Mobilising affinity ties: Kachin internal displacement and the geographies of humanitarianism at the China-Myanmar border

July 2016
Embargoed till further notice
Please do not circulate without the author’s permission
Forthcoming in Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers

Elaine Lynn-Ee Ho
Department of Geography
National University of Singapore
1 Arts Link, Kent Ridge
Singapore 117570
elaine.ho@nus.edu.sg

Keywords: emotions, IDPs, migration, citizenship, China, Myanmar

Abstract: This paper considers how webs of connection bridge people from different social worlds and engender affinity ties that can be mobilised to nurture caring relationships, despite the physical and cognitive borders that exist within and between societies. Territorial contestation between the Myanmar military and the Kachin Independence Army has precipitated internal displacement in Kachin state (Myanmar). The situation of Kachin internally displaced people (IDP) in camps at the China-Myanmar border directs attention to how geographical and geopolitical constraints deter international humanitarian assistance yet provide opportunities to engage a different set of humanitarian actors. The paper first argues that the Kachin IDPs are treated as surplus populations by the sovereign states in both Myanmar and China. Surplus populations come into existence when nation-states impose punitive measures that compromise the survivability of populations that are considered threatening to national sovereignty. Second, the paper examines how mobilising affinity ties enables Kachin humanitarian workers to leverage the citizenship resources of empathetic Chinese nationals to negotiate humanitarianism constraints at the China-Myanmar border. Affinity ties refer to connections emanating from a dynamic constellation of cultural attributes to do with history, ethnicity, religion and place amongst other malleable identity constructs. Interlocking constellations form webs of connections which transverse essentialising categories of social difference and contribute to shared biographies that allow for cultivating emotional attachments to a place and its people. Affinity ties may congeal into durable ties of solidarity and activism, but no less significant are vernacular expressions of affinity that prompt empathy for proximate or distant strangers and a predilection to act on behalf of those experiencing oppression. The paper proposes that conceptualising affinity ties draws out transversal webs of connections that bridge people of differential social positionings. This approach provides a potential ethical stance and productive analytical lens for advancing wider migration and citizenship debates.
**Introduction**

During 2011 when internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Kachin state (henceforth Kachin IDPs) in Myanmar sought asylum in China by attempting to cross a shallow river marking the China-Myanmar border, heavily armed Chinese police forcibly sent them back. This act not only denied the Kachin IDPs safety but also de facto recognition as refugees. Without refugee status, the Kachin IDPs remain under the domestic jurisdiction of Myanmar and are not officially recognised by the international community as political subjects deserving of international aid. Political conflict between the Myanmar military and the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) has precipitated human displacement from Kachin state in Myanmar. At the same time, the IDPS are rendered invisible to the international refugee regime because of China’s refusal to recognise displaced persons seeking refuge on its side of the border.

In the absence of international assistance, local Kachin organisations have capitalised on the resources of a different set of humanitarian brokers located at and beyond the China-Myanmar border to deliver aid to the IDPs. This paper considers how physical and cognitive borders establish taxonomies of social difference but also provide opportunities for identifying connections and forging transversal dialogues (henceforth transversal webs of connections) to bridge people of different social positionings. The paper argues that transversal webs of connections engender affinity ties that can be mobilised towards nurturing empathetic identification and caring relationships in societies characterised by cultural diversity and social complexity.

Affinity ties refer to connections emanating from a dynamic constellation of cultural attributes to do with ethnicity, place, language, religion, and history amongst other malleable identity constructs. Interlocking constellations form webs of connections which transverse essentialising categories of social difference and contribute to biographical ties that allow for cultivating emotional attachments to a place and its people. Such affinity ties may congeal into durable ties of solidarity and activism, but no less significant are vernacular expressions of affinity that prompt empathy for distanced or proximate “strangers” and a predilection to act on behalf of another person experiencing oppression¹, whether or not this contributes towards collective action. This paper conceptualises affinity ties as both an analytical category that

---

¹ This paper follows Iris Marion Young’s (1990) conceptualisation of oppression as exploitation, marginalisation, cultural imperialism, powerlessness, and violence.
encapsulates a “shifting constellation of relationships and actions” (Larsen and Johnson 2012:633) as well as an ethical stance for migration and citizenship struggles. Affinity ties draw attention to the transversal connections that bridge people of different social positionings, orientate one towards empathetic identification, and respond to the needs of another.

Although the account of affinity ties in this paper bears similarity to anarchist readings of affinity politics, I distinguish my conceptualisation of affinity from those that emphasise radical movements (e.g. Day 2004; Dupuis-Deri 2010; Clough 2012). My interest lies in drawing out the potential of affinity for bridging social differences through the recognition of personhood in the everyday sphere and articulating interventions done in a personal capacity without presupposing that such interventions seek self-determination or subvert oppression (Larson and Johnson 2010). The analytical value of affinity and biographical ties has been discussed in recent publications on diaspora engagement that seek to delink “diaspora” from primordial attachments such as those premised on ethnicity, birthplace or nativism (e.g. Jons et al. 2015; Yamashiro 2015). I extend this conceptually to wider debates on migration and citizenship through discussing how affinity ties can be forged in the context of intercultural relations and social complexity. The operational working of affinity ties is sharpened in this study of the Kachin IDPs because of how abjection is evinced (“left to die”). That is not to say that the operationalisation of affinity ties is limited to such grim circumstances. Rather, this paper uses this case study to illustrate how conceptualising affinity ties provides a productive analytical lens for advancing migration and citizenship debates more generally.

