

crisis, climate change reminds states that everything is connected and therefore it may be in states' self-interest to cooperate internationally to prevent large humanitarian crises and conflicts. As such, climate change and the concept of climate migration could foster stronger international solidarity and be an opportunity for advances in international law in fields such as migration, human rights protection and development.

As such, Mayer's book provides an innovative and timely suggestion to strategically reframe and develop moral narratives on climate migration based on an alternative pragmatic narrative that recognizes the interests of states based on international solidarity and responsibility. Moreover, Mayer effectively repurposes the concept of climate migration to serve a larger goal of being a catalyst for policy reforms in international governance.

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Fleeing Homophobia: Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Asylum. By Thomas Spijkerboer (ed), Abingdon: Routledge (hb 2013, pb 2015). XVIII + 239 pp. £76.00 ISBN 978-0-415-62817-4 (hbk); £32.99 ISBN 9781138930131 (pb)

Fleeing Homophobia: Sexual orientation, gender identity and asylum, edited by Thomas Spijkerboer, brings together scholars from distinct fields (such as law, migration and conflict management) to explore the major legal issues arising in relation to LGBTI people seeking asylum in Europe, while also considering the context of refugee law in non-European settings such as Canada, Australia and the United States. Organised into ten chapters, including the introduction, it attempts to provide the reader with an examination of both the general EU legislation and the specific cases of Member States. The collection brings together chapters emerging from the *Fleeing Homophobia* conference, which took place in Amsterdam in 2011.

The volume begins with the refugee definition provided by the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, highlighting that sexual orientation and gender identity are not mentioned therein, and noting that these have gradually been recognised as persecution grounds in the last years. The first chapter, by Jansen, presents the outcomes of the *Fleeing Homophobia* research project which explored issues affecting LGBTI asylum seekers such as credibility, late disclosure, and reasons employed to reject asylum applications (the possibility of hiding one's gender identity or sexual orientation, or the absence of legislation criminalising same-sex acts in a country of origin). This is an important chapter, since it draws the reader into the realities faced by LGBTI asylum seekers and is easy to read by a non-expert audience. The author also stresses the lack of research focusing on lesbian, bisexual, trans and intersex people. While their underrepresentation is obvious, an increasing number of works on lesbian (see Bennett and Thomas, 2013; and the work of Rachel Lewis, 2010 and 2013) and trans (see Gowin et al, 2017; Waynet, 2016; Bach, 2013; Jenkins, 2009) asylum seekers has been published in the years before and after *Fleeing Homophobia*

was printed in hardback (2013), and more recently in paperback (2015). Jansen's contribution reveals the existing discordances between Member States' protection of LGBTI refugees and EU standards, which is extremely relevant in the context of the contemporary refugee landscape in Europe. The introduction, however, does not provide a nuanced or consistent definition of the acronym LGBTI, which is used interchangeably throughout the book with LGBT.

In Chapter 2, Millbank explores the evolution in sexuality rights for refugee status determination, concluding that progress has been unsteady over the last 20 years. It is here where the use of terms 'lesbians' and 'gays' is discussed for the first time, leaving aside bisexuals and trans. This is not surprising as the title of the volume only mentions homophobia, but comes up as one of its weaknesses because it is stated from the early beginning that the book considers "the position of LGBTI asylum seekers". While the author argues for changes in the use of language to achieve greater change (p. 48), the inclusion and exclusion of certain terms may play against her statement.

In Chapter 3, Weßels focuses on the issue of discretion in sexuality-based asylum law looking at *HJ (Iran)* and *HT (Cameroon)*. For the purpose of achieving a smoother transition between chapters, Chapter 3 could have been followed by Chapter 7, which explores the issues of normativity and credibility of sexual orientation. While Chapter 3 focuses on the need to overcome the belief that asylum seekers should conceal their sexual orientation to avoid persecution, Chapter 7, in line with Murray's *Real Queer?* (2015), presents cases found in the Netherlands to analyse credibility assessments in regards to sexual orientation. Both chapters illustrate the problems of visibility and the normative construction of gender and sexual orientation through characteristics that authorities often ask applicants to hide or display. These chapters make a valuable contribution to literature on LGBT identity-making in the bureaucratic procedures which LGBT asylum seekers find themselves involved in to prove their 'true' sexual orientation.

