FROM PROTRACTED SITUATIONS
TO PROTRACTED SEPARATIONS:
ACEHNESE-CANADIAN REFUGEE SETTLEMENT
IN VANCOUVER, BC

by

Lisa Ruth Brunner
BA, University of Pittsburgh 2006

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

In the
Department of Geography

© Lisa Ruth Brunner 2010

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Fall 2010

APPROVAL

Name: **Lisa Ruth Brunner**

Degree: **Master of Arts**

Title of Thesis: **From Protracted Situations to Protracted Separations: Acehnese-Canadian Refugee Settlement in Vancouver, BC**

Examining Committee:

          Chair: **Dr. Nick Hedley**
Assistant Professor
Department of Geography
Simon Fraser University

_____

Dr. Jennifer Hyndman
Senior Supervisor
Professor
Departments of Social Science & Geography
York University

_____

Dr. Paul Kingsbury
Committee Member
Assistant Professor
Department of Geography
Simon Fraser University

_____

Dr. Jennifer Marchbank
External Examiner
Associate Professor
Explorations in Arts and Social Sciences
Simon Fraser University

Date Defended/Approved: December 14, 2010

Declaration of Partial Copyright Licence

The author, whose copyright is declared on the title page of this work, has granted to Simon Fraser University the right to lend this thesis, project or extended essay to users of the Simon Fraser University Library, and to make partial or single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or other educational institution, on its own behalf or for one of its users.

The author has further granted permission to Simon Fraser University to keep or make a digital copy for use in its circulating collection (currently available to the public at the "Institutional Repository" link of the SFU Library website <www.lib.sfu.ca> at: <http://ir.lib.sfu.ca/handle/1892/112>) and, without changing the content, to translate the thesis/project or extended essays, if technically possible, to any medium or format for the purpose of preservation of the digital work.

The author has further agreed that permission for multiple copying of this work for scholarly purposes may be granted by either the author or the Dean of Graduate Studies.

It is understood that copying or publication of this work for financial gain shall not be allowed without the author's written permission.

Permission for public performance, or limited permission for private scholarly use, of any multimedia materials forming part of this work, may have been granted by the author. This information may be found on the separately catalogued multimedia material and in the signed Partial Copyright Licence.

While licensing SFU to permit the above uses, the author retains copyright in the thesis, project or extended essays, including the right to change the work for subsequent purposes, including editing and publishing the work in whole or in part, and licensing other parties, as the author may desire.

The original Partial Copyright Licence attesting to these terms, and signed by this author, may be found in the original bound copy of this work, retained in the Simon Fraser University Archive.

Simon Fraser University Library
Burnaby, BC, Canada

STATEMENT OF ETHICS APPROVAL

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this work, has obtained, for the research described in this work, either:

(a) Human research ethics approval from the Simon Fraser University Office of Research Ethics,

or

(b) Advance approval of the animal care protocol from the University Animal Care Committee of Simon Fraser University;

or has conducted the research

(c) as a co-investigator, collaborator or research assistant in a research project approved in advance,

or

(d) as a member of a course approved in advance for minimal risk human research, by the Office of Research Ethics.

A copy of the approval letter has been filed at the Theses Office of the University Library at the time of submission of this thesis or project.

The original application for approval and letter of approval are filed with the relevant offices. Inquiries may be directed to those authorities.

Simon Fraser University Library
Simon Fraser University
Burnaby, BC, Canada

Last update: Spring 2010

ABSTRACT

Between 2004 and 2006, the Canadian government resettled 154 refugees originally from Aceh, Indonesia in Metro Vancouver, British Columbia. Their resettlement was unique for three reasons: (1) they were the first group of refugees resettled entirely in one Canadian metropolitan area; (2) they were the first Acehnese refugees ever resettled in Canada; and (3) among adults, the gender ratio was disproportionately skewed towards (young, single) men. This thesis probes the meanings of refugee 'integration' by examining their settlement five years after arrival. Through an analysis of surveys and interviews, I document structural barriers to settlement. I then relate these barriers to the 'integration' of single men in particular, who, after years in a protracted refugee situation involving detention, face long wait times in pursuit of transnational marriages. Rather than place the onus on resettled refugees to 'integrate' better, I argue that Canadian policy can better accommodate their desires to settle.

Keywords: Refugee resettlement; refugee settlement; refugee integration; government assisted refugees; protracted refugee situation; transnational marriage; Aceh, Indonesia; Vancouver, Canada.

In honour of my beloved parents for their continuous support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

GLOSSARY

ACCS	Acehnese Canadian Community Society
Bahasa Indonesia	Indonesian language
CIC	Citizenship and Immigration Canada
Darul Islam	Islamic State
ELSA	English Language Service for Adults
fiqh	Islamic economic jurisprudence
halal	Permissible food according to Islamic law
IRPA	Immigration and Refugee Protection Act
ISSofBC	Immigrant Services Society of British Columbia
GAM	*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* (Acehnese separatist group)
GAR	Government assisted refugee
LSIC	Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada
mahr	Money paid by the groom to the bride at marriage
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
RAP	Resettlement Assistance Program
riba	Interest forbidden in *fiqh*
sharia	Islamic law
UNIRSD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

1: INTRODUCTION

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that there are 15.2 million refugees in the world (UNHCR, 2010a). In response, the UNHCR assists refugees through one of three 'durable solutions:' (1) voluntary repatriation, (2) local integration, or (3) resettlement to a third country, the latter employed only as a last resort when the first two solutions are impossible (Loescher, Betts, & Milner, 2008). Unfortunately, 10.3 million of the 15.2 million refugees in the world are in 30 separate protracted refugee situations (PRS), defined by the UNHCR as situations "in which refugees find themselves in a long-lasting and intractable state of limbo" where their "basic rights and essential economic, social and psychological needs remain unfulfilled after years in exile" (UNHCR, 2004, para. 1; Loescher et al., 2008). For many in protracted refugee situations, resettlement to a third country is the only safe option.

Although the need for resettlement is high, only 1% of the world's refugees are ever referred for resettlement due to a lack of available resettlement spaces (UNHCR, 2010b). The number of refugees resettled to third countries is slowly increasing as more countries establish humanitarian resettlement programs. In 2008, 65,548 refugees departed to 26 resettlement countries, compared with 49,868 refugees in 2007 (UNHCR, 2010b). Still, developing countries continue to host four- fifths of refugees; Pakistan, Iran, and Syria are the top three host countries with over one million refugees each (UNHCR, 2010a).

In Canada, resettled refugees are selected from abroad and become permanent residents soon after arriving in Canada. They arrive through two main streams: the Government Assisted Refugee (GAR) program and the Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) program. Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) are distinct in that their initial support comes almost exclusively from the federal government, whereas privately sponsored refugees (PSRs) are supported both financially and logistically by community organizations. Both GARs and PSRs differ from refugee claimants (also known as asylum seekers)

who seek asylum in Canada at a port of entry and undergo an asylum hearing with the Immigration and Refugee Board.

This thesis focuses specifically on refugees who arrived in Metro Vancouver, British Columbia through the Government Assisted Refugee (GAR) program. Approximately 7,300-7,500 refugees arrive annually in Canada as Government Assisted Refugees (GARs). Starting in 2011, however, the total number of annual GAR arrivals across Canada is expected to increase to up to 8,000 individuals annually, and this increase comes just as Canada is beginning to see the long-term effects of a notable change in its GAR program.

In 2002, the implementation of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) significantly changed the face of Canada's GARs (Department of Justice Canada, 2001). Following urges from the UNHCR, Canada shifted its selection process away from those with an 'ability to establish' in Canada (as determined by the Canadian government) to those 'most in need of protection' (as determined by the UNHCR). As a result, the makeup of GARs quickly changed, bringing newcomers to Canada from drastically different political, economic, and social contexts. For example, between 2005 and 2009, the top five source countries among GARs resettled to British Columbia were Burma (also known as Myanmar) (21%), Afghanistan (18%), Iran (12%), Iraq (7%), and Somalia (3%), with the remaining 39% coming from 38 different countries (18 in Africa, 12 in Asia, 4 formally in the Eastern Bloc, 3 in Latin America, and 1 in the Middle East) (Brunner, Friesen, & Sherrell, 2010). For the first time, the majority arrived from protracted refugee situations (PRS) following years of trauma, torture, detention, and/or life in refugee camps (Pressé and Thomson, 2007).

As a result, Canada's 'post-IRPA' GAR population now includes more 'high needs' individuals facing multi-barriers to settlement, such as low literacy levels in their original languages, physical and mental health issues, larger households, single-headed households, and youth with limited exposure to formal education (Hiebert and Sherrell, 2009). The program also employs more 'group processing' in which groups of individuals from the same refugee situation (often, but not always, a camp) are intentionally resettled together. Many who arrive through group processing are 'new and few,' forming relatively small ethnic

groups previously un/underrepresented in Canada and lacking pre-existing co-ethnic support networks. Those who come from protracted refugee situations (PRS) – such as the ethnic Karen from Burma who have lived in camps since the late 1980s and the Bhutanese of ethnic Nepalese descent (the Lhotshampa) who have lived in camps since the early 1990s – also typically have not lived in cities or had access to land for farming for an entire generation. These changes raise important questions about the long-term settlement needs of today's 'post-IRPA' GARs (Pressé and Thomson, 2007).

The lack of data during a time of change left many wondering how post-IRPA GARs were *doing* in Canada. Ideally, the Canadian government, researchers, and/or service providers would trace the settlement outcomes of post-IRPA government assisted refugees (GARs) from various countries over time in longitudinal studies, but such data is expensive to collect and challenging at the national scale. In a modest way, this thesis contributes to the slowly growing knowledge about refugees resettled through Canada's GAR program since changes made to the immigration legislation were enacted in 2002. As a case study, I focus on Acehnese people from the province of Aceh in Northern Sumatra, Indonesia who lived undocumented (and, for many, in detention) in a protracted refugee situation (PRS) in Malaysia. As the following contextual overview explains, their settlement was unique for several reasons and sheds light on the general challenges of refugee resettlement.

Contextual Overview

From Aceh to Malaysia

The people of Aceh have a long and layered history of both marginalization and resistance. Because of Aceh's geographic location on the northern tip of Sumatra, it historically functioned as a powerful and strategic center for international trade, particularly from the 17th to 19th centuries. The presence of natural resources (such as oil and natural gas) also made it a highly desirable place to control. The people of Aceh fought bitterly against Dutch colonizers to varying degrees from 1873 to 1910 – much longer than other parts

of what is now Indonesia – and remained resistant throughout Dutch control (Drexler, 2008).

Also due to its geographic location, Aceh is the probable location of Islam's initial establishment in Southeast Asia and remains religiously conservative relative to the rest of Indonesia. When Aceh was transferred from Dutch to Indonesian control in 1949, an Islamic rebellion was waged over differences with other parts of Indonesia under the name of *Darul Islam* (Islamic State) (Drexler, 2008). Ultimately, this conflict resulted in Aceh's designation as a special territory of Indonesia with some degree of autonomy.

Further conflict arose in the mid-1970's over perceptions that the Indonesian government was allowing unequal foreign access to the province's natural resources. In 1976, former ambassador of *Darul Islam* Hasan di Tiro proclaimed Aceh independence and created the Free Aceh Movement (*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*, or GAM). Popular support for GAM grew slowly over time, and tensions between the government and Aceh's claims of independence intensified in the early 2000s. Although rights to implement sharia law and accept direct foreign investments were subsequently granted by the central Indonesian government, other restrictions were put in place. From 2003-2004, the Indonesian government launched an offensive against GAM in Aceh and declared a state of emergency.

Between 1999 and 2005, over 300,000 Acehnese were displaced within and beyond the region's borders to escape danger in the province (Drexler, 2008; Waizenegger & Hyndman, 2010). Forced migration was particularly widespread following May 2003 when Indonesia began its largest military offensive since the 1975 invasion of East Timor (Human Rights Watch, 2004). Thousands of Acehnese – and, in particular, young men – fled to Malaysia, where a similar language and culture provided a second home (Nah & Bunnell, 2005). In 2003, the UNHCR office in Malaysia estimated the presence of between 8,000 – 9,000 Acehnese of concern living undocumented in Malaysia (UNHCR Malaysia, 2003).

Because Malaysia is one of the few countries that are not signatories to the United Nation 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees or its

1967 Protocol, the UNHCR in Kuala Lumpur granted temporary protection letters to those Acehnese who successfully registered at their office in an attempt to offer temporary safety (Kuppusamy, 2003). Despite the UNHCR's temporary protection letters, the Malaysian government indefinitely detained and deported Acehnese refugees found in Malaysia en masse (UNHCR Malaysia, 2010). The deportation of Acehnese refugees to Aceh went against the widely accepted international principle of non-refoulement; once deported to Aceh, Acehnese refugees faced documented imprisonment and/or death (Kuppusamy, 2003; UNHCR Malaysia, 2003). Still, in August 2003, Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi declared Malaysia's intentions to continue deporting Acehnese, denying that they qualified as refugees (Roberts, 2003). In response to international pressure regarding the deportations, a news agency quoted him as saying, "If foreigners are found without valid entry permits, they will be sent back. This is the law of the country" (Roberts, 2003, para. 4). With no solution in sight, the exile and detention of Acehese people in Malaysia progressed into a protracted refugee situation (PRS).

As crackdowns on undocumented migrants throughout the country lead to increased arrests, detentions, and deportations, the plight of the Acehnese in Malaysia became a growing concern for the UNHCR (UNHCR Malaysia, 2010). On August 19, 2003, for example, Malaysian police set up road blocks around Malaysia's UNHCR office in Kuala Lumpur and proceeded to overtly detain those attempting to register as refugees (Roberts, 2003; Vogt, 2003); at least 232 Acehnese were arrested and detained that day alone (Kuppusamy, 2003). The UNHCR grew concerned with the restricted access they were given to Acehnese detainees in Malaysia, sharply contrasting with the access given to detainees from Burma and other countries (Vogt, 2003). By mid-September 2003, a high-level UNHCR delegation arrived in Kuala Lumpur from Geneva, after which Malaysia's Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar reported that the "Acehnese who had registered with [the] UNHCR would be in Malaysia temporarily, pending resettlement in a third country" (as cited in Vogt, 2003, p. 4). This meeting was the impetus for the Acehnese's designation as those 'most in need of protection' by the UNHCR and the start of their resettlement abroad.

From Malaysia to Canada

As mentioned above, the UNHCR outlines three 'durable solutions' for refugees: (1) repatriation to their country of origin, (2) local integration into the host country, or (3) resettlement to a third country (Loescher et al., 2008). Although resettlement is seen by the UNHCR as the option to turn to as a last resort, it sometimes "constitute[s] the only viable durable solution for specific small groups" of refugees (Loescher et al., 2008, p. 117). In the early 2000s, this became true for the Acehnese in Malaysia and particularly those in detention. In accordance with Canada's commitment to resettle refugees deemed by the UNHCR as 'most in need of protection' since the 2002 implementation of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA), 104 Acehnese individuals – mostly men – were selected by Canada as GARs and resettled to Canada between February and September of 2004 (McLean, Friesen, & Hyndman, 2006).

GARs arriving in Canada are typically 'destined', a word employed in the not-for-profit settlement sector, to 36 different cities across Canada including the Province of Quebec. An equal number of immigrant and refugee serving agencies provide initial settlement to GARs through the Government of Canada's Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP). As the first group of GARs from Indonesia ever settled in Canada, a unique decision was made by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), in consultation with the British Columbia (BC) based immigrant and refugee serving agency Immigrant Services Society of British Columbia (ISSofBC), to resettle all Acehnese GARs in Metro Vancouver in order to keep the community together.[1] The Acehnese who arrived had scant other 'co-ethnic' Acehnese in Canada; that is, there were very few people from Aceh in Canada to whom they could turn for assistance. Their trust of non-Acehnese Indonesians was also low. Most of the interpreters and the main settlement counsellor hired were Canadians of Chinese-Indonesian descent. As an early example of the increasingly 'new and few' Canadian-selected GARs

---

[1] I use 'community' to describe the cohort of Acehnese who came to Vancouver between 2004 and 2006 and include their immediate family members in Vancouver – some Canadian citizens and some not, some refugees and some not – but mark it as problematic in terms of who it may include and exclude. For further thoughts on how 'community' may be defined differently by members themselves and outsiders, see Cohen (1985).

through group resettlement, those from Aceh were unique for three reasons: (1) they were the first group of refugees resettled entirely in one Canadian metropolitan area; (2) they were the first Acehnese refugees ever resettled in Canada; and (3) among adults, the gender ratio was disproportionately skewed towards (young, single) men.

Although this resettlement flow from Malaysia to Canada was slated to continue, a catastrophic tsunami in December 2004 unexpectedly hastened relative peace in Aceh (Waizenegger and Hyndman, 2010). In August 2005, GAM and the Indonesian government signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). With the arrival of relative peace to Aceh, Acehnese resettlement to third countries came to an abrupt halt and the possibility of repatriation became a reality; indeed, there is anecdotal evidence that some resettled in European countries have returned to Aceh (Missbach, 2007).

The tsunami also indirectly affected virtually all Acehnese resettled in Canada. The tsunami hit Aceh the hardest, killing more than 167,500 Indonesians – mainly from Aceh – and reducing Aceh's population by 2.3% (Tsunami Evaluation Coalition, 2006). An additional 500,000 Indonesians – again, mainly from Aceh – were displaced (Waizenegger and Hyndman, 2010). As research for this thesis reveals, the spouses of at least two men resettled in Canada died in the tsunami while they were waiting for their sponsorship applications to be processed, and virtually all other Acehnese had friends or relatives killed or displaced. The resettlement process thus took place during a highly tumultuous time, during which the Acehnese landscape dramatically changed both physically and politically.

In total, after all applicants' wives and children arrived, 154 Acehnese individuals were resettled to Metro Vancouver between 2004 and 2006, forming 5% of all GARs resettled to BC between 2003 and 2006 (ISSofBC, 2007). Between 2003 and 2006, GARs from Aceh were the second largest group of GARs to settle in the municipality of Vancouver (with 85 individuals) and the fifth largest to settle in Burnaby (with 45 individuals); an additional 23 individuals settled in Surrey and one settled in an unknown Metro Vancouver municipality (ISSofBC, 2007). After providing initial settlement services, Immigrant Services

Society of British Columbia (ISSofBC) identified the need to follow up on the Acehnese as a group comprised of such particularly 'new' and particularly 'few' GARs.[2]

The First 365 Days

In an effort to fill the research gap on GAR settlement in a modest way, research with resettled refugees from Aceh, Indonesia was conducted in 2005 (one year after most arrived) to ascertain settlement outcomes in the areas of housing, official language acquisition, employment, and participation in Canadian society. McLean et al. (2006) surveyed 70 of the 104 Acehnese refugees settled in Vancouver since February 2004 and later conducted a focus group with 47 members of the community. This found that the decision to keep all Acehnese GARs geographically together was unanimously favoured by the Acehnese surveyed and laid the groundwork for the consolidation of an Acehnese community (McLean et al., 2006). Despite "challenges posed by official language deficits and poor employment prospects," (McLean et al., 2006, p. 20), the formation of an Acehnese Canadian Community Society (ACCS), competitive sports teams within local Muslim leagues, and participation in local mosques showed "small but important signs of settlement" (Hyndman & McLean, 2006, p. 358).

However, the gender imbalance among the Acehnese throughout the resettlement process was identified as a "particularly salient issue" in the final stages of the initial study (Hyndman & McLean, 2006, p. 356). Of the 70 surveys completed, 66 respondents were male; the average age was 29 and 18 of the 66 men were married (Hyndman & McLean, 2006). As Hyndman and Walton-

---

[2] Soon after arriving in Canada, GARs become Canadian permanent residents and are technically no longer refugees. At the time of this study in 2009, more than half (31 of 50) of all interviewed research participants were Canadian citizens and the majority of the remaining 19 intend to become Canadian citizens in the future. Because this study focuses on the settlement process of a particular group of people following refugee resettlement through a particular program (the GAR program) – and virtually all people of Acehnese descent in Metro Vancouver arrived as GARs – I use 'Acehnese GAR,' 'Acehnese Canadian,' 'Acehnese in Canada,' 'Acehnese community,' and 'member of the ACCS' interchangeably to describe this group of people. In contrast, many could also be described simply as 'Canadians' or 'Canadian residents,' and my descriptions do not necessarily reflect how they may choose to identify themselves.

Roberts (1999) note, a significant skew in the gender ratio reflecting higher numbers of men in refugee movements is common. During a discussion of this skew at the June 2005 dissemination event, "participants noted that they did not speak sufficient English to meet other women nor have strong ties to people beyond the Acehnese community because of English language skills" and "desire[d] to bring Acehnese women in future settlement schemes" (McLean et al., 2006, p. 17). Researchers highlighted these issues to be addressed in a scheduled five-year follow up in 2009.

The Next 1,460 Days

Because researchers conducted the 2005 study only a year after the Acehnese arrived, they did not ask questions probing potentially traumatic experiences in detention. However, the effects of prolonged detention on resettlement – combined with the skewed gender ratio – left many questions unanswered. My thesis came to fruition through a follow up study five years later aiming to find some answers to these questions. The four researchers on the project wanted to ascertain if detention caused trauma or other health challenges that may be shaping settlement.[3] We assembled survey and interview questions in this vein, covering a wide range of topics including experiences in detention, housing, family reunification and marital status, newspaper readership, mosque attendance, Acehnese Canadian Community Society (ACCS) participation, parenting, employment, language, relations with non-Acehnese people, the resettlement process, and hopes for the future.

The 2009 findings presented here are but a snapshot of social and economic relations among the Acehnese at the time. However, they represent the fullest available picture of how these GARs are doing, what their concerns, priorities, and challenges are, and what Canadian policies do to facilitate or hinder their aims as new Canadians and permanent residents.

---

[3] This study was a collaboration between Jennifer Hyndman (Professor, Departments of Social Science and Geography/Associate Director, Centre for Refugee Studies, York University); Chris Friesen (Director of Settlement Services, Immigrant Services Society of British Columbia); Alison Mountz (Associate Professor, Department of Geography, Syracuse University); and myself as a graduate research assistant.

Research Methods

Study Design

The project emerged as a direct response to research questions from the refugee-serving agency (ISSofBC) responsible for the Acehnese's settlement. In this way, it contained elements of participatory action research (PAR), a "collaborative process of research, education, and action explicitly oriented toward social change [involving] academic researchers…and nonacademic co-researchers and participants…working together to examine a problematic situation in order to change it for the better on participants' own terms" (Kindon, Pain, & Kesby, 2008, p. 90). In human geography, PAR is a quickly growing approach "now becoming a leading paradigm within contemporary social and environmental sciences" (p. 90), offering radical challenges to issues of power and knowledge production in the research process. In collaboration with ISSofBC, my supervisor, the co-investigator, and I developed survey and interview questions to reflect both the settlement sector and our own academic research goals; we then presented these to the Acehnese Canadian Community Society (ACCS) leaders for input and feedback and adjusted the questions as needed throughout the research process. The research generated policy implications also presented to the ACCS at a dissemination event (detailed below) for input and feedback.

As I learned, 'truly' enacting PAR is not easy, and this study contains only elements of such research; the extent to which the policy implications will result in direct 'action' has yet to be seen, and a more purely PAR method would have used questions generated directly from the ACCS. One other agenda at work in the conception of the research was that of the funder, Metropolis, an applied research centre that required some 'deliverables' in the area of immigration and refugee policy. To read the more policy-oriented results from the study, see Brunner, Hyndman, & Friesen, 2010.

As the principal frontline investigator, I conducted 75 surveys (with 51 men and 24 women) and 50 semi-structured interviews (with 28 men and 22 women)

between May 2009 and November 2009.[4] To build trust and add a participant observation dimension to the project, I also attended community gatherings (such as Muslim holiday and birth celebrations) and met with individuals on an ad hoc basis to offer informal advice and services (such as preparing resumes, family sponsorship forms, and training applications) between May 2009 and August 2010 as requested. Between September 2009 and January 2010, I transcribed the 50 semi-structured interviews, and between February and April 2010 I coded and analysed the data. The entire research project concluded with a dissemination and feedback event with participants, other community members, policy makers, and academics on July 3, 2010.

Oliver Bakewell (2008) observes a bias in refugee research concerning the "danger of falling into the trap of assuming that a certain set of problems or experiences are the exclusive domain of refugees" (p. 445). To avoid 'refugee-centrism,' this study broadly included any adult Metro Vancouver resident originally from Aceh who arrived to Canada after 2004. However, all came either directly through the GAR resettlement program or were sponsored as family members. Estimating the size of a refugee community often posits another problem when designing survey-based studies with refugees (Bloch, 1999). However, at the time of study the adult Acehnese community in Canada consisted of only approximately 98 adults based on data from the Acehnese Canadian Community Society (ACCS) and ISSofBC (the primary service provider for this refugee group upon arrival). Thus, I was able to survey approximately 75% of the population and interview approximately 50%.

As McLean et al. (2006) mention, the initial 2005 study with the Acehnese community dealt with potential mistrust between participants and interpreters and the settlement counsellor based on their negatively-perceived experiences with the Indonesian, Malaysian, and, to a lesser extent, Canadian governments. To overcome this, careful steps were taken to make their participation "more than academic" by "offer[ing] a social space for interaction" and establishing trust (McLean et al., 2006, p. 4). This 2009 study builds on the previously established relationship and rapport between ISSofBC and previous researchers, and my aim

---

[4] See appendix C and D.

was to continue fostering a community-university collaboration that serves both academic and community-based agendas.[5] Like Katz (1994), I am conscious of the 'arrogance of research' and was suspicious of the stance that the project would have direct benefits for the participants. However, Katz goes on to say that "if common grounds are established, there can be mutual learning about the meaningful differences and workable affinities in our positions vis-à-vis the structures of dominance," and this was my aim as well (p. 70).