The next section synthesises the literature on critical border studies and territorial contestation with recent debates that extend analyses of “surplus populations” to migration and citizenship studies. It further develops a conceptual framework that signals how affinity ties are forged through transversal webs of connections. In conceptualising affinity ties, the role of emotions in constituting social relations and political subjectivity is highlighted. This conceptual framing informs the subsequent empirical analyses on Kachin internal displacement and humanitarianism at the China-Myanmar border. After the methodology discussion, the section on the geographies of humanitarianism elucidates how, on the one hand, geographical and
geopolitical constraints at the China-Myanmar border impede international humanitarian assistance; on the other hand, the Kachin organisations utilise a geographical division of labour and mobilise wider webs of connections across the border to navigate those constraints. This sets the context for the subsequent section to show how affinity ties are evinced and galvanised as a humanitarian resource at the China-Myanmar border. The discussion underlines the emotional symbolism associated with place, understanding this as “measured less by miles or kilometres and more by the social relationships, exchanges and interactions involved” (Allen 2011, 284). The concluding section sums up these arguments and highlights the significance of affinity ties for wider migration and citizenship debates.

**Bordering, contested territorialities and affinity ties**

Poststructural approaches towards studying the border has heightened awareness of how borders give rise to conceptual taxonomies and social hierarchies (Mignolo, 2000; Balibar, 2012; Mezzadra and Neilson, 2013) alongside their function of demarcating populations spatially. Assessing the ways in which one is the same as or different from another person entails decisions of how to relate to others; apart from rejection or inclusion, a spectrum of positionalities exist. Thus cognitive and symbolic perspectives on borders also open up the possibility of identifying a range of tangible and intangible connections that bridge people from different social worlds. Tracing such connections creates opportunities for forging transversal dialogues that establish a sense of shared wellbeing across borders and boundaries, based less on membership to an exclusive identity and more on common values and emotional identifications despite people’s different social positionings (Yuval Davis 2013). Notions of transversalism are normally associated with feminist politics directed at coalition building (Yuval-Davis, 1997), but this paper argues that its focus on bridging social and cultural difference, combined with the aforementioned border epistemologies, makes it useful for analysing migration and citizenship issues in societies grappling with social complexity (also see Wise, 2009).

The renewed interest in theorising the border resonates with William van Schnedel’s (2002) influential thesis on “zomia”, the contiguous border zones that he argues create structures of knowledge and geographies of knowing. Zomia refers to the overlapping borderlands of states and in which communities share language affinities, religious
commonalities, cultural traits, ancient trade networks and ecological conditions. Existing in tension with the societal structures of zomia are alternative conceptual taxonomies and social hierarchies that sovereign states have established through decades of asserting territorial rule. As an area of politically ambiguous spaces, zomia became associated with separatist movements that precipitate what geographer Karin Dean (2011) considers contested territorialities. For Dean, territoriality provides a means of reifying power and “a multitude of political organisations and groups” with competing claims co-exist in the lived space of borderlands (Dean 2011, 238).

Contested territorialities in politically ambiguous zones can precipitate the expulsion of populations that are deemed risks to the sovereign order. Biopolitical programs to secure life for privileged social groups trigger other types of sovereign dispossession (Li 2010) towards those groups that are ranked lowly or which lie outside of statist conceptual taxonomies and social hierarchies. Building on the Marxist concept of “surplus populations”, geographers such as Mitchell (2010), McIntyre and Nast (2011), and Tyner (2013) extend class-focused analyses of unwanted populations to debates of state sovereignty. Surplus populations come into existence when nation-states impose punitive measures against populations couched as pre-determined risks to the ethnopolitical order and geo-body (Mitchell 2010). Tyner (2013, 5-8) argues that state regulation over mobility discursively constructs surplus population categories, such as the unauthorised, undocumented, irregular or illegal migrant. This approach shares the same interest as border epistemologies in critically interrogating the conceptual taxonomies and social hierarchies produced by physical and cognitive borders. This paper deploys insights on the discursive construction of surplus populations and critical border epistemologies to analyse the situation of the Kachin IDPs who have been rendered expendable by the sovereign state in Myanmar (through its military arm).2

Despite recognition as one of the eight official “races” allowed citizenship status in Myanmar, the Kachin experience of substantive citizenship is at best partial. Kachin culture has been subordinated by decades of Burman assimilation; moreover, natural

