**AFRICAN INSTUTUTE FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

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**COURSE STUDY: FORCED MIGRATION STUDY**

**POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA**

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| **COURSE UNIT ONE [1]:**  **INTRODUCTION TO REFUGEES AND FORCED MIGRATION**  **ATTEMPT QUESTION TWO [2]:**  **IN ABOUT ONE PAGE, TRACE THE HISTORY OF REFUGEE AND FORCED MIGRATION STUDIES?**  **SUBMITTED BY:**  **OKETA DOMINIC LABOKE**  **ADMISSION NO: 256/003/2019**  **SUBMITTED TO:**  **MODERATOR: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2019.**  **SUBMISSION DATE: 04/05/2019; SIGNATURE:** |

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| **Introduction:**  This question is to examine the history of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies and asks why the field is so often considered ‘historical’ and subject to neglect by historians. For the interest of justice in history the key words herein are the refugee, forced migration and studies of forced migration, foremost essential to provides a brief overview of the historiography of refugees and forced migration, focusing on continuity and change in refugee and forced migration history. The Convention of 1951 defined refugee in Article 1A (1) of the 1951 Convention applies the term ‘refugee’, “to any person considered a refugee under earlier international arrangements. Then, Article 1A (2), read now together with the 1967 Protocol and without time or geographical limits, offers a general definition of the refugee as including “any person who is outside their country or origin and unable or unwilling to return there or to avail themselves of its protection, owing to well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion in country of former habitual residence”. It then traces the evolution from Refugee to Forced Migration Studies within the framework of a debate over the appropriate labels and their methodological implications.  Although the field of refugee and forced migration studies itself emerged in the 1980s, there is a long and important history of research into refugees and forced displacement across the Humanities and Social and Political Sciences. During the inter-war and post-Second World War eras, for instance, historians examined refugee movements and the role of international organizations established to protect and assist refugees during this period. While these early assessments were insufficiently critical of either the states or intergovernmental agencies, during the 1970s and early 1980s researchers became increasingly frank in their analyses. Legal scholars were also active during this time, principally focusing on the provisions of national and international refugee instruments pertaining to refugee definitions, asylum and protection.  In the early 1980s legal scholars adopted a broader policy-oriented approach examining the domestic and foreign policy influences on Western refugee determination procedures providing important insights into the effectiveness of refugee decision making procedures, the role of UNHCR, and the impact of domestic and foreign policy factors on the implementation of refugee legal instruments. Although Malkki notes that researchers positioned within geography and anthropology started to conduct research on ‘Refugee Studies’ more recently than historians and legal scholars throughout these and later decades, research from across the social and political sciences explored individual, familial, and collective experiences of persecution, internment, and mass displacement in diverse contexts. Most notably, perhaps, this includes Elizabeth Colson’s political-anthropological research in Japanese-American internment camps in the 1940s and her analysis of colonized populations’ experiences of displacement and forced resettlement in the 1950s and 1960s  *By the early 1980s refugee and forced migration issues had become a globally salient issue, in part as a result of major protracted refugee situations in South East Asia, Pakistan and Iran, the Horn of Africa, Southern Africa, and Mexico and Central America, as well as a substantial increase in the numbers of asylum seekers in Europe and North America. In response to these developments, organizations such as the Ford Foundation funded a number of research organizations and individuals to undertake projects dealing with these issues. The result was a growing body of work documenting the causes of refugee flows; emergency assistance programmes for refugees; transnational networks to assist refugees; and policy responses of particular states to refugee movements.*  Arguably one of the key scholarly contributions from this period was Barbara Harrell-Bond’s ground-breaking Imposing Aid. This research was influential not least because it reflected Harrell-Bond’s conviction that research about refugees should be used for refugees, to uphold refugees’ rights and agency throughout processes of displacement. Indeed, what is now often referred to as researchers’ ‘dual imperative’ to promote academic knowledge and undertake ethical action, Jacobsen and Landau 2003 is closely tied to the assertion that there can be no ‘justification for conducting research into situations of extreme human suffering if one does not have the alleviation of suffering as an explicit objective of one’s research’. Consequently, one of the most important developments during the 1980s was the emergence of refugee and forced migration studies as a distinct field of study and policy analysis, and the establishment of new research and teaching centres and policy institutes. These included the Refugee Studies Programme at the University of Oxford, the refugee programme at York University in Toronto, and the Refugee Policy Group in Washington DC; in addition, existing policy centres such as the US Committee for Refugees, the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, and the European Council on Refugees and Exiles considerably strengthened their coverage and advocacy efforts for refugees and asylum seekers.  Finally, two new academic journals, the Journal of Refugee Studies and the Journal of International Refugee Law were established in 1988 and 1989 respectively, and The International Research and Advisory Panel on Refugees and Other Displaced Persons (IRAP), which was the precursor to the International Association for the Study of Forced Migration (IASFM), was formed in 1990. Over the last thirty years refugee and forced migration studies has grown from being a concern of a relatively small number of scholars and policy researchers to a global field of interest with thousands of students’ worldwide studying displacement either from traditional disciplinary perspectives or as a core component of newer programmes across the Humanities and Social and Political Sciences.  