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This is the third issue of the [Refugee Research Network \(RRN\)](#) e-newsletter. The RRN is a Strategic Knowledge Cluster Grant funded in 2008 by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Here you'll find information about ongoing and recently completed activities of the network and updates on new developments. The RRN e-newsletter is a biannual publication accessible in electronic format.

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Message from Dr. Susan McGrath

It has been four years since we were awarded the Strategic Research Cluster Grant for the Refugee Research Network (RRN) by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). It has been an exciting and productive time! We have completed our mid-term review and SSHRC has confirmed their support for our last three years. Network members are meeting in early May to review our progress, explore priority research issues and set a strategic plan for the last phase. We will also be looking at funding opportunities to support the development of our initiatives and to sustain the RRN after 2015. We are pleased to have two new institutional members: the Center for Forced Migration Studies at Northwestern University in Chicago led by Galya Ruffer and the Centre for Refugee Research at the University of New South Wales in Sydney Australia led by Eileen Pittaway.



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In this newsletter we feature developments in several Clusters. The Borderless Higher Education for Refugees cluster led by Wenona Giles and Don Dippo has secured significant funding to support the provision of university degrees to refugees in the Dadaab camp by a consortium of Canadian and African universities. In collaboration with the Australian Catholic University, courses are being offered to refugees in camps along the Thai Burma border. This initiative, funded by York University, is led by Wenona Giles and Robin Roth. Our legal clusters have been particularly productive. James Simeon's Critical Issues in International Refugee Law cluster has held two workshops and produced one book with a second in progress. These workshops featured academic presentations with responses by members of the judiciary thus promoting knowledge exchange across sectors. Donald Galloway's cluster on comparing refugee determination systems has helped to launch an important public policy education group in Canada. The Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers (CARL) has been providing critical commentaries on the changes in Canada's refugee legislation. We also have updates on the Latin American Network on Forced Migration led by our partner Roberto Vidal of Javeriana University in Colombia and on the Ottawa Policy Network led by James Milner of Carleton University. We are particularly proud of the accomplishments of our New Scholars Network. They now have 470 members, have created their own website, are sending out bi-weekly news digests, have developed a discussion series with scholars and have just launched their e-journal, the *Refugee Review*. We have much to learn from the new generation of forced migration scholars!

Ranabir Samaddar of the Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group (CRG) is our featured refugee researcher in this newsletter. He is a productive and critical scholar providing post-colonial commentaries on migration and displacement issues particularly in South East Asia. Details on all of these topics are enclosed. Check out our website at www.refugeereseach.net and if you are not yet a member, do join us!

Refugee Research Clusters

Borderless Education: The Provision of Tertiary Degree Programs to Long-term Refugees Wenona Giles and Don Dippo, Centre for Refugee Studies, York University

The provision of tertiary/higher education for long-term refugees such that supports the production of the higher-order capacity necessary for promoting peace, security and development in the Global South is emerging as a crucial form of development assistance. While the benefits of higher education for refugees in countries of origin and host countries are well-documented, solutions for effective delivery that can reach significant numbers of refugees are few. To date, international scholarships to travel to institutions in the Global North, of which Canada is a significant contributor, remain the predominant scheme to address the need for tertiary education for only a negligible few (about one percent). Despite the technological advancements made in education service delivery internationally, poor countries of asylum such as Kenya, that host a significant number of long-term refugees, currently lack sufficient capacity to provide on-line and on-site degree programs that allow the realization of education as a right for this excluded group. As a country that has embraced and promoted technological advancement in education, Canada and its educational institutions are in an excellent position to lead a cutting edge initiative that will offer higher education opportunities to refugees despite contexts of conflict, violence and exile.



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Focusing mainly on Dadaab Kenya (DC-K), where a group of three camps comprise one of the largest refugee clusters in the world, hosting 420,000 refugees from Somalia, Sudan and Ethiopia, the goal of this Cluster is to study access to and impacts of education for long-term refugees and provide on-line/on-site courses and degree programs. Through the mobilization of a North-South multi-stakeholder network and based on the outcome of research that probes the consequences of protracted refugee situations, specifically in the Dadaab camps and in relation to limited educational opportunities currently offered, we aim to achieve the following objectives: (1) to analyze the needs, openings and obstacles to delivering portable skills to refugees who are not 'at home' and determine the best way of providing tertiary education for refugees based on the contextual needs of refugee youth; (2) to explore models that support participation of refugee populations in tertiary education.

