

Call for papers

Symposium

**“Physical and mental vulnerability in populations in need of international protection.
From the recognition of the category to social practices”**

Friday, 18 October 2019, University of Nantes (France)

The European laws on asylum give increasing importance to the notion of “vulnerability,” a phenomenon also identified over the past 15-plus years in other areas of social life (Brodiez-Dolino 2016). New directives impose the identification of vulnerable asylum seekers, especially unaccompanied minors, people with disabilities, and victims of human trafficking and even torture, as well as imposing adaptations in reception facilities¹ and asylum procedures to the “special needs” of these populations (Pétin 2017). While European law aims to “protect against vulnerability,” numerous studies on migration show that it can also “produce vulnerabilities” (Aumond et Robin 2017). These legal developments however call on us to reflect on the concept’s polysemy (Carlier 2017), the emergence and entrenchment of the paradigm, and the social uses of this category. This reflection involves examining the genesis and evolution of the evaluation mechanisms and the specific treatment of the physical and mental vulnerabilities of populations in need of international protection (Boublil et Wolmark 2018).

This interdisciplinary symposium will combine contributions from historians, legal experts, sociologists, geographers, anthropologists, political scientists, and European legal and medical professionals. Coming from a historical standpoint, contributions should deepen our understanding of the mobilisations and procedures involved in recognizing physically and mentally vulnerable subjects in contemporary asylum rights, particularly in the European Union, as might explore the mobilisations and controversies around the criteria for vulnerability (d’Halluin 2016). From a legal standpoint, contributions could explore the different doctrinal positions and ways in which vulnerability has been treated, as shown by various decisions taken



by European institutions in response to appeals to the courts. From a social sciences point of view, the idea is to understand the social and spatial uses of this category in a context characterized by a suspicion towards asylum seekers and increased burdens of proof for people looking for international protection. In the asylum process, how are physical and mental vulnerabilities identified and considered when it comes to access to rights, especially to shelter? What methods for evaluating vulnerability are used by doctors in public institutions or by association actors involved in their accompaniment? How do these effect access to rights and differential care of populations (for example the interview arrangements for asylum petition evaluations, Dublin Regulation exemptions from the ruling procedure, vulnerable populations identified and removed from squats enrolled in treatment by a network of actors, etc.)? The focus will be on these identification and assistance activities at the level of the European Union and occurring in the “classic” asylum process, the asylum seeker relocation scheme (2015-2017), and the resettlement schemes for protected persons.

The symposium will be structured around three themes:

- Theme 1. Recognizing vulnerability in the field of asylum
- Theme 2. Detecting vulnerable populations in the field of asylum
- Theme 3. Treating vulnerable populations in the field of asylum

The proposals (600 words maximum, plus a bibliography for the literature cited) should include the author name(s), institutional affiliation(s), paper title, and five keywords. They should indicate the research question, theoretical issues debated, and/or the main results produced. Mention should be made of the data underpinning the analysis, the methodological and disciplinary approaches used, and the theme.

All proposals should be sent no later than 8 July 2019 via email to estelle.dhalluin@univ-nantes.fr and symposium-vulnerabilite@univ-nantes.fr (in Word .doc format). The authors of the proposals selected will be informed by 19 July 2019, and the deadline for sending the completed materials is 8 October 2019.



Organizing committee : Estelle d'Halluin, Clélia Gasquet, Anne-Cécile Hoyez, Julien Long, Sylvie Morel, Isabelle Siffert

Scientific committee : Carole Billet, Alexandra Clavier-Mercier, Jean-Marc Chapelain, Samuel Delépine, Estelle d'Halluin, Clélia Gasquet, Emilie Hétreau, Anne-Cécile Hoyez, Hélène Leroy, Sylvie Morel, Isabelle Siffert, Bérangère Taxil

References

Aumond, Florian, et Nelly Robin. 2017. *Young people and Children on the Move. Dossier Parcours migratoires, privation de liberté et vulnérabilité*. Vol. 3. Poitiers: Université de Poitiers, Migrinter.

Boublil, Elodie, et Laure Wolmark. 2018. « Vulnérabilité, soin et accueil des demandeurs d'asile ». *La Revue des droits de l'homme. Revue du Centre de recherches et d'études sur les droits fondamentaux*, n° 13. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/revdh/3502>.

Brodiez-Dolino, Axelle. 2016. « Le concept de vulnérabilité ». *La vie des idées*. https://laviedesidees.fr/IMG/pdf/20160211_vulnerable-2.pdf.

Carlier, Jean-Yves. 2017. « Des droits de l'homme vulnérable à la vulnérabilité des droits de l'homme, la fragilité des équilibres ». *Revue interdisciplinaire d'études juridiques* 79 (2): 175-204.

Halluin, Estelle d'. 2016. « Le nouveau paradigme des «populations vulnérables» dans les politiques européennes d'asile ». *Savoir/Agir*, n° 2: 21-26.

Pétin, Joanna. 2017. « La notion de personne vulnérable dans le droit européen de l'asile ». *Jeunes et Mineurs en Mobilité. Young people and Children on the Move* 3: 25-37.

