



Refugee Research Network

Research Digest

No.51 – November 15, 2018

The RRN Research Digest provides a synopsis of recent research on refugee and forced migration issues from entities associated with the RRN and others.

Recent Publications and New Research

Orchard, Phil (2018) *Protecting the Internally Displaced: Rhetoric and Reality*, Routledge.

Orchard argues that while an international IDP protection regime exists, many aspects of it are informal, with IDP issues bound up in a humanitarian regime complex that divides the mandates of key organizations and even the question of IDP status itself. Through an in-depth examination of IDP efforts at the international level and across the forty states which have adopted IDP laws and policies, Orchard argues that while progress has been made, new and greater monitoring and accountability mechanisms at both the domestic and international levels are critical. This work will be valuable to scholars, students, and practitioners of forced migration, international relations theory, and the Responsibility to Protect doctrine. More information available at: <https://www.routledge.com/Protecting-the-Internally-Displaced-Rhetoric-and-Reality/Orchard/p/book/9781138799226>

Abji, S. (2018). Postnational acts of citizenship: how an anti-border politics is shaping feminist spaces of service provision in Toronto, Canada. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 1-23.

Using interviews with feminist advocates in Toronto, Canada, this research examines how postnational challenges to state power are being mobilized in spaces of service provision addressing gender-based violence. It shows how, for some advocates, a postnational politics deeply informed their critiques of state borders and restrictive immigration controls as fundamental sources of gendered and racialized violence. However, postnational approaches were also limited in offering few concrete alternatives to state protection from domestic or interpersonal violence, particularly for women with precarious immigration status. Significantly, it was through advocates' everyday practices of service provision that they blueprinted an alternative feminist ethics of solidarity. The author argues that these practices constitute *postnational acts of citizenship*, in so far as they attempt – albeit imperfectly – to de-border institutional spaces from within. Available at:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/yaqX5GgScSgxXQKitQrI/full>

Peterson, G. (2018). Forced Migration, Refugees and China's Entry into the 'Family of Nations', 1861–1949. *Journal of Refugee Studies*.

This article is concerned with the broad imperial and colonial frameworks that have shaped forced migration and human displacement in Asia. What does it mean, for example, when the international jurisprudence surrounding asylum and refuge was formulated at a time when it was widely assumed—by international lawyers and states alike—that colonial powers could do more or less as they wished with the people under their control? This article argues that such contradictions were not peripheral or incidental, but central to the historical formation of the international regimes governing refugees and forced migrants. The goal is to put the cultural/civilizing discourses of colonialism into the heart of political and economic arguments over how to categorize the movement of people. It focuses specifically on China, and the experiences of Chinese migrants overseas, in order to reveal the complex interlocking of European colonialism in Asia around

issues of political asylum, labour migration and a complex colonial apparatus of banishment, exile and deportation. Available at: <https://academic.oup.com/jrs/article/31/3/274/4792971>

Mcconnachie, K. (2018). Boundaries and Belonging in the Indo-Myanmar Borderlands: Chin Refugees in Mizoram. *Journal of Refugee Studies*.

This article examines the reception of Chin refugees from Myanmar in Mizoram State in north-east India through the framework of boundaries and belonging. Strong historical, cultural and ethnic connections between Chin and Mizo might suggest a strong claim to belonging. This has been true to some extent but the reception of Chin in Mizoram has also been shaped by perceived otherness. This article explores the co-existing discourses of Chin as other/brother in relation to processes of boundary-making, boundary policing and boundary manipulation. It argues that these contrasting narratives illustrate a dynamic relationship between national borders and boundaries of belonging that speak to deeper truths about the legitimacy of the nation state and the role of place, politics and identity in the construction of insiders and others. Available at:

<https://academic.oup.com/jrs/article/31/3/314/4934132>

Huennekes, J. (2018). Emotional Remittances in the Transnational Lives of Rohingya Families Living in Malaysia. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 31(3), 353-370.

In this article, based on 18 months of ethnographic fieldwork carried out in an urban Rohingya community in Kuala Lumpur, the author illustrates how transnational remittance practices act as an important strategy for maintaining collective wellbeing, both emotionally and financially. However, although remittance practices are imbued with feelings of love and gratitude, they are also infused with feelings of resentment, obligation and guilt. Thus, while remittance practices are important for maintaining family ties and providing a buffer to the precariousness of life locally and transnationally, they also put additional financial and emotional pressure on family members, who remain stuck in protracted transit countries like Malaysia.

Available at: <https://academic.oup.com/jrs/article/31/3/353/5060034>

Reports, Working Papers and Briefs

Atak, Idil and Nakache, Delphine and Guild, Elspeth and Crépeau, François (2018), 'Migrants in Vulnerable Situations' and the Global Compact for Safe Orderly and Regular Migration. Queen Mary School of Law Legal Studies Research Paper No. 273/2018.

