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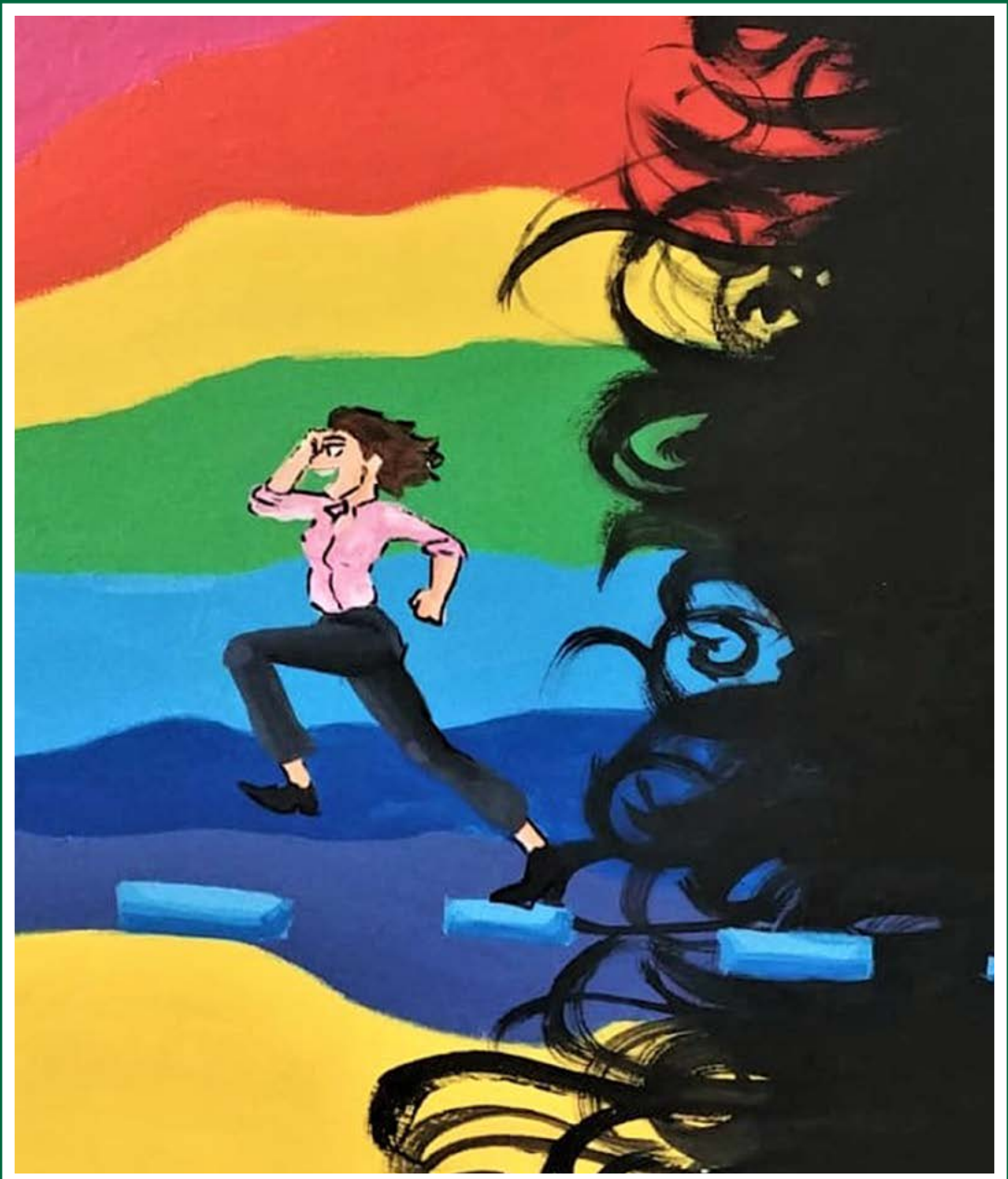
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Cover image: "Galaxy Running" by Bita Golmohamadi, a participant in the Youth Migration Project (page 83)

Migration, Mobility, & Displacement

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MM&D

Making Sense of One's Feelings: The Emotional Labour of Chinese International Students in Canadian Universities

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Abstract

Canadian universities' sharpened focus on international students starting in the early 2000s coincided with the growing interest by students from China to study abroad. Various actors, including states, have shaped and benefited from this increase in student migration. I examine how student migrants deal with the feeling rules transmitted to them, as an under-explored site where the migration experience is shaped and justified. In light of the work of Sara Ahmed and Arlie Russell Hochschild, I explore how students feel and are asked to feel about their studies abroad, and how emotions work in framing and maintaining the migration narrative. Through Ahmed's concept of skin of the collective, I argue that Chinese student migrants are affected by and contribute to an affective atmosphere regarding their years of study in Canada as specific feeling rules help them make sense of similar experiences of confusion, frustration, self-reliance, and responsibility. Based on interviews with students and university staffers, I discuss the links between this type of migration, the actors involved, and the emotional landscapes students navigate in order to highlight how they interpret their own experiences and how these interpretations contribute to maintaining a general narrative about being Chinese international students in Canada.

Canada's official engagement with international students began in the 1960s through policies of development assistance and Commonwealth relations, but became increasingly important in the early 2000s when federal and provincial authorities explicitly focused on the economic and immigration potential of international students. Although Canada had relatively low numbers of international students at the time in

comparison to countries such as the United States (US), the United Kingdom, and Australia, a 2014 federal education initiative signified a clear commitment to increase this number and to diversify the source countries. The Canadian government made an explicit case for utilizing international students to economically boost local service-based economies, to add to the next generation of highly skilled workers, and to act as a form of soft support for Canada's engagement with its key trading partners (Scott et al. 2015).

Similarly, international students from a country like the People's Republic of China (PRC) are encouraged by their government to obtain quality training and develop overseas networks to support the country's international visage. Coined as the Twelve Words Approach in the 1990s, the PRC developed a policy "to support study overseas, encourage returns and guarantee freedom of movement," which were seen by many Chinese students as a cornerstone for gaining the experience needed for upward social mobility upon their return to China (Biao and Shen 2009, 515). In a social context in which international education has become synonymous with better opportunities in a rapidly changing China, students are encouraged to study abroad, and many do so either on their own means or through the government's scholarship program. The logic behind such official encouragement is that international students become a source of closer and more peaceful relationships with various foreign institutions and countries (Biao and Shen 2009, 514-17).

The Canadian and Chinese states have looked at international student mobility through a strategic framework. The same can be said of Canadian universities, which have increasingly focused on recruiting international students because they pay higher tuition fees thereby helping to compensate for reduced public funding for higher education (Fisher et al. 2009). To offer a critical complement to these lenses, one can focus on how bodies move across borders and how individuals experience these state designs (Wilcox 2014, 11). More specifically, the role of emotions in shaping the mobility of these bodies and how student migrants navigate their experiences is still an under-explored site from which to document the migration process, and it speaks of the ways in which international students are emotionally guided through and actively produce a broadly defined migration narrative, despite their distinct individual experiences. As Sara Ahmed (2004, 117) notes, emotions are "crucial to the delineation of the bodies of individual subjects and the body of the nation." A study of how emotions work will shed light on the migratory experiences, the expectations of actors such as states, and the affective atmosphere of which students are part (Anderson 2009, 77-78).

In asking how international students from China feel and how they are asked to feel about studying at Canadian universities, I explore the ways in which emotions work in framing this type of migration experience through Ahmed's (2004) concept of "skin of the collective." I argue that Chinese student migrants are affected by and contribute to a similar affective atmosphere regarding their years of study in Canada by dealing with specific feeling rules, or "what guides emotional work by establishing the sense of entitlement or obligation that governs emotional exchanges […] between 'what I do

feel' and 'what I should feel'" (Hochschild 2003, 56-57). Although they follow different pathways and have different experiences, student migrants are similarly made to feel in specific ways towards their home society, their host society, and their migration experience, and these feelings are constructed through specific material, ideological, and cultural parameters imposed by various actors involved in their migratory experience. Here, the emotional labour these students perform is key to grasping a broadly defined migration narrative at play, as it speaks directly to the individual and collective work they do to navigate between the social tensions, contradictions, and pressures of the process, including how they accept or resist specific feeling rules and how they emotionally participate in giving meaning to their migration.

After a theoretical discussion on the emotional labour of student migrants, I examine key moments in the stories of two sets of friends, all Chinese international students at Canadian universities. I discuss how these students navigate the emotional landscapes associated with their migratory experiences in order to shed light on various feeling rules that contribute to a general narrative of being a Chinese student migrant to Canada.

Methodological Note

This qualitative research with ethnographic sensibilities was conducted in 2008 and in 2015 in British Columbia (BC) and Ontario. Of 12 in-depth interviews with Chinese international students and four semi-structured interviews with university staff members, I zero-in on six individual interviews at the University of British Columbia (UBC) and the University of Waterloo. University staff were helpful in illuminating the institutional expectations of Chinese international students, while also connecting me to the student body. Recruitment through posters and snowballing allowed me to access specific student social networks. Focusing on friends' circles, moreover, enabled me to gain a deeper understanding of shared stories and worldviews, including the prominence of the social dimensions of their experiences and emotions. After the interviews were concluded, I gave each interviewee the opportunity to comment on how I had interpreted their experiences.

Through the analysis, I aimed primarily to connect how, through emotions, different ideas and thoughts are linked together. I anchor these interviews in a post-positivist and hermeneutical framework and use them in a heuristic fashion to make linkages between student migration experiences and overall narrative, affective atmospheres, and the actors involved in shaping students' emotional responses, such as states, universities and families. I clearly recognise the impact of my positionality as a white male scholar on the interview process, and as such, these interviews are not meant in any way to imply representativeness or objectivity. Rather, they are used as a way to reflect on under-explored dimensions of Chinese student migration to Canada and Canadian universities and to develop a research agenda. Because the intent is to draw connections between the migration process and the emotional landscapes students develop in a social setting, a key limitation is a lack of analysis of the gendered differences among the participants.

Framing Student Migrants' Emotions

Emotions are a useful lens through which to shed light on processes like international migration, which is usually explored from a more rational perspective. In the classical model of push-pull factors that is used to explain international migration, the onus is on rational factors that attract or dissuade a migrant from living in a specific location, even if such decisions are ingrained in under-explored and under-theorized emotional landscapes involving interactions with family, friends, and various actors involved in the process (Mazzarol and Soutar 2002). Building on an emerging scholarship documenting "the emotional geography of migration" (Menon and Sreekumar 2016, 7), I explore how emotions work to support this process, and more precisely, how international students perform emotional labour during their migration, which includes conforming to or resisting specific feeling rules.

The emotional turn in the social sciences has been documented in various bodies of literature, ranging from work that makes a commitment to everyday life theory to work that focuses on human senses, and to work that emphasises visceral and embodied realities and looks at affect (Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy 2008; Montserrat Degen 2008). The latter body of work (that which looks at affect) in particular adds to our understanding of social action, perceived and real limitations, and possibilities. As Ben Anderson (2009, 78) indicates, the locus here is not only on how bodies affect each other and their environments, but also how they are affected through "the shared grounds from which subjective states and their attendant feelings and emotions emerge."

Framing emotions as part of affective economies, Ahmed (2004, 120) emphasises their transmission and transformation in everyday social interactions, as they are a "form of capital […] produced only as an effect of [its] circulation." Ahmed (2004, 119-23) highlights that emotions work in different ways depending on the situation, as they can "stick" unrelated ideas together to form a coherent normative framework, and can help differentiate between "us" and "them." Emotions are productive and emotional labour is a key component in individuals and groups integrating, contesting, and negotiating their participation in society, often used to make sense of and give coherence to thoughts and actions that may seem contradictory if understood only through a rational lens. As defined by Arlie Russel Hochschild (2003, 7), emotional labour is inherently situational; it helps position us towards others depending on the context, as it requires "one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others."

Despite being performed individually and in different ways, emotional labour is shaped by broad ideological precepts, often expressed through feeling rules that help individuals navigate entitlements, obligations, detachments, and other requirements of emotional exchanges. The management of emotions and emotional labour is of particular interest because it speaks to the ways in which global economic and political processes come with specific understanding of proper emotional conduct (Hochschild 2003, 20-27, 56-

58). Individuals seek guidance on how to act properly in expressing their emotions and they turn to desired feeling rules, shaped by various sources of authority, to know "how a situation ought to be viewed [and] how we should feel [about it]" (Hochschild 2003, 75).

In the case of migrants, especially student migrants, emotional labour is oriented toward making sense of the journey and how one fits as a migrant in the designs of the other actors they encounter through the process. For Ahmed (1999, 343), the emotional work of migrants starts with the ways migrant narratives reproduce the uneasiness of the migratory experience:

> *The experience of leaving home in migration is hence always about the*
> *failure of memory to fully make sense of the place one comes to inhabit,*
> *a failure which is experienced in the discomfort of inhabiting a migrant*
> *body, a body which feels out of the place, which feels uncomfortable in this*
> *place.*

The emotional labour of migrants is intrinsically linked to the significance given to the migrant body, as interpreted by other actors. For student migrants, uneasy feelings arise from the fact that they are navigating the contradictory stance of many host countries, which on the one hand encourage the recruitment of and business related to international students, and on the other hand vilify their skilled or racialized presence in relation to a local ethos (King and Raghuram 2013, 130). Each student migrant may have his or her own individual experience, but the movement of bodies and the emotional negotiations of new social contexts that they experience nonetheless have some similarities.

As many studies in psychology have shown, the emotional lives of student migrants are constitutive of an affective atmosphere in which personal acculturative stressors in terms of language abilities and academic learning curves are enmeshed within the socio-cultural framing of their bodies and are present in terms of local expectations, social tensions, and immigration debates (Smith and Khawaja 2011; Zheng and Berry 1991). As "targets of increasing suspicion" in their host society, student migrants develop similar coping strategies to navigate the uneasiness of their presence as situated both outside and potentially part of the local population (King and Raghuram 2013, 131). These strategies are responses to how the student migrant body is understood as defying traditional understandings of migration as a settling practice, and as transgressing the common understanding of fixed categories of migrant classification, such as a family member or a foreign worker (Collins 2011, 322).

Amid the diversity of experiences, a general migration narrative emerges from the affective atmosphere created by and for student migrants, notably through the negotiation of various social, cultural, and ideological codes of other actors involved in the process. Sources of authority, such as states, families, and educational institutions, are key actors in helping student migrants give meaning to their experiences. These include, for example, home countries encouraging their outbound students to earn

academic achievements abroad to gain specific skill sets or to send back remittances; host countries welcoming student migrants as potential foreign talent to strengthen their own national economies; and these states' public designs to shape the ways in which the student migration experience is understood and emotionally negotiated (Collins et al. 2014, 662; Verbik and Lasanowski 2007).

Moreover, social institutions, such as families, shape the emotional landscapes of the migratory experience. As Kate Geddie (2013, 196) argues, personal and social bonds are the prime locus where decisions are made with respect to every step in the process of student migration, from the choice of the host country and institution, to the return to the home society or a move to another destination. This includes various family strategies: "study mothers" accompanying their children to a host country in order to make life better for the entire household, students serving as anchor citizens in a host society in order to engage in family reunification, or students returning to the home society to support the family's upward social mobility. Such strategies highlight the role of personal and intimate interactions in shaping the decision-making process beyond rationality (Geddie 2013). Student migrants are not alone in defining this emotional journey of migration, as emotions are working and circulating through all people and actors involved in the process.

The role of other migrants with a similar experience, such as other international students, is also important in understanding the affective atmosphere in which they are an active part. As Ahmed (1999, 345) indicates, migrants going through a similar experience can bond through the lack of common experience in the host country. As she explains:

> *forming a community through the shared experience of not being fully at home—of having inhabited another space—hence presupposes an absence of a shared terrain: the forming of communities makes apparent the lack of a common identity which would allow its form to take one form.*

This bond in the host society and related pressures from states and social institutions all play a role in creating a nébuleuse of feeling rules that migrants must navigate. Despite their individual migration experience, they find in each other a site where they can start making sense of the process and contribute to a broadly defined migration narrative. Student migrants specifically may find familiarity not so much through their shared desires and anxieties, as through the various feeling rules framing these emotions.

Dealing with similar feeling rules is part of the emotional journey of international students, as they engage, as Ahmed (1999, 342) puts it, in the "transformation in the very skin through which the body is embodied." In her view, the skin of the collective can be a starting point for the emotional patterns left by bodies on the move, as:

> *feelings rehearse associations that are already in place, in the way in which they "read" the proximity of others, at the same time as they establish the "truth" of the reading, and the impressions left by others are shaped by*

> *histories that stick at the same time as they generate the surfaces and the boundaries* (Ahmed 2004, 39).

Student migrants who might have nothing else in common do experience a similar set of feeling rules related to the migratory process. As such, the skin of the collective gives an overall narrative of the journey and through this, Chinese international students may connect with and contribute to this collective, in addition to negotiating other aspects of their migrant bodies, such as the gendered, ethnic, age, class, and ableist realities about their experience.

Mapping Students' Emotional Lives

As a host country, Canada has been seen as "operating in the shadow" of the US, while trying to support its postsecondary institutions to increase their share of international students by communicating directly to the PRC market—one of its key source countries—that Canadian universities have a strong reputation, that Canadian cities are a safe environment, and that the cost of living in Canada is reasonable (Verbik and Lasanowski 2007, 6). This follows significant changes in the management of Canadian universities over the last two decades. Adapting to the challenges associated with a global knowledge-based economy and reduced public funding, these institutions have taken on the roles of corporate entities, with for-profit expansion plans and internationalization strategies, including in the recruitment of international students (Fisher et al. 2009). In this section, I focus on the stories of two sets of friends from the PRC who are studying at Canadian universities and whose migration experiences stem from these strategic designs. The case of Lily and Susanne's first year at the University of Waterloo highlights feelings of frustration and confusion, as well as the roles of various pre-migration actors in shaping their emotional lives. The story of Josh and Mike, who studied together at UBC in Vancouver, sheds light on the importance of developing a sense of purpose and responsibility through community involvement and support of other student migrants.

Lily and Susanne at Waterloo

When I met with Lily and Susanne they were in their first year of studies at the University of Waterloo. They came directly from Shanghai to study in Canada and shared with me how they felt about their experiences so far, emphasising how their pre-migration expectations played into the emotional work to be done since they arrived. In fact, various actors have shaped their expectations and understanding of studying in Canada, starting with their families. Lily's desire to study abroad was determined by the expectations of her family: "[m]y parents want me to get a good job, a good co-op program […] after my degree, I want to apply for a job in Canada in computer sciences or in stats." She indicated that she feels pressure to meet these expectations because of the financial sacrifice her family is making: "[m]y family is OK in China, but it costs a lot more here."

Similarly, Susanne's choice came from her parents' plans for her: "[t]hey wanted me to study abroad because I was not fit for Chinese education. They pay more and the expectations are higher. They want it [to be] worth it, to get [a] better job and better life." Susanne has clearly internalised these expectations: "because of that, I do more [...] I want to find a job. That's most important to meet [these] expectations." Both students' stories reveal the role of their parents' expectations in determining their desires and emotional state while studying at Waterloo.

Beyond the difficulties of speaking English and misunderstanding local cultural cues during social events, they both expressed some unexpected frustrations in their academic transition. Emphasising the difficulties of relating to their professors and their teaching style, they identified the information they received prior to coming to Canada as responsible for these frustrations. Despite the preparation she received in Shanghai by attending the "BC Program" for students coming to Canada, Lily noted that she feels insecure because she is unable to understand her professors: "the profs talk fast and only read notes. Why pay tuition?" Returning to the issue of the financial cost of her education, Lily clearly feels unable to meet her family's expectations; experiences shock in being academically under-prepared; and makes a direct emotional connection between this shock, her family's expectations, and the financial cost of her migration experience.

Susanne expressed similarly negative feelings, but understands them differently, as she puts the burden on herself to adapt to what she was not expecting:

> *Some professors are great, some are mediocre. They are not explaining well and I have some problems with the vocabulary. I have to do more work after class [...] the education system in China is different. I have to build myself the prof-student relation, go to the prof's office hours. It is more than just study [...] I have to ask the right questions and express my feelings right.*

For these two friends, their academic and migratory transition led to some unexpected feelings, and they are learning to connect, through emotional labour, these experiences to their expectations and what they anticipate will be the outcome of their studies.

