

## Panel 1: Transition of Concepts

While the field of forced migration research has long been dominated by refugee studies, scholars increasingly acknowledge the multidimensional nature of forced migration. Today, forced migration is more often conceptualized as an integral part of global social inequalities that continuously produce forced mobility. This panel explores in how far everyday manifestations of the so-called north-south divide entail forced migration: Should we, for instance, understand peasants who cannot compete with agribusiness and leave their lands, as forced migrants? Would this sharpen our analysis or render the concept futile? What would it mean for bureaucratic categories and real-world outcomes and how, if at all, could it be applied within the legal framework of international human rights and migration law?



- Prof. Dr. Dennis Dijkzeul (Ruhr University Bochum)
- Dr. Isabella Risini (Ruhr University Bochum)
- Serge Palasie (Eine Welt Netz, Düsseldorf)
- Christopher Boyd (University of Glasgow)

**Chair:** Corinna Land (Sylff Mikrokolleg, Ruhr University Bochum)

## Panel 2: Transition of Perspectives

Social scientists and human rights theorists have introduced actor-oriented perspectives into forced migration studies, opposing an understanding of migrants and refugees as passive beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance. This panel explores the influence of actor-oriented perspectives from two angles. Empirically, an actor-oriented perspective allows researchers to ask how migrants make use of their (limited) room for maneuver. Legally, this understanding puts the prerogative for the interpretation of situations, rules and interests in the hands of decision makers, states, and those affected, migrants themselves. An actor-oriented perspective changes the way in which we must construe human rights realization and enforcement, especially when it comes to balancing interests and designing procedures for administrations and courts to interact with affected individuals.



- Dr. Itamar Mann (University of Haifa)
- Dr. J. Olaf Kleist (Osnabrück University)
- Dr. Axel Kreienbrink (German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Nürnberg)
- Dr. Ekaterina Yahyaoui (National University of Ireland, Galway)

**Chair:** Benedikt Behlert (Sylff Mikrokolleg, Ruhr University Bochum)

## Panel 3: Transition of Law

Against the backdrop of global investment interests in land and increasing scarcity of this finite 'commodity', potential conflict between vulnerable groups such as indigenous peoples, small-scale agriculturalists and minorities looms as an ever more important driver of forced migration. In reaction to this issue, we are observing attempts to integrate land rights into the existing framework of international human rights law in particular and international law more broadly. This panel explores whether land rights, understood as human rights, may help to defuse or rather trigger and exacerbate conflict and how they are used in practice to strengthen land-related claims and mitigate an important driver of forced migration.



- Prof. Dr. Jochen von Bernstorff (University of Tübingen)
- Dr. Kei Otsuki (Utrecht University)
- Lucy Claridge (Amnesty International, London)
- Dr. Mariana Monteiro de Matos (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle)

**Chair:** Robin Ramsahye (Sylff Mikrokolleg, Ruhr University Bochum)

## Panel 4: Transition of Civic Spaces

In many countries, public discourse and migration policies are increasingly shaped by anti-immigration sentiment and xenophobia. Within a heated political climate – often accompanied by the exclusion and repression of advocates for an open, plural society – the civic space for migrant and civil society organizations is shrinking, limiting the opportunities and the legitimation of political articulation and dissent. This panel discusses ways of reclaiming or reopening civic space, elaborating on the responsibilities of governments, academia, and civil society. Taking up the questions of previous panel sessions, it will explore responses to a discourse that entitles some migrants and delegitimizes others and ask what an actor-oriented approach – taking migrants seriously as actors on their own behalf – would mean for existing practices of social movements and civil society organizations.



- Prof. Dr. Ludger Pries (Ruhr University Bochum)
- Isabel Schayani (Westdeutscher Rundfunk, Köln)
- Claudia Jerzak (University of Applied Sciences for Social Work, Education and Care, Dresden)

**Chair:** Carolin Funke (Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict, Ruhr University Bochum)

## Programme Thursday, 14 November

12:00	Registration and Snacks
13:00	Welcome and Introductory Remarks
13:20	Panel 1: Transition of Concepts
15:20	Coffee and Snacks
16:00	Panel 2: Transition of Perspectives
19:00	Conference Dinner for Speakers and Organizers

## Programme Friday, 15 November

9:00	Registration and Snacks
9:30	Panel 3: Transition of Law
11:30	Lunch
12:30	Panel 4: Transition of Civic Spaces
14:30	Wrap up and Goodbye
15:00	End of Conference

## **FORCED MIGRATION IN TRANSITION: PERSPECTIVES FROM SOCIAL SCIENCE AND LAW CONFERENCE OF THE SYLFF MIKROKOLLEG ON FORCED MIGRATION**

14-15 November 2019 – Blue Square  
Ruhr University Bochum

Forced migration has taken centre stage in public and academic discourse over the last years. Given its contemporary relevance, familiar as well as novel theoretical and methodological approaches to migration studies are gaining momentum. Multifaceted and controversial debates reveal various transitions concerning empirical dynamics and approaches to address forced migration as well as theoretical, methodological and legal challenges to grasp the complex phenomenon. Exploring these transitions, the conference provides a space for interdisciplinary debate as well as exchange between academia and practice. It aims at stimulating a discussion between scholars of humanities and law and practitioners. The conference encourages scholars to reflect on the real-world outcomes of their research and animate practitioners to scrutinize their day to day work. In four consecutive workshops, participants discuss transitions of concepts, perspectives, law and civic spaces.



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