

Call for Research Papers

Anti-Migration Politics and Islamic Ethics: Nationalism, Discrimination, Securitization and Vulnerable Groups

CILE Seminar in Doha, Qatar
21-23 September 2020

The Research Center for Islamic Legislation and Ethics (CILE) issues a call for papers for a research seminar on Anti-Migration Politics and Islamic Ethics in Doha, Qatar. This seminar aims to explore the current growing hostilities towards migrants, asylum seekers and refugees around the world from the perspectives of Islamic ethical principles, legal and political challenges. The seminar is convened by CILE's research unit **Migration Ethics and Human Rights** as part of a publication project carrying the same title, in collaboration with Brill Publishers. Papers from a previous seminar was published in December 2019 by Brill with open access: Ray Jureidini and Said Hassan (eds) *Migration and Islamic Ethics: Issues of Residence, Naturalization and Citizenship*, Leiden/Boston, Brill Publications.

Background Notes

The Center is particularly interested in papers that address Islamic ethics of migration related to recent trends in migration flows and migration experiences of Muslims around the world (mainly, within the last 10 years). This may include research on second and third generation migrants and refugees. In this sense, papers should have some empirical content and analysis along with reflections on Islamic ethical principles that pertain to human movement, whether forced or voluntary. Scholars and researchers are welcome to tackle these issues from a normative Islamic ethical perspective and/or with empirical examples or case studies.

Asylum-seekers, refugees, displaced people and similar terms have gone viral in the human rights discourse in the last two decades for various reasons. Although these terms are considered modern, these categories of people have existed throughout history but were mostly referred to simply as "migrants". Muslims, since the moment they declared their faith in the seventh century AD, have lived the experience of migration in different forms, places and times. History informs us about individual or group migration/escape from persecution of Quraish. Early migrations to Abyssinia or to Madinah were described in some modern scholarly writings as an early precedent of a coherent community of refugees. The Great Migration to Madinah (*hijra*), which became a turning point in the establishment of the faith, instituted a precedent that became the cornerstone of what some scholars called the doctrine of migration in Islamic discourse. The discussion of this "doctrine" goes beyond the act of movement from one place to another, but to direct people to "walk/wander through the earth" - for preaching Islam, escaping persecution, protecting oneself, for safety, for education or for economic reasons.

Muslim scholars have debated the categories, reasons and justifications for such movements. Islamic law (*fiqh*) developed a set of principles and rulings throughout the early centuries of

its progression that state certain rights and duties of those categories of people who were forced to move. The issue was discussed mainly under the subject of *amān*, “the contract of safety”, *istijārah* “extending protection” and *dhimmah* “the rulings pertaining to the People of the Book”. These discussions took place with the assumption of the prevalence of the Islamic faith in the world. Jurists dealt with the urgencies of their social and political settings, but their discussions were mainly framed with the classification of the world into *dar al-Islām*, *dār al-ḥarb* and *dār al-‘ahd*, respectively the land of Islam, the land of disbelief and the land of the covenant.

With the change of the political and social mapping of the Muslim world, the influence of colonialism, the introduction of nation-states and the sovereignty of borders, the wars over resources and the rising discourse of human rights, Muslim scholars have had to critically revise the classical discussions in order to cope with the challenges of the new legal and ethical settings.

Contemporary Muslim scholars have developed various paradigms to tackle the issue of forced migration movements. The legal approach has discussed the issue in more depth, not only reviewing the positions of early scholars, but also challenging them by widening the scope of legal texts to include general Qur’anic principles of the dignity of the human soul, prophetic traditions of the sanctity of the human self, regardless of belief, and recalling early historical events that shows the connection of modern experience with precedent conditions.

One cannot ignore the stress on the religious and secular ethical paradigms in discussions about asylum seekers, refugees and migrants. Islam promotes the protection of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. Some Muslim scholars have gone even further to base their arguments on mainly ethical principles, including but not limited to human dignity, justice, *Iḥsān* “benevolence” and freedom. Islamic Relief, for example, identify the rights of forced migrants in Islam, including the duty to seek asylum and the duty to give asylum; the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies ([IFRC](#)) specify 10 migration principles that require humanitarian responses; the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights ([OHCHR](#)) elaborate some 20 principles to guide responses to migrants in vulnerable situations. On the protection of labour migrants, the International Human Rights and Business ([IHRB](#)) identify 10 principles (The Dhaka Principles).

To what extent, however, in contemporary circumstances, are secular and Islamic ethical principles and international law being compromised by the moral relativism of nationalist xenophobic and Islamophobic attitudes and actions? To what extent does nationalism result in, or demand increased discrimination and securitization, not only at borders, but also in relation to existing residents. What are counter-veiling forces against this? Regarding asylum-seekers and refugees, what are the ethical issues of the most vulnerable, such as women and children who are to receive particular attention and protection?