The recruitment of participants initially relied on one of several leaders of the Acehnese Canadian Community Society (ACCS), introduced to me by an ISSofBC settlement worker. This relationship with the group's community leader was vital to the trust-building process and required "constant negotiations" common to survey research with refugee populations (Bloch, 1999, p. 378). I also recruited more generally by hanging recruitment flyers at ISSofBC's office and incorporating snowball sampling to make contacts with other potential participants.[6] As Bloch (1999) points out, a snowball sampling approach can "isolate members of the communities who [are] not in touch with any social, cultural, religious or community group or contact point and excludes them from the research" (p. 381). To counter this bias, I followed Bloch's suggestions of using multiple gatekeepers and a purposive sampling approach. I insisted upon a minimum of at least 30% women for both the surveys and the interviews despite the lower actual percentage of women in the community. In the end, 32% of surveyed participants and 44% of interviewees were women.

The surveys and interviews were administered predominantly in *Bahasa Indonesia* with the assistance of two interpreters (one man and one woman). Although Acehnese is the first language of virtually all participants, the majority are also fluent in *Bahasa Indonesia*, the official language of Indonesia, and have

---

[5] The downside to this kind of collaboration is the potentially restricted discursive space for dissent and criticism. Tension does exist. In addition, despite my efforts to explain otherwise, some research participants misunderstood my role as a university graduate student and researcher, mistaking me for an ISSofBC settlement worker or even a government employee. Nonetheless, it is unlikely that access to the community would have been possible without this initial trust, and ISSofBC offered valuable perspectives as a settlement agency.

[6] See appendix A and B.

relied on both translators for previous interpretation.[7] Out of 50 interviewees, the majority (32) chose to speak entirely in Indonesian, while 10 spoke a mixture of English and Indonesian and 8 spoke primarily in English with clarifications from the interpreter. The translators were chosen by the community leader in consultation with the other Acehnese and are generally trusted due to their Chinese (as opposed to Javanese) ethnicity. They also served as additional gatekeepers by actively recruiting participants who were not as involved in the Acehnese Canadian Community Society (ACCS).

The surveys and interviews were first piloted with community leaders and presented to the ACCS to approve and add relevant questions. The surveys were then administered in the living room of a private home adjacent to the ACCS community centre frequented weekly by most members (including women, men, and children). The survey questions included questions regarding demographics, housing, arriving to Canada, social participation, work, and language.[8] Following the surveys, I conducted interviews regarding employment, participation in Canadian society, detention in Malaysia, housing, and family.[9] Interviewees chose where they preferred to be interviewed; most were administered in either the private homes of participants or in the ACCS community centre. The interviews were audio recorded with permission. Interview participants were given grocery store gift cards in exchange for their participation and the ACCS was given payment in the form of rent for using the community centre throughout the project.[10] Following ethical standards, at the start of each step of data collection the participants were informed of the academic nature of the study and encouraged to skip any question they did not feel comfortable answering. Finally, on July 3, 2010, a dissemination event at Simon Fraser University's downtown Vancouver campus brought together approximately 28 adult research participants (Achenese-Canadian community members), 10 Acehnese-Canadian children, 7 academics, 3 government

---

[7] At least one woman is not fluent in either *Bahasa* or English and has declined to participate in the interview due to the difficulty in communicating her answers for the survey.

[8] See appendix C.

[9] See appendix D.

[10] See appendix E.

representatives, one NGO worker, and one interpreter to discuss the research results and analysis.[11]

Figure 1:   Dissemination Event, July 3, 2009.

From right to left: Lisa Ruth Brunner (research assistant), Samsidar Halim (interpreter), and audience members (research participants, ACCS members, and academics). Taken by Jennifer Hyndman and used with permission.

Data Analysis

Due to the nature of this study – an open-ended analysis of how the processes of settlement and 'integration' were proceeding – I did not have a pre-existing hypothesis beyond this. Instead, my epistemological starting point came

---

[11] My supervisor (Jennifer Hyndman) and I first screened a film she produced entitled *The 2004 Tsunami in Aceh: Global Crisis and the Role of Media*. We then presented the research and policy implications/suggestions, facilitated a short discussion, and received valuable feedback from both research participants/community members themselves and fellow academics.

from grounded theory. As Cope explains, grounded theory goes beyond analysis to inform (and even shape) "all areas of research – identification of the research questions, data collection, analysis, theory building, writing, and sharing of results" with the goal of producing "new insights that are thoroughly 'grounded' in the empirical findings, but also which have strong conceptual threads tying them together" (Cope, 2008, p. 647). A central aspect of grounded theory is that "these areas of research are not discrete and sequential but instead are iterative and recursive" and that "data can be collected – or, more accurately, 'created' – at any point during the project and indeed, researchers are expected to go back and forth between multiple data sources, through various analytical techniques and perhaps even writing, frequently returning to do more data collection as new themes emerge, new questions arise, and new concepts need clarification or validation" (p. 647). After manually tabulating the survey data and transcribing the interviews, I coded the data by the following themes: detention, marriage, employment, language study, gender, repatriation, the Acehnese community in Vancouver, transnational ties to Aceh, and comparisons between Canada and Scandinavian countries (where many respondents' friends were resettled) and between Metro Vancouver and Alberta/Calgary. However, this research process was an explicitly non-linear process; interviews early on in the study informed the structure of later interviews, and analysis was ongoing throughout the survey and interview process.

Constructivist grounded theory in particular attends "to issues such as reflexivity, the research context, the inescapable effect of prior knowledge and existing literature" by recognizing that "the researcher plays an active and vital role in the research process, particularly in the developing dialogue between researcher and data from which codes and categories, and eventually a grounded theory should result" (Charmaz & Bryant, 2008, p. 376). This reflexivity came into play concerning the positionality of myself in relation to the research collaborators and participants, for example. The collaborators with arguably the most power in terms of the direction of the research (myself, the co-investigators, and the Director of Settlement at ISSofBC) were all white, university-educated, employed Canadians or American Anglophones, while those with less power (the interpreters, the ACCS leaders, and the research participants) were non-white,

non-native English speaking immigrants from Indonesia and were struggling to find satisfactory employment with varying education levels.[12] Although I attempted to alleviate these power imbalances by holding interviews in the ACCS community space and/or individual homes where participants might feel more comfortable, power differences unavoidably influenced the research process and the data analysis on some level.

Whiteness, and in particular the confusion between race and nationality, was a recurring issue during the interviews. As Aguilar, Tomic, and Trumper (2005) show in their analysis of Kelowna as a "White Space," whiteness goes beyond "a numerical superiority tied to political power in the pursuit of legislation to embed this advantage" but also functions as "an ideological frame of mind that defines who one is and is not, as well as influences how one lives and experiences racialised social activities" (p. 131).[13] During the interviews, when asked about 'Canadian friends' or 'finding a spouse in Canada,' many respondents (but, after some explanation, not the interpreters) interpreted 'Canadian friends' to mean 'white friends' while male respondents interpreted 'a spouse in Canada' to mean 'a white woman.' Beyond interpretation issues, race undoubtedly played into the research process, since "racism is an everyday experience not reliant on official legal/documentation for powerful exclusionary practices because it is woven into the customs, norms and representations of the every day" (Aguilar et al., 2005, p. 131), and raced discourses play out in everyday life, even in 'multicultural' Vancouver (see, for example, Cavell, 1997). My own whiteness seemed to trump any axis of difference or potential marginality based on my foreign-born, non-immigrant status, and the privilege of whiteness and Anglophone mother tongue was usually read as 'being Canadian', although I am not.

In general, research involving such significant power differences requires particularly careful considerations, especially when coupled with translation issues. As mentioned in the acknowledgements, the lessons about research

---

[12] See the epilogue for thoughts on the emotional impacts of these differences.

[13] Much more could be said about the racialization of refugees who come to Canada, and the influence of discrimination and/or social exclusion as a relation of power that shapes integration. Given the resources and small numbers in this case study approach, however, we chose not to 'test' race as an indicator of these phenomena.

design and implementation I gleaned extend far beyond the pages of this thesis, and I hope to apply these lessons to future research projects.[14]

Outline of Chapters

As an introduction to this thesis, **chapter one** provides a contextual overview of the migration of the Acehnese GARs through Malaysia to Canada, forming the basis of this study. It outlines the study's design and the structure of the thesis as a whole.

Chapter two provides a literature review of the two main components to this study: (1) refugee 'integration,' and (2) refugee transnationalism. **Chapter three** offers a broad analysis of the settlement process among Acehnese GARs including official language abilities, employment status, housing conditions, and citizenship acquisition (naturalization). By honing in on the settlement experiences of specifically single, male Acehnese GARs, **chapter four** pushes existing meanings of 'integration' by examining the ways in which transnationalism and state-centred 'integration' are inseparable. Finally, **chapter five** offers a conclusion and possible changes that could improve the lives refugees who are resettled in Canada in years to come. An **epilogue** adds my final thoughts of the research process on a personal level.

---

[14] For a copy of this study's ethics approval letter, see appendix F.

2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The methods for this study were designed to ascertain if and how detention affected settlement among refugees from Aceh in Metro Vancouver. They also probed the skewed gender ratio among the 'new and few' post-IRPA government assisted refugees (GARs). Research in these areas is lacking on multiple levels.

On a general level, not much is known about the settlement of post-IRPA GARs overall. In 2007, Canadian policy makers pointed out the "gap in research exploring 'social indicators' of [government assisted refugee] success" and argued that "more empirical studies of the impacts of protracted refugee situations are needed to guide future engagement of Canada's Refugee and Humanitarian Resettlement Program" (Pressé and Thomson, 2007, p.52). Knowledge of GARs in Metro Vancouver or BC is similarly lacking; for example, the author of a 2006 M.A. thesis describes it as the first study "that looks in-depth into GARs in British Columbia," yet BC GARs are quite diverse (Watson, p. 20).

Research related to the specificities of Acehnese settlement are equally limited. There is little precedent for such a drastically skewed gender ratio in group refugee resettlement, particularly in combination with prolonged detention. The vast majority of refugees in PRS live in semi-permanent camps or in urban centres, and little is known about the effects of prolonged detention on refugees from PRS. One study suggests that the "psychological stress endured by asylum seekers during their imprisonment [in the United States] proves to hinder their economic and social development in American society" (Smith, 2010, p. vi), for example, but the experiences of asylum seekers differ dramatically from those of resettled refugees who are selected overseas and arrive with full legal status. Equally, the experiences of detention in the United States are very different from those in Malaysia.

In light of these gaps, this literature review focuses on two main conceptual inquiries: (1) what is the meaning of 'integration' as it applies to

refugee settlement in Canada? And (2) what do we know about marriages between refugees resettled in the global North and their spouses from the refugee camps and/or countries of origin, what I will call 'transnational marriages'?

Interrogating Refugee 'Integration'

Many academics, policy makers, and service providers – particularly in Canada – might frame the objective of this thesis by asking: how are the Acehnese *integrating*?' Indeed, most previous research on refugee settlement – or what I call participation in (Canadian) society – uses the term 'integration' to mean something similar. Yet I am hesitant to embrace the word – hence the scare quotes – because people use 'integration' in very different ways. This inconsistency in meaning is described well in a report by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) on the term 'social integration':

> Social integration is a complex idea, which means different things to different people. To some, it is a positive goal, implying equal opportunities and rights for all human beings. In this case, becoming more integrated implies improving life chances. To others, however, increasing integration may conjure up the image of an unwanted imposition of conformity. And, to still others, the term in itself does not necessarily imply a desirable or undesirable state at all. It is simply a way of describing the established patterns of human relations in any given society (UNRISD 1994, p. 4).

While 'social integration' here implies "equal opportunities and rights for all human beings" in general and not necessarily in the context of migration, it reflects the way 'integration' is used when discussing refugee and immigrants' relation to receiving societies (UNRISD, 1994, p. 3). Some use it positively (as the Canadian government does), using 'integration' to refer to an explicit policy goal. Others use it negatively (as some migrants or activists do), arguing that 'integration' imposes an unfair expectation that newcomers adapt to the norms of a receiving society. Still others use it neutrally (as many researchers do) as a measurement of how well newcomers are faring in relation to the native-born part of society. In this thesis, I use the term to mark an *aim of the Canadian state*

rather than an assumed norm or an unproblematic concept. In an effort to probe its meanings, this section outlines the complexities of defining 'integration' and specifically 'refugee integration;' I then argue for two ways to 'reclaim' the term in a meaningful way.

What is 'Integration'?

Despite its frequent usage in the government, media, settlement NGOs, and academia, the term 'integration' is rarely defined and there is "no single, generally accepted definition, theory or model of immigrant and refugee integration (Castles, Korac, Vasta, & Vertovec, 2002, p.114; van Tubergen, 2006). This contributes to the "great deal of disagreement about what constitutes integration, how one determines whether strategies for promoting integration are successful, or what the features of an integrated society are" (Atfield, Brahmbhatt, & O'Toole, 2007, p. 12). In Canada, the term 'integrate' (literally defined as "to form, coordinate, or blend into a functioning or unified whole") is often used instead of the terms 'assimilate' ("to absorb into the system; to make similar") or 'incorporate' ("to unite or work into something already existent so as to form an indistinguishable whole") which are more popular in the United States and Europe (Merriam-Webster, 2010). Of course, dictionary definitions do not begin to account for the nuances of refugee experience: rupture, suture, and change (Nolin, 2006).

'Assimilation' has a long and complex history in the United States beginning with Robert Park's use of assimilation (a process) and incorporation (a result) as sociological concepts in the late 1800s (Kivisto & Faist, 2010). Park defined assimilation as "a process of interpretation and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other persons and groups and, by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated," (as cited in van Tubergen, 2006, p. 8). According to Kivisto and Faist (2010), Park explicitly attempted to separate "sociological analysis from moral preferences and ideology" (p. 100) and actually "disagreed with the Anglo-conformity view of assimilation," or the view that assimilation is "a one-way process wherein the newcomers transform themselves, but there is no reciprocal process affecting the members of the host society" put forth by political economist Richmond Mayo-

Smith in 1894 (p. 95). Yet today, Park's term is often colloquially used to imply this 'Anglo-conformity' in the US and Europe. Kivisto and Faist identify three "incontrovertible facts" about the contemporary usage of assimilation: "(1) there is little consensus about what we mean by the term; (2) it remains highly contentious; and (3) it continues to shape contemporary research agendas" (2010, p. 93-94). As Roger Waldinger wrote in 2003, "long in disgrace, assimilation is now back in style" in the United States (as cited in Ley, 2005, p. 7).

The term 'integration' thus attempts to signify a break with this legacy, particularly in a Canadian context where the Multicultural Act and the federal Charter of Rights and Freedoms "institutionalize not only respect for difference but also the rights of being different" (Ley, 2005, p. 7). To Kivisto and Faist, multiculturalism is in itself "a mode of incorporation" and thus "an approach to inclusion that either constitutes an alternative to assimilation, a complement to it, or a new version of assimilation" (2010, p. 163). In Canada, the term 'integration' is often used in this way as a 'multicultural' alternative to assimilation; as Yu, Ouellet, and Warmington put it, "most [Canadian academics and policy makers] generally accept that 'integration,' as opposed to one-way assimilation, outright marginalization, or segregation, is desired" (2007, p. 17). However, it is not always clear if 'integration' is employed *in contrast to* (as Yu et al. suggests) or simply *in place of* assimilation. Ley notes that, in Canada, "some erosion" of multiculturalism has recently occurred (2005, p. 7). He writes:

> The federal and provincial governments have downsized, and in some cases closed multicultural offices, settlement benefits for immigrants have been cut back, and government rhetoric has moved from multiculturalism towards a normative language of social cohesion and integration, positions that could easily blend into a disguised assimilationism...Even in the nation where [multiculturalism] was first enunciated and most fully institutionalized, multicultural policy is on the defensive" (2005, p. 7-8).

On one end of the spectrum, 'integration' is used to stress a genuine "two way interchange of culture and understanding," implying adaptation on the part of both the 'host' community/institutions and newcomers "that begins with arrival

and ends when refugees are in an equal position to the majority" (Phillimore & Goodson, 2008, p. 309). However, there is debate about how much of a 'two way' process 'integration' ever actually implies both conceptually and in practice. Castles et al. explain that the term's broadness makes a precise definition difficult, contributing to its controversy and "hot debate" (2002, p. 114). Despite academic definitions arguing otherwise, "popular attitudes and policies often seem to be based on the assumption that integration *is a one-way process*" in which "migrants are expected to integrate into the existing culture or society without any reciprocal accommodation" with the "connotation of assimilation in which immigrants are expected to discard their culture, traditions and language" (Castles et al., 2002, p. 113, emphasis in original). They add that, at least in the UK, the NGO/community sector considers 'integration' particularly "top-down" and problematic (p. 114). Ager and Strang (2008) echo Castles et al. in their attempt to grapple with 'integration's' varying uses and lack of definitions despite its role as a "stated policy goal and a target outcome for projects working with refugees" in the UK (p. 167).

Ager and Strang's (2008) argument applies to Canada as well. The federal department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) takes 'integration' very seriously as a policy goal. In its *2010–2011 Report on Plans and Priorities for Citizenship and Immigration Canada*, CIC lists its "Integration Program" as one of seven 'program activities' with the stated 'outcome' notably being "newcomers contribute to the economic, social and cultural development needs of Canada" (CIC, 2010c). The planned spending for the program in 2010-2011 is more than $1 billion – almost twice the amount of the other six programs combined. The report contains the following description:

> Canada's approach to integration is one that encourages a process of mutual accommodation and adjustment by both newcomers and the larger society. Newcomers' understanding of and respect for basic Canadian values, coupled with Canadians' understanding of and respect for the cultural diversity that newcomers bring to Canada, is fundamental to this approach. As well, the cooperation of governments, stakeholders and other players, such as employers and volunteers, in providing newcomers with the support they need for successful economic and social integration helps Canada realize the full benefits of immigration (CIC, 2010c, p. 29).

In this case, Canada recognizes the "mutual accommodation and adjustment by both newcomers and the larger society," setting it apart from 'assimilation' and 'incorporation.' Yet it also expects newcomers to respect "basic Canadian values" without stating what those values are (as opposed to listing a specific document such as the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms). So while there are no stated *universal* Canadian values, there are shared norms and values that newcomers are expected to adopt and perhaps adapt. Canadians, meanwhile, are expected to respect the "cultural *diversity*" newcomers bring to Canada but not necessarily newcomers' *values*. Successful 'integration' is thus designed so newcomers will "contribute to the...needs of Canada" and help Canada realize its "full benefits of immigration" (CIC, 2010c) rather than achieve an "equal position to the majority" as Phillimore and Goodson suggest (2008, p. 309.)

There are further complications in defining 'integration.' 'Integration' in a 'third country' of the global North through refugee resettlement is sometimes confused with the second UNHCR durable solution of 'local integration', which more often occurs in the global South where most refugees reside. Other times, the *definition* of 'integration' as a process is confused with the *measurement* of successful 'integration.' Such measurements imply judgement about what integration *should* look like. Finally, many definitions and measurements of 'integration' short-sightedly "focus on the economic, social or cultural domains as discrete areas of integration" while, in reality, what is often meant by 'integration' "involves a complex set of interconnected issues" (Atfield et al., 2007, p. 12). These factors lead to a rampant confusion surrounding what the term actually means.

For some, 'integration' simply has no measurable or useful meaning, and many social scientists in particular choose to use other terms with either more neutral or more normative connotations depending on their goals. Castles et al. (2002) identifies the terms acculturation, adaptation, incorporation, inclusion/exclusion, insertion, settlement, denizenship, citizenship, and race relations as the most common of these alternatives. Another option employed by my supervisor Jennifer Hyndman is 'participation in Canadian society,' scored by indicators such as housing, official language competency, and labour market participation (Hyndman & McLean, 2006; Sherrell & Hyndman, 2006). Other

scholars choose to reject a single term altogether, using descriptive phrases such as "arrangements that enable immigrants...to actively participate in a host society through equality of opportunity and absence of discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity or national origin" (Ghosh, 2005, p. 2) or arguing that "no state possesses a truly coherent incorporation regime" but rather "ramshackle, multifaceted, loosely connected sets of regulatory rules, institutions, and practices in various domains of society that together make up the frameworks within which migrants and natives work out their differences" (Freeman, 2004, p. 946).

Then What is 'Refugee Integration'?

Since 'integration' is so vaguely used, '*refugee* integration' is nebulous at best, and many users fail to make the distinction between 'integration' among economic or family class immigrants and those who come as refugees. Although the difference between 'refugee integration' and the 'integration' of immigrants is not always made clear, Yu et al. point out that it is significant for at least two main reasons, thus "warranting more studies focusing on refugees" and the meaning of 'integration' (2007, p. 18). Firstly, unlike other forms of immigration, Canada's refugee resettlement program is explicitly a *humanitarian* rather than *economic* endeavour. While Canada selects most immigrants based on their ability to establish (either based on their own economic potential or the presence of economic support in the form of family members), refugees are now selected based on their need for protection (Yu et al., 2007). Secondly, the migration of refugees is inherently based on a fear of persecution and likely involves more trauma than that of immigrants, and IRPA cemented and deepened this distinction even more (Hyndman, 2009). Yu et al. stress these differences to both show that refugees have unique 'integration' challenges and remind us that these challenges are to be expected. A third difference related specifically to resettled refugees is that, as opposed to asylum seekers or privately sponsored refuges, the selection and settlement of GARs is done at the discretion of the state. The federal government is thus explicitly and legally responsible for the 'integration' of government assisted refugees during their first year in Canada through the income supplement provided by the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP),

after which GARs are expected to utilize services for other immigrants (Hiebert & Sherrell, 2009).

The forced nature of refugee migration is an additional significant difference. In *Multicultural Citizenship*, for example, Kymlicka's theory of minority rights makes a distinction between the rights of 'national minorities' and immigrants, since by "deciding to uproot themselves, immigrants voluntarily relinquish some of the rights that go along with their original national membership" (1995, p. 96). In contrast, refugees are only *voluntary* immigrants in the sense that when they agree to resettlement they agree to adhere to the laws of the new society. The diminished agency in their choice is clear, considering the alternative of indefinite detention, torture, and/or deportation in the case of the Acehnese.

Successful refugee 'integration' is not explicitly defined in Canadian legislation or policy (Pressé & Thomson, 2007). However, Canada implicitly commits to provide "the appropriate reception and integration of resettled refugees" under the UNHCR's Multilateral Framework of Understandings on Resettlement (Pressé & Thomson, 2007, p. 96). Yu et al. contend that "most scholars and policy makers in Canada and elsewhere agree" with the UK Home Office's 2003 description of refugee 'integration' as a "dynamic, multi-faceted two-way process which requires adaptation on the part of the newcomers, but also the society of destination" (2007, p. 17). Indeed, in *Refugee Resettlement: An International Handbook to Guide Reception and Integration*, the UNHCR defines 'integration' similarly as,

> "a mutual, dynamic, multifaceted and on-going process. From a refugee perspective, integration requires a preparedness to adapt to the lifestyle of the host society without having to lose one's own cultural identity. From the point of view of the host society, it requires a willingness for communities to be welcoming and responsive to refugees and for public institutions to meet the needs of a diverse population" (2002, p. 12).

These two oft-quoted definitions still leave vague notions of how policies of 'integration' should be enacted. Practical uses and measurements of the term vary widely.

As an example, Watson (2006) unintentionally demonstrates how commonly integration is used and yet how unclear its usage is. Despite titling his work "Integration of Government Assisted Refugees in British Columbia," the author never defines the term 'integration,' only stating that "successful integration includes the full participation of refugees in Canadian society and economy" (Watson, p. 20, 17). Although the complexity of 'integration' is acknowledged and the first keyword listed for the work is "social integration," it focuses entirely on 'integration' in one domain (iii). In this case, it is the 'integration' of GARs into the workforce, since not doing so would be costly "because it fails to use available labour[,]...it results in increased costs to the public for income support, and it results in lost earnings for the refugees" (p. 17). Yet a document in the appendix reveals the impetus for the study as very similar to this one: "How are GARs doing?" (p. 67). His work is thus specifically about labour market participation. This vague use of 'refugee integration' is extremely common in research in both Canada and beyond.

Why Study 'Integration'?

'Integration' may be widely used without precise definition, but, as shown above, it is also a serious policy aim of the Canadian state in relation to refugee settlement. The need to interrogate the meaning of refugee 'integration' and the government's role in its success is particularly timely for Canada. Since the 2002 implementation of IRPA, CIC "recognizes that current resettlement programming may not adequately meet the unique and changing needs of refugees" (Pressé &Thomson, 2007, 96). The barriers post-IRPA refugees face in securing and maintaining adequate employment, housing, education, and language are well-documented (for example, see Yu et al., 2007; Sherrell & ISSofBC, 2009; Hiebert & Sherrell, 2009). The economic measures of refugee 'integration' show lower incomes than the Canadian average (Hiebert, 2009), poorer housing conditions (Sherrell & ISSofBC, 2009), and less competence in English or French as our study found, but far less is known about the *social* life of refugees because such relations are difficult to quantify. How the various facets of settlement are interrelated is also hard to measure, but is the focus of chapter four.

