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REFUGEE
STUDIES
CENTRE



RSC library move

The collections of the RSC Library were successfully moved to the Social Science Library (SSL) on Manor Road in Oxford (OX1 3UQ) in August, and are now available to readers.

All books have been integrated into the SSL book collection, contributing over 3,700 new titles to the SSL. The key academic journals for forced migration studies are now stored in the SSL's periodicals section. The extensive and unique RSC 'grey literature' – unpublished material – remains as a discrete collection and is easily accessible. These documents are organised as before, using a geographical and subject-based scheme.

Visitors to the RSC collection, and those enquiring from afar, still have access to our specialist staff – who remain the same. Information about the RSC collections in the SSL are available on www.ssl.ox.ac.uk and www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/library.html.

For more information, please contact Sarah Rhodes, Forced Migration, African and Commonwealth Subject Consultant, +44 (0)1865 285998; sarah.rhodes@ouls.ox.ac.uk

Funding successes

We are delighted that the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs recently committed two million Danish Kroner to fund Summer School bursaries to support participants from the global south over the next three years and to co-fund our conference on Protection held in September.

We are equally pleased to have received 50,000 Swiss Francs from the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs to co-finance our research on environmental displacement. We are currently seeking additional support for this work.

In addition we are grateful for the individual philanthropic support we receive, which over the last two months includes a renewed pledge from Mrs Bruna Johnson for the Bob Johnson Scholarship, and a generous pledge from Mr and Mrs Ron Olson to provide \$50,000 to support scholarships for MSc students through Linacre College for five years.

For more information please contact Amelia Richards, Head of Development, at amelia.richards@qeh.ox.ac.uk

Dispossession & displacement of mobile peoples

RSC Deputy Director Dr Dawn Chatty was invited to give a presentation in July to the XVI Congress of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences in Kunming, Yunnan, China. As Chairman of the Commission on Nomadic Peoples, she spoke about the contemporary dispossession and displacement of mobile peoples from their traditional grazing lands in order to make way for the establishment of nature reserves.

China is currently engaged to moving its Mongolian herders off their lands and into cities. Chinese authorities regard these measures as part of their strategies to prevent the Mongolian steppe land from becoming a dust bowl. These strategies, however, reflect a misinterpretation of Western experiences. The lecture Dispossession and Displacement to Protect Nature – available at www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/PDFs/dispossessionanddisplacement.pdf – sought to provide a different perspective by outlining the history of protected areas, the mistakes made, and the steps currently being taken to recognise the rights of traditional and local people to their common grazing lands.

For more information, please contact Dr Dawn Chatty at dawn.chatty@qeh.ox.ac.uk

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Tenth annual Harrell-Bond lecture: Jan Egeland

The RSC is delighted to announce that Jan Egeland will be giving the tenth Harrell-Bond lecture on 18 November.

The title of the lecture will be 'Beyond blankets: in search of political deals and durable solution for the displaced'. Mr Egeland will speak about enhanced humanitarian relief efforts for the world's displaced people, arguing that only political agreement and effective security arrangements will lead to progress in resolving the refugee crisis.

Mr Egeland was UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator from June 2003 to December 2006. He took up his current position as director of the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) on 1 September 2007.

In 2008, Mr Egeland published a memoir, *A Billion Lives: An Eyewitness Report from the Frontlines of Humanity*, about his time at the UN.

Prior to his UN appointment, Mr Egeland acquired 25 years of experience in humanitarian, human rights and peace work. He served as Secretary-General of the Norwegian Red Cross, and from 1999 to 2002 he was the UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Colombia.

Earlier in his career, he served as State Secretary in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1990–97). He has also been Head of Development Studies at the Henry Dunant Institute in Geneva, Chair of Amnesty International, Norway, and an international news reporter for the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation.

The lecture will take place on Wednesday 18 November 2009, 5pm, at the University Museum, Parks Road, Oxford, OX1 3PW. The lecture will be followed by a drinks reception.

