

GLOBAL & TRANSNATIONAL SOCIOLOGY

ASA MEMBER NEWSLETTER



Fall 2018 Edition

FEATURING

Fall Exclusive: Essays on the 'Refugee Crisis'

Member Publications

Updates on Research Clusters

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

JULIAN GO, BOSTON UNIVERSITY



One of the many privileges of being selected as Chair of the Global and Transnational Sociology section, one is to work with such fantastic colleagues in the Section. In this regard I want to thank Zsuzsa Gille for leading the Section last year and to outgoing officers Rachel Shurman (Section Council) and Kristin Shorette (Secretary/Treasurer). I look forward to working with new Council members Jeong-Woo Koo and Smitha Radhakrishnan, Monika Krause, who has bravely taken on the role of Secretary/Treasurer, and Student Representative Nikita Carney.

Another privilege is to help craft our Section's sessions for the upcoming American Sociological Association. The [call for papers](#) is now out, and as you'll see, there are ample opportunities for you to submit your work.

Note, first, two open-themed sessions, to be organized by Jennifer Bair and Monika Krause. The first is "Methodological and Empirical Advances in Global and Transnational Sociology." The second is "Theory and Research in Global and Transnational Sociology." The goal of both of these sessions is allow room for the latest and most innovative theoretical, methodological and empirical scholarship in our Section, regardless of substantive theme. Please do submit.

There are also two open sessions with more explicit substantive themes. One is "Gender and the Crises of Global Capitalism," organized by Jordanna Matlon and Raka Ray. This session aims to deeply explore how the recurrent crises of capitalism articulate with gender relations on transnational and global scales, including how femininity or masculinity are reconfigured in relation to global capitalism. This theme seems especially relevant today. We are all cognizant of how recent capitalist crises (not least since the 2008 downturn) have generated the conditions for the global rise of Populism and white supremacy. But we are only just beginning to understand their connection to gender relations. I'm confident that you, fellow Global and Transnational Sociologists, have much to say about this issue, and I look forward to seeing this session in New York.

The other is "Global Historical Sociology" which partly builds upon a Section session held at the 2017 ASA titled "The Global, the Transnational, and the Historical." The goal is to showcase work in our Section that takes seriously the historical and processual dimensions of global and transnational social relations, based upon the recognition that we cannot understand contemporary social relations without a critical understanding of

their historical formation. The World-Systems tradition has always been insightful on this score, contextualizing contemporary processes and relations within larger historical cycles and secular trends. Our Section is theoretically rich, encompassing not only World-Systems Analysis but also other approaches and traditions, and all of them, in my view, would benefit from a continued engagement with history. We must not forget that one of C. Wright Mills' key elements of exercising the "Sociological Imagination" is historical consciousness. Can we really understand the global rise of populism, for instance, without taking historical dynamics and past expressions of populism into account? Can we fully apprehend global migration or human trafficking today without recognizing the flow of labor and bodies through the slave trade or colonial regimes? Is it adequate to discuss global racial formations without understanding historical processes of racialization? When I was Chair of the Comparative-Historical Sociology Section I urged my colleagues there to overcome methodological nationalism and Eurocentrism and take global and transnational relations more seriously.¹ Here I invite you, fellow Global and Transnational Sociologists, to share with us your thoughts on the historical components of your work.

Julian Go
December 2018

¹ "Letter from the Chair: Globalizing Comparative-Historical Sociology" Trajectories: Newsletter of the Comparative-Historical Section of the American Sociological Association 24(1): 1-5

NEWSLETTER EDITORS

AARUSHI BHANDARI, STONY BROOK
UNIVERSITY



Dear Section
Members,

Hope you all had a great semester! As always, thank you for your submissions to the newsletter. I want to welcome my new co-edior Alexander Hoppe from University of

Pennsylvania. Together, with the help of our new section chair Julian Go, we have been able to bring you this fall newsletter. I hope you enjoy the important conversations featured here about the ongoing refugee crisis, in addition to keeping updated with the scholarship of the diversity of members within this section.

Please continue to send your contributions for the Spring issue to myself and Alexander. We made the best effort to include everyone's submission in this issue and apologize in advance if a submission accientally fell through the email vortex!

Also be sure to check out the GATS website:

<https://asaglobalandtransn.wixsite.com/asa-gts>

Happy holidays to all!

Aarushi
Aarushi.Bhandari@stonybrook.edu

SECTION OFFICERS 2018-2019

SECTION OFFICERS & COUNCIL Officers

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Smitha Radhakrishnan, Wellesley
College

ALEXANDER D. HOPPE, UNIVERSITY
OF PENNSYLVANIA

Dear GATS members,

It's my pleasure to join Aarushi in editing the newsletter. My research focuses on administration in creative industries, especially fashion. My dissertation is a "follow the product" ethnography centered on Indian suppliers in the apparel global value chain. By connecting assembly line managers to local designers and global buyers, it both re-enchants organic solidarity and challenges conventional morphological arguments about the international division of labor. It will be a few years before it's finished, but I can already say thank you to section members who have provided mentoring and feedback!



Until ASA,
Alex
hoppe@sas.upenn.edu

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MEET YOUR NEW OFFICERS

ORLA KELLY, BOSTON COLLEGE



I am a doctoral candidate in the department of sociology at Boston College. My research interests include environmental sociology, development sociology, gender and development, and comparative education. My current research project is a macro level investigation into the relationship between national educational attainment rates and sustainability. I am also a Teaching Fellow in the department and enjoy teaching introduction to sociology to undergraduates.

In addition to my work at Boston College, I am a research fellow at the FXB Center for Health and Human rights at Harvard University, where I worked as a research associate between 2010 and 2015. As a research associate, I managed a number of projects relating to access to education in India.

I hold a master's degree in International Human Rights Law from National University of Ireland, Galway and an MSc in International Business from University College Dublin, Ireland. Before crossing over into the academic world, I worked in Google's European headquarters in Dublin as a campaign developer between 2005-2007. For fun, I enjoy yoga, gardening with my one- and three-year-old sons, hiking, and trivia nights with friends.

SMITHA RADHAKRISHNAN, WELLESLEY COLLEGE

Smitha Radhakrishnan is Associate Professor of Sociology and Luella LaMer Slaner Associate Professor of Women's Studies at Wellesley College. Her research examines the cultural, financial, and political dimensions of gender and globalization, with particular focus on India, the United States, and South Africa. Her current project uses microfinance as a window into newly dominant anti-poverty practices that merge profit motivations with the social ones. Drawing from ethnographic work and



interviews with commercial microfinance institutions, their clients, their employees, and their funders, she shows how gendered labor and class inequalities shape access to finance and entrench gendered livelihoods in the context of a polarized service economy. Articles from this project have appeared in *World Development*, *Signs*, and *Economic Anthropology*, among others. A book manuscript, tentatively titled, *When Women Pay Up: Making Financial Citizens in India*, is currently in process.

Radhakrishnan's dissertation project was a multi-sited ethnographic examination of transnational Indian IT workers, based on research in urban India, South Africa, and the Silicon Valley. In *Appropriately Indian: Gender and Culture in a Transnational Class* (Duke University Press 2011), she argues that gendered arrangements within educated, upwardly mobile IT families give this elite group disproportionate power in defining what it means to be Indian in the global economy. Apart from these main projects, Radhakrishnan continues to study the cultural politics of post-apartheid South Africa. Radhakrishnan received her PhD in Sociology from University of California, Berkeley.

