

## International conference

# *Thinking Migration to Rethink the World*

21-24 June 2016 - University of Poitiers, Migrinter

### Call for papers

The scholarship on migration, relatively scarce until the 80s, is now outstandingly abundant. Migration studies have become a scientific field in its own right, with associated conferences, research centres, international associations, journals and so on. For the last three decades, the MIGRINTER team, whose research agenda includes a variety of issues ranging from human circulation to diasporas and urban mobilities, has marked of its imprint francophone research on international migration.

While taking shape as an autonomous scientific field, migration studies have irrigated and renewed broader social theory. All disciplines are now concerned: geography, history, demography, sociology, anthropology, economy but also linguistics, psychology, philosophy, cultural studies and humanities. A wide array of theoretical and epistemological advancements has been inspired by the analysis of migration dynamics. Postcolonial anthropology, multi-situated approaches, transnationalism, new approaches to identity and global history are some of the scientific areas whose foundation dwells on a critique of the sedentary vision of cultures and societies. Migration studies are the crucible of an alternative to the methodological nationalism that has, for long, underwritten social sciences. This scientific field offers a lens through which mainstream conceptions of state, individual and collective identities, societies, artistic practices, but also our relationship to time and space, can be revisited. This has led some scholars to evoke a “migration paradigm”.

The aim of this conference, celebrating the thirtieth anniversary of MIGRINTER, is to examine the contribution of migration studies to human and social sciences at large. It will feature panels bringing forward some of the scientific domains that have addressed issues pertaining to international migration: the production of cities; the relation of politics to migration and of migrants to politics; history beneath and beyond nations; literature in/of exile.

This conference encourages the participation of migration and non-migration scholars with a view to enhance a cross-fertilizing dialogue between disciplines and theoretical fields.

**Abstracts** (2000 characters max.) are to be sent before **15 January 2016** at the following address : [migrinter30ans@sciencesconf.org](mailto:migrinter30ans@sciencesconf.org).

Authors will have to **specify the panel** to which they are applying. Proposals can be in English, French or Spanish.

The scientific committee will notify authors whether their proposal has been selected on the **29 February 2016**.

The **full text** of selected proposals (30 000 characters max.) is expected by **1 June 2016**.

A selection of papers will also be published in a special issue.

Accommodation and meals (subscription fees included) will be covered by the conference organisers, but participants will have to take in charge their travel expenses.

## List of panels

- Panel 1 : Migration and urban change: from housing to the city
- Panel 2 : Visible spaces of integration: migration, urban planning and social inclusion
- Panel 3 : Immigration and Trade Unions
- Panel 4 : Reinforcing, Redefining or Challenging the Political? Cross-disciplinary Perspectives on Migrants and Activism across the World
- Panel 5 : Migration from/to unrecognised States
- Panel 6 : Migrations and traceability: towards new modes of control?
- Panel 7 : Academic and scientific mobilities: a tool for understanding local and international social dynamics
- Panel 8 : How to think of 'the space and time' of migrations, as proposed by Fernand Braudel?
- Panel 9 : Migrations and Revolutions: a transhistorical perspective
- Panel 10 : Literature as a form of expression of the migration imaginaries: discourses, representations, identities
- Panel 11 : (Re)Tracing life's itineraries : On the art of collecting and interpreting
- Panel 12 : Public Spaces: Forms and Methods
- Panel 13 : How to teach International Migrations in social sciences?

## Panels' description

### **Panel 1: Migration and urban change: from housing to the city**

Urban mobility is at the core of the functioning of cities. From housing systems to daily commuting, mobility affects residents' access to urban resources and structure territories and life spaces. The aim of the panel is to improve the understanding of urban change (especially the process of gentrification) by promoting dialogue between three areas of study: international migration, urban studies and housing studies.

In this perspective, a series of questions will be addressed, among others: what are the effects of gentrification on access to housing for migrant populations? With the absorption of degraded habitat and social housing in central and peri-urban neighbourhoods, how are migrant populations disseminated in metropolitan territories? Which neighbourhoods do endorse the receiving function of international migrants? To what extent real estate investments and the presence of circulating high-income populations in central areas contribute to the gentrification of the historic centres?

Contributions may also address the methodological aspects of the study of these phenomena: what source of data can be used in order to deal with these issues?

