Children Displaced Across Borders: Charting New Directions for Research from Interdisciplinary Perspectives

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Abstract: This paper introduces the special issue on Children Displaced Across Borders, tied to the outcomes of the conference held in Swansea in 2016. It explores discussions in migration research that attend to different meanings of the "border" in relation to varied displacements of children. It starts with the discussion about the boundaries of migrant subjectivities and brings into question the ability of the child to manage and order displacements. It considers changing ethical and symbolic boundaries that are used to represent children and their movements, and challenges dominant dialectical oppositions used to define their belonging. It explores the linguistic and symbolic structures enabling children's displacements and disappearances. It concludes with the conceptual observations about different ways of engaging with the silences and limit-experiences in children's displacements often overlooked in contemporary migration research.

Migration is a part of the global mobility, which involves corporeal, physical, imaginative, virtual, and communicative movement across the world (Urry 2007). Although people have migrated for centuries out of economic necessity, a spike in forced displacement has occurred on a scale not witnessed since World War II. In this context, children's displacement should be considered in relation to material, symbolic, imaginary, virtual barriers interfering with the mobility of their bodies that they seek to control and contain. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2019), estimates that millions of children are involved in these

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back-and-forth, often spontaneous and uncertain movements that are accompanied by periods of waiting, wherein physical arrival to a place does not always correspond with the child's imagined travel and expectations about border crossings. With different types of movement unfolding across different scales it is difficult to draw clear lines between micro-, meso and macro-structures shaping migrations. These different processes of displacement, as Castles and Miller (2002 21) suggest, "affect every dimension of social existence and … develop its own complex dynamics," thus calling for broader analysis of social change and living on the move.

The complexity and increasing intensity of forced migrations raise important questions about the ways in which children migrants negotiate the issues of "distance" and "strangeness" in such a changing field. The concept of borders often appears particularly problematic in the discussions about migration that priorities transnational movement beyond national boundaries and other limits. Some scholars argued for increasing attention to crossings and continuous exchanges between people across borders (Vertovec 1999) and subsequent re-definition of boundaries in the "heady swirl of spatial trajectories and flows" (Malpas 2012). Reichert (1992), Massey (2004) and Thrift (2006) called for the dissolution of boundaries in their critical re-evaluation of the concepts of spaces and flows. In particular, studies of youth migration and displacement destabilized the ideas of childhood as a bounded site of fixity, highlighting the transcultural or "blended" nature of children's migrancy and fluid boundaries of their belonging (Hoerder et al. 2005; Ní Laoire et al. 2010).

However, the assertion of unbounded expansion in transnational research and "liquid" modernity of cross-border movement (Bauman, 2000) has been criticized in recent literatures,

which draw attention to difference created in the process of migration and the new forms of boundaries and separations, as well as obstacles and dislocations it entails. In particular, Grewal (2005) highlights not just links created in migrations, but also disconnections produced by gendered, racialised, sexualised and classed migrants. Similarly, Pewdell (2014) writes of the challenges related to international mobility and displacement, which create ruptures, loss and failures. Lionnet and Shih (2005 7) bring to the fore complex forms of boundaries and transgressions within the mixture of colonial, postcolonial, and neo-colonial spaces that can shape international displacements.

Importantly, under both domestic and international law, notably influenced by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, States have obligations to protect the vulnerable. Yet, tied to colonial legacy, contemporary neoliberal impulse, a wide gap between human rights protection in policy and what is implemented in practice appears in the lived experiences of displaced children. These ruptures not only reflect spatial boundaries, but also temporal limitations such as expected endpoints migration processes or "temporal limits" to integration of young people (Waters 2011 1120). Different temporalities of "home" coincide with the liminal times of suspension and temporariness in the lives of displaced young people (Shubin and Collins 2017), and require complementary analysis of objective (measurable limits imposed on mobility) and existential borders (linked to their everyday, mobilized engagement with the world). Contested approaches to children's displacement raise three key concerns about limits and borders, which are explored.

