

Debunking “migration crisis”: Is there a potential for change?

ABSTRACT

Voluntary or involuntary movement of individuals, groups and sometimes entire population, in search for a safe and better life, has oftentimes been driven and triggered by crises of various kind (economic, political, environmental, demographic, others). Eurocentric perspective has been constructing discourses about these movements which recreate notion of “migration/refugee crisis”, one that generally and permanently threaten the current order and hegemonic power of the Global North. By representing “migration as crisis” and migrants and refugees as a threat, global and local policy-makers invoke for crisis management measures, as a combination of a known securitization vs humanitarian mechanisms. In this presentation we deal with issues of language of crisis that is connected to migration and mobility phenomena, by analysing a few current and overtly politicized sub-themes related to statuses and prospects of migrants and refugees in the European Union, and in the local context. This includes reflection on recent political turning points of some “developed states” where migrants’ presence is questioned, in situations where restrictive domestic policies, radicalization of attitudes and depletion of solidarity towards people on the move could actually mean inducing of further humanitarian and civic crises in host societies. The next big thing is “production of crisis” related to framing environmentally induced migration as the ultimate massive and global phenomena that will utterly change the world we know. Following the proposal of Susan Martin et al. (2013) in which scholars and policy-makers need to change perspective by start looking at migration not as a cause, but as a consequence of crises in natural and/or socio-political and/or technological environment, we posit that “crisis migration” could entail a certain transformative power for global social-economic change, justice, and development, as indicated by Stephen Castles, surpassing the crisis language and crisis politics altogether.

KEYWORDS: migration crisis, migrants as threat, crisis migration, securitization, humanitarianism