UPDATE ON RESEARCH CLUTERS

CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS: GLOBAL AND TRANSNATIONAL SOCIOLOGY RESEARCH CLUSTERS

We are writing to inform ASA members of the Global and Transnational Sociology (GATS) Sections' recently-formed research clusters. These clusters provide a forum to develop social networks, disseminate ideas and papers, explore opportunities for collaboration, and discuss methodological and theoretical issues specific to research on global and transnational processes. Clusters are organized around the following themes:

- Arts, Culture, and Religion: contact Shai Dromi, shai.dromi@g.harvard.edu
- Gender and Sexuality: Vrushali Patil, vrushali.patil@gmail.com
- Global Environmental and Climate Crisis: John Foran, Foran@soc.ucsb.edu
- Global Human Rights: Kristopher Velasco, krisvelasco@utexas.edu
- Global Populism: Marco Garrido, garrido@uchicago.edu
- Social Movements: Selina Gallo-Cruz, sgallo@holycross.edu

VICTORIA REYES, UC-RIVERSIDE

Section members,



Greetings! It's been a pleasure to serve as the research clusters convener. As I hand off the responsibilities to Jake Watson, I wanted to give a brief update. But first, a reminder: what are research clusters? They are formed from you, the members! They are a way to connect with scholars of similar interests and one way a big section can feel small. Some of our research clusters meet regularly online or over the phone to discuss their work, a kind of working or accountability group. Other clusters meet only once a year at ASA. Regardless of how they operate, they are meant to facilitate connections within our section and to help our members in whatever capacity they can: whether as a way to have your name on the ASA program, to help set up an accountability group to keep track of your goals, or the beginnings of what will be future research collaborations.

This past year we reserved tables for the research clusters alongside the GATS roundtables. That meant that during 2018 ASA our section continued to have a vibrant roundtable session with tables filled with sociologists across rank sharing their work, while simultaneously having tables set aside specifically for the research clusters as a day, time, and place for clusters to congregate and discuss their work. This year, we also introduced research cluster listservs as a way to coordinate communication among participants, though the extent to which they are used may vary.

Our brand new website has a link to a FAQs about the research cluster initiative (<https://asaglobalandtransn.wixsite.com/asa-gts/research-clusters-1>) and links to each research cluster and their leader. If you're looking for a way to connect with scholars and don't see your interests currently reflected, create your own! Just contact Jake Watson (jtwatson@bu.edu) who will work with you to set one up and brainstorm ways to call for participants.

Best,
Victoria Reyes

GTS/CHS MENTORING EVENT: THE TRADITION CONTINUES

JENNIFER TRIPLETT, JOHNNIE LOTESTA, RICARDA HAMMER, AND SARA TOMCZUK

At the ASA Annual Meeting this past August, the Global and Transnational Sociology section (GTS) again paired with the Comparative and Historical Sociology section (CHS) to host a mentorship event for graduate students and postdocs. This year's event was held at Aqimero, a restaurant housed in the lobby of the Ritz-Carlton, just steps from Philadelphia's historic City Hall. Nearly ninety participants attended, including 23 professors, 10 postdocs, and 55 graduate students. Both sections offered financial support, and GTS generously provided extra funds to sponsor registration fees for a number of graduate students and non-tenured faculty.

The two-hour event began with open-ended mingling over drinks and hors d'oeuvres, providing an opportunity for faculty and students to meet and network freely. Attendees then divided into seventeen small groups organized by substantive interests for more pointed conversation with assigned faculty mentors. This year's attendees represented the great vibrancy and intellectual diversity of both sections, covering topics such as social movements, development & political economy, capitalism, nationalism and violence, postcolonialism, culture and memory, and welfare states. Huddled around cocktail rounds and nestled into plush armchairs, participants discussed the intersections of their research programs, the ins-and-outs of publication, tips and tricks for fieldwork, and the experiences that have shaped their careers. As Cata Vallejo Pedraza, a participating graduate student from the University of Virginia recounted, "I was paired with a wonderful faculty that not only cares about the same theoretical questions but who also does research on Latin America. He provided guidance on how to keep a dialogue with experts in the region and those who provided help with fieldwork."



Kristin Foringer, a graduate student participant from the University of Michigan, expressed appreciation for the opportunity to meet new colleagues and gratitude for the faculty members who volunteered their time. In her own words,

"This mentoring event was really useful to me as a first-time ASA attendee in particular since it provided a great "face-to-name" opportunity to meet several scholars in my subfield along with graduate students at different schools doing similar research to me. I am also very grateful to the scholars who were generous with their time and really wanted to spend an hour or two in conversation with graduate students looking to follow similar trajectories as them both research- and career-wise."

Fiona Greenland, Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Virginia, remarked on the variety of topics that her small group of faculty and students discussed as well as the hope she has for continued collaboration of this variety among students and professors. As she explains, "The mentoring event did a great job of bringing together PhD students and faculty members, all at various career stages and linked by shared interests in comparative and historical sociology. In our group we tackled questions about the job market, sustainable writing habits, big data archival work, and how the field has changed in the last 10 years. It was a vibrant mix of the pragmatic and existential, with a collective sense of investment in each other's work. I know it's trite to say things like, 'The future of the discipline is bright.' But in this case it's true, and it all comes down to sustained engagement with cutting-edge theory and comparative methods that reach beyond conventional spaces and time periods."

Since its inception in 2013, the mentorship event has become a GTS-CHS tradition as both sections seek to recruit and support young scholars. The event originated at the initiative of then-GTS Chair Julia Adams, who recruited Chris Muller and Nick Wilson to organize the event in partnership with CHS. This first event involved a sit-down luncheon generously sponsored by Yale Sociology. Event organizers experimented with multiple formats in subsequent years, and the event evolved into a happy hour format with both structured conversation and informal mingling. Thanks to the organizing efforts of Damon Mayrl, Chris Muller, Nick Wilson and Richard Lachmann, mentorship events were held at each of the 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016 Annual Meetings.

The success of the mentorship event over the years and its significance to section members are made evident in the statements of participating faculty and students. As CHS Treasurer and former mentorship event organizer Damon Mayrl states, "I think this is a great event for building contacts and solidarity within the section, and for passing on professional knowledge and tricks of the trade to a new generation of historical sociologists. It was very helpful for me as a graduate student and very enjoyable to participate in as a mentor this past year. It's been particularly gratifying to see how many section members have actively inquired about serving as mentors over the years."

2017-2018 GTS Chair Zsuzsa Gille also emphasized the short- and long-term benefits for participating mentees,

"The mentoring event serves many purposes. Strategies of getting published, presenting one's work for future employers, managing the demands of teaching and research are favorite

discussion topics. However, beyond these more immediate concerns, there are other benefits of meeting with mentors. More established scholars can provide the beginner sociologist with a perspective on how one's current research agenda and publication plans may fit into long-term scholarly objectives. It can be helpful to young scholars to see different possible trajectories in their careers and research and start thinking about the practical implications of each.”

As student participants in the event ourselves, we wish to thank the faculty who volunteered their time and registration fees, the section Chairs and Council members who helped with recruitment and financial support, and, of course, our fellow graduate students who shared their interest and enthusiasm. In the words of Michael Kennedy, incoming GTS Chair, “The mentorship event was remarkable for a number of reasons, not least of which was to find colleagues earlier in their career who shared so many interests. If knowledge networks matter, CHS/GTS mentoring is a winner!”

All bias aside, we share Michael’s enthusiasm and look forward to future mentorship events to come.

The authors wish to thank Kristin Foringer, Fatma Müge Gocek, Zsuzsa Gille, Fiona Greenland, Michael Kennedy, and Cata Vallejo Pedraza for their feedback and their willingness to provide statements for this article. We also wish to thank Damon Mayrl and Nick Wilson for sharing their institutional knowledge. Finally, we extend our gratitude once again to the GTS and CHS Chairs and Councils for their generous support.

UNPACKING THE ‘REFUGEE CRISIS’: A SYMPOSIUM FROM POLITICAL POWER AND SOCIAL THEORY

AN INTRODUCTION FROM THE EDITORS
BY PATRICIA WARD AND JAKE WATSON, BOSTON UNIVERSITY

This segment has been reproduced from the [Political Power and Social Theory Blog](#).

As 2018 comes to a close, an unprecedented 68.5 million people are displaced, the most since the international refugee system began in 1951. Of those forcibly displaced, roughly 25.5 million are “refugees” (i.e., those who have crossed an international border and have received official designation under the UN’s Refugee Convention). The ongoing civil and proxy war in Syria has been the primary driver of this increase, with the number of registered Syrian refugees at the end of 2018 peaking at just over 6.3 million². Not only is the scale of human displacement numerically unprecedented, but “Syrian refugees” have become the flashpoint for political upheavals and conflicts across Europe, the Middle East, and North America. Further, the geography of Syrians’ displacement has vividly exposed the deep and seemingly intractable problem at the core of the international humanitarian refugee system. Roughly 90% of Syrian refugees reside in countries that have either not ratified the UN Refugee Convention (Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, and Lebanon), or have ratified with geographic limitations specific to Europeans (Turkey). Conversely, ratifying states at the supposed “core” of the liberal humanitarian regime (e.g., UK, France, or the U.S.), have been reluctant to resettle refugees, and have instead focused energy and resources on keeping refugees in place in non-ratifying states³.