The conceptualization of universal human rights goes beyond what may be understood as a limited set of rights of citizens. Thus, from a rights perspective, what are the ethics involved in the hierarchy of privilege between citizens and non-citizens of a nation state? What is the validity of the contradictory values inherent in this? Even though the rights of migrants, for example, whether citizens or non-citizens, or if irregular, have well defined rights as detailed in the UN International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990/2003).

Further Questions to be Considered

- How are nationalistic attitudes and policies towards Muslims affecting Muslim migration/migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees?
- What are the secular and Islamic moral principles that can be applied to such anti-migration attitudes, policies and behavior?
- How are such attitudes on the ground and policies from above being dealt with by individuals, supra-national organizations, non-governmental organizations and national governments in relation to Islamic principles on asylum and protection?
- What are the specific issues involving gender and those who may be classified as vulnerable – or “morally significant” – groups of people?
- What is the impact of migration policies and attitudes on second and third generation Muslim migrants in respect to their national and religious identities?
- To what extent are Muslim migrants, asylum seekers and refugees exploited politically and economically?
- To what extent does the presence of Muslim migrants and refugees strengthen or question the notion of *Ummah* among Muslim collectivities?
- How do migrant diaspora communities develop religious activist networking? Which moral principles rooted in the Islamic tradition can be recalled and examined to empower those forced to migrate away from their homeland?

Points that papers may discuss (other suggestions are welcome):

- Historical experiences and their relevance to modern concerns
- Progression of legal rulings on refugees and asylum seekers
- Special place of children and women in the Islamic discourse of protecting minorities
- Duties and obligations towards displaced people in Islamic law, compared with national and international laws
- Fatwa discourse on the position of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, especially for Muslims in non-Muslim lands or for non-Muslims in Muslim lands
- The rights of citizens vs rights of non-citizens

Selection Criteria

Please note that the call is for critical analyses of the philosophies behind the laws and experiences of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees – not mere comments or statements of the law. The selection criteria will be based more upon a critical, analytical outlook of

existing legal texts, ministerial decrees as well as fatwas, etc. Preference will be given to papers that apply ethics to well-researched and documented empirical cases, particularly if contemporary. Note also that this call for papers is open to all voices. Authors may focus on particular issues in either the normative or current practice fields. Again, preference will be given to those who can incorporate both normative and applied fields into their analyses.

Submission Details

Those who are interested should send:

- (a) An abstract (300-500 words only), describing the research's core ideas.
- (b) A brief biography (300 words only) outlining the applicant's academic background, main research interests and key publications.

Authors whose abstracts are accepted will receive an invitation to submit their full papers (between 7,000 and 9,000 words) within the deadline specified below. The authors of a selection of the accepted papers will be invited to participate in the seminar and the other accepted papers will be considered for the publication project. It is to be noted that submissions (abstracts, bios and full papers) must be written in English.

Plan of the Refereed Publication with Brill:

In April 2016, CILE signed an agreement with Brill to launch the refereed *Journal of Islamic Ethics (JIE)*. A thematic issue in the *JIE*, or a stand-alone edited book in the Islamic Ethics book series is one of the planned deliverables of the above-mentioned publication project "Anti-Migration Politics and Islamic Ethics: Nationalism, Discrimination, Securitization and Vulnerable Groups". Thus, accepted submissions in this call-for-papers will undergo the usual peer-review process for inclusion in this publication project.

Benefits

CILE will offer the authors of accepted papers the following benefits:

- Refereed publication
- Cover of the costs of making the publication available via open access.

For those who will be invited to present their papers during the closed seminar, the following additional benefits apply:

- Travel and accommodation costs during the three days of the seminar.

Contact Us:

Submissions should be sent to migration2020@cilecenter.org

For any inquiries about this call-for-papers or about the accompanying Background Paper, please contact Dr. Ray Jureidini – rjureidini@hbku.edu.qa who directs the CILE research unit 'Migration, Ethics and Human Rights'.

Important Dates:

- March 30, 2020: Deadline for receiving paper title, abstracts and bios. **Please read the above Background Notes carefully before writing the abstract.**

- April 24, 2020: Authors whose abstracts are accepted will be notified and invited to write the full papers.
- July 24, 2020: Deadline for receiving the full papers.
- August 17, 2020: Authors whose papers are accepted will be notified.
- September 21-23, 2020: Seminar in Doha, Qatar
- December 4, 2020: Revisions of papers for refereeing and publication

About the Research Center for Islamic Legislation and Ethics (CILE):

CILE aims to contribute to the reform and renewal of Islamic thought by developing a contemporary vision guided by the fundamental principles of the Holy Qur'an, Sunnah and the higher objectives of Islamic Shariah. For more information, please contact: CILE Office.