### **Panel 2 : Visible spaces of integration: migration, urban planning and social inclusion**

The visibility of the space is a conception borrowed from Jacques Derrida (1997) and reshaped in "non-conditional visibility" by two Italian scholars (De Leo; Belli, 2013). It argues that some spaces present multifaceted characters due to the different uses to which they are subjected by city users. This visibility of space can be a foremost concern to understand the linkages between urban policies and socio-territorial integration processes of the immigrants. Notably, marketplaces, religious and cultural centres are characterized by a pivotal capacity in aggregating and meeting different people. Moreover, they are places where the overlapping of functions and purposes between residents and immigrants is extremely visible.

The aim of the panel is to open an interdisciplinary debate focused on issues related to the

management of these spaces that are usually a one-side discussion in the urban planning discourse. How to express the notion of visibility in new urban planning policies aimed to manage the integration of migrants? How to use the pluralism of these spaces to address issues related to integration and social inclusion beyond the classification of "migrant" and "indigenous"? What is the role of the concepts of multiculturalism and diversity in the new urban planning and integration policies in Europe?

### **Panel 3: Immigration and Trade Unions**

The problem of the relationship between the labour movement and immigration has been one of the main research questions in the 1970s. Nowadays, it is much less present in the scholarship. And yet, integration through work and the subsequent access to rights remain central elements in the everyday life of immigrants. More recently, the deterioration in economic conditions since 2008, changes in the labour market (subcontracting, casualization of work, etc.), trade unionism in Europe and the increasing complexity of migration trajectories call for a renewed approach to this relationship.

This panel aims to encourage the presentation of works that will examine the history of this relationship, unravel the motives of engagement of migrants in working class struggles, their individual involvement in Trade Unions, their formation of activists, shed light on a contemporary reading of this problem and provide a compared analysis between European and transatlantic level.

Among the privileged research areas, we highlight the ways through which the different union federations address migration and migration policies, the "told and untold" - to resume the work of François Vourc'h and Véronique de Rudder - of the attitude of these organizations towards racism and discrimination at work.

### **Panel 4: Reinforcing, Redefining or Challenging the Political? Cross-disciplinary Perspectives on Migrants and Activism across the World**

This panel wishes to look at the various and heterogeneous ways in which migrants, either through organised social movements and organisations or through practices of resistance, have reiterated, challenged and/or redefined the scope of the political in receiving societies. To what extent are migrant practices, discourses and narratives of political engagement a reflection or rather a challenge to the institutional context in which they are enacted? To what extent do they reinforce, redefine or rather challenge the concept of citizenship as enacted in a specific context? How can we conceptualise migrant political engagement in relation to other forces of political change such as, for example, social movements, or in relation to more institutionalised actors such as labour unions, non-governmental organisations and political parties?

In an effort to connect migration scholarship to other crucial strands of literature, we welcome contributions addressing one or more of these questions from a variety of perspectives, including (but not limited to) social movement theory, organisational analysis, labour studies, and citizenship studies.

### **Panel 5: Migration from/to unrecognised States**

Where international migrations are mostly understood as the crossing of borders recognised by (almost) all states in the world, there exist migrations, also considered as international, related to crossing borders that are not recognised by most countries of the international community. This is the situation of people coming from Abkhazia (Georgia), Transnistria<sup>1</sup> (Moldova), Palestine (Gaza) and from Cyprus Island (TRNC<sup>2</sup>). This panel will explore how mobilities from and to these microstates function and call into question the migration policies and related legislations of neighbouring countries, and indeed further away countries.

### **Panel 6: Migrations and traceability: towards new modes of control?**

State institutions and private organisations are increasingly using Information and Communication Technologies (ITC) in order to trace people's movement. ITC are for example employed in the processing of administrative files related to visa applications and delivery, as well as in registered traveller programmes. Some of these devices also allow recording localised events and transmitting personal data: such is the case with the European regulation *Dublin III* in respect to the movement of asylum seekers and with electronic bracelets imposed on people under house arrest while waiting for

removal from the territory (United States, United Kingdom...). These devices are often considered as 'smart' insofar as they aim to improve the situation of certain categories of people, yet do they not also presage new modes of control in our societies? Could it also be argued that such projects are related to economic considerations as much as, or more than, legal ones?

**Panel 7: Academic and scientific mobilities: a tool for understanding local and international social dynamics**

Academic and scientific mobilities intensified during the last decade and took new directions. Increased South-South academic migrations add to South-North flows, and new international centres emerge as nodal places in the international educational space. These phenomena suggest new international dynamics, as well as a shift in historical power relations between Northern and Southern countries. They also point to new social groups configurations, as illustrated by the original process of re-composition of Southern elites, a process which does not take place in the North only, but within new boundaries and regions in the South. The analysis of academic and scientific mobilities appear as heuristic: as factors of change with regard to international dynamics and balance, as well as to national social dynamics. This panel aims at mobilizing research works illustrating processes of social change and shifts in international relations, through the lens of the evolution of academic circulations.