To begin, we draw from ongoing debates in the social sciences on relational subjectivity (Dewsbury 2007; Massey 2005; Whatmore 2002) that question the existence of a coherent subject and argue for displacement of subjective positions (related to sense, will, thought). In doing so, this collection of articles is attentive to the changing limits or boundaries of a "child" crossing the borders. Second, energized by the growing number of interdisciplinary literatures studying the processes of othering and placement of migrants (Cresswell 2006; Huot et al. 2015; Loftsdóttir and Jensen 2016; Sibley1995), we consider children's displacements in relation to changing ethical, normative and symbolic boundaries producing power geometries of everyday lives. Finally, building on recent debates that challenge the logic of unity, continuity, and representation in expressing mobile living (Anderson and Harrison 2010; Bissell 2018; Cresswell and Merriman 2016;), we analyze children's displacements in language and consider alternative approaches to expressing the interruptions, disjunctions and breaks in their movements.

The scholarship in this collection is tied to a conference on Children Displaced across Borders held in Swansea in 2016, which examined trans-Atlantic migratory transformations alongside the shifting sociopolitical and economic trends that constitute modern globalization processes. Though situated within the distinct geographic contexts of Bangladesh, England, and the United States, each article within this collection focuses on system level responses to child displacement. Furthermore, each was keen to consider how local policy and practice either addressed or ignored the needs of children and youth who had various statuses within each State. Public sector systems must be adequately equipped to address the needs of displaced peoples, and particularly those of minors. As evidenced in this collection, some systems and States have struggled more or less than others to do so. Thus, in addition to theoretical contributions, key to

this collection of articles, and the conference from which it originated, is an emphasis on policy and programmatic recommendations for systems and actors who are tasked with addressing the needs of children on the move either by force or otherwise.

Changing Limits of Migrant Subjectivities

First, this collection explores the changing subjectivities of displaced children and the futility of attempts to delimit them. Here our focus is on constantly transforming migrant identity in relation to the boundaries between the space and time of their crossings, barriers between the child and local communities, and limits that shape childhood within broader life. Traditionally migration and displacement research considered such processes to include the existence of a relatively coherent migrant identity and the presence of semi-stable personhood. While it was understood that migrants undergo change and transformation in the process of cross-border movement, it was assumed that the migrant subject had substantial control over the process of identification and undertook it in a conscious manner (Jasso, 2004).

Recent literatures unsettled this relatively stable view of migrant identities, drawing on the view of migrant "subjects-in-transit" engaged in mobility and habitation simultaneously (Clifford 1994 321). Papadopoulos and Tsianos (2007) described "non-representable… unlabelled, untamed, unidentified" migrants travelling across the Mediterranean, who choose to dispose of their documents in an attempt to define the limits and definitions set for them by the European states (234). Similarly, Shubin et al. (2004) considered migrant subjectivity as a flawed and incomplete process, arguing for the shift beyond the analysis of migrants as relatively stable

entities towards considering them as always-emergent constellations of processes straddling diverse borders. Other literature discussed how the changing subjectivities of children on the move do not fit within the institutionalized group boundaries or geographical limitations of destination contexts (Sporton et al. 2006). This view of subjectivity challenges the construction of boundaries as sites of certainty and contingency and goes beyond the discourse constructing the knowledge of "displaced person" and migration (as the passage between the known and the unknown, across the limits of "normality") on the basis of reason (Shubin 2016).

Recent calls to challenge 'child-centredness' (Spyrou 2017) in children geographies are supported by the theorizations of youth migrations as "assembled" through the combination of emotions, bodies, objects not limited to individual human experiences (Raghuram 2012). Bolzman et al. (2017) for example, described migrant children as assemblages situated across borders through the clustering of actors, practices, ideas and objects, which come together, change shape, and add or lose specific elements in displacement processes. The frameworks of hybridity (Liu 2015) and transnationalism (Baldassar and Merla 2014) also have been usefully applied to explain open-ended development of children in relation to their movement across borders, which involved constant remaking of their relations with other beings and things in different locations. The resulting discussions in the literatures about displaced children stress the impossibility of treating them as self-enclosed agents and producing definitive boundaries of their identity. They reiterate the dispersed construction of everyday life of migrants and acknowledge the multitude of practices producing social subject of "child migrant" who is neither stable nor unified (Dobson 2009; Veale and Dona 2014; Moskal 2015).