They agree that part of the blame for these negative experiences is on the agent hired in the PRC to help them get into a Canadian university. For Lily, a lot of the confusion she felt in adapting to life and school in Waterloo seemed to come from having received the wrong information by the agent who helped her prepare her university application. She also feels she has missed out on opportunities she was not made aware of by the agent: "the information for international students is very little and hard to have access to. I could have applied to a co-op [program]—I had the marks for it!—but I didn't know it existed because of the information [given by] my agent." In contrast, Susanne frames her disappointment with the services of her agent through a more productive lens of what can be done to improve the experiences of others: "[t]he agents in China help to apply but the university should [ask] students to do it themselves. They confuse

students with [the] information they give, for me [they did] about Waterloo." In this view, they both deal with specific unanticipated feelings of being lost due to the actions of a third-party actors benefitting from their migration.

However, Lily and Susanne have different emotional reactions to their first year of study at Waterloo based on these unexpected experiences. Whereas Lily expressed a lot of frustration and negative feelings about still not knowing how to navigate university life successfully, Susanne attempted to find resources to help her become a student and a migrant who knows where she is going and what she is doing. As Susanne indicates: "I saw the academic advisor a lot this year, asking for the job market and my program requirements [...] I am not focused on social clubs now, because studying is more important in the first year—next year maybe."

This echoes what Zoe, an advisor to international students at the University of Waterloo, expects:

> *International students must understand the academic expectations in the classroom and in their program. There are also social expectations in their interactions with their peers and with professors, and they must learn to build resiliency here [...] I see a lot of students, and the stress stems from their success in the classroom.*

Zoe expressed what the university expects of international students: they go through a somewhat difficult time of transition, build resiliency and independent social support, and eventually find their way to academic success. Speaking of a broader affective atmosphere, the university's expectations of students like Lily and Susanne seem to explain and justify the feelings of confusion and frustration they are working through as first-year Chinese international students in Canada.

Josh and Mike at UBC

When I met Josh and Mike, they were in their final year of undergraduate studies at UBC. After three years at UBC, they were now leaders of the Chinese Students and Scholars' Association (CSSA) on campus, and expressed a sense of purpose and pride in their migratory experience by playing a role of representing and supporting other Chinese international students from the PRC at UBC. This was not the case initially, as both experienced a state of confusion and frustration similar to what Lily and Susanne felt. Echoing what university staff expect for Chinese international students, the case of Josh and Mike shows that it is up to the individual to develop the skills and experiences to find their way socially and academically. As Colleen, a university staff member working with international students at UBC, mentions, "[w]e help them explore their new surroundings to make new friends [...] I do not recommend clubs to students based on their ethnic background because many would be offended." In this way, both Mike and Josh experienced what Lily and Susanne referred to as it is part of the design and the framing of the migratory journey, at least as understood by Canadian universities.

Of note here is that Josh and Mike's difficult transition experience was the basis for their involvement in the CSSA and their commitment to provide services to newcomers based on what they themselves would have wanted to receive. Focusing on offering a place of comfort and cultural support geared towards Chinese students from the PRC, Mike understands the CSSA as a platform "to serve the students living, starting here, so they have a convenient transition." The various activities they plan, including for the children of CSSA members, are not only based on cultural differences of Mainland China, but also offer a space where members can feel at ease and close to home and can gain a sense that they are currently working—albeit from a distance—toward a happier future back in China. They do this, for example, by organizing many networking and training events to help members find employment opportunities after their studies.

Josh and Mike added to UBC's cultural events during their tenure, especially during Chinese Lunar New Year, and they are conscious of how the CSSA serves as a place to support the emotional lives of their members. For instance, they organized a vigil for their members to grieve after the 2008 Sichuan earthquakes. During the event, an official of the university spoke about the importance of hosting such events to help students emotionally reconcile their academic migration with their life back in China:

> *"I am here because we have many Chinese students and I want to say that your pain is our pain"* (Participant observation, 30 May 2008).

For Josh and Mike, this event was a way of offering emotional support and relief to students affected by the disaster, helping them see how UBC and the CSSA are there to support them through a difficult time, while at the same time finding a sense of purpose in their own migratory experience by supporting others. As Josh indicated while speaking of the vigil, "I guess I'm the most proud of being able to help when people needed it. It makes the studying experience more fun." Josh's statement reflects the dual nature of his emotional labour: supporting the emotional needs of other international students from the PRC, and gaining enjoyment and his own sense of purpose in fulfilling this task.

Josh and Mike's migratory experiences take on meaning through the various roles they played in representing their constituents to various bodies on and off campus. Mike, the association's former president, says of the experience: "I was most proud of leading the club. It was a great honour to be their representative. This work comes with responsibilities […] and there is a lot of pressure to do the work well." For Josh, his experience was highly influenced by the various events he organized to keep up with world events, from mobilizing his members after the Sichuan earthquakes and the 2008 snowstorms in the PRC, to the various debates he was part of pertaining to the politics of the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympic Games. Josh's own emotional labour involved making sense of all these activities and his positionality as a student migrant and leader of his peers: "It triggered a sense of belonging to the motherland, not in patriotic ways, but as cultural and national pride." In this way, Josh was happy and proud to be from the PRC and to represent this perspective in Canada and at various UBC events. This

gave him pride in his cultural heritage and his home country and helped him frame how his study migration fit into the broader picture. Similarly, the two friends found similar meaning in their migratory experience through being involved in the CSSA and making the association a place where they themselves could grow emotionally, while emotionally and socially supporting their peers after they arrived at UBC.

Productive Feelings and a Student Migrant Narrative

Josh, Lily, Mike, and Susanne have all distinct migration experiences but contribute to a similar, broadly defined migration narrative. Whereas Lily and Susanne's story speaks to the anxieties and desires related to the first year of studying in Canada and to their transition, Josh and Mike's story encapsulates a later moment in their experience, and demonstrates the productive impact of community involvement on their emotional journey. In this section, I draw some similarities in the experiences of all four students to explore how their emotional labour connects to the skin of the collective and the related feeling rules with which they commonly engage to create a broader narrative associated with Chinese international students at Canadian universities.

In terms of the emotional journey of migrants, as bodies move across borders, defining a sense of home is key in understanding how the migration experience creates a unique skin of the collective (Ahmed 2004, 30). In the case of Josh, Lily, Mike, and Susanne, their automatic association with other students from the PRC is "read" through a similar narrative of what makes Mainland China culturally distinct, all having navigated the cultural differences between Hong Kongese, Tawainese, and Chinese Canadian students. Through the various events they participate in or lead, they emphasise a feeling rule of comfort in the cultural proximity of hanging out with other Chinese international students from the PRC. This process of association plays on emotional closeness, as it is part of a broader context in which alumni and senior students help and guide new students in choosing how to associate with other international students, and in which university staff members prefer not to interfere. This emotional closeness and cultural proximity helps students develop similar social boundaries, share stories, and create a common history.

Furthermore, they all participate in reproducing expectations about experiences, desires, and anxieties that are generally similar among student migrants. Desires and anxieties, which are not understood as inner feelings disconnected from social interactions and context, circulate among international students and give us some sense of their collective priorities, at least as another feeling rule with which student migrants engage. In this case, Josh, Lily, Mike, and Susanne shared stories expressing their desires relating to betterment and social mobility, employment prospects and family support, and anxieties over family expectations and academic achievement. As two sides of the same coin, these desires and anxieties find a collective presence in the emotional labour of Chinese international students, which has also been reinforced by generalizations about the desires and anxieties of Chinese international students, as shared by university staff

in framing services and support for this student body. Students work to keep these desires and anxieties alive in relation to their expectations and interactions with other actors involved in the migration process, including states and families.

There are specific collective expectations of the Chinese international student's emotional journey and a precise, affective atmosphere framing the student's migration from China to a Canadian university, an atmosphere that many student migrants themselves help to reproduce. Josh, Mike, and Susanne all expressed how initial feelings of isolation and confusion had to be replaced by self-reliance, and they made the point to interpret their own experiences as a difficult emotional journey through learning this lesson. As for Lily, her story reveals a considerable amount of confusion and frustration with having yet to figure out how to deal with the various roadblocks she sees to her academic success, and she still felt comfortable sharing such negative feelings. As such, Lily's negative state is also re-appropriated as a cautionary tale, and friends like Susanne attempt to help her move on to resiliency, which seems to be an important part of the journey. In this way, the emotional narrative of Chinese international students at Canadian universities takes the shape of key milestones in the migratory experience, and students help to interpret these milestones and make them productive in concrete ways, both for themselves and for others in the same situation.

More precisely, the performance of struggling and engaging with specific feelings becomes key to maintaining the coherence of the affective atmosphere to a much greater extent than do the differences in the individual experiences:

> *The actual content of feelings – or wishes, or fantasies, or actions – is not what distinguishes the false self from the true self; the difference lies in whether we claim them as 'our own.' This claiming applies to our outward behavior, our surface acting* (Hochschild 2003, 194-95).

Josh, Lily, Mike, and Susanne are all engaging with specific feelings related to the migration process, and they utilise these experiences as performances that help them actively identify as being part of this group of Chinese international students in Canada.

Various actors in authority positions also contribute to shaping the feeling rules and the issues they feel they should care about as Chinese international students in Canada. For Hochschild (2012, 219-21), this is in the realm of "wantology," which relates to the interest of various institutions in systematically re-defining what people want and should feel in order to fit those institutions' broader strategic designs. For institutions like the University of British Columbia and the University of Waterloo, the interest is in transforming Chinese international students into mainstream students and future contributing alumni. As proximate actors, they enter into contact in various ways with the skin of the collective to imbue the narrative of what Chinese international students want for themselves with a specific ideological bent through which they emotionally connect with and interpret activities such as improving their English language skills, understanding Canadian and Western cultural cues, and looking for employment in Canada after their studies.

Other actors who come into contact with the skin of the collective, such as governments, families, and third-party agents, have their own expectations about the journey. These expectations make their way, through students' own emotional labour, into understanding and giving meaning to the migration narrative. Here, the intent is not to distinguish between the authentic desires of student migrants and these desires as they are framed by other actors because the emphasis is on how the process of the transformation of the skin of the collective is reflected in the affective work that is performed by student migrants themselves. When unpacked, the emotional labour of student migrants shows how the cultural preferences, expectations, and ideological predispositions of these actors fit together. For instance, Josh, Lily, Mike, and Susanne all expressed feelings about the PRC and Canada. The PRC was framed as a source of nationalistic pride and deference in guiding most of the rational actions and emotional stances taken by Chinese students in Canada. This feeling toward the PRC is grounded in expectations that help "stick" together ideas of responsibility toward the nation, responsibility toward the family, and expectations of themselves. Speaking to how Chinese international students in Canada feel or are asked to feel about their home and host countries, the affective atmosphere created for and by these students contributes to making their own emotional justifications of their individually lived migration process, and helps them shape the feeling rules for other student migrants.

Conclusion

As migrants, Chinese international students at Canadian universities feel and are made to feel in specific ways about their experience of studying abroad. Through emotional labour, students make sense of their individual experiences and help shape a general migration narrative for students from the PRC in Canada. Focusing on the stories of two sets of friends, I discussed how dealing with specific feeling rules reflects a common experience and contact with the expectations of other actors involved in the process. Although not a representative study and limited in terms of understanding how other identity markers, such as gender and class, play into their experience, the emotional work of Josh, Lily, Mike, and Susanne is in line with what other scholars have documented. In various contexts, international students' unfulfilled desires and frustrations with the ways the host society operates serve as a starting point to help student migrants collectively navigate the unknown territories of academic life, one's sense of identity as/while migrant, and future aspirations (Collins et al 2014; Smith and Khawaja 2011).

A broader contribution of this study is that it connects the emotional journeys of student migrants to discussions about the management of emotions and feeling rules. It is unsurprising that the emotional contribution of market-based third-party actors, such as the agents hired in the PRC to help these students get admitted to a Canadian university, is vilified, while the contribution of family members through their expectations is framed positively as part of a "relief zone," an intimate place to be one's self away from the pressures of society (Hochschild 2003, 69). Hochschild argues that

making such a distinction between the contributions of these two types of actors allows students to distance their identities from the market-based interactions that are part of the reason for their migration, even though the third-party actor's contribution is just as influential as the family's contribution (Hochschild 2012, 222-24).

With a growing emphasis on the business of international education, the emotional landscapes of international students will increasingly involve third-party market-based actors, and may even influence how students understand the role of other actors who have yet to be seen in this light. As university strategies become similar to corporate strategies, students may increasingly interpret the emotional contribution of their professors and university to their experience as market-based. The emotional work of international students in interpreting the contributions can become a starting point in understanding broader societal shifts, and may shed light on the evolving responsibilities of market-based actors involved in the process, including universities.

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Migrants, Refugees, and the Politics of Immigrant Categorization

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Abstract

The 1951 Refugee Convention was established after WWII to protect those escaping persecution because of race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or social group membership. Although roughly three-quarters of all states are signatories and most states purport to defend the rights of refugees, in practice many who have been displaced due to persecution or fear are labeled as migrants rather than refugees and are consequently denied asylum. Using the cases of Haitians and Central American unaccompanied children, this paper argues that U.S. policies toward these two populations demonstrate the limitations of the Convention and the role of foreign policy in refugee policy.

Introduction

Literature on the seeking and granting of asylum often points to its long history, with World War II signifying the point when states recognized the need to formalize both the definition of a refugee and states' responsibility to grant asylum. The 1951 Refugee Convention, which was established after the Second World War, defines a refugee as a person who,

> *owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it* (UNHCR Convention and Protocol).

In other words, a refugee is a person who has fled his or her country to escape specific

forms of persecution. We can add to that statement, "and can prove it" since the burden of proof is on the refugee.

Refugees are entitled to basic protections under the 1951 Convention and the 1967 protocol, which removed the geographic limits that had restricted the 1951 Convention to Europeans escaping the persecution that accompanied World War II. After their arrival in their destination country, refugees can apply for political asylum. By law, refugees cannot be sent back to countries where their lives would be in danger (UNHCR 1977). Yet repeatedly, we observe instances in which refugees are defined as migrants – in many cases illegal migrants – and are consequently criminalized and repatriated. This essay discusses two cases that underscore the failure of both the Refugee Convention and receiving states to protect individuals who are fleeing danger. First, the experiences of Haitian asylum seekers in the United States illustrate that not all people who are facing a "well-founded fear of persecution" are granted asylum. Those who leave the island in unsafe watercraft and make it to the shores of the United States, or who manage to arrive on flights that they boarded out of fear for their lives, are placed on the fast track to deportation, often with the justification that their conditions are economic rather than political (Cartright 2006), with the outcome that a population that warrants asylum under the 1951 Convention is routinely denied that right. Second, heightened violent crime in Central America (Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador in particular) since 2012 has resulted in large movements of people from these countries, sometimes traveling in groups that have been referred to as caravans, toward the United States via Mexico. They too are largely emigrating out of fear, in this case fear of gang recruitment and/or intimidation. Exacerbating this movement is the drastic increase in the number of unaccompanied minors entering the United States from these countries via Mexico. Although the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) has responded by providing accommodations and care for the children, and various organizations – primarily charitable organizations – have provided legal services, many of the children have been deported to the countries from which they fled, despite the internationally accepted non-refoulement principle. A report compiled by William A. Kandel indicates that of the 12,977 cases of unaccompanied children heard in court between July 18, 2014 and June 28, 2016, 41.7% resulted in the children's removal from the United States. Access to legal representation plays a significant role in this figure, which declines to 13.4% in cases with legal representation and surges to 88.2% in cases without legal representation (Kandel 2017).

With recognition that the integrity of the Refugee Convention requires clear parameters and that not every individual living under difficult or potentially dangerous circumstances qualifies for refugee status, this article argues that the inextricable relationship between political and social conditions in Haiti and the three Central American countries is such that those who escape from these countries are in effect facing persecution. In the case of some Haitian asylum-seekers, the threat may be directly from a political entity, or in less direct cases, a loss of livelihood due to political affiliation. In Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, young people are routinely forced into gang membership, aware that resistance could end their lives or the lives

of family members. They are also profoundly aware of the limitations of their political systems, and the ineffective ways in which law enforcement functions, at one extreme being complicit in crime and at the other being woefully incapable of mitigating crime. While the Refugee Convention suggests that a refugee is someone who faces a direct threat rather than a more generalized fear of violent crime, political violence in Haiti is connected to political affiliation, while in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, gang initiation is tantamount to forced membership into a social group that is typically in conflict with other social groups as well as government and law enforcement. While I draw from existing literature to critique the limitations of the Convention, this paper furthers the debate by underscoring the direct impact of those limitations on actual lives, using the examples of Haitians and Central Americans to illustrate the human cost of a Refugee Convention that has inadequate reach.

Perspectives On The Asylum-Migration Nexus

The distinction between migrants and refugees has been fervently debated among scholars, some of whom consider the difference between categories of migrants to be central to the protection of the rights allotted to refugees. Other scholars, in contrast, consider the distinction to be both superfluous and misleading, since there is often considerable overlap between the conditions that force refugees and migrants out of their home countries. These opposing perspectives are sometimes observed within the same person, suggesting that the debate is more complex than simply a matter of making the distinction or not. For example, while Feller (2005) insists that refugees are not migrants and that conflating the two is detrimental to the protection of refugees, she also observes the blurring of the lines between the categories and notes that, "While the immediate causes of forced displacement may be readily identifiable as serious human rights violations, or armed conflict, these causes can overlap with, or even themselves be aggravated by, factors such as economic marginalization and poverty, environmental degradation, population pressures and poor governance" (Feller 2005: 27). Although she supports protecting all displaced persons, Feller insists on maintaining a firm distinction between migrants and refugees because from her perspective it is harmful to refugees to be categorized as migrants. Further, she sees the distinction as a way to grant refugees the rights to which they are entitled based on the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol, a perspective that is largely held by both states and international organizations (See Long 2003 and Betts 2010). Similarly, Koser and Martin caution that, "labels can impact directly on the protection and assistance that migrants receive from states and international institutions – in other words it can make a difference to survival chances if a migrant does or does not fit certain institutionally-defined migration categories" (Koser and Martin 2011: 9). While they acknowledge the complicated relationship among the various categories of migration, they maintain that the distinctions are necessary in order to accurately represent the conditions of each group of migrants. Furthermore, they argue that the dichotomy lies not simply between migrants and refugees, but also between refugees and other displaced persons. As they put it, "the situation of refugees is uniquely political – they are not just victims of a

set of failed policies and unfortunate conditions (economic crisis, drought); to put it crudely, somebody is out to get them" (Koser and Martin 2011: 17).

As compelling as the argument is that refugees face a distinct set of challenges that are largely political and should consequently be defined and categorized separately, other scholars argue that maintaining the contrived distinction between refugees and migrants is not helpful to either group, and is especially disadvantageous to refugees in the long term. According to Long, "a humanitarian discourse intended to protect refugees has in fact strengthened many states' restrictionist migration agendas, and prevented refugees [from] being included within migration-development discourses" (Long 2013: 5). Furthermore, the benefits granted to refugees and asylum-seekers address their immediate humanitarian needs, but often neglect their long-term integration into the host societies. Migrants, on the other hand, benefit from the assumption that their stay in the host society will be long-term or permanent, and the intentionality of their migration process often means that it involves a trajectory that includes acculturation, employment, political participation, and citizenship. Depending on the legality of the migration, this trajectory may be more or less circuitous.

In his essay on the labeling of refugees, Roger Zetter argues that the labels that refer to refugees, along with their varying qualifiers, are intended to not only manage, but also restrict, the movement of migrants and refugees. Although he is a proponent of keeping the two categories of human mobility separate, he is critical of the ways in which labels operate to the detriment of migrants. In particular, he argues that while refugees rely on the labels that states ascribe to them – labels that may determine life or death – states often develop bureaucratic and exclusionary labels for refugees that, rather than facilitate their humanitarian needs, support states' political agendas (Zetter 2007). This issue is evident in the discrepancy between the reception of Haitians and that of Cubans in the United States. Cubans have been granted refugee status in the United States since the 1959 Cuban revolution, and since the implementation of the Cuban Adjustment Act in 1966 they have had access to permanent resident status upon completion of a one-year period of residence in the United States. A 1995 revision of this act limited its application to those who made it to U.S. soil by excluding those who were intercepted at sea. Further, on January 12, 2017, the Obama administration ended the policy of automatic admission without a visa, while the Cuban government adjusted their policies to allow the repatriation of Cubans.