For more information or to reserve a place, please contact Wouter te Kloeze at wouter.tekloeze@qeh.ox.ac.uk



Photo by Wouter te Kloeze

International conference on 'Protecting people in conflict and crisis'

To mark the tenth anniversary of the ICRC's landmark workshops on humanitarian protection, the RSC hosted a major international conference on the theme of 'Protecting people in conflict and crisis: responding to the challenges of a changing world' from 22–24 September.

Hosted in collaboration with the Overseas Development Institute's Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) and with the generous support of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNHCR and DfID, the conference brought together over 180 participants – researchers, humanitarian practitioners and policy makers – from more than 50 countries to review the state of policy and practice in the field of humanitarian protection. Among the participants were representatives from the governments of Denmark, Japan, Norway, UK and the USA, as well as representatives from Médecins Sans Frontières, International Rescue Committee, Oxfam, Save the Children UK, and various UN agencies.

The conference was opened by the UN Assistant High Commissioner for Refugees (Protection), Ms Erika Feller, who discussed the question of 'Humanitarian and Protection Spaces'. Six keynote papers were delivered by eminent speakers, including Professor David Keen of the London School of Economics, Dennis McNamara of the Humanitarian Dialogue Centre, and Zonke Majodina of the UN Human Rights Committee.

The conference considered six thematic tracks, ranging from the conceptualisation of 'protection' within international policy-making processes and the politics of delivering protection programmes at the global, regional and national level, to analysing community's perceptions of protection and revisiting more practical issues relating to the implementation of protection activities.

Podcasts of the plenary sessions can be found at www.forcedmigration.org/podcasts/protecting-people and the text of the keynote speeches at www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/conf-conferences_220909.html.

For more information, please contact rsc-conference@qeh.ox.ac.uk

PROTECTING PALESTINIAN CHILDREN THE ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Research project of Dr Jason Hart and Claudia Lo Forte



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In December–January 2009, around 350 Palestinian children were killed and approximately 10,500 displaced during Israel's bombardment of Gaza.¹ For children growing up in the occupied territories of Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem, the extreme effects of political violence such as witnessed at that time are a tragically familiar feature of everyday life. Indeed, this violence has shaped the settings in which successive generations of children have grown up. Within this volatile setting numerous UN and international agencies have worked for many years with the aim of protecting children and realising their basic rights. Yet the limits to their ability to fulfil this aim have been made obvious time and again.

The research project undertaken by Dr Jason Hart and Claudia Lo Forte has sought to understand the challenges faced by organisations in protecting Palestinian children from the direct and indirect effects of political violence, and to produce clear recommendations on how such challenges may be met. This has involved enquiry in relation to three distinct areas: concepts, institutional frameworks and politics, pursued through seven months of fieldwork in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and complemented by desk review. Regrettably, it was not possible to include an explicit focus upon Gaza within this project due to issues of access and timing.

At the conceptual level, our concern has been to document the different ways in which the notion of 'child protection' is understood by actors at all levels: from governmental donors to UN, international and local agencies, as well as parents and children living in situations of everyday violence. Our starting point was the definition of child protection employed by UNICEF and other agencies as 'preventing and responding to violence, exploitation and abuse against children'. Over 100 interviews and focus group discussions revealed a range of views about the nature and causes of threat to children, as well as the means by which the young may be protected. In various ways these views were at odds with one another. This was evident, for example, with regards to the strong association made between child protection and domestic or school violence by various international actors which for others, risked obscuring the child protection task of preventing political violence and the politically-motivated denial of access to basic resources and services. Such divergence was evident most strongly through discussion with Palestinian NGO workers who, in several cases, struggled to reconcile the conceptual framework given by their employers or donors with their own experience as parents and community members.

In terms of institutional dynamics we were particularly interested in the ways that certain concepts and actions relating

to child protection may acquire a dominant status within the efforts of large numbers of child protection actors. Aside from consideration of the impact of intra-organisational hierarchies, questions were also raised about the 2005 Humanitarian Reform involving the introduction of the so-called Cluster Approach. The adoption of this approach in the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt) has led to the creation of a Child Protection Working Group which seeks to ensure better coordination amongst relevant agencies. Yet such a group also has the potential for control through the insistence on a particular strategy of child protection that represents the views and position of certain actors while marginalising those of others. A similar concern was raised about the consequences of greater coordination amongst members of the Save the Children Alliance, both in the oPt and globally. In short, our research revealed tension arising from current efforts to improve coordination, while powerful intra- and inter-agency hierarchies remain unaddressed.