Changing Ethical and Symbolic Boundaries

Second, we consider changing ethical boundaries used to position displaced children in relation to difference and normality in the dominant moral fields. The deeply-rooted traditions of sedentarist thinking (Cresswell 2006), which prioritizes fixity over mobility, would often consider mobile children such as Gypsy Travellers in negative moral terms due to their limited attachment to place and potential threat to the dominant moral order (Shubin 2011a). Many displaced children are caught in the power geometries of everyday life (Massey 1994), so much so that their physical mobility is presented as potentially dangerous, challenging the inside/outside boundaries of belonging and in need of control. Within the persistent sedentary discourses that prioritize fixity and placement over mobility, displaced children are often portrayed as being out of place, or even crossing the moral boundaries of settled communities and therefore made invisible in migration processes (Laoire et al., 2012). In this case, ethical boundaries framing the displacement of children are produced through the work of negation. Mobile being of children is ~~crossed out~~ as they are seen as absent within the dominant moral order, detached from space and time, and not at-home in the world. These limits rely on binary conceptualizations of place and placelessness, "stability versus movement, permanent versus temporary," which have been challenged by geographers (Smith and King 2012 131).

Furthermore, children such as those seeking refuge or asylum are often differentially displaced in the dominant symbolic system, which relies on utilitarian ethics. On the one hand, the ethical system based on rationality frames those children coping "well" with their dislocations as "resilient" and having less voice in decision-making process than those

considered "vulnerable" (Maegusuku-Hewett et al. 2007). While the possibility of voluntary mobilities increasingly is becoming a "new norm" for young people in the Global North (King 2018 1), for the children in the Global South experiences of uprootedness and resettlement are often portrayed as transgressive in relation to the existing cultural boundaries. Mobility of children such as those lacking a fixed "home" (Van Blerk 2005), engaged in itinerant living as Travelers (Shubin 2011b; Vanderbeck 2005), and/or who are forcefully moved and trafficked (Hopkins and Hill 2008; Lemke 2017) have been categorized as transgressive and unsettling to the existing order. Tied to normative politics of the State and larger society, such movement is both shaped by and can produce cultural fears and moral panics. Similarly, in a study on refugee children in Jordan, Hart (2002) highlighted the marginalization of those who were seemingly unable to make sense of their forcefully disrupted lives and "fit" within the boundaries of a new cultural landscape, which constituted wholly different language, dress, and faith practices. Thus, this collection of articles contributes to recent studies that challenge the associations of children's mobility with deviance (Beazley 2015; White et al. 2016) and highlights the emergence of fluid, uncertain, and contextual ethical boundaries in migration.

On the other hand, those young people-in-transition whose practices do not fit within the externally-ascribed normative boundaries of childhood and development can also find themselves symbolically and morally excluded. Critical theorizations of young people as "becoming" active and changeable subjects constructing their social worlds challenged the visions of linear and progressive movement through the different boundaries or stages of "childhood" to "adulthood" (Uprichard 2008; Worth 2009). Despite this, many displaced children in the Global South, who seem to disappear from the expected pathways of progression

(for instance, via education) or achieve their role within household (as "full adults"), have been viewed as other and misunderstood by policy makers (Punch 2014). For example, Asian children's independent migrations for work challenge the simplistic boundaries between home and not-home and unsettle a stage-by-stage view of their development as they reconfigure their education by learning from relatives and elders as well as through vocational training (Beazley, 2015). Similarly, Hashim and Thorsen (2011) observe that migrant children in Africa often interrupt their education in an attempt to provide care for younger siblings, but they can be sucked into petty crime, which transgress existing boundaries of the societal order. In the Global North, scholarship documents educational equity concerns for displaced students. In the United States context for example, educational research has focused on basic preparedness to address refugee language, socioemotional, and cultural needs, as well as how educator normative values collide with displaced family values and perceived levels of cultural capital (Ngo 2008; Roxas and Roy 2012). Most recently critical educational scholarship has examined the very real effects of fear-driven policies, practices, and discourses have on migrant and other displaced populations (Quinn, Hopkins, and Bedolla 2017). Thus, during complex temporal, spatial and social transitions within the areas of education, family, and work, young migrants also re-negotiate the limits of the law and morality, which require further analysis of the processes that maintain social boundaries and define transgressions (Huijsmans 2012). In this view, the displacement of children is an attempt to flee structural disenfranchisement, as well as escape from liminality and symbolic exclusion within the existing power structures (Chiu and Choi 2018).