The meaning of 'integration' is also of urgent concern to other countries where refugee resettlement occurs, such as the UK. A small number of European studies and reports have attempted to sort out the misunderstanding surrounding 'integration' and carefully redefine the term in a thorough and meaningful way. Below I outline two frameworks that attempt to define refugee 'integration' in a holistic, multi-faceted way.

A Refugee 'Integration' Framework

The most useful attempts to conceptualize refugee 'integration' view it as a subjective process, taking the perspectives of refugees themselves into consideration (Atfield et al., 2007). Thus far, two widely cited frameworks prevail in a European context. The first, commissioned by the European Refugee Fund Community Actions in 2002, employs "four main clusters of indicators built around key policy variables which constrain and facilitate (often simultaneously) the process of integration" in a layered structure: legal/citizenship, governance, functional, and social (Zetter, Griffiths, Sigona, & Hauser, p. 135). The second, commissioned by the British Home Office specifically in the context of refugees in the UK, consists of ten indicators in four overall themes: "achievement and access across the sectors of employment, housing, education, and health; assumptions and practice regarding citizenship and rights; processes of a social connection within and between groups within the community; and structural barriers to such connection related to language, culture and the local environment" (Ager & Strang, 2008, p. 166). Neither framework is perfect. Although such indicators are "possible and desirable" in terms of achieving equity, the multi-dimensionality of integration should be recognized and the interrelationship between indicators considered (Phillimore & Goodson, 2008, p. 309). Additionally, while both suggest quantified measurements, Phillimore and Goodson stress the importance of complementary qualitative data "at a sufficiently fine level" to understand the "experiential side of integration" especially considering its non-linear process (p. 322).

In this thesis, I use the term 'settlement' to specifically refer to the process in which resettled refugees begin to participate in Canadian society. I also employ Anger and Strang's indicators not as a measurement of 'integration' but

of their participation in society. I echo the importance of understanding the interrelationship between such indicators, the need for qualitative data at a fine level (Phillimore & Goodson, 2008), and the clear "gap in research exploring 'social indicators' of success" (Pressé & Thomson, 2007, p. 51). In what follows, I briefly point out the lack of discussion around refugees' 'integration' in two unique contexts of single Acehnese men: first, they were the first Indonesian (and Acehnese) refugees settled in Canada; and second, their preferences to marry women outside of Canada.

Being 'New and Few' and the Impact on 'Integration'

The importance of social ties as mechanisms for support during initial settlement in Canada is well documented (Simich, 2003). Compared with other classes of immigrants arriving in Canada with existing human and/or financial capital, "one of the few resources available to most refugees is social capital in the form of social support networks" (Lamba & Krahn, 2003, p. 336). Yet for post-IRPA GARs such as the Acehnese who are 'new and few' – that is, arriving in Canada in small numbers without a pre-existence of 'like-ethnic' individuals – the lack of social support networks may present an additional hurdle to their participation in Canadian society (Hyndman & McLean, 2006). Indeed, Canada piloted post-IRPA group resettlement in 2003 with 780 Sudanese and Somali refugees from Kenyan refugee camps not only to reduce processing time but also to "create ready-made support systems for arriving refugees" (Labman, 2007, p. 42). The same program brought approximately 1,000 Afghans from Central Asia in 2004 and 810 Burmese refugees from Thailand were resettled in late 2006 and early 2007 (Labman, 2007). However, Labman contends that the refugee resettlement process still lacks "a transparent and systematic structure for group selection," resulting in "resettlement's schizophrenic dilemma" in terms of fair selection models (p. 42). The long-term implications of Canada's state-planned refugee resettlement designs are not well understood.

Additionally, the demographic profile of those 'most in need of protection' – i.e. those with higher 'needs' than previous resettled refugees – may affect the significance of social networks. For example, in a survey of Southeast Asian refugees (Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, Hmong, and Chinese-Vietnamese)

living in California, Ying and Akutsu (1997) found that the Chinese-Vietnamese enjoyed an easier transition and greater emotional well-being due to support from existing and thriving Chinese-Vietnamese communities. The Vietnamese and the Laotians, on the other hand, "had among them better educated co-ethnics who could assist with the transition to the Western world, but the Cambodians on the whole were less educated (over one-fifth had no formal education), and were less likely to benefit from the presence of co-ethnics in facilitating a smoother transition and better well-being" (p. 136). Compared with those from other immigration admission classes in BC, education and official language proficiency are already lowest among immigrants arriving as refugees (Hiebert & Sherrell, 2009). Still, post-IRPA GARs in particular are more likely to face multi-barriers to settlement, including low literacy levels in their original languages, physical and mental health issues, larger households, single-headed households, and youth with limited exposure to formal education (Hiebert & Sherrell, 2009).

The specificities of persecution and politics in countries of origin also have implications for the 'integration' process.   In a study with Kosovar refugees, for example, Sherrell and Hyndman (2006) found that "where political conditions in one's region of origin cease to be favourable for return, integration in the host state is likely to proceed more 'rapidly'" (p. 19). Though the possibility of return for visits or repatriation is rare among resettled refugees, the 2005 peace agreement between the Indonesian government and GAM brought relative peace to Aceh, raising the question of whether the inverse is true; that is, if the political conditions in one's region of origin became *favourable* for return, will integration in the 'host' country proceed less rapidly? In addition, since the Acehnese are 'new and few,' the relationship between the strength of social networks and repatriation is also unknown. If finding a wife in Canada is difficult for single Acehnese men and returning to Aceh is a possibility, will the 'integration' process take longer? Will Acehnese who struggle in Canada decide to return to Aceh permanently, or will they be able to find a spouse in Canada?

The Use of Marriage as an Indicator of 'Integration'

With such a skewed gender ratio among the resettled Acehnese Canadians, the prospect of marriage with a non-Acehnese woman – specifically

one in Canada – came up frequently during the interviews. Single male research participants spoke of both their desire and difficulty to meet 'Canadian' spouses (a word used by respondents to describe non-Muslim, non-Indonesian women) and their subsequent plan to marry and sponsor spouses from Aceh. There are multiple levels of difference to work through in the discussion of the former type of marriage – religion, nationality, ethnicity, and language, or perhaps culture. Due to the scant research on the marriage patterns and preferences of refugees specifically, no one term describes it accurately. Social scientists have historically used marriage across 'groups' in general as an indicator of 'integration' of immigrants overall, yet the literature typically essentializes socially constructed categories (particularly race) and shows how discussions of 'integration' often imply a merging with the majority or dominant sector of society rather than a position of equity in which 'merging' is a choice (Song, 2009). In what follows, I give a brief overview of the literature to conclude my discussion of 'integration' and explain why an additional use of transnational literature is necessary.

Social scientists have used marriage as an indicator of 'integration' since Robert Park's use of the term 'intermarriage' as one of three main tenants of assimilation in the early 1900's (Kivisto & Faist, 2010). Park took 'intermarriage' to mean marriage between an immigrant or a 'racial minority' and a 'native' or a member of the 'racial majority' (Kivisto & Faist, 2010). Like the term 'integration,' 'intermarriage' has different connotations today, often used popularly as a synonym for 'interracial' marriage. The concept as Park originally intended is still widely cited in contemporary 'integration' and assimilation literature; one influential book in the United States claims that 'intermarriage' "is generally regarded, with justification, as the litmus test of assimilation" since "a high rate of intermarriage signals that the social distance between the groups involved is small and that individuals of putatively different ethnic backgrounds no longer perceive social and cultural differences significant enough to create a barrier to long-term union" (Alba & Nee, 2003, p. 90). Other scholars similarly state that 'intermarriage' is a "test of" 'integration' (Nottmeyer, 2009, p. 1), a "crucial factor in our understanding" 'integration' (Dribe & Lundh, 2008, p. 348), or part of an "essential…achievement of parity with the native-born" (Wu, Schimmele, & Hou, 2010). 'Intermarriage' is associated with both economic 'integration' (in terms of

higher employment and higher individual income for those who marry a 'native' or racial majority) and social 'integration' (in terms of social acceptance).

Previous studies of immigrant marriages conclude that the likelihood of 'intermarriage' rises among second-generation (and subsequent generation) minorities, those with higher levels of education, and smaller immigrant groups (Song, 2009, Nottmeyer, 2009). These assumptions are affirmed in a Swedish analysis, for example, where 'intermarriage' is found to be high among Swedish 'natives' and immigrants from Western Europe and the United States but low among other immigrants, most of whom are from outside the West and primarily consist of refugees (Dribe & Lundh, 2008). Since the "availability of potential endogamous marriage partners affects the absolute exogamy rates," larger immigrant groups are less exogamous in Sweden, and both the length of time in Sweden before marriage and higher education levels are associated with higher intermarriage rates (p. 340). Dribe & Lundh further add that it is "more important for immigrants who are culturally distant to have very high education in order to intermarry" (p. 340); however, the positive economic effects of 'intermarriage' "are stronger for refugees than for labour immigrants," explained "by differences between different immigrant groups in terms of family cultures (family systems, kin relations, marriage customs, etc.)" (p. 348).

Because defining 'intermarriage' is complex and difficult, and studies on intermarriage typically imply a focus on visible, interracial differences while ignoring ethnic or religious difference in marriage, I do not engage with the 'intermarriage' literature. Instead, I ask what the *implications* on 'integration' are if Acehnese choose a *transnational* alternative: returning to Aceh to marry and sponsor Acehnese wives?

Refugee Transnationalism

Transnational processes are most commonly defined as those "by which immigrants and refugees forge and maintain multi-stranded social relations that link together their places of origin and places of settlement," first called transnationalism by Basch, Glick-Schiller, and Szanton-Blanc "to emphasize that many immigrants today build social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and

political borders" (1994, p. 7, 27). Associated with these processes, Basch et al. argue (1994), are the concepts of increased mobility and subsequent deterritorialization, particularly of the nation state. Since Basch et al.'s initial book, transnationalism has grown as a focus of study to necessitate various forms of organizing its emerging intricacies: Glick-Schiller (1997) identifies three separate streams of transnational cultural studies, transnational migration studies, and transnational communities studies, while Mahler (1998) makes a distinction between transnationalism from below and transnationalism as migration.

The relationship between 'integration' into the Canadian state and transnationalism is not straightforward. As geographers Hiebert and Ley write,

> Whereas the American research identifies transnationalism as a form of integration, if not assimilation, our Vancouver results locate membership in a transnational field among immigrants who are weakly connected to the Canadian nation-state. For this group, at least at present, transnationalism is not a subset of integration but an alternative to it. Their place of origin remains more central than their place of residence to their sense of self" (2006, p. 89).

Although their argument is mainly centred around economic 'integration,' Hiebert and Ley make a clear distinction between 'integration' and transnationalism as separate, incompatible processes, calling their stance "closer to the original anthropological representation of transnationalism as an

alternative to social and economic integration" (p. 89). What, then, is transnationalism, and why is it important to consider in relation to the above discussion of 'refugee integration'?

A Distinct Refugee Transnationalism

While the varied manifestations of transnationalism have much to offer in understanding migrant identities and practices in general, the need for a distinct refugee transnationalism was initially argued by Malkki (1992) and Shami (1996), and recently developed by Nolin (2006) and Sherrell and Hyndman (2006). Since forced migration is non-voluntary, Shami (1996) cautions against the common celebrations of cosmopolitanism associated with transnationalism in

light of the "burden of global capital accumulation" refugees bare and the danger of subsequently removing refugees of agency (p. 6). Careful attention to how the role of the state affects transnational flows is necessary since, as Nolin (2006) eloquently points out, "the agency and life choices of the world's refugees are quite different from those of (im)migrants and the social processes that bind the two contexts when physical presence is impossible in the home country," because "for refugees, physical mobility is often short-term, one-way, and violence-induced" (p. 183). In other words, for refugees, the ability to conceive of the world as deterritorialized is much more difficult. Nolin (2006) highlights two important elements offered through refugee transnationalism: "a conceptual shift from a focus on 'connections' to 'ruptures and sutures' of identity and sense of belonging" and "a shift of focus from 'community identity' to 'transnational social fields' and multi-scaled social relations" (p. 182).

Tying Cross-Border Knots: Transnational Marriage

One type of these social relations is that of multi-scaled intimate relationships; in the context of the Acehnese living in Vancouver, this plays out as transnational marriage, or marriage across world regions. In other words, just as conventional conceptions of transnationalism have proven problematic when applied to the refugee experience (Shami, 1996; Nolin, 2006; Sherrell & Hyndman, 2006), so too might transnational marriage.

Hirsch's (2003) work on Mexican transnational families with a focus on shifting negotiations in intimate relationships serves as an example; however, her work focuses on circular migration patterns of labour without a refugee context. Research on the domestic life of refugees in general – and particularly intimate relationships – remains relatively sparse. Grabska's (2010) work on marriage practices and gender asymmetries among young Sudanese refugees in Kenyan refugee camps and those resettled in 'the West' is a more related example. Although her focus is on transnational marriage practices between refugee camps in Kenya and resettlement countries such as Australia, the US, and Canada, she also incorporates a gender analysis of forced migration into her study. Since she examines *how* transnationalisms are produced, Grabska is able to show the significance of the particularities of a refugee experience and how

this affects transnational marriages. Grabska demonstrates how bride prices in the refugee camps have been inflated to reflect perceived earning power in the US. In turn, families hope that such funds can rescue them from their own privation, but once the money exchanges hands, there is no space to void the marriage if abuse or other legitimate grounds emerge because the bride price would have to be repaid. In a sense, then, these marriages can be more dangerous for women than regular ones to local Sudanese men. She also uses anthropological literature to highlight that such marriages are agreed to in order to honour families back home, even when some of the men who agree to be grooms have girlfriends or partners back in the resettlement country. Again, while the impression might be that transnational marriages are progressive, they could well be retrograde for women in them.

Throughout the existing research broadly concerning transnationalism and refugee studies, there is a persistent call for an increased focus on social relations and the intimate sphere in line with Grabska's work. Indra (1989) made a plea two decades ago for more applications of feminist theory to refugee studies, stressing that when research neglects domestic life, "it further reduces the individuality of refugees, making it that much easier for research and practice to consider refugees and aid provision chiefly in terms of abstract, decontextualized discourse about 'refugee flows' and programmes of assistance" (p. 239). Shami (1996) echoes this plea, suggesting that examining the social relations of refugees in a qualitative, contextual way is vital to retaining refugees' agency. Yet as Sherrell and Hyndman (2006) point out a decade later, although economic and political linkages are inherently involved in social relations, it remains true that "the least attention has been paid to the establishment and implications of transnational social practices" (p. 5). Grabska's (2010) approach remains among the minority in forced migration studies by going "beyond the general focus in the current literature and policy on remittances" to make a useful examination of social relations (p. 3). Even when attempting to define and problematize refugee 'integration,' Ager and Strang (2008) stress the need to better understand the role of social relations.

However, a focus on intimate social relations must also be done critically. In her reflections on fieldwork with refugees, Katz (1994) reminds us of a

cautionary note by Milagros Lopez in 1992 that "scholars working with subaltern groups [should] not render the practices of the oppressed visible to those who dominate, but [should] make the operations of capitalism and patriarchy more transparent to the oppressed groups" (p. 71, as cited in Katz). To deal with this issue of exposure, I find Mountz and Hyndman's (2006) claim that the intimate and the global are co-constituted and inseparable useful. By attempting to show how refugee transnational practices are produced on both the intimate and the global scale, a reading of social networks can inform a concurrent interrogation of policy.

One example of work in this vein is Bernhard, Landolt, and Goldring's (2009) analysis of the experiences of Latin American women in Toronto while separated from their children. By simultaneously investigating the women's painful emotional experiences and deconstructing Canadian policy, they successfully show how "Canadian immigration policy and elements of the women's context of departure lead to the systemic production of transnational family arrangements," leaving women to deal with "unexpected lengths of separation, the spatial dispersal of social reproduction, and post-reunification problems" (p. 1). They call for further recognition of both "the social policies that produce ruptured family arrangements, as well as their social consequences" in this "fertile ground for further research" (p. 25, 24). Particularly under-researched and potentially affected, Bernhard et al. note, are migrants "not embedded in transnational social fields where such dispersion may be more widespread" (p.6) such as small diasporas like the Acehnese in Vancouver. Through a synthesis of both Bernhard et al. and Grabska's approaches, my project attempts to answer this call.

Conclusion

Ultimately, expanding research on transnational practices among refugees will explore how both global governmental resettlement policies and intimate social processes affect both interpersonal relationships and larger social networks. However, it will also speak to the need to more clearly defining 'integration' into Canadian society. In Ager and Strang's (2008) aforementioned presentation of a framework for relating the controversy over the term, they

ultimately call for more local, longitudinal studies focusing on social aspects to address.

Although this research contains policy implications for future groups of resettled refugees in Canada, its intended audience is not necessarily governing bodies. In an argument criticizing the limitations of policy relevant research, Bakewell (2008) contends that policy irrelevant questions must be asked; he warns that by not asking "difficult questions - such as how important are…social networks in the mass movement of refugees" researchers will "confirm and legitimize the assumptions made by powerful actors, such as states, and ensure that they remain taken-for-granted" (p. 438). This "over-reliance on policy categories," he says, constrains methodologies and ultimately "limits the extent to which research can offer a radical analysis of the situation of forced migrants that may bring substantive change to their lives (in contrast to changing only policy)" (2008, p. 437). In the following chapter, I outline the answers to the question, "how are the Acehnese *doing*?" In so doing, I aim to find balance between enacting concrete change on a policy level and bringing into focus the broader questions surrounding refugee resettlement, transnationalism, and participation in new societies.

3: SETTLEMENT AMONG ACEHNESE-CANADIAN REFUGEES FIVE YEARS ON

Introduction

This chapter[15] follows up directly on research conducted with Acehnese in 2005, remembering that "despite full legal status and access to employment sanctioned by the host state, there is no guarantee that refugees will have an easier time creating livelihoods under dramatically new conditions" (Hyndman & McLean, 2006, p. 345). Five years after arrival, low levels of employment and official language skills impact other aspects of settlement in the context of two additional unique facets of Acehnese resettlement: the initial concentration in one urban area and the possibility of repatriation. Although many are now Canadian citizens, a number of official language and employment issues persist more than five years after their arrival.

As mentioned in the introduction, the post-IRPA policy shift away from resettling refugees with an 'ability to establish' in Canada towards those most in need of protection significantly altered Canada's resettled refugee population to include more 'high needs' individuals with increased settlement requirements. The GARs from Aceh fit this profile to the extent that they spent many years in hiding and in detention in Malaysia before coming to Canada. Post-IRPA GARs face well-known barriers in securing and maintaining adequate employment, housing, education, and language (see, for example, Yu et al., 2007; Sherrell & ISSofBC, 2009; Hiebert & Sherrell, 2009), and Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) "recognizes that current resettlement programming may not adequately meet the unique and changing needs of refugees" (Pressé & Thomson, 2007).

---

[15] A modified version of this chapter was published as a paper for the *Metropolis British Columbia Centre of Excellence for Research of Immigration and Diversity Working Paper Series*, under the co-authorship of Brunner, L. R., Hyndman, J., and Friesen, C. See reference Brunner, Hyndman, and Friesen, 2010.

However, the long-term implications of these 'higher needs' on settlement are not well understood. Do levels of greater need exist empirically? If so, will they continue in perpetuity or will these newcomers eventually catch up on health and educational deficits, for example? Longitudinal research on post-IRPA refugee settlement may yet happen, but at present, it exceeds the shorter funding cycles of Metropolis BC and other national funding bodies. The Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (LSIC), with its national coverage and successive waves of data, is a rich data source, but one in which refugees – who comprise about 12% of the immigrant population – are not well represented (WelcomeBC, 2010.

This research aims to fill this gap in a modest way by looking at the experience of Acehnese GARs in Vancouver at a fine scale. According to the main community informant, 73 male and 25 female Acehnese adults (not including children) are currently living in Metro Vancouver, who appear to be a closely knit if not homogenous group of newcomers.[16] The surveys thus represent approximately 75% of the total population and the interviews approximately 50%, although some who participated in the 2009 study did not participate in the 2006 study and vice versa.

Figure 2:   Adult Gender Ratio, 2009.

Source: Participant Surveys.

---

16 Some Acehnese have moved to Alberta for better work opportunities, but the majority remain
   in Metro Vancouver.

Among those interviewed, feelings towards life in Canada are mixed five years after arrival. All 50 respondents expressed their gratitude to the Canadian government, particularly for the safety permanent residence in Canada provides. They praise access to high quality, low-cost public education, medical services, and transportation. One man expressed his appreciation:

> I want to say thank you very much to the Canadian government because they supported us...I'm really happy. It's [allowed me to] make a new life here. Everything is changing (Man, interview #48 p. 3, 11/01/09).

However, echoing the initial research conducted in 2005 (Hyndman & McLean, 2006; McLean et al., 2006), unemployment remains high among respondents, official language skills remain quite low, and adequate housing in Metro Vancouver (and particularly Vancouver) remains prohibitively expensive. As another man explains, these challenges have increased over time, especially in light of the late-2000s recession:

> The first two weeks I felt very happy and very proud because we are mostly from the lower class [in Aceh] and I never imagined that I could cross the ocean and live on another continent. So I was happy at that time. But...now it's getting more difficult because we don't know how to find a job. [In Canada] you have to speak English (Man, interview #30 p. 7, 08/11/09).

Although the Acehnese community in Canada is small, the diversity among individuals is noteworthy. The interviews revealed varying Acehnese and Indonesian language skills, as well as age, marital status, rural/urban, and educational differences, each affecting settlement differently. For example, the significant gender imbalance among Acehnese Canadians represents a major challenge for the young, single men who want to start families of their own. In the absence of single, Acehnese women in Canada, many experience long waiting times associated with marriages organized across international borders (hereafter, 'transnational marriages'). They endure tensions between state (and

sometimes personal) goals for their participation in Canadian society and their aspirations to keep Aceh culture alive, given its minority status in Indonesia and in Canada. The following chapter explores the specific settlement implications and transnational marriage practices that result from a skewed gender ratio among the Acehnese upon arrival.

In the following discussion, I focus broadly on three prominent issues common to all respondents: the work/language dilemma; secondary migration to Surrey, BC and Calgary, AB; and the relationship between repatriation and Canadian citizenship. In doing so, my aim is to avoid the "tendency to define refugees themselves as the problem, and the resettlement system as the solution," instead recognizing how "this system operates within a problematic social context" (Simich, 2003, p. 577). I agree with Simich that "too little analytic attention has been given to contextual factors such as the social conditions in which refugees are expected to adapt and policies designed to control refugee settlement patterns in receiving countries" (p. 577). Although refugee settlement is often compared to the economic objectives of other immigrant classes (such as temporary foreign workers or skilled workers), I stress that the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) is first and foremost a refugee protection and humanitarian program.

The Work/Language Dilemma

For up to one year after their arrival or until economic self-sufficiency is achieved, GARs are eligible for federal assistance through RAP. In addition to initial orientation services such as temporary housing for 15 nights and a one-time basic household goods and furniture package, monetary assistance is available based on family size and age of household members. In 2006, for example, an individual living in British Columbia was eligible for up to $635 CAD monthly, mirroring provincial income support rates (ISSofBC, 2007). In principle, this initial year offers GARs an opportunity to concentrate fully on settlement and especially on official language acquisition as provided in British Columbia by BC's English Language Service for Adults (ELSA) program. In practice, several factors pose challenges to full-time language study during this initial period. GARs arrive to Canada with low official language skills compared to other

newcomers; among GARs aged 15 and over arriving in BC between 2004 and 2008, for example, only 28.9% had official language ability (English or French) at the time of arrival in comparison with 65% for all arriving immigrants (WelcomeBC, 2010). In addition, a recent study among post-IRPA GARs in Toronto found high drop-out rates, low graduation rates, and increased overall difficulty in language classes compared to other classes of immigrants (Debeljacki, 2007).

Although low official language hinders several aspects of GARs' lives – such as their ability to access services and more generally participate in Canadian society – it is particularly related to accessing employment (McLean et al. 2006). Researchers and Acehnese participants alike stressed a strong link between language and employment in the 2005 study (McLean et al., 2006) as have studies elsewhere (Hyndman & Walton-Roberts, 1999; Henin & Bennet, 2002). Acehnese "participants repeatedly called for more ESL availability, as well as more innovative ESL/pre-employment job placement pilot programs," leading McLean et al. to conclude that "extant federal and provincial employment assistance models [were] not working well for non-English speaking refugees" (2006, p. 15). After more than a year in Canada, "all members of the Acehnese community were experiencing difficulty finding stable employment, and continued to cite lack of English skills and 'Canadian' work experience as the reason for their failure" (p. 15). The 2005 study also revealed language assessment wait-lists and seat shortages, delaying access to ELSA during this crucial first-year period (McLean et al., 2006). Although new money from federal sources largely eliminated these waits for GARs arriving after 2008, other barriers to ELSA during RAP persist. Starting from the critical first-year RAP support period, I trace Acehnese experiences with the 'work/language dilemma' by highlighting additional challenges revealed five year later.