The most challenging aspect of the research project has been to identify and fully comprehend the effects of the wider political context upon the efforts of child protection actors working in the oPt. This region of the world is constantly in the global media spotlight: a place wherein many people and governments around the world have strong vested interests and agendas. Moreover, it is an unusual location given the inherent weaknesses of the Palestinian Authority (PA) and the consequent ambiguities around the role of local civil society and the international community, respectively. How does this political complexity impact upon the efforts to protect Palestinian children? How are UN and international agencies constrained in their work not only to *respond* to children suffering from violation of their wellbeing, but to *prevent* abuse occurring in the first place? What political considerations shape the interaction of such agencies with child protection actors on the ground, both within the PA and local organisations? These are questions with which we are currently contending as we strive to produce a report summarising the key findings of the research and recommendations arising. This report is intended for completion in late December/early January and will appear in both English and Arabic.

This project has been generously supported by the East-West Foundation, which has provided the core funds for this project. We are also very grateful for the additional funds offered by the Council for British Research in the Levant and the Queen Elizabeth House Research Fund.

For more information, please email rsc@geh.ox.ac.uk

1. Figures according to Defence for Children International, Palestine www.dci-pal.org accessed 28.09.09

Special issue of the Journal of Refugee Studies

The September 2009 issue of the Journal of Refugee Studies is a special issue on Representation and Displacement, guest-edited by Dr Eva-Lotta Hedman and Dr Graeme Rodgers. It highlights how representations of displacement routinely shape processes and outcomes of displacement, with particular focus on localised and often highly politicised contexts. As the papers show, the social production and reproduction of diverse forms of such representation may signify the consolidation of new political communities, or uncover and stoke existing latent political tensions related to gender, class, ethnicity and so on. Furthermore, competing forms that arise in the wake of displacement may constitute important new forms of social and political capital, exchanged and contested in symbolically powerful ways.

For more information please contact Margaret Okole at margaret.okole@qeh.ox.ac.uk, Desk Editor of the Journal of Refugee Studies

To subscribe to the Journal, please visit <http://jrs.oxfordjournals.org>

Statelessness Policy Briefing

The RSC has launched its third policy briefing on 'Statelessness, protection and equality' by Brad K Blitz (Professor of Human and Political Geography, Kingston University and RSC Research Associate). This paper provides a typology of stateless people and contexts, reviews relevant international law and jurisprudence, and assesses the links between nationality and the protection of human rights. The paper gives recommendations for reducing and eliminating statelessness in the future.

The Forced Migration Policy Briefings highlight the very best and latest policy-relevant research findings from the fields of forced migration and humanitarian studies by providing a forum in which academic researchers, humanitarian practitioners, international lawyers and policymakers may share evidence, experience, best practice and innovation on the broad range of critical issues that arise at the intersection of forced migration and humanitarian intervention.

Forthcoming policy briefings will focus on Humanitarian reform, UNHCR and the protection of refugees, the situation of Iraqi exiles in the Middle East, and regional approaches to protracted refugee situations.

The Statelessness Policy Briefing can be found at www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/PDFs/RSCPB3-Statelessness.pdf.

Studies in Forced Migration book series

The Studies in Forced Migration book series was conceived by Dr Barbara Harrell-Bond, founding director of the RSC, in the mid-1990s. It is published by Berghahn Books in association with the RSC. With more than 25 volumes published so far, the series reflects the multidisciplinary nature of the field and includes within its scope international law, anthropology, medicine, geography, geopolitics, social psychology and economics. Volume 29, to be published in March 2010, will be edited by RSC Deputy Director Dr Dawn Chatty and will be entitled *Deterritorialized Youth: Sahrawi and Afghan Refugees at the Margins of the Middle East*.

Forced Migration Review (FMR) issue 33: Protracted displacement

The English edition of FMR 33, with a major feature on Protracted displacement, is now online at www.fmreview.org/protracted.htm.