While the number of refugee youth in the camp steadily increases, the level of funding and resources remains relatively static. Thus, exploring the creation and delivery of on-line courses, tuition and supervision, such that they meet international standards and are designed as “portable” methods of study within the unique environment and circumstances of refugee camps is the focus of the feasibility study (2011-12) that will lead to a 5-6 year Pilot Project.

Thai Burma Project

Wenona Giles, Robin Roth, Centre for Refugee Studies, York University

Figures vary but there are approximately 150,000 registered refugees from Burma settled in nine camps along the border in Thailand. Upon invitation from the Australian Catholic University (ACU), York University has joined an existing ACU consortium of universities currently offering a Diploma in Liberal Studies to refugees on the Thai-Burma border and in Ranong, Thailand. Wenona Giles secured a York Academic Innovation Fund (AIF) grant to enable York to provide an online course to students in the diploma program. Robin Roth of York’s Geography Department taught a section of the course, *The End of the Earth As We Know It: Global Environmental Change*, in the fall of 2011 and is now providing leadership to the project. The course will be offered again in the fall of 2012. York’s Anthropology department is also prepared to offer a course, *Introduction to Social Anthropology*, in year three of the project. In addition to online delivery, this initiative emulates new directions in geography and anthropology regarding the development of virtual fieldtrips/ethnography, conducive to mobilizing pedagogical potential and enhancing the education (academically and experientially) of York University under/graduate and refugee students, and developing linkages with universities in Thailand for the further expansion of this project. The refugee and migrant students will be registered in York courses with York University students.

As a second stage of the project, we also expect to explore partnerships with universities in Thailand (specifically Chiang Mai University) where the project team has linkages. We will work towards the development of ‘virtual fieldtrips/ethnography’ where refugee, York University, and Thai students could benefit from online interaction and the sharing of assignments and other types of exchanges. This stage of the project may include interaction with Thai students and organizations, and the development of international experiential education opportunities.

War Crimes and Refugee Status

James C. Simeon, Deputy Director, Centre for Refugee Studies, York University

Professor James Simeon has organised two workshops of his cluster on Critical Issues in International Refugee Law at York University, one in 2008 and the second in 2011. Details are available at <http://www.yorku.ca/ciirl/>. Both brought together distinguished Superior and High Court judges and leading legal scholars in the field from around the world, as well as senior government and intergovernmental officials, including UNHCR officials to examine and to study in depth critical issues in international refugee law, four topics at each workshop. The format of academic presentations of papers with responses by members of the judiciary and/or policy makers is popular with the practitioners in promoting knowledge exchanges. The papers from the first workshop were published by Cambridge University Press in 2010 in a text edited by Professor Simeon: *Critical Issues in International Refugee Law: Strategies toward Interpretative Harmony* and a book based on the second workshop is in production. The conference papers are available at the website to all of the participants for ongoing reflection and a video of the keynote address by Professor James C. Hathaway is posted there for public access. The CIIRL website has links to over 600 relevant website resources.



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The list of the participants at the 2011 workshop accessible at <http://www.yorku.ca/ciirl/participants/index.html> demonstrates the global reach of these workshops and the cross-sectorial engagement that they provided. Members of the high courts of Malawi, Germany, the UK, South Africa, Tanzania, Nigeria, Australia and Canada engaged with academics from the US, UK, Switzerland and Canada. Senior civil servants of the Immigration and Refugee Board Canada, Justice Canada and UNHCR also participated.

Refugee Determination: Comparisons, Challenges and Dilemmas

Donald Galloway, University of Victoria

In 2011, Professor Galloway with other Canadian colleagues who attended the October 2010 workshop focusing on Directions and Developments in Refugee Status Determination, including Peter Showler and Audrey Macklin, formed the Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers (CARL) which provided public commentaries and



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critiques on Bill C-49 and continues to do so on the more recent Bill C-31 which is modifying the earlier legislation. The formation of CARL has been identified as an outcome of the workshop. CARL members are working to engage the public and policy makers on policies related to refugees in Canada. Details are available at www.refugeelawyersgroup.ca.