The various socio-political dimensions of the human displacement caused by war in Syria has come collectively to be seen and understood within a “crisis” discourse. As Janet Roitman has argued in her book “Anti-Crisis,” the crisis framing provides stakeholders (scholars, policymakers, NGO heads, pundits, and so on) the opportunity to make authoritative claims on questions such as migration, political organization, long-term solutions, and political order. The UN’s final draft of the Global Compact for Refugees⁴ (and the separate Global Compact for Migrants) highlights this remarkable degree to which the “refugee crisis” framing has become *the* singular lens through which not only the Syrian civil and proxy war is understood and experienced, but also a whole raft of other global and transnational political ongoingings (not least, the continued fractious fragility of the European political project). While the compact is designed “to strengthen the international response to large movements of refugees and protracted refugee situations,” critics highlight that the compact does little more than protect “rich state interests,” promote market-driven approaches to refugee protection, and reinforce uneven burden sharing of

² <https://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>

³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sRxcj8Zl8>

⁴ <https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/refugees-compact>

refugee protection between host countries located in the Global South and their Global North counterparts.⁵ This “crisis” framing has further legitimized global efforts to categorize “refugees” and “migrants” as distinct groups in policy and practice; to “better manage international migration in all its dimensions.”⁶ However, arbitrary distinctions of who counts as a migrant or refugee in many cases suggest that these compacts particularly, and “crisis” claims broadly, provide critical avenues to challenge or normalize certain interpretations of the problem, and advance certain solutions beckoning political futures.

We called for this special symposium to tackle head on these authoritative claims, and seek to provide a much neglected critical, reflexive perspective on the purported crisis. Indeed, as well as camps, special humanitarian zones, multilateral agreements, and donation drives, the “refugee crisis” has been generative of academic panels, special sessions, expert seminars, and lecture series. Attending these academic events over the past several years, one is struck by the unproblematic deployment of the dominant “refugee crisis” framing, as if this exists as a category of social and political experience in-and-of-itself; a category which if better understood in its own terms would provide the proper solutions and answers (a technical problem, requiring technical solutions). However, unproblematically adopting the language of states and international bureaucrats leads to a substantivist discussion of the current issue which reifies and normalizes the institutional and categorical systems which produce the refugee in the first place, concealing as much as they reveal. This symposium brings together three experts in the field of refugee studies and the politics of displacement, each presenting a critical vantage on the refugee crisis.

In her contribution, **Yen Espiritu** (UC San Diego) calls attention to the “ubiquitous pairing of refugee with crises.” Embodied in the figure of the desperate and abject refugee (Fanon’s “wretched” or Agamben’s life stripped bare), the militaristic interventions, forms of coerced extraction and accumulation, ethno-nationalist projects, and statist-conflicts which produce human displacement are concealed under a hegemonic humanitarian framing. Not only does this framing work to obfuscate, but it is productive also: seeing war and conflict through the humanitarian lens of refugees depoliticizes and further legitimizes state interventions in foreign affairs. As “out-of-place victims,” refugees also provide states a valuable resource, valorizing, through negative example, “the nation-state as the ultimate provider of human welfare,” and thus buttressing, as Lissa Malkki famously coined, “the national order of things.” In its resettlement program, for example, the US moves from an imperialist power to a liberal-humanitarian rescuer, thus celebrating and making meritorious the American political project. Espiritu thus calls for a *critical refugee studies* agenda which “flips the script, positing that it is the existence of the displaced refugee, rather than the rooted citizen, that provides the clue to a new politics and model of international relations.”

Starting with the centrality of “seeing” in the practice of statecraft and governance, **Antoine Pécoud** (University of Paris, France) draws attention to the politics of visibility and invisibility

⁵ <https://www.euronews.com/2018/09/19/global-compact-on-refugees-a-rich-countries-model-for-keeping-others-out-view>

⁶ <https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/high-level-side-event-“road-marrakech”>

in the counting of migrant deaths. Uncounted and hence “invisible” to states and the broader public, migrant deaths began to be counted by civil society and activist groups. These counting operations, and the statistics they produced, provided a powerful challenge to states by directly linking migration policies and border security to human deaths. In his contribution, Pécoud charts the consequences of the integration of migrant death counting into the mainstream of migration management. The uptake of statistical collection by organizations such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has led to an increased sophistication and precision of counting mechanisms, but a pacifying of the political critique, with the IOM focusing instead on making these deaths legible to states such that they can improve their response. Like Espiritu, Pécoud shows the complicated and convoluted mingling of humanitarianism with managed migration controls. Key sites of escalated border controls such as the Mediterranean, Black Sea, or British Channel crossing are converted into zones of humanitarian intervention (William Walters’ “humanitarian borders”⁷) in which states and state actors seek to prevent the death of migrants framed as victims of poverty and war, exploited by the unscrupulous traffickers and smugglers profiteering off of their desperation. Hence, Pécoud warns that the collection of migrant death statistics, once politically unsettling, “may now turn into a technical and depoliticized death-counting activity that coexists unproblematically with the very political context that creates the conditions for these deaths.”

Similar to Pécoud’s contribution, **Martina Tazzioli** (Swansea University, UK) draws our attention to the politics of visibility and invisibility in the management of asylum-seekers within the European Union. A core contribution of Tazzioli’s piece is in emphasizing the social and political struggle at the core of migration controls, which pits states and state-actors against the autonomous mobility of asylees seeking safety, security, family unity and betterment. Due to a persistent sedentary bias⁸ in migration scholarship, this socio-political struggle is often downplayed if not completely ignored, where migration is simply seen as a *problem* which states necessarily have to find a solution to. In particular, Tazzioli draws our attention to the to-and-fro of internal forced transfers, deportations, and containment, which are preceded and followed by migrants’ autonomous movements (“secondary mobility”) undermining these state practices. Coupled with the invisibility of forced internal transfers, deportations, and nefarious agreements with non-EU third countries, this to-and-fro contributes to the hyper-visibility of “crisis,” in which migrants seem to be endlessly concentrating in hotspots of migration control across Europe’s interior, only to elicit, once again, the punitive practices to dispersal, detention and removal, and forced transfer. In her contribution, Tazzioli introduces her concept of “migrant multiplicities” as a way of explaining why states and state-actors engage in this process. Tazzioli argues that the principal aim is in splintering and fracturing the formation of asylees’ collective political subjectivities by multiplying legal categories, moving asylees around, and individualizing asylees’ journeys. Hence, similar to Espiritu’s forwarding of a critical refugee studies, Tazzioli calls for a “counter-mapping gaze on borders that refuses the spaces and temporalities of visibility set by states.”

⁷ <http://williamwalters.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/2011-Foucault-and-Frontiers.pdf>

⁸ https://afrique-europe-interact.net/files/engl._migration_and_development_-_ob.pdf;
<https://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/events/theories-of-migration-and-social-change/castles.pdf>.

In closing, each of the three contributions to this online symposium raise the thorny issue, which troubles critical research on migration more broadly, of how to navigate the conceptual terrain of refugeehood, a space so overly determined by categories made, deployed, and often violently, if insidiously, enforced by states, state-actors, and international bureaucrats. There remains vibrant debate about how best to even describe and conceptualize different forms of mobility: is the concept of forced migration useful⁹, or does it flatten migrant experiences and rob agency¹⁰? How about divides between economic, voluntary, or humanitarian mobility? And should we use the term “refugee” at all in analyzing the politics and sociology of human mobility¹¹? The categorical demarcations of mobility distribute, often arbitrarily and always politically and consequentially, resources and capital unevenly. Critical scholars have hence been wont to eschew these dominant categories. The sheer exigency of addressing human displacement (an increasingly entrenched feature on the global order) however, keeps bringing scholars back to the dominant categories produced by those with political, categorizing power. In their own way, each of the three contributions to this online symposium offer meditation and reflection on this conceptual issue, framing the “refugee crisis” as a sociologically and politically *emergent* order. In doing so, we hope that this special symposium will inspire and provoke further critical scholarship on this urgently pressing issue.