Despite this policy shift that is intended to restrict Cubans' access to the United States, the long history of U.S. receptiveness to Cubans in contrast with concerted efforts to prevent Haitian arrivals despite evidence of politically motivated human rights abuses and extrajudicial killings, suggests that refugee policies are driven by foreign policy rather than humanitarian needs. Cartright (2006: 116) observes that, "the number of political persecutions (including illegal incarceration, physical abuse, and even murder) was ten times greater in Haiti than in Cuba over the past decade." As Lennox notes, although the U.S. could have granted asylum to Haitians attempting to escape the brutal Duvalier dictatorships of the mid-late 20th century, they refused to grant asylum

or to even acknowledge them as refugees because of the Duvaliers' support for U.S. anti-communism efforts (Lennox 1993: 712). Recognizing Haitians as refugees would serve as an acknowledgement that Haitians were facing political persecution under a regime that the U.S. supported financially, militarily, and ideologically; and that the United States remains mired in Haitian politics (as it does with the politics of much of Latin America and the Caribbean) that limits its ability to intervene or to support citizens when they try to claim asylum in the U.S. As the relationship between the U.S. and Cuba became more amicable in the latter years and months of the Obama administration, there no longer appears to be a need to recognize Cubans as refugees.

Regardless of the side of the terminology debate that scholars support, the observation that the delineation between refugees and migrants is not organic and has not always existed is an important aspect of the discussion. Karatani notes that,

> Today, the demarcation of 'refugees' and labour 'migrants' seems to be hard and fast; the former are entitled to apply for international protection, whereas the latter are left to the discretion of the countries of their residence and employment. At the end of the Second World War, however, refugees, displaced persons, and economic migrants in today's terms were muddled within a mass of Europe's so-called surplus population. The task for international society then was basically to choose which of the two programmes was better suited to solving Europe's surplus population. (Karatani 2005: 517)

Kay and Miles make a similar observation, as they refer to the case of Eastern European workers in Britain during the mid-20th century to illustrate the equivocality of the distinctions between migrants and refugees. The Eastern European workers whom they studied were recruited from Displaced Persons camps in Germany and Austria to work in industries that were facing labor shortages. As Kay and Miles indicate, "By recruiting refugees to fill labour shortages, the scheme incorporated elements of both a labour migration and a resettlement programme, and the incomers could be seen as refugee-workers" (Kay and Miles 1988: 215). Today, the delineation between refugees and migrants is such that the former are likely to be granted residence and humanitarian aid in the receiving country, while the latter are likely to be either intercepted on their migration route or criminalized and deported upon arrival. While the category of refugees remains poorly defined on an international scale, at the state level the definition clearly serves the purpose of enabling states to maintain autonomy over their immigration policies while purporting to support humanitarian measures. Historically, the use of Eastern European refugees to fill Britain's labor needs under the guise of providing asylum suggests that this was the case then, while contemporary cases such as the deportation from the United States of Haitians or Central Americans who are fleeing persecution at the hands of political thugs or bona fide gangs suggests that little has changed. While different, the examples of the recruitment of refugees in Europe and the rejection of refugees in the United States both underscore the freedom that states have to tailor their refugee policies based on their labor needs, political climate, and/or foreign policy.

Betts, too, has observed that states tend to regard migrants and refugees as distinctly bifurcated groups of either voluntary economic migrants or refugees who fit the criteria stipulated in the 1951 Convention. Like other scholars discussed here, he argues that this dichotomy is not useful, and it fails to account for people who "fall between the gaps of this dichotomy" (Betts 2010: 364). As one approach to bridge this gap, he suggests survival migration, which he defines as, "persons outside their country of origin because of an existential threat to which they have no access to a domestic remedy or resolution" (Betts 2010: 362). Survival migrants, by Betts' analysis, include refugees, but also include others who do not fit the limited definition, such as those escaping environmental disasters or "failed states." He makes the important observation that the time and circumstances under which the 1951 Convention was developed have shifted considerably. The 1967 Protocol added geographic breadth and removed temporal limits, but evolving global economic, political, and environmental complexities warrant further consideration of the relevance of the way in which we conceptualize displaced persons. In his assessment of responses to asylum-seekers across six Sub-Saharan African countries, Betts observes that both national and international responses vary significantly, and largely depend on the asylum-seeker's country of origin. He describes the responses as being, "led more by politics than by a coherent and clear international normative and legal framework" (Betts 2010: 376). While he notes that survival migrants should theoretically be protected under international human rights law, he also underscores the absence of institutional structures to ensure that asylum-seekers have access to these rights.

These perspectives on the language used to define displaced persons illustrate both the complex nature of their status on one hand and the rights, obligations, and political meanings attached to identifying displaced persons as either refugees or migrants on the other. States and individuals have different motivations for embracing one category over another, and much of the ambiguity in assigning status is rooted in the language of the Refugee Convention. While there are indeed differences between the experiences of immigrants and refugees and consequently a need for distinction between them, I advocate a policy approach that recognizes the intersection between voluntary migrations and refugee movements, and does not exclude asylum seekers on the basis of experiences or characteristics that may mimic those of voluntary migrants.

1951 Refugee Convention

The Refugee Convention was created by states, for states, functions in the interests of states, and enables states to maintain autonomy over how they choose to define and admit refugees. The Convention does not grant asylum-seekers the right to enter any country, nor is there any structure under which the rights that the Convention establishes can be enforced. Although the 1951 Convention in large part forms the basis of the way in which refugees are defined, some states as well as regions have developed their own standards of defining refugees within the parameters that the Convention delineates. However, as Kourula points out, the inconsistencies in refugee

definitions across countries and regions can create challenges in refugee movements and in determining the obligations of states (Kourula 1997: 169). The contrast between the admission and reception of refugees in the United States and Canada and recent attempts by asylum-seekers to move from the former to the latter since the installation of the Trump administration in the United States illustrates this point. Canadian immigration policy has long included admissions categories for those who do not meet the criteria required to be considered convention refugees but are clearly in need of protection, such as those fleeing gang violence.

Although the Refugee Convention has largely had a positive impact on the lives of countless refugees and asylum-seekers, its weakness lies in the ambiguity of the language, which states are able to manipulate based on their own interests rather than the interests of the asylum-seekers. While states generally proclaim to adhere to some interpretation of the Refugee Convention, which suggests that refugees are entitled to protection, the Convention does not guarantee the right to enter any country; asylum is granted at the discretion of states (Orepeau and Nakache 2006: 6). In this age of heightened security concerns that are exacerbated by xenophobia, this may be considered a justifiable means by which states exercise their sovereign right to protect their territory and population. Jacqueline Bhabha refers to the balance between the defense of state sovereignty and the protection of human rights as "pragmatic." Still, she also acknowledges that it, "acts as a constraint on international law's protective impact on migration" (Bhabha 2011: 151). It is within this context of balancing state sovereignty with humanitarian protection that some states and regions have developed their variations on definitions of refugees, and their associated policies. With an understanding that these variations exist, the Executive Committee of UNHCR (EXCOM) has recommended that procedures to determine the eligibility of refugees include stipulations that:

1. *The first official, to whom the applicants address themselves, respects the principle of non-refoulement and refers cases to a higher authority;*

2. *There should be a clearly identified authority – wherever possibly a single central authority – with responsibility for examining and taking a decision on the requests in the first instance;*

3. *Applicants who are not granted refugee status in the first instance should be given reasonable time to appeal for a formal reconsideration of the decision, either to the same or to a different authority, whether administrative or judicial;*

4. *Applicants should be allowed to remain in the country during the whole procedure, unless the first instance establishes that the requests are clearly abusive* (Kourula 1997: 85).

While the UNHCR continues to make efforts to protect the rights of refugees, states are not mandated to follow these procedural standards, nor can they be. Furthermore, the

language remains ambiguous, allowing countries to determine, at their discretion, which requests are, for example, "clearly abusive."

United States Refugee Policy

The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) defines a refugee as someone who:

- *Is located outside of the United States*

- *Is of special humanitarian concern to the United States*

- *Demonstrates that they were persecuted or fear persecution due to race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group*

- *Is not firmly resettled in another country*

- *Is admissible to the United States*

(www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/refugees-asylum/refugees)

They describe asylum-seekers as persons who:

- *Meet the definition of refugee*

- *Are already in the United States*

- *Are seeking admission at a port of entry*

(www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/refugees-asylum)

The U.S. has classified refugees according to three main priorities. The first priority is given to individuals with "compelling persecution needs." Those who are, "of 'special concern' to the United States" based on their nationality are grouped at the second priority level. The tertiary priority level is granted to close relatives of refugees (American Immigration Council, 2018). At a glance, the U.S. refugee policies are fairly uncomplicated and parallel the objectives of the UN Convention. However, like the Convention, the challenge of the policies is that they are vague and leave much room for subjectivity and for biases either in support of or against refugees based on factors such as nationality.

Temporary Protected Status

Different administrations have, over the years, developed temporary protection programs for those who have been deemed to be in need of protection but did not qualify for asylum. Between 1960 and 1990, the response to these asylum seekers was a practice known as Extended Voluntary Departure (EVD), which, at the Attorney

General's discretion, temporarily prevented deportation of members of certain nationalities that were known to be facing strife (Frelick and Kohnen 1995: 342). Since EVD was non-statutory, its benefits, requirements, and recipient nationalities were varied based on the governing administration. Similarly, Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) was a non-statutory measure applied to citizens of particular countries who were considered in need of protection but did not meet the criteria to be refugees. Both were criticized for being rooted in U.S. foreign policy objectives (Frelick and Kohnen 1995). Temporary Protected Status (TPS) was established as part of the Immigration Act of 1990 as a statutory measure to serve a similar purpose of filling the gap between those who are voluntary migrants and those who are determined, based on the Convention, to be refugees. While TPS has been lauded for providing some asylum seekers with temporary, legal access to the U.S., it has been criticized by both proponents and opponents of immigration. As Frelick and Kohnen (1995: 345) note:

> In general, refugee and immigrant advocates are in favour of TPS because it provides safe haven to individuals who may not meet the legal definition of a refugee, thus filling a gap that previously existed in US law. However, some refugee advocates – particularly in Europe – express concern that temporary protection could increasingly be used as a substitute for asylum as a means of sidetracking otherwise eligible refugees who deserve and need permanent protection into a temporary status that will eventually expire. On the other hand, anti-immigration organizations express concern that TPS could give otherwise undocumented aliens a foothold in the United States from which they might remain permanently.

A fundamental limitation of this status is that it is a temporary measure that does not include a transition to legal permanent resident status. Given that the conditions that warrant this status could be prolonged, recipients could find themselves indefinitely in an indeterminate state. Further, as the Trump administration's recent decision to terminate TPS for hundreds of thousands of people from six countries illustrates, recipients are at the mercy of changes in U.S. administrations and political priorities. While TPS has served as a potentially life-saving measure for hundreds of thousands of people who have failed to qualify for asylum, the status still leaves them vulnerable and is not a substitute for asylum. A more nuanced and inclusive interpretation of the Refugee Convention would eliminate the need for stop-gap measure such as TPS.

Haitian Refugees

United States policy toward Haitian refugees and asylum-seekers is based on a rather binary assumption, that individuals are either political refugees or economic migrants. This clear dichotomy does not in fact exist, as political refugees often face economic challenges, blurring the lines between migration categories. Katy Long observes that, "a refugee is generally presented as a figure of humanitarian rescue, qualifying for protection only by virtue of the absence of any explicit economic aspirations" (Long

2013: 7). Conditions in Haiti are such that the political is inextricably connected to the economic. Further, even when Haitian refugees and asylum-seekers leave Haiti for decidedly political reasons, the poor economic conditions in which the country is mired lead U.S. immigration officials to assume that the motivation is economic rather than political.

The U.S. has a longstanding relationship with Haiti, which became the world's first black republic following the revolution that culminated in independence in 1804. In 1915, following multiple presidential assassinations and pervasive political instability, the U.S. invaded Haiti and launched a military occupation that lasted until 1934 when, rather than the intended stability, political chaos was perpetuated following the withdrawal of the U.S. marines, suggesting that the objective of political stability was not attained (Jeffries 2001). Although the immediate causes of the invasion included disputes over the Haitian National Bank and the U.S.-owned Haitian National Railroad, the ensuing occupation also served the purpose of consolidating U.S. control over Haiti (Bellegarde-Smith 2004: 98). Further, the occupation created in Haiti conditions that would make the country more receptive to a U.S.-driven development model that included U.S. imports, U.S.-owned manufacturing plants, and the assertion of U.S. influence on Haiti's leadership (Burron and Silvius 2013). In recent years, the U.S. promotion of its neoliberal economic development model in Haiti has been expressed through the installation and removal of a series of presidents, ranging from U.S. support for the Duvalier dictatorships to their wavering support for Jean-Bertrand Aristide, which was largely dependent on the extent to which he upheld or obstructed plans for the export-led manufacturing that U.S. and Canadian based agencies orchestrated (Burron and Silvius 2013: 520).

Haitian asylum-seekers have been making their way to the United States since the latter half of the 20th century, with their numbers swelling during periods of heightened political instability (Legomsky 2006) or brutal political repression, as was the case during the dictatorships of François "Papa Doc" Duvalier and Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier between 1957 and 1986. In response to the increased flow of Haitian asylum-seekers in the U.S., President Reagan in 1981 instituted an agreement with the Haitian government that permitted the U.S. to board Haitian vessels at sea to determine if passengers were attempting to migrate illegally. The agreement included a promise that anyone with a legitimate claim to refugee status would not be returned to Haiti. A study by the then Lawyers Committee for Human Rights (now Human Rights First) found that between 1981 and 1990 more than 21,000 Haitians found on vessels intercepted at sea had been returned to Haiti, while only six were granted a full asylum hearing (Legomsky 2006). The notoriously violent regimes of the two Duvaliers make these figures especially alarming, and raise concerns that legitimate asylum cases were disregarded.

While extreme poverty in Haiti is often cited as an indicator that Haitians are drawn to the U.S. for economic rather than political reasons, the parallels between heightened political repression and increases in emigration or asylum-seeking suggest otherwise.

For example, following the election of Jean-Bertrand Aristide in December 1990, the volume of boats leaving Haiti declined dramatically. However, the military coup that led to his ousting in September 1991 was followed by the murder, torture, and detention of hundreds of Aristide's supporters and accompanied by an exodus from the country (Legomsky 2006). As Legomsky notes,

> *That pattern – the sudden drop in boat traffic upon the election of Aristide followed by an equally sudden resumption upon his overthrow – strongly suggested, as refugee advocates had argued but as the US government strenuously denied, that the main impetus for the outflow was political persecution rather than economics* (Legomsky 2006).

Similarly, the U.S. Coast Guard recorded a significant surge in the number of vessels intercepted with Haitians on board following the ousting of Aristide in 2004 at the hands of the U.S. government.

Central American Asylum Seekers

While unauthorized immigration from Central America as well as other parts of the world has long been a concern in the United States, the recent wave that began in 2012 and ebbed by 2015 was particularly alarming because of the volume and the age of the population. Over a short time, the number of minors entering the U.S. without an adult parent or legal guardian multiplied dramatically; from an annual total of 6,000-8,000 prior to 2012, the number grew to 13,625 in Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 (October 1, 2011 – September 30, 2012) and 24,668 in FY 2013. According to the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol FY 2014 Border Security Report, 68,631 unaccompanied children were apprehended at the U.S.-Mexico border in FY 2014 (US Customs and Border Patrol 2014). While some of these figures include children arriving in the U.S. from a variety of countries around the world, the overwhelming majority arrived from Central America, particularly Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, because of the severity of poverty, violence, and political instability as well as their proximity to the United States.

The context of violence and trauma that Central Americans leave behind in their home countries underpins both their needs and their experiences within the U.S. Much of Central America has faced civil wars and authoritarian governments in recent decades, and emigration has been one of the responses to the ensuing violence. Even as the civil wars ended, people have continued to seek refuge abroad due to an increase in drug trafficking, which has emerged and grown as one of the most dominant social problems. The gangs that control the drug trade are responsible for much of the violent crime in Central America, and murder rates in the region are among the highest in the world. In 2016, El Salvador and Honduras ranked among the five countries with the highest violent death rates (McEvoy and Hideg 2017). In 2018, El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala had homicide rates of 51, 40, and 22.4 per 100,000, respectively, in contrast to the global average of 6.2 homicides per 100,000 (Dalby and Carranza 2019). From the height of the civil wars to the current rise of gang-related violence that confronts the

population, migration remains a common response for those who have the means and the opportunity to leave.

Gang violence is not isolated, but is entrenched in broader networks involving the political and economic structures (both legal and otherwise) of not only the countries in which gangs are present, but also others with which they are interconnected. As Jutersonke et al. argue, "Gang violence is ultimately embedded in a wider crisis of exclusion and spatial segregation. It cannot be conceived narrowly as a function of rational choice or endogenous factors isolated to gang-affected communities" (Jutersonke et al. 2009: 381). Scholars disagree on the number of gang members in Central America, with estimates ranging from 69,000 to 200,000; yet even at the lowest estimate, the number of gang members in the region exceeds the number of military personnel (Jutersonke et al. 2009). Most are concentrated in Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador. Neither gang violence nor the fear that it evokes qualifies citizens for asylum in other countries based on the Refugee Convention, although countries may at their discretion admit them under other categories of protection, as is the case in Canada. It is also true that many of the vulnerable Central American youth are forced into gang membership. Yet the role that gangs and the violence that they perpetrate play is superficial, as they cannot be divorced from the larger political context of Central America. Gang violence is, in fact, a symptom of the failures of law enforcement and of the political structures of these three countries. Much of the mass emigration from Central America can be attributed to the political, economic, and social instability that allows gangs to thrive. In 2009, the precariousness of the Honduran democracy became evident when president Manuel Zelaya was ousted by the military in a coup d'état that was widely supported by the national congress (Ruhl 2010). The fledgling Honduran economy, which is dependent on migrant remittances and volatile export crops, such as coffee and bananas, exacerbates the political instability and paucity of economic options. Guatemala, too, struggles to cope with pervasive, violent crime. Since its 36-year civil war ended in 1996, efforts to develop democratic institutions have faced impediments that are rooted in the war and its aftermath. For example, Isaacs (2010) argues that the establishment of an effective police force has been hindered by the presence of civil war-era military and police personnel who have histories of human rights abuses and have maintained old attitudes from that period of Guatemala's history, including vulnerability to corruption. As is the case in Honduras and Guatemala, poverty and a weak political system in El Salvador create limitations on the state's capacity to contain gangs, the most dominant among which are the rival Mara Salvatrucha and 18th Street gangs. The control that these gangs hold over neighborhoods is such that emigration is perhaps one of the few ways to evade them. Wiltberger (2014) suggests that the propensity to emigrate is so deeply embedded in Salvadoran society that it is widely considered to be a survival strategy among individuals and families and a development strategy on the national scale.

According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), an unaccompanied minor is a child under the age of eighteen who has been "separated from both parents and is not being cared for by an adult who by law or custom has

responsibility to do so" ("Guidelines on Policies and Procedures"). Unaccompanied migrant children face challenges that are associated with displacement – isolation, culture shock, limited funds, and unsafe conditions – and are even more vulnerable to other forms of malevolence, such as physical violence, sexual abuse, and human trafficking. While there is a basic understanding among scholars of the migration of unaccompanied minors[1], there is a dearth of data that can be used to inform policy changes that will reduce the incidence of migration among unaccompanied minors and/or reduce the risks for those who do migrate. The limited studies that exist underscore the urgency of this humanitarian predicament, as children who are escaping violence are further victimized on their journey, with the trauma continuing if they are apprehended upon arrival in the United States. U.S. Border Patrol apprehended nearly 25,000 unaccompanied minors in FY 2013, a number that grew from the 2008 figure of 8,000 (UNHCR 2013). Similarly, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) indicated a 77 percent increase in the number of detained unaccompanied minors in the first three months of 2012. A 2012 study by the Vera Institute of Justice outlines the process through which children are channeled through the justice system once apprehended in the United States (Byrne and Miller 2012). A 2010-2011 study conducted by the Fray Matías de Córdova Human Rights Center and the Human Rights Center of the Universidad Nacional de Lanús similarly concludes that there is a need for transnational, qualitative data to guide the development of appropriate policies (CDH & UNL 2012). A 2013 report by Kids in Need of Defense (KIND) offers a wealth of data on how and why unaccompanied children migrate to the United States and also underscores their need for international protection (KIND 2013). Based on the concerns and the reports of "crisis" that are heard within the U.S., it is evident that neither the journey nor the trauma ends upon arrival in the U.S., as they are perceived as people who immigrate illegally rather than as children escaping danger who are consequently in need of international protection. These studies primarily emphasize that the conditions in the home country threaten the lives of the children who migrate and warrant the risks that the children and their families take in their journey from Central America to the U.S. However, they also imply that there are underlying failures in governance that make emigration the most viable option for the children's survival.