Regional Initiatives with Institutional Partners

Latin America Network on Forced Migration – Update on October 2011 workshop and SSHRC Partnership Grant

The RRN has been working with its global institutional partners to support local interests and activities. Particular effort has been directed to Colombia, a site of major dislocation of people. With funding support from IDRC, AUCC and SSHRC, two workshops have been organized in collaboration with colleagues at Javeriana University (Professor Roberto Vidal), Los Andes University, (Professor Beatriz Sanchez) and colleagues at York's Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLAC) (Professors Eduardo Canel and Alan Simmons). We met first in Bogota in November 2010 with 37 researchers and practitioners from the region to explore the issues of forced migration and the impact on the region. Most of the participants were from Colombia but researchers from Peru, Spain, Costa Rica, Mexico and the US also participated. The workshop closed with a commitment to the formation of the Latin American Network on Forced Migration, a network of academics and practitioners from the region dedicated to research and documentation of displacement. The workshop report with the list of participants is available in Spanish at http://www.refugeeresearch.net/Bogota_2010

In October 2011, a second international workshop was held at York University to examine specifically the impact of trade and investment on population displacement in Latin America. Canada and Colombia have negotiated a free trade agreement and there are concerns about the extent of internal displacement that is being caused by resource extraction and monoculture farming in addition to the drug wars and regional conflicts. Presentations were made by academics and NGO practitioners from Canada and Colombia allowing for a vibrant exchange of ideas. The conference report is available at http://www.refugeeresearch.net/trade_and_investment. The list of participants is on pages 57-62. The participants included three Colombian academics, three Colombian doctoral students, three community researchers with leading Colombian NGOs, a priest representing the Catholic social ministry, two senior staff at Canadian NGOs, three YorkU graduate students and seven Canadian

academics (four from YorkU). At the closing session, the participants identified three themes that they believed needed further exploration. These themes guided the development of a letter of intent (LOI) by York University to SSHRC's Partnership Grant program in February 2012, *Displacement in Colombia: Advancing Knowledge, Building Canadian-Latin American Networks, and Enhancing Policy*. A LOI was submitted in 2011 and was highly rated but not funded. The organisations of the conference participants have all committed to participate in the Partnership Grant LOI which if secured will further the collaborative work of the two workshops.

Updates

The Ottawa Policy Community Update – January 2012 Meeting

In January 2012, RRN members James Milner, Jennifer Hyndman and Susan McGrath arranged to meet with key policy makers in Ottawa. A half-day meeting with directors from Citizenship and Immigration, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and Canadian International Development Agency was held at Carleton University.

The three objectives of the meeting were outlined as follows:

1. Provide members of the policy community with details of the work and future objectives of the RRN;
2. Discuss how the Network may help share the research needs of the policy community more systematically with the research community; and
3. Discuss how the Network may facilitate better dissemination of research findings on refugee and forced migration issues with the policy community.

The group generated an extensive list of research topics/themes. Members of the policy community offered to revisit this list with a wider group of colleagues to update as necessary and refine these issues and a means to provide informally guidance to the research community on the areas where additional work would be helpful. It was discussed that this list could be revisited periodically through an email exchange between the RRN and members of the policy community every six months or so. Concerns were raised that due to lack of resources and time constraints there is pressure on the expectations regarding what would be the outcome of this process. However, a number of meeting participants preferred that this process be kept informal, as it provided a flexible approach for a dialogue to take place.

The RRN offered two areas of support when updates to the list are received:

- 1) Disseminate the updated list of themes to the research community and encourage additional research activity in these areas; and
- 2) Proactively seek to identify members of the research community engaged currently in work in priority areas and to make the contact details of these researchers available to interested members of the policy community.

