

The Anthropology of Refugees and Displacement

George Washington University

Prof. Stephen Lubkemann
Graduate Seminar offered since Spring 2002
United States of America

Course Description:

Over the last three decades population displacement has become more prevalent and more visible worldwide. Once an issue largely at the periphery of international politics, displacement has increasingly become a more central geo-strategic concern. Since World War II an ever more elaborate international regime has developed to codify and structure responses to displacement. In tandem with these developments refugees and displacement have also increasingly emerged in particular ways as “issues” and research subjects within anthropology and the broader social sciences in general.

This course will provide a critical understanding of displacement processes (the complex causes, characteristics, and consequences of forced migration experiences) and of the “displacement problem” (how international policy-makers and scholars have constructed displacement as an object for analysis and action—and some of the consequences of this construction). It will also explore how the study of displacement as a process and as a problem may provide a “strategic research site” for critically interrogating broader concepts and theories within anthropology and the social sciences.

Students in this course will gain an understanding of how local social and larger geo-political forces interact to produce refugees, and are in turn also affected by displacement processes. They will also examine how social relations and identities at various intersecting levels are influenced by displacement. Particular attention will be played to how gender relations are affected by displacement. The course will examine the contrast and contest between local interests and those of national and international-level actors (such as state governments, intergovernmental agencies and NGOs) in the formulation of solutions to displacement. The course will also review how “refugees” have been historically constructed as a “problem” within international relations and how the international humanitarian and political system of response has developed and changed in response to the growth of displacement. Finally we will consider some of the ethical dilemmas and methodological challenges raised by studying displacement processes and problems.

While drawing on a wide variety of cases from across the globe the course will focus in particular on displacement processes in Africa as well as on the experience of refugees in North America. This course is designed to provide graduate or advanced undergraduate students who have had previous coursework in anthropology with an understanding of how forced migration is organized and links global political-economic and local social processes in ways that increasingly bear on the central subjects of the discipline.

Syllabus:

Week 1: Introductory Lecture: Why Study Displacement?

Week 2: The Scope, Impact, and Significance of Displacement

*Chambers, R. 1986. "Hidden Losers? The Impact of Rural Refugees and Refugee Programs on Poorer Hosts." *International Migration Review* 20 (2): 245–263.

*selections from Cohen, R. & Deng, F. *Masses in Flight: The Global Crisis of Internal Displacement*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

*Davis, J. 1992. "The Anthropology of Suffering" *Journal of Refugee Studies* 5 (2): 149–161.

Malkki, Liisa. "National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity Among Scholars and Refugees." *Cultural Anthropology* Vol.7, no.1, 24–43, 1992.

Dowty, A. and Loescher, G. "Refugee Flows as Grounds for International Action." *International Security* Vol.2, no.1, 1996.

Week 3: Global and Local Forces in the Production of Displacement I: Historical Overview

selections from Zolberg, Aristide, Suhrke, Astri, and Aguayo, Sergio. 1989 *Escape From Violence: Conflict and the Refugee Crisis in the Developing World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Lubkemann, S. 2002 "Refugees: Worldwide Displacement and International Response" in *World at Risk: A Global Issues Sourcebook*. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Week 4: Global and Local Forces in the Production of Displacement II: Contemporary Dimensions

Loescher, G. 2001 "Protection and Humanitarian Action in the Post Cold-War era" pp 171–205 in Zolberg, Aristide, and Benda, Peter M. (eds.) 2001. *Global Migrants, Global Refugees: Problems and Solution*. New York: Berghahn Books.

Keen, D. 1998. "The Economic Functions of Violence in Civil Wars." *Adelphi Papers* No.320 Oxford: International Institute for Strategic Studies.

Capelon, R. 1995. "Gendered War Crimes: Reconceptualizing Rape in Times of War." in J. Peter and A. Wolpe (eds.) *Women's Rights, Human Rights: International Feminist Perspectives*. New York: Routledge.

Keen, D. 1994 "The Functions of Famine in Southwestern Sudan" pp 111–124 in J. Macrae and A. Zwi (eds.) *War and Hunger: Rethinking International Responses to Complex Emergencies*. London: Zed Books.

*selections from Cohen, R. & Deng, F. *Masses in Flight: The Global Crisis of Internal Displacement*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

Week 5: Frameworks and Methods for Analyzing Displacement Behavior and Experiences—Structure and Agency

*Kunz, E. 1973. "The Refugee in Flight: Kinetic Models and Forms of Displacement." *Int'l Migration Review* 7:125–146.

*Richmond, A. 1988. "Sociological Theories of International Migration: The Case of Refugees." *Current Sociology* 36 (2): 7–26.