The UNHCR report, *Children on the Run: Unaccompanied Children Leaving Central America and Mexico and the Need for International Protection* (UNHCR 2014) documents what is arguably the most comprehensive study on the subject. The report, which is based on data collected from interviews that occurred from May to August 2013, concludes that 58 percent of the children who were interviewed, "were forcibly displaced because they suffered or faced harms that indicated a potential or actual need for international protection" (p. 6). The report offers an in-depth analysis of the violence

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[1] For example, 2014 UNHCR Report, Children on the Run: Unaccompanied Children Leaving Central America and Mexico and the Need for International Protection; 2014 UC Hastings/KIND report, A Treacherous Journey: Child Migrants Navigating the U.S. Immigration System; 2012 Women's Refugee Commission report, Forced from Home: The Lost Boys and Girls of Central America; and Olga Byrne and Elise Miller, The Flow of Unaccompanied Children Through the Immigration System: A Resource for Practitioners, Policy Makers, and Researchers, 2012.

or threat of violence the children faced prior to their migration, which suggests that local government and law enforcement has failed to protect the children. This finding is compounded by the UNHCR observation of a 712 percent increase in asylum requests made in Mexico, Panama, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Belize combined by citizens of Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador between 2008 and 2013, suggesting that factors in the home countries may be the primary cause of the children's displacement rather than simply a desire to migrate to the United States. Accordingly, the report recommends that all unaccompanied and separated minors who are apprehended in the United States be screened to determine their international protection needs. Still, the Trump administration has imposed policies that further restrict access to asylum claims, such as the requirement to pay processing fees and the restrictions on work permits, both of which severely limit asylum-seekers' access to the even attempting to make a claim. In keeping with the UNHCR's mission to protect and support those who are displaced from their homes, the study focuses considerably on determining whether the needs of the children include international protection. Still, as Philip Marfleet laments, "Western states make the assumption that most applicants for refugee status are inauthentic – that they do not move under compulsion, seeking security, but are opportunists whose aim is to exploit potential host societies. Increasingly they also view refugees as 'illegals' – people who evade migration controls and who, placing themselves outside the law, abandon their rights to asylum" (Marfleet 2006).

Conclusion

While it is no secret that violence is pervasive in Haiti, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, the contention regarding the choice of terminology used to describe human mobility is rooted in the premise that the presence of violence in the home country does not automatically denote refugee status. The U.S. insists that refugees must prove that they face a direct threat of persecution based on social or political beliefs and/or affiliation. The overwhelming majority of unaccompanied Central American minors and Haitian asylum-seekers, lacking legal representation, have been unable to provide such evidence and are consequently not classified as refugees. Still, there have been legal cases that contest the distinction between economic and political hardships and blur the lines that lead individuals to seek asylum. For example, Lennox cites the successful case of Kovac v. INS, in which the court found that the plaintiff was indeed deprived of a livelihood due to political repression and should consequently be granted political asylum (Lennox 1993). U.S. practices toward Haitian and Central American asylum-seekers overlook the asylum-seekers' expressed fear of death. While there are indeed unauthorized immigrants in all the dominant migrant receiving countries, it is dangerous to conflate them with those who are escaping danger or persecution, i.e. asylum seekers. States, particularly those that are signatories to the UN Convention on Refugees, have an obligation to consider the cases of all who make a claim for asylum. Their systematic failure to do so, particularly in the context of Haitian asylum-seekers, implies that the policies and the accompanying practices serve the political interests of the receiving state rather than the humanitarian interests of the asylum-seekers.

The Trump administration's practice of detaining Central American unaccompanied minors (as well as accompanied minors) with the intention of deporting them rather than making a fair assessment of their need for protection indicates that the plight of these children has worsened in recent years. Furthermore, other immigration-related pronouncements by the Trump administration, such as the efforts to end Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) indicate the administration's hostility toward those who are deemed to have entered the U.S. in iniquitous ways. The administration continues to create barriers to legitimate channels for asylum, as indicated by the recent announcement that asylum seekers will be required to pay application fees and will face restrictions on obtaining work permits.

Sovereignty is important, but it doesn't have to exist at the expense of human rights. Karatani suggests that the distinction between migrants and refugees was "inadvertent rather than deliberate" (Karatani 2005: 517). Furthermore, he argues that the U.S. (and perhaps other states) sought to preserve their autonomy in developing a set of policies for refugees separated from their immigration policies. Zetter, on the other hand, contends that there is a conflation of the labels of "refugee" and "economic migrant," which results from the failure of governments to develop policies that reflect the different needs of refugees and economic migrants (Zetter 2007). The language that is used to define refugees suggests that motivations for migration are clear-cut. The reality, as the examples discussed here illustrate, is that migration is a much more multifarious process, and while there is a sense of desperation that accompanies refugee movements, there are often multiple layers of compulsion underlying the urgent need to leave one's country. Receiving countries need to recognize the complexity of processes and motivations inherent in human mobility, individually, through states' policies and practices, and collectively through a Refugee Convention that reflects the complex realities of the 21st century that may have been unacknowledged when the current Convention was developed.

Although this paper has focused on two groups entering the U.S., the question of the categorization or labeling of refugees is just as readily applicable to groups entering or attempting to enter Europe or Australia, for example. This was evident in the politicians' and news media's insistence on the use of the terminology of migrants rather than refugees to refer to the asylum-seekers entering Europe, particularly during the recent crisis of 2015, when unprecedented numbers of asylum-seekers arrived from war-torn countries such as Syria and Yemen. The measures that receiving countries take to evade their humanitarian responsibilities are comparable across regions. While I acknowledge the different experiences of immigrants and refugees and the consequent need for the distinction between them, I support an approach that recognizes the intersection between voluntary and forced migrations, and that does not dismiss those in need of protection based on their failure to fit neatly into these categories. While TPS served as a temporary measure, the Trump administration's termination of this status for hundreds of thousands of foreign nationals suggests the need for a more stable, long-term category of protection for those whose circumstances make them neither refugees nor voluntary migrants.

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Michael Gordon: "Bordering Through 'Crisis': Migrant Journeys, Border Industries and the Contestation of Control" *Migration, Mobility, & Displacement 5 (1): 39-58*

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Bordering Through 'Crisis': Migrant Journeys, Border Industries and the Contestation of Control

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Abstract

This article engages with the development and expansion of border industries in the global North. Recently, the state-led industries have grown in response to the rising number of irregular migrants contesting the borders of the global North. Situated within the constructed narrative of 'crisis', border industries are both materially and discursively produced as a direct response to the perceived threat of irregular migrant populations. The article interrogates the development of border industries from both the state and migrant perspectives. The purpose of the article is to examine not only the emergence of these border industries but to highlight the detrimental and deadly impact they continue to have on migrant journeys, ensuring the continuation of the structural and direct violence of borders. The development of these industries, particularly from the state-led perspective, is indicative of the violent, exclusionary practice and enactment of borders. The paper adds to the calls for rethinking bordering practices while simultaneously challenging the perpetuation and continuation of a hegemonic global apartheid regime constructed through state bordering practices in the global North.

Although much of the global community has experienced greater interconnectivity between states economically, culturally and diplomatically, a growing disconnect between the global North and South has evolved as legal opportunities for migration have diminished. Irregular migration[1] has emerged as a prominent issue within an increasingly globalized international system. States are experiencing the friction

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[1] The term "irregular migration" will be used in reference to the practice where migrants cross international state borders to gain entry to a state without state authorization achieved by going through the regular, documented and officially recognized administrative channels.

associated with large movements of increasingly irregular migrants[2] who resist bureaucratic processes of control that seek to manage their mobility while contesting the geographic division. The growing trend towards increasingly militarized and restrictive border policy regimes has been enabled through developing and reinforcing both legal and physical barriers to the global North. In light of mounting restrictions, this article is keenly focused on interrogating the evolution of state efforts to contest migrant journeys and the growth of border industries from both the state and migrant perspectives. The primary question guiding this research interrogates how has the discursive production of 'crisis'[3] and restrictive border practices enabled and encouraged the growth of both state and migrant border industries. Furthermore, what are the implications of these developments for irregular migrant journeys.

I argue the discursive production of 'crisis' has enabled the material expansion of border industries, particularly in the state-led sector, leading to an intentionally violent and detrimental impact on irregular migrant journeys. Conversely, this process has spurred the growth of migrant-led border industries in response as they contest the exclusionary performance of sovereignty as exemplified through state bordering practices in the global North. Despite the growing number of impediments for migrant journeys tied to the expansion and investment into the state-led border apparatus, irregular migrants maintain an active and effective resistance to this practice. Coupled with the direct violence materialized through growing investment in border infrastructure, the structural violence of borders reinforces a classed and racialized enactment of exclusion. The state practice of bordering has become a routinized form of both structural and direct violence against migrants through the development of state-led border industries in particular (Galtung 1969; Jones 2016; Andersson 2014). As a result, violence is increasingly understood as an immutable reality of highly securitized borders. In highlighting this reality, I seek to challenge current state bordering practices and performance of sovereignty, positing that they fail to appropriately respond to the needs of the global South, only further developing and entrenching a global apartheid regime (Richmond 1994; Sharma 2005). The notion of a global apartheid regime points to the structural division of the global North and South and is reinforced along racialized and classed lines that continue to marginalize 'subaltern' populations. In looking at the emergence of border industries, the distinction between the global North and South becomes ever more apparent as a structural, active and systematic effort to exclude.

My intention is to add to the growing body of literature surrounding the practice of both state and migrant-led border industries through outlining the interaction

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[2] I use the term "migrant(s)" in broad reference to individuals who cross international borders, whether they be asylum seekers, economic migrants or individuals who do not fit into traditional, legal categories. While the term as used here is not unproblematic and bares gendered, classed and racialized connotations (Mainwaring, 2016), the simplified notion is used for means of clarity and coherence in the discussion that will take place in the following pages.

[3] I use "crisis" in quotations in an effort to denaturalize the term within the broader reference to the border and in order to highlight the discursive production and performance associated with the word as it is often used by political actors, within the mainstream media and other popular outlets discussing migration. This is not to suggest that certain experiences of individuals could be categorized as "crisis" events, the goal here is to address the state usage of the "crisis" terminology as a means of producing a state of exception and emergency surrounding irregular migration and the borders of the global North and which operates to reaffirm the exclusion of irregular migrant populations.

and inseparability of these two distinct industries. I seek to critically engage with this process, highlighting the problematic, circular and paradoxical development of militarized bordering practices in the global North. The overarching contribution of this article is to clearly and unequivocally identify the violent logic and deadly implications of state bordering practices on the lives of irregular migrant populations. Enabled through the discursive production of 'crisis,' state bordering efforts ensure the persistence of violence, exclusion and segregation of the global South along classed and racialized lines.

I proceed by first, outlining the concept of border industries. Second, I address the discursive production of 'crisis' as an integral component to the development of border industries. Third, I highlight the expansion of border industries from both the state and migrant perspective through analyzing the experiences of both the United States (US) and European Union (EU) routes. Fourth, I examine the deadly implications of the border on migrant journeys, exposing the structural and direct violence perpetuated through state bordering practices. Finally, the article concludes by discussing the failure of current efforts to secure borders despite the remarkable investment in border industries.

Conceptualizing Border Industries

Examining the growth and evolution of border industries provides a valuable entry point into the discussion around global bordering practices. There are numerous characterisations of this concept with scholars such as Castles and his colleagues (2012) suggesting the process of interaction between state bordering efforts and irregular migration practices is constituted as a 'migration industry.' Andersson (2014) refers to this process as the 'illegality industry,' viewing the state business of bordering as a multi-faceted industry that is expressly targeted at combating irregular migration, with billions of dollars invested in contesting these journeys and securing the state. Conversely, De León (2012, 482) offers a more migrant-oriented perspective referring to the coalescing of migrant goods and services as 'border crossing industry.' This migrant led-industry has emerged to facilitate irregular migrant journeys while responding to consumer demands.

The (re)production of border industries remains a central, organizing concept in this article. I see this process as the establishment of two distinct industries, both state and migrant led, that work in an oppositional manner to the other. The symbiotic nature of this relationship, as situated within a globalized border regime necessarily ensures the persistence of these industries. First, from the state perspective there have been growing bureaucratic efforts to limit migration, primarily through restrictive visa regimes, coupled with a growing trend in development of physical protection, enforcement and defense of the border (Andersson 2016b). The practice has coincided with increased militarization and surveillance efforts surrounding state borders, which entails billions of dollars being funneled into counter-migration initiatives and spending on border

security infrastructure and hardware (Andersson 2014). Exorbitant state investment in the material performance of the border through the proliferation of border defense contracts, the market response of technological innovation tied to border security and the increasing labour requirements of the border underscore the existence of state borders as a highly commodified industry of exchange. Second, this expanding border industry complex also incorporates migrants seeking entry into the global North as entire migrant-oriented markets are established to facilitate increasingly difficult and dangerous journeys into advanced industrial states (De León 2015). Migrant border industries involve a diverse range of components including smuggling 'networks' as well as border crossing towns, catering to the needs of irregular migrants in order to facilitate the journeys and often operating in response to market pressures and consumer demands. The simultaneous expansion of these two industries is directly linked to the increasing restrictions associated with borders and mobility.

The increasing investment in state-led border capabilities serves to reaffirm the necessity and development of migrant-led border industries designed to circumvent the processes of control. States seek to control the flow of migration by performing and enacting the border through (re)defining the territoriality of the state, as migrants attempt to circumvent these efforts of exclusion (Rygiel 2011a). From this process, two distinct, yet deeply enmeshed industries constituted by states and migrants have emerged as a very direct result of the current organization of state borders and the performance of sovereignty. Conceptualizing border industries as a symbiotic process between states and migrant communities highlights the dynamic nature of this process while reasserting the notion of migrant agency and subjecthood into the discussion. It is important to see both state and migrant industries as separate and distinct sets of producers and consumers, yet inherently linked through state bordering practices. State efforts to control migration through exclusion and migrant efforts to contest that segregation, establishes this as reciprocal relationship between the two industries.

While border industries are characterized by the traditional manifestations of the productive economy through the exchange of both material goods and services, there is further non-material production that occurs (Peterson 2003). On the material level of border industries, the production of border hardware is seen through the investment in walls, motion sensors, security cameras among other aspects of the security apparatus. Conversely, the production of non-material goods is understood through the discursive performance and securitization of borders which enables further growth of the respective border industries as will be examined shortly. The performance of the securitizing discourse provokes a particular sense of necessity for response. Securitization is, however, broader than the simple declaration of a speech act. Rather, it operates as a more pervasive process that becomes embedded in many different aspects of state security efforts (Huysmans 2006). State-led border industries in particular are at once both a material and discursive practice, where the material border industry is enabled through the discursive production and performance of 'crisis.' This notion of 'crisis,' as will be examined in the following section, is central to the organizing logic of the border industry process, allowing for the growth and expansion of the material practice of borders.

Bordering Through 'Crisis'

Borders are sites of intense securitization, exceptional power, surveillance, policing and exclusion that have expanded in scope despite living in a supposedly globalized international system. Borders are no longer limited to the traditionally envisaged territorial demarcation of the state, but are increasingly conceived as part of a mobile practice and process of enactment (Côté-Boucher, Infantino, and Salter 2014). To understand how bordering practices are justified, it is instructive to look at how border industries evolve. One common thread in both the US and EU border contexts is the constant allusion to 'crisis.' Invoking notions of a border 'crisis' is problematic as it is through the production of 'crisis,' "that inevitably leads to calls for more money, more agents, more fences" (Graff 2014, 2). The rhetoric surrounding 'crisis' is linked to the conceptualization of irregular migration as an 'illegal' act. In particular, the discursive production of 'illegality' characterizes irregular migrants as physical, cultural and economic threats to the state, while efforts to reclassify migrants as 'illegal' is done in order to deny their legitimacy (Williams and Boyce 2013; Sharma 2005). Irregular border crossings become recast as 'illegal' migration, which are then tied to notions of criminality and presented an existential security threat to the state. When coupled with rising numbers of irregular crossings it allows for the rhetoric to be elevated to a state of 'crisis.'

Hysteria and violent practices of exclusion rely on graphic testimony and the performance of 'crisis' to justify bordering practices (Sanchez 2016). Media portrayals and graphic imaginaries of the state under siege invoke an emergency narrative that is alluded to in order to justify the increased enforcement of the border. Constructing a state of emergency generates favourable conditions for supporting increasingly militarized response to migration (Andersson 2016b). The practice of invoking 'crisis' as situated within a state of emergency narrative, however, increases the precarity associated with the irregular journeys. The emergency framework is produced through what De Genova (2013) articulates as the border spectacle. Through the discursive and visual production of the migrant imaginary, the 'illegality' of the individual is revealed, thereby reaffirming their exclusion from the state. The production of the border spectacle generates increasing need for inherently violent, militarized landscapes. Through what has been described as, 'a cat and mouse game' (Donato, Wagner, and Patterson 2008), the violence of the border is made visible and renders migrant bodies increasingly vulnerable to abuse and exploitation in a segregated global system.

Common in both the US and EU contexts, fear is produced and constructed through the perception of a migrant invasion where migrants are situated as an embodied threat to the preservation of state security and sovereignty (Huysmans 2006; Ward 2014). Through the production of the 'crisis' narrative surrounding irregular border crossings, migrant bodies become the physical embodiment of these notions of threat and fear. The anxiety associated with irregular migration is subsequently performed and materialised through checkpoints, surveillance cameras, warning signs and physical barriers. These material actions shape and produce an emotional response that becomes

focused into further demands for intervention (Williams and Boyce 2013). By enacting borders through the militarization of borderlands and erecting physical barriers to mobility, the abstract concept of borders are assigned practical meaning. The enactment of borders represents the translation of policy through a relational process between the state and migrants and reifies the state in the process (Côté-Boucher, Infantino, and Salter 2014).

Efforts in the EU have largely sought to construct the response to the migrant 'crisis' as a humanitarian effort. Curiously however, the humanitarian trope also necessitates military intervention, while depicting EU border guards as saviours of vulnerable migrants. The humanitarian characterization of the Mediterranean rescue missions represents an effort to legitimize the practice of the state in controlling migration and securing the borders by exposing the 'illegality' of migrant journeys (Musarò 2016). Constructing increasingly restrictive bordering practices in the interest of saving migrants represents a thinly veiled humanitarianism serving as justification for exclusion, simultaneously allowing for the reproduction of the very policies intended to deter migrant mobility (Brigden and Mainwaring 2016). This is tied to visual production of migrants being saved by border patrols in order to reaffirm their role as a paternalistic protector. The humanitarian rationalization relies on the positioning of irregular migrants as infantilized individuals while the state is represented as a saviour of the vulnerable. States perform the spectacle of the 'humanitarian battlefield,' necessitating a militarized response as an effort to both save and deter migrants through greater investment into border capabilities (Musarò 2016).

Bordering practices represent an opportunity for states to enact the border as the assumed prerogative to exclude migrants (De Genova 2013). There has been a distinct change in the construction, understanding and rhetoric surrounding, not only refugees and asylum seekers, but arguably migrants as a whole (Duffield 2008). The spectacle of migration helps to create an environment in which an increasingly militarized border becomes justifiable to the public as a legitimate means of preserving state sovereignty, despite increasing the precarity associated with migrant journeys. Indeed, efforts have been made to both discursively and materially construct the European continent as 'Fortress Europe,' yet migrants continue to come and die in the process (Mainwaring 2016). As Sharma (2005, 96) aptly suggests, the main result of state-led campaigns against irregular migration has served to "make illegalized migrations more dangerous." It is important to note that the causal factors behind the precarity of the journey are both paradoxically and inextricably linked to the presence of border security forces as attempts to control migration produce increasingly dangerous journeys (Little and Vaughan-Williams 2016). The production and performance of 'crisis' enables a favourable environment for increased border security that provides the fertile ground on which border industries can evolve and through which the militarized and structural violence of borders becomes ever more apparent. The 'crisis' narrative becomes integral to the development and expansion of both state and migrant border industries as the expansion of one industry necessarily leads to the growth of the other.