The First 365 Days: "I was broken that year…"

Facing the highest housing prices in Canada, one initial challenge for Acehnese in Vancouver was that the assistance provided by RAP was simply not enough (Sherrell & ISSofBC, 2009). As one man explains, rent was so high that RAP left room for little else:

When I first landed in Canada, I got 573 dollars every month
[from RAP]. That is not really enough, because after you
pay rent and buy a bus pass, you have no more money
(Man, interview #48 p. 8, 11/01/09).

The already stretched-thin RAP allowance left little room for the additional cost of the transportation loan GARs are required to pay back to the Canadian government with interest. In 2006, for example, an individual GAR arrived to Canada with a $1,534 CAD debt (ISSofBC, 2007; (Brunner, Friesen, & Sherrell, 2010). Although repayment can typically be delayed interest-free for up to 12 months after arrival (depending on the size of the loan), all 50 of our respondents said they paid their transportation loans as quickly as possible; for some, this was partially to avoid paying *riba*, the Arabic term for interest forbidden in *fiqh*, or Islamic economic jurisprudence.

The pressures on Acehnese GARs to send home remittances created an additional financial burden early on. In the context of resettled Sudanese refugees, Akuei (2005) notes that remittances are a source of dignity and pride for those who send them, often contributing towards a dowry or allowing younger siblings to attend school. However, remittances vary by country of origin; in a study with Kosovar refugees living in BC in 2002-03, for example, only 3 families out of 24 sent semi-regular remittances (Sherrell, Hyndman, & Preniqi, 2004). For the Acehnese, the widespread devastation of the 2004 tsunami created an unexpected pressure to send remittances months after arrival (or, depending on their arrival, immediately upon arriving) in Canada. Respondents described their support of those affected by the tsunami:

[I send remittances to Aceh because] my mom and my
family need help. Before, my husband's brother lost his
home because of the tsunami, and they needed help [too].
So we helped them (Woman, interview #4 p. 5, 07/12/09).

I have relatives in Aceh who, because of the tsunami, are
orphans. So I still have to send some money to support them
(Woman, interview #6 p. 6, 7/18/09).

42

Before [the peace agreement] we had to [send] donations for orphans, because in Aceh there are a lot (Man, interview #40 p. 10, 08/20/09).

Based on the interviews, all respondents – even those unemployed – are currently sending remittances back to Aceh to support their aging parents and/or the education of their younger relatives such as siblings and cousins, while unmarried men are also saving up for additional costs associated with future transnational marriages. Orphaned relatives continue to add pressure not only to send remittances but also to save towards the costly sponsorship process, as another woman describes:

My nephews' parents were killed in the tsunami, so I would like to bring them [to Canada]…[when I] call [my nephews], they ask whether they can come [live in Canada] with me. I would like to sponsor them. Even just one kid is okay…I treat them just like sons (Woman, interview #28 p. 6, 08/08/09).

A final challenge during the RAP period was the sheer difficulty in adjusting to life in Canada. Unfamiliarity with Canadian teaching styles and limited previous exposure to English created challenges adjusting to ELSA classes, as one woman remarked:

The first time I was put into an ELSA class at level 1, I learned up to level 2, but I was not interested at that time because I couldn't understand what the teacher was trying to explain. But now I feel I could learn more because I understand a little bit [more], so I want to go back (Woman, interview #13 p. 2, 07/19/09).

This woman needed time in Canada before feeling confident enough to progress further through Canadian language classes. Unfortunately, like all immigrants, GARs are only allowed limited ELSA instruction; thus, individuals entering at a lower level – as most Acehnese did – are not supported to reach full

43

fluency. In addition, once a permanent resident obtains citizenship, they are no longer eligible for government subsidized classes. These barriers significantly limit the level of official language proficiency post-IRPA GARs are able to obtain even five years after arrival.

For others, years of conflict, separation, and detention presented challenges, particularly in light of the tsunami:

> The first year I stayed in Canada, the government gave my
> people one year to go [language] school [and everything]
> was free. But at that time I was crazy; something was wrong
> because I thought about my country, and then I didn't go
> school. I was broken that year…but now [by working and
> sending money back to Aceh] I can help so many people in
> my family (Man, interview #43 p. 1, 09/06/09).

As the above quote exemplifies, initial adjustment difficulties combined with the pressures to afford life in Vancouver, pay back the transportation loan, send home remittances, and achieve self-sufficiency created a serious distraction from taking language courses during the first year after arrival. This resulted in quick part-time entry into the labour market, many before the RAP period was up. Once in the workforce, however, respondents faced difficulty juggling employment and other household responsibilities with language classes. As the following two quotes show, the demands of both paid and unpaid labour compete with language classes:

> Going to school after work was very difficult. It was just going
> through one ear and out through another ear. There was
> nothing left. Nothing stuck (Man, interview #23 p. 1,
> 08/04/09).

> I stopped [ELSA] during the Ramadan preparations. I didn't
> have enough time for cooking [and] preparing [Iftar]
> dinner…so far I haven't [gone back] because I have take

care of other things first (Woman, interview #27 p. 1,
08/08/09).

Among women, childcare was the single greatest barrier to ELSA. This
mirrors findings from previous studies (for example, Sherrell et al., 2004; Wasik,
2006; Wayland, 2006).

For men in particular, the 'low-skilled' nature of employment found
resulted in an additional factor in hindering official language acquisition. Upon
arrival, most of the younger Acehnese men quickly found jobs in construction,
finishing carpentry, and painting, while older men tended to work lower-paying
positions as janitors, *halal* butchers or prep cooks in restaurants, or in a box
factory. Although the latter were relatively high-paying (more than $20/hour),
many jobs were outside the city (such as work on the Sea-to-Sky Highway in
advance of the 2010 winter Olympics) and required irregular, contract, or
overtime hours.[17] It quickly became impossible to meet the requirements for both
work and English classes as one man working in construction pointed out:

> I have no time [for ELSA] right now because sometimes I'm
> working late but sometimes I'm not. I really want to study
> but [if I do] I would have to tell my boss I have to stop a job
> at 4 or 5 [pm]. But sometimes I have to work until 6 or 7
> [pm] (Man, interview #30 p. 1, 08/11/09).

However, after stopping ELSA classes, it was virtually impossible to
reenrol. In addition to the previously listed barriers to ELSA based on allotted
time in ELSA and citizenship status, the complex logistics of reenrolment are a
further hurdle. In the study, two men mentioned attempts to reenrol in ELSA but
faced long wait times; others mentioned the difficulty balancing the commitment
to classes with the search for part-time work and the need to be available for
work anytime.

If official language skills are not obtained during the RAP period, they can
remain elusive indefinitely. In 2009, English-speaking abilities among Acehnese

---

[17] The average wage of men was reported to be $18.3 per hour, although only roughly two-thirds
of those employed were willing to give an exact number.

men and women was varied but low overall. Among those surveyed, the average ELSA level obtained is between 2 and 3 among men and 2 among women out of 6 possible levels (literacy level, beginner levels 1-3, and intermediate levels 4 and 5). Among the 50 men and women interviewed in the presence of an interpreter, 32 spoke entirely in Indonesian, 10 spoke a mixture of English and Indonesian, and 8 spoke primarily in English with clarifications from the interpreter. No one has successfully returned to ELSA after stopping and, despite a desire to do so, no one is actively studying English.

(Un)Employment Among Men: "My future is very dark"

For Acehnese men, quick entry into the labour market despite low English proficiency levels proved disastrous when employment conditions changed during the recession The construction industry, particularly in conjunction with the 2010 Olympics, was hit hard; as a result, many men were forced to accept short-term, sporadic contract work or lost their jobs entirely. With few significant ties beyond their community, the Acehnese were particularly affected. Out of 26 men interviewed, 24 found all their jobs through other Acehnese men.[18] Because the entire Acehnese community worked in groups for a small number of employers, when one company laid off employees, multiple men from the community lost work options. This research was conducted in the midst of these changes. The following quote is representative of virtually all young Acehnese men's experiences:

> My first job was in construction. I heard about it from an
> Acehnese person. I worked for one year and 2 months, but
> the salary did not match the work load. Another Acehnese
> friend [helped me get a job in] tile grinding, so I worked there
> for one year and two months…[but] I was always at the
> bottom...I quit and went to work for the Kiewit construction
> company [through another Acehnese friend] for 9 months but
> I got laid off. I called the previous grinding company and got
> work but after 2 weeks I got laid off again because the

---

[18] Two men said they found their jobs through acquaintances in ELSA classes.

economy was slowing down…[Finding a job in Canada] is very hard because I don't know anybody here…I still don't know what to do. My future is very dark for me right now. I have no experience and no stable job (Man, interview #47 p. 2, 09/27/09).

Facing a shortage of 'low-skill' job opportunities, those with limited English skills were having great difficulty finding work and making ends meet. One sentiment frequently expressed again echoed that of the 2005 survey: Acehnese men want to work but simply cannot find it. At the time of the survey, 19 of the 52 men were unemployed, although anecdotally I learned that this proportion grew significantly as 2009 progressed; at the time of writing, community informants estimate that "most" are out of work. Two men – both with jobs and relatively high English skills – described what other respondents were hesitant to admit:

My friends [without a job] have nothing. No money. No job. Some of them have no money to pay the rent. Some of them have no money to buy food. I fill out their forms [like] employment insurance forms. I feel sympathy for [them] (Man, interview #44 p. 8, 09/13/09).

Some Acehnese have just enough to survive (Man, interview #18 p. 8, 07/28/09).

Attempts to better their situation have largely failed. New funding in 2008 provided more employment-related support programs such as ISSofBC's Employment Outreach Services and the MOSAIC-led Step Ahead program. Those who have participated in employment programs, however, still struggle to find work.   At least four men described attempts to work as truck drivers or electricians but faced certification challenges. The sector has delivered targeted training programs that included an ESL and job placement/work experience component. These have included home support work, painting and decorating, long-term care aide, and automotive mechanics. Many of the skills that Achenese

have were not aligned with local labour market needs as with the Kosovars settled in the BC interior in 1999 (Sherrell et al., 2004).

One woman described the plight of her family after her husband, who had worked as a truck driver in Malaysia for 20 years, failed the BC driver's test for the 30th time:

> I'm ashamed because when I go to the welfare office it seems like I'm a beggar asking for money, and the person there just keeps rejecting, rejecting. With four kids you have to pay bills, have to pay the rent – the money is not enough. The money I had in savings is already used up. [My husband] has been unemployed since September last year, so it's [been] about a year already. The welfare people...say if [he] doesn't find a job by September then [our] welfare will be cut After finishing with RAP and transferring to provincial welfare, these threats happen and at times refugees are pushed out of language classes in order to find employment and get off of welfare (Woman, interview #20 p. 1, 07/29/09).

Finding employment remains difficult, but an additional source of frustration among respondents after 5 years in Canada is that the low-skilled work available to them does not match their expectations. One man recalls his expectations of employment in Canada before his arrival:

> In Aceh we don't get paid by the hour. We get a monthly salary. So when we had to work eight hours [a day in Canada], we were really surprised because eight hours here is really eight hours. It's not like Aceh. If you work eight hours, maybe only four hours are [spent] directly working...That was a hard adjustment and I wish the Canadian officer had told me [more] about employment in Canada...[Some of us thought] working in Canada was just

sitting and using a computer, like an office job (Man,

interview #33 p. 6, 08/12/09).

Expectations and lived realities are two very separate things. Although some respondents remain hopeful, the difficulty they face in improving their English leaves bleak prospects for many respondents to achieve their goals:

I don't like my [construction] job right now. I don't want to be

dirty. It's a [manual] labour job. My first target will be

studying English. After that I want to be a politician (Man,

interview #18 p. 2, 07/28/09).

I want to find a job. I don't care about the salary...because I

have no job now...but my dream job is to be a paramedic

(Man, interview #48 p. 1-2, 11/01/09).

Previous research revealed frustration among refugees with generally high education obtainment who experience downward mobility in the Canadian labour market (for example Krahn, Derwing, Mulder, & Wilkinson, 2000). Despite lower educational levels overall, these post-IRPA GARs also face frustration.

Women's Perspectives on Work: "We have our own pride"

Women had different observations and analyses of the settlement process. As the quotes below show, Acehnese society prescribes different gender roles than those in Canada (see also Siapno, 2002), and older women in particular encountered tensions upon entering the Canadian labour force. One woman with four children described her difficult decision to quit her job even though her husband had been unemployed for almost a year:

In Canada it's very normal for both the husband and the wife

to work, but back in my hometown, it's common that the

husband works outside and the wife takes care of the house,

the kids, and the husband. [When] I had a job, I got off work

at midnight. I went to sleep at 1 o'clock. In the mornings at

5:30 I was already awake to cook for my husband. Then at

7:30 I woke up the kids to go to school and then at 9 o'clock I

took them to school and then picked them up again, and

then you know [I had to] clean and everything, and then I

went work. [After one year] I could not do it. It was too hard

for me [especially] at my [older] age. From the perspective of

a wife, the government of Canada [can help by] preparing a

job for the husband so we [wives] can take care of children

at home (Woman, interview #20 p. 15, 07/29/09).

Despite her struggle to balance employment and household obligations, her unemployed husband's assistance with household work was not a realistic option in her opinion:

If I am the one who has to go to work, it's better not to have

a husband...I just don't feel it is right for a man to stay at

home (Woman, interview #20 p. 16, 07/29/09).

Some younger women, however, described positive experiences working in Canada (some as the sole breadwinner in their family) or expressed a strong desire to work. At the time of our survey, six out of 24 women were employed with an average hourly wage of $10 per hour as part-time prep cooks, grocery cashiers, or labourers in a commercial bakery. More women want to work but face multiple barriers related to their household obligations and low English levels. As one young mother expressed:

The government has to do something for young moms,

because after we get pregnant we would still like to find a

job, but we know that our English is not sufficient enough to

find one. But if we would like to improve our English, there is

no day care provided and we cannot go. The income of our

husbands cannot cover all the expenses. That's the conflict

we [face] but we do not know how to solve it. I feel

embarrassed to [depend on] welfare assistance. I would like

to find job, but what about my kids? Who will take care of

them? That's the conflict in our hearts. We do not want to

add to the burden of the government. We have our own

pride (Woman, interview # 6 p. 7, 7/18/09).

The unpaid but vital work of child care competes with the need for income and paid work. Although some ELSA classes offer free childcare, there are "not many spaces" and wait times are long (ELSA Net, 2010).

Still, in addition to the competing demands of household work, the available paid work options are poor. Like their male counterparts, women expressed frustration regarding the type of work prospects. As one woman explained, some positions are under-the-table and render employees vulnerable:

If I work in a factory, I feel more secure because everything

is arranged [formally]. But if I work [under the table] in a

restaurant, there is no commitment, there is no certain

schedule or shift...the [business] is small and they have to

pay cash...I'm forced to take the job in the restaurant

because my husband is unemployed now. If in the future my

husband gets a job, I will no longer stay in the restaurant. I

will find another job [which] provides benefits (Woman,

interview #13 p. 3, 07/19/09).

Others recalled their previous experiences in Aceh:

[When I change my job in the future] I don't want it to involve

too much physical labour. What I was doing in a commercial

bakery [here in Canada] was [a difficult job physically].

Before coming to Canada I never even worked before. I'm

still young. I was doing my university [in Aceh] (Woman,

interview #36 p. 3, 08/16/09).

It's shameful. Back home [in Aceh] I had a comfortable

position. I was working for a government institution, not

[manual labour]. But here I have to work in a factory
(Woman, interview #28 p. 2, 08/08/09).

I dream to be a nurse again, like [I was] in my country. Of
course I can do that here [someday] because the
government will loan me money for an education. The
government provides such kinds of opportunities, right?
(Woman, interview #29 p. 9, 08/09/09).

These women are experiencing downward social mobility on a local scale
through their employment, while men experience a similar downward mobility
through unemployment. As one woman remarked, things are different in Aceh:

[In Aceh] if you are jobless, your condition is still okay. But
here [in Canada] you are forced to face that unemployment
is not a good thing here...if you are unemployed [in Canada],
it seems that it's not good for this country. But in Indonesia
there is a lot of unemployment (Woman, interview #28 p. 8,
08/08/09).

While not unusual for immigrants of any class, their struggle with limited
options and aspirations to find better jobs is real.

The Role of the State: "The government does not pay enough attention to us"

Frustrated, both men and women respondents see this as an unmet
obligation on the part of the Canadian government in terms of basic survival and
self-determination, as the following representative quotes reveal:

Incoming refugees should be given a skill to prepare
themselves before coming [to Canada] or maybe during their
resettlement so they have a [way] to survive in Canada
rather than depending on employment assistance (Man,
interview #24 p. 6, 08/07/09).

The government does not pay enough attention to us, to help us find jobs. We do not regret coming to Canada, oh no no no. We are happy to come to Canada. But the thing is, [having a] job is very important to survive (Woman, interview #20 p. 4, 07/29/09).

Thinking of the future, respondents also expressed fears that the availability of manual labour is not only affected by the economy but also by individual age and ability, as an older man says:

After ELSA, maybe the government can provide a training course for employment...to learn about the refugees' skill and what they did in their country before. For example, I had a convenience store business [in Aceh] so I want to know how to [manage] a convenience store here [in Canada] also...I don't like working in construction. If you work in construction and you are strong, you are young, okay. But around 55 or 60 you'll be too weak, right? (Man, interview #40 p. 5, 08/20/09).

Finally, as the following quote shows, the significance of employment exceeds its monetary value and affects notions of self and participation in Canadian society:

The Canadian government should pay more attention to employment, because for other things, we can do it by ourselves to improve. But for employment we still feel like strangers to the country (Woman, interview #7 p. 6, 07/19/09).

For some participants, employment is one of the few opportunities to interact with non-Acehnese people. As the remainder of the paper will show, long-term unemployment coupled with low English abilities leaves many families with difficult decisions to make.

Secondary Migration to Surrey and Calgary: "Our future is uncertain"

As noted, the Acehnese were the first group of GARs to be resettled entirely in one Canadian urban centre, and the Acehnese surveyed in 2005 unanimously favoured this decision. The community remains very tight; at the start of the 2009 study, the Acehnese Canadian Community Society converted a collectively rented storefront in Vancouver into a mosque and used it as a community centre. Although all 75 respondents said they attended at least once a month, the vast majority attended every Saturday. Respondents expressed the importance of this space as a place to pray, socialize, teach their children Acehnese and religious classes, exchange information about jobs, and support community members during celebratory or grieving periods following major events such as births and deaths. During the study, however, the community centre was moved to a storefront with cheaper rent; at the time of writing, the community is only able to afford a basement space and its future remains up in the air.

At the approximate time of the 2005 survey, 85 individuals lived in Vancouver, 45 lived in Burnaby, and 23 lived in Surrey (ISSofBC, 2007). This 2009 survey of 75 individuals revealed 41 living in Vancouver, 23 in Surrey, 9 in Burnaby, and 2 in Richmond; during our research, several additional families moved or planned to move to Surrey. Because Vancouver's high rental costs were negotiated "through strategies of doubling and tripling up in order to spread rental costs among more people," in 2005, 81% of survey participants lived with 4 or more other people in their apartment, 26% lived with 6 or more, and 22% lived with 3 or more people per room (McLean et al., 2006, p. 11). Our 2009 study reveals that single men with no spouse in Canada (69% of survey respondents in 2009) are more likely to double/triple up and thus afford housing in Vancouver, while married couples with children largely do not have the housing option and tend to live in Burnaby or Surrey.

However, a (third) migration to other parts of Canada has emerged as a survival strategy by the Acehnese. Single men and families alike undertook searches to find employment specifically in Alberta, threatening the continuity of

a geographically centralized community. Research participants spoke of the relationship between the Acehnese community in Metro Vancouver and two Acehnese men who immigrated to Canada several decades ago through their work in the oil industry. These men initially assisted Acehnese find employment in restaurants and factories throughout Alberta, including in more rural areas such as the Columbia Icefields in the Rocky Mountains and in Fort McMurray, Alberta.

Anecdotally, at the time of the study, respondents estimated that there were about 30 Acehnese living in the Calgary area. Their moves are, however, often temporary; many return, citing cold weather, poor public transportation, and a lack of Asian and/or Acehnese people and food as their reasons for returning to Metro Vancouver, as the following respondents explain:

> I went to Calgary because some Acehnese live there and
> [my Acehnese friend] said come here, we have a good job
> here, [you can] work in a restaurant [near the Columbia
> Icefield], there are a lot of [Acehnese] people [in
> Calgary]...but when I got there, I saw that the weather is not
> really good for me. So I came back. Vancouver has the
> very best weather...[and] more [people from] different
> nations live here so I love it (Man, interview #44 p. 2-3,
> 09/13/09).

> In Calgary, from one place to another place is quite far and
> of course the weather is cold. There are also not so many
> Acehnese people there. In Vancouver, there are a lot of
> places we can go, for example the beach, and we have
> many friends here. That is why I decided to move back to
> Vancouver (Man, interview #24 p. 2, 08/07/09).

These passages only scratch the surface of locational decision-making among the Acehnese interviewed. Despite negative aspects of life in Alberta for respondents, it remains an option for the future. Since the end of our research in

2009, at least two families interviewed have moved to the Calgary area. Very few Acehnese men, however, and no women with whom I spoke were willing to move to an area with no other Acehnese nearby. One man tried working in Vernon, BC but stayed for only 2 weeks due to feelings of alienation and housing difficulties.

> I went to buy something in a Canadian food store, but I [was the only] Asian guy. The other guys were too different. That's why I don't like it [in Vernon]...It was difficult to get housing there too (Man, interview #22 p. 2-3, 08/04/09).

Yet, as the poor economic climate continues, even less-desirable locations for work may cease to be an option, as one man pointed out:

> In Calgary it's also difficult to find a job. If there is a job in Calgary, I want to move [back] there. But even some Acehnese in Calgary are already coming back to Vancouver now because they lost their jobs there. Everybody's getting laid off (Man, interview #38 p. 4, 08/18/09).

Moving between apartments, cities, and metro areas was a persistent theme throughout the interviews. In five years, almost all respondents reported moving at least five times, adding to personal histories of displacement. Two families were successful in jointly purchasing a home in Surrey, BC. Since the recession, however, the looming possibility of unemployment is omnipresent, and respondents noted inadequate living conditions, unresponsive landlords, and long waiting lists for subsidized housing though BC Housing. These housing conditions closely resemble those recently described by Sherrell & ISSofBC (2009). The resulting instability caused by moving to seeking better opportunities is, as one woman describes, disruptive:

> [I was told by Acehnese friends in Calgary] that it's easy to find employment [in Calgary] and the pay rate is much higher, so it's good to be there. My husband took the opportunity to go there and after 3 months I joined my

husband, but I found it difficult to socialize and there is not
much [Acehnese] community there…so [our family] decided
to move [back to Vancouver]...For the time being, we can
maintain our situation [in Vancouver] because my husband is
still has a job. But if in the future it's hard for my husband to
be employed, we will have to consider moving to another city
or country. We are not sure yet because our future is
uncertain (Woman, interview #3 p. 2-3, 07/12/09).

In the 2005 study, one respondent was quoted as saying "we would never go back to Aceh for good" (McLean et al., 2006, p. 20). Yet as the preceding quote alludes to, relocation possibilities are not limited to Canada. Still, Metro Vancouver is retaining many of the GARs from Aceh, even after they have tried other Canadian destinations and returned. In the final section, I explore the ways in which settlement difficulties are related to cross-border, or transnational, linkages and strategies employed by those interviewed.

Repatriation and Canadian Citizenship: "I am a Canadian but I was born in Aceh"

For those struggling to survive, an uncertain future might focus less on living in Metro Vancouver or Calgary and more on the benefits of Canada versus Malaysia or even Aceh. The last two questions I asked during each interview were, "what has been your biggest challenge in Canada so far?" and "which achievement in Canada are you most proud of?" This attempted to reveal the significance of living in Canada for the Acehnese in our study. Interestingly, the two most common answers to both questions were identical: English skills and economic self-sufficiency. Even very limited English skills or former employment experiences were viewed as sources of pride. The third most common answer to the question concerning achievement, however, was physically *being in* Canada. As the following respondents explain, the upward social mobility on a global scale gained by simply 'making it' to Canada is great:

People usually say that someone who can go abroad is
wealthy. But we came here from nothing, from a poor

situation. But we still can be here. That's really a very good blessing. It's lucky for us to be here. Before we just dreamed...(Woman, interview #29 p. 9, 08/09/09).

People [in Aceh] think going abroad is difficult, especially to Canada, but I made it. So I'm proud of it. That is my biggest achievement. I made it (Man, interview #33 p. 9, 08/12/09).

The sense of being among the first Acehnese ever to arrive in Canada made this feat particularly rewarding, as one man describes:

I'm proud because I'm the first Acehnese to come to Canada. Before [me] there were no Acehnese. In Canada there are lots of people from around the world, like Chinese, Japanese; every country is here in Canada. But Acehnese never came here before (Man, interview #38 p. 13, 08/18/09).

For some, however, it was their *only* source of pride in Canada, as one woman says:

[Respondent]: I am proud that I can be here [in Canada]. I can be here at the other end of the world because of the [Canadian] government's help. Even if people have a lot of money, they cannot stay in Canada.

[Interpreter]: What about your achievements for yourself? Perhaps studying English or working or having a driver's license?

[Respondent]: No, not so much. [My achievement] is the existence of being here [in Canada] (Woman, interview #42 p. 7, 09/06/09).

