

## EDITORIAL

### Janus-faced Migration Policy: The Obscurity between Chaos, Gate-keeping and Transition<sup>1</sup>

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“Janus, almost uniquely, was celebrated for his very obscurity” (Taylor, 2000: 2). While the first name of the double-faced Roman God was Chaos (Ovid, *Fasti* 1; see below), the Latin word “janus” means “doorway” or “entrance” (Taylor, 2000: 1). As doorkeeper to heaven, Janus controlled access to the gods “looking simultaneously on the past and the future, chaos and civilization, the world of gods and the world of men” (Wiseman, 2004: 161, cited after O’Keefe, 2021: 5).

“The ancients called me Chaos, for a being from of old am I; observe the long, long ages of which my song shall tell. [...] Now hear the other reason for the shape you ask about, that you may know it and my office too. Whate’er you see anywhere – sky, sea, clouds, earth – all things are closed and opened by my hand. The guardianship of this vast universe is in my hands alone, and none but me may rule the wheeling pole. When I choose to send forth peace from tranquil halls, she freely walks the ways unhindered. But with blood and slaughter the whole world would welter, did not the bars unbending hold the barricaded [!] wars. [...] Every door has two fronts, this way and that, whereof one faces the people and the other the house-god; and just as your human porter, seated at the threshold of the house-door, sees who goes out and in, so I, the porter of the heavenly court, behold at once both East and West.” (Ovid, *Fasti* 1, cited from Boyle & Woodward, 2000, cited from Atsma, 2002).

As this issue of the QRP will demonstrate once more, today’s migration policy is Janus-like in this very sense. Constantin Hruschka, Tim Rohmann and Christian Hunkler illustrate the challenges of interdisciplinary research on exclusion in the migration area and provide insights on how to possibly overcome it. Joachim Schroeder and Louis Henri Seukwa demonstrate how migrants are forced to refer to a survival habitus to cope with difficult living conditions. Friedegard Föltz looks at minor migrants and refugees with disabilities or medical fragilities as intersectional life situations inadequately addressed by German legislation. Ralf Roßkopf recalls the decades-long protracted displacement of Palestinian refugees and opens a door for inclusion. Andrea Schmelz’s contribution on disrupting borders explores the role of social work between the poles of migration control and activism. The News and Notes report about EU policies for a better control of irregular migration routes in parallel to paving regular pathways into a welcoming migration society.

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Today, States took over God Janus' part. They became the gatekeepers between peace from tranquil halls on the one hand and blood and slaughter on the other. The guardianship to open or to close the two fronts of the one door is in their hands alone.

Chaos could be reduced, hands opened for liberal transit, and eyes turned from the past to the future if the perception of migration could be changed from a narrative of threat to one of opportunities and fairness. If not already for humanitarian reasons, Western politics should recognize the high demand for immigration in so many aging societies to sustain economic prosperity and social welfare. They should accept science-based suggestions,

“that a 1 percentage point increase in the share of migrants in the adult population (the average annual increase is 0.2 percentage point) can raise GDP per capita by up to 2 percent in the longer run”, (Jaumotte, et al: 2016: 2)

that not only high skilled but also medium- and even low-skilled migration increases income per capita to a similar extent for the top earners and for the rest of the population (Jaumotte, et al. 2016: 15), and that measures like transnational skill partnerships bear all the potentials to create a triple win for countries of origin, receiving societies and migrants alike (Clemens, 2015).

What is needed is a rational discourse for Janus to open the gates for save, orderly, and regular migration as was called for and agreed upon in the 2018 UN Global Compact on Migration.

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