

**Project title: Negotiating Queer Identities Following Forced Migration (NQIFM): A Comparative Study of Iranian Queer Refugees Living in Turkey, the UK and Canada'**

**Description**

The NQIFM study will investigate the processes of identity transition of Iranian diasporic queers seeking international protection in countries generally seen as being of transition, destination or resettlement. It will develop concepts of postcolonial sexual identity, augment life histories of exile, explore trauma-based cultural politics, consider more carefully creative methods, and make a nuanced contribution to emerging queer studies of migration, transnationalism and exile.

We will explore the lived experiences of Iranian queers in exile (IQIEs), enquiring: a) how migration affects IQIEs negotiation of sexual and gender identity from Iran to 'the West'; b) how culturally specific categories such as 'LGBTQ+' are negotiated; c) how poetry or other creative practices help IQIEs express or construct such journeys for 'sexual liberty'; and d) how poetic forms might help articulate the 'hidden experiences' of IQIEs.

**Method**

1. Semi-structured life-history narrative interviews of 20 participants in each of the three countries of refuge, identified with the help of stakeholders and the researchers' professional networks.
2. Twenty online confidential interviews with sexual minority persons resident in Iran, conducted with complete digital anonymity.
3. Six participant workshops with creative poetry writing, drawings, photography and word poems, as well as podcasts with participants reading their own poems to be posted (subject to consent and/or anonymization) on project website.

**Skills / experience required**

University undergraduate level good skills in reading, writing, communication and researching in English.

Knowledge in migration / refugee law and queer studies an advantage.

Experience with NVivo and creative methods an advantage.

Knowledge of Persian language and Iranian culture an advantage.

**Key readings**

Bucar, E. & Shirzai, F. (2012). 'The "invention" of lesbian acts in Iran: Interpretative moves, hidden assumptions, and emerging categories of sexuality'. *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, 4(16), 416-434.

Çalik, D. & Kara, H. (2016). 'Waiting to be "safe and sound": Turkey as LGBTI refugees' way station'. *Kaos*.

Karimi, A. (2018). 'Hamjensgara belongs to family; exclusion and inclusion of male homosexuality in relation to family structure in Iran'. *Identities*, 25(4), 456-474.

Korycki, K. & Nasirzadeh, A. (2016). 'Desire recast: The production of gay identity in Iran. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 25(1), 50-65.

Mahdavi, P. (2012). 'Questioning the global gays(ze): Constructions of sexual in post-revolution Iran'. *Social Identities*, 18(2),223-237.

**Learning Outcomes**

Overall, the aim is to enhance legal, sociological and cultural studies research and academic writing competences of the trainee, as well as the capacity to successfully follow directions and fulfilling the tasks assigned.

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