A CRITICAL REFUGEE STUDIES APPROACH TO THE ‘REFUGEE CRISIS’ YEN LE ESPIRITU, UC-SAN DIEGO

In the devastating aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, reporters, politicians, and media commentators used the term “refugee” to describe the tens of thousands of storm victims, many of them poor African Americans, who were uprooted from their homes and forced to flee in search of refuge. Almost immediately, prominent African American leaders, including Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton, charged that the use of “*refugee*” to refer to Katrina survivors was “racially biased,” contending that the term implies second-class citizens—or even non-Americans (Sommers *et al.* 2006: 40–41). For these critics, “refugeeness” connotes “otherness,” summoning the image of “people in a Third World country” who “carried the scraps of their lives in plastic trash bags,” wore “donated clothes,” and slept “on the floor of overpopulated shelters.” They charge that calling U.S.-born African Americans “refugees” was tantamount to stripping them of their citizenship—“their right to be part of the national order of things” (Masquelier 2006, 737).



⁹ <http://monthlyreview.org/2013/02/01/the-migration-and-labor-question-today-imperialism-unequal-development-and-forced-migration/>

¹⁰

http://sro.sussex.ac.uk/51909/3/Migrant_workers_in_the_ILO%2527s_GAAFL_Report_A_Critical_Appraisal_Rogaly_pre-publication_final_version.pdf;

http://research.gold.ac.uk/710/1/ANTH_SHAH_2006a.pdf.

¹¹ <http://ijrl.oxfordjournals.org/content/26/3/327.abstract>;

As the Katrina controversy makes clear, the term “refugee” triggers associations with highly charged images of Third World poverty, foreignness, and statelessness. These associations reflect transnationally circulated representations of refugees as incapacitated objects of rescue, fleeing impoverished, war-torn, or corrupt states—a “problem” for asylum and resettlement countries. The voluminous scholarship on refugee resettlement and on refugee policies also construct the refugees as out-of-place victims and the nation-state as the ultimate provider of human welfare. In these studies, the rooted citizen constitutes both the norm and the ideal, whereas the refugee is once again described as uprooted, dislocated, and displaced from the national community. These studies thus treat state borders as geographical givens rather than territorial boundaries constructed by law and regulated by force.

As such, to “unpack the *refugee crisis*,” we first need to unpack the ubiquitous pairing of “*refugee*” with “*crisis*.” Academic and popular representations of wars participate in the making of the “refugee crisis” narrative when they emphasize, and even sensationalize, the most pervasive acts of acute violence—the bombing, burning, napalming, killing. Indeed, as Rey Chow (2006) has argued, Americans have increasingly come to “know” the world as a target—through the lens of U.S. military intervention. That is, when wars break out, foreign areas and peoples enter American mainstream public discourses, via media outlets and policy pronouncements, as embodiments of (naturalized) violence, crisis, and disasters. The emphasis on the spectacular—on the images and sites of analysis that are readily accessible and consumable, especially to American audiences—and the hyper-focus on the refugees’ suffering and needs (re)affirm the “refugee crisis” narrative, thereby precluding any critical examination of the global historical conditions that produce this “crisis” in the first place.

The Making of the “Refugee”

The “refugee crisis” narrative constructs the refugee as a problem to be managed by states via humanitarian organizations. However, historians, political scientists, and international relations scholars have emphasized the utility of the “refugee” category, especially in the twentieth century, for the practice of statecraft. They thus conceptualize the refugees not as a problem but rather as a *solution* for resettlement countries. As Nevzat Soguk muses, for all that states denounce refugee outflows as a problem, the precarious condition of “refugeeness” in fact provides “affirmative resources for statist practices,” fostering a better appreciation for what it means to enjoy state protection (1999: 16). Liisa Malkki (1995) argues that the construction of refugees as out-of-place victims reflects nationalism’s fiction of an unproblematic link between territory and identity and an idealized relationship between the state and its citizens. Viewing state borders as geographical givens, the “there’s no place like home” mantra implies that only those fleeing tyrannical governments would forsake their state’s protection to embark on a perilous path as refugees.

The figure of the refugee, as a socio-legal object of knowledge, has been metaphorically central in the construction of U.S. global power. During the Cold War years, “*refugeeness* became a moral-political tactic,” demarcating the difference between the supposedly uncivilized East and civilized West, and fostering “cohesion of the Western Alliance nations” (Lippert 1999: 305). This “moral-political tactic” was the impetus behind the production of the “refugee” as a

sociolegal object of knowledge and management at the onset of the Cold War. In 1951, prodded by the United States, whose paradigmatic refugee was the Eastern European and Soviet escapee, the United Nations officially defined “refugee” as a person who harbors “a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.” This definition prioritized sufferers of state-defined *political* oppression over victims of natural disaster; it also sharply distinguished “political refugees” fleeing persecution from “economic migrants” moving in search of a better life, even when it is impossible to disentangle the two.

For the most part, state interests have determined whether, when, and where displaced persons receive the status of “refugee” in the West. During the Cold War, the term “refugee” became interchangeable with “defector,” as the “provision of asylum became a foreign policy tool” awarded by Western countries primarily to those who fled or refused to be repatriated to Communist countries (Gibney 2005: 25). The propoganda value of accepting refugees fleeing communism—deemed the living symbols of communism’s failure—was central to U.S. foreign policy goals, providing the nation with an alleged advantage over the Soviet Union. Along the same line, in response to the massive exodus of refugees from Southeast Asia in the late 1970s, the U.S. Congress passed the Refugee Act of 1980, which adopted the 1951 United Nations definition of “refugee” and established a uniform procedure for the admission and resettlement of refugees of “special concern” to the United States. Although the purported goal of the 1980 act was to drop any reference to communism and eliminate the previous geographic restrictions on granting refugee status only to Europeans, the actual admissions proposals for fiscal-year 1980 continued to prioritize refugees fleeing communism, with refugees from Southeast Asia being the main beneficiaries. In marked contrast, during this same period, because the United States was providing massive economic and military aid to the right-wing military regimes in El Salvador and Guatemala, the Reagan administration denied asylum status to hundreds of thousands of Salvadorans and Guatemalans who were fleeing torture and persecution from these very regimes.

The U.S. geopolitical landscape has changed since the resettlement of the Southeast Asian refugees in the 1980s. In the post-Cold War era in which U.S. imperialism and globalized militarization take the form of endless wars on terrorism, the refugees produced by these wars, such as the Syrian refugees, are cast as threats to be eradicated, and not victims to be rescued. As Eric Tang argues, “Today’s refugees are construed as an entirely unique racial problem that reflects the public’s anxieties over national security and is managed by practices such as racial profiling, surveillance, and detention rather than humanitarian resettlement” (2015: 176). The November 2015 Paris attacks, which killed 130 people and injured another 368, unleashed a swift and vitriolic anti-Syrian backlash in the U.S., with many officials calling on the federal government to halt acceptance of Syrian refugees. In the 2015 fiscal year, the United States accepted only 1,500 refugees from Syria. When images of desperate Syrian refugees trying—and sometimes dying—to reach Europe show up in the nightly news, refugee advocates began to call on the U.S. to significantly boost the number of Syrian refugees it accepts. Importantly, these humanitarian pleas for the U.S. to admit more refugees did not renounce but further confirm the U.S. status as a benevolent “rescuing” nation. The argument goes like this: The U.S. needs to welcome Syrian refugees because it “has historically been the world leader in recognizing the

moral obligation to resettle refugees.”ⁱ For instance, Lee Williams, vice-president and chief financial officer of the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, one of the nine national agencies that handle refugee resettlement in the U.S., opined, “Accepting refugees into the United States is one of our grandest traditions. And we’ve been doing it since the beginning even before we were a nation.”ⁱⁱ International Rescue Committee program officer Rachel Unkovic similarly waxed nostalgia for a refuge-granting America: “The America that I grew up in is one that also raised refugee children.”ⁱⁱⁱ

As Laura Wexler (1992) reminds us, even when the socially stigmatized—the refugees, in this case—are the subjects of the stories, they do not play the leading roles; instead, they constitute the human scenery deployed to confirm the superiority of the white American middle-class way of life and the rightness and righteousness of “rescuing” projects. In this instance, the “persecuted and uprooted” narrative—that is, the “refugee crisis” narrative—works to confirm U.S. reputation as a benevolent nation that rescues the world’s displaced. Such conclusion enables and ensures the erasure of all evidence to the contrary—of genocide, (settler) colonialism, slavery, and wars—that has cumulatively established the United States as a refugee-*producing* rather than a refuge-providing nation.