In examining the production of 'crisis,' it is important to ask the question: 'crisis' for whom? While tropes of humanitarianism are drawn on in order to justify the militarized intervention, it largely remains a 'crisis' of maintaining hegemonic authority in a globalized system. Drawing on Benjamin's (1989) notion of the state of emergency, the supposedly exceptional nature of 'crisis' has become an institutionalized norm for borders, the preservation of the nation-state and the continued subjugation of 'the oppressed.' Both 'crisis' and emergency are not to be seen as an exception, but rather the rule that facilitates the continued exclusion of non-western, 'subaltern' populations. States of the global North are not concerned with the 'crisis' of state sanctioned border violence (Jones 2016); unequal access of the global South in a globalized neoliberal economic system (Duffield 2007); destructive and violent colonial legacies (Mountz and Loyd 2014); or continual marginalization and subjugation of the 'subaltern' (Escobar 2011). No, this is a 'crisis' of advanced industrialized nation-states and the persistence of hegemonic dominance in a highly unequal international system. The expansion of state border industries is indicative of the effort to preserve the hegemonic position of the state under the guise of 'crisis' and highlights the structural violence of borders, which become manifest in the material efforts to exclude.

The militarized enactment of borders as produced through the constructed 'crisis' trope, legitimizes the expansion of border industries as acceptable and even necessary response to 'uncontrolled' migration. The implications of this action, however, ensures the persistence of both structural and direct violence against populations of the global South. Constructing 'crisis' as exceptional enables the justification for further investment into security infrastructure as part of the state-led border industries designed as a means of maintaining authority in a globalized international system. The production of 'crisis' is tied with calls for a more active response in order to protect the territorial integrity of the state. Through discursively producing an exceptional environment of 'crisis,' investment into border security becomes more palatable to the public as states seek to address irregular migration (Ackleson 2005). 'Crisis' paradoxically operates as an organizing logic for the development of state border industries. It is through performing the disorder and 'crisis' of 'unmanaged' migration that provides an opportunity for the growth of border industries as a means of both organizing and establishing control/order in an environment where migration is deemed to be disorderly.

The Border Industry

State-led Border Industry and Efforts to Secure the Border

For the past two decades, there has been a consistent build-up of the US border enforcement apparatus (Williams and Boyce 2013). In the mid-1990s, the US developed its border policy around the concept of 'Prevention Through Deterrence,' predicated on the assumption that heightened security capabilities and enforcement, particularly around urban centres would serve as an effective deterrent for irregular

migrants on the southern border with Mexico (Rosenblum 2012). It was initially believed that forcing migrants into harsher environmental conditions associated with desert crossings would serve as a natural deterrent for migrants. This logic however, has proven largely ineffective in curbing demand, while increasing the reliance on smugglers to facilitate irregular crossings (Cornelius 2001; Spener 2004). The policy has transformed the desert into a heavily militarized landscape of walls, fences and roads designed to impede the flow of migrants accompanied by growing surveillance, roadside checkpoints, planes and unmanned drones to contribute to the ever expanding scope of the border security industry (Williams and Boyce 2013). Efforts to secure the border, however, have been accompanied by a rising number of deaths as migrants take increasingly dangerous routes to evade the expanding border apparatus.

The EU has experienced a similar evolution in its efforts to control the border. Increased visa requirements, particularly for North Africans, lead to an increased number of irregular boat arrivals in the state beginning in the early 1990s. More recently, growing political instability in the Middle East as a result of protracted conflict has only served to supplement the rising number of irregular migrants (Andersson 2016b). Border controls have done very little to actually stop the flow of migrants, rather it displaces the point of focus somewhere else (Lutterbeck 2009). Andersson (2016b) highlights the contradiction in the EU mission to secure the borders suggesting that for many migrants who have travelled hundreds, if not thousands of kilometres, often fleeing extreme violence and suffering, the presence of fences, barriers or the sea will not dissuade them in their journey.

The commitment to securing the US southern border has come with significant material investment in border capabilities. The administration of border security in the US is divided among three institutions under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) – Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS), and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) (DHS 2017b). The CBP apparatus employs more than 59,000 customs officers and border patrol agents with an annual budget of approximately $16.4 billion, which is an increase of nearly $2.5 billion from the previous year (DHS 2017a). Despite the significant budgetary growth, a supplementary $100 million has been earmarked to recruit, hire and train an additional 5,000 new CBP agents (DHS 2017a). Border Patrol specifically, which is primarily concentrated on the southern border, grew from 9,200 agents in 2000 to roughly 21,000 by 2011, with the reported number of Border Patrol agents as of 2016 holding at around 19,800 (CBP 2016b). At present, there are roughly 3,200 border patrol agents in the Rio Grande Valley alone (CBP 2016a).

The investment in militarized capabilities of the US has been striking. The US has amassed a fleet of roughly 250 planes, helicopters and Predator drones, along with high tech surveillance equipment including cameras, motion and ground sensors to detect the movement of irregular migrants, both in urban and remote regions of the border (Boyce 2016; Graff 2014). In 2010, the process of increasing militarization continued with the Obama administration deploying 1,200 national guard troops to the border

regions. This was accompanied by signing "a $600 million emergency supplemental appropriations act to expand border enforcement, including 1,500 additional Border Patrol agents" (Williams and Boyce 2013, 910). The US has in effect, built a highly militarized border security and surveillance force with the expressed intent to stop irregular crossings.

The EU border industry has mounted a similarly remarkable build-up of the security apparatus. The budget for the EU border and coast guard agency, Frontex, has grown from a mere €19 million in 2004 to €143 million in 2015 (Andersson 2016b). Despite this significant 10 year rise, the 2016 operating budget had risen exponentially to approximately €232 million, while the proposed operating budget for 2018 tops out at €302 million in an effort to coordinate border enforcement across the EU (Frontex 2017). Furthermore, the EU has allocated 60% of its Home Affairs budget from 2007-13, which amounts to €4 billion to managing migration with €1.8 billion of that dedicated to an external borders fund while having spent roughly €11 billion in deportation since 2000 (Andersson 2016b).

The EU has also made a significant investment in border surveillance technology to monitor and control migration including costal radar systems and border fences, primarily in the eastern Aegean and northwest African regions. The European external border surveillance system (EUROSUR) has come with an approximated cost €1.4 billion being invested in defence industry procurement (Andersson 2016b). At sea, the Italian-led military-humanitarian naval mission, Mare Nostrum, was intended to both rescue migrants in distress and arrest smugglers, while stopping irregular entries into Europe and was estimated to cost €9 million per month alone to operate (Musarò 2016).

EU member states have also sought to externalize the scope of the border through tied aid with 'transit' states on the periphery of Europe. For example, Italy invested $5 billion in an Italy-Libya "Friendship Pact" in 2008 with the express intention of increasing the capability of the Libyan government to manage migration. Similar agreements have taken place between Spain and Morocco, and more recently with Greece and Turkey (Andersson 2014, 2016b). Funding for EU counter migration operations are included with this provision of aid and support for 'transit' states to address migration and point to the externalization of borders as part of the re-bordering process (Andersson 2016a; Rygiel 2011b). Despite the persistent investment in migration controls, the EU remains largely unsuccessful in stemming the flow of migrants into the region, especially given the increasing number of refugees seeking protection in Europe (Andersson 2016a). The efforts in the EU's 'fight against illegal migration' has drawn parallels to the ineffective nature of the 'War on Drugs' which is largely viewed as a costly failure on both the human and political fronts (Andersson 2016b). The implications of the EU border industry failure, however, has dire consequences for migrant populations seeking irregular entry into the region.

Enabled in part through the persistence of the 'crisis' narrative and reaffirming calls for

a bolstered security apparatus to control state borders, the counterproductive evolution of the border security industry remains a central piece in the efforts of the global North to control migration. The discursive production of the 'crisis' trope facilitates the growth of state bordering practices. The desire by states, as enacted through militarized displays of control over the border, is an effort to display and communicate to the citizenry that they control the proverbial gates (Nieuwenhuys and Pécoud 2007). The material practice of state-led border industries reinforces the violence of borders as enacted zones of exclusion and entrenches the segregation of the global South in a supposedly globalizing international system. The expansion of state-led border industries continues to have adverse impact on the lives of irregular migrant populations, while tremendous profits are made in the process. The state-led border industry is producing the 'crisis' environment it intends to curtail, through ensuring more precarious journeys for irregular migrants, which is then used to justify further highly profitable investments in counter-migration initiatives (Andersson 2014). Despite the obstinate failure, states have continued to funnel billions of dollars into border industries intent on stopping irregular migration. The coordination and expansion of state-led border industries has deepened the organization of the border regions as zone of exclusion. Paradoxically, however, despite persistent failure to stop clandestine migrant journeys, the continued investment in the border security apparatus has spurred the growth and expansion of migrant-led border industries.

Migrant Border Industry and the Contestation of Control

The emergence of migrant oriented border industries challenges the hegemonic authority of the state, operating as resistance and contestation to the growing state securitization of borders in an exclusionary neoliberal system. While the US and EU have responded to irregular migration through increasing investment in the border security apparatus, migrant-led border industries have evolved to counter increasing barriers to mobility, using smuggling[4] as a means to facilitate the irregular entry. Smuggling is a mechanism by which migrants seek to circumvent the efforts of the state to control mobility, with the act itself often motivated by both notions of help and profit and can be viewed as an emergent form of labour in the neoliberal economic system as a response to the exclusion from formal economic processes and state markets (Castles et al. 2012; Sanchez 2016). Serving as a reply and reformation of the illegality imposed on migrants by the state, smuggling shifts the conceptualization of labour and community formation processes tied to efforts to survive in the neoliberal economic system.

Smuggling operations compete for business through "'normal' competition at the levels of price and quality of service," who in many cases, are not professionals but

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[4] Smuggling is defined by the United Nations (2000, 54–55) as "the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or permanent resident." Sanchez (2016, 3) conversely outlines smuggling as "the criminal designation of the series of activities that facilitate the voluntary, assisted and negotiated travel of individuals into a country different than their own avoiding official forms of state control."

rather individuals assisting the transport of friends or family (Spener 2004, 303). Scholars have suggested that in some cases, migrant smuggling operations represent a "cottage industry" consisting of "mom and pop" style outfits to facilitate the process, either through the direct transportation of migrants but also through facilitating safe houses and sale of goods and services used by the migrant community in the journey process (Spener 2004; Herman 2006). Smuggling has even been viewed as a transnational service industry with firms of varying size and degrees of organization, often involving multiple actors, while remaining aware of their reputation and quality of service provided (Bilger, Hofmann, and Jandl 2006). The shifting realities of border crossing associated with a growing militarization of the border increase the reliance on smugglers to facilitate irregular migration (Donato, Wagner, and Patterson 2008). The good treatment of clients, increases the likelihood that facilitators will not be exposed as smugglers if they are caught by border patrol, and therefore it is in their interest to treat their clients favourably (Spener 2011; Bilger, Hofmann, and Jandl 2006). While abandonment and harassment can undoubtedly feature in the process, it remains counterintuitive, as to do so can impair the reputation, harming the ability to ensure a constant flow of customers and minimizing risk. The purpose is not to argue that the increasingly violent role of cartels or other organized crime groups is not problematic.[5] Rather, the intention is to disturb the homogenized, criminal imaginary of smugglers and suggest there is variance in the size and scale of smuggling operations as well as the experience for the individual.

There is a constant demand for the services of smugglers in response to increasingly securitized borders as assistance is required to facilitate the journey, creating new opportunities and markets for exploitation (Sanchez 2016; Spener 2011; Aronowitz 2001). Even in the non-traditional industries of irregular border crossing, profit-driven, neoliberal capitalist markets persist in response to the hardening of borders. Smuggling represents a complex market with both small and large service providers willing to offer their services to paying customers. The cost associated with smuggling has risen as the border apparatus evolves, increasing the precarity associated with the journey (Gordon 2015; Vogt 2013). The rising costs tied to irregular migration makes smuggling a lucrative industry and encourages the development of techniques and knowledge in order to circumvent the barriers and maintain a profitable business.

The development of migrant-led border industries have become manifest in other visible ways. As smuggling has become a major industry, border towns such as Altar, Mexico, have developed as staging grounds for migrants attempting to cross to the US. The evolving border industries associated with Altar, draws in coyotes, vendors and

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[5] I am not trying to simplify, sanitize, nor romanticize the efforts of smugglers, which can be a violent and exploitative experience for migrants. The purpose of the discussion of smuggling is to highlight how migrant-led border industries are developed in response to the increasingly restrictive attempts to secure borders, which in many ways necessitates some form of assistance in an effort to facilitate the irregular border crossing process. The relationship between migrants and coyotes has become more complicated as there is an growing involvement of drug cartels in the smuggling process which has been tied to both rising levels of violence and monetary costs associated with smuggling. The rise in monetary cost means it is increasingly difficult for individuals, particularly from the poorest states of Central America, to be able to afford smuggling services, only furthering the precarity of their journeys as they may attempt the journey without assistance (De León 2012).

manufacturers of specialised goods such as clothing, food, water, or shoes needed for the migrant crossing, transforming the town into a veritable migration hub (De León 2012). In Altar, for example, a town of roughly 9,000 people, there are six water-bottling plants that produce the bottles most commonly used by irregular migrants to the US. Interestingly, migrants began painting or concealing the traditionally used white jugs in burlap sacks in the belief that it would help reduce detection by CBP. The industry responded to the migrant needs, however, by producing the same product but with black plastic as a result of migrant preferences (De León 2012). Both the licit and illicit markets adapt to the needs of migrants, showing a responsiveness from industry to address the needs of migrant populations with numerous other towns experiencing a similar border industry evolution (Anderson and Salas 2016; Taylor 2016).

In the EU, there is a similar development in relation to the increasing securitization of the border. Mainwaring and Brigden (2016, 247) suggest that, "A political economy of transit emerges in the migration corridors, as shopkeepers and food vendors tailor their services and ware to the needs of a transient population. Archipelagos of motels, smugglers' drop houses and humanitarian shelters link migration corridors, providing respite for weary travellers." As Andersson (2016b, 1061) notes, "given that smuggling is a market driven by rampant demand, punitive measures only tend to drive business further underground while new risks are transferred downwards from provider to client." State-led efforts to control the border have played a key role in the development of new migrant-led industries as individuals seek to circumvent the barriers and control mechanisms that operate to limit the mobility of "subaltern" populations.

Border industries from both the state and migrant perspectives do not operate in isolation from one another, but rather are inextricably linked in the process and production of these industries; the existence of one, feeds the reciprocal growth of the other. The reactive response by states signals an effort to preserve the structures of exclusion and inequality as typified by the strict enforcement of the border. The continuation of physically and structurally violent state-led industries is implicated in the increasing death and precarity associated with the borders of the global North. There is a certain adaptability of migrant-led border industries to the increasing pressures of state-led industries as the discursive production of "crisis" has fostered the expansion and materiality of border industries. The performance of sovereignty and subsequent migrant response has ensured a circular relationship persists in the violent enactment of the border, embedding both structural and physical barriers for irregular migrant communities.

Border Industries, Death and the Migrant Journey – The Persistence of Violence in a Globalized System

Understanding the negative impact and violent implications of the state-led border industry is integral to challenging the ontologized nature, practice and policy of borders. Despite rising death tolls, attacks against migrants and anti-immigrant sentiment,

negative migrant experiences have done little to deter migrants crossing (Slack and Whiteford 2011). The transformation of borderlands into militarized zones of exclusion through greater investment and expenditure in securing the border has resulted in deadly consequences for irregular migrants. Deaths associated with the US border from 1994 to 2009, have been estimated at approximately 5,600 as migrants die from drowning, hypothermia, dehydration, or heat stroke. Despite the deterrence efforts, there is little to suggest that there has been any substantial reduction in migration (Castles et al. 2012). Particularly during the summer months, the death toll rises as physical barriers, primarily located along urban areas of the border forces migrants into more remote and rural areas where they contest the rugged terrain in an effort to evade detection as outlined with the perverse logic of 'Prevention Through Deterrence' (Spener 2004; De León 2015).

In the EU, an unintended consequence to the development of the illegality industry, has created further demand on both sides of the migration control equation (Andersson 2016b, 2014). As state-led efforts demonstrate, policies of exclusion promote precarity in the journey and create an increasingly fragmented, non-linear, social process of negotiation and renegotiation for irregular migrants (Collyer 2010; Koser 2010; Mainwaring and Brigden 2016). The consequences of these maneuvers have been similarly dire. Over 20,000 people have died in the Mediterranean in the past two decades, as the EU now has the dubious distinction of representing the deadliest migrant destination in the world (Musarò 2016). As border controls continue to increase and journeys become more precarious, the death toll in the Mediterranean continues to rise with nearly 3,800 dead in 2015, rising from approximately 3,300 in the previous year (IOM 2016). Current estimates in the Mediterranean are on pace to at least match last year's totals, with the recorded number of deaths surpassing 2,000 on June 20, 2017, World Refugee Day (UNHCR 2017; Dearden 2017). Efforts to secure the border have not been able to address the structural aspects of the migration industry that are spurred by growing inequality and exclusion as the global North only responds with short term solutions to these issues (Andersson 2016b). The temporary, hot spot approach, only serves to put out small fires without addressing structural inequality between states. While EU officials managed to "close off" the viability of migration routes from North Africa to the Canary Island and into much of Spain, it only shifted the routes into the Central Mediterranean (Lutterbeck 2009). At present, there are similar experiences in Greece, as the closing of borders forces more people into the sea. It is the misdirected focus of counter migration efforts that embolden smuggling, force more dangerous clandestine routes, and amount to an unwinnable battle against irregular migration (Andersson 2016b).

In both the US and EU, the prevailing mentality of ensuring precarious border crossing is a direct effort to shirk the responsibility surrounding the deaths of irregular migrant populations. Through presenting the deaths associated with irregular crossings as an unfortunate reality of "illegal" and dangerous crossings, it distances the responsibility of the state and its implication in the systemic deaths of irregular border crossers. The nefarious effect of this mentality positions the state in such a way where government

officials are able to argue the harsh and dangerous environmental conditions were responsible for the deaths of irregular border crossers, not the violent bordering practices that deliberately produced increasingly precarious journeys. Indeed, it provides the "moral alibi" that state sanctioned policy did not kill vulnerable migrants, harsh environmental conditions did (Doty 2011). The environment and physical characteristics of the borderlands become employed as an active participant in the defence and security of the border despite the seemingly apolitical characterization by the state (Nyers 2012). However, migrant deaths are not an unfortunate reality of irregular migration, but rather the direct and intended consequence of state efforts to control the border. Instead of addressing the failings of current border policy efforts and the violent practice of securing the border, state officials are willing to continue to express disbelief at the number of individuals who die, without acknowledging the role of the state and the implication in the deaths of migrant populations.

The violence associated with the border and enabled through the production of "crisis" reinforces a hegemonic global apartheid regime predicated on the exclusion of the global South. Achieved through, "maintaining global inequalities insofar as it maintains separate social, political, and economic spaces in the world-system" (Spener 2011, 117), "crisis" becomes the vehicle through which exclusion is justified. The current approach to borders as a militarized means of exclusion contributes to the creation of a new post-colonial apartheid regime both materially and economically (De Genova 2013). Immigration control has become a means of ensuring hegemonic, planetary order through controlling the mobility of "subaltern" populations as states of the global North have established and maintain the separation from the South through control over migration and security (Duffield 2006; Hyndman 2009). This contradiction underscores the logic through which states of the global North have approached globalization. Marked with different rules for different actors despite the appearance and rhetorical efforts to espouse equality in access to global markets (Andersson 2016b), the persistence and expansion of classed and racialized exclusion – including the deaths associated with this exclusion (Jones 2016) – becomes evermore apparent as a central organizing logic in the global system. The production of "crisis" and the continuation of structural violence through the embeddedness of a global apartheid regime, produces precarity and violence on migrants involved in clandestine journeys due to the restriction of their mobility.

Conclusion

Castles and his colleagues (2012, 145) argue that "migration should be seen not as a threat to state security, but as the result of human insecurity that arises through global inequality." Approaching migration from a securitized perspective, predicated on a misleading trope of "crisis," fails to see migration as inherently structural and cannot be fixed through punitive approaches to migration control (Andersson 2016b). Examining border industries reveals the relationship between the state and migrants as policies of exclusion and drive the growth and development of the respective industries. The

practice of bordering remains highly problematic as it increases the precarity associated with the irregular migrant journeys. The unwavering commitment to the security narrative and the production of "crisis," coupled with the obfuscation of state's role in migrant deaths, will continue to lead to further, more substantial investment in border industries capabilities.