Increasingly, growing numbers of displaced people remain displaced for years, even decades. This latest issue of FMR includes 29 articles by academic, international and local actors assessing the impact of such situations on people's lives and our societies and exploring the 'solutions' – political, humanitarian and personal.

FMR 33 also includes a spotlight on the 'internment' camps in Sri Lanka, a mini-feature on collective centres, and a selection of articles on other aspects of forced migration.

This issue was funded by the Australian Government Department of Immigration and Citizenship, the Canadian International Development Agency, and UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Africa.

The next three issues of FMR will include features on Urban displacement, Disability and displacement, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo/Great Lakes. Details at www.fmreview.org/forthcoming.htm.

To request copies of any issue of FMR, or to enquire about forthcoming issues, please contact the Editors, Marion Couldrey and Maurice Herson, at fmr@qeh.ox.ac.uk

The politics of refugee voices

The theme of the RSC's forthcoming Wednesday seminar series is 'The politics of refugee voices'. Speakers are invited to explore the issues of refugees' political participation and representation, bringing insight from different disciplinary perspectives and geographical foci.

On 14 October, Dr Giorgia Donà (UEL) will question the prevailing representation of the Rwandan genocide as a dichotomous narrative of survivors and perpetrators, which renders invisible the experiences of the majority of Rwandans.

The following week, Prof Alessandro Triulzi (University of Naples L'Orientale) will introduce 'Come un uomo sulla Terra [Like a man on Earth]', a documentary that recounts the experience of Ethiopian refugees who decided to start a joint 'archive of migrant memories' to create awareness for the inhuman conditions of their journeys to Lampedusa in Italy and of their experiences in the Italian asylum system.

On 28 October, Dr Leah Bassel (City University) will review current debates over gender equality and minority inclusion, and identify two spheres of contestation at the interface of asylum and integration, each of which enables certain voices while silencing others.

Dr John Nassari (UEL), on 4 November, will explore ways in which national charities, galleries and museums promote and facilitate the visibility of refugee experiences in Britain, and how refugee groups themselves have intervened in these initiatives.

In the following seminar, on 11 November, Prof Robin Cohen, director of the International Migration Institute (Oxford University), will reflect upon the formation of social identities among refugees and migrants.

The final two seminars, on 25 November and 2 December, will be given by Prof Robert Barsky (Vanderbilt University) and Dr Miriyam Aouragh (Oxford University), talking respectively on the precarious and dangerous routes of potential refugees into US cities in search of their own version of the 'American Dream', and on the impact of the internet on the transnational Palestinian nation.

All seminars are open to the public and take place at Seminar Room One, 3 Mansfield Road, Oxford OX1 3TB, starting at 5pm. For more information, please contact the convener Nando Sigona: nando.sigona@qeh.ox.ac.uk

RSC conferences

Two RSC conferences are currently scheduled. The aim of the conference on 'Deportation and the development of citizenship' (11–12 December 2009, organised in conjunction with COMPAS), is to encourage interdisciplinary and comparative scholarship on deportation. The latter is broadly conceived as the lawful expulsion power of states, both as an immigration control and as a social control mechanism. The conference will serve as a vehicle for bringing together scholars from different disciplines interested in the study of deportation, including politics, sociology, history, international relations, law, criminology and anthropology.

A conference on 'Romani mobilities in Europe: multidisciplinary perspectives' (14–15 January 2010) will map the variety and directions of contemporary Romani mobilities into, out of and within the EU, including economic and forced migration as well as forced or voluntary repatriation. It will locate these mobilities in the broader political, social, historical and cultural context.

Both conferences are part of projects funded by the John Fell Oxford University Press Research Fund.

Contact Dr Emanuela Paoletti at emanuela.paoletti@qeh.ox.ac.uk and Nando Sigona at nando.sigona@qeh.ox.ac.uk respectively for more information

International Summer School in Forced Migration

The next International Summer School in Forced Migration will take place from 5–23 July 2010. It offers an intensive, interdisciplinary and participative approach to the study of forced migration, enabling people working with refugees and other forced migrants to examine critically the forces and institutions that dominate the world of the displaced. Beginning with reflection on the diverse ways of conceptualising forced migration, the course considers political, legal and well-being issues associated with contemporary displacement. Individual course modules tackle a range of other topics, including globalisation and forced migration, and negotiating strategies in humanitarian situations.

