The EU Refugee Crisis & the Future of Europe: Moral Challenge & Political Conundrum

Organized by Professor Seyla Benhabib, Yale University and Senior Scholar in Residence at the Columbia Center for Contemporary Critical Thought, and Bernard E. Harcourt, Columbia University

The current EU refugee crisis threatens the viability of the Schengen borders and raises questions about the future of the European Union and the possibility of a Brexit. This colloquium will explore Europe’s special situation, geographically as well as juridically, the meaning of the crisis for the future of the Union, as well as the challenges posed by the current situation to upholding post-WW II transnational human rights. This will be an interdisciplinary discussion among lawyers, political and social scientists, historians on refugee and asylum law and rights today.

April 1, 2016
1:00 - 6:00 pm
Maison Française
Buell Hall

Participants: Seyla Benhabib (Yale), Alexander Aleinikoff (Columbia), Saskia Sassen (Columbia), Ayten Gundogdu (Columbia), Stefanos Geroulanos (NYU), Daniel Kanstroom (Boston College Law School), Turkuler Isiksel (Columbia), Stathis Gourgouris (Columbia), Adam Tooze (Columbia), & Bernard Harcourt (Columbia).
1:00PM

INTRODUCTION BY PROFESSOR SEYLA BENHABIB

PANEL I: THE CONTEMPORARY REFUGEE CRISSES

ALEXANDER ALENIKOFF, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

On the Movement of Refugees from the Mid East toward Europe and Elsewhere

SASKIA SASSEN, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

A Massive Loss of Habitat: How to Factor this into Migration Policy

AYTEN GUNDOGDU, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

On the right to have rights: Migrant deaths and the question of personhood

STEFANOS GEROULANOS, NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

Concepts Available and Unavailable for Understanding the 'Refugee' 'Crisis'

3:00PM

PANEL II. THE DYSTOPIA OF THE RIGHT TO MOVEMENT

DANIEL KANSTROOM, BOSTON COLLEGE LAW SCHOOL

Is Expulsion ‘Different?’: Reflections on Refugees, Rights, and Return in Europe and the US

TURKULER ISIKSEL, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Europe’s Perverse Mobility Regime

STATHIS GOURGOURIS, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

The Internally Catastrophic Logic of Fortress Europe

ADAM TOOZE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

The Refugee Crisis and the Bio-politics of the Eurozone

5:00PM

Concluding Reflections and Discussion with all Panelists

Moderated by Seyla Benhabib and Bernard E. Harcourt
PARTICIPANTS

T. ALEXANDER ALENIKOFF

T. Alexander Aleinikoff is a leading scholar in immigration and refugee law. From 2010 to 2015, he served as the United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva. Prior to his service with the UN, he was a professor at Georgetown University Law Center (1997-2010), where he also served as dean (2004-2010). Aleinikoff was a professor of law at the University of Michigan Law School from 1981 to 1997.

Aleinikoff was co-chair of the Immigration Task Force for President Barack Obama’s transition team. From 1994 to 1997, he served as the general counsel, and then executive associate commissioner for programs, at the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).

Aleinikoff has published numerous books and articles in the areas of immigration law, refugee law, citizenship, race, statutory interpretation, and constitutional law.

SEYLA BENHABIB

Seyla Benhabib, born in Istanbul, Turkey, is the Eugene Meyer Professor of Political Science and Philosophy at Yale University and was Director of its Program in Ethics, Politics and Economics from 2002 to 2008. She was the President of the Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association in 2006-07 and has been a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences since 1995. She has previously taught at the New School for Social Research and Harvard Universities, where she was Professor of Government from 1993-2000 and Chair of Harvard’s Program on Social Studies from 1996-2000.

She has been Adjunct Faculty in Law at the Yale Law School since 2007 for a total of six terms, co-teaching courses on human rights, sovereignty, cosmopolitanism and European legal debates on citizenship and migration with Professors Robert Post and Alec Stone Sweet. She has also held a Visiting Professorship of Law at the University of Tel-Aviv’s Zvi Meitar Center for Advanced Studies Legal Studies (2010).

Professor Benhabib is the recipient of the Ernst Bloch prize for 2009, the Leopold Lucas Prize from the Theological Faculty of the University of Tubingen (2012), and the Meister Eckhart Prize (2014; one of Germany’s most prestigious philosophical prizes). A
Guggenheim Fellowship recipient (2011-12), she has been research affiliate and senior scholar in many institutions in the US and in Europe such as Berlin’s Wissenschaftkolleg (2009), NYU’s Strauss Center for Advanced Studies in Law and Justice (2012) and the European University Institute in Florence (Summer 2015).

Her work has been translated into German, Spanish, French, Italian, Turkish, Swedish, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Hebrew, Polish, Japanese and Chinese and she has also edited and coedited 10 volumes on topics ranging from democracy and difference to the rights of migrant women and children; the communicative ethics controversy and Hannah Arendt. Her volume, Migrations and Mobilities: Gender, Borders and Citizenship (NYU Press, 2009), edited with Judith Resnik from the Yale Law School, has been named by Choice one of the outstanding academic books of the year.

Professor Benhabib holds Honorary Degrees from the Universities of Utrecht (2004), Valencia (2010) and Bogazici University in Istanbul (2012).

---

Stefanos Geroulanos

Stefanos Geroulanos is Associate Professor of European History and Director of the Center for International Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences at New York University. He is the author of *An Atheism that is not Humanist Emerges in French Thought* (2010), co-author of *Experimente im Individuum* (2014), and co-editor of *The Scaffold of Sovereignty: Global and Aesthetic Perspectives in the History of a Concept* (forthcoming with Columbia University Press). His book *The Matter with Transparency in Postwar France* is forthcoming from Stanford University Press later this year.