The RRN presented the broad contours of an on-line research dissemination tool that is being developed for the RRN website. This tool would capture brief abstracts of research outcomes, contact details for the researcher(s) and a link to the full research product. The objective would be to have predictability between policy needs and research outcomes and a knowledge exchange between those in the policy community and those in academia. Preference was expressed for email communication on recent research projects, policy briefs, upcoming events, and updates on international and domestic issues. It was suggested that the policy briefs include a one page summary rather than a 250 to 300 word abstract. It was also suggested that members could initially sign up on the RRN website and select specific refugee issues to receive email updates on those areas of interest.

The RRN committed to continue to develop the on-line dissemination tool, and share a template with members of the policy community for feedback and suggestions.

During the two days in Ottawa, Susan McGrath and Jennifer Hyndman also met individually or together with representatives of IDRC, UNHCR, WUSC and Carleton University to discuss the RRN and explore possible collaborations.

New Scholars Network

A major objective of the RRN is to support and promote the work of new scholars undertaking research in the field of refugee and forced migration studies. The mission of NSN has two basic goals: advancing research in the field of forced migration and fostering the professional development of new scholars. The strategies used by the NSN to achieve these goals are similar to the RRN's ones: networking, collaboration and knowledge mobilization.

Current and planned activities include:

- NSN website is in place www.refugeeresearch.net/nsn

- Bi-weekly digests disseminate relevant information and new opportunities for new scholars, such as conferences, call for papers, internships, academic programs, jobs, etc.
- NSN is facilitating the creation of working groups around research clusters of interest.
- New Scholars Network Google Group has 200 members and is used to circulate the bi-weekly news digests and provide a forum for discussion among members.
- A "New Scholars Discussion Series" has been created. It is a series of conversations between people already in the field and their suggestions for people who want to join now the field. Interview questions were completed online by more than 30 scholars and practitioners from different countries including: Thailand, Uganda, Japan, Czech Republic, Germany, Brazil, Canada. This advice to new scholars will be edited into a collage and published in the first issue of the e-journal, *The Refugee Review*.
- A biannual peer-reviewed e-journal dedicated to new scholars has been established: *The Refugee Review*. A Call for Papers was sent out on March 5, 2012. The title of the first journal issue is "Social Movements and the Politics of Refugees and Forced Migration".
- The creation of visiting scholar positions with refugee research centers and academic programs world-wide are being promoted.

NSN membership has grown to include 470 new scholars drawn from countries around the world. NSN executive committee members are: Aditi Surie von Czechowski, PhD student at Columbia University, New York, is President; Paula Popovici, a PhD student at York University is Past President Advisor; Oana Petrica, a PhD student at York University is the Liaison Officer to the RRN and CRS; Brittany Wheeler, Repatriation Specialist at The Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago is CRS-NSN Partnership Officer; and, Henri Kyalu Katombe, from Southern Africa Youth Vision, Cape Town, South Africa is Partnership Officer.

NSN has its own website which provides bi-weekly digests of current issues and events including employment and educational opportunities. NSN members also use the RRN Facebook page to communicate.

<http://newscholarsnetwork.wordpress.com/links/>

Meet a RRN Researcher

A Note on his Research on Forced Migration

Ranabir Samaddar belongs to the critical school of thinking. His much-acclaimed *The Marginal Nation* (Sage, 1999) was a culmination of his long work on borders, migration, the subjectivity of the migrant, immigration control techniques, and the way societies in South Asia negotiate the twin issues of citizenship and alien-hood. Such a study was possible because of his strong background of research in migration and refugee studies, the theory and practices of dialogue, nationalism and postcolonial statehood in South Asia, and new regimes of technological restructuring and labor control. The critical style backed by an empiricist line of inquiry led to his next significant publication in this field, *The Politics of Dialogue* (Ashgate, 2004), reviewed widely as one of the densest works on post colonial democracy, geopolitics, border wars, and the politics of peace. His recent writing, *The Emergence of the Political Subject* (Sage, 2010) has brought out in bold relief his style of thinking and analysis.