Today the field encompasses both rigorous academic research which may or may not ultimately inform policy and practice as well as action-research focused on advocating in favour of refugees’ needs and rights. This Handbook draws on an ever-expanding global network of scholars in refugee and forced migration studies, bringing together contributions from leading academics, practitioners, and policymakers working in universities, research centres, think tanks, NGOs, and international organizations around the world.  History can bring important inputs by shedding light on the ‘manifold ways in which past societies thought about refugees’ (Holian and Cohen 2012: 324). Although still an emerging area of research, the preceding pages demonstrate that a rich body of historical scholarship exists. As attested by a number of ongoing research projects and recent conferences, historians’ contributions to the field seem to represent a flourishing field of study. To be sure, there are still many shortcomings, such as the lack of ‘history from below’. Methodological and archival difficulties may explain part of the research gap but historians have to better address those aspects if they are to shed the ‘ahistorical’ stigma. In doing so, they can certainly count on the interest of and the contribution from other academic disciplines and collaborations with anthropologists is certainly a most promising avenue. However, for the dialogue to be productive, it is also important for other academics to show more interest in historical studies on refugees and forced migrants as well as more generally. When Philip Marfleet laments that ‘researchers in the field of forced migration rarely undertake historical analyses’ and seem to be ‘averse to history’ (2007: 136), he not only points to the shortcomings in historical studies on refugees and forced migrants.  In defining the key debates, since 1980s, refugee and forced migration studies has evolved beyond its original close ties to advocacy and policymaking, developing a more distinct identity as an independent field worthy of scholarly research. Increasingly, many researchers elect to use forced migration as a lens through which to contribute to a range of philosophical, political, and interpretative theory. Yet there can be little doubt that the study of forced migration is as relevant to the ‘real world’ as ever, with 7.6 million people having been newly displaced due to conflict or persecution in 2012 alone: an average of 23,000 people a day (UNHCR 2013). New and ongoing humanitarian crises continue to erupt, most recently and with terrible consequences across the Middle East and North Africa, with the conflict in Syria described in April 2013 by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres, as ‘the most dramatic humanitarian crisis that UNHCR have ever faced’. Meanwhile, two-thirds of refugees and displaced persons continue to wait in exile for over five years, in some cases for generations, with no solutions in sight for millions of Palestinians, Somalis, Afghans, or Colombians among others. One of the great contemporary debates in refugee and forced migration studies is the extent to which research should be framed by urgent policy questions to respond to these and other crises. Policymakers frequently decry what they perceive to be a shift towards more abstract, intellectual concerns, while academics argue that more theoretical approaches contribute to important disciplinary debates and that completing policy relevant research is no substitute for rigorous intellectual analysis. This Handbook not only documents these different approaches to research, but shows how they can be complementary when used in combination. Indeed, there is a real and continuing need to collect accurate, representative, and meaningful qualitative and quantitative data in order to carefully map and better understand the scope, scale, causes, and consequences of forced migration.  In addition to informing policymaking, evaluation and development, new concepts, methodological and interpretative frameworks, and theoretical modelling are equally fundamental to the wider framing of forced migrations, be they crises of conflict, citizenship, or capitalism. Integral to the debate regarding policy-relevant and ‘policy-irrelevant’ research Bakewell is an interrogation of the methods of data collection and analysis which have characterized a significant proportion of studies undertaken by scholars in the field to date, and whether such research is in fact well situated to inform policy. With much, if not most, research in the field having been primarily qualitative in nature, and often framed around detailed analyses of single case-studies (as is the classical ethnographic approach underpinning anthropology), the challenges of completing research which is simultaneously meaningful for displaced persons and communities, academics, practitioners, and policymakers are complex (Jacobsen and Landau 2008). Many of the Handbook’s contributions represent and critically reflect upon these diverse methodological and interpretative frameworks, ranging from archival research and institutional history; micro, meso, and macro levels of analysis; large statistical data sets and top-down research; and technological tools such as remote sensing and Geographical Information systems. In turn, interpretative frameworks represented in the Handbook include normative approaches and critical perspectives grounded in feminist, gender, and post-colonial theories. Just as the contested relationship between research, policy, and practice in refugee and forced migration studies is in evidence in many of the Handbook’s so too is the connection between definitions and experiences of forced versus voluntary migration, and how forced migration studies relates to and complements the wider field of Migration Studies. Some contributors, such as Bakewell, Van Hear, and Long, argue that it is often more appropriate to focus on processes of migration in and from conflict, and that in defending refugee and forced migration studies as a separate field, there is a risk that scholars are legitimizing labels that are as warns us deliberately constructed to exclude and to disempower.  