Stathis Gourgouris


Outside of these projects, Gourgouris has also published numerous articles on ancient Greek philosophy, political theory, modern poetics, film, contemporary music, and psychoanalysis. He is currently completing work on two other projects of secular
criticism: *The Perils of the One* and *Nothing Sacred*. Gourgouris is also an internationally awarded poet with four volumes of poetry published in Greek, the most recent being “Introduction to Physics” (Athens: 2005).

Gourgouris writes regularly for Internet media (such as Al Jazeera, The Immanent Frame, and Re-Public), as well as major Greek newspapers and journals focused on political and literary matters. He is currently the director of the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society at Columbia University.

**AYTEN GUNDOGDU**

Ayten Gundogdu is Assistant Professor of Political Science at Barnard College-Columbia University. Her research draws on the resources of modern and contemporary political theory for the purposes of addressing problems related to human rights, migration, citizenship, and sovereignty. She has recently published *Rightlessness in an Age of Rights: Hannah Arendt and the Contemporary Struggles of Migrants* (Oxford University Press, 2015; ISA Theory Honorable Mention; Choice Outstanding Academic Title). The book offers a critical inquiry of human rights by rethinking Arendt’s key concepts and arguments in light of contemporary phenomena such as immigration detention, deportation, refugee encampment, and struggles for regularization. She is currently working on a new project that examines how the concept of “the human person” figures in the human rights discourse, attending to its violent exclusions as well as inventive reappropriations.

**BERNARD E. HARcourt**

Bernard E. Harcourt is an Isidor and Seville Sulzbacher Professor of Law at Columbia Law School, director of the Columbia Center for Contemporary Critical Thought, and directeur d’études at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris.

He is the author, most recently, of *Exposed: Desire and Disobedience in the Digital Age* (Harvard: 2015), *Occupy: Three Inquiries in Disobedience* with Michael Taussig and W.J.T. Mitchell (University of Chicago Press: 2013) and *The Illusion of Free Markets: Punishment and the Myth of Natural Order* (Harvard University Press: 2011). Harcourt is the editor of Michel Foucault’s 1972–73 lectures at the Collège de France, “La Société punitive” (Gallimard: 2013), and the co-editor of the lectures Foucault delivered at


Harcourt is also an active death row lawyer, having represented inmates sentenced to death in Alabama since 1990. He continues to represent inmates on a pro bono basis today.

Turkuler Isiksel

Turkuler Isiksel is Assistant Professor at the Department of Political Science at Columbia University. She earned her PhD in political science from Yale University and works primarily in contemporary political theory. Isiksel has served as a Perkins fellow at the Princeton University Program in Law and Public Affairs and as an Emile Noël Fellow at the Jean Monnet Centre for International and Regional Economic Law and Justice at the New York University School of Law. In addition, she has held a Jean Monnet fellowship at the Global Governance Program at the European University Institute in Florence, and a visiting fellowship at the Justitia Amplificata Centre for Advanced Studies at Goethe Universitat in Frankfurt. Her book entitled Europe’s Functional Constitution: A Theory of Constitutionalism Beyond the State is forthcoming from Oxford University Press in May 2016.

Daniel Kanstroom

Daniel Kanstroom is Professor of Law and Thomas F. Carney Distinguished Scholar at Boston College Law School, where he teaches Immigration and Refugee Law, International Human Rights Law, Constitutional Law, and Administrative Law. He is the Director of the International Human Rights Program and co-founder of the Post-Deportation Human Rights Project, which seeks to conceptualize and develop a new field of law while representing US deportees abroad. He founded the Boston College Immigration and Asylum clinic in which students represent indigent migrants
and asylum-seekers. Together with his students, he has provided counsel for hundreds of clients, won dozens of immigration and asylum cases, and authored amicus briefs for the U.S. Supreme Court and other courts in immigration and human rights cases.


Professor Kanstroom has taught at many universities including The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, American University, the University of Paris, Northeastern School of Law, King’s College, London, the University of Hawai’i, and Vermont Law School.

He was a member of the national Immigration Commission of the American Bar Association.

**SASKIA SASSEN**

Saskia Sassen is the Robert S. Lynd Professor of Sociology and Chair, The Committee on Global Thought, Columbia University ([www.saskiasassen.com](http://www.saskiasassen.com)). Her new book is *Expulsions: Brutality and Complexity in the Global Economy* (Harvard University Press 2014). Recent books are *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton University Press 2008), *A Sociology of Globalization* (W.W.Norton 2007), and the 4th fully updated edition of *Cities in a World Economy* (Sage 2012). Among older books are *The Global City* (Princeton University Press 1991/2001), and *Guests and Aliens* (New Press 1999). Her books are translated into over 20 languages. She is the recipient of diverse awards and mentions, including multiple doctor honoris causa, named lectures, and being selected as one of the top global thinkers on diverse lists. Most recently she was awarded the Principe de Asturias 2013 Prize in the Social Sciences and made a member of the Royal Academy of the Sciences of Netherland.
Adam Tooze

Professor Adam Tooze teaches and researches widely in the fields of twentieth-century and contemporary history. From a start in modern German history with a special focus on the history of economics and economic history his interests have widened to take in a range of themes in political, intellectual and military history, across a canvas stretching from Europe across the Atlantic. His most recent book was *The Deluge: The Great War and the Remaking of the Global Order, 1916-1931*. He is currently completing a new global history of the Great Financial Crisis of 2007 and after.