



Public Lecture

—
Thursday, 19 September 2019

**Protection or Control? Migration Governance and the Repressive
Approach of Sex Work in France**

—
**Prof. Calogero Giametta, LAMES Aix-Marseille University |
Sciences Po Paris**

Discussant: Prof. Janine Dahinden, University of Neuchâtel

18:15 – 19:45 h

Location: University of Neuchâtel, Avenue du 1er-Mars 26, Room B32

Abstract

Moral panic about the contemporary increase of migration flows coincides with the production of both openly racist and humanitarian forms of migration governance on a global scale. In this context, gender and sexuality have become strategic dimensions through which specific groups of migrants are identified as particularly vulnerable. Countries in the Global North celebrate the acceptance of sexual and gender diversity as an essential feature of their democratic superiority to the rest of the world, but the interventions and protocols they implement to address migrants' 'needs and rights' produce alarm-based forms of migration governance. In the contemporary migration regimes across the Global North, migrant women and gender and sexual minorities are conceived as a 'particularly vulnerable' category of migrants. Yet they experience a mismatch between states' protection discourses and the practices of the border and immigration administration. The resulting moral imperative of dealing with, or 'rescuing', sexual minority, trans migrants as well as migrant women often becomes entangled with the enforcement of restrictive migration policies and heightened controls. This does not protect these migrant populations but exacerbates their vulnerability to labor exploitation along existing racial and class-based hierarchies. In this presentation I will specifically focus my analysis on the French context where since 2016 the end-demand model of sex work has been enacted in order to fight against human trafficking and prostitution. In so doing, I will contextualize the criminalization of the demand for sexual services and humanitarian and rescue operations directed at sex workers, particularly migrant and racialized people in the sex work sector across France. Since the law penalizing their clients in 2016, sex workers have not stopped working, continuing under severely worse conditions. Given their migration statuses and the insidious ways in which racialization operates in the French public sphere, migrants working in the sex work sector are particularly exposed to precarity and exploitation.

Curriculum Vitae

Calogero Giametta is a sociologist with a research focus on gender, sexuality and the political economy of migration. In his work, Calogero examines how migration control operates through (sexual) humanitarian interventions under neoliberal democracies - in France and in the UK. More precisely, he studies anti-human trafficking interventions and the right of asylum. In his doctoral research, Calogero examined the experiences of gender and sexual minority refugees, and the discourses linking the politics of sexuality and the British refugee granting process. This involved conducting ethnography with LGBT asylum seekers living in the UK. In his current post-doc fellowship, Calogero expanded his research focus to the analysis of migrant labor exploitation, as well as humanitarian and securitization practices targeting migrant sex workers in France.

Selected Publications

- Giametta C. and Akoro S. J. (2019 forthcoming). Queering social research on Sexuality, Migration and Asylum through co-authoring with participants, *Socioscapes* 1 (under review).
- Calderaro C. and Giametta C. (2019). 'The Problem of Prostitution': Repressive policies in the name of migration control, public order and women's rights, *Anti-Trafficking Review* 12, 155-171.
- Giametta C. (2018). New asylum protection categories and elusive filtering devices: the case of 'Queer Asylum' in France and the UK, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*,
- Giametta C. (2018). Reorienting participation, distance and positionality: ethnographic encounters with gender and sexual minority migrants, *Sexualities* 21, 868-882.
- Giametta C. (2017). *The Sexual Politics of Asylum: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in the UK Asylum System*. Routledge: New York and London.
- Giametta C. (2014). 'Rescued' subjects: the question of agency and religiosity for non-heteronormative asylum seekers in the UK, *Sexualities* 17, 583-599.