*Wilson, K.B., 1994. "Refugees and Returnees as Social Agents." pp 237–250 in T. Allen & H. Morsink (eds.) *When Refugees Go Home*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.

*Marx, E., 1990. "The Social World of the Refugee: A Conceptual Framework." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 3: 189–203.

*Scudder, T. & Colson, E. 1982. "From Welfare to Development: A Conceptual Framework for the Analysis of Dislocated People." in A. Hansen. & A. Oliver-Smith (eds.). *Involuntary Migration and Resettlement*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

*Krulfeld R. and MacDonald, J.L. 1998. "Introduction" pp 1–18 in R.M. Krulfeld, and J.L. MacDonald *Power, Ethics, and Human Rights: Anthropological Studies of Refugee Research and Action*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield.

Week 6: Psycho-social Processes in Displacement

Peteet, J. 1995. "Transforming Trust: Dispossession and Empowerment Among Palestinian Refugees." pp 168–186 in E.V. Daniel and J.C. Knudsen (eds.) *Mistrusting Refugees*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Voutira, E. and Harrell-Bond, B.E. 1995. "In Search of the Locus of Trust: The Social World of the Refugee Camp." pp 207–224 in E.V. Daniel and J.C. Knudsen (eds.) *Mistrusting Refugees*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Sommers, M. 2001. *Fear in Bongoland: Burundi Refugees in Urban Tanzania*. New York: Berghahn Books.

Lubkemann 2002 "Where To Be An Ancestor? Reconstituting Socio-Spiritual Worlds and Post-Conflict Settlement Decision-Making Among Displaced Mozambicans." In *Journal of Refugee Studies* Vol. 15.

Week 7: Social Process in Displacement: Community Identities

chapters to be assigned from Cernea, Michael, and McDowell, Christopher. 2002 *Risks and Reconstruction: Experiences of Resettlers and Refugees*. Oxford, UK: Berghahn Books.

Woldemikael, T.M. 1997. "Ethiopians and Eritreans." pp 265–288 in D.Haines (ed.) *Case Studies in Diversity: Refugees in America in the 1990s*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

*Alitolppa-Niitamo, A. 2000. "From the Equator to the Arctic Circle: A Portrait of Somali Integration and Diasporic Consciousness in Finland." pp 43–65 in *Rethinking Refuge and Displacement: selected Papers on Refugees and Immigrants VIII*. Arlington, VA: American Anthropological Association.

*Mortland, C. 1997. "Khmer" pp 167–196 in D.Haines (ed.) *Case Studies in Diversity: Refugees in America in the 1990s*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

*Eastmond, M and Ojendal, J. 1999 "Revisiting a Repatriation Success: The Case of Cambodia" in Black, R. and Koser, K. (eds.) 1999. *The End of the Refugee Cycle*. New York: Berghahn Books.

(chapters to be assigned) Holtzman, J.D. 2000. *Nuer Journeys, Nuer Lives: Sudanese Refugees in Minnesota*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Week 8: Social Process in Displacement: Gender

Indra, D. 1999. "Not a Room of One's Own." in D. Indra (ed.) *Engendering Forced Migration: Theory and Practice*. New York: Berghahn Books.

Matsuoka, A. and Sorenson, J. 1999. "Eritrean Canadian Refugee Households as Sites of Gender Renegotiation." pp 218–241 in D. Indra (ed.) *Engendering Forced Migration: Theory and Practice*. New York: Berghahn Books.

*Abdulrahim, D. 1993. "Defining Gender in a Second Exile: Palestinian Women in West Berlin" pp 55–81 in Buijs, G. (ed.) *Migrant Women*. New York: Berghahn Books.

*Lubkemann, S. 2000. "Other Motives, Other Struggles: Gender Politics and the Shaping of Wartime Migration in Mozambique." Pp 343–368 in E. Godziak and D. Shandy (eds.) *Rethinking Refugee and Displacement: selected Papers on Refugees and Immigrants VIII*. Arlington, VA: American Anthropological Association.

McSpadden, L.A. 1999. "Negotiating Masculinity in the Reconstruction of Social Place: Eritrean and Ethiopian Refugees in the United States and Sweden" pp 242–60 in Indra (ed.) *Engendering Forced Migration: Theory & Practice*. New York: Berghahn Books.

*DeVoe, Pamela 1997 "Lao" pp 107–126 in D. Haines (ed.) *Case Studies in Diversity: Refugees in America in the 1990s*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

(chapters tba) Holtzman, J.D. 2000. *Nuer Journeys, Nuer Lives: Sudanese Refugees in Minnesota*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Week 9: Socio-Economic Processes in Displacement

(chapters to be assigned) 2002 Cernea, Michael, and McDowell, Christopher. *Risks and Reconstruction: Experiences of Resettlers and Refugees*. DC: World Bank.

