

Podcast Name: “Hierarchies of Humanity”: The COVID-19 Response in Greek Refugee Camps

Podcast Team:

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Reflections on the Podcast Assignment:

Making this podcast has been one of the most interesting and enriching experiences for us as a team. It provided us not only with an opportunity to experiment with a different medium, but also to learn a new set of skills. Both technically challenging and fostering self-reflexivity, the past few months spent working on this podcast have been very insightful. It was a deeply engaging project, which not only allowed space for creative work, but also ensured critical thought. It enabled us to make fluid translations of crucial theoretical ideas on humanitarianism into conversations reflecting lived realities.

While an enriching journey, we realized that it was a much more challenging project than we had initially anticipated. While the process in the beginning seemed straightforward – deciding on a topic, doing some preliminary research, conducting short interviews, writing our own analytical parts, and editing it - it required a lot of thinking, time and engagement. Looking back now, selecting the topic seems to have been the easiest part. We wanted to discuss the life experiences within refugee camps, especially during a global “emergency”, so as to understand the realities and paradoxes of humanitarianism better. During our preliminary research we found some news articles reporting on the disparities in COVID-19 responses in Greece between Greek citizens and those living in refugee camps. The challenge, however, began for us after we identified this issue as a topic for us to explore. We reached out to half a dozen NGOs and solidarity organizations working in Greek camps, but only heard back from one. With time running short, we contacted people through personal contacts .

While tackling technical glitches with recording equipment, internet connection issues, maneuvering through rooms for minimizing sound disturbances, and ending up with conversations as long as 1.5 hours, we managed to gather some rather insightful and moving interviews. Interestingly, what began with just one potential interviewee, ended up with us having to choose from five full-length interviews. An unexpected challenge was also to decide which parts of the interviews we wanted to include in our final podcast. With each interview ranging from 45 minutes to more than an hour, we had very rich material to choose from. At one point, a podcast series also began to seem like a tempting idea. While the assignment on the whole was challenging, what really helped us throughout this process was the very carefully designed support and feedback mechanism, making reflections and course corrections possible at crucial steps along the way - right from the introductory workshop to the final podcast submission.

The exercise taught us how to convey ideas in the most succinct yet powerful way possible. It did not only help us learn important technical skills of editing and fine-tuning voice recordings, but also made us think about how to make voices and perspectives speak to each other, while also finding space for our own thought and analysis. It enabled us to look for common threads in conversations, to not only add to the breadth of the idea but more importantly, unpack its depth. While each interview was an immensely enriching experience

for us, they all brought a different dimension to the conversation - all intellectually stimulating and emotionally moving in their own ways. Making this podcast was a rather self-reflexive endeavor. It challenged our understanding and interpretation of otherwise commonly used terms and notions such as “refugee”, “asylum seeker”, “refugee camps”, “integration”, “equality”, and the like. The assignment also raised pertinent ethical concerns, especially when trying to bring in the voice and the lived experience of an asylum seeker into the podcast. It made us think about safety and security concerns, and of the real consequences our actions and inactions can have on people’s lives.

Summing up, making this podcast truly was an enriching learning experience for us – one that enhanced our academic understanding while helping us gain practical insights into the world of humanitarianism and its multiple complexities.