58

Only one man discussed the significance of Canadian *citizenship* above and beyond the social mobility gained by simply *being* in Canada. Although he was unemployed at the time of the interview, his Canadian citizenship carries a huge weight in Malaysia:

> [Canadian citizenship gives me] more respect. The first time I landed in Malaysia [after becoming Canadian] I gave [the officer] my passport. He looked at my passport and then he looked at my face. He looked at my passport and then he looked at my face. I said, is something wrong? [He said,] no no no, are you Canadian? And then I spoke in Malaysian. Yes, I am a Canadian but I was born in Aceh. [The officer said,] oh, that's great, how long have you been in Canada? [I said,] I've stayed there 5 years. [The officer said,] are you working there? [I said,] yes, I'm working. As a Canadian I must work. [The officer said,] oh! And then he gave me a visa for three months. I stayed there for two days. When I gave the passport again [to leave for Aceh, the officer said,] what? Just two days in Malaysia? [I said,] yes, because I need to travel to Aceh. I want to see my family. [The officer said,] well, you have a visa for 18 days. You should stay here for like one or two more visits in Malaysia? I said I have no time. <laughing> If they didn't know I'm Canadian, they would ask for my passport and everything. But because I feel I'm Canadian, I don't have to worry when I go anywhere. I don't care about the police because we don't make any mistakes. We have a true document...It changes a lot [about how I think about myself]. Before when I didn't have a document in Malaysia, when I want to buy something I felt very nervous. Are the police outside or not? We have to look very carefully, make sure there are no police on the street, make sure there are no operations to [arrest undocumented

migrants]. I was in Malaysia for three years. I stayed in the
city for one year, but [the first two years] I stayed in the
forest (Man, interview #48 p. 7, 11/01/09).

Canadian citizenship provides enhanced status, though ironically it belies
a life of unemployment or underemployment. Its relative value also changes
depending on one's location. Recent changes to the Citizenship Act that focus
on English or French language requirements may well make it more difficult for
post-IRPA refugees to obtain Canadian citizenship (see Beeby, 2010).

A major irony for the majority of respondents who spent years working
undocumented in Malaysia is that formal Canadian documentation does not
guarantee a job (McLean et al., 2006). Despite very negative experiences as
undocumented migrants and subsequent detainees in Malaysia, three
respondents expressed a preference for life in Malaysia over Canada. This may
partially be true because Malaysian language and culture, including religion, are
much more similar to that in Aceh than that in Canada. However, as the
following passages show, negative employment experiences in the Canadian
labour market influence these preferences:

The most difficult [thing about living in Canada is] the
language and also [the fact that there are] too many
regulations in Canada. In order to enter a trade [in Canada]
you have to have a certain ticket. There are too many
regulations that block the way to earn money. It's different in
Malaysia. As long as you can work, you get a job (Man,
interview #34 p. 6, 08/14/09).

The minimum wage [of $8.00 in British Columbia] is too low.
It is still the same as the Malaysian rate, [but] here in
Canada, everything is expensive [such as] rent and food.
Compared to Malaysia, when we work, a single day's wage
can be used for eating in a restaurant for one week. But
going back to Malaysia really depends on the government

60

policy because it's not easy for [undocumented migrants]
there (Man, interview #27 p. 8, 08/08/09).

In Malaysia, respondents could work, communicate, pray, eat, etc. in a
familiar context; they just were not allowed to stay legally. In Canada, the
opposite is true. This paradox frustrated respondents, and the allusions to the
difficult plight of undocumented workers in Malaysia in the preceding quote
reveal the impracticality of living without status in Malaysia.   A more plausible
hope is to return to Aceh.

All respondents – single men, married men, and women – noted their
desire to travel temporarily back to Aceh in the future, citing cost as the main
obstacle. Technically, the Indonesian consulate has the authority to issue either
a travel document or Indonesian passport for those Acehnese who are not yet
Canadian citizens. One woman respondent travelled back to Aceh on an
Indonesian passport while one married couple returned on travel documents
issued by the Indonesian consulate; all three did so in response to emergency
medical situations concerning their relatives in Aceh. The remaining respondents
expressed distrust of the Indonesian government and chose not to be involved
with the consulate, opting instead for Canadian citizenship and passports as one
man explained:

I can't trust Indonesia...Nobody can trust Indonesia,
especially Acehnese (Man, interview #1, p. 6, 06/26/09).

The Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (LSIC) "shows that
refugees (GARs and Privately Sponsored Refugees) show the highest
percentage (97 to 99 percent) of having obtained, applied for, or intending to
apply for naturalization" by the fourth year of arrival as compared to economic
and family class immigrants (Yu et al., 2007, p. 21). This is not a surprise, since
refugees normally do not benefit from the protection of their own government.
For most Acehnese, however, Canadian citizenship has an additional purpose: to
more safely facilitate a return visit to Aceh.

However, a gender imbalance exists in the rates of citizenship between
men and women: at the time of our survey, Acehnese men were 3.5 times more

61

likely to have citizenship than Acehnese women, with 31 of 51 men holding Canadian citizenship compared to only 4 of 24 women.[19] I initially hypothesized that this difference may be related to the increased desire of the overwhelmingly single men to return to Aceh to get married. A community informant, however, told us that many women and men alike have failed the citizenship test more than once because of poor English abilities.

Figure 3:   Naturalization Rates, 2009.
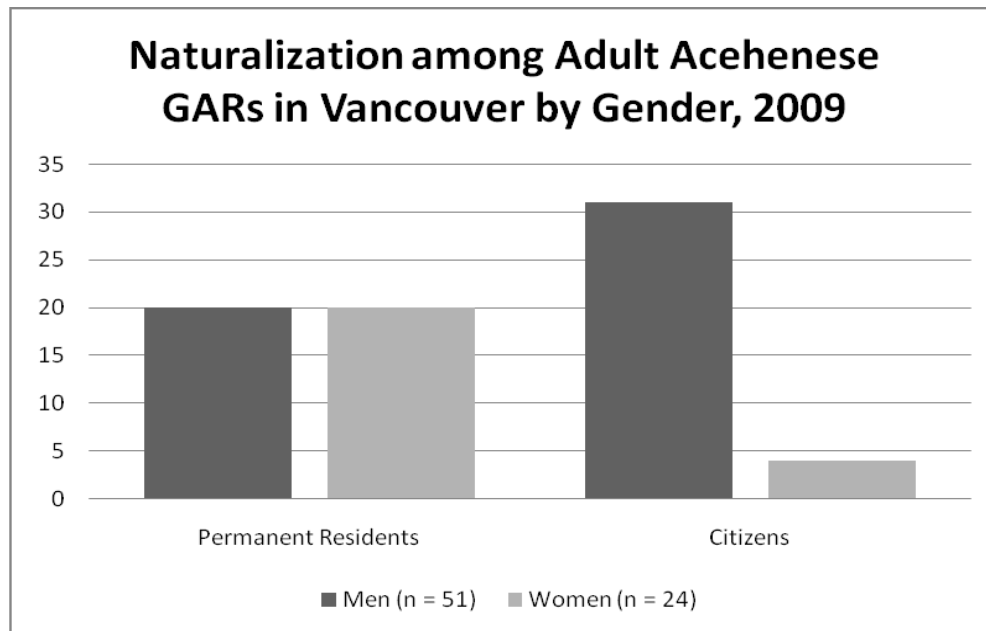
Source: Participant Surveys.

While citizenship is an important indicator of social inclusion, one is technically no longer eligible for settlement services once citizenship is obtained. Likewise, access to official language acquisition is restricted. More research on the implications of the new citizenship act on post-IRPA refugees is needed.

Another factor may be the feeling that Canadian citizenship comes at a cost. Since neither Indonesian (nor Malaysian) nationality law – the countries

---

[19] At the earliest, GARs are permitted to apply for Canadian citizenship approximately 36 months after arrival and the total processing time for a routine application for Canadian citizenship is approximately 13 to 16 additional months (CIC 2009). Thus, it is reasonable to assume that citizenship could be obtained in 52 months. Based on our survey of 75 participants in 2009, the average length of time in Canada at the time of the survey differed only slightly for men (59 months) compared to women (56 months) with 46 out of 51 in Canada for 52 months as compared to 20 out of 24 women.

where most Acehnese spent significant amounts of time – recognize dual citizenship, once an Acehnese becomes a Canadian citizen, a visa is required to return to Aceh. Although short-term visas (30 days or less) are available to Canadian citizens at the Indonesian border, respondents typically obtain a single-entry 60 day visitor visa in Malaysia or Singapore and may extend it a maximum of four times, or 180 days total.[20] One woman expressed regret over losing her Indonesian citizenship in order to acquire Canadian since it lessened the chance she would ever return to Aceh permanently:

> If from the beginning we knew that we could travel [back to Aceh] with a travel document, perhaps my husband wouldn't have applied for [Canadian] citizenship. Perhaps we would just hold permanent residency. We tried for [Canadian] citizenship and my husband passed but I failed. Then due to the tragedy of my sister passing away, my mom asked me to come back [to Aceh] for a visit so we tried another way by visiting the [Indonesian] consulate. The consulate gave me a travel document so I could go back to visit Aceh. But now [since] my husband is already a [Canadian] citizen, I have to [try to pass the Canadian citizenship test] again to join [my husband] (Woman, interview #26 p. 8, 08/08/09).

Of the UNHCR's three "durable solutions" (voluntary repatriation, local integration, or resettlement to a third country), resettlement is reserved for "situations where it is impossible for a person to go back home or remain in the host country" (UNHCR, 2010c). Indeed, as Castles aptly reminds us, "the overwhelming majority of the world's displaced people would prefer to return to their homes in safety and dignity. It is only those who have no hope of return who get resettled in the West" (2005, p. ix). Yet since the signing of the peace agreement, Acehnese *do* have the option of returning. One woman made the following remark:

---

[20] Indonesia makes an exception for children under 18; however, at the age of 18, they must choose citizenship to one country.

There is an Indonesian proverb [which says] it's still better to live in our own country than go abroad. If God permits and gives me a long life, I prefer to go back home for my retirement (Woman, interview #28 p. 5, 08/08/09)

Of 50 interviewees, nine say they plan to return to Aceh in the future and five say it is a possibility. Of the 36 respondents who plan to remain in Canada permanently, eight said Aceh is not yet safe enough to return; nine mentioned the lack of jobs in Aceh; and six said education for their children is prohibitively expensive in Aceh. The remaining 13 mentioned only positive attributes of Canada and nothing about Aceh. Although two men mentioned the incompatibility with Canadian work schedules and Islamic prayer and five parents mentioned hopes to send their children to Islamic schools abroad, most cited the Canadian labour market as the primary reason behind their consideration to leave Canada.

Notably, however, no respondent had a concrete plan to return permanently, although some implied that money was the only limiting factor:

I want to move to another country. Maybe Malaysia or Saudi Arabia. Or maybe go back to Indonesia, I'm not sure yet. I am thinking about it but if I don't have money, how can I open a business there?... If I have enough capital, maybe I will go back to Indonesia or Malaysia (Man, interview #50 p. 2, 11/03/09).

I have no intention to [return to] Aceh because I have no capital to start a business [but] if I have enough money, I might want to stay in Aceh...I'm planning to run a small business like a convenience store in Aceh (Man, interview #37 p. 5-6, 08/18/09).

This *is* an option for the significant community of Acehnese refugees living in Denmark, where immigrants are offered financial incentives in exchange for their right to Danish residency through the "Repatriation Act" (Danish Refugee

Council, 2002). Yet one man recounts his disapproval of a friends' acceptance of the offer:

> After the tsunami, the Danish government offered [my
> Acehnese friends living in Denmark] about CAD$25,000 [to
> move back to Aceh] and sign that they are not allowed to
> return to Denmark. Once you take that money, you can do
> business in Aceh, but you can't return to Denmark anymore.
> Only one [of my friends] did that, but [in my opinion] he made
> the wrong [decision]...it's very hard to go to another country!
> You need lots of money. If you [immigrate] by yourself you
> have to spend lots of money, like $200,000. [If Canada
> offered the same option] I'd stay here [in Canada] (Man,
> interview #38 p. 9, 08/18/09).

These repatriation schemes are controversial and not a path I suggest for policy and practice in Canada. Instead, I encourage dialogue about what Canadian citizenship means in the context of refugee resettlement. Citizenship is commonly defined by two component features: membership in a polity and a "reciprocal set of duties and rights" (Kivisto & Faist, 2010, p. 227). As I have shown, a survival income (ironically equivalent to approximately half of the Statistics Canada low income cut-off) may be a right in Canada through the provision of social assistance, but employment and acquisition of official language skills are not. Without these, active citizenship in Canadian society – the idea that newcomers participate in this country's institutions, public life, and communities beyond simple membership in a polity – remains elusive.

Conclusion

In 2003, Simich argued against the Canadian government's decision to 'destine', or distribute, other groups of GARs out across multiple urban centres. Her main concern was that "while refugees are agents of their adaptation, the resettlement bureaucracy may operate at cross-purposes and constrain their resettlement" (2003, p. 588). In the case of the GARs who came to Metro

Vancouver from Aceh via Malaysia, the decision to concentrate the community and settle its members together have proven popular with them and is perhaps a factor in retention. Further research should examine the successes of Canada's destining policy. Yet overall, the Acehnese generally view their move to Canada as a positive one. Locating all Acehnese refugees in Metro Vancouver in 2004 has worked, and the community is close and active. While some have left for jobs in Calgary, others have returned for the weather and for Acehnese friends.

Yet, this is qualified by the barriers they face in acquiring English and getting good jobs, and, as I show, the two are intrinsically linked. Adequate jobs have been hard to find in light of the recession, and strong language skills have been neglected in order to pursue other goals. Unemployment and low English skills ultimately affect many aspects of settlement, including the ability to come together in a community centre, the continued geographic concentration in Vancouver, and ultimately a sense that everyone will stay in Canada. Family reunification policies are proving difficult to negotiate, as shown in an analysis of efforts to arrange marriages across borders despite very low incomes in Canada upon arrival and transportation loans to be repaid. RAP rates of income assistance are low across the country, meaning that all GARs face a meagre start in Canada.

In outlining the struggles faced by the Acehnese, I aim to stress refugee resilience rather than pathology (Simich, 2003). The interviews included moments of joy and stories of success as well. Yet although these former refugees, who are now citizens and permanent residents, may be resilient, they still require some ongoing settlement support and further access to employment and English language classes for which they are no longer eligible.

4: WAITING FOR A WIFE: ASYMMETRICAL GENDER RATIOS, TRANSNATIONAL MARRIAGES, AND THE CHALLENGE OF REFUGEE SOCIAL 'INTEGRATION'[21]

Introduction

The previous chapter focused specifically on language, employment, housing, and citizenship as they relate to Acehnese-Canadian participation in Canadian society, intentionally avoiding the common term 'integration.' In this chapter, I focus more on the *social* dimensions of participation in Canadian society, which are of course linked to economic activities and needs. Specifically, I focus on single men from Aceh who expressed interest in marrying someone from Aceh. I aim to show why more attention to social relations and contexts is important when developing resettlement policy. In some cases, the very refugee resettlement policies aiming to promote 'integration' may have unintentional consequences.

This chapter probes 'integration' by focusing on how the gender imbalance among arrivals who were mostly single, young men and had experienced extended time in detention dramatically shaped the circumstances of their settlement, creating a tension between state goals for participation in Canadian society and aspirations to start a family through marriage with Acehnese women abroad. Since sponsoring a spouse was a salient goal for the majority of single men interviewed, I demonstrate how working towards, saving, and waiting for such relationships to materialize may impede 'integration' aims in Canada. Although Canadian immigration and refugee policy aims to facilitate 'integration' with Canadian society, it may unintentionally stall this process at a cost to the refugees, many whom are now Canadian citizens.

---

[21] A modified version of this chapter is to be submitted as a paper for the *Metropolis British Columbia Centre of Excellence for Research of Immigration and Diversity Working Paper Series*, under the co-authorship of Brunner, L. R., Mountz, A., and Hyndman, J. In the reference list, see Brunner, Mountz, & Hyndman, forthcoming.
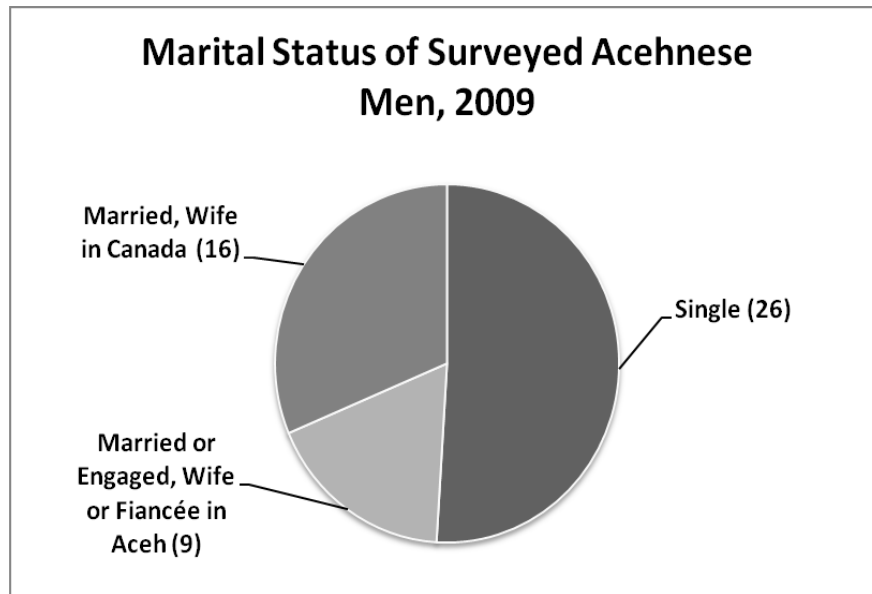
Context: Wanting Wives

As mentioned in the introduction, researchers conducted a study in 2005 – one year after the arrival of most Acehnese GARs – to probe initial settlement. Researchers acknowledged the significant gender imbalance skewed towards (single, young) men in their late 20s/early 30s as a "particularly salient issue" in the final stages of the study (Hyndman & McLean, 2006, p. 356). Of the 70 surveys completed in 2005, 66 respondents were male; the average age was 29 and only 18 of the 66 men were married (Hyndman & McLean, 2006). Research participants expressed an explicit desire "to establish families in Canada" yet "noted that they did not speak sufficient English to meet other women [in Canada], nor have strong ties to people beyond the Acehnese community because of English language skills" (McLean et al., p. 17). In a community feedback event, participants requested that the Canadian government increase refugee resettlement of women from Aceh. However, the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Free Aceh Movement (*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*, or GAM) and the Indonesian government in 2005 brought relative peace to Aceh, an abrupt end to Acehnese resettlement in Canada, and a lingering question mark regarding the gender imbalance.

As a follow up to the 2005 information, this study takes place in 2009, five years after the arrival of the Acehnese GARs. Among the 51 men surveyed in 2009, the average age was 35 years; 16 have a spouse in Canada. Of these 16, only one was married in Canada (to a non-Acehnese Indonesian woman in Canada through the Live-in Caregiver Program); the rest were married before coming to Canada. Eight have married Acehnese women and one has been engaged since arriving to Canada, but all remain separated from their partners geographically, who are in Aceh, waiting to come to Canada. At the time of the survey, none had yet been successful in getting an Acehnese spouse to Canada, although many were in the midst of trying.[22] Two men were married when they initially arrived in Canada but are now widowers after their wives died in the 2004 tsunami while waiting to come to Canada. The remaining (24) have never married.

---

[22] At the time of the dissemination event in July 2010, the first sponsored Acehnese spouse had just arrived in Canada.

Figure 4:   Marital Status of Acehnese Men, 2009.

Marital Status of Surveyed Acehnese Men, 2009

Married, Wife in Canada (16)

Single (26)

Married or Engaged, Wife or Fiancée in Aceh (9)

Source: Participant Surveys.

As Hyndman and Walton-Roberts (1999) note, a gender imbalance reflecting higher numbers of men in refugee resettlements is common, yet Canadian policy has aimed for better gender balance in the last decade. However, many Acehnese men were single in this case because they were in detention as the result of a protracted refugee situation (PRS). As the 2009 surveys reveal, the men spent an average of four years in Malaysia before their resettlement to Canada, with the minimum time in Malaysia one year and the maximum 12 years; many travelled back and forth between Aceh and Malaysia several times. As mentioned in the introduction, Malaysia is not party to either the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees or the 1967 protocol; thus, refugees are not legally recognized as needing protection and are instead actively searched for and arrested (Amnesty International Malaysia, 2004). Thus, for all but two men, this time in Malaysia included an average of 13 months in Malaysian prisons and/or detention camps before being selected for resettlement by the UNHCR and the Canadian government.

The 24 women surveyed, on the other hand, spent an average of 17 months in Malaysia before arriving to Canada. One woman spent 18 months in a detention camp, came to Canada as a principal applicant (and, at the time,

unmarried), and subsequently married an Acehnese man in Canada months after arriving. The rest came to Canada as the spouse of male principal refugee applicants, having lived primarily in Aceh and partially in Malaysia while their husbands were either living undocumented in Malaysia or in prisons/detention camps. Some were resettled to Canada with their husbands, but many arrived approximately a year later. The interviews evoked stories of pain between the women, their children, and their husbands due to these separations of several years, and there was a particularly strong desire to get on with their lives after arriving in Canada.

The 33 men surveyed who arrived to Canada as unattached, however, fled Aceh as young, unmarried men and had few opportunities to get engaged or marry in Malaysia, especially while detained. Although we do not assume that every Acehnese man in Canada aspires to marry women, among those interviewed, the desire to marry and start families was significant.[23] Five years after their arrival, the initial excitement of life in Canada has been replaced with a sense of waiting and angst among most of the single men we interviewed.

> The first problem [for us] is the lack of women. Acehnese
> women (Man, interview #18 p. 8, 07/28/09).

> [The gender imbalance] is still difficult because now I still feel
> like I really want to have a wife from Aceh. If I can. I don't
> know (Man, interview #47 p. 5, 09/27/09).

For these men, finding a spouse in Canada remains difficult, and most see the sponsorship of a wife from Aceh through a transnational marriage as their only option. Marrying and sponsoring an Acehnese spouse, however, requires several things: Canadian citizenship and money to make the trip home and pay for the wedding; flexible commitments to language training, work, and housing;

---

[23] I recognize the potential pitfalls of heteronormativity by focusing on marriage. Although gender-neutral terms such as 'spouse' were used by the interviewer, they were likely understood in heteronormative terms (e.g. 'wife'). At the time of writing, homosexuality is illegal in Aceh under a provincial bylaw (Amnesty International, 2009), although this of course does not mean homosexuality does not exist there. Throughout my research, all male respondents who were married or discussed their desire to get married referred to women. See data analysis section.

and additional remittances to support the fiancée during the process. The previous chapter outlined the general difficulties faced by the community overall in settling. Yet as the single men face so many unique features in regard to their settlement and subsequent competing goals, a general question arises: how are they faring in particular?

The remainder of this chapter applies the discussion of 'integration' to the experiences of single male Acehnese seeking spouses in Canada. Next, I turn to the ways in which the alternative – marrying and sponsoring spouses in Aceh through transnational marriages – affects other functional and legal 'integration' goals as discussed in the preceding chapter. Finally, I highlight the costliness of the resulting waiting period for the GARs and offer conclusions.

'Integration' among Acehnese Single Men

Social Bonds and Bridges

Based on research with Acehnese Canadian men who were single in 2009, I heard repeatedly that they were waiting for the moment when they could afford to travel to Aceh and marry an Acehnese woman using a Canadian passport. This was clearly an important goal and issue. My purpose in studying marriage choices among Acehnese in Canada, however, is not to imply that marrying an Acehnese spouse indicates an impediment to 'integration'. The desire to form bonds with – and, in this case, marry – someone from the same ethnic group who speaks the same language and shares the same interpretation of faith is not uncommon. Instead, it is useful to consider Ager and Strang's (2008) distinction between social *bonds* (connections linking members of a group) and social *bridges* (connections between groups) when measuring 'integration.' Their research shows the maintenance of ethnic identity through connections with 'like-ethnic groups' (social bonds) "in no way logically limit[s] wider integration into society" (p. 186) and is instead associated with "various benefits contributing towards effective integration" (p. 178). Although social bridges are also usually positive, in Ager and Strang's words, "involvement with one's own ethnic group (bonding capital) influence[s] 'quality of life'

independently of involvement with the local community (bridging capital)" (p. 178).

In their discussion of social bridges, Ager and Strang make another important distinction between those reflecting 'friendliness' (or a "lack of conflict and sense of acceptance") and "more intense involvement with the local people," or connections (p. 180). Although 'friendliness' bridges are linked with safety, security, and positive self-judged 'quality of life,' it is the latter form of bridges which is "crucial in bringing longer-term social and economic benefits to a community" such as employment opportunities (p. 180). In our study, both men and women were quick to describe 'friendliness' as one respondent does here:

> I feel happy in my life because the people [in Canada] are very friendly, even at work…It's not only your employer or a sub-contractor. At the jobsite, we are team players. I feel very happy. Wow. If you need help from other workers [and ask] 'Hey, can you give me a hand please?' They just help right away…In Hong Kong [and Malaysia where I worked,] when I asked 'Excuse me sir, can I ask [a question]?' they didn't even look at me. Here [in Canada when I say] 'Excuse me sir?' [they say] 'Yes? How can I help you?' That's the happiest thing for me (Man, interview #45 p. 6, 09/13/09).