*Kibreab, G. 1995. "Eritrean Women Refugees in Khartoum, Sudan, 1970–1990." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 8: 1, 1995

*Daley, P. 1991. "Gender, Displacement and Social Reproduction: Settling Burundi Refugees in Western Tanzania." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 4 (3): 248–266.

(assigned chaps) Holtzman, J.D. 2000. *Nuer Journeys, Nuer Lives: Sudanese Refugees in Minnesota*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Bascom, J. 1998. *Losing Place: Refugee Populations and Rural Transformations in East Africa*. New York: Berghahn Books.

Week 10: Socio-Political Processes in Displacement:

Malkki, L.H. 1995. *Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory, and National Cosmology Among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

*Peteet, J.M. 1995. "Transforming Trust: Dispossession and Empowerment Among Palestinian Refugees." pp 168–186 in E.V. Daniel and J.C. Knudsen (eds.) *Mistrusting Refugees*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

*Shahrani, M.N. 1995. "Afghanistan's Muhajirin (Muslim 'Refugee Warriors'): Politics of Mistrust and Distrust of Politics." pp 187–206 in E.V. Daniel and J.C. Knudsen (eds.) *Mistrusting Refugees*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press.

*Khiddu-Makubuya, E. 1994. "Voluntary Repatriation by Force: The Case of Rwandan Refugees in Uganda." pp 143–158 in H. Adelman & J. Sorenson (eds.) *African Refugees: Development Aid and Repatriation*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

selections from Cohen & Deng 1998. *The Forsaken People: Case Studies of the Internally Displaced*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

Week 11: The anthropology of International Response to Displacement I: Making the Refugee-problem and subject

(chapters to be assigned) Loescher, G. 1993. *Beyond Charity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Martin, Susan F. "Forced Migration and the Evolving Humanitarian Regime." *UNHCR New Issues in Refugee Research Working Papers*, No. 20, July 2000.—online UNHCR publication.

*Malkki, L. H. 1997. "Speechless Emissaries: Refugees, Humanitarianism and Dehistoricization." pp 223–254 in K. F. Olwig and K. Hastrup (eds.) *Siting Culture: The Shifting Anthropological Object*. New York: Routledge.

(chapters to be assigned) in Cohen, R. & Deng, F. *Masses in Flight: The Global Crisis of Internal Displacement*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

Indra, D. 2000 "Not Just Displaced and Poor." pp 142–164 in E. Godziak and D. J. Shandy (eds.) *Selected Papers on Refugees and Immigrants Vol. VIII, 2000*. Arlington, VA: American Anthropological Association.

Week 12: The anthropology of Int'l responses to displacement II—Gender in Assistance and Protection

Matlou, 1999. "Upsetting the Cart: Forced Migration and Gender Issues, the African Experience." in D. Indra (ed.) *Engendering Forced Migration: Theory and Practice*. New York: Berghahn Books.

Cammack, D. 1999. "Gender Relief and Politics During the Afghan War." in D. Indra (ed.) *Engendering Forced Migration: Theory and Practice*. New York: Berghahn Books.

Gilad, L. 1999. "The Problem of Gender-Related Persecution: A Challenge of International Protection." in D. Indra (ed.) *Engendering Forced Migration: Theory and Practice*. New York: Berghahn Books.

Macklin, A. 1996. "A Comparative Analysis of the Canadian, US, and Australian Directives on Gender Persecution and Refugee Status." in D. Indra (ed.) *Engendering Forced Migration: Theory and Practice*. New York: Berghahn Books.

*Charlesworth, H. 1995. "Human Rights as Men's Rights" in J. Peter and A. Wolpe (eds.) *Women's Rights, Human Rights: International Feminist Perspectives*. New York: Routledge.

*Sullivan, D. 1995. "The Public/Private Distinction in International Human Rights Law" in J. Peter and A. Wolpe (eds.) *Women's Rights, Human Rights: International Feminist Perspectives*. New York: Routledge.

*Scott, G.M. 1988. "To Catch or Not to Catch a Thief: A Case of Bride Theft Among the Lao Hmong Refugees in Southern California." *Ethnic Groups* Vol. 7: 137–151.

*Rao, A. 1995. "The Politics of Gender and Culture in International Human Rights Discourse." in J. Peter and A. Wolpe (eds.) *Women's Rights, Human Rights: International Feminist Perspectives*. New York: Routledge.

