

Migration, Diasporas and Citizenship

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Angeliki Dimitriadi

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At the Margins, Looking In

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To those who made it.

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Ideas, thoughts and topics of this book have been presented in different formats and discussed in various workshops and conferences across Europe over the past years and I am appreciative of all comments received.

The writing of parts of this book took place between Athens and Berlin, where I spent a six month between 2015 and 2016 on a visiting fellowship at the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR). Amidst the “refugee crisis”, the fellowship offered a rare opportunity to see another setting, a different country also on the receiving end of Afghan migrants.

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Author's Note

This book is based on two different source material.

On the one hand, 110 interviews drawing from personal research conducted during the period 2010–2012 in Greece, as well as again from September 2015 until June 2016 in Greece and Germany. A total of seventy (70) interviews with Afghan migrants have taken place over both time periods, including roughly forty (40) interviews with policy makers, NGO workers and officials.

Secondly, it draws from empirical research undertaken during my postdoctoral research fellowship of fifty five interviews (55), in the IRMA Project (Governing Irregular Migration: States, Actors and Intermediaries), led by Professor Anna Triandafyllidou, funded by the General Secretariat for Science Research and Technology (GSRT, Greece) and implemented at the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP).

Interview sites throughout the years included Athens, Thessaloniki, Patras, Paros, Lesvos as well as detention facilities in the region of Evros during the period 2010–2012, Istanbul and the detention facility of Amygdaleza (Attiki region) between 2013–2014. Brussels, Berlin and Athens once more, were added in the past 2 years (2015–2016).

Quotes are used verbatim throughout the book, and where needed, the location of the interview is given also, to assist the reader. Settings are important in the analysis and understanding, which is why where possible

extensive personal notes from field visits have been included in painting a picture of detention sites and reception places. Interviews under “controlled conditions” were coloured inevitably by both mine as well as the interviewees’ experience of those sites. Access was always granted from the appropriate authorities and all interviews in detention facilities took place in separate areas, guaranteeing privacy. All participants offered verbal consent. Most interviews took place with the presence of an interpreter either in English and/or Greek. Roughly 85% of the sample was men, between the ages of 20 and 38, which is representative of the Afghan population in Greece.

Where names of interviewees are used, they have been changed to protect their identity and no personal information has been used that could identify the persons. Law enforcement officials, NGO representatives are also referred to by position rather than name, to ensure their anonymity per their request.

Explanatory references have been relegated to endnotes, along with links to relevant websites and media articles.

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