Although Malaysia offers more similarities to Acehnese culture and language, cultural views of class and cultural differences prevented the formation of social bridges in the workplace. On this level, 'integration' may proceed at different rates based on the stratification of the society rather than the cultural similarities. However, a lack of the latter 'more intense' social bridges were less common in the interviews, and descriptions of significant social bridges were nonexistent among single men:

> It's really hard to find a friend [in Canada] because I don't know how to speak [English] very well. Maybe if my English was very good I [could] make a lot of friends…I need to make a friend from a country [other than Aceh]…[One of my

Acehnese] friends has a lot of friends in Canada…[but] my English is not really good so I feel a little bit – <sigh> (Man, interview #39 p. 10, 08/18/09).

This is in stark contrast to respondents who talked about having Malaysian friends in Canada and who hung photographs of Malaysia on their walls. Significant social bridges may be much more important. When asked what advice he would give to future refugees, another man responded:

[Future refugees should] socialize and make friends with [people outside their ethnic community]...I don't do it but I think it's good...people basically need friends to talk to, so it should be [like that] (Man, interview #46 p. 4-5, 09/27/09).

This respondent *wants* to form social bridges but is not able to, which is a different situation than *choosing* to not interact significantly with a majority culture.

The surveys reflect this on a larger level. Of the 75 Acehnese men and women surveyed, 70 reported regular attendance at the ACCS Community Centre (at least once a week) and the remaining five attended at least monthly, one indicator of well-developed social bonds.[24] Social bridges in general were much weaker, with 11 men out of 51 reporting they do 'no' activities with non-Acehnese people. Those who do activities with non-Acehnese people listed playing in soccer tournaments with other Muslim communities, discussing job opportunities, and eating/talking with co-workers at work. A minority (less than 5 each) mentioned talking to neighbours, fellow public transportation passengers, and people at Muslim celebrations or in coffee shops, while community leaders mentioned meeting with people from other immigrant groups to discuss community-building. Among women, 8 out of 24 surveyed reported doing 'no'

---

[24] The organization of the Acehnese Canadian Community Society (ACCS) and the initial rental of a community space took place before the late 2000s recession when the majority of Acehnese men were able to find relatively high-paying jobs in the construction industry. Since a significant number of Acehnese men have lost jobs, the successful continuation of a community space is up in the air. At the time of writing, the community is only able to afford a basement space, which is half of what they were previously renting. To read the ACCS Constitution, see appendix G.

activities with non-Acehnese people. Yet women who did participate in activities with non-Acehnese people cited positive and potentially 'more intense' social bridges through drop-in parenting programs at community centers and neighbourhood houses, shopping, food banks, and volunteering at their children's schools.

What does this mean for family and the community's gender imbalance? Using Ager and Strang's framework (2008), I suggest that men in particular have strong social bonds with each other, but weak social bridges beyond the community, leaving few opportunities to meet and develop relationships with unmarried women in Canada. Indeed, male respondents noted the lack of opportunities to meet women as a major hindrance to their aspirations to start a family. This is especially significant in the context of gender-segregated nature of Acehnese events. Although two men mentioned meeting and dating non-Acehnese women in English Language Services for Adults (ELSA) classes, no respondents are were enrolled in ELSA at the time of the study. Additional indicators of language, 'cultural competency,' and conflicting values, however, complicate the picture.

Gender Imbalance and Marriage

In terms of marriage, very little research exists in the context of refugee resettlement and gender imbalances among arrivals. In this case, the men outnumber the women acutely, and all the Acehnese women we spoke to [and reportedly all who live in Greater Vancouver] are already married. Social geographies of family relations in general and gender issues specifically remain understudied in refugee studies (Indra, 1989; Shami, 1996; Sherrell and Hyndman, 2006; Hyndman, 2010). Gender ratios in Canadian refugee resettlement policy are well known to historically favour men even when spouses and dependents are considered, as shown in separate studies from 1981-1993 (Gordon & Boyd, 1994) and from 1996-2006 (Dauvergne, Angeles, & Huang, 2006). Although this gap is closing in recent years, especially with the increased protection mandate of IRPA passed in 2002 which reduced the importance of admissibility criteria for acceptance, gender ratios vary widely based on country

of origin.[25] The extreme gender imbalance among the Acehnese remains unusual, but reflects the conditions of detention in Malaysia from which they came.

One exception to the lack of research on the impact of gender ratios is the resettlement of Sudanese refugees in the US, Australia, and Canada. In a sample of 2,660 Sudanese refugees in the US between 1990-1997, for example, three men were resettled for every woman (Shandy, 2007). The resettlement of the so-called 'Lost Boys of Sudan' continued well into the 2000s, with very few 'Lost Girls' being resettled during the same period (Grabska, 2010). In this case, pressures to sustain a connection to 'home' and retain an ethnic identity led to a preference among resettled Sudanese men to marry women from within their clan (Grabska, 2010; Shandy, 2007). Although the initial gender imbalance limited the number of suitable candidates for Sudanese men to marry in the West from the start, there was an additional perception that Sudanese girls who had migrated to the West were "too free and too open" and thus not compatible with the men's' "very traditional" values and desires to both "control" their wives and "serve" and "understand" their parents (Grabska, 2010, p. 487). A significant number of Sudanese men resettled abroad returned to Kakuma Refugee Camp in Northern Kenya to marry and sponsor Sudanese women who had not yet gone abroad.

Like those in Sudan, gender norms and expectations of marriage in Aceh differ widely from those in Canada. Since the creation of the modern Indonesian nation-state, gender relations have been reconstructed so that "on the one hand Aceh is represented by Acehnese Muslim nationalists as having a long tradition of 'strong, fighting women' and on the other hand...by the Indonesian state and military since the New Order under Suharto as the cradle of 'Islamic fundamentalism'" (Siapno, 2002, p. 1). Aceh is the location of Islam's initial establishment in Southeast Asia and remains religiously conservative relative to the rest of Indonesia. Since obtaining semi-autonomy and implementing partial *Sharia* (Islamic) law in the early 2000's, the province has increasingly enforced punishment for acts such as drinking alcohol, contact between unmarried adults,

---

[25] Admissibility criteria assess one's 'ability to settle' in Canada, by documenting official language ability and other factors that may hasten 'integration'.

and sex outside marriage ("Indonesia's Aceh passes stoning law," 2009). Polygamy is also legal not only in Aceh but throughout Indonesia. Enforcement of *Sharia* law – implemented often in the 2004 tsunami – remains controversial within Aceh (Waizenegger & Hyndman, 2009). As Siapno writes, "within Islamic communities, there is a conflict between the apologists who say that Islam is a liberatory force for women and on the other [activists] who argue that Islamic fundamentalism is misogynist" (2002, p. 1-2). Still, the law and cultural norms it embodies reflect an incompatibility with the Canadian definitions of family. Despite expressed interest in marrying 'Canadian women', explanations similar to those among Sudanese men are found in the Acehnese men's explanations of why they are unable to find a spouse in Canada:

> I like white girls but when I talk to white girls the conversation doesn't go smoothly…That's why I'm not happy in [Canada.] If you want to have a white girl, you have to go to a club and drink alcohol…it's unacceptable in my culture. I tried but it didn't work...I'm thinking to get a girl from my culture, because [in Aceh] when men come home from work the food is already on the table so the husband just eats, and if the husband gets mad, his wife never talks back or complains. This is my culture...If I can find a white girl I will not go back to Aceh, but it's so difficult to find a local girl (Man, interview #18 p. 4-5, p. 8, 07/28/09). [26]

The absence of family ties in Canada may also be contributing to the difficulty single men face in finding a wife, reflecting Ager and Strang's (2008, p. 178) findings that proximity to family, or lack thereof, "played a large part" among refugees in feeling settled. In their study, single men "pointed out that traditionally it would be their family's responsibility to find them a wife [and]

---

[26] Since a *Bahasa* Indonesia interpreter was used for the interviews and the first language of the respondents is Acehnese, here it is necessary to problematize research based on interpretation and note the dangers of (mis)translations. In addition, the association between 'being Canadian' and 'whiteness' points to a larger discussion of race and the understanding of Canadian identity; see research analysis section in chapter one.

without family, they were anxious about how they could ever get married" (2008, p. 178). The following respondent captures this sentiment as well:

> In Aceh it's easier [than in Canada to find a wife]. Here you have to have a personal relationship with a girl, then after living together for a while you decide if you want to get married. In Aceh the parents or family members just introduce you and…it's not based on a relationship. If the man likes the girl, they get married. Easy. There's no need for a slow process…here you can test the water. You can test if you fit together…because here [Canadians] have a perception that you marry only one time, so when they get married they really get together. In my culture it's different. I can have another wife (Man, interview #33, p. 6, 08/12/09).

One important observation here is that the 'social division of labour' – the role of matching young men and women for marriage is done by parents, not by the brides or grooms themselves. The loss of such supports in Canada and the shift in responsibility must be considered in the Canadian context. A second important observation is the distinct cultural differences in terms of understandings of marriage.

In the interviews, the phrase 'finding a spouse in Canada' was often interpreted as 'finding a white girl.' In probing this assumption, I asked some interviewees if they would consider marrying Muslim women and/or Southeast Asian women in Canada. Respondents said that mother tongue and language ability were additional barriers:

> First I want to marry someone who has the same religion as me [but also] the same culture and the same language. Right? Because it's easier to communicate between wife and husband. That's why I want to get married to an Acehnese person (Man, interview #25 p. 8, 08/07/09).

We want to marry [non-Acehnese women] and some of us
try, but communication [is] a problem. Because of the
different culture, it's not easy to understand each other. In
our culture, women can work or to earn money and help
family, but usually the woman is second in the family. The
husband is number one. This helps to manage the house.
The wife takes care of the kids. The husband just tries to find
money to live and to make the family better. That's why if we
try to marry [non-Acehnese] people there's a problem. But
for sure it's good, because if we marry between different
nations, in the future [the children will be] different and that
would be nice. We try to do that but the first problem is [a]
misunderstanding [we encounter when] speaking. Our
English problem (Man, interview #1 p. 9, 06/26/09).

Here, 'culture' is equated with 'sexism.' The men described their 'wife' as
someone who stays at home and attends to domestic duties. Such gender
expectations stand in contrast with those of married Acehnese women who have
lived in Canada for three or four years. One woman recounts her story:

I want work and [to get] an education. I need both, but for
right now until my daughter grows up maybe it is better to
stay home…but [work or school is] better than being bored
at home, right? For me it's very boring staying at
home…The first time [I went to work] my husband said 'No,
just stay home, look after my kid.' I said, 'If I stay at home I'm
just cooking and cleaning every day, and then shopping,
spending money'…I think I can just help a little bit [by
working] and then my English also can also improve outside
[the home] and I can make friends, so it's fine (Woman,
interview #29 p. 4, 08/09/09).

In general, women spoke positively of working outside the home. Women also described changes in their sense of independence in relation to their husbands based on examples of other women witnessed while in Canada:

> The first time I arrived here I felt it was so hard. I did not know how to communicate, did not know where to go, I did not have the courage to go by myself. Everywhere my husband went I had to follow. I always needed my husband's guidance…but now I feel that I have more courage. I can go everywhere by myself. [It changed because] in my mind, it's impossible to always follow the husband.   Why can other people make it? Why can't I? I have to try also. If other people can do it, I will try. I can do it also (Woman, interview #3 p. 4 , 07/12/09).

Only one man revealed a sustained relationship with a non-Acehnese woman in Canada. This particular man spoke relatively good English and was the only individual to live by himself in a neighbourhood with no other Acehnese. Nonetheless, he appeared conflicted about his future:

> I have a girlfriend in Aceh and I have a girlfriend [from China] in Canada also…I don't know [what to do] because everything is different. I need to really, really think about which way is better…I need to respect [the Acehnese community.] I need to do [what is good.] If I do something not good, if they know – my religion is different. So if I have a girlfriend from a different country, if that girl wants to come to my religion, maybe I will get married. But if not, most people [won't accept it.] [With] different religions it's very hard (Man, interview #39, p. 6, 08/19/09).

For both men and women respondents, shifts in cultural norms are selective. Some Acehnese norms, such as patriarchal views of marriage, are praised and retained by the Acehnese-Canadian men, while others, such as

hierarchical power structures in employment settings, are criticized when compared to Canadian norms. If integration requires refugees to "adapt to the lifestyle of the host society without having to lose one's own cultural identity" (UNHCR, 2002), then this balance must be understood. What needs preserving and what needs adapting is not always clear, and British Columbia does not have explicit and specific statements on issues such as gender equality which immigrants agree to uphold. This is in contrast with the government of Québec, for example, which explicitly states that "to integrate into Québec society is to be prepared to know and respect its common values" clearly outlined in a document entitled "Values and foundations of Québec society" (Immigration-Québec, 2009). These values include the statements that "women and men are equal. They have the same rights and the same obligations" and "parental responsibilities towards their children are the same" (para. 1, 3).

I do not deny the sexism and different marriage norms evident in the excerpts from respondents, in contrast to the normative framework and values of Canadian society and law. Sexism is not accepted in Canada as a 'different culture.' However, I aim here to highlight the difficulty of this process for groups like the Acehnese. In the study cited earlier of Southeast Asian refugees in California, the previously "illiterate, hill-tribal Hmong who came from a geographic setting that was most divergent from urban America were the most likely to suffer the greatest cultural dissonance upon arrival in the United States" (Ying & Akutsu, 1997, p. 135). Aceh too is a largely rural province of Sumatra, despite a pattern of coastal settlement for the majority; this is dramatically different from Canada where 80% of the population lives in urban areas. Respondents revealed significant struggles with the unfamiliarity of English Language Services for Adults (ELSA) classroom settings in a secular, non-Muslim society.

I now move to the way in which the gender imbalance affects other aspects of 'integration' in Canada. As I have shown, the small sample of Acehnese refugee men shows strong social bonds within the group, but weak social bridges beyond it. Whether this suggests a lack of 'integration' in Canada remains open for debate, but the evidence collected suggests participation in Canadian social circles is low. Yet despite the difficulty in finding a wife in

Canada, the alternative – facilitating a transnational marriage – presents its own set of challenges:

> If I can find a girl here [in Canada], I want to be married here because if you sponsor a wife you have to wait (Man, interview #41 p. 7, 08/20/09).

As this quote refers to and as mentioned earlier, a transnational marriage with an Acehnese spouses requires Canadian citizenship and money to make the trip home and pay for the wedding; flexible commitments to language training, work, and housing; additional remittances to support the fiancée during the process; and, perhaps above all, patience to endure the wait. In the next sections, I look at the three challenges previously discussed in chapter three that were significantly shaped by this process: citizenship, the language-work dilemma, and housing.

Work/Language

The rewards of being self-sufficient, sending home remittances, and saving for marriage costs are a serious distraction from taking language courses through ELSA. In the context of resettled Sudanese refugees, Akuei (2005) notes that remittances are a source of dignity and pride for those who send them, often contributing towards a dowry or allowing younger siblings to attend school. The context of gender imbalance among Acehnese resettled to Canada exacerbates this salient, well-known set of challenges.

Because a major goal of the single men we interviewed is to marry Acehnese women, they face even more pressure to save money to cover the costs. The initial transportation loan from the federal government sets up a hurdle from the start; even though most GARs have one full year before they are expected to pay back the loan (depending on the size of the loan; see Brunner, Friesen, & Sherrell, 2010), the interest which accrues after one year is not permitted in the Acehnese interpretation of Islam. Additionally, any debt to the government may hamper their financial ability to sponsor a spouse. Some other expenses relate to communication, such as calling cards to contact potential

wives, fiancées, and wives back in Aceh. Others involve supporting an additional
family in Aceh:

> Single [men] who married [someone] in Aceh have to send
> money every month [and] support 3 families now because
> they have to support themselves, they have to support their
> wife, and they have to support their own parents. So they
> have to send 3 [times the money]. So that's why they have
> to look for another job (Man, interview #31 p. 13, 08/11/09).

Although remittances are a source of pride, a study of Southern Sudanese men
in a western Canadian city found the financial strain as 'global breadwinners'
sending remittances to multiple families back in Sudan resulted in social
adjustment difficulties (Stoll & Johnson, 2007; Quinn, 2006). For the Acehnese,
remittances have been critical for many families after the 2004 tsunami
devastated the coast, yet about half of all respondents said they wanted to send
more. For example, one single man who was left a widower after his wife and
children died in the tsunami is continually asked for money by other Acehnese in
Canada:

> I don't have family [to send money home to] so all my
> [Acehnese] friends [in Canada] call me [and say], 'Hey, give
> me money, let me borrow your money, I want to send money
> [to Aceh].' The ones who got married there [have an extra
> fee to pay] (Man, interview #31 p. 14, 08/11/09).

Still other expenses include the cost of sponsorship itself:

> There is a certain doctor [approved] to do the medical tests
> [for the sponsorship application], and unfortunately the
> doctor [is] only in Medan, about one day from Banda Aceh. I
> have money difficulties right now because [of my] economic
> situation. I have to send money back home in order for [my
> wife] to travel to go to Medan and to pay for the doctor too,
> right? (Man, interview #22 p. 8, 08/04/09).

The largest financial outlays for prospective grooms are threefold: the airfare back to Aceh, the 'bride wealth' or 'bride price' (called *mahr* in Arabic) and the cost of the wedding. At the time of writing, a return economy airfare to Banda Aceh is $2000 CAD. According to a past ACCS president, *mahr* ranges from $2000 to $5000 CAD (personal communication, October 20, 2010). These amounts are high for individuals in the secondary labour market or on social assistance.

Housing

In line with other evaluations of post-IRPA GARs (Sherrell & ISSofBC, 2009), the Acehnese struggle to find adequate housing in Vancouver, the most expensive housing market in Canada (Hiebert, Mendez, & Wyly, 2008). For the single men, doubling or tripling up in bedrooms and using living rooms as bedrooms remain common housing strategies, just as they were five years ago (McLean et al., 2005). Single men from Aceh had previously lived in Vancouver, clustered around the Skytrain, but have now moved to Surrey where rent is lower.

Because most single men aim to return to Aceh, roommates shuffle between apartments as one leaves to return to Aceh and then returns as he waits for his wife to be sponsored. At least two single men lived with married couples at points:

> My previous roommate's wife arrived, so he had to live with his wife and it broke [us] up as roommates. Then I moved to Main Steet with [four] Acehnese. After that I got surgery so I moved in with an Acehnese family [but] the [daughters in the family] were growing so it's not good to stay with teenager [females]. And now I moved in with [another Acehnese family] (Man, interview #31 p. 5, 08/11/09).

Living with and near other Acehnese was described as desirable for other reasons.[27] It provides a support network, particularly for those with poorer English skills.

> [Living near other Acehnese is important] because I lack English language skills, so sometimes if I want help then I can ask my friends to help me (Man, interview #43 p. 4, 09/06/09).

However, a much more common explanation of these mixed household arrangements concerned access to Acehnese food. The UNHCR *Refugee Resettlement* handbook reads, "[m]any resettled refugees are young single men from traditional societies where they will have been accustomed to having domestic tasks such as cooking and cleaning performed for them by female relatives [and] they may require additional support to learn the tasks of independent living" (2002, p. 248). This was certainly the case with respondents in this study:

> When I lived in Aceh I never cooked. My mom cooked for me and that's why it's difficult [for me in Canada] (Man, interview #25 p. 10, 08/07/09).

It is not clear if these tasks have been learned, as single men repeatedly cited food cooked by the women in nearby families as an important factor in their housing decisions:

---

[27] It is important to note that a minority of Acehnese spoke positively about living separate from other Acehnese but these were almost all married men living with wives and children. Out of 51 men surveyed, only five lived outside of three main geographical clusters of Achenese: one single and four married with children. While the single man noted the negative aspects of living too close to other Acehnese such as fighting or disagreements, the married men found positive aspects with living farther away, such as affording to buy a house or meeting new people:

> *In my neighborhood there are Filipino, Chinese, South Indian, and then Canadian people. Not Acehnese people…[It's not important to me to live near other Acehnese] because I want to meet all the countries, all the communities, I want to know cultures. If you meet your community too [much], this is not really good….if you meet other people from Mexico or from other countries it's good, good for your kids, good for you too. You can learn the culture, everything. We need this* (Man, interview #40 p. 5, 08/20/09).

It's helpful [living near other Acehnese]. Some of them send me [food]. I don't know how to cook [many kinds of food]…They know how to cook Acehnese food. Downtown there [are only single Acehnese men], they don't know how to cook. That's why here [in Surrey] is better...Downtown there are no families, that's why they don't know how to cook (Man, interview #44 p. 4, 09/13/09).

Living around Acehnese is good because some families cook a lot and sometimes they share food. Everybody. Sometimes [an Acehnese man's] wife cooks a lot and he gives [some food] to me and my people. [It's] like family. This is why I'm happiest living here [in Surrey] (Man, interview #43 p. 4, 09/06/09).

That the availability of food from 'home' can shape one's decision regarding geographical location of housing is interesting. This points to Creese, Dyck, & McLaren's (1999) notion that immigrants "who lack the support networks of the extended family that were available to them in their home country…may attempt to replicate them by symbolically adopting friends as relatives" (p. 7). When asked, female Acehnese unanimously expressed their happiness to cook for single men and contribute to the community, such as this respondent:

[Single men] know that here [in Canada] they cannot find Acehnese cuisine…so the families always welcome all the single men to come to their families [and eat]…so we are really very solid, providing the strength for the community (Woman, interview #6 p. 4, 07/18/09).

However, it is clear that household duties inhibit other activities such as ELSA:

I stopped [ELSA] during the Ramadan preparations. I didn't have enough time for cooking [and] preparing [Iftar]

dinner…so far I haven't [gone back] because I have take

care of other things first (Woman, interview #27 p. 1,

08/08/09).

The gender imbalance thus affects the community in a larger way. Other studies have shown how refugee resettlement affects gender roles in profound ways, and tension can derive from women adapting more rapidly than men to new gender roles in mostly liberal democratic states (Sales, 2007; see also Szczepanikova, 2010). During visits to personal homes while conducting interviews, it became clear that many Acehnese men depend on the cooking of a limited number of Acehnese women and carried out housing decisions accordingly; these social aspects of settlement cannot be considered separately from other aspects of immigration such as conventional measurements of 'integration' such as official language acquisition and labour market participation as discussed in chapter three.

Lives On Hold and the Quest for Citizenship

The first step towards sponsoring an Acehnese spouse is either a travel document or a passport in order to travel back to Aceh and get married. Because almost all Acehnese men are hesitant to deal with the Indonesian embassy in Canada, the acquisition of citizenship has a very specific purpose and sense of urgency for the single men as a step towards marriage. Thus, the difference in naturalization rates between men and women discussed in the previous chapter remains significant and might be explained by the men's more rapid acquisition of citizenship as strategic.

GARs arrive in Canada and gain permanent residency very quickly, yet obtaining citizenship is another matter. For example, basic English or French is required, and this is something several men interviewed did not possess. According to the Citizenship Act, to become a Canadian citizen, one needs "adequate knowledge" of English or French, or enough "to understand other people and for them to understand you" with an exemption for applicants under the age of 18 or over the age of 55 (CIC, 2010a, para. 5). As chapter three

shows, obstacles to language and employment can create a catch-22, and official language proficiency among Acehnese living in Canada is relatively low.

During the interviews, at least a dozen men asked me questions about obtaining citizenship and/or a passport to travel back to Aceh. As one man explained, marriage was simply not an option for him in the near future because he lacked a combination of money, work, citizenship, and a passport:

> I have no plan [to get married] because I am too young. I
> have no passport and no job, so I can't. Not in the short
> term (Man, interview #34 p. 13, 08/14/09).

For the men with particular official language and employment struggles, the promise of marriage and starting a family in Canada remains far off. The resulting waiting period puts their lives on hold, and does little to improve prospects of 'integration.'

For refugees – both those from protracted refugee situations (PRS) in camps and asylum seekers –waiting "has become the rule, not the exception" (Hyndman and Giles, 2011). In an unfortunate twist on that argument, waiting can also persist after refugee resettlement. For the few who are able to pass the Canadian citizenship test, acquire a passport, and accrue enough money, the years of waiting to return to Aceh ends with the start of a second phase of waiting. After getting married in Aceh, the men (who are now Canadian and lack Indonesian passports) return to Canada where they begin processing their wives' sponsorship applications if they have sufficient funds. The reunification process is long; according to CIC, 80% of applications for spousal sponsorship at the Canadian visa office in Kuala Lumpur are finalized after 10 months, and in Singapore after 17 months (CICb, 2010). After experiencing a protracted refugee situation, the waiting continues.

One man, for example, was engaged in 2002 but fled to Malaysia in 2003 and was later put into detention there before coming to Canada. Because he did not list his fiancée on his initial application to be resettled to Canada out of fear he would be rejected, he came to Canada alone. Despite constant contact with his fiancée, he has not seen her for eight years, and he told me that she is

growing impatient. He reports that she is increasingly being courted by other men and recently gave him a deadline: come to Aceh by 2010 to marry her or she will stop waiting.

For others, the long periods of separation are simply too difficult to weather, as one man explains:

> Before [coming to Canada] I had a girlfriend but she married [someone else] because she was worried I could not go back [to Aceh]…When she told me I cried. And right now I'm just single (Man, interview #43 p. 5, 09/06/09).

Another man met his fiancée while working in Malaysia before being detained and was separated from her for five years until recently returning to Aceh marry her. However, they are again enduring a second separation period while waiting for her sponsorship to Canada to be approved.