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As director of the Calcutta Research Group (CRG), he has encouraged a critical post-colonial way of chronicling and analyzing various forms of forced migration, which now marks the writings of CRG scholars. These writings are informed by a strong sense of history, awareness of the distinct nature of post-colonial politics and society, and an appreciation of the migrant and the refugee appearing as the subject of history of our time that is marked by the return of the empire. Thus the collected writings of CRG scholars including Ranabir Samaddar's on India's refugee protection policy, *Refugees and the State - History of Asylum and Care, 1947-2000* (Sage, 2003), *Internal Displacement in South Asia* (Sage, 2005), and the report, *Voices of the IDPs in South Asia* (CRG, 2008) are marked by collaborative research, critical post-coloniality, and a strong sense of the significance of the local in this globalizing time. He followed up his earlier work, *The Marginal Nation*, with a long view of citizenship and alien-hood in the Northeast of India, histories of hatred, reconciliation, friendships and enmities, published as a co-authored work, titled *Migration and Circles of Insecurity* (Rupa, 2010). The report *Voices* brought out the significance of camp as a liminal space of subjectivity and submission, of control

and escape, despair and inefficacy of international norms, laws, and arrangements, and brought out the IDPs own voices about how and what could be done.

His writings challenge the customary distinction between refugee studies and forced migration studies, and episodic violence and structural violence in terms of protection policies and institutions. They ask, if constructing hierarchy of the victim is the appropriate way to frame protection policy. This way of analyzing through interrogation of received binaries will be once again evident in the ongoing CRG study on statelessness. These binaries in form of refugee/IDP, episodic violence/structural violence, citizen/stateless, movement due to fear/movement due to economic imperative, international norms/national responsibility, human rights/humanitarianism, etc. - have been subjected to critical inquiry in his writings. They all feature in CRG's corpus of work in the area of forced migration studies.

This has been possible today because, he never took studies on forced migration as an isolated discipline or a subject, defined by it, but a field marked by lines of power and flight paths of various subjectivities. To write with that awareness, he maintains, we require not only a sense of rights and responsibilities, but some sort of political awareness of the way in which the migrant appears in our civilized societies as *abnormal*. Interrogating the production of abnormality in the figure of the migrant has been his main research concern and his contribution to forced migration studies.

The citizen is the defence of the visibility of constitution; the alien is the shadow, its prey. The citizen exists in the alien as the savage form. Citizen is articulate; the alien is inaudible, silent. Yet what are the ways in which the alien overcomes the two obstacles of inaudibility and invisibility? To understand this life world of visibility and shadow Ranabir Samaddar has adopted several times the strategy of interrogating alterity. Of course to understand this framework of analysis it will be necessary to read some of his equally known and discussed writings in other areas, such as on issues of war and peace, revolts and revolutions, technology and labour, and the abiding theme of the political subject. A reasonable selection of his writings can be found at <http://mcrj.ac.in/rs.htm>

Announcements

CARFMS12 – Restructuring Refuge and Settlement: Responding to the Global Dynamics of Displacement

May 16th – 18th, 2012

The Canadian Association for Refugee and Forced Migration Studies Conference hosted by the Centre for Refugee Studies, York University.

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

<http://carfmsconference.yorku.ca>

IASFM14 – Contested Spaces and Cartographic Challenges

January 6 – 9, 2013

International Association for the Study of Forced Migration 14th Conference hosted by the Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group

Kolkata, India

<http://www.iasfmconference.org>

2nd Annual Summer Institute – “Settling Resettlement”

Northwestern University

July 8th-14th, 2012

The Center for Forced Migration Studies at Northwestern University will host its 2nd annual Summer Institute at Northwestern’s Evanston, Illinois campus.

<http://www.cics.northwestern.edu/programs/migration/summer.html>

For more conference and workshop listings, please visit:

<http://www.refugeereseach.net/event-list>

Are you planning a trip to Ottawa? Do you have research findings you would like to present to the policy and research community in Ottawa? If so, the Policy Research Network of the Refugee Research Network (RRN) can help!

In cooperation with the Ottawa Migration and Refugee Research Network (OMRRN), the RRN is able to host seminars and brown-bag lunches in Ottawa - and ideal way for researchers to share their findings. Past events have attracted engaged audiences from Ottawa's research and policy communities and resulted in lively discussion.

If your travel plans will bring you to Ottawa, please contact James Milner (James.Milner@carleton.ca) at least two weeks before your proposed visit with details of your research and to discuss the possibility of an event.