

Chapter 3

Changing Climate and Reparatory Justice: Abricots (South of Haïti) to Beirut (Lebanon)

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter, the author draws on transnational literature on displacement by challenging its overemphasis on identities. In contrast, it argues for a deeper engagement of new mobility patterns and other routes that have emerged in localities often situated apart that have not been fully analysed together thus far. Further, an analysis of consequence of neoliberal policies through the use of civil society organisations (CSOs) versus a more effective use of the politics of decentralization contributes to increasing the understanding of both the mechanisms that reproduce (mis)management of resources and the constant marginalisation of constructive endogenous forces to address reparatory justice under the threat of climate change. From Abricots (Haiti) to Beirut (Lebanon), putting in dialogue regions that barely interact in the literature is intended to motivate future studies on the emerging connections between memory, long-distance civic engagement, South-South cooperation, and claims for restorative climate justice.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years we have observed large changes in the context of climate change in general and displacement in particular as a result of disasters frequency. One of the research fields which gained momentum as a result of this was migration and adaptation discourse. Many new data analysis techniques emerged which exploit availability of more and different data from several sources, and increased computational power of nowadays computers.

Whilst there have been some significant studies undertaken in developmental geography about climate-related environmental challenges, this chapter deals with a rare comparative approach of transcending geographical areas challenged by serious vulnerabilities. It offers a reassessment of the notion of displacement in the light of environmental catastrophes, and asks the question: What sort of citizenship can be created as a result? It explores whether participating in associations results in sustainable solutions. Its research objectives are: to explore the impact of diaspora associations' engagement in the context of displacement by natural catastrophes (earthquakes, hurricanes) and the problematic development of the islands themselves; and to identify how these strengths can be utilized to facilitate engagement on the part of the younger generation abroad to reconnect substantively to their homeland communities exposed to brain drain. In doing so, people's mobility begs the question of finding better discourse for what is changing is the geography through which power operates. Trade-offs may have to be made for more effective policies for a different politics of membership and development that is simultaneously localized and transnational.

With such a question in mind, this chapter focuses on limits of decentralization as a form of power-sharing in conflict-affected societies has been a popular aspect of constitutional design in peace agreements developed by international mediators. Much of the academic literature on the subject attempts to assess whether decentralization contributes to further division of multi-ethnic societies, or if it sates ethno-national group demands for further autonomy. This focus on outcomes and efficacy, however, can overlook the processes of negotiating and implementing decentralized plans – particularly the role of local association in determining how resource should be allocated in order to accommodate their needs.

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