**Week 13: The anthropology of International response to displacement III:
"Protecting and Assisting Whom or What?"—Deconstructing the
Determinants of Displacement Solutions and Interventions**

(chapters to be assigned) in Loescher, G. 1993. *Beyond Charity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

*Rogge, J. 1994. "Repatriation of Refugees: A Not So Simple Solution." pp 14–49 in T. Allen & H. Morsink (eds.) *When Refugees Go Home*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.

Conway, F.J, and Stafford, S.B. 1997. "Haitians" pp 244–264 in D.Haines (ed.) *Case Studies in Diversity: Refugees in America in the 1990s*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Coleman, J. 1997. "Cubans" pp 14–33 in D. Haines (ed.) *Case Studies in Diversity: Refugees in America in the 1990s*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Aleinikoff, T.A. 1995. "State-Centered Refugee Law: From Resettlement to Containment" pp 257–278 in E.V. Daniel and J.C. Knudsen (eds.) *Mistrusting Refugees*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

(chaps tba) Cohen & Deng *The Forsaken People: Case Studies of the Internally Displaced*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

**Week 14: The anthropology of International response to displacement IV:
The Persistence of Refugee Interests**

*Pottier, J. 1999. "The 'Self' in Self-Repatriation: Closing Down Mugunga Camp in Eastern Zaire, pp 142–170 in Black, R. and Koser, K. (eds.) 1999. *The End of the Refugee Cycle*. New York: Berghahn Books.

*McSpadden, L.A. 1999. "Contradictions and Control in Repatriation: Negotiations for the Return of 500,000 Eritrean Refugees. in Black, R. and Koser, K. (eds.) 1999. *The End of the Refugee Cycle*. New York: Berghahn Books.

*selections to be assigned from Harrell-Bond, B. 1986. *Imposing Aid: Emergency Assistance to Refugees*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (now full text available online).

**Week 15: Reframing Displacement and Assistance—Dilemmas, Debates,
Tradeoffs, and Payoffs**

(chapters to be assigned) Loescher, G. 1993. *Beyond Charity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

*Weiner, Myron. 1998. "The Clash of Norms: Dilemmas in Refugee Policies." *Journal of Refugee Studies* Vol. 11, no.4: 433–453.

*Hendrie, B. "Relief Behind the Lines: The Cross-Border Operation in Tigray." pp 125–138 in J. Macrae and A. Zwi (eds.) *War and Hunger: Rethinking International Responses to Complex Emergencies*. London: Zed Books.

*Duffield, M. 1994. "The Political Economy of Internal War: Asset Transfer, Complex Emergencies and International Aid" pp 50–69 in J. Macrae and A. Zwi (eds.) *War and Hunger: Rethinking International Responses to Complex Emergencies*. London: Zed Books.

(chaps tba) Cohen & Deng *Masses in Flight: The Global Crisis of Internal Displacement*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

*Chimni, B.S. 1998. "The Geo-politics of Refugee Studies: A View from the South." *Journal of Refugee Studies* Vol. 11, No.4: 350–371.

Course Readings:

Required Texts:

Black, R. and Koser, K. (eds.) 1999. *The End of the Refugee Cycle*. New York: Berghahn Books.

Cernea, M. and McDowell, C. 2000. *Risks and Reconstruction: Experience of Resettlers and Refugees*. Washington, DC: World Bank

Cohen, R. & Deng, F. 1998. *Masses in Flight: The Global Crisis of Internal Displacement*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

Daniel, E.V., and Knudsen, J. (eds.) 1995. *Mistrusting Refugees*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Haines, D.W. (ed.) 1997. *Case Studies in Diversity: Refugees in America in the 1990s*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Holtzman, J.D. 2000. *Nuer Journeys, Nuer Lives: Sudanese Refugees in Minnesota*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Indra, D. (ed.) 1999. *Engendering Forced Migration: Theory and Practice*. New York: Berghahn Books.

Loescher, G. 1993. *Beyond Charity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Malkki, L. H. 1995. *Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory and National Cosmology Among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Sommers, M. 2000. *Fear in Bongoland: Burundi Refugees in Urban Tanzania*. New York: Berghahn Books.

Coursepack—instructor will notify as to where available on first day of class.

Recommended Texts:

Bascom, J. 1998. *Losing Place: Refugee Populations and Rural Transformations in East Africa*. New York: Berghahn Books.

Harrell-Bond, B. 1986. *Imposing Aid: Emergency Assistance to Refugees*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cohen, R. & Deng, F.M. 1998. *The Forsaken People: Case Studies of the Internally Displaced*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

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