It is essential that we recognize this. What few on either side would dispute, however, is that the two areas of study are closely connected. Particularly at the edges of what is conventionally recognized as forced migration when dealing with topics like Diasporas and transnationalism, irregular migration, or economic livelihoods attempting to draw clear boundaries is unhelpful, and the most exciting research in these areas reflects the best insights from both the migration studies and forced migration studies traditions.  Despite these contests and caveats, which have fuelled considerable debate in recent years in practice, most researchers can nonetheless readily identify work that belongs to the field of refugee and forced migration studies. Most clearly, such research can be broadly considered to cover the study of those who have been identified by the international community as asylum seekers, refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), development induced displaced persons, or trafficked persons, as well as all those whose claim to such labels may have been denied, but who have been forced to move against their will as a result of persecution, conflict, or insecurity. Interest in studying governmental, institutional, and international responses to such forced migrations reflects the extent to which law has influenced the development of the field. Concurrently, detailed ethnographic studies and concern with documenting lived experiences of forced migration reflect the crucial contributions of anthropologists and sociologists to the field.  In addition to direct lived experiences of being forced to flee, a related set of studies centralize direct and inherited experiences of forced immobility and forced sedentarization. These studies include research with individuals and groups born into protracted displacement who may not have personally experienced migration (forced or otherwise) and those who are ‘internally stuck’ or otherwise prevented from safely returning to their own or their families’ places of origin in spite of a desperate desire to do so, including stateless persons and communities.  *Indeed, with reference to the latter, the causes, experiences, and implications of borders moving over people as in the cases of the partition of India and the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union in addition to people moving over borders, have gained increasing attention over the past few years.* Uniting the diverse disciplinary perspectives, methodologies, and areas of analysis outlined above as aptly illustrated in this Handbook-is that refugee and forced migration studies is a subject focused on understanding and addressing human experiences of displacement and dispossession. Most explicitly, perhaps, scholars working within the traditions of anthropology and sociology have highlighted the heterogeneity of these human experiences, according for instance to age, gender, sexual orientation, health and disability status, or religious identity. Understanding this diversity is highly significant for political and institutional analyses of the nature and implications of state and non-state responses to forced migration which can variously aim to alleviate human suffering and uphold the rights of displaced persons, or to control and protect borders and territories by limiting and/or forcing the removal of certain bodies from these spaces.  **In conclusion:**  Refugee and forced migration scholars should engage more with the general historical contexts in which displacements develop. For fruitful exchanges to emerge, it may also be important to realize that more often than not, historians will aim to produce history of forced displacements for its own sake and not just with a ‘utilitarian’ perspective, i.e. to ‘help’ other scholars, as Marfleet requests (2007: 136). Historians will (hopefully) not necessarily select a research topic or an approach solely for the benefit of other disciplines, a specific field of study, or to feed into policy. Despite the inherent difficulties, meaningful engagement with historians has to be based on genuine 19 interdisciplinary projects and consideration for historians’ own perspectives. In other words, as historians move to take refugee and forced migration studies seriously, the wider refugee and forced migration studies community must start taking history seriously  Acknowledging this diversity is equally significant in order to ensure that studies and policies of about, and for forced migrants recognize the agency of affected individuals and groups, even in contexts of extreme violence, oppression, and control. Indeed, beyond academics policy makers, and practitioners, analyses, forced migrants themselves are of course active agents who represent their own and others experiences of displacement through diverse means, including through refugee and IDP produced media. Harrell-Bond’s seminal work (1986) argued that refugees are not a prior dependent and passive, but rather that humanitarian institutions and political structures have created and even demanded the dependency of forced migrants upon donors and providers of assistance which lead into subject of studies today.  This suggests that there is a continuing need for both humanitarian and political responses to displacement on the one hand, and academic research across all disciplines on the other, to ensure that policies, studies, and discourses do not deny the agency of displaced persons, but rather aim to enhance their rights and capabilities within contexts of accelerated social and political change. Such approaches must, we would argue, simultaneously interrogate structures and mechanisms which unduly criminalize and subject forced migrants to securitization paradigms, but also those structures which concomitantly lead to an unrealistic and potentially equally oppressive idealization of certain groups of displaced persons. It is, we hope, this commitment to upholding the human rights of displaced persons within the framework of international legal commitments and ethical values, wherever they may be located in camps or cities; ‘here’ or ‘there’; in the global North or global South which connects scholars working on refugees.   |  | | --- | | References: |   JD. Pugh Examining Colombian forced migration in Ecuador  (Martin 1982; Avery 1984),  Bakewell, 1995-2008  Barbara Harrell-Bond’s 1986  Martin 1982; Avery 1984,  Jacobsen and Landau 2003  Martin 2004; Hathaway 2007),  Colson 1971.Turton 1996: 96).Alleviation of suffering as an explicit objective of one’s research and forced migration studies across the Humanities and social and political sciences. |