

**NO WOMAN'S LAND:
SECURITISATION OF FEMALE FORCED MIGRATION IN AFGHANISTAN**

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Abstract

Forced migration is a phenomenon present in globalisation's dynamics, as is the absence of women in the conceptualisation of the processes that shape the lives of citizens. At the intersection of these two realities, we aim to analyse female forced migration as a security issue, analysing the absence of gender in the definition of forced migrant by the United Nations. From a methodological standpoint, this research draws upon Feminist Security Studies, as it conceptualises the intrinsic relationship between gender and security. These key terms guide the semi-structured interviews with thirty Afghan forced migrant women, methodological instrument used to include the realities of women, in their own words. By conceptualising gender as a social and cultural construct, and acknowledging that it shapes the experiences of forced migrant women, we contextualised the background from which they depart: Afghanistan. More than four decades of war, compounded by the Taliban's second takeover, have profoundly eroded women's rights, prompting the forced migration of Afghan women. Three conclusions are drawn. Firstly, for the majority of the interviewed women, as forced migrants, security is linked to protection from gender-based violence, freedom from fear and human rights protection, and gender specific barriers remain overlooked in the migration journey. Secondly, the realities of women are not represented in the definition of forced migrant. The absence of gender leads to a gap in gender-disaggregated data on migrants flows and a lack of acknowledgment of the gendered challenges along the migration journey. Furthermore, it leads to the invisibility of policies that materially impact women's lives and security. Thirdly, we acknowledge that in a spectrum of non-politicised, through politicised, and to securitised - existential threat, justifying emergency measures beyond normal political procedures - female forced migration is a security issue, as it is a matter of a particular saliency and political urgency.