The circular and paradoxical nature of border industries has been highlighted throughout the article, suggesting that efforts to control the border are met with increased innovation and resistance from migrant populations. This contributes to greater state efforts to control borders in a seemingly never-ending process (re) negotiation of the border and efforts to secure the perceived territorial integrity of the state in a globalized era of increased interconnectivity. There is a need to critically rethink borders in a supposedly globalized system. The perverse logic that currently frames the understanding and performance of sovereignty is antiquated and desperately needs to move beyond the inside/outside logic that has served to entrench classed and racialized segregation in the international system. Embedding barriers, both physical and structural, remain intact ensures the violence of borders will persist and the marginalization and deaths of irregular migrant populations will continue.

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"Does it matter where they come from? This is the duty of humanity"[1]

Iván Győző Somlai

Iván's career with universities and private consulting has encompassed development cooperation around the globe. Be it strengthening local planning with indigenous communities; improving extractive industries through better governance; uplifting suppressed minorities; improving social services delivery, Iván approaches each opportunity collaboratively, with sensitivity to cultures, religions, ethnicities and genders and true local needs. Coming himself from a refugee background, his empathy towards displaced populations is exemplified through his facilitation with humanitarian and disaster response programmes, conflict mitigation as well as human trafficking publications. Iván is the Director of Ethnobureaucratica and is on the Editorial Board of the Pakistan Journal of Peace and Conflict Studies.

Abstract

The author describes his personal experience as a young refugee from a revolution in Europe, through his later intimate contact with three refugee communities in the course of decades of work in Asia, and reflects upon the greater context of the numerous issues impacting on decision-making and enveloping the sphere of refugees. Especially in the current tide of millions displaced, it is not possible in times of crises to simply segue in an attempt to harmonize the exceedingly complex situation. All components of the inter-related issues and results, namely causes of flight, reception outside their home countries, plans for resettlement and actual resettlement, as well as retaining some level of communication with those left behind need to be understood through improved, proactive planning and preparation.

Introduction

Through personal experience and reflection, I argue how, for a holistic understanding of refugee issues, there needs to be an understanding of the causes for fleeing, the trauma of the escape itself, the importance of how one is received, the preparation for resettlement and the integrative encouragement in the receiving country. My personal recollections and contemporary feelings also attest to the everlasting deplacé imprint that could remain with one, sometimes for life. While the process and format of my personal exposition had been my own, inherently valid reflection and mental process emanating from family marginalia and memories, I do wish to thank the anonymous reviewer who brought to my attention coincidentally and considerably related research and documentation done on personal testimonies and narratives in contexts of

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[1]Nereli olduklarinin önemi var mi? Bubir insanlik görev! Turkish poster quote from the 2015 Japan-Turkish co-produced film "Ertuğrul 1890 - Kainan 1890".

Keywords: refugee, migration, immigration, Hungary, Canada, Nepal

emotionally riveting trauma (e.g. Edkins, 2003 and 2004; Pratt, 2012; Pratt, Johnston, and Banta, 2015). These and other writings have helped me bridge an oft perceived gap between existent wider literature and the compulsion for personal divulgence.

The author with his mother in Hungary 1955

I was a refugee. Hungary, October-December 1956.

Before my journey began, I recalled daily warnings by my parents to watch very carefully what I said in my grade 3 class at Pannónia Public School to "that boy," who happened to live one floor above our apartment (we, in #3, 5th floor; the boy and his parents, in #3, 6th floor); and whose father was known to be with the dreaded AVO (Államvédelmi Osztály, the State Security Department), the secret police. Nazi control had been replaced by Soviet control. But authoritarianism seemed analogous to most of the hoi polloi; and at some point, collective patience had run its course against the AVO as well as the Soviet heavy hand. The Stalinist forces invaded and tried to protect the government from the practices of the security services (that boy's father was among the hundreds lynched from trees in the street in the intoxicating turbulence of Soviet tanks, cannonades against churches, radio stations, apartment buildings, government offices); and the demonstrations, invectives, counter efforts with Molotov cocktails, rifles, grenades and reasoning with the Soviets when their overwhelming force became imminently futile.

The revolution-in-progress further created distrust and had impeded schooling, safety, mobility, commerce, health and other social services and distribution of essential goods. Even before the uprising we depended on capturing pigeons on our kitchen window sill to supplement our diet. In the maelstrom of an increasingly violent revolution and profound uncertainty, my parents decided to attempt an escape, rather than risk ostensible incarceration or extermination as happened to many of our family members during World War II.

On November 4th at early dawn in a radio broadcast, Prime Minister Imre Nagy pleaded with the world - repeatedly until 08:00 hours when all stations were shut down by the Soviets - to help counter the overwhelming Soviet incursion and its concomitant strangling of all facets of life throughout the country, but to no avail. Aside from requesting detailed reports and encouraging dialogue, no country, no organization, certainly not the United Nations....no one came to help.

Deploring the exacerbating repression, knowing that sooner or later our attempts to flee would result in consequences once Soviet-inspired total control would be established, my parents were hastily seeking options to leave. Such a decision was not made easily. A whirlpool of memories, balancing of mind and heart, logic and irrationality made a dizzying exercise out of cogent decision-making.

Whom do we tell or ensure we do not tell?

How much to tell me and to trust me not to speak about it? (After all, I was a chatty third grader, bound to have overheard related whispering at home).

What to take?

What if we fail? What might happen wherever we may be caught? Would we be allowed to return to our home? Could my parents resume previous work?

Is the risk worth taking?

Would the future be really better elsewhere?

In the end, as peritraumatic dissociation sets in, a decision is made to flee.

As inconspicuously as possible, we left our apartment in Budapest on December 13th pretending to visit relatives. This meant carrying virtually nothing but some personal papers and photographs. We took a train to a village about 2 kilometres from the Austrian border. Arriving in the late evening, along with two other families who obviously had the same idea, our nervous and chilled group walked toward a fortuitously tall crop of corn. In the distance was a single light: the Austrian border.

Proceeding slowly, silently, eyes fixed on that distant light of liberty sometimes dimmed by a gradually engulfing fog, there was no other sound aside from unavoidably brushing against the stalks. Until.

Until, in Hungarian we heard "*Állj! Fel a kezekkel, vagy lövünk!*"—Stop! Hands up or we shoot! Three soldiers confronted us about 100 metres from the border and immediately shot flares up to alert their base that some fleeing citizens had been captured. In the next hour and a half, in drizzling rain, wet, tired while awaiting return signals, the soldiers and some of the adults in our group were chatting. One of the soldiers, as it turned out—the one who shot the flare—was born in Liptovský Svätý Mikuláš, Slovakia, once part of Hungary up to the Treaty of Trianon in 1920, but more importantly, where my own mother was born. A bit more sharing of memories led to some mutual

sympathy and the soldier's apology for what he and his comrades had to do, especially after having alerted their base; after which he and his comrades had no choice but to take us back to their barracks, back 3½ hours through that maze of glorious corn to the office where we were documented and released to return to Budapest. Because of the large number of people attempting to escape, there was no room to lock everyone up; it sufficed to document those captured and then deal with them later. Taking an early morning bus back to Budapest, we arrived at our apartment building: imagine now the consternation, the trepidation in seeing on the building's bulletin board a sarcastic message: "Greetings to Mr. Somlai, the free world's brave citizen." Decapitation of AVO did not mean the elimination of spies! The very next morning at 8 o'clock we were called in to a government office for an "interview."

A new opportunity came December 16th to join three other families in a truck driving legally to the Austrian border with a truck full of apples for sale. At least that was what it looked like from behind, where—at the back end of the vehicle—three rows of boxes full of apples were stacked to the roof; the remaining space was crammed with twelve people. I cannot remember all the checkpoints: there had been perhaps four. But we did sail through them all. Until.

Until what became the last checkpoint: to this day, I clearly recall a Russian soldier opening up the truck's side panels, peering in whilst holding up the panel and smiling at us. Once again we were shuttled back to yet another barrack for a repeat documentation and for possible later retribution. Returning to our tiny apartment, we found it already occupied by another family! Our choices had instantly dwindled. We somehow made do with a one-night cramped, nervous and absolutely uncomfortable joint accommodation with people we did not know and could not trust.

The next day, December 17th, an alternative was thankfully offered by the same truck driver: he would drive again to the border, using Russian license plates, paying off all guards along the way and noting what times they would be on duty; if it worked, he would immediately return to Budapest to pick up the previous group, supplemented by yet another two families, so as to arrive at the border by nightfall.

For him it worked. On December 18th, the now 16 desperate freedom seekers piled in, myself and parents with the driver, our compatriots behind us in the open backed truck. Being so visible created an ambivalent, confused emotion: without apple boxes to hide us, it may appear as though we had nothing to hide and were travelling presumably legally; but the visibility likewise exposed us as potential targets in any ensuing encounter "in the wrong place at the wrong time." However, we did progress. Checkpoint No.1: flagged through. Checkpoint No.2: after brief pleasantries, permitted to continue. A long stop in Győr allowed for a meal and a calculated continuation in the dark to arrive at times the paid-off guards were supposed to be on duty. Checkpoint No.3: Allowed to pass. Until.

Until Checkpoint No.4: an unexpected, unscheduled Russian Colonel! It is amazing what one can remember from that age: the driver, left arm sitting on the open window,
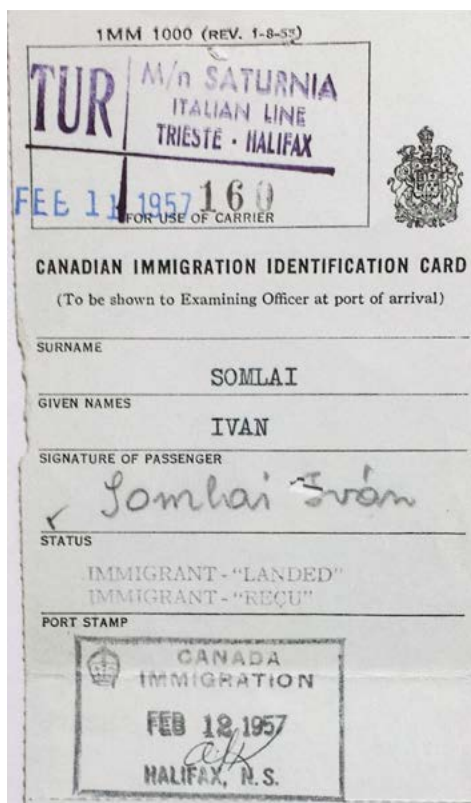
The author's immigration document issued on landing in Halifax, N.S. in 1957

fiddling with his silver watch, the Colonel eyeing it, a silent understanding, the gifting, the grateful Colonel then waving us on.

Within about 20 minutes we stopped. It was December 18th, close to midnight. Our driver said we were inside Austria, at a small village called Halbturn. Everyone alighted. A coincidental shooting star marked our arrival to freedom. Relief was palpable, yet unexpected tensions began to arise: we had nothing, aside from some salvaged photographs and no convertible currency. And now what?

Subsequent to local documentation later that day on December 19th, we stayed at the Pension Maxi boarding house, at Seilerstätte 17 in Vienna I. From January 11th, having fortunately received permits for Canada, we were shifted to the Canadian administered Wiener Neustadt Refugee Centre, an old aircraft hangar already hosting several hundred people of the over 200,000 Hungarians fleeing to Austria. Fortuitously, "(i)n response to public pressure, the Canadian government implemented a special program, offering the Hungarian refugees free transport, instead of loans. More than 37,000 Hungarians were admitted in less than a year" (Brief History, n.d.). While we had relatives in Italy, France, England and Austria, my maternal grandparents and uncle had already settled in Canada following their harrowing escape post World War II. We stood in line for 2-3 hours and signed for some necessary items such as shoes, winter coats, a handbag for my mother and sundry clothing, all donated via the American Joint Distribution Committee.

We continued on January 22nd by train to Trieste, Italy, and boarded the ocean liner Saturnia on January 23rd, 1957 bound for Halifax, landing there on February 12th. Soon we were on a train to Montréal, our destination for a renewed life.

Interactions with Tibetans, Bhutanese, Afghanis 1976 - 2011.

During my forty years of involvement throughout Nepal since 1976,[2] I had lived near Tibetan refugee camps and interacted with shopkeepers and trading caravans in both rural and urban settings in Kaski, Mustang, Solu Khumbu, Rasuwa, Kathmandu and Lalitpur Districts.

The author chatting with Tibetan traders in 2008

Whilst working in the northern border areas for over a year, I came across many ailing refugees who had, at considerable risk trudged through ice, rocks and snow on bleeding feet and frostbitten extremities to exhaustedly cross the high altitudes to assumed safety. They were lucky; some of their compatriots were arrested and deported by the Nepali military. Others managed to keep travelling to Kathmandu or eventually to Tibetan communities in India. Some recalled fellow refugee aspirants being shot by Chinese border guards. Seeking freedom has costs: leaving families; enduring possible topographic and physical harm en route, as people have little choice but to cross high passes through which altitude and snow conditions can rapidly debilitate them; separating from cherished personal effects; heading into an uncertain future; relentless eternal longing for one's homeland.

As in any refugee community, some of its members are quite visible while others remain out of sight. Most tourists engage with the more successful segments; in Nepal, this means largely carpet, thangka[3] and jewellery vendors. Yet there are thousands under the radar who suffer from sustained poverty and inadequate social support. One common theme amongst most refugee Tibetans is their longing for their lost homeland.[4] While

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[2] By the end of two years as Game Plan '76 Manager and Assistant Coach of Canada's Olympic Water Polo Team, I was getting ulcers from stress relating to the intense internal bickering, politicking and selfish decision-making by the sport's governing body. The ensuing corruption within the Olympics led me to a life-changing post-Olympic epiphany: a spiritual/physical rejuvenation was essential through vigorous mountaineering and 3 months helping at the United Mission to Nepal School in Pokhara, Nepal. That, in turn, begat my intense interest in the Himalayan world, and related academic pursuits and consulting with universities, companies, NGOs and governments.

[3] Tibetan religious paintings, usually on canvas.

[4] The concept of "homeland" elicits diverse understandings, depending on: length of residency in host country; ages and generation of migrants; what had been left behind; desire and ability to integrate; fit of knowledge and skills in host country; linguistic ability; cultural comfort, etc. Tibetans, in particular, more than most other cultures, receive extraordinary amount of support from the international community due to their maintaining a functioning "Government-in-Exile" in Dharamshala, India (which I also visited) coupled with a sustained revitalization of Buddhist and Tibetan spiritual and cultural practices throughout the globe and drawing adherents from western societies.

refugee identification cards had been availed to those arriving between 1959 and 1989, many chose to retain their exiled status with the rapidly fading hope of seeing and resettling in their birthplace, or by now their parents' or grandparents' birthplace. Citizenships have been difficult to obtain, as "Nepal is not party to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 protocol" (Gamble and Ringpapontsag, 2013; Ministry…, 2014; UNHCR, 2014; Department…, 2013), and has no laws concerning refugees or asylum seekers (Ministry, ibid); therefore, "refugees in Nepal have no legal status and are viewed as foreigners and non-citizens" (Tibet Justice, 2002) without Nepali citizenship. As a result, Tibetans are unable to legally own property or a business (International Campaign…, 2012; Department of State, ibid; Human Rights, 2014) nor even get a driver's licence.

Reality can take a lifetime to sink in….to be absorbed, reflected upon, analysed, understood, to be rejected or accepted or modified; and to embark on changes to synchronize the new reality with one's life! Tibetans keep hoping to still return to their homeland; concomitantly, the reality of that materialising is illusive, as "emotional attachment to symbols and myths of homeland appears to have endured" (Anand, 2000; Nowak, 1984 in Bernabei, 2011), while the accessibility of that dream becoming physically realised is elusive. As a personal attestation, it took around 20 years for me to stop yearning for my Budapest. However, my original homeland had been replaced by Nepal, where after 15 years of intense academic and professional involvement, having travelled to all 75 Districts, having had convivial interactions with royalty and rebels, politicians and proletariat, becoming fluent and earning a wonderful family, I have unconsciously adopted it as my alternative home. Hungary, Canada or Nepal: I seem to remain permanently in symbiosis with sehnsucht.

In 1990, yet another wave of refugees arrived in Nepal after their first country of refuge—India—refused to accommodate them: Bhutanese of Nepali origin – Lhotsaampaas--either fled on their own or were forced to flee during a period of repressive Bhutanisation by a regime viewed through rose coloured glasses by most western countries. Enforced under this new law was use of only the Dzongkha language (no more Nepali language, despite the community's having lived there since before the 1800s[5]), and of Driglam Namza, the royal dress code (no more dauraa suruwal and topi, or other simple dress as was the custom of the Nepalis). Some might see parallels with nikab-wearing Muslim women being forced to unveil in France, or ISIS coercions of non-covered women to wearing veils. In either case, the significance is that inhabitants are obligated to change their dress habits for seemingly irrelevant reasons, this being a travesty of whatever level of freedom there heretofore existed and an intense aversion to the government which enforces such rules.

Settled in the early 1990s into 7 camps in Jhapa and Morang Districts, this eclectic, displaced mass of about 110,000 started to shrink after 2007 when resettlement

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[5] The first documented Nepali in Bhutan was a Newar craftsman engaged to build a memorial chorten, or stupa (Aris, 1979). Similar craftsmen had been commissioned by Tibetan King Srongtsen Gampo's Nepali wife Bhrikuti in the 7th century, to build the Potala and other temples. Settlement of Nepalis increased with British exigencies for road building and food production from the mid-19th century in Bhutan, Sikkim and what is now northern West Bengal.

programmes to about a dozen countries were implemented (UNHCR, 2015). The common language with the Nepalis near their camps made a palpable difference in communication and developing trust, despite some cultural dissimilarities with Nepal after living in Bhutan for several generations. In retrospect, this refugee population was dispersed to welcoming countries more quickly than most refugee groups elsewhere in the world because some had decided to integrate within Nepali society. In addition, there are three other reasons, as elucidated in my personal communication with Bhutanese, Nepalis and Pakistanis within their respective countries:

Relatively quick and adept preparatory organisation and subsequent camp management by the Government of Nepal, the UN and some International Non-Government Organizations (such as the Lutheran World Service) in partnership with competent local Non-Government Organizations, although the standards did differ from camp to camp.

Decent education levels, at the very least of the school age children, as schools had been established in all camps; ergo a good start by ensuring that once resettlement takes place, at least the new generation will more easily adapt.

An aura of exoticism, coming from Bhutan, an erstwhile peaceful and exotic Buddhist/Hindu land and to some, a mesmerising country, albeit sadly beclouded by its royalty's xenophobia, with violent repression and expulsion of its Nepali citizens.

In my observation and assessment, the last reason is the most critical, as there are certain traits, characteristics and personalities that western societies tend to more easily connect with and trust, and this facilitates decision-making in determining the preferred immigrant. In other words, there needs to be some symmetry between the policy environment, regulatory application, livelihood opportunities as well as the host country and its receiving communities' attitudes toward immigrants (Brun, 2001). Certain countries make it clear what type of immigrants they would prohibit or prefer; others, to at least present a liberal façade, do not single out particular cultures but might inherently have biases in selection. People from a relatively peaceful country or region with an even limited real or perceived affinity to the host culture may be preferred.

Success in receiving permission to resettle somewhere does not, however, preclude succumbing to severe adaptation problems.

> *Many are unable to communicate with their host communities, plagued by worries about family back home, or unemployed. In addition to depression, risk factors for suicide include[d] not being the family's provider, feelings of limited social support, and having family conflict after resettlement.*
> (Preiss, 2013)

In other words, sustained instability, fears, and embarrassment have led to negative coping strategies.