Even after approval, difficulties can ensue, particularly in a context of 'new and few' refugee resettlements lacking the established narratives of migration as one man describes:

> [I was told] after the approval it takes only 6 - 8 months. [My wife] was approved [almost a year ago] but she doesn't have a visa [or an interview] yet. So right now the problem is… my wife feels like oh, maybe I am playing around, not telling the truth…In Indonesia when you get married to somebody far away, neighbors and family [get suspicious] and ask if he will fulfill his promise. [Especially] my wife's parents. So right now there's some bad gossip. [They say I'm] like a sailor. So whenever I talk about coming to Canada, my wife is a little bit stressed because she doesn't want to talk about it (Man, interview #30 p. 7, 08/11/09).

All this is to ignore the sheer difficulty of being separated from a one's partner:

I can't sleep because I miss her…if the government delays too long I will become crazy (Man, interview #8 p. 7, 07/19/09).

Being separated is very hard. We were together not even 2 months [in Aceh] and then I had to come back [to Canada.] I don't know how to express it. I know she feels [the same.] She cries every night. We both want to be together [all the time], everywhere. Not just here [in Canada] – everywhere. [We both want to be] together. Just like that (Man, interview #45 p. 4, 09/13/09).

For the majority of Acehnese men, however, the waiting is not for a particular person but for the nebulous hope of returning to Aceh in the future to get married. For these men, waiting to get married was commonly accepted as inevitable and its perpetual presence served as a backdrop for all decisions:

For [us single men waiting to] sponsor, to get wives to come here [to Canada, we] single men understand. [Other men] have a family, and [we are] single. That's okay. [We are] just waiting [for the day] when we can [go] back. [There is] no problem (Man, interview #1 p. 5, 06/26/09).

This waiting has inhibited enrolment in ELSA classes, prevented men from making long-term commitments to housing and employment, and added stress to the wider community.

Refugees who wait patiently in camps across the global South are problematically seen as more legitimate than those who arrive spontaneously to claim asylum in the global North, leading to the *feminization* of those living in limbo (Hyndman and Giles, 2011). It is crucial not to play "into the representation of such people as passive and depoliticized" (Hyndman and Giles, 2011). Still, a similar process may be happening in this context, since a significant number of single Acehnese men are unable to generate a sufficient livelihood or start a family as they wish. Respondents expressed their frustration with the drawn out

sponsorship process especially in more informal conversations outside of the interview setting. Some commented during the interviews as well:

> Why [is] the process still long for the single [men to sponsor spouses]? Finally they [will] come anyway, right? Why not speed up the process? (Man, interview #31 p.13, 08/11/09).

According to the Canadian Overseas Selection and Processing manual, "family unity is an express objective of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act…family separation is an impediment to the successful establishment of the family unit and leads to psychological/emotional distress such as loneliness, guilt for leaving family members, separation anxiety, loss of support network, inability to focus and get on with new life, breakdown in relationships, depression and mental health problems" (p. 62). However, separations were commonplace for the Acehense men interviewed with painful results. Integration, ironically, was not impeded by the trauma of prior detention but by the policies and procedures of immigration that made them wait for a spouse. Detention shaped how Canadian policies would be applied to them, with no provision for expedited sponsorship of spouses.

In a 2006 research project with 152 GARs in BC from 12 different countries of origin, Cubie (2006) found that:

> ...being separated from family members can cause distress and increased anxiety to refugees already here. This was particularly marked where immediate family members (such as spouses, children or fiancées) had not yet arrived. For example, several respondents mentioned that separation from family members was the worst thing about living in Canada, when asked how they pictured their life in 3 years time a number of respondents stated that they hoped that their husband, children or fiancée would be with them, and family reunification came out strongly as the one change respondents would like to see to their lives (p.43)

Loss – both material and emotional – is part of the commonalities of 'the refugee experience,' however diverse these experiences may be (Sales 2007). Refugees may lose friends and family members, status, trust, and control over elements of

their lives. But the long-lasting disruptions of forced migration need not continue on after resettlement if possible.

Conclusion

Transnationalism and state-centred 'integration' are inseparable. The specific resettlement contexts of gender imbalance and detention greatly directed the settlement of the Acehnese in Canada, as they likely do in all resettlement schemes. In this case, detention made immediate family sponsorship impossible, and no provisions to address the situation were made. In an investigation of secondary migration among GARs resettled to smaller Canadian cities, Simich found that "[GARs] from all backgrounds maximized their opportunities for social support in ways meaningful to them, irrespective of the logistics problems that result for the resettlement system" and that "government support is an important part of the help refugees receive, but it seldom meets all support needs" (Simich, 2003, p. 582). The social context of settlement is part of an interrelated, complex process; this chapter fits closely with the preceding chapter in terms of understanding the situation fully.

'Integration' is a poorly-defined term and should be used with caution. The preceding chapter offers a conventional take on 'integration,' but as this chapter shows, it cannot be understood alone. Research participants stressed again and again that language and employment were their most pressing issues, but there are underlying reasons for their requests. Quite invisible to this discussion is the 'two-way street' aspect of 'integration.' At least in the Acehnese case, the two-way integration process seems limited. I echo Hiebert and Sherrell (2009) in their urge for wider society to understand their role in facilitating 'integration.'

The wait time particular to the Acehnese as a result of transnational marriages left challenges to 'integration.' Ideally, "spouses and children of people recognized as refugees in Canada [could] be brought immediately to Canada, to be processed here" (Dauvergne, 2006, p. 146). In the case of refugee resettlements with particular gender imbalances and/or detention prior to arriving in Canada, perhaps the Canadian government should devise a way for

individuals to borrow money to sponsor a spouse at the outset or within the first year of being in Canada.

Despite a multitude of frustrations, I end by noting that those interviewed never cited the Canadian state as producing their frustrations. Respondents repeated their gratitude to Canada again and again during the interviews. In light of their unique challenges, the Acehnese community are nonetheless doing well: they have very strong social bonds, high hopes for the next generation of Acehnese Canadian children, and a physical space serving as a community centre with extremely high numbers of attendance – for now. All three of these areas of success remain in question in light of high levels of unemployment, low official language proficiency, and the ways in which these issues intertwine with the themes from this chapter. It is my hope and theirs that this research will contribute towards improved policies for both their community and future GARs.

5: CONCLUSION

This thesis concludes with four main findings based on the study: a descriptive analysis of how the Acehnese are 'doing' five years after arrival; an analysis of the effects of detention among single men; a reminder that settlement incorporates a complex interrelation between several aspects of life; and a deeper and more critical understanding of 'integration' as a relationship between a state and the refugees it sponsors. Following each conclusion, I offer policy suggestions based on both the findings and the research dissemination event in which invited stakeholders from CIC and the Province of BC, academics, and members of the Acehnese community reflected on the research.

How are the Acehnese (Canadians) doing?

So how are the Acehnese faring? The results are mixed as one might expect. On one hand, respondents expressed unanimous gratitude and appreciation towards the Canadian government for giving them a 'new life' in Canada and praised their newfound access to high quality, low-cost public education, medical services, and transportation. This is in line with BC GARs in general; one study found that "92% of all respondents stated that they were either 'very happy' or 'happy' at having moved to Canada, and many wished to express their thanks to both the Canadian Government" (Cubie, 2006, p. 8). Respondents described the Acehnese community in Vancouver as close-knit and supportive, and members of the ACCS worked hard to maintain a physical meeting space despite high rental costs. Those who had jobs were proud to support their families back in Aceh with remittances and to navigate their new social status as Canadian permanent residents (PRs) and citizens by purchasing expensive material goods (such as laptops, cars, and brand name clothing). Younger women in particular expressed pride in their shifting social status as they entered the workforce in the public sphere.

On the other hand, the Acehnese face difficulties, particularly in finding employment, obtaining official language skills, and sponsoring family members and new spouses. This is also in line with other GARs in BC; a study found that "60% of respondents from both 2003 and 2005 rated their English language skills as 'Not at all' or 'Beginner'" and the overall unemployment rate was 78% (Cubie, 2006, p. 9). English language skills vary widely, and many rely completely on the better English language skills of a handful of Acehnese more competent in English than they. Limited language abilities create barriers to obtaining citizenship, meaningful employment, and milestones such as driver licences. Some moved away from British Columbia in search of jobs, but for reasons of weather and social networks most returned despite continued lack of employment. The social networks have been geographically based in a community centre, but its size is now diminished and the community's ability to continue paying its rent is now in question. A significant number are unwillingly unemployed and feel pessimistic about their future. Male respondents in particular asked the Canadian government to intervene and offer assistance finding employment. Finally, all respondents wish to sponsor family members from Aceh (including parents, nieces and nephews, brothers and sisters, and orphaned relatives) and express pain in their inability to do so either legally or financially.[28]

The challenges faced by the Acehnese were indeed exacerbated by their 'new and few' status. In the future, linguistic/ethno-specific official language training should be considered for post-IRPA GARs, particularly those who are 'new and few' and/or come from protracted refugee situations. Pre-departure delivery of such services in first countries of asylum would be efficient, both in terms of cost and in hastening labour force attachment once in Canada.

---

[28] The Canadian government allows permanent residents to sponsor immediate family members who are spouses or dependents, or one family member that could be a fiancée, but beyond this, family reunification is difficult. There are provisions to sponsor ageing parents, but the waits are counted in years.

What is the Effect of Detention on Settlement, If Any?

My initial hunch that detention might have an effect on settlement proved to be true. However, its effect was indirect. Unlike other GARs in Canada, those in detention were not only disproportionately men but also single and relatively young. Due to the circumstances of their detention, they could not meet spouses or change their marital status during this time. Once selected by Canada for resettlement, however, only those who were already married at the time of their resettlement were able to bring their wives to Canada. There is no provision in immigration policy to expedite the sponsorship of a fiancée or wife married *after* resettlement, and yet these men stated that could not find suitable mates in Canada, especially given their limited interaction with women outside the Acehnese Canadian community.

Given these conditions, many of the Acehnese men are single today as an outcome of the *combination* of forced migration to Malaysia, detention there, and Canadian family reunification policies which affected them once they were accepted as GARs. No single factor created this isolating phenomenon, in which single men work when possible, wait, and save to obtain Canadian citizenship, and enough resources to marry a partner from Aceh, yet these hopes may well get in the way of 'integration' as the Canadian state sees it.

It has now taken many men upwards of 5 years to gain Canadian citizenship, return to Aceh to meet prospective spouses, and pay for the sponsorship application, associated travel, and wedding costs. Based on my research, findings show that this process competes with other aspects of settlement such as obtaining English language skills. And still, not all of the men have been able to obtain Canadian citizenship and afford to marry the women that they would like. These men remain 'in limbo' in Canada, 'waiting for a wife.'

As I write this thesis, respondents are contacting me with a new problem: among those who have returned to Aceh to get married, some now have pregnant wives still in Aceh or even born children who are waiting to be sponsored and come to Canada. In at least one instance, the birth of the child has complicated and prolonged the sponsorship processing time of the wife,

worrying other community members that the same will happen to them. Thus, in new ways the protracted separations continue.

In the future, CIC should make every effort to amend sponsorship policy and reduce processing time *once* for the sponsorship of a spouse, even if the engagement/marriage occurs after arriving in Canada. This is particularly important for newcomers from Aceh for two reasons: 1) there was no refugee community from Aceh already in place upon their arrival in Vancouver; and 2) the initial group came from Malaysia where most spent three to five years in detention before their resettlement to Canada. They had little to no opportunity to foster such relationships in these conditions.

How are Different Aspects of Settlement Related?

Post-IRPA GARs – especially those who are 'new and few' – face structural barriers to 'integration.' It is short-sighted, however, to focus solely on the measurable aspects of settlement such as housing, language, and employment (as many studies do) in isolation from 'social' aspects such as gender ratios, community cohesiveness, and geographical concentrations. In the case of the Acehnese, the combination of detention and a gender imbalance lead to struggles unique to the Acehnese, and policies could have addressed such challenges. This study also shows that the ACCS community centre was frequently attended by virtually all Acehnese and had many functions, including the sole source of job networking for many Acehnese Canadians. Thus, when considering the labour market participation of Acehnese Canadians, failing to consider the social function of the community centre would be an oversight.

As the Canadian government continues to test, monitor, and evaluate group settlement strategies, it should fund further research inclusive of all areas of settlement – including the social – in order to better facilitate successful settlement and follow up on the needs of GARs from across a troubled globe.

In addition, the provision of space for community gatherings and network/support building would be very beneficial for GARs, particularly during the first year after arrival for those who are 'new and few.' This space could be used by multiple

GAR groups during different times and would also serve as a contact point for ISSofBC and other service providers.

What is the Meaning of 'Integration?'

Finally, in an effort to make policy more effective, the Canadian government should more clearly define 'integration.' The Canadian government expects newcomers to respect "basic Canadian values" and Canadians to respect the "cultural diversity" newcomers bring to Canada (CICc, 2010). Yet the ways in which both the government and Canadian society understand "basic Canadian values" and "cultural diversity" is unclear, as is their measurement.

Considering the changing makeup of post-IRPA GARs, 'refugee integration' in particular should be more carefully addressed and defined. Forced migrants do not necessarily have the same agency in 'choosing' to live in Canada, and the subsequent cultural differences may be unexpected and/or more difficult for them to accept. This study shows this in several ways. For example, interviews with Acehnese men reveal significant differences in many of their understandings of gender norms and marriage expectations between Canadian norms. Some parents expressed their frustration with raising children in a non-Islamic society. As strictly observant Muslims who cannot pay interest, access to credit proved to be difficult for many Acehnese entrepreneurs who were committed to opening new businesses, as did repaying transportation loans within the first year before interest begins to accrue. Negotiating their faith with market values here in Canada created an unexpected obstacle to succeeding financially for some.

The question remains whether 'integration' truly is a two-way process. Hiebert and Sherrell rightly point out that "the government can only do so much to help immigrants integrate and the process is limited by the degree of accommodation offered by society at large" (2009, p. 20). They point to BC's Welcoming and Inclusive Communities and Workplaces Program as an "innovative" example of a program to encourage just that among immigrants in general (p. 7). Yet despite "changes in the provision of services for BC GARs" since the implementation of IRPA, "the configuration of *refugee resettlement*

programs has yet to be perfected" (Hiebert and Sherrell, 2009, p. 36, emphasis added). Refugee resettlement is a *humanitarian* form of "premeditated, state-planned, government-managed migration and settlement" (Hyndman & McLean, 2006, p. 345) and thus implicates a stronger role of the state than other forms of immigration.

A two-way form of 'integration' does not necessarily change Canadian law (such as legalizing polygamy) or alter policies unfairly (such as eliminate interest for some groups of GARs but not others).[29] What it can do is facilitate an optional expedited spousal sponsorship process for all GARs or optional assistance in finding financial assistance in order to comply with sharia law (see Ijara Canada, 2009). Otherwise, Canada's refugee resettlement policies themselves may hinder 'integration' goals.

---

[29] I do not mean to imply polygamy is inherently 'wrong,' only that it is currently illegal in Canada

EPILOGUE[30]

When I started my degree in 2008, I fell into a situation most M.A. students can only dream of: an incredibly supportive supervisor with generous funding and a fascinating research project set up and ready to go. A primary gatekeeper was on board, trusted interpreters were established, and ethics were approved. All I had to do was conduct 75 surveys and 50 interviews, transcribe, and write it all up. As a novice researcher with few responsibilities other than school and big plans to change the world, I was confidant, ambitious, and – I realize now – naïve.

At first, the prospects seemed unusually positive. A settlement counsellor mentioned success stories like home ownership (quite the feat in Canada's most expensive housing market) and a jointly-rented storefront doubling as a flourishing community centre and mosque. I started spending Saturdays in the community centre to conduct surveys and was greeted with remarkable hospitality from a seemingly cohesive community. Yet like Jim Delaney's "Doing Research in a Time of Crisis" (2009), the research began just as the global economic crisis was wreaking havoc. As the construction boom fuelled by the 2010 Winter Olympics died down and jobs without English language proficiency requirements grew far and few between, the mood on Saturdays noticeably dampened.

When studying methodology, students new to qualitative research often underestimate the "humanness" of research. How can we know how real it will really get? It did not hit me until the interviews started and I found myself at a table with a male respondent, an interpreter, and a tape recorder. Both men were significantly older than me; both were fathers; both had endured much to come to Canada from Indonesia. As the interview began, I struggled to hold my

---

[30] A modified version of this epilogue is forthcoming as a feature article in the Canadian Council for Southeast Asian Studies Newsletter titled "Learning to Research in Human(e) Geography." See reference Brunner, forthcoming.

ground as a professional, young woman; mitigate the power imbalance held in my favour as a white, native English-speaking researcher; and, above all, quell my sudden fears of inadequacy as a researcher for the project. I probed the respondent's English skills: they were low and he was embarrassed. I asked about his experiences in a Malaysian detention centre: he had indeed suffered much. Next came employment: yes, he had been unemployed for quite some time. He cried. The interpreter lowered his eyes. I cried.

New researchers also lack the skills of emotional disentanglement. In the summer of 2009 I thought of the research project and little else. As the interviews progressed, it became harder and harder to hear some respondents' shame in working low-skilled jobs. It was painful to hear, again and again, respondents' concrete plans to sponsor their siblings, nieces, and nephews to come to Canada when I knew Canada's family reunification policy left little room for the sponsorship of adult siblings and their children. And it was simply impossible to respond when a man asked me why he had been resettled to Canada while his wife and children – who under normal circumstances would have joined him a few months later – had died in the 2004 tsunami. These interviews lingered within me and clouded my vision of both a just society and my role within it.

Yet the most difficult step – if I can call it difficult in light of the challenges faced by the respondents – was the write-up stage. How could I possibly do the respondents' stories justice with a graduate thesis? Who was I to judge 'settlement outcomes'? How could I avoid focusing too much on the negative while still accurately portraying the failings of the resettlement system? Most importantly, what if my findings were misinterpreted by a policy maker and caused more harm than good? I felt paralyzed for months; only now, after being assured that my thesis "doesn't have to change the world," am I able to stitch the threads together with a newfound sense of purpose and responsibility.

As countless papers recount, research is often messy. However, papers can never replicate the steep learning curve of the first full-scale qualitative research project. I admire those in the settlement service sector who endure these stories in perhaps a less detached way. I also respect researchers who conduct important studied under infinitely more difficult circumstances. But most

of all I admire research participants around the world who put their trust in fumbling graduate students doing the best we can.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Recruitment Flier (English)

**Are you interested in the interview project with the
Community Centre and Simon Fraser University?**

Both men and women are encouraged to participate.
All interviews may be conducted in either English or Bahasa Indonesia.

April - May: **SHORT INTERVIEWS** (5-10 minutes)
    * Conducted at the community centre
      * Basic questions about your employment, language, housing, community,
      and family

June - August: **LONG INTERVIEWS** (1-2 hours)
    * Conducted at the community centre or your home
    * You will receive $30 in gift cards for participating
    * Only one interview per family
    * You may choose to have your interview audio recorded or not
      * You will have the option to skip any questions you do not want to answer
      * More in-depth questions expanding on the short interview topics:
      employment, language, your time prior to arriving in Canada, housing,
      family, and the future

September: **GROUP DISCUSSION** (an afternoon)
      * Food will be provided
      * Discussion of the findings with a chance for feedback

This is an academic study lead by Simon Fraser University professor Dr. Jennifer
Hyndman. The interviews will be conducted by Simon Fraser University student
Lisa Brunner and Bahasa Indonesia translators Samsidar and Fredy Tanumiharja.

Your name will always be kept secret and confidential!
Thank you for your participation!

Appendix B: Recruitment Flier (Indonesian)

Berminatkah anda dalam proyek wawancara yang diadakan Universitas Simon Fraser dan pusat komunitas?

Baik laki-laki maupun perempuan dianjurkan untuk berperan serta. Semua wawancara dilakukan dalam bahasa Inggris ataupun dalam Bahasa Indonesia.

April – Mei: **WAWANCARA SINGKAT** (5-10 menit)
   * Dilaksanakan di pusat komunitas
   *Pertanyaan-pertanyaan dasar mengenai pekerjaan, bahasa, perumahan, komunitas, dan keluarga anda.

Juni – Agustus: **WAWANCARA PANJANG** (1-2 jam)
   * Dilaksanakan di pusat komunitas atau di rumah anda
   * Anda akan menerima 30 dolar dalam bentuk kupon hadiah jika berperan serta
 * Hanya satu wawancara per keluarga
      *Dalam wawancara anda boleh memilih untuk direkam atau tidak
   *Anda mempunyai pilihan untuk mengabaikan setiap pertanyaan-pertanyaan yang anda tidak mau jawab
   * Pertanyaan-pertanyaan lebih mendalam yang dikembangkan dalam topik wawancara singkat: pekerjaan, bahasa, waktu sebelum tiba di Canada, perumahan, keluarga, dan masa depan anda

September: **DISKUSI KELOMPOK (**sore hari)
   * Akan disediakan makanan
   * Pendiskusian hasil-hasil temuan dengan peluang untuk memberikan tanggapan

Ini adalah sebuah penelitian akademik yang dibimbing oleh guru besar Universitas Simon Fraser Dr. Jennifer Hyndman. Wawancara-wawancara akan dilaksanakan oleh mahasiswi Universitas Simon Fraser Lisa Brunner dan penterjemah Bahasa Indonesia Samsidar dan Fredy Tanumihardja

Nama anda akan selalu disembunyikan dan dirahasiakan!
Terima kasih untuk partisipasi anda!

Appendix C: Survey Questions

1. What is your age? (Also record sex.)

2. Where do you live? What is the postal code and city?

3. When (month and year) did you first arrive in Canada?

4. What is your current status in Canada (PR, citizen, other)?

5. Did you come to Canada as a refugee?

   a. If so, were you previously in Malaysia? If so, for how long? When was the last time you were in Aceh before landing in Canada?

   b. If no, did you come to Canada through family reunification? (If so, what is your relation to the person who sponsored you?)

6. Do you hope to sponsor anyone through family reunification? (If so, who?)

7. How do you get news about the world? (Newspapers, TV, internet, friends? Which one(s)? And in which languages?)

8. Do you attend mosque? If so, where?

9. Do you visit the Acehense Community Centre on a regular basis?

10. Do you participate in any community or social activities other than mosque or the Achenese Community Centre with others from Aceh (sports, shopping, cooking, etc)?

11. Do you participate in any community or social activities other than mosque or the Achenese Community Centre with others not from Aceh? (If so, who? How did you meet them?)

12. Do you have any children? (If so, do you attend parent-teacher meetings at your children's school from time to time? Have you met any other parents with whom you talk at school? After school?)

13. Do you have a paid job? (If so, what post and who is your employer? How many hours per week and at what rate of pay?)

14. What language do you speak at home? (elaborate)

15. What level of ELSA training have you finished, if any?

Appendix D: Interview Questions

Preamble: In 2005 we conducted a study with ISSofBC about the arrival of the Acehnese community in Canada, your housing situation at the time, and your education and language programs. These questions follow up from those; we want to know what has changed since 2005 and how you are faring.

1. **Employment/training/language**

   a. Did you participate in our focus group discussion in 2005? Either way, what were you were doing (for work or school) in 2005? How have things changed since you arrived in Canada?

   b. Describe your experiences with ELSA classes and learning English For example, if you are no longer taking ELSA classes, why not?

   c. Describe your experiences finding employment. If you are employed, do you enjoy your job? Do you plan to look for a new job in the future? Have you been affected by the global recessio

   d. Are you still paying the transportation loan?

2. **Prior to arrival in Canada**

   a. Did you spend time in detention in Malaysia? Are you comfortable answering a few questions about that time? [if no, skip to last two questions in this section]

   b. If yes, where were you detained and for how long?

   c. What did you while you were in detention? (work?)

   d. How were you treated? (probe treatment by authorities, availability of food, living conditions)

   e. Did you have any communication with family members while in detention?

   f. Did any health issues arise? (which? In Aceh or Malaysia?)

   g. Did you have medical care?

h.   Did your time in Malaysia affect your health?

i.   When did you learn that you would travel to Canada? What, if any information did you learn about Canada before leaving? Do you have any advice for the Canadian government to change the pre-departure orientation program?

j.   How would you rate your current state of health: Excellent; 2. Good; 3. Okay; 4. Poor; 5. Extremely Bad

3.   **Housing**

a.   Can you describe your arrival in Canada? How did you feel upon arriving? What did you do during those first weeks after arriving? Compared to your feelings then, how do you feel now?

b.   How many times have you moved residency since you arrived in Canada?

c.   Where are you living now (city and postal code)?

d.   Why did you choose this place?

e.   Do you rent or own this home? If renting, what rent do you pay per month?

f.   Are there other Acehnese nearby?

g.   With whom are you living? (note number of family members and relation of each to respondent)

4.   **Family**

a.   One of the issues raised in 2005 was the difference in the number of Acehnese men versus the much smaller number of women. What have Acehnese men done to solve this issue? (Has anyone been able to marry women from Aceh and sponsor them?)

b.   Are you married/divorced/single?

c.   Where and when did you get married? (Canada/Aceh/Malaysia)

d.   Have you been back to Aceh since you came to Canada? (If so, when, for how long)? If so, what did you do while you were there?

e.   Do you have family members in other countries, other than Aceh or Canada?

f.   Do you send money to family? To family in Aceh? How often do you send money?