**Panel 8: “How to think of ‘the space and time’ of migrations, as proposed by Fernand Braudel?”**

This workshop will gather scholars in social sciences interested in the historical modelling of migration dynamics.

How do we engage in a dialogue between conceptual and cartographic tools to unravel the complexity of migration processes? What are the reciprocal influences that occur? And more generally, how can we reflect on social facts in a space which, in its essence, disappeared; or at least in a space which cannot be directly observed?

**Panel 9: Migrations and Revolutions: a transhistorical perspective**

Revolutions, as they generate political violence or as a symptom of broader social and economic transformations, are the lever of large-scale population displacements.

This workshop suggests confronting recent revolutions (e.g.: Arab springs) with other revolutions with occurred in the past and in other regions (e.g.: European or American revolutions, industrial revolutions, decolonisation...). What are the convergences and specificities that such a transhistorical comparison can highlight? This workshop will gather historians and social sciences scholars specialists of migrations and/or revolutions.

**Panel 10: Literature as a form of expression of the migration imaginaries : discourses, representations, identities**

Taking stoke of reflection on the way migration studies can grasp artistic productions, the panel focuses on the expression and questioning of migratory imaginaries and their associated collective and individual representations that can be found in literary works.

What are the theoretical, methodological and aesthetic stakes of the use of literature in migration studies? How do literary works, be they fictional or not, reshape national narratives and/or take part in the building of transnational and cosmopolitan identities?

**Panel 11: (Re)Tracing life’s itineraries : On the art of collecting and interpreting.**

Apprehending social change through the lens of migratory itineraries is becoming one of the dominant paradigms in Social Sciences. In the field of International Migrations, the notions of migratory *itineraries* and *projects* are found in numerous researches. Itineraries are defined, collected and analysed in a multitude of ways: surveys by questionnaires, mono or multi-situated observations, numerical traces and Big Data, that have led to a great diversity of analysis (more or less formalised statistical analysis, (carto)graphic, cinematographic or artistic representations).

The objective of this panel is twofold. A first intent is to compile the methods used to collect itineraries

and their limits in terms of treatment of information. What itineraries are we referring to: those experienced and lived by the individuals, analysed by researchers or represented by artists? Those pulled from administrative data? Those found in the numerical traces resulting from individual activities?

A second axis will focus on the relationship between itineraries and structures: which structures are revealed through the analysis of the itineraries? This interrogation will be approached from a social, spatial, historical and generational angle. How does the analysis of itineraries reveal the dynamics of a social field, of a generation or of a place? How does it question the notion of historical event?

### **Panel 12: Public Spaces : Forms and Methods**

The notion of public space is one of the most mobilised by Human and Social Scientists in their effort to understand and analyse the evolutions in contemporary societies. Over the last two decades, the phenomenon of “metropolisation” has led urban researchers to place “public spaces” at the heart of their work, by conferring it at the same time the status of “field” and “object”, in order to describe urban transformations.

The city and its inhabitants, their lifestyles and daily practices are among the prisms of observation this panel wishes to explore. Since the starting-point of this International Conference is focused on international migrations, the question of public spaces could not be reduced to the study of an immigration neighbourhood. Instead, we propose to engage in an analysis of public spaces from which emerges urban forms, where international mobilities are at the heart of social dynamics through diverse temporalities, participating in the fabrication of the city.

In parallel to a morphological approach, leaning on the diversity of the actors’ statuses and their relations, the workshop encourages propositions related to questions of methods, and more particularly from the ones found in the aesthetics and ambiance approaches, or those centred on the usage and status of field images.

### **Panel 13: How to teach International Migrations in social sciences?**

“International migrations” has become a key domain of study in sociology, geography, history, economy, etc. Its teaching is based on a multitude of approaches and methods. The respective inputs of the different disciplines have underwritten the development and densification of the research on international migrations. At the same time, the growing social demand regarding migration issues have urged the multiplication of academic training. The number of master in migration studies has boomed in the Americas, Africa, Europe and Asia.

The intrinsically interdisciplinary dimension of human migration poses a challenge for the teaching of migration dynamics. The topic of this panel is an invitation to share experiences and methods of teaching the international migrations within the frame of specialized (or not) formation courses.