Later on, I spent three years working in Peshawar, the capital of the Northwest Frontier Province (later renamed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) in Pakistan. This exposed me to

Disrepair in Afghan IDP Camp near Peshawar 2010, author photo

governance and social service deficiencies (education, health, water) within an insurgent environment; to the effects of international influence and interference in a sovereign state (The New Yorker, 2016; Cheema, 2015); and with the oscillating societal levels of tolerance for approximately 5 million Pashtun and Hazara Afghan refugees in absolutely horrendous, crumbling maze camps. The latter were barren brown expanses of cramped, peeling mud walls with loose roofing, mud-engorged alleys on rainy days, with little relief from the heat of the summer months. During some Taliban defeats around 2002, about half the refugees returned to Afghanistan; but when the security situation worsened again, my personal observations and communication in field indicated that more families crossed over to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In 2016 the Pakistani government was trying to repatriate the remaining 3 million or so (see Danish, 2016; Ferrie, 2017; Ferrie et al, 2016; Jamal, 2016; Rashid, 2016). Yet once again the Taliban (and in some areas, ISIS) were experiencing local victories which, inevitably, fuel an ongoing ebb and flow of refugee mobilisation with the associated disruption of normal life. This diaspora has its internal tensions caused by uncertainty, instability, and incomprehension of how thousands born in the camps in Pakistan could undergo refoulement (i.e. forced return of a refugee to any place where their lives and safety would remain threatened) to a land many had never seen. The shortage of funds and services would mean scant welcome to a rapid influx of so many. According to the Human Rights Watch (2016), "Economic hardship in Pakistan, linked to loss of access to job markets due to a deteriorated freedom of movement, harassment, and intimidation, arbitrary arrest, extortions, and bribery" restrict health and education services. This, coupled with stress on its own severe displacement issues in Pakistani society means that almost 2 million people were relocated because of natural (floods and/or earthquakes) and anthropogenic causes (militancy, and many communities' aversion to continuous hosting of migrants).

Thus the displaced population feel and know that they are on the verge of overstaying their welcome to the degree that even those circa 200,000 who had legally obtained Pakistani citizenship or Computerized National Identity Cards have been threatened, as recently as 2015, in having these documents abrogated (Riaz, 2015; Express Tribune 2015). As Kibreab (1999) noted, the attitudes of the host community are one of the key determinants of refugee relationships and the integration into the host communities.

Like Tibetan refugees in Nepal, a minority of successful Afghan entrepreneurs have flourishing shops; some try to integrate with local society, and many do; but the majority remains impoverished and in declining health. Social structures have been weakened, fear of rejection and ejection hang like a thick fog over the displaced, knowing that uncertainty shall remain the only constant for the foreseeable future.

Reflections from Canada, 2016-2020.

My experience has progressively led me to increased understanding from various perspectives. I have come to believe that –much as one's not being able to escape romantic or creative thinking about indigenous peoples without ever having even, at least, visited a reservation if not having actually stayed with the people[6]– only personal experience as a refugee or, at the very least, living amongst refugees, offers any chance for credible empathy. Empathy is not an abstract concept. Empathy is an accumulation of an intentional interdisciplinary understanding of the "wicked complexity," the "metacontext," if you will, of the social, political, educational, religious and cultural environment (along with other parameters) causing and accepting (or rejecting) refugees and migrants. People's movement, especially compelled mass movement, inherently has so many facets, components and perspectives that single-discipline focused experts, be they bureaucrats, academics or NGO stalwarts, often cannot adequately articulate the status quo nor the appurtenant needs and response. Castels (2003) insightfully lists some ideal complementarities of relevant disciplines vis à vis refugees:

> • *history, anthropology, geography, demography, political economy and economics in explaining the causes of forced migration and the dynamics of movement;*
>
> • *political science and law in examining entry rules, migration policies, and institutional structures;*
>
> • *psychology, cultural studies and anthropology in studying individual and group experiences of exile, identity, belonging and community formation;*
>
> • *law, political science and social policy studies in analysing settlement and community*

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[6] During my work with First Nations communities in Canada, I heard sometimes acerbic comments and other times "friendly advice" about government consultants who flew in to a community and made sure to depart the same day because it was inconceivable to remain there overnight. My own anthropological instincts gave me confidence and desire to, indeed, always spend at least one night –more if feasible--in and with a community.

> *• sociology – as the study of individual, society and the relationship between structures and group processes – is involved in research on all the above aspects of the migratory process.[7]*

Following the abhorrent treatment of migrants by Australia (BBC, 2016) and the recent wave of dangerous passages from Africa to and through Europe, it has been distressing to read and hear broad brush, stereotypical statements about pernicious characters, religious extremists, high security risks, economic leeches and so on.

And it has got me thinking.

Had we not managed to escape in December 1956:

> Would these same xenophobic critics be spewing mea culpas for not having been able to help (now that it would be a moot issue)?

> Would they be beating the drums against the Hungarian AVO's excesses or Soviet invaders' cruelty?

> Would they shamelessly be exclaiming their anguish in not being able to have us saved and brought to their countries (now that they don't really have to)?

> Had we indeed escaped but been unwelcomed in Austria, the country of first refuge; had we been forced back over the border or compelled to move on to another country, pressured out of desperation to crawl under barbed wires or packed into some ramshackle camp (for months or years):

>> *Would these same xenophobic critics understand the feeling of leaving everything and everyone behind?*

> Could anyone in more comfortable, stable, peaceful democratic societies have any inkling as to the psychological scars left by having been compelled to change surnames by a previous intolerant regime? Or to feel it necessary to set a lit Christmas tree prominently in the window so that others would see and think that we adhered to the mainstream religion?

> Could they empathise with what it may be like to escape with children who get fevers on the way and feel tired beyond words?

> Would they comprehend how in a prolonged environment of fear, lack of privacy, uncertainty, impoverishment, reliance on others, evaporation of education, unscrupulous interveners and scammers, unknown destinations, sensing of being unwanted, sensing becoming a number rather than a person, inability to be with family, compromised health, prey to diverse gender and child-related exploitative

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[7] In the establishment in Indonesia of Mulawarman University's Centre for Social Forestry in 1997, I had worked with local host colleagues in ensuring that the severe community/extractives issues confronting society could be addressed holistically. Our solution lay not in simply having various specialists look at a particular problem and being able to say we had a "transdisciplinary team"; rather that all issues would be collectively analysed so that an "interdisciplinary team" could multiply its creativity and response alternatives. This effort is sustained to this day.

activities....could lead to desperate and perhaps inadvisable yet (perhaps) predictable decisions?

Could they truly – truly – envision the process for a previously peaceful person becoming agitated, inconsolable, criminal, unstable....even radicalised?

Had we, after landing in Canada, not been welcomed, not been made to feel like we were home, derided in the street, in school or in stores:

Would these same xenophobic critics have said "see, we told you so, these are antisocial people, they don't blend, they just stay in their own ghettos"?

Would human rights and sundry experts mired in terminological beadledom have accused us of having used smugglers?

People must understand the antecedents of refugees' discomfort, social distancing and increased isolation. My own escape was traumatic enough, but incomparable to the extreme physical risks and "on arrival" ghettoization of those fleeing in flimsy dinghies or walking for days in the heat and cataclysmic moonscape of an emaciated Syria. In my global involvements, I learned that people do, indeed, have similar needs, desires and ambitions; humour is in all cultures, as is love, friendship, goodwill to others, protection of children and the vulnerable, some levels of fate balanced with sincere effort, seeking practical education and, above all, trust. Certainly the process of accessing, achieving and dealing with these characteristics varies from culture to culture. As Mahmoud (2015) so correctly articulated,

> *Historically, the dynamic of cultural expectations has always been reduced by both sides, the new settlers and the welcoming nations, to a few shallow cultural differences over relatively trivial aspects such as food habits and the exposure or concealment of women's flesh. It is not. The cultural divide involves far deeper issues, ranging from the subtlety of body language and eye contact to more overt actions, such as engaging with the local community and developing a sense of belonging.* (Also see Luxmoore, 2011; Bauer and Hein, 2016)

As just one essential example, even within one's own country, trust is earned from any combination of credentials (types and levels of qualifications); status (multigenerational family history in region, respect and recognition within community, position at work); familiarity (approachability); articulatory ability (how one expresses oneself, ease of communicating) and perceived commonalities (finding anything in common), to name some determinants; when interacting with people from other cultures, especially in an atmosphere of mutual apprehension, other decision-enabling elements may be required, such as: increased frequency of communication; strengthening personal connections within the expatriate and host communities; proactive application of processes for mutual understanding (Somlai, 2015).

Dilemmas, intuitions, confusions. April 2018.

My birthplace, one of the most culturally sophisticated countries in Europe, had been invaded. When at a breaking point, the country's leader made an emotional plea to the free world, as did the Union of Hungarian Writers (Radio Free Kossuth b., 1956) which was repeated over the next three hours (see below) until the Soviets cannonaded or otherwise destroyed the radio stations.

The Prime Minister implored:

> *Civilized people of the world, listen and come to our aid, not with declarations, but with force, with soldiers and arms. Do not forget that there is no stopping the wild onslaught of Bolshevism. Your turn will also come, once we perish. Save our souls! save our souls! Peoples of Europe, whom we helped for centuries to withstand the barbaric attacks from Asia, listen to the tolling of Hungarian bells warning against disaster. Civilized peoples of the world, we implore you to help us in the name of justice, of freedom, of the binding moral principle of active solidarity. Our ship is sinking. Light is failing, the shadows grow darker every hour over the soil of Hungary. Listen to the cry, civilized peoples of the world, and act; extend to us your fraternal hand. "SOS, SOS -may God be with you."*

The Union of Hungarian Writers complemented:

> *To every writer in the world, to all scientists, to all writers' federations, to all science academies and associations, to the intelligentsia of the world! We ask all of you for help and support; there is but little time! You know the facts, there is no need to give you a special report! Help Hungary! Help the Hungarian writers, scientists, workers, peasants, and our intelligentsia! ...Help! Help! Help!*

Aside from the formality of some remonstrations, there was silence from the world, and it took from then until 1989 to finally break out of the Soviet mould.

At the same time, Canada's surprising response resulted in over 37,000 Hungarians resettled in Canada. Demonstrably successful and beneficial to the country's growing economy and social development (see Hungarian Presence, n.d.), a more confident Canada thereafter proactively engaged in later resettlement efforts which saw the welcoming and resettling of displaced people from Europe, Africa and Asia between 1968 and 2000 (Molloy, 2006). In other words, Canada–amongst others–learned positively from that experience and was progressively making up for its travesty of earlier rejections of legitimate refugees in 1914 (SFU, 2011) and 1938 (Brief History, n.d.). Most recently, the admittance of over 30,000 Syrians to date seems to continue Canada's cautious trust in its process. With proper verification processes and the accompanying orientations and briefings, complemented by exposure of Canadians to Syrian (and other) cultures, many more from other countries could–and should–be admitted.

Now, in relation to the contemporary predominantly Muslim refugees and migrants entering and trying to enter Europe and North America, the temptation is to draw parallels between and amongst previous—and seemingly similar—mass displacements. However, a major difference is attributable to the larger number for the forcibly displaced, the speed at which the fleeing masses are reaching some safe lands, all concatenated with a confusing response system.

Hungary has unenviably portrayed itself as perhaps the least-welcoming country in the E.U. for refugees. As the country's Prime Minister frankly explained:

> *Everything which is now taking place before our eyes threatens to have explosive consequences for the whole of Europe. We shouldn't forget that the people who are coming here grew up in a different religion and represent a completely different culture.[8] Most are not Christian, but Muslim … That is an important question, because Europe and European culture have Christian roots.* (Aljazeera, 2016)

Neighbouring Slovakia has evinced similar concerns:

> *You have to understand….that there are countries which have been open to other cultures for centuries, and there are countries for which this is a new experience. This [refugee intake] cannot be ordered overnight. It has to be a process. You have to explain it to people. They have to get used to it. People are afraid of what they don't know. Our people have not been exposed to Muslims and they are frightened. It's a new phenomenon for them (…). Hundreds of Muslims mean nothing in Belgium or London ….but it does mean something in Slovakia.* (DW, 2016)

Historicity of Europe's roots aside, the two leaders do have valid points in that these and a few other countries have had largely homogenous populations except for the Mongol and Ottoman incursions in the 13th, 15th and 16th centuries (Tucker, 2009; BBC, 2012). And it is true that in modern times they have relatively minimal experience with significantly different cultures; while census data shows there are 30 or more minorities, most of them are from neighbouring countries. These are illustrative for all the bordering countries. What is not disaggregated from the census (to bring the diverse origins of inhabitants to 30>) is the category "Other", which includes people of origin from previously Soviet or other communist states such as Vietnam, Laos etc. and a few modern day refugees from countries like Syria. (Kovács, 2011; Kapitány, 2015).

When the Soviet system was still operating, there were students and workers from some Asian communist countries, such as Vietnam, with some having settled permanently in Hungary and Slovakia. Indeed, Islam and other minority Christian religions were not officially recognized in the Hungarian Constitution until 2012,(ANN, 2012) and most practitioners, as I am personally informed, are white, ethnic Hungarians. With

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[8] Albeit Hungarians, too, have some Central Asian and Central European admixture

the present rightist government in Hungary, even white, ethnic Hungarians who have adopted Islam face prejudice (Bauer, ibid).

Hungary and its plea in 1956 are in contrast to its stance on immigration today, seemingly showing contradictory perceptions of "active solidarity" (Radio Free Kossuth b., ibid). In fact, the different responses do point to the fact that would the world have cooperatively and effectively confronted the Soviets and halted the incursion, there may not have been any sizeable displacement of Hungarians; by extrapolation, had the world cooperatively and effectively confronted Syria and been able to stop the civil war, there may not have been the millions displaced today.[9] Fewer displaced are much more manageable than millions (Binnendijk and Johnson, 2004; Brahm, 2006). And, at any time, decisions may be thought of as averse, but which are in fact beneficial for a nation's strategic and political welfare.

Meanwhile, in long-time multicultural countries such as Canada, USA and Australia, indigenous lands had been gradually occupied by Europeans who were induced to emigrate to relieve population pressures on the continent "back home;" to develop land, trade and commerce; to proselytise; and to keep the emerging newcomers safe. As some countries were formally established by a combination of refugees, economic migrants and adventurers, the newly evolving nationalism of each country supported stricter immigration as an expressed means of perceived cultural preservation. But we—especially citizens from the above mentioned countries—should not forget our own entry to these lands; our own process of establishing communities, laws and new nationalism; and, above all, our often inconvenient relationship with those upon whose lands we intruded (Sylvester, 2016).

Fundamentally then, present immigration issues have assumed a wicked complexity owing to greater numbers of refugees than ever before within a very short time span. Amongst these, thousands fleeing by boat drowned, ratcheting up the pressure for countries and agencies to act faster and more effectively; but the stress on governments has made the response even more difficult. The situation is further compounded by frequent terrorism, habitually attributed to Islamic adherents. The states, however, did not have the ability to separate true believers (in whatever religion) from ersatz adherents who are only symbolically allied to their faith and who distortedly use the umbrage of the faith as rationale for deleterious ends. Additionally, many refugees intend to or have been counseled to settle in countries not accustomed to receiving large numbers of Muslims (e.g. Hungary, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, Baltic countries). As for the destination countries, governments facing internal exigencies (high unemployment, large debt burden, fear of welfare and pension benefit cuts, xenophobia) may severely limit political leeway for refugees. This leads to some countries rationalising limits or impediments to easy admittance: high levels of

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[9] I say "may not" and this is, of course, arguable. "While multilateral missions complicate coordination and bureaucratic management, they also spread risk across different participants and appear to be more successful (Binnendijk, H). At the same time, military intervention seems just as likely to invigorate or generate new insurgencies as to bring them to an end."

academic or professional experience (Japan); cash incentives (Denmark); anti-immigrant parties gaining popularity, thus pushing other parties to inch toward the right (Sweden); security bonds for students or workers (United Kingdom) (National Geographic, 2013).

Conclusion

A few life lessons from my experience with refugees, multicultural communities, slums and social services in Europe, Asia and the Americas are offered. It would be prudent to state that my statements do not claim to comprise all possible improvements to the current imbroglio; and that while some might point out that certain suggestions are not new, I repeat or paraphrase them as they have yet to be systematically implemented anywhere. Hence, these conclusions remain "inconclusive."

1. Usable land availability and suitability must be taken into account in decision-making. It is one thing for a country to feel uncomfortable taking in refugees in numbers highly disproportionate to its population, especially as compared to other similar countries; but it demands quite another rationale if, population aside, there is much unused land in a particular country that refugees would hardly make a dent.[10] In rapidly aging populations (such as in Japan, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation and the United Kingdom), "replacement migration" is a key solution to counteract the otherwise predictable downward trend of production linking with diminished taxes, resulting social service vulnerabilities, and excuses seem out of touch with reality (Hungarian Free Press 2017; Reuters, 2018). This highlights a paradox for Hungary which, while experiencing outmigration of over 30% of skilled and linguistically adept workers, would benefit from a higher birthrate or acceptance of more refugees and immigrants (Hungarian Free Press, ibid). With exponential population growth and limited land, we cannot remain selfish to the extent of excluding demonstrably needy refugees or migrants from available land in sparsely populated countries. We need to recall, from Canadian modern history, that many of our own immigrants arrived as settlers to exploit land for farming and ranching. In this century, there naturally are innumerable work opportunities not only in rural farming and ranching (perhaps to seek decorporatization of farmlands), but in urban areas as well; however, many immigrants do come from farming backgrounds and could be urged to settle in smaller cities and towns, depending on family composition, skills, proximity of health facilities, upgrading institutions and other learning centres.

2. Referring to history, to understand when and how countries assisted other nations during times of upheaval, famine, devastating calamity and militarily contested governments. Illustrative of such collaboration is captured in the insightful re-enactment of Japanese-Turkish reciprocation separated by almost a century (Tanaka, 2015). After all, it would not make sense to bring in people who have

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[10]This principle is obviously complicated by rights of Indigenous peoples in settler states. And this principle would have to be qualified to accommodate those particularities in such a state.

been struggling to live in their home countries and escape to a receiving new homeland wherein similar struggles would be perpetuated because of living conditions or social conflicts. By reviewing and understanding the conditions that underscore particular attitudes, concepts and behaviours in certain cultures, one could then see that in a more beneficent social environment—as afforded by a place of refuge—people can change and adapt. Simple "bookish" or touristic familiarity with particular cultures cannot suffice for distilling deep knowledge and understanding of a very different culture.

3. Establish practical parameters for coming to a country as well as providing displaced people with aid. Despite reams of reports, strategies, declarations and debates, there remain daunting and aggravating inconsistencies in the application of espoused responses and a seemingly permanent roadblock in establishing sufficient trust among potential aid providers as well as in those very countries or among the very peoples requesting aid. This requires a common understanding in, what late Prime Minister Imre Nagy, in his appeal to the world on the dawn of Hungary's collapse under the illegal Soviet occupation, termed as a "binding moral principle of active solidarity." (Radio Free Kossuth b., ibid; Tanaka, ibid). The modus operandi for implementing such aspirations need be worked out beforehand.

4. Entrench first-country-of-refuge comprehensive settlement services, including identity verification; skill, education and health assessments; documentation and recommendations or decisions for onward country of settlement. The entangled granularity of being able to prove one's claims in the absence of papers, and of the validity of papers that are available, adds considerably to the complexity of decision-making. While there is a reasonable Canadian process in place,(Canadian Security Intelligence Service, 2016; Lutheran, 2015; UNICEF, 2006), in conflict regions there are serious limits from both bureaucratic as well as humanitarian aspects to get precise, validated information. National and international agencies must ensure synchronicity in their discrete processes and regulations.

5. Regardless of the in loco process for refugee verification, the first-country-of-refuge could organise welcoming, well-organised, and simple receptions to buoy the spirit and rekindle faith in strangers. However, neighbouring countries to the areas of conflict must not be encumbered, by default, as long term hosts for the displaced.

6. Once a particular country of destination is approved, that country must provide a focused pre-departure orientation covering socio-cultural expectations, especially related to religion, dress, language; interaction with government officials (e.g. police, bureaucrats); domestic living conditions and regulations regarding larger and extended families; work opportunities and expectations; acceptability of foreign-earned credentials and options for retraining or upgrading for contemporary needs; suggested match of backgrounds to types of host communities (e.g. rural, urban); general standards of morality; optimizing integration; and what to expect on arrival. This is an absolutely essential programme for people who come from

different cultures. Whether we admit it or not, all peaceful, modern and ostensibly exemplary societies have been at times besmirched by xenophobic and prejudiced actions toward refugees. I argue that the fear of admitting certain groups of applicants is predicated by insufficient or incorrect knowledge of those groups and their customs, beliefs and habits, concatenated with a dearth of appurtenant orientation and briefing programmes both in and outside the country. The obverse of this, naturally, is that it behoves refugees to also seek and/or accept, if proffered, orientation about their destination so as to enable their decision-making prior to departure. It is patently unfair to both sides to have refugees arrive in a country only to realise that there are restrictions on certain clothing or religious garb, or that some of their own socio-cultural traditions are illegal and seriously punishable. If no opportunity had presented itself earlier, then this would be the stage at which emphasis should be put on the host country's expectation of proactive efforts by incoming refugees to integrate in their new society so as to avoid ghettoisation, social exclusion and allied inevitable problems.