The course, which is residential, is held in Oxford. Teaching is conducted in English.

A number of bursaries are offered on a competitive basis to applicants from less-developed countries.

For further information, please visit www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/teaching_summer.html or email: summer.school@qeh.ox.ac.uk; Tel: +44 (0)1865 281728/9

To our alumni

If you have spent time at the RSC studying or working, you are very welcome to share with our newsletter readers news about your career, research, publications, organisations or anything else related to forced migration. Please contact Wouter te Kloeze at wouter.tekloetze@qeh.ox.ac.uk

Dr Peter Westoby, Summer School 2005

Dr Peter Westoby has recently published a book based on four years of research amongst Southern Sudanese refugees within Australia. The book is titled *The Sociality of Refugee Healing – in dialogue with Southern Sudanese refugees settling within Australia* (published by Common Ground).

At the heart of *The Sociality of Healing* is the argument that it is the current and present world of settlement that should be the primary focus for healing work, not the past. Healing, for refugees and those of us living within host countries, is essentially about learning to live together, and living together well, with healthy, vibrant and 'engaged' relationships. This engagement requires a willingness to embrace past pain, but also a capacity to create a new culture, new kinds of communities, and to build a socially just society together.

The book explores some of the key research findings as they relate to the spheres of culture, community and power within refugee settlement processes. The book should provide new thinking about how researchers, policymakers and community practitioners can engage in a dialogical and elicitive journey of co-discovery *with* refugee groups.

Contact Peter:
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Kamini Karlekar, MSc 2000–2001

In early 2004, I went to Sudan to work with UNHCR on a refugee status determination project. From there I moved to Liberia, working on issues relating to the return, reintegration and rehabilitation of Liberian returnees.

My first book, a work of creative non-fiction entitled (*Unsettled: Notes from a Shifting Life*), is partly travel, partly personal and partly political as the history of the two countries and weave in and out of the narrative of my life in these two countries. It is about the discoveries I made about myself as a UN worker and where I was, both as a professional and an individual – my surprise at falling in love with Sudan despite all the bad press, and feeling at home in Harper, Liberia, despite the ubiquitous loitering ex-combatants and razor wire compounds.

Contact Kamini:
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Photo by Anna Cervi

Anna Cervi, MSc 2007–2008

After I completed the MSc in Forced Migration in June 2008, I started working at Intersos (www.intersos.org) as Field Officer in West Darfur, Sudan.

Intersos is an Italian NGO that operates in emergency situations. It has worked in the provision of humanitarian aid to populations affected by human and natural disasters since 1992. Intersos has been active in West Darfur since 2004, trying to support a safe and dignified return of IDPs and refugees to their area of origin. In West Darfur, Intersos is one of the implementing partners of UNHCR, carrying out activities in cooperation with a number of other international donors focusing mainly on education, water and sanitation, agriculture, forestry, distribution of non-food-items to vulnerable groups, peace building, and profiling.

Prior to my studies at the RSC, I worked on displacement both in Italy and in the Horn of Africa, after five years of Development Studies at the University of Bologna. Working on displacement requires a strong theoretical background that enables one to transcend the complexities faced on the ground. This was the main reason I longed to study at the RSC.

Describing the complexities entrenched in that area is a rather difficult task that goes beyond the aim of this article. However, in a nutshell, working in Darfur after my experience at the RSC has given me a unique opportunity to deepen my knowledge in the field of forced migration through practical experience.

Living in Darfur is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Though the region is adversely affected by conflict, Darfurians taught me to believe that conditions can improve even in a context as complex as Darfur. I have come to appreciate the importance of and need for going beyond the commonplace practice of labelling individuals and groups as IDPs, refugees and returnees, because such labels mask the more pertinent requirements of listening to the actual practical needs of those affected and voicing them in the international arena. From my day-to-day interaction with colleagues in the Intersos base of Forobaranga, I learnt the importance of advocating for our beneficiaries regardless of their tribe, origin or dialect, and respecting their dignity and integrity as human beings.

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