Critical Refugee Studies

As “refugeeism” has become a prominent feature of our times, Trinh T. Minh-ha urges us to “empty it, get rid of it, or else let it drift”—to prevent the word “refugee” from “being reduced to yet another harmless catchword” (2010: 45). Toward this goal, I chart an interdisciplinary field of *critical refugee studies* (CRS), which conceptualizes “the refugee” not as an object of rescue but as a site of social and political critiques. This field begins with the premise that the refugee, who inhabits a condition of statelessness, radically calls into question the established principles of the nation-state and the idealized goal of inclusion and recognition within it. CRS thus flips the script, positing that it is the existence of the displaced refugee, rather than the rooted citizen, that provides the clue to a new politics and model of international relations. At the same time, CRS is attentive to the refugees’ rich and complicated lives, the ways in which they enact their hopes, beliefs, and politics, even when they live militarized lives. In short, CRS scholarship conceptualizes the “refugee” as a critical idea but also as a social actor whose life, when traced, illuminates the interconnections of colonization, war, and displacement.

Critical Refugee Studies has two main tenets:

- 1) Militarism and Migration: CRS pivots on a critique of the unique braiding of militarism and imperialism that underlies forced migrations on a global scale, then and now. It thus disrupts the myth of western “rescue and liberation” of refugees and exposes the connections between refugee flight and western interventions in “Third World” countries—via counterinsurgency actions, anticommunist insurgencies, terrorism counteraction, and peacekeeping operations. To make a case against U.S. militarism, one needs to expose the militarized violence behind the humanitarian ideas of “refuge(es).” As an example, in my work on Vietnamese refugees, I recast the U.S.’s most celebrated story of rescue—the April 1975 airlifting and routing of refugees from Vietnam to the Philippines to Guam and then to California, all of which routed the refugees through U.S. military bases on these sites—as a

critical lens through which to map, both discursively and materially, the legacy of the military's heavy hand in the purportedly benevolent resettlement process (Espiritu 2014). In connecting Vietnamese displacement to that of Filipinos, Chamorros, and Native Americans, and making intelligible the military colonialism that engulf these spaces, I expose the hidden violence behind the humanitarian term *refuge*, thus undercutting the rescue-and-liberation narrative that erases the U.S. role in initiating the refugee crisis.

2. Feminist Refugee Epistemology: CRS also shifts the reference point in refugee studies from that of state and policy makers and humanitarian organizations to that of the refugees and their children. In particular, it adheres to a *feminist refugee epistemology* (FRE), which takes seriously the intersection between private grief and public violence, and the hidden and overt injuries *but* also joy that play out in the domain of the intimate. Applying a transnational feminist lens to refugee studies, FRE reconceptualizes war-based displacement as not only about social disorder and interruption but also about social reproduction and innovation. Attentive to the gendered nature of agency, FRE prioritizes refugee women's knowledge and emphasizes their creative, improvised, and experimental refuge-making practices. These social practices, which have emerged to tend to the ongoing wounds of war, flight, and resettlement, hold the potential for the radical remaking of a proper humanity, however tentative. Centering the more mundane, routine and open-ended dimensions of war and displacement, FRE re-conceptualizes time and space not as natural and fixed but materially and discursively produced, *and* unsettled and remade by the refugees. In so doing, FRE shifts the conceptual frame that privileges sedentarist orientations to one that explores the creation of meaning, identity, and community in the context of flux and disorder.

In sum, CRS insists that the ubiquitous pairing of "refugee" with "crisis" precludes a critical examination of the global historical conditions that forcibly displace and propel refugee flight in the first place. It also challenges liberal narratives of tragedy that represent war-displaced refugees as always-already suffering feminized bodies. Instead, CRS urges us to approach the question of displacement from the knowledge point of the forcibly displaced: to take seriously the hidden and overt injuries but also the joy and survival practices that play out in the domain of the everyday; and to mark the broken trajectories but also the moments of action—indeed, of creation—as refugees search for and insist on their right to *more*.

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THE POLITICS OF COUNTING MIGRANTS' DEATHS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN ANTOINE PÉCOUD, UNIVERSITY OF PARIS 13



The Euro-Mediterranean region has become the biggest migrant cemetery in the world. Every day, crowded boats with migrants from countries such as Syria, Afghanistan or Eritrea try to reach European coasts; many of them sink and, while they are sometimes rescued, migrants' dead bodies are found on Turkish, Greek or Italian beaches. Inside Europe, migrants take desperate risks to cross the continent by, for example, jumping dangerously on trucks crossing the Channel to reach England from the French town of Calais. It is estimated that more than 3,000 migrants have already died in 2016, a year that will eventually prove even more deadly than 2014 and 2015.¹²

Migrant deaths constitute a structural reality of the migration process. They are probably as old as migration itself – or as states' attempts to regulate migration and block the mobility of certain categories of people. According to Nevins (2003), Chinese migrants died in 19th century's

¹² See for example https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/the-number-of-europe-bound-migrants-falls-but-death-toll-rises/2016/09/02/7a957b8e-6ef3-11e6-993f-73c693a89820_story.html

California when trying to circumvent some of the provisions of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. Today, casualties are also reported at the Mexico-US border, in the Horn of Africa, off the Australian coasts, in the Caribbean, and in many other part of the world (Weber and Pickering 2011). In a world in which access to mobility is a crucial, but unevenly-distributed, resource, migrant deaths constitute the most visible outcome of the physical and symbolic violence associated with migration.

In Europe's current migration or refugee "crisis," migrant deaths have become more and more visible. Some of these deaths inspire worldwide emotion, like Aylan Kurdi's, a young Syrian boy found dead on the Turkish coast in September 2015.¹³ Yet, most migrant deaths go unnoticed. They often occur in remote places, in deserts or at sea. Migrants travel clandestinely, and die just as clandestinely. And above all, in a postcolonial world, the deaths of migrants from the Global South do not receive much attention and often provoke only indifference or resignation, as if they were the unpleasant but unavoidable condition for states' exercise of their sovereign right to control their borders.

It is in this context that civil society actors have sought to gather data and produce statistics on migrant deaths. In Europe, the first one to do so was the NGO *United for Intercultural Action*: since 1993, it has been releasing and updating a 'List of deaths'¹⁴, which now contains almost 23,000 casualties. In 2004, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, a leftist and anti-capitalist French newspaper, published the first map on migrant deaths at European borders¹⁵, which has since then been regularly updated in cooperation with the NGO *Migreurop*¹⁶. The ongoing crisis has spurred new initiatives: one can mention the Italian blog *Fortress Europe*¹⁷, the *Watch the Med* platform¹⁸, the Dutch project on *The Human Costs of Border Control*¹⁹, and a media initiative entitled *The Migrants' Files*²⁰.

All these civil society initiatives aim at filling the void left by states. Indeed, migrant deaths are not considered by governments: states collect data on migrants who enter their territory alive; also, for epidemiological and sanitary purposes, they count the deaths that occur on their soil. But they do not document the deaths of migrants trying to reach their country. Not only does this have to do with practice and legal issues, such as the difficulty of identifying corpses, or the complexity of states' responsibilities in in-between border zones like international waters; it is also due to states' reluctance to acknowledge the dark side of their politics of migration control. In today's crisis, for example, states never recognize their responsibility in the migrant deaths occurring in the Mediterranean; rather, they systematically blame "smugglers" and "traffickers" for embarking migrants on these dangerous journeys.