7. The receiving country must arrange on-arrival briefings to supplement the pre-departure orientations and reviewing the recommended steps for progressive integration; this process may be contracted to qualified local, trained social assistance groups.

8. Never think displacement cannot happen to you and your community! Cultured and supposedly civilized people can turn against one another when what one believes metamorphoses into how things must be (Frostrup, 2016). I have seen this first hand in Hungary, Canada, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, North Korea, Nicaragua, Slovakia and elsewhere.

9. Trust in basic human goodness. Most people, especially families with young children, would not risk their lives in escaping were it not that worse fate might befall them by staying in their ravaged communities; these escapees cannot be assumed to be terrorists or miscreants. Trust and gradual integration in a new society evolves from days to years; and it has to progress under mutual respect with sincere effort by both sides to understand one another, bearing in mind the frequently eventual benefit to both hosts and newcomers.

The present refugee crisis is at a hypercritical level which, by its unprecedented complexity has presented politically charged decision-making contributing, in turn, to ineffective and often irrational management. We must collectively take responsibility for having been incapable of mitigating if not preventing, influencing if not interceding, alleviating if not holistically and effectively halting the crises which have caused so many displaced within the recent past. In my mind it is not that we cannot plan for the eventualities of such catastrophic events and create scenarios of probabilities and concatenated responses: what bothers me the most is that we have not learned sufficiently from the past to effectively intercede in emerging atrocities before they exponentially magnify. We have forgotten or disregarded the immense atrocities and

trauma of all continents and have become complacent in thinking that we have the knowledge and skills to avoid future human-caused calamities. To wit: I received the report "Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Stephen O'Brien – Statement to the Security Council on Syria, New York, 21 November 2016", in which was stated *"...shame on us all for not acting to stop the annihilation..... All the facts and reports I gave last month have, not one of them, been changed, qualified, denied or proven wrong, by any one of you or anyone beyond this room."*

This attitude, in combination with increasing population, new forms of media and warfare (internet), and an increase in seemingly intractable conflicts creates the wicked complexity of today. Ironically, it seems to take a crippling pandemic to realize— temporarily perhaps?-- the transformation of immigrants considered different and unskilled into essential and skilled contributors to society.

Each of these aspects requires a study of its own by those involved or planning to become involved in refugee related services; and the sundry parts must be intelligently woven into a complex whole for each catastrophe that creates refugees. Moreover, the metacontext of refugees and migrants, in view of the current and probable future similar circumstances, is indeed so complex that the hysteresis of such massive movements will be known only in many years hence, perhaps to our next generation which will not have the empathy we now have with the displaced populations from our parents' as well as our own generation still languishing in camps.

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An arts-based, peer-mediated Story Board Narrative Method in research on identity, belonging and future aspirations of forced migrant youth

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Abstract

An innovative, arts-based, peer-mediated Story Board Narrative method of data collection in an ongoing, multi-sited Youth Migration Project is described. The research explores negotiated identity, belonging and future aspirations of forced migrants aged 11 to 17 years old living temporarily in Thailand and Malaysia. The unique data collection method centres meaning making by youth about their forced migration and adaptation in often hostile and precarious conditions. Primary data are youths' narrative accounts of an arts-based Story Board that each youth creates over a four week period and then presents to a small group of migrant peers. Follow-up sessions invite youth to revise their Story-Board and their narrative, with inquiry led by peers rather than research facilitators. The method positions youth as experts and in control of their own stories. Story Board Narratives are audio-taped, transcribed, and content analyzed by a team of investigators who also have migration experiences. Unlike other visual methods that prescribe drawings and focus on the visual production, this method allows youth to direct their own visual representations and the narrative associated with them. The method enables a developmental process whereby youths' introspection, discussions, and representations of the impacts of forced migration evolve over time. This emergent, participatory, arts-based method as the centerpiece in a mixed method research design yields richly nuanced and often unexpected findings that may not have been generated through methods that are more prescriptive, structured, investigator-centered, and deductive.

Introduction

A peer-mediated, Story-Board Narrative (SBN) procedure is described in this article as a promising new approach to research exploring the experiences of migrant youth. The method combines the known advantages of methods that are both visual and that call upon participants to give detailed, free-flowing accounts of the meanings they ascribe to their migration experiences in terms of identity, belonging, and implications for their future. The method also appears to have transformative impacts which participants noted as an unexpected benefit. This article begins with an overview of the research project for which the SBN method was devised, called the Youth Migration Project and describes how the method has been implemented. The method is then considered in the context of other arts-based research methods which, when integrated with mixed methods research, have potential to create new knowledge about the impacts of forced migration on young people. The distinctiveness of the SBN method as a more developmental, dynamic, and youth-centred approach compared to other methods is discussed. Finally, the article comments on the potential for the SBN method to be adapted and used in future research and psychosocial interventions with forced migrant and refugee youth.

Arts-based research

Arts-based research is now generally accepted in social science research (Carless & Douglas, 2016). In arts-based research, three broad categories of methods—hand-made, digital, and performance—are used to collect, generate, analyse, and/or disseminate data (Fraser & Sayah, 2011; Mitchell, Theron, Stuart, Smith, & Campbell, 2011; Tao & Mitchell, 2011). Typically the participants produce the artwork, and the art may be used as the primary data for interpretation. In some research, artwork is understood as a form of text to be interpreted, and serves a catalytic function either in one-to-one discussions about an individual's artwork (e.g., Mitchell et al., 2011) or in group discussions about collective experiences (e.g., Bianchi, 2009; Wang & Burris, 1997). For instance, Wang (2016) describes art-based narrative interviewing in which participants draw while being interviewed. It is based on the presumption that drawing facilitates the participatory process and invites consideration of "intersubjective truths" (p. 41). Dialogue is also the primary research data in methods using photographs as a catalyst for discussion, such as photovoice (Tao & Mitchell, 2010) and photo elicitation (Samuels, 2007). Clover (2011) comments that in arts-based research, the goal of art is usually to disrupt taken-for-granted assumptions or received knowledge, or at least open these up to consider more (often suppressed) vantage points and ways of knowing about the human experience under investigation. In the Youth Migration Project, an arts-based method was chosen as a catalyst for youth to provide in-depth accounts of their migration experience and its impacts on key aspects of their development. The Youth Migration Project drew on a rights-based framework that centres youth's own understandings of their rights, goals, and psychosocial needs and assists them to make their views known (Lundy & McEvoy, 2012). The goal is to generate a more

differentiated and nuanced understanding of youth who are forced to migrate to disrupt or at least provide a balance to prevalent, adult-centred, monolithic representations of young forced migrants as passive, developmentally derailed or victims lacking agency or voice. The Youth Migration Project is positioned within the broad field of applied developmental psychology and the broad perspectives of sociocultural theory, transnationalism, and deconstructionism. Resting on decolonizing, critical and feminist epistemologies, it combines arts-based research and mixed methods research (e.g., see Archibald & Gerber, 2018).

Research context

The SBN method was created by the author for use in the Youth Migration Project, involving forced migrant youth aged 11 to 17 years living temporarily in Malaysia and Thailand. The project explores how youth continuously re-negotiate their identity, sense of belonging and future aspirations over the course of their migration journeys, which often extend over several years and countries. Living without access to normative entitlements, compounded by specific traumas, it is generally understood that many forced migrant and refugee youth suffer from loss of a sense of self-worth, belonging, and hope for their future (International Organization for Migration, 2017; Pejovic-Milovancevic et al., 2018). The SBN method was devised as a medium for youth to represent their journeys, including how they make meaning of their exodus from their home country and adapt in often hostile and precarious conditions in transit. Primary data are youths' narrative accounts of their migration 'Story Board.' Combining arts-based research with mixed methods research, data collection is also carried out through questionnaires, observations, and document review. To date, participants have included 52 girls and boys from Myanmar, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Somalia, and Yemen, living in Malaysia with the status of 'illegal aliens.' Sixty per cent of youth participants were proficient in English, the other 40 per cent had rudimentary English and required a translator or an investigative team member who spoke the same language as they did.

Story Board Narrative Method

Through a purposive sampling method, youth who are forced migrants are recruited through informal schools and social service centres such that participants are already familiar with some other youth in the research sample. Youth self-select into peer groups of 4 to 8 members, usually on the basis of their age, school group, or primary language. Each youth is provided with a kit of art supplies (e.g., coloured pens and pencils, glue, scissors, paint, coloured papers, cloth, etc.) and a large, durable poster board (approximately 50cm X 80cm). It is emphasized that no art skills are needed: the goal is not to create an 'artistic', aesthetically pleasing, linear or complete piece of art per se. Instead, youth are encouraged to be as creative, messy, gestural or orderly as needed to communicate their experiences, and they are shown Story Board examples

Participant in the Youth Migration Project. Photo credit: Lamouchi/Tse/Ball

illustrating different approaches. They are asked to represent their migration journeys, and especially their sense of who they are, where they belong, and how they envision their future. Initial peer group meetings are used to facilitate discussion among the youth about what these concepts might mean. However, these concepts are deliberately left open-ended to avoid pre-empting the meanings youth ascribe to them or how they might wish to express and integrate them into their Story Board and subsequent narrative. Each peer group meets weekly for four to five weeks, first to receive the materials and discuss the task and main concepts, and subsequently to hear each member's narrative account. Participants volunteer to present their Story Board when they feel ready to show and explain it. Each SBN takes from 10 to 45 minutes. After a SBN, peers in the small group ask the narrator questions seeking clarifications, examples or elaborations of aspects of the story. A research team member facilitates this process and it ends with the facilitator asking the narrator questions. SBNs, including the peer mediation process, are audio-taped, transcribed, and content analyzed by a team of investigators who also have migration experiences. In the iterative-inductive manner of grounded theory building (Glaser, 1992), informal review of an SBN transcript typically gives rise to questions for the narrator, which are pursued in a follow-up session led by a research team member either individually or in the peer group setting. During the follow-up session, youth are invited to add to or revise their Story Board and their narrative. This opportunity for revision was initiated after some of the youth asked if

they could make ongoing changes to their Story Board. Follow-up sessions are also audio-taped, transcribed, and content analysed.

Advantages of the Story Board Narrative method

The main purpose of arts-based research is its generative and potentially transformative potential (Bagley & Castro-Salazar, 2012). The SBN method is an alternative to investigator-driven and institution-centred data collection procedures. Studies of migrants and refugees often pursue questions relevant to institutional agendas such as humanitarian aid, education assistance, and government surveillance, employment policies, child welfare or detention practices. Increasingly, critical, decolonial and feminist perspectives have demonstrated the potential for fresh perspectives and insights to flow from using research methods that make visible and audible the experiences and accounts of marginalized and silenced people, including migrants and asylum seekers (e.g., Haaken & O'Neill, 2014). Youth Migration Project participants have commented that the use of the SBN method enables them to tell their own stories in their own words, according to their own timeline, sequence, and level of detail - including or leaving out aspects of experiences as they wish. Parts of the Story Board that appear left out of the narrative are significant, and peers often inquire about these omissions. Probes and encouragements are led by peers rather than the researchers: what peers find in common, interesting, humorous, or disturbing is also illuminating for the research. arts-based research does not claim to objectively represent experiences, but rather engages subjectively with participants through "critical cultural engagement" (Bagley and Castro-Salazar, 2012, p. 240).

Unlike many arts-based methods, which focus on the visual product and rely upon an outside 'expert's' inferences about it, the visual production in the SBN method is mainly a stimulus and reference point for a youth's narrative account and their peers' musings about it. The SBN method reflects the premise of the Youth Migration Project that forced migrant youth are always social actors and active subjects, not powerless or passive victims: youth demonstrate agency when creating their Story Board from a blank canvas, selecting what to highlight, how to explain its meanings, what to elaborate upon and what to hold back. This process overcomes power imbalances that exist in traditional research methods which often constrain agency by prescribing what or how to draw, paint, photograph, or write about, or use prepared questionnaire, interview or focus group protocols. Each youth is positioned as the expert in making meaning of their own migration and its impacts, and is in control of their story. The SBN method makes room for non-linear, non-discursive, and metaphorical representations of experience as youth creatively find and refine ways to open their private experiences of migration to the empathic scrutiny of migrant peers and researchers. What emerges through art may not have become known if participants had to start with oral or written language alone (Van Lith, 2014). It provides an opportunity for youth with various home languages, or with little oral fluency due to trauma, to start with a visual medium to convey their story. Yet, the youth's narratives and responses to peers'

probing questions and empathic reflections have yielded deeply revealing and nuanced accounts of their experience than the visual production itself. In the SBN process, youth generally do not restrict their narrative to explaining the images on their Story Board; as they explain one part of their board, their narrative often deepens to include background information, thoughts, feelings, and other associations. In the traditions of arts-based research and mixed methods research, central use of the SBN data aims to create new knowledge about forced migration in the intersubjective space where meaning making is co-produced by the narrator, their peers, and a facilitator who is also a migrant.
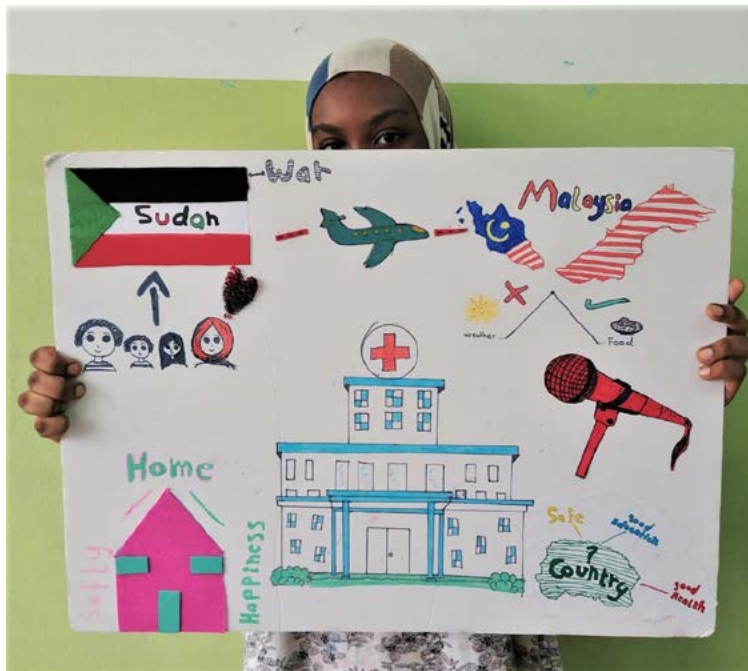
Participant in the Youth Migration Project. Photo credit: Lamouchi/Tse/Ball

Other visual methods typically collect and interpret productions obtained at a single time point. While this may be the only option in some situations where the setting is chaotic or where migrants are rapidly moving on, there is a risk of conveying that the ways they make meaning of their experience or its impacts are static, rather than constantly evolving. With the SBN method, youth work to fill up their Story Boards incrementally over several weeks, adding and changing elements and occasionally starting over with a new board. The SBN bears some similarities to the use of visual arts in a therapeutic workshop procedure developed specifically for refugee youth called the Tree of Life (Ncube, 2006; Stiles, 2019). This procedure invites youth to visually represent and then narrate their migration experiences through the provided metaphors of trees and forests (Jacobs, 2018; Stiles et al., 2019). Studies suggest that youth respond positively to this procedure and that it can promote healing and connection to other refugee youth. In contrast to the SBN method, the Tree of Life procedure asks youth to

fit their experiences into provided metaphors and categories, and it is done at one point in time. The longer time period used for the SBN method allows for a developmental and dynamic process, in which a youth can elaborate their self-representation over time and across multiple discursive opportunities with peers, the research team, and others as they plan what and how to represent their story on a blank canvas.

Several youth have commented that the task of filling up a blank canvas is daunting at first, and calls them to think deeply about how various aspects of their experiences have impacted how they see themselves, where they belong, and future possibilities. For example, one youth arrived at the first SBN sharing session with her Story Board blank. This was part of her story: she explained that in her home country, Afghanistan, she was "a person", and now she is "a non-person". She described how she actively suppresses memories and feelings about her home and migration experience. After three weeks listening and responding to her peers' SBNs, she began to fill up her Story Board, expressing excitement and relief in doing so, as if waking from hibernation. She was among several other youth who asked if they could continue to work on their Story Board after their participation in the project was over. Thus, the SBN method acknowledged youths' dynamic, developmental process in which their stories are ever-changing. Youth are on the move and so are their stories, identities, sense of belonging and future possibilities.

Illustrative outcomes of the SBN method

Findings of the Youth Migration Project will be reported elsewhere. Yet it is useful to exemplify a few insights yielded by the SBN method that may not have emerged by relying on more structured, traditional methods. (1) Youth overwhelmingly describe their response to migration as a project including certain presuppositions, values, external constraints and opportunities, goals, tasks, and sought-after outcomes. (2) Youth describe the tremendous physical and psychological toll exacted by armed conflict, gender-based violence, and persecution in their home countries and life in generally hostile communities and a country that views them as illegal aliens. (3) Youth describe that migration is challenging yet also filled with new opportunities, especially for girls. (4) When youth are seriously struggling, the most significant sources of ongoing emotional distress and sense of instability are the negative changes that migration creates for family relationships, and the risk of long-term detention of adult family members who are working illegally to support their family. (5) For migrant youth, the primary source of social support, information needed to adapt, and hope for the future is their peer group, which is similar to sedentary youth in high income countries who are the subjects of most mainstream developmental research. (6) Exile often fuels a long-term goal to help others in the home country through human service work or political activism. As other exploratory studies of forced migrant and refugee children have suggested (e.g., Sullivan et al., 2016), living in extremely difficult circumstances does not necessarily mean that all youth will experience only subtractive effects on their identity, belonging, and future aspirations development and wellness.

Participants in the Youth Migration Project describe additive effects of their mobility and immersion in unfamiliar social, cultural and linguistic ecologies while in transit.

The SBN appears to normalize youths' experiences of struggle and their persisting optimism despite difficult circumstances, resulting in a positive impact on their mental health and social support. There is limited evidence about the psychosocial development, mental health or effects of interventions for youth who are still in transit. Most evidence-based interventions for forced migrant youth are based on Euro-Western concepts and implemented with youth after they are resettled (Bennouna et al., 2019; Sullivan & Simonson, 2016). In the Youth Migration Project, youth have described how creating a Story Board, sharing their "back story" and current context of their mood and behaviours, and hearing responses from peers with similar experiences, gives them a tremendous sense of relief and normalizing reassurance. Youth have described feeling relieved to "get the story I keep telling in my head out" and "having my friends and you take real time to listen to how I try to make sense of what's happened and what I'm trying to do about my situation." Youth welcome hearing their peers' stories and feeling: "Now I know that I am not the only one who struggles [from being a migrant]."

They described increased empathy for their migrant peers as a consequence of hearing and responding to their SBNs. Yet the SBN is less intimate, foreign, and costly than an explicitly therapeutic intervention, which might also be seen by some youth as too intrusive or deficit-focused. Service practitioners who have assisted in recruiting participants have also commented on the positive impacts of participating in the Youth Migration Project on youth. They have noted that the method appears to help youth "open up" about their experiences, and that the SBN method is culturally safe, strength-based, feasible in terms of the capacity of local service practitioners to learn the method, and practical in terms of the resources required.

Future applications

The SBN method is promising for research involving a variety of populations, particularly those having ongoing experiences that have unsettled their sense of self and belonging. It is particularly useful for those who may need a more self-paced, incremental, and non-verbal way to begin to represent and prepare to share their story compared to a single session visual arts procedure or an oral interview or focus group. Given unprecedented numbers of forced migrant youth globally (UNICEF, 2016), there is an urgent need to incorporate their perspectives in research in order to understand their experiences, needs, and goals. In terms of knowledge creation, there is much to learn from forced migrant youth about psychosocial development when a young person's world has been destabilized and their identities, belonging and futures have been disrupted through forced migration. The developmental, dynamic, youth-centred SBN method has promised an open-ended opportunity for youth to demonstrate their agency and for theorists to access the meaning-making processes of youth on the move.

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