

## **Dilemmas, mediation and opportunities in the reception of refugees and asylum seekers**

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Bruno Riccio and Federica Tarabusi

(University of Bologna)

The ever increasing arrivals of boats “full of fleeing human bodies” (Pinelli, 2011) to the coasts of Southern Italy has raised serious doubts in our country and has prompted new fields of investigation for social science researchers.

Indeed, dissatisfaction with regard to prevailing interpretations in public discourse, partly due to migration control policies and border control measures, seems to have stimulated the production of a nationwide flourishing body of studies and research on forced migration. Whilst some analyses have focused on the violence and drama that shape the experiences and trajectories of refugees and asylum seekers (Pinelli, 2011; Pinelli and Ciabbarri, 2016), other studies have contributed to bringing to light the non-transparent and contradictory dimensions of reception policies in specific local contexts (Sorgoni, 2011), exposing aspects regarding educational practices and social insertion in operators’ accounts (Catarci, 2011).

On this front, analyses of the processes and bureaucratic procedures which a mixed group of institutional and professional players has suddenly found itself managing have revealed, for example, a decisive gap between abstract demands for neutrality and the personal implications that operators experience every day when faced with dramatic and hard to decipher stories; they have highlighted the dynamics of exclusion, depersonalisation and control which are veiled behind the formalisation of processes institutionalising the procedures envisaged by the asylum system; and furthermore, they have demonstrated a striking contrast between the demand for efficiency in the rigid application of procedures, and the discretionary practices which develop in the daily interactions between staff working in refugee and asylum reception and those seeking international protection. The need to discuss the elements of heterogeneity within these different experiences (Zoletto, 2012) appears to prevail both in organisational contexts and in the practices of those who work at promoting planning, autonomy and social inclusion programmes.

With a view to contributing to this debate, the call aims to bring to the forefront the complexity and variety of the social and working experiences, which until now have only been partially explored, of those operating in this highly controversial and hostile field. Adopting an interdisciplinary perspective, the call addresses researchers, professionals, educators, operators and other figures, who, with an analytical and reflective approach, intend to clarify the dilemmas and tensions but also the leeway, strategies and negotiations that staff working in refugee and asylum reception are developing and applying in a multitude of work environments. From an application point of view, what is required is an in-depth reflection which allows both researchers and scholars, and the individuals that operate on a day-to-day basis in intercultural contexts, to delve deeper into understanding the phenomenon, in a direction that closely unites theoretical and practical perspectives (Bertolini, 1988).

We particularly welcome contributions which, from specific observation points, are capable of outlining programmes, and debating tools, strategies and approaches which aim at a critical reflection on the building of new professionalism in the area of reception of forced migrations, as well as on the processes and on the effects that the formalisation of policies in this field has on the employment trajectories of operators and/or on the biographies of asylum seekers.

### **Call for proposal**

Interested parties are invited to submit, by and no later than the **1<sup>st</sup> November 2017**, their proposal for a paper of no more than 4.000 characters (including spaces), focusing on its main aims and considerations and any methods and research results that will be discussed in the paper in response to the specific questions posed by the call. Proposals for papers should be sent to the following email addresses: Margherita Cardellini (margherita.cardellini@unibo.it), Federica Tarabusi (federica.tarabusi2@unibo.it) and Bruno Riccio (bruno.riccio@unibo.it). It is also necessary to attach a short biography of the authors.

### **Call for paper**

Interested parties are invited to submit their finished articles, ensuring that they conform to the editorial guidelines of the journal (<http://rivistedigitali.erickson.it/educazione-interculturale/proponi-un-contributo/>) **by and no later than the 15th January 2018**.

Articles should be sent in word format by email to Margherita Cardellini: margherita.cardellini@unibo.it To ensure anonymity and to enable the double blind peer review contemplated, the name and details of the author (short biography and email address) must not appear within the pages of the article but be sent in a separate attachment together with the article to margherita.cardellini@unibo.it. The full address including house number and postcode of the organisation where the author works must also be given.