¹³ See <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/04/world/europe/syria-boy-drowning.html>

¹⁴ See <http://www.unitedagainstracism.org/campaigns/refugee-campaign/working-with-the-list-of-deaths/>

¹⁵ See <http://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/cartes/mortsauxfrontieres>

¹⁶ See <http://www.migreurop.org/>

¹⁷ See <http://fortresseurope.blogspot.fr/>

¹⁸ See <http://watchthemed.net/index.php/main>

¹⁹ See <http://www.borderdeaths.org/>

²⁰ See <http://www.themigrantsfiles.com/>

James C. Scott (1998) relies on the work of Michel Foucault to argue that it is through the production of data that states “see” reality. Faced with complex dynamics developing over vast territories, states need statistics to apprehend their population – and to govern it. Indeed, the words *state* and *statistics* share the same etymology. The corollary is that, without statistics, reality remains invisible. Certain issues will therefore be ignored, not because they do not exist, but because they are not documented. This constructivist approach also makes clear that not all aspects of social life are documented: certain topics are the object of scrutiny, while others are not - and such differences of treatment often have to do with politics in the broad sense, that is to say with what is deemed socially and politically relevant. Clearly, migrant deaths are on the hidden side: in the absence of data, they are invisible. Even when they are immediately observable, for example when corpses come ashore on beaches full of tourists in the Italian island of Lampedusa, they could remain anecdotal and isolated. Only statistics have the power to transform the multiplicity of disconnected local casualties into a global phenomenon that becomes the object of media coverage and political attention.

This is why civil society groups produce their own statistics. By producing knowledge on a topic ignored by governments, they aim to shed light on migrant deaths, at raising awareness among decision-makers and public opinion, and at fostering change in the politics of migration. NGOs do not only challenge states’ often monopolistic position in the production of statistics; in some cases, they also venture into actual life-saving activities - a field that is traditionally dominated by state actors. This is for instance the case of the German *Sea Watch*²¹ project and the Maltese *Migrant Offshore Aid Station*²², which operate with their own boats to rescue migrants in the Mediterranean Sea. Statistics and action thus come together: by making migrant deaths visible, NGOs also pave the way for policies that aim at saving these lives.

Like all statistics, data on migrant deaths are therefore highly political. This is also clear in another key aspect of any statistical activity, namely the definitions and categories that underlie data collection. Information must not only be collected; it must also be sorted and organized. In this respect, it is worth noting that there is no precise definition of what constitutes a “migrant death.” Statistics in this field are still in their infancy, and a single harmonized definition is not yet shared across different civil society actors. Many of the initiatives mentioned above focus on the Mediterranean and mainly count deaths at sea. By contrast, *United for Intercultural Action* adopts a larger definition that encompasses, for example, the deaths that occur far away from Europe (like in Sub-Saharan Africa), the deaths inside European countries (for example in detention centers), and even the suicides committed by desperate migrants at any stage of their journey. The argument is that all these migrants, however they die, are victims of the violence inherent to the politics of migration in Europe.

These differences in categories are of a crucial political importance because they come along with different interpretations of states’ responsibilities. Depending upon the category that is used, states’ role – and, accordingly, the way they should react to these deaths – are framed differently. In a narrow understanding, migrant deaths are the deaths that occur at sea and the key issue is to prevent them by humanitarian measures of rescue. This is what the *Mare Nostrum* operation, led

²¹ See <http://sea-watch.org/en/>

²² See <https://www.moas.eu/>

by the Italian government between 2013 and 2014, was up to. Increasingly, border control initiatives have been relying on this humanitarian imperative: Frontex, for example, argues that its patrols serve both to control European borders and save lives²³ - thereby exemplifying what William Walters calls the “humanitarian border.” In this view, the culprits are the criminal networks of smugglers and traffickers, which need to be combatted - with the UN Security Council going as far as to authorize military action against their boats²⁴. By contrast, if one enlarges the definition of migrant deaths to include all those who die inside Europe, the political implications are very different. The emphasis is then put on the way governments treat (or mistreat) migrants and on the structural anti-migrant violence that pervades not only border controls, but other aspects of immigration policy too (like readmissions or expulsions).

It is in this highly sensitive political debate that an actor of another kind has stepped in. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is a Geneva-based intergovernmental organization that provides services to states in a wide range of migration-related policy fields²⁵. In 2013, it launched the *Missing Migrants Project*²⁶, which provides data on migrants’ deaths throughout the world. This project resembles earlier initiatives by NGOs: it provides a list of casualties, along with maps that localise the places where these deaths occur. In this respect, civil society groups have clearly set up a standard that now inspires the IOM. This organization also aims at intervening at the practical level, for example by providing information to the relatives of missing migrants or by contributing to the identification of corpses.

As an intergovernmental organization, however, the IOM is much more prudent than NGOs. It does not establish a direct causality between European policies and migrant deaths. Rather, it aims to develop a neutral “technical” expertise, which can improve knowledge on the topic more broadly: in its report, one can, for example, read that “while views may differ on how best to limit the number of migrant deaths, there is a broad agreement on the need for better data” (IOM 2014: 17). The IOM claims that it wishes to help states monitor the phenomenon: its role would be to provide them with accurate information, without interfering in the ways states will use this data and possibly elaborate policies to reduce migrant deaths. The IOM also believes that increased coverage of these deaths may help make would-be migrants more aware of the risks they take.

The IOM’s *Missing Migrants Project* may seem quite at odds with other activities by the same organization. Indeed, the IOM is active in the reinforcement of border controls throughout the world, including in the Euro-Mediterranean region. For example, it trains border guards in many less developed countries, while also facilitating the expulsion and readmission of undocumented migrants (Georgi 2010). These are precisely the kind of activities that incite migrants to take deadly risks. As such, the IOM exemplifies the confusion between control and humanitarian protection that characterizes contemporary migration politics. This leads this organization to borrow from civil society repertoires, but to do so in a way that depoliticizes their activities. While civil society counted deaths to make states accountable, the IOM sees this activity as a

²³ See <http://frontex.europa.eu/operations/types-of-operations/sea/>

²⁴ See <http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/sc12072.doc.htm>

²⁵ See <https://www.iom.int/>

²⁶ See <http://missingmigrants.iom.int/>

technical task with little or no political signification in itself. Yet, it is precisely because migrant deaths have become more and more politically visible that the IOM has felt the need to step into this activity – and to neutralize the political signification of these statistics.

Counting migrant deaths is an activity that may thus be at a crossroads. It was designed as a critical way of exposing the human costs of migration control, and of highlighting the flagrant contradictions between the values and principles of Western states and the actual outcome of their migration policies. It served as one of NGOs' major tools in calling for political change. It may now turn into a technical and depoliticized death-counting activity that coexists unproblematically with the very political context that creates the conditions for these deaths. To some extent, this testifies to the success of NGOs' efforts, which have long struggled to make this topic visible with very limited resources. Yet, it also challenges the *raison d'être* behind these statistics. By moving from the field of civil society to the intergovernmental realm, statistics become more detailed, but less challenging. Could it be that these numbers were finally becoming politically dangerous, and that they therefore had to be neutralized?

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MOVING MIGRANTS AROUND, MOVING MIGRANTS BACK: COUNTER-MAPPING CHANNELS OF RELOCATION AND OF FORCED TRANSFER ACROSS EUROPE

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On a weekly basis between August and October 2016, migrants apprehended at the border-zones of Ventimiglia and Como (Italian cities close to the borders of France and Switzerland respectively) have been bused back to the south of Italy, to the “hotspot” of Taranto^{iv}. Organized by the Italian authorities, these forced internal transfers have had two primary goals: deterring future migrations to Europe’s interior; and “lightening the migrant pressure at the frontier.”^v Despite these forced transfers to Taranto, however, migrants find their way back to the French and Swiss border within days. Thus, the hotspot itself has changed its function, from a chokepoint for identifying and selecting migrant entries to a site of containment for regulating the presence and unruly mobility of migrants who are on the territory.

Taranto represents just one of many containment “hotspots” within European border countries. This intervention subsequently attempts to engage current political and academic debates about the putative “refugee crisis” in Europe, focusing on the overt institutional strategies of the Relocation Program and on the more covert channels of *forced internal transfers*. Both forms of forced movement exist as tactics for disciplining—and controlling—what the EU calls “secondary movements.” Looking at the mechanisms for channeling mobility and regaining control over migrants’ autonomous movements is an analytic angle that engages with the “refugee crisis” narrative from the perspective of “border materialities;” i.e., the aim of this intervention is to grasp the spatial and political transformations within the micropolitics of migration controls as states seek to respond to “unruly mobility.”