Changing Politics and Representations in Language

Finally, we consider changing politics and attempts to represent in language or re-draw the boundaries around mobile identities. Displacement of children has been studied in relation to already existing identities, which are differentiated along the boundaries of not/belonging, not/migrants, not/integrated, and thus are linked to the areas of jurisdiction and "localized" responsibility (Shubin 2011a). The systems of decision-making and service provision for migrants tend to rely on the logic of segmentarity ("catchment areas") and the use of boundaries to cut up mobile lives into acceptable "regions" such as migration/settlement, job/holiday, family/profession (Dickey et al. 2018). As Deleuze and Parnet (2002 129) suggest, power in this case functions as "a code-territory complex", attempting to codify the multiplicity of children displacements (as hybrid, assembled, always-evolving) and allocate them a place within the linguistic and organizational system (such as non-belongers or ineffective speakers). The state attempts to territorialise mobile young people in relation to others, often marking them as strangers, through language, which "stabilizes around a parish, a bishopric, a capital" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987 7). Naming in language creates the object of a "displaced child," which is considered within a specific area of jurisdiction or bounded "parish" territory such as psychological inventory or educational scale (Crush and Tawodzera 2014).

Yet, such coding and placement within specific domain inevitably focuses only one component of migration, often linked to defining physical attributes of coping with displacement, to the exclusion of other elements of children's journeys such as the virtual, imaginative, and metaphorical (Maegusuku-Hewett et al. 2007). In such cases, spatially defined boundaries drawn around one of the attributes of displacement provide segmented view of young people and their experiences of migration, separating those who moved and who did not (Boyden and De Berry

2004). Within such immobile regulatory frameworks, experiences and practices of displaced youth can often be fragmented in an attempt to make them belong to the institutional and geographical structures in the areas of destination (through practices of integration or even assimilation) or to return them to their places of origin (Dickey et al. 2018; Valentine et al. 2009).

The restricted economy of meaning grounded in territorialisation produces the break between the representative, "a child migrant," and the represented, i.e. actual displacements often described as "false" (Lecerlce 2002). The figure of the displaced child in this process becomes an abstraction used in the dominant symbolic system of exchange, where migrants appear in a simple relationship of opposition or assimilation into the host culture based on the number of fixed elements such as skills, language or "resilient mindset" (Brooks 2005 300). As a result, such attempts to fix and "regionalize" children's lives often fail to capture the imagined movement, transcultural, and emotional links they develop through the process of displacement, which can jeopardize their sense of independence and interrupt transnational links they rely on (Ní Laoire et al. 2010). In this collection of articles, we build on these studies to view displacement as relational and transversal, involving continuous remaking of children's lives that cannot be neatly positioned in relation to borders indicative of specific "territories" of concern within linguistic or organizational structures.

At the same time, the attempts to locate children within the structure of language often fail as they assume continuity in their displacements and thinking with the view of unifying their often disjointed experiences. Despite the appearance of coherent movement, youth migration is

governed by discontinuity and disruptions, which refuse to be incorporated into the dominant modes of intentionality (Bakewell and De Haas 2007). Some of the children's encounters of trauma (Pratt et al. 2017), violence (Gifford and Sampson 2010), emotional insecurity (Jordan and Graham 2012) and near-death (Hoffman 2016) during their migrations reflect their terrifying exposure to the forces of alterity and finitude, which cannot be put into words. These forces are unspeakable and unknown, "limitless" due to the engagement with the haunted, the violent and the strange so they cannot be contained within the boundaries of the migrant self. Such encounters exceed the limits of human possibility (as they often involve near-destruction, irreversible transformation of the displaced child) to choose and represent the disruptive events as they are not fully accessible to and cannot be made meaningful by the migrant. As Blanchot (2010) suggests, the relation to mortal risks in such situations is provided by language at its limits, in its powerlessness to say the unsayable. Critical understanding of children's displacement and accompanying states of pain and weariness needs careful analysis of entangled spatialities and temporalities of affliction and tracing vulnerability across boundaries (Philo, 2005 11). Furthermore, a response to such "wounded geographies" (Philo 2017) at the limits of representation calls for a different kind of expression and rethinking of the boundaries of knowledge.

