

Call for Papers: Symposium and PhD Training

Lived transnationalism in times of violent conflict –

Cross-border connections and mobilities of people, goods and capital

27-28 March 2023, Bonn, Germany

Violent conflicts set people into motion and change existing social relations. More specifically, large-scale wars and localised conflicts not only force people to flee from violence but transform pre-existing mobility patterns, often rupturing the rhythms and routes of movement. As a consequence, new forms of social practises across international borders and of 'transnational living' (Carling et al. 2021) are established. This two-day symposium, which is co-organised by the IMISCOE Standing Committee on Migrant Transnationalism (MITRA) and the BMBF-funded project Forced Migration and Refugee Studies: Networking and Knowledge Transfer (FFVT), seeks to unpack how transnational mobilities and connectivities come into being and change under the conditions of violent conflicts, and how they shape the lives of those who are transnationally (dis)entangled.

So far, practices of transnationalism in the context of violent conflict are a marginal theme within studies of migrant transnationalism (e.g., the recent handbook on transnationalism by Yeoh and Collins (2022) hardly mentions conflict or displacement at all). Nonetheless, refugees and other migrants' multi-directional mobilities and transnational networks in the context of war, insecurity and (protracted) displacement have been studied for more than 20 years (Al-Ali et al. 2001; Horst 2006; van Hear 2006; Monsutti 2008; Harpviken 2014; Etzold et al. 2019; Horstmann et al. 2019; Betts et al. 2021; D'Angelo 2021; Zuntz 2021; Etzold and Fechter 2022; Tobin et al. 2022; Vancluysen 2022). Still, large gaps in research remain. Displaced people's multiple border crossings, e.g. for family visits and business activities, between countries of origin and neighbouring countries, and their specific transnational entanglements in wider kin networks and/or diaspora organisations affect their ways of 'doing family', 'doing business' or 'doing politics' across a multitude of countries.

In peace and conflict studies, the transnational dimensions of (civil) war have been noted (Gleditsch 2007), but were never systematically explored – to our knowledge. Journalists published informative reports on the cross-border movements of actors or flows of resources under conditions of war and conflict. However, academic studies that have investigated the transnational mobilities and connections of other social actors in conflict settings such as military personnel and armed groups (Meininghaus and Schluesing 2020; Pettersson and Öberg 2020), political elites (de Waal 2015), diasporas (Chaudhary and Moss 2019; Pérez-Armendáriz 2021), activists (Wilkins 2022), traders and business(wo)men (Doevenspeck 2011; Ahmad 2015; Montabone 2018), construction labourers (Grawert 2019), transport workers such as seafarers (Acejo 2012; Markulla 2021), or humanitarian actors (Scott-Smith 2016; Oliff 2018; Fradejas-García and Mülli 2019) are comparatively rare. Moreover, they are largely disconnected from the academic debates on migrant transnationalism.

Objectives of the symposium

With the aim to address some of these gaps, our symposium wants to bring together scholars who embrace a transnational research perspective yet come from very different disciplinary backgrounds (e.g., anthropology, sociology, political science and international relations, geography). We invite contributions from (forced) migration and mobility studies as well as peace and conflict studies, among others, to address some of the following questions.

- How are people's 'normal' patterns of transnational life, im/mobility and connectivity disrupted and transformed under the conditions of war and insecurity?
- How do forcibly displaced people maintain ties across the distance and circulate resources, information or capital within transnational personal, political or business networks?
- How are displaced and often forcibly separated families 'doing family' in a transnational space that is marked by ongoing violence, uncertainty and barriers to mobility?
- Which structures and actors enable or impede the transnational mobility of people, goods, capital and information in times of war, and how?
- What are the effects of interrupted, ruptured or brittle transnational network relations for diverse actors who are living in and outside of conflict settings?
- How are the lives of those who are forced to stay behind transformed by new mobility patterns, rhythms, and routes of movement?
- What role do new technologies play in shaping, transforming and sustaining the lived experience of transnationalism in times of violent conflict and at diverse sites of engagement?

On the symposium

The Bonn International Centre for Conflict Studies ([BICC](#)) hosts the symposium with support of the IMISCOE Standing Committee on Migrant Transnationalism ([MITRA](#)) and the German Ministry of Research and Education (BMBF)-funded project 'Forced Migration and Refugee Studies: Networking and Knowledge Transfer' ([FFVT](#)).

The symposium aims to provide a space of engagement for both established scholars and PhD candidates, who are particularly encouraged to apply. We envisage a hybrid workshop format that is accessible for a wide audience but ask all the speakers to be present in Bonn as this allows for a more in-depth exchange.

On the PhD training

During the symposium, PhD students will have the opportunity to present ongoing work and receive in-depth feedback. Following the symposium, a half-a-day training session (on March 28) particularly targeted towards PhD students will be organised. It will focus on practical challenges, ethical dilemmas and research methods in conflict settings. PhD students who attend the symposium and the training session may request a travel stipend of up to 200 EUR.

How to apply?

Please send us a short proposal that includes the title, an abstract of your paper (max. 300 words) and up to 5 keywords as well as your institutional affiliation and career status (e.g., PhD candidate, post-doc, senior researcher, professor) until **31 January 2023** to event@ffvt.net.

Drafts of accepted papers (10 p.) will have to be sent in advance on March 1st 2023. Discussants will be allocated for each paper in order to provide in-depth constructive and critical feedback. Strong papers will be considered for publication in a special issue of a peer-reviewed journal or an edited volume.

More information

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