Together with deportation, practices of *forced internal transfer* represent the underside of the EU’s managed migration system which ranges from student visas to circular and temporary migration programs. Forced internal transfers pivot around the Relocation System^{vi} launched by the European Union in May, 2015, at the time of the EU Agenda on Migration. According to policymakers, the Relocation System establishes a sort of “burden sharing” agreement, in which 160,000 asylum seekers will be relocated from Italy and Greece to other EU member states. “Relocation” is a term that hints at the biopolitical engineering of migrant multiplicities^{vii}, which consists in sorting and partitioning migrants, allocating them to specific destinations or to distinct legal categories. The use of “relocation” further implicitly confirms that migrants should not—and cannot—choose where to claim asylum. Rather, it is the governing powers that “should be” the decision-makers of migrants’ mobility (Biao, Lindquist, 2014).

Relocation has subsequently become normalized as a spatial measure for allocating and governing mobility at the policy level. However, to understand the scope of the implications associated with relocation practices, we need to understand how this translates into the control of space in practice.

In order to do this, we have to first closely scrutinize and unpack the laborious *border operations* that take place before and as pre-conditions to the act of relocating migrants. Sorting strategies that aim to divide up migrant multiplicities in order to prevent the formation of collective political subjects, for example, actually involve and give rise to a multiplication of relocation channels as a result of these exclusionary partitioning strategies. In particular, states try to block practices of mobility that do not take place according to the tempos and the conditions of institutional and legal channels.

Yet, migrants' autonomous practices of mobility to circumvent sorting practices should not be confused with autonomous spaces. On the contrary, what characterizes migrants' movements are precisely the absence of a proper place, and the related necessity of finding cunning ways of moving across spaces. At the same time, relocation, as conceived by the EU, should not be conflated with mobility (whether controlled or not). Rather, relocation acts as a spatial trap for the "lucky" asylum seekers who are selected as eligible: indeed, it fixes precise geographical limitations, in the sense that "when an asylum-seeker is relocated to another EU country, they only have the right to legally reside in that country and cannot move on to another EU country without authorization."^{viii} This measure of spatial containment is combined with a digital traceability that is posited as the pre-requisite for *being moved* and that consists in the obligation of being fingerprinted in the place of first arrival.

Relocation policies are also racialized through the establishment of a nationality-based criteria. This criteria establishes that "persons deserving of protection" are those who belong to nationality groups which have their asylum-claims recognized at least 75% of the time in the European Union. This means that demands for relocation are not processed on an individual basis, and that even the number of migrant nationals claiming asylum in the EU is irrelevant. This criteria has indirectly posited that Syrians are the only genuine asylum-seekers, and has had a deleterious implication for those from other countries. For instance, for many months Afghans and Pakistanis have been consistently ranked as the top two nationalities excluded for relocation in Greece. Their massive flight from Afghanistan and Pakistan to Greece is *not* considered a marker of their condition of insecurity and of their need of protection.

With the uneven benefits of the relocation system in mind, it can be seen that the relocation system, and the forced internal transfers which underpin and facilitate it, is not in fact about forward movements of migrants to countries of asylum, but rather containment, followed by relocation in the form of backward movements to the country of origin for those coded as "undesirable" through the relocation system's nationality-criteria. More broadly, the goal of taking migrants in the opposite direction to their move is twofold: producing an effect of deterrence by discouraging migrants from trying again; and, making their journeys longer. Paradoxically, such a *move back* and the consequent retry tactic on the part of migrants comes to multiply secondary movements (the very practice EU policy is designed to deter) and thus multiply erratic geographies. Migrants are kept on the move: more than being stopped in their attempt to move to Northern Europe, they are in fact forced to restart, over and over again, their journey (Picozza, 2016). Nevertheless, it is important to remark that the outcome of these strategies for disciplining "secondary movements" is not only migrants' hyper-mobility but also a multiplication of forms of containment. Spatially, these forms of containment are not restricted to the fences surrounding hotspots, nor are they

restricted temporally to the time migrants are kept inside these hotspots; what occurs instead is what can be called “containment beyond detention” (Garelli, Tazzioli, 2016).

Conclusion

The insights provided in this paper about the visible and institutional channels of regulated mobility, and on the more invisibilized and arbitrary channels of forced transfer, must be situated within a broader contested politics of visibility that sustains migration governmentality. As this brief commentary suggests, EU relocation programs not only create and elaborate visible infrastructures of mobility management and containment, but also “invisible” ones. The visibility of migrant spaces of transit and border-zones responds to what I would call a *desultory temporality*, meaning an intermittent visibilization of spaces of migration that does not depend only on border narratives produced by the media, and not even on numbers per se. Rather, what matters the most is the *conceptualized potential weight of these numbers to EU actors*. Through such an expression, I refer to the “troubling effects” generated by migrants’ very presence, and, more importantly, by the potential for collective claim-making of a migrant multiplicity as it threatens to realize its latent potential for collective political subjectivity, even if just temporarily. The “immediate” and fleeting visibility that usually characterizes borders and migration events involves the disruptive moment of migrants’ presence only.

Take August 4, 2016, in Ventimiglia, for example: about 300 migrants move from a hosting center run by the Red Cross towards the French-Italian border, ten kilometers away from the city. There, they are blocked by the Italian police for about ten hours. Suddenly, however, about 140 of them managed to cross the border. Many newspapers and websites described the scene as migrants breaking through the Italian police and entering France^{ix}. Yet, beyond the most visible scene, what occurred in this instance remains largely invisible and obscured. What in fact occurred, was that the French police immediately apprehended the 140 migrants and pushed them back to Italy. Yet, it is even harder to follow these opaque channels of deportation: all those migrants have been transferred to detention hotspots South of Italy (Taranto and Trapani), divided into small groups, and to date it remains unclear how many received a decree of expulsion.

In the light of these invisible channels of forced transfers and deportations, I suggest that we should mobilize a *counter-mapping gaze* on borders that refuses *the spaces and temporalities of visibility* set by states. This involves first of all looking at the spaces of control, mobility and containment that are generated through mobile bordering practices that are invisible on the geopolitical map and do not appear as territorial entities. Concrete examples are the cooperation between the EU and African countries in sea patrolling activities aimed at intercepting migrant vessels; the training provided by the EU to the border and coastal guards of non-EU “third countries”; as well as the donation of technical equipment (radars, fingerprinting machines, among others). Beyond analyses of these activities of cooperation, this *counter-mapping gaze* should examine the channels of deportations, transfers, relocations and data exchange that crisscross the European space and extend beyond it. The stretching of the EU border regime and its externalization cannot, in fact, be flattened to visible territories; in order for it to be *seen*, a map of the mobile spaces of control should be made.

ⁱ<http://openmigration.org/analisi/il-giro-delloca-dei-trasferimenti-coatti-dal-nord-italia-a-taranto/>

²<http://www.sanremonews.it/2016/08/08/leggi-notizia/argomenti/cronaca/articolo/ventimiglia-emergenza-migranti-il-capo-della-polizia-franco-gabrielli-assicura-gia-pianificate-o.html>

³http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/2_eu_solidarity_a_refugee_relocation_system_en.pdf

⁴ By “migrant multiplicities” I mean group of migrants that are temporary and subjected to process of partition by authorities. As I explain elsewhere (Tazzioli, 2016), what distinguishes migrant multiplicities from other kinds of group formations is the divisible and temporary dimension.

⁵http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-15-5698_it.htm

⁶<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/05/migrants-break-through-italian-police-barriers-to-enter-france>

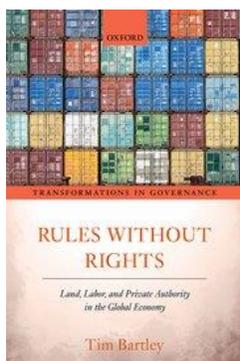
Martina Tazzioli is Lecturer in Geography at Swansea University and Visiting Lecturer in Forced Migration at City University of London. She is the author of *Spaces of Governmentality: Autonomous Migration and the Arab Uprisings* (2014), co-author with Glenda Garelli of *Tunisia as a Revolutionized Space of Migration* (2016), and co-editor of *Foucault and the History of Our Present* (2015). She is co-founder of the journal *Materialifoucaultian*.