Instead of assuming that afflictions and traumas that are not yet known can be made meaningful and incorporated into a coherent discourse or narrative of displacement, this approach opens space for the passive suspension that speaks beyond the individual. To address the nameless, infinite and disastrous events, Blanchot (1993 78) insists that one needs, "not only to express oneself in an intermittent manner, but also to allow intermittence itself to speak …

without reference to unity." Such intermittence, which he terms the neuter, on the one hand creates limits and effaces, while at the same time displaces and transforms, avoiding the logic of completion and presentation (Hill 2002). Broader geographical accounts of witnessing and testimony for traumatic events such as Holocaust provide further illustrations that avoid representation of suffering, express victimhood without attempts to make meaning and bring disruptive events into totalizing grid of "intelligibility" (Carter-White 2018).

Changing Conceptualizations of the Displaced Child

This collection of articles builds upon empirical and theoretical scholarship in a manner that further unsettles conceptualizations of displaced children and youth. Rather than fixed, stable, and mappable identities, children are now viewed as moving in ways that are both flexible and contested. Thus, this scholarship seeks to disrupt clearly defined boundaries constituting the "displaced child" and to develop open-ended conceptualizations of migrant subjectivities in ways that account for the contextual variety and experiential complexity of child and youth movement. Here youth transitions are viewed as fluid, complex, and fragmented and thus invite the possibility of an alternative ethics that challenges pre-defined norms and limits of concern for displaced children.

Still, these articles also elucidate the web of politics, polices, and policy actors, which both contribute and respond to forced displacement. In this vein, this collection attempts to express the disconnections and unspeakable breaks in children's mobile lives that reinvent time-space crossings, and to move beyond the distinctions between those who moved and those who

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did not. Finally, the articles in this collection are rightly attuned to the permanency of the kinds of exploitation, trauma, and stigma experienced while on the move and once settled in a new spaces. Yet, there is a clear acknowledgement that those constituent dynamics of identity, culture, and agency are not eliminated during displacement, but rather are reconstituted in new and evolving ways.

In the first article, Shubin and Sowgat speak to the broader themes of this special issue by considering ethical, cultural and geographical displacements of urban poor children in Bangladesh. They start exploring geographical displacements of children, who migrate to the city from the countryside in an attempt to escape from poverty and then are often moved to child development (detention) centres across the country. These physical displacements are accompanied by the repositioning of children within the boundaries of the law ("diversion" program) and hierarchies of power, with the expectations that they are moved away from crime. The paper challenges the attempts to represent poor children as outsiders in discourse and the legal system, based on the logic of rationality, reason and calculation. It highlights children's complex engagements with the world that cannot be easily reduced to categorical oppositions and brought fully into knowledge to the exclusion of the "transgressive" elements and actions threatening to undermine the dominant moral order. Drawing on the ideas of Georges Bataille, this paper considers the possibility of different responses to "other" poor children in the form of patience and waiting that acknowledge the indeterminancy and uncertainty of children's lives beyond conceptual categorisations, rigid ethical boundaries or limits of the law. In so doing, the paper resonates with broader call of this special issue to re-examine the boundaries framing

youth displacements, de-centre the subject of the "child" and disrupt the existing systems representing and responding to difference emerging in children's lives.

