

Special Issue on Contemporary Wars and Politics of Dispossession: Afghanistan and Ukraine

Call for Papers – Refugee Watch

As a post-colonial society emerging from decades-long protracted conflicts, Afghanistan confronts a complex legacy of past crimes and structural violence in addition to a complex web of mobilities. Communist rulers, Soviet occupiers, rural resistance fighters, Islamist parties, the Taliban movement, Pakistani volunteers, al-Qaeda members, power-seeking warlords, and the anti-Taliban coalition all contributed to the litany of abuse and turmoil since 1978. In the larger context of the continued subjection of the Middle East and North Africa to an extraordinary condensation of the old and new aspects of imperialism and neocolonialism, the pertinent effects of the occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq endure in tandem with novel forms of international, external and regional interventions. What is more, this constellation seems to have facilitated the rise of new regimes of powers with a more assertive economic, political and military grip on the country. The latest wave of brutality—the latest in 40 years of conflict—has forced more than half a million people from their homes in Afghanistan so far in 2021.

Reflections on contemporary wars are marked by the use of the language of 'otherness' of both Afghan/Asian and Ukrainian/Slavic populations and the inherent logic of governmentality associated with their histories. In this context, the standard call for 'the patrimonial State' as opposed to the post-colonial dynamic of dispossession through which the 'meta-border' between metropolis and colonies is perpetually challenged.

During both Afghan and Ukrainian wars and conflict-related exodus, like in all other mass movements of forced exit, death, poverty, and precarity are normalized as choices made by individuals, rather than shaped by the political context, and systemic and historic conditions. Individuals are forced to experience their ordinary living as like-death, where there is no viable escape, while the causes of their predicament remain unclear, solutions confusing, and the impact is always inter-generational – thereby making these experiences of living death one of the cruelest forms of structural violence. The displaced are not only more likely to suffer; they are also much less likely to have their suffering noticed. Overlooking historical inequality, precarity, and perpetual suffering leads to the normalization of exodus.

Furthermore, the unique combination of moments of 'break' and 'continuity' in both Ukrainian and Afghan history presents itself in the current conjuncture marked by uneasy alliances and the unparalleled militarization of the society. The current 'interregnum' urgently calls for critical interventions in understanding not only the specificity of the most current Afghan and Ukrainian crises but also the foundational relationship between war and politics of dispossession.

Against this background of debates that took place under the aegis of CRG, **Refugee Watch** is pleased to announce the call for papers for a special issue journal publication on the theme of *Contemporary Wars and Politics of Dispossession: Afghanistan and Ukraine*.

Possible contributions include but are not limited to the following themes:

- The relevance and/or limitations of classical and new theories of imperialism/neocolonialism in engaging with the current constellation of exile, exodus, uprooting of communities and displacements in Afghanistan and Ukraine/Russia; necropolitics and contemporary wars; post-colonial/decolonial futurities;

- Continuities and shifts in neo-imperialism/neo-colonialism in Afghanistan; new models of citizenship in Ukraine; biopolitics and politics of membership in the nation in both contexts;
- The crises of neoliberalism and its sustenance via contemporary wars and mass dispossessions; gendered and intersectional aspects of contemporary wars;
- The struggle over Afghanistan and Ukraine, rising powers, bipolar politics of American/Russian hegemony and displacement;
- (Neo-)national liberation struggles;
- Militarization, securitization and sectarianization of civilian populations via contemporary wars.

Please send 300-word abstracts along with a short bio and contact information of the author(s) and keywords by June 15, 2022. The selection of abstracts by June 30, 2022 and submissions by August 15, 2022. Submissions and queries to be made to editor@mcrg.ac.in, nergiscanefe67@gmail.com