MEMBER PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS

RULES WITHOUT RIGHTS: LAND, LABOR, AND PRIVATE AUTHORITY IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

TIM BARTLEY



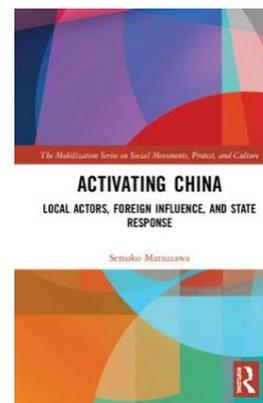
Activists have exposed startling forms of labor exploitation and environmental degradation in global industries, leading many large retailers and brands to adopt standards for fairness and sustainability. This book is about the idea that transnational corporations can push these standards through their global supply chains, and in effect, pull factories, forests, and farms out of their local contexts and up to global best practices. For many scholars and practitioners, this kind of private regulation and global standard-setting can provide an alternative to regulation by territorially-bound, gridlocked, or incapacitated nation states, potentially improving environments and working conditions around the world and protecting the rights of exploited workers, impoverished farmers, and marginalized communities. But can private, voluntary standards actually create meaningful forms of regulation? Are forests and factories around the world actually being made into sustainable ecosystems and decent workplaces? Can global norms remake local orders? This book provides striking new answers by comparing the private regulation of land and labor in democratic and authoritarian settings. Case studies of sustainable forestry and fair labour standards in Indonesia and China show not only how transnational standards are implemented 'on the ground' but also how they are constrained and reconfigured by domestic governance. Combining rich multi-method analyses, a powerful comparative approach, and a new theory of private regulation, *Rules without Rights* reveals the contours and contradictions of transnational governance.

ACTIVATING CHINA: LOCAL ACTORS, FOREIGN INFLUENCE, AND STATE RESPONSE

SETSUKO MATSUZAWA

This book examines the effects of the transnational social and environmental advocacy of foreign NGOs in China. Based on three case studies, including China's first participatory development project, its first successful case of transnational anti-dam activism, and its first national park project, the book challenges our typical understanding that global forces shape local outcomes. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork in China and archival work in the United States, Matsuzawa sheds light on the entrepreneurial behaviors of Chinese activists, researchers, and government officials. She shows that global projects are often substantially transformed by local actors, despite the original intentions of their foreign collaborators and even China's central government.

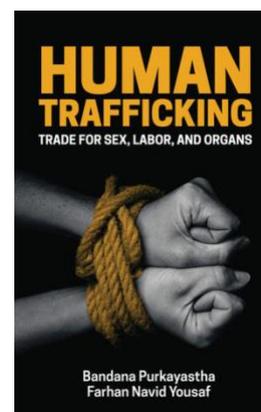
Thus, it is argued that foreign NGOs are not as hegemonic or culturally imperialistic as is commonly viewed. Matsuzawa reveals that their goals may change profoundly as a result of their engagements with local actors on the ground. She offers a new theory of transnational advocacy together with an account of the Chinese party-state's rising concerns over the influence of foreign NGOs. *Activating China* will be of interest to sociologists and political scientists working in the fields of social movement studies and activism in China.



HUMAN TRAFFICKING: TRADE FOR SEX, LABOR, AND ORGANS

BANDANA PURKAYASTHA AND FARHAN NAVID YOUSAF

The last few decades have seen a huge increase in attention being paid to the trafficking of human beings, often referred to as modern-day slavery. A number of international and national policies and protocols have been developed and billions of dollars have been spent to combat the issue and protect trafficking victims. Yet it continues to flourish and human beings, both in the Global North and the Global South, continue to be degraded to the level of commodities, smuggled across borders for profit, trafficked for sex, labor, or their body parts. Drawing upon feminist and human rights approaches to trafficking, this book links the worlds of policy, protocols, and social structures with the lived experience and conditions of trafficked people. Recognizing that trafficking for sex, labor, and body parts often overlap in a broader context shaped by poverty, violence, and shrinking access to rights, the authors offer a more thorough-going account of this social problem. Only by doing so can we understand the exploitative conditions that make people vulnerable to trafficking, and the progress – as well as gaps – in initiatives seeking to address it.



AMERICA, AS SEEN ON TV: HOW TELEVISION SHAPES IMMIGRANT EXPECTATIONS AROUND THE GLOBE

CLARA E. RODRÍGUEZ



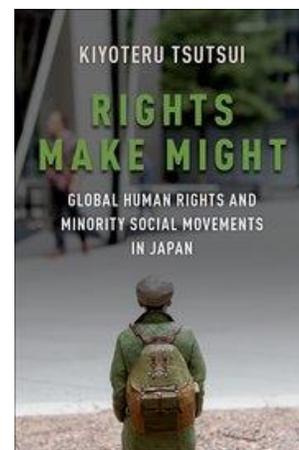
As a dominant cultural export, American television is often the first exposure to American ideals and the English language for many people throughout the world. Yet, American television is flawed, and, it represents race, class, and gender in ways that many find unfair and unrealistic. What happens, then, when people who grew up on American television decide to come to the United States? What do they expect to find, and what do they actually find? In *America, As Seen on TV*, Clara E. Rodríguez surveys international college students and foreign nationals working or living in the US to examine the impact of American television on their views of the US and on their expectations of life in the United States. She finds that many were surprised to learn

that America is racially and economically diverse, and that it is not the easy-breezy, happy endings culture portrayed in the media, but a work culture. The author also surveys US-millennials about their consumption of US TV and finds that both groups share the sense that American TV does not accurately reflect racial/ethnic relations in the US as they have experienced them. However, the groups differ on how much they think US TV has influenced their views on sex, smoking and drinking. *America, As Seen on TV* explores the surprising effects of TV on global viewers and the realities they and US millennials actually experience in the US.

RIGHTS MAKE MIGHT: GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND MINORITY SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN JAPAN

KIYOTERU TSUTSUI

Since the late 1970s, the three most salient minority groups in Japan - the politically dormant Ainu, the active but unsuccessful Koreans, and the former outcaste group of Burakumin - have all expanded their activism despite the unfavorable domestic political environment. In *Rights Make Might*, Kiyoteru Tsutsui examines why, and finds an answer in the galvanizing effects of global human rights on local social movements. Tsutsui chronicles the transformative impact of global human rights ideas and institutions on minority activists, which changed their understandings about their standing in Japanese society and propelled them to new international venues for political claim making. The global forces also changed the public perception and political calculus in Japan over time, catalyzing substantial gains for their movements. Having

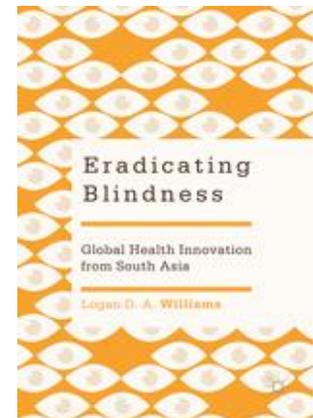


benefited from global human rights, all three groups repaid their debt by contributing to the consolidation and expansion of human rights principles and instruments outside of Japan. Drawing on interviews and archival data, *Rights Make Might* offers a rich historical comparative analysis of the relationship between international human rights and local politics that contributes to our understanding of international norms and institutions, social movements, human rights, ethnoracial politics, and Japanese society.

ERADICATING BLINDNESS: GLOBAL HEALTH INNOVATION FROM SOUTH ASIA

LOGAN D. WILLIAMS

This book describes community ophthalmology professionals in South Asia who demonstrate social entrepreneurship in global health to help the rural poor. Their innovations contested economic and scientific norms, and spread from India and Nepal outwards to other countries in Africa and Asia, as well as the United States, Australia, and Finland. This feminist postcolonial global ethnography illustrates how these innovations have resulted in dual sociotechnical systems to solve the problem of avoidable blindness. Policymakers and activists might use this example of how to avoid Schumacher's critique of low labor, large scale and implement Gandhi's philosophy of good for all.



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AWARDS AND TRANSITIONS

Bandana Purkayastha, University of Connecticut, has been elected to the executive committee of International Sociological Association. ISA is an organization with members from 126 countries and is centrally committed to developing global dialogs, including in multiple languages.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

There will be a global conference at Ton Duc Thang University in Ho Chi Minh City (formerly, Saigon) on “Innovations in the Social Sciences and Humanities” in early October 2019. Organizers are seeking papers for consideration. Details on-line at <http://issh2019.tdtu.edu.vn/>.