In the second article, Lemke and Nickerson utilized critical policy framing, as well as literature on culturally responsive pedagogy and trauma-informed practice to examine how U.S. schools address the academic and mental health needs of displaced students. Drawn from a larger qualitative case study, their article presents findings on supports and barriers to refugee and hurricane displaced high school student acclimation within an inhospitable national political context. Unique to this research is the multi-strategy design that involved document and photograph collection, observations, individual administrative-level interviews, and teacher and staff focus groups. Mindful of those processes and decisions that affect youth worlds, this research actively involved educators at multiple levels to unpack how multi-tier policies, programming, pedagogical practices shape displaced youth educational experience. Key to this study was the critical lens it brought to its consideration of the relationship between displaced students recently resettled in New York State and the politics of fear bound up with the policies and rhetoric of Trump Administration. In doing so, it found that culturally responsive and trauma-informed practices play a key role in countering and resisting "unquestionable nativism and xenophobia" existent within contextualized lived student experience. This research contributes to interdisciplinary research focused on the traumas associated with forced migration and the policies and politics wedded to global displacement processes. It also contributes to educational scholarship concerned with how youth navigate normative culture, as understood through the context of one U.S. school serving displaced students. Findings offer a framework for thinking through how educators can engage in anti-deficit and trauma-informed approaches

that are mindful of the temporal realities of student adversity, and varied levels of enacted agency.

In the third article, Hanna utilizes theoretical devices of educational inclusion, migration, and borders to examine the political and socializing role of primary school curriculum and pedagogy as relevant to newly arrived migrant children in northern England. Utilizing an exploratory, creative and participatory approach, this article presents findings from a small-scale study that examined migrant learning in a multi-ethnic primary school. Similar to the approach used by Lemke and Nickerson, this study involved multiple strategies including observations, group discussion, and interviews, as well as collection and analysis of student picturebooks and over 500 photographs. Also incorporative of a child-rights approach, which aims to include children and youth in that which affects their daily lives, findings from this research contribute to a framework for understanding migrant children inclusion within schools. This inclusion not only involves physical access to the school and curriculum, but educational opportunities across and beyond the learning environment. Thus, as argued by Hanna, "a co-constructed approach to knowledge is key." Among other things, findings from this article underscore that the co-construction of knowledge is reliant on how teachers include migrant learners within the physical classroom space and address elements of the "hidden curriculum," whether or not the multiplicity of migrant identity is valued, and the degree to which migrant learners themselves have agency over their schooling experience – each of which the consequences of extend far beyond the physical classroom space.

Finally, Doel's Afterword focuses on the meaning of the word "displaced" in the title of this special issue and considers alternative 'topography' of displacements in discourse, time and speech. Instead of taking place and its limits for granted, it offers critical examination of this concept that might help to shape modes of analysis of children's displacements in geography. It introduces a pause in dis/(-)placement and questions the very positioning of children (in place, badly placed, out of place) in the existing structures of meaning and in symbolic register. Furthering the analysis of borders started in this introduction, the Afterword explores the passage or crossing beyond the limits of a "child" in an encounter with alterity that is impossible to locate in language or place within the legal system of prohibitions or transgressions. The child can be seen as the "other" and different in the existing moral frameworks (considered "displaced" from its place of "normality" or left-behind) and yet showing the signs and actions that call for its "placement" within the dominant landscapes of hospitality and care. In this respect, the discussion points to the double movement of placement and displacement, affirmation and negation, which involves simultaneous taking place and effacement, both creating and erasing the limit of the place. This movement suspends the temporal relation of meaning since it is neither a present event (as an erasure, stepping beyond oneself that cannot be accomplished) nor the absence of an event (there is a movement of differentiation, creating of something new that takes place). In that sense, the Afterword moves effectively to a discussion about what happens when the place is cracked, di-splaced, and the ways of engaging with the emerging nothing and the intermittence that cannot be used in activity or brought to meaning.

The articles presented in this special issue speak to each of the terms in its title: children, displaced, across, borders. They consider transfigurations of identity in engagements with

foreignness and difference and brings into question the ability of the child to manage and order displacements. The collection critically evaluates the ability of the state to represent children and their movements using dialectical oppositions between migrants and non-migrants, presence and absence, which are used to define their belonging. Lastly, it resonates to the broader attempts in social science to re-consider the "undocumented spatiality" (Sigvardardsdotter, 2013) of children by exploring the linguistic and symbolic structures enabling their displacements and disappearances. Such reorientation might require closer engagement with the silences and limit-experiences (such as trauma, affliction, fear) and further attention to the impossible, disturbing movements of effacement and alteration that existing literatures often attempt to smooth, "displace" (in language or the law) and incorporate into a totality of history or time.

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