Taking a Glance, Taking a Stance: Critical Perspectives on Asylum Seekers' Reception in Italy

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Abstract:
Conservative, populist and right-wing governments in Hungary, Germany, Italy and Austria build new alliances to control and close borders and stop immigration. This inter-European cooperation draw up new "master plans of migration" that "are completely at odds with dynamics of migration (and) systematically fail in their aim of ending the arrivals of illegalised migrants", as pointed out by researcher and co-founder of Forensic Oceanography Charles Heller. Italy, as a country of first arrival, is an important site, where migrant trajectories are negotiated. While the reception of asylum seekers has become highly politicized, irregular work-force recruitment is now a relevant issue of migrants’ struggles for the right of residence. But how much do we know about the situation in Italy apart from media images of boats? What has changed since the election of the current Italian right-wing/populist government?

The conference Taking a Glance, Taking a Stance invites researchers to share insights and findings on asylum and border regimes in different regions of Italy. The aim is to better understand the current situation, allowing us to develop comprehensive perspectives aside of mainstream media discourses. The conference discusses aspects of the Italian asylum system, such as reception and asylum seekers' trajectories through Italy and investigates the rising criticism of the humanitarian approach to the asylum system.