

History in the Making**Global Migration and the Refugee Crisis: Some Questions to Consider**

May 30, 2016

At the *History in the Making* meeting on Tuesday, May 24, we came up with some questions that will help to direct and refine our research, and structure our writing.

It is not our intent to cover each of these main questions (or their sub-questions) in each article we produce. Rather, these questions have been put forward for us to consider (and add to) as we move forward with this project. One or more of these questions (or sub-questions) might provide a useful focus for the article(s) that individual authors are working on.

1. What misconceptions does your research/article counter, contest, or complicate? Below are some examples of popular attitudes and misconceptions:

- the crisis is the fault of the refugees (and thus it is up to them to fix it)
- why can't they just go home?
- if they were patriots, they would stay in their home country and fight, instead of fleeing (this is typically—but not exclusively—directed at male refugees of military age)
- refugees will be/are a drain on the limited resources of the countries they are migrating to; they are a potentially “parasitical” element who have nothing to offer or contribute
- refugees will not integrate (nor do they want to)

- the crisis is tantamount to an “invasion”; Muslims in particular look to colonize Europe and other Christian nations

- (Muslim) refugees are terrorists, rapists, criminals, etc. (or at least have these elements amongst them)

2. How can we render a particular case study (and thus the global situation more generally) more understandable by introducing our readers to the complexities of the stories we are researching? Some questions to consider include:

- what are the various push/pull factors at work?
- what are the overlapping factors (both immediate and historical) that have contributed to the material conditions that have made migration a perceived or actual necessity?
- what silences does the article/research address? How does the work in question render marginalized people “visible”?

**note: in addressing this question, we should be careful to also look at the local factors behind the crisis; that is, we need to be aware of the role that people and governments in Africa, the Muslim world, and so on have played in creating the crisis itself. This is not to say that they are solely to blame, but we do need to find this balance in our work.*

3. How has the refugee crisis/migration issue been politicized (by both the left and the right)?

4. What are the possible solutions to the problem/cases we are examining? Is there an historical precedent that we can point to?

5. How can we use our work to help define complicated and often controversial terms? Some terms to consider include:

- capitalism
- neoliberalism and globalization
- imperialism and colonialism (and with this neo-imperialism and neo-colonialism)
- Islamophobia
- terrorism
- refugees/migrants/displaced peoples
- the far right/neo-fascism
- etc.