

## **Editorial**

Dear Reader

Welcome to the ninth issue of the Oxford Monitor of Forced Migration. This edition—complete with seven articles written by graduate students, young researchers, and an individual who was resettled to the US as a refugee—has been produced by a new editorial board comprised of students who finished their Master’s degrees in Forced Migration and Migration Studies in 2014. We crafted this issue in the midst of energetic, often chaotic, developments relating to migration and asylum in the Global North. The articles contained herein reflect this atmosphere.

For the past several months our newsfeeds have been saturated with stories of Europe’s ‘migration crisis’—an unfolding yet familiar narrative that is framed by policymakers and the media as a complex problem that needs to be ‘solved.’ Recently, Oxford academic and advocate, Bridget Anderson, pointed out the absurdity of media enquiries that she has received which ask for suggestions on how to resolve the challenges in Calais in just 50 words. Anderson does acquiesce—albeit, in 53 words—offering an intentionally longwinded master plan that would ‘finance local government and groups to facilitate integration alongside investing in UK people and public services, and changing foreign policy.’ This exchange reflects a perennial difficulty in the field of migration studies: that of producing scholastic material and engaging both effectively and ethically with media and policy circles. This interface is a matter of continued concern for (young) researchers that has been explored since the inception of OxMo (see, for instance, Tom Barrat’s 2011 article, ‘Sales over Substance: Pandering to Populism on the Right and the Left’).

In this issue of OxMo, the Editors of each section have independently selected an array of articles that touch upon the tensions underlying the compulsion to solve ‘refugee crises.’ We observe that the articles in this issue fall relatively neatly into one of two camps.

One set of articles focuses on ways in which states and policymakers attempt to govern human mobility. In the academic section, Sebastian Lundby considers immigration detention from the perspective of Europe as a whole, exposing the ways in which individual states have exploited the elevated status of law to legitimate systematic acts of immorality—through increasing occurrences of detaining migrants—rather than to guarantee protection for the individual. Moving from detention to deportation, Caroline Parker considers how the spectacle of deportation is a mode of statecraft that affects the public’s moral emotions and leads to the creation of distinctions between a racialised and gendered deserving and undeserving ‘other.’ In the law monitor, Bernice Carrick explores the expanding role of the Australian border (both literally and rhetorically) in Australian politics, explaining how the shifting boundaries of that state have been justified as a means to secure the survival of Australian democracy, economy, freedom, and culture. Lastly, in a contribution to the policy monitor, Damian Rosset and Tone Maia Liodden discuss how the perceived neutrality of Country of Origin Information (COI) can be used to legitimise restrictions in a state’s asylum adjudication process. They use the example of COI on Eritrea that was produced by the Danish Immigration Service to suggest potential repercussions that one country’s practices can have on other asylum regimes.

Countering these pieces on increasingly restrictive state practices are narratives that focus on the resistance, resolve, and agency of individuals. In the first hand section, Manar Al shares his story of self-discovery and perseverance as he escaped perilous circumstances in Baghdad and confronted bureaucratic barriers in UNHCR Lebanon before securing physical safety and mental security in the United States as a resettled refugee. Georgina Ramsay draws upon ethnographic fieldwork with refugees who have received third country resettlement in Australia to consider the role that return visits to their previous country of exile play in shaping their identities. Her unique perspective, which splices airport scenes of transit with reflections on the social nature of displacement, highlights the particular pressures that are faced by resettled refugees to support their networks in former countries of residence. Finally, Reva Dhingra traces the increasing provision of psychosocial support programmes in humanitarian situations, leveraging quotations and anecdotes from Syrian refugees in Jordan to argue that a more holistic approach to enable refugees' well being must consider integrative, community-driven efforts to address the plurality of difficulties caused by traumas they have endured both in conflict and in protracted displacement.

Cumulatively, these articles create ample space to reflect on the relationship between ostensibly liberal democratic states and the restricted mobilities of migrants. We invite you to explore these concepts and other salient themes that you come across in this issue. Your comments, questions, and continued interest in these matters are encouraged and we invite you to please be in touch.

Sincerely

**Andonis Marden & Angelica Neville**

Editors in Chief

August 2015

*The next volume of OxMo will be published in late 2015. Please see the Call for Papers at the end of this issue for submission details.*