Chapters 4 and 5 in turn focus on two case studies. The former explores Dutch asylum policy in relation to *sur place* claims, while the latter analyses the challenges faced by LGBT asylum seekers in Turkey. Once again, the volume is not consistent with the acronym LGBTI that the editor uses to present the book nor with the geographical focus, since Chapter 5 focuses on a non-EU Member State. The chapter offers, however, interesting empirical data about Iranian LGBT refugees who often feel "less free in Turkey than in Iran" (107).

In Chapter 6, Berg and Millbank analyse claims for refugee status brought by transgender and transsexual individuals, once again evidencing that the scope of the volume could have more helpfully been set out from the onset (and indeed in the title of the volume) as including both 'homophobia' and transphobia. Nonetheless, this is a relevant chapter due to the lack of literature on the process of considering trans identities in asylum adjudication. It explores these issues with examples from, among other countries, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. Even though they are not part of Europe, this is a positive addition as it expands knowledge on how diverse legal systems act with regards of asylum decisions, in comparison to the European model. Of equal interest is its illustration of trans asylum seekers' experiences as opposed to claims based on sexual orientation, which demonstrates that trans asylum cases tend to be perceived to be more credible.

In Chapter 8, Sußner makes use of the term *queer* for the first time in the volume through the notion of “queer intervention”, which is the term she uses to refer to “queer anti-racist critique” in relation to the portrayal of ‘gay’ and ‘migrant’ as exclusive categories through the case of the Austrian Registered Partnership Act. This chapter is particularly thought-provoking as it sets out the directions for a queer approach towards refugee studies based on intersectionality. It demonstrates, however, that the relevance given by law to specific identities in relation to the asylum process makes it difficult to use a queer approach since it would undermine the idea of specific sexual orientations and gender identities.

Following Chapter 9, which highlights the importance of professional training among personnel undertaking refugee status determination, in Chapter 10 Spijkerboer scrutinises the concept of sexual identity by providing a more theoretical approach in relation to the previous chapters, linking his analysis to Foucault and Sedgwick. The author explores some of the obstacles to secure refugee status, pointing towards the complexity inherent in both law and sexual identity as evolving forces. As he notes (217), his analysis is more sceptical than Millbank’s (Chapter 2) regarding the potential positive outcomes of refugee law. Finally, Spijkerboer wraps up the main issues explored in the book by stressing the difficulties emerging from debates around discrimination, discretion, criminalisation and credibility in relation to the unstable character of minority sexual identities.

A very remarkable volume in a time of massive deportations, when around a hundred LGBTI asylum seekers have been deported from the UK alone to Nigeria and Ghana facing persecution on their return, and anti-immigrant attacks have increased exponentially. Those interested in the study of refugee law, asylum adjudication and its linkages with gender and sexual orientation will appreciate this passionate exploration of these themes. Even though the volume’s structure could have been strengthened further, the authors contribute by giving voice to those fleeing homophobia by stressing the difficulties faced and the problematic nature of asylum law, arguing overall for a cautious evaluation of the practices of asylum decisions. Through a combination of empirical legal research, case studies and deep analysis of asylum decisions in several situations (from Europe to Canada via Australia), *Fleeing Homophobia* constitutes a key text for policy makers, activists and scholars of refugee studies. It is hoped that future research will expand the focus of this volume to deeper analyse the terminology used when using the acronyms LGBT and LGBTI (one of its main flaws), and the intersectional character of such a project. Since the volume focuses mainly on asylum law, it does not explore the lived experience of asylum seekers, which would provide the reader with a closer depiction of refugee law as a category of practice.

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Troubled Transit: Asylum Seekers Stuck in Indonesia. By Antje Missbach. Singapore: ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, 2015. 289 pp. \$29.90. ISBN: 978-981-4620-56-7

On 31 December 2016, Indonesian President Joko Widodo issued a presidential instruction regarding the handling of asylum seekers in Indonesia in an