This Working Paper examines the concept of the vulnerability of migrants which has become a key term in the UN's negotiations for a Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. The authors argue that the concept must be interpreted inclusively and related to the human rights obligations of states through the UN conventions. All too often migrants are vulnerable because of state action. States must ensure that they deliver on their human rights obligations in ways which reduce the vulnerability of migrants. Available at: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3124392

“Communities in Crisis: Interior Removals and Their Human Consequences, a report by The Kino Border Initiative (KBI), the Center for Migration Studies of New York (CMS), and the Office of Justice and Ecology (OJE) of the Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States

This report details findings from the CRISIS Study (Catholic Removal Impact Survey in Society), which interviewed deportees at KBI's migrant shelter in Nogales, Sonora, and those affected by deportation in Catholic parishes in Florida, Michigan, and Minnesota. The interviews explored: (1) the impact of removals on deportees, their families, and other community members; (2) the deportation process; and (3) the relationship between deportees and their families. The report also includes policy recommendations to mitigate the ill effects of the administration's policies and promote the integrity of families and communities, including: using detention as a “last resort;” reducing funding to Immigration and Customs

Enforcement (ICE); and limiting collaboration between police and ICE and Customs and Border Protection (CBP). Available at:

<http://cmsny.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/FINAL-Communities-in-Crisis-Report-ver-5.pdf>.

Human trafficking vulnerabilities in Asia: What’s the incentive? Comparing regular and irregular migrant work experiences from the Lao People’s Democratic Republic to Thailand, International Labour Organization and United Nations Development Programme (2018)

The report provides a synthesised outline of the regulatory framework for labour migration between the two countries, evaluates that against the recruitment, work and life experiences reported by regular migrant workers, and compares these with the conditions faced by irregular migrant workers. It is divided into four sections, covering respondents’ background information and pre-departure conditions; the recruitment process; the working and living conditions in Thailand; and the end of their work and the return to the Lao People’s Democratic Republic. The study concludes that, overall, regular labour migration has yielded more positive migrant work outcomes than irregular channels in the sample. Available at:

http://un-act.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Whats-the-Incentive_Final-Report.pdf

From Europe to Afghanistan: Experiences of child returnees, Save the Children (2018)

This report assesses the impact on children who were returned from Europe to Afghanistan. Through interviews with individual children, their parents or guardians, and with governmental and non-governmental actors, it builds a picture of children’s material, physical, legal and psychosocial safety during the returns process. Returns processes implemented by EU member states and Norway are examined to analyse where European governments are failing to provide appropriate support. Available at:

https://campaigns.savethechildren.net/sites/campaigns.savethechildren.net/files/SC-From_Europe_to_Afghanistan-screen%201610.pdf

Summary Report: A Brief Timeline of the Human Rights Situation in the Calais Area, Refugee Rights Europe (2018)

On the occasion of the two-year milestone since the demolition of the Calais ‘Jungle’ camp, Refugee Rights Europe and Help Refugees release a new report highlighting the human rights situation which has been unfolding in northern France over the past few decades. The report highlights many years of human suffering, characterised by precarity, rough-sleeping, dangerous and unauthorised border-crossings, and what appears to be excessive police violence. After decades of encampments and evictions, and two years on from the demolition of the Calais ‘Jungle’ camp, it is evident that the state approach tried so far is simply not working. Available at:

http://refugeerights.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/History-Of-Calais_Refugee-Rights-Europe.pdf

Harm Reduction in Immigration Detention: A Comparative Analysis of Detention Centres in Europe, The Global Detention Project

This Special Report systematically compares conditions and operations at detention centres in five European countries - Norway, France, Germany, Sweden, and Switzerland - to identify practices that may be used to develop “harm reducing” strategies in detention. Commissioned by the Norwegian Red Cross as part of its efforts to promote reforms of Norway’s detention practices, the report addresses several key questions: In what ways has the Norwegian system met or exceeded internationally recognised standards? In what ways has it fallen short, especially when compared to detention practices of peer countries? And what are the key reform priorities going forward that may help reduce the harmful impact of detention? Available at:

<https://www.globaldetentionproject.org/harm-reduction-immigration-detention>

News Reports and Blog Posts

Refugia: Answering the Critics, Nicholas Van Hear, (Oct. 29, 2018). News Deeply

It is three years since Nicholas Van Hear and Robin Cohen, two Oxford academics, floated the idea of Refugia: a transnational polity created for and governed by refugees. It was conceived as an archipelago of self-governing refugee communities spread around the world but interconnected, freed from territory. In this article, Van Hear responds to five main criticisms of his proposed Refugia in advance of a book on the subject due out later this year. Available at:

<https://www.newsdeeply.com/refugees/community/2018/10/29/refugia-answering-the-critics>

Digital and Social Media

Documentary: Harrell-Bond: a life not ordinary, Katarzyna Grabska.

This documentary explores the achievements of Barbara Harrell-Bond - academic, refugee activist and a life-long advocate of refugee rights. Available at: <https://vimeo.com/273494590>

The 9th International Refugee Law Seminar Series: Niger: The Making of a Model Transit Country, Speaker: Daniel Howden, Refugees Deeply (7 November 2018)

Howden argues that, though unfortunate, Niger is seen by many as the European Union's "model" for how other transit countries should manage migration. Thus, A critical examination of Niger offers insight into what this model actually means for those in search of international protection and for the countries whose economies have long depended on human mobility. Available at:

<https://soundcloud.com/refugeelawinitiative/niger-the-making-of-a-model-transit-country>