5.   **The future**

a.   Now that peace has come to Aceh, do you want to return? Will you? To visit? To live? Why or why not?

b.   What has been your biggest challenge in Canada so far?

c.   Which achievement in Canada are you most proud of?

d.   What would you change about the Canadian government assisted refugee resettlement process for future groups?

Appendix E: Interview Honorarium Receipt

SFU

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

Acehnese 5-Year Follow-Up Project

Interview Honorarium Receipt ($50 Gift Card)

Simon Fraser University

8888 University Drive
Burnaby BC Canada
V5A 1S6

TEL: 778.782.3321
FAX: 778.782.5841
www.sfu.ca.geography

Date and Time:

_____

Location:

_____

Participant Name:

_____

Participant Signature:

_____

Research Assistant's Signature:

_____

Translator's Signature (if applicable):

_____

Appendix F: Ethics Approval

SFU

OFFICE OF
RESEARCH ETHICS

November 9, 2010

street address
Simon Fraser University
Multi-Tenant Facility
Room 230, 8900 Nelson Way
Burnaby, B.C. Canada
V5A 4W9

Lisa Brunner
Graduate Student
Department of Geography
Simon Fraser University

Dear Lisa:

mailing address
8888 University Drive
Multi-Tenant Facility
Burnaby, B.C. Canada
V4A 1S6

**Re: From Protracted Situations to Protracted Separations:
Acehnese-Canadian Refugee Settlement in Vancouver, BC –
RETROACTIVE - Appl. #: 2010s0674**
Metropolis BC (SSHRC/Govt.) Subgrant
Grant title: Refugees from Protracted Situations to British Columbia

I am pleased to inform you that the above referenced Request for
Ethical of Research has been approved on behalf of the Research
Ethics Board. This approval is in effect until the end date
November 6, 2013, or only during the period in which you are a
registered SFU student.

The Office of Research Ethics must be notified of any changes in
the approved protocol. Request for amendments to the protocol
may be requested by email to dore@sfu.ca. In all
correspondence relating to this application, please reference the
application number shown on this letter and all email.

Your application has been categorized as "minimal risk" and
approved by the Director, Office of Research Ethics, on behalf of
the Research Ethics Board in accordance with University policy
R20.01, http://www.sfu.ca/policies/research/r20-01.htm. The
Board reviews and may amend decisions or subsequent
amendments made independently by the Director, Chair or
Deputy Chair at its regular monthly meetings.

.../2

SFU

Page 2

"Minimal risk" occurs when potential participants can reasonably be expected to regard the probability and magnitude of possible harms incurred by participating in the research to be no greater than those encountered by the participant in those aspects of his or her everyday life that relate to the research.

Please note that it is the responsibility of the researcher, or the responsibility of the Student Supervisor if the researcher is a graduate student or undergraduate student, to maintain written or other forms of documented consent for a period of 1 year after the research has been completed.

If there is an adverse event, the principal investigator must notify the Office of Research Ethics within five (5) days. An Adverse Events form is available electronically by contacting dore@sfu.ca.

All correspondence with regards to this application will be sent to your SFU email address.

Please notify the Office of Research Ethics at dore@sfu.ca once you have completed the data collection portion of your project so that we can close this file.

Best wishes for success in this research.

Sincerely,

Dr. Hal Weinberg, Director
Office of Research Ethics

c: Dr. Jennifer Hyndman, Supervisor

/jmy

Appendix G: ACCS Constitution

SOCIETY ACT

CONSTITUTION

1. The name of the Society is "**ACEHNESE CANADIAN COMMUNITY SOCIETY**".

2. The Purposes of the Society are:

    (a) To assist Acehnese immigrants and refugees overcome language and cultural barriers to access proper community services;

    (b) To facilitate the access to health care services to Acehnese immigrants and refugees;

    (c) To assist in identifying the needs of the local Acehnese community;

    (d) To preserve and promote Acehnese traditions and culture and raising awareness in the general community; and

    (e) To partner with local and international NGO's that work with Acehnese communities locally and abroad.

3. In the event of winding up or dissolution of the Society, funds and assets of the Society remaining after the satisfaction of its debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to such organization or organizations concerned with the social problems or organizations promoting the same purposes of this Society as may be determined by the members of the Society at the time of winding up or dissolution, and if effect cannot be given or transferred to some other charitable organization or charity recognized Revenue Canada as being qualified as such under the provisions of the Income Tax Act of Canada from time to time in effect.

4. The above purposes of the Society shall be carried out without purpose of gain for its members, and any profits or other accretions to the Society shall be used for promoting its purposes, and all of the above purposes shall be carried on an exclusively charitable basis.

5. Paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of this Constitution are unalterable in accordance with section 22 of the Society Act.

REFERENCE LIST

Ager, A., & Strang, A. (2008). Understanding Integration: A Conceptual Framework. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 21(2), 166-191.

Aguilar, L., Tomic, P., & Trumper, R. (2005). Work hard, play hard: selling Kelowna, BC, as year-round playground. The Canadian Geographer, 49(2), 123-139.

Akuei, S. R. (2005). Remittances as unforeseen burdens: the livelihoods and social obligations of Sudanese refugees. *Global Commission on International Migration: Global Migration Perspectives*, 18, 1-16.

Alba, R., & Nee, V. (2003). *Remaking the American Mainstream: Assimilation and Contemporary Immigration.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Amnesty International. (2009, Sept. 17). *Indonesia: Repeal "cruel" new stoning and caning law – Public Statement*. Retrieved from http://www.amnesty.ca/resource_centre/news/view.php?load=arcview&article=4 87&c=Resource+Centre+News

Amnesty International Malaysia. (2004, August 25). *Amnesty International Malaysia: Refugees and Migrants*. Retrieved from http://www.aimalaysia.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=9

Atfield, G., Brahmbhatt, K., & O'Toole, T. (2007, September). *Refugees' Experiences of Integration*. Retrieved from http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/Resources/Refugee%20Council/downloads/researchreports/Integrationresearchreport.pdf

Bakewell, O. (2008). Research Beyond the Categories: The Importance of Policy Irrelevant Research into Forced Migration. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 21(4), 432-453.

Basch, L., Glick-Schiller, N., & Szanton-Blanc, C. (1994). *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments, and Deterritorialized Nation States*. Langhorne: Gordon and Breach.

Beeby, D. (2010, November, 28). Immigrants failing citizenship test in record numbers. *The Globe and Mail*. Retrieved from http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/immigrants-failing-citizenship-test-in-record-numbers/article1816501/

Bernhard, J., Landolt, P., & Goldring, L. (2009). Transnationalizing Families: Canadian Immigration Policy and the Spatial Fragmentation of Care-giving among Latin American Newcomers. *International Migration*, 47(2), 3-31.

Bloch, A. (1999). Carrying Out a Survey of Refugees: Some Methodological Considerations and Guidelines. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 12(4), 367-383.

Brunner, L. R. (forthcoming). Learning to Research in Human(e) Geography. Canadian Council for Southeast Asian Studies Newsletter, 2010(11), forthcoming.

Brunner, L. R., Friesen, F. & Sherrell, K. (2010). Changing Faces, Changing Neighbourhoods: Government Assisted Refugee Settlement Patterns in Metro Vancouver 2005 – 2009. *ISSofBC Publications: Immigrant Issues*. Retrieved from http://www.issbc.org/sites/default/files/ChangingFaces-GARpublication.pdf

Brunner, L. R., Hyndman, J., & Friesen, C. (2010). Aceh-Malaysia-Vancouver: Settlement Among Acehnese Refugees Five Years On. *Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis Working Paper Series*,10(12), 1-55. Retrieved from http://mbc.metropolis.net/assets/uploads/files/wp/2010/WP10-12.pdf

Brunner, L. R., Mountz, A., & Hyndman, J. (forthcoming). Waiting for a wife: Asymmetrical gender ratios among Acehnese refugees and the challenge of 'integration.' *Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis Working Paper Series*, forthcoming.

Castles, S. (2005). Foreword. In Wazman, P. and Colic-Peisker, V. (Eds.), *Homeland Wanted: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Refugee Resettlement in the West* (p. ix-x). New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc.

Castles, S., Korac, M., Vasta, E., & Vertovec, S. (2002). *Integration: Mapping the Field*. Centre for Migration and Policy Research and Refugee Studies Centre. University of Oxford. Retrieved from http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/rdsolr2803.doc

Cavell, R. (1997). The race of space. New Formations, 31, 39–50.

Charmaz, K., & Bryant, A. (2008). Grounded Theory. In SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods (Vol. 2, pp. 374-377). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada. (2010a, March 16). Becoming a Canadian citizen: Who can apply. In *Citizenship and Immigration Canada*. Retrieved from http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/citizenship/become-eligibility.asp

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). (2010b, July 23). *Statistical information: Applications processed at Canadian visa offices*. Retrieved from http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/times/international/05-fc-spouses.asp

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). (2010c). *Report on Plans and Priorities: Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2010-2011*. Retrieved from http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/rpp/2010-2011/inst/imc/imc-eng.pdf.

Cohen, A. P. (1985). The Symbolic Construction of Community. London: Tavistock.

Cope, M. (2008). Grounded Theory. In International Encyclopedia of Human Geography (pp. 647-650). London: Elsevier.

Creese, G., Dyck, I.L., & McLaren, A. T. (1999). Reconstituting the Family: Negotiating Immigration and Settlement. *Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis Working Paper Series*, 99(10), 1-19. Retrieved from http://mbc.metropolis.net/assets/uploads/files/wp/1999/WP99-10.pdf

Cubie, D. (2006, December). *New Beginnings: Insights of Government-Assisted Refugees in British Columbia into their Settlement Outcomes*. Retrieved from http://www.issbc.org/sites/default/files/publications/New_Beginnings_Jan31_06.pdf

Danish Refugee Council. (2002). Repatriation Country Survey: Denmark. In *European Reintegration Networking*. Retrieved from http://www.reintegration.net/denmark/index.htm

Dauvergne, C. (2006). Reflections on Gendering Canada's Refugee Process. *Refuge,* 23(2), 139-148.

Dauvergne, C., Angeles, L. C., &, Huang, A. (2006). *Gendering Canada's Refugee Process*. Retrieved from http://www.iiav.nl/epublications/2006/gendering_canadas_refugee_process.pdf

Debeljacki, D. M. (2007). *Government-Assisted Refugees in Toronto's LINC Classes: An Exploration of Perceived Needs and Barriers*. Unpublished Master of Arts thesis, Ryerson University, Toronto, ON. Retrieved from http://digitalcommons.ryerson.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1111&context=dissertations

Delaney, J. (2009, Winter). Doing Research in a Time of Crisis. *The Canadian Council for Southeast Asian Studies' Newsletter*, 9(2), 10-11.

Department of Justice Canada. (2001). Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. Retrieved from http://laws.justice.gc.ca/PDF/Statute/I/I-2.5.pdf

Drexler, E. F. (2008). *Aceh, Indonesia: Securing the Insecure State*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Dribe, M., & Lundh, C. (2008). Intermarriage and Immigrant Integration in Sweden: An Exploratory Analysis. *Acta Sociologica*, 51, 329-254.

English Language Service for Adults Net. (2010). *What is ELSA?* Retrieved from http://www.elsanet.org/site/what-is-elsa

Freeman, G.P. (2004). Immigrant incorporation in Western democracies. *International Migration Review*, 38(3), 945-969.

Ghosh, B. (2005). The Challenge of Integration: A Global Perspective. In R. Sussmuth & W. Weidenfeld (Eds.), *Managing Integration: The European Union's Responsibilities Towards Immigrants*. Gutersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung.

Glick-Schiller, N. (1997). The situation of transnational studies. *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*, 4(2), 155-166.

Gordon, L., & Boyd, M. (1994). Proceedings from the annual meeting of the Population Association of America: Refugees to North America: Gender Issues and Implications. Miami, Florida. Retrieved from http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/~boydmon/ research_papers/immigrant_women/Gordon_Boyd_PAA_1994.pdf

Grabska, K. (2010). Lost Boys, Invisible Girls: Stories of marriage across borders. *Gender, Place and Culture*, 17(4), 479-497.

Henin, B., & Bennet, M. R. (2002). Immigration to Canada's mid-sized cities: A study of Latin Americans and Africans in Victoria, B.C. *Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis Working Paper Series*, 02(22), 1-22. Retrieved from http://mbc.metropolis.net/assets/uploads/files/wp/2002/WP02-22.pdf

Hiebert, D. (2009). The Economic Integration of Immigrants in Metro Vancouver. *Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis Working Paper Series*, 09(08), 1-99. Retrieved from http://mbc.metropolis.net/assets/uploads/files/wp/2009/WP09-08.pdf

Hiebert, D., & Ley, D. (2006). Characteristics of Immigrant Transnationalism in Vancouver. In V. Statzewich and L. Wong (eds).,*Transnational Identities and Practices in Canada*. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Hiebert, D., Mendez, P., & Wyly, E. (2008). The Housing Situation and Needs of Recent Immigrants in the Vancouver Metropolitan Area. *Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis Working Paper Series*, 08(01), 1-123. Retrieved from http://mbc.metropolis.net/assets/uploads/files/wp/2008/WP08-01.pdf

Hiebert, D., & Sherrell, K. (2009). The Integration and Inclusion of Newcomers in British Columbia. *Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis Working Paper Series*, 09(11), 1-44. Retrieved from http://mbc.metropolis.net/assets/uploads/files/wp/2009/WP09-11.pdf

Hirsch, J. (2003). *A Courtship after Marriage: Sexuality and Love in Mexican Transnational Families*. University of California Press: Berkeley.

Human Rights Watch (2004). Aceh Under Martial Law: Problems Faced by Acehnese Refugees in Malaysia. In *Reports*, 16(5), 1-27. Retrieved from http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/malaysia0404.pdf

Hyndman, J. (2009). Second-Class immigrants or First Class Protection? Resettling Refugees to Canada. In P. Bevelander, M. Hagstrom, and S. Ronnqvist (eds.), *Resettled and Included? Employment Integration of Refugees* (p. 247-265). Malmo: Malmo University.

Hyndman, J. (2010). Introduction: the gendered politics of refugee migration. *Gender, Place and Culture*, 17(4), 453-459.

Hyndman, J., & Giles, W. Waiting for What? (2011). The Feminization of Refugees in Protracted Situations. *Gender, Place and Culture*, forthcoming.

Hyndman, J., & McLean, J. (2006). Settling Like a State: Acehnese Refugees in Vancouver. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 19(3), 345-360.

Hyndman, J., & Walton-Roberts, M. (1999). Transnational Migration and Nation: Burmese Refugees in Vancouver. *Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis Working Paper Series*, 99(07), 1-29. Retrieved from http://mbc.metropolis.net/assets/uploads/files/wp/1999/WP99-07.pdf

Ijara Canada. (2009). *Ijara Canada*. Retrieved from http://www.ijaracanada.com/

Immigrant Services Society of British Columbia. (2007). *Faces of Refugees: Settlement Patterns in the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) January 2003 – December 2006.* Retrieved from http://www.issbc.org/sites/default/files/publications/faces_of_refugees_6.pdf

Immigration-Québec. (2009, December 9). Men and Women have the same rights. In *Immigration et des Communautés culturelles*. Retrieved from http://www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/choose-quebec/common-values/men-women-rights.html

Indonesia's Aceh passes stoning law. (2009, Sept. 14). *Al Jazeera*. Retrieved from http://english.aljazeera.net/news/asia-pacific/2009/09/200991418142587643.html

Indra, D. M. (1989). Ethnic Human Rights and Feminist Theory: Gender Implications for Refugee Studies and Practice. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 2(2), 221-242.

Katz, C. (1994). Playing the Field: Questions of Fieldwork in Geography. *Professional Geographer*, 14(1), 67-72.

Kindon, S., Pain, R. & Kesby, M. (2008). Participatory action research. In *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography* (pp. 90-95). London: Elsevier.

Kivisto, P., & Faist, T. (2010). *Beyond a Border: The Causes and Consequences of Contemporary Immigration*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Krahn, H., Derwing, T., Mulder, M., & Wilkinson, L. (2000). Educated and Underemployed: Refugee Integration into the Canadian Labour Market. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 1(1), 59-84.

Kuppusamy, B. (2003, September 9). Malaysia walks tightrope on Aceh refugees. *Asia Times*. Retrieved from http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/EI09Ae04.html

Kymlicka, W. (1995). *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*. Oxford: Oxford university press.

Labman, S. (2007). Resettlement's Renaissance: A Cautionary Advocacy. *Refuge*, 24(2) p. 35-47.

Lamba, N., & Krahn, H. (2003). Social Capital and Refugee Resettlement: The Social Networks of Refugees in Canada. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 4(3), 335-360.

Ley, D. (2005). Post-Multiculturalism? *Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis Working Paper Series*, 05(18), 1-20. Retrieved from http://mbc.metropolis.net/assets/uploads/files/wp/2005/WP05-18.pdf

Loescher, G., Betts, A., & Milner, J. (2008). *The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees: The Politics and Practice of Refugee Protection into the twenty-first Century*. Oxon: Routledge.

Mahler, S. (1998) Theoretical and empirical contributions towards a research agenda for transnationalism. In *Transnationalism from Below*, eds. M. P. Smith and L. E. Guarnizo, p. 64-102. New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers.

Malkki, L. (1992). National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees. *Cultural Anthropology*, 7(l), 22-44.

McLean, J., Friesen, C., & Hyndman, J. (2006). The First 365 Days: Acehnese Refugees in Vancouver, British Columbia. *Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis Working Paper Series*, 06(07), 1-23. Retrieved from http://mbc.metropolis.net/assets/uploads/files/wp/2006/WP06-07.pdf

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (11th ed.) (2010). Retrieved from http://www.merriam-webster.com/

Missbach, A. (2007 October-December). Aceh homebound? *Inside Indonesia*, 90. Retrieved from http://www.insideindonesia.org/content/view/607/47

Mountz, A., & Hyndman, J. (2006). Feminist Approaches to the Global Intimate. *Women's Studies Quarterly*, 34(1-2), 446-463.

Nah, A. & Bunnell, T. (2005). Ripples of Hope: Acehnese Refugees in Post-Tsunami Malaysia. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*, 26(2), 249-256.

Nolin, C. (2006). *Transnational Ruptures: Gender and Forced Migration*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Nottmeyer, O. (2009). *Wedding Bells Are Ringing: Increasing Rates of Intermarriage in Germany*. Migration Information Source: Migration Policy Institute. Washington, DC. Retrieved from http://www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?ID=744

Phillimore, J., & Goodson, L. (2008). Making a Place in the Global City: The Relevance of Indicators of Integration. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 21(3), p. 305-325.

Pressé, D., & Thomson, J. (2007). The Resettlement Challenge: Integration of Refugees from Protracted Refugee Situations. *Refuge*, 24(2), 48-53.

Quinn, C. (Producer & Director). (2006). *God Grew Tired of Us* [Motion picture]. USA: New Market Films.

Roberts, J. (2003, August 26). Malaysia rounds up Acehnese refugees for deportation. *World Socialist Web Site*. Retrieved from http://www.wsws.org/articles/2003/aug2003/mala-a26.shtml

Sales, R. (2007). *Understanding Immigration and Refugee Policy: Contractions and continuities*. Bristol: The Policy Press.

Shami, S. (1996). Transnationalism and Refugee Studies: Rethinking Forced Migration and Identity in the Middle East. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 9(1), 3-26.

Shandy, D. (2007). *Nuer-American passages: Globalizing Sudanese migration*. Florida: University Press of Florida.

Sherrell, K., & Hyndman, J. (2006). Global Minds, Local Bodies: Kosovar Transnational Connections Beyond British Columbia. *Refuge*, 23(1), 16-26.

Sherrell, K., Hyndman, J., and Preniqi, F. (2004). Sharing the Wealth, Spreading the "Burden"? The Settlement of Kosovar Refugees in Small B.C. Cities. *Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis Working Paper Series*, 04(06), 1-32. Retrieved from http://mbc.metropolis.net/assets/uploads/files/wp/2004/WP04-06.pdf

Sherrell, K., & Immigrant Services Society of BC (ISSofBC). (2009) *At Home in Surrey? The Housing Experiences of Refugees in Surrey, B.C. (Final Report).* Retrieved from http://www.issbc.org/newsletter/At_Home_in_Surrey_04-2009.pdf

Siapno, J. A. (2002). *Gender, Islam, Nationalism and the State in Aceh: The Paradox of Power, Co-optation and Resistance*. London: Routledge.

Simich, L. (2003). Negotiating Boundaries of Refugee Resettlement: A Study of Settlement Patterns and Social Support. *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*. 40(5), p. 575-591.

Smith, T. (2010). *Assimilation Effects on Asylum Seekers in Immigration Detention*. Unpublished Master of Arts thesis. Excelisor College, Albany, NY. Retrieved from https://www.excelsior.edu/portal/page/portal/EC_Library_Portlets/MA-LS_Thesis/Smith_Tracy.pdf.

Song, M. (2009) Is Intermarriage a Good Indicator of Integration? *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 35(2), p. 331-348.

Stoll, K., & Johnson, P. (2007). Determinants of the Psychosocial Adjustment of Southern Sudanese Men. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 20(4), p. 621-640.

Szczepanikova, A. (2010). Performing refugeeness in the Czech Republic: gendered depoliticisation through NGO assistance. *Gender, Place and Culture*, 17(4), 461-477.

Tsunami Evaluation Coalition. (2006). *Joint Evaluation of the International Response to the Indian Ocean Tsunami: Final Report*. Retrieved from http://www.ifrc.org/docs/pubs/updates/tec-synthesis-report.pdf

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2002, September 30). *Refugee Resettlement. An International Handbook to Guide Reception and Integration*. Retrieved from http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/405189284.html

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2004). *Protracted Refugee Situations*. Retrieved from http://www.unhcr.org/40ed5b384.pdf

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2010a). *2009 Global Trends: Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Returnees, Internally Displaced and Stateless People*. Retrieved from http://www.unhcr.org/4c11f0be9.pdf

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2010b). *Resettlement: A New Beginning in a Third Country*. Retrieved from http://www.unhcr.org/pages/4a16b1676.html

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2010c). Durable Solutions. In *UNHCR 'What We Do.'* Retrieved from http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646cf8.html

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Malaysia. (2003, Sept. 1). Malaysia deports asylum seekers to Aceh despite UNHCR appeal. In *UNHCR Malaysia News and Events*. Retrieved from http://www.unhcr.org.my/cms/news-and-events/news-050903

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Malaysia. (2010, June 1). UNHCR in Malaysia. In *UNHCR Malaysia Basic Facts.* Retrieved from http://www.unhcr.org.my/cms/basic-facts/unhcr-in-malaysia

United Nations Research Institute for Social Development. (1994, March). Social Integration: Approaches and Issues. *World Summit for Social Development UNRISD Briefing Paper No. 1*. Retrieved from http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BCCF9/%28httpAuxPages%29/510920DA18B35A6880256B65004C6A7B/$file/bp1.pdf

van Tubergen, F. (2006). *Immigrant Integration: A Cross-National Study*. New York: LBF Scholarly Publishing LLC.

Vogt, N. (2003, October). Malaysia Detains and Forcibly Returns Acehnese Asylum Seekers. *Refugee Reports*. Retrieved from http://www.refugees.org/data/refugee_reports/archives/2003/oct.pdf

Waizenegger, A. & Hyndman, J. (2010). Two Solitudes: post-tsunami & post-conflict Aceh. *Disasters*, 34(3), 787-808.

Wasik, A. (2006). Economic Insecurity and Isolation: Post-Migration Traumasamong Black African Refugee Women in the Greater Vancouver Area. *Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis Working Paper Series*, 06(17), 1-34. Retrieved from http://mbc.metropolis.net/assets/uploads/files/wp/2006/WP06-17.pdf

Watson, C. (2006). *Integration of Government Assisted Refugees in British Columbia.* Unpublished Master of Arts thesis, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC. Retrieved from http://www.sfu.ca/mpp-old/pdf_news/Capstone/Watson_Craig.pdf

Wayland, S. V. (2006). *Unsettled: Legal and Policy Barriers for Newcomers to Canada: A Joint Initiative of Community Foundations of Canada and the Law Commission of Canada*. Retrieved from http://canada.metropolis.net/publications/pf_9_ENG_Immigration.pdf

WelcomeBC. (2010, February.) *Refugee Immigrants 2004-2008 Fact Sheet*. Retrieved from http://www.welcomebc.ca/local/wbc/docs/communities/fact-new_refugees.pdf

Wu, Z., Schimmele, C., & Hou, F. (2010). Social Integration of Immigrants and their Children in Canada's Urban Neighbourhoods. *Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis Working Paper Series*, 10(10), 1-59. Retrieved from http://riim.metropolis.net/assets/uploads/files/wp/2010/WP10-10.pdf

Ying, Y., & Akutsu, P. (1997). Psychological Adjustment of Southeast Asian Refugees: The Contribution of Sense of Coherence. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 25(2), 125–139.

Yu, S., Ouellet, E., & Warmington, A. (2007). Refugee Integration in Canada: A Survey of Empirical Evidence and Existing Services. *Refuge*, 24(2), 17-34.

Zetter, R., Griffiths, D., Sigona, N. and Hauser, M. (2002). *Survey on Policy and Practice Related to Refugee Integration*. European Refugee Fund Community Actions 2001/2002. Oxford: Oxford Brookes University. Retrieved from http://repository.forcedmigration.org/pdf/?pid=fmo:5892