---

2 Democratic transition saw the official handover of power from the military-led government to the National League of Democracy (NLD), which won the popular vote in 2015. However, military personnel retain significant powers in the Cabinet and oversee key ministries including those concerning domestic security and defence.
Resource extraction in Kachin state has yielded meagre economic benefits locally (Global Witness, 2015). Since 2011 renewed fighting between the Myanmar military and the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) has expelled affected populations in Kachin state from their villages. Although most desire to return to their villages, conflict continues apace in northern Myanmar (even during the landmark national elections in 2015). The IDPs purposefully move away from danger to seek safety elsewhere, but their migration is by no means voluntary since they are expelled forcefully and compelled to leave behind their belongings and land. They face questions of survivability as involuntary migrants placed in a holding pattern unless the conflict abates or arrangements are made for them to resettle elsewhere.

Many resettle along the border zone that Myanmar shares with China but in which pockets of land actually come under the jurisdiction of the Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO), also known as the de facto government of the Kachin Independence Army (KIA). The Chinese police restricted the IDPs from crossing the border to seek asylum in China on account of national security reasons, but this act also denies those displaced from being recognised as refugees who deserve protection and assistance under international law. Physical and cognitive borders situate the IDPs in politically ambiguous spaces that impact the extent of humanitarian assistance they receive. They are susceptible to structural violence (Kingston and Datta, 2012) in contested territorialities (Dean, 2011) and exist outside of global protection norms (Cohen, 2006). Kachin internal displacement highlights the geopolitics of international humanitarian assistance, showing how the protection role of international humanitarian organisations is circumscribed by competing claims of sovereignty; whoever controls the disbursement of aid affects its equitable distribution (Tan-Mullins et al. 2007).

---

3 Since political reforms, there has been a purported separation between the Myanmar military and the civilian government. However, key members of the Cabinet have a military background and the alleged independence of the civilian government remains questionable. The Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO) (the government arm) similarly delineates itself from the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) (the military arm), but the KIO leadership also has military links.

4 As Hyndman (1999, 107) observes, the geographies of forced migration have changed from “the right to leave one’s country” (giving up citizenship to become stateless) to a purported “right to remain” wherein displaced persons are encouraged to remain in situ for humanitarian assistance rather than seek asylum in another country.
The cognitive borders established by sovereign authority also produce what Ahmed (2000) terms as “stranger fetishism”, referring to how different forms of exclusion from belonging and identity are gathered into a singular referent represented by the figure of the “stranger”. Stranger fetishism erases important historical, social and material connections that exist between social groups. Conversely, tracing the webs of connections concealed by stranger fetishism allows the possibility of cultivating caring relationships that accord recognition to those marginalised in society. Connection points to social relations that connote entanglement, intersectionality and interdependence both within and across geopolitical borders. Pedwell (2008) argues that understanding the past and present connections of different social worlds can heighten consciousness of how privilege and subordination are sustained, nurture empathetic identification, and generate the possibility of change. Nonetheless, she raises two critical observations about theories of empathy that are relevant to this paper: first, liberal versions of empathy are prone to presume universalism; and second, what happens when “structural relations of power enforce absolute distance or segregation” (Pedwell 2012, 167)?

Theorisations of connection and empathy can be usefully informed by geographical analyses that conceptualise, on the one hand, the local context in which emotions, society and space mutually constitute one another, and on the other hand, the way in which caring from a distance happens when emotional connections mediate the flow of resources across space despite physical and social distance (e.g. Davidson and Milligan, 2004; Pain, 2009; Ho et al 2015). To elaborate, emotions operate in and across spatial domains in two key ways that are important to this paper’s argument on affinity ties: first, emotions mediate society and space as contextualised in a constellation of historical, social and cultural relations. When such affective sensibilities are invested in a place that place becomes imbued with emotional symbolism. Places provide people with spiritual and emotional connections to history and memory, and cultivate personal and collective stakeholdership (Bosco 2007; Kobayashi and Preston, 2011). The desecration of place and people’s relationship to place can prompt interventions to protect the emotional symbolism of a place or to extend expressions of care to those affected by such action (Dallman et al, 2013).
Second, emotions circulate within and across geographical spaces through both human mobility (Ho 2014) and the emotional labour of intermediaries, such as activists, international volunteers or development workers (Bosco, 2007; Pedwell, 2008; Ballie Smith et al, 2013; Griffiths, 2015). Emotions constitute political subjectivities at a personal and collective level, thus enabling or limiting political possibilities (Ho 2009). For example, Griffiths (2014) argues that global civil society can subvert unjust development agendas through the affective connections between international volunteers and the people whose causes they advocate. But how are such affective connections forged, especially if the persons concerned are separated by physical distance and occupy different social worlds? For Bosco (2007, 546), it is “emotional labour [that creates] feelings of proximity, solidarity, and shared identities, often in spite of social distance and territorial separation”. In order to mobilise affinity ties and expressions of care, an emotional connection to places and between people matters as much as, if not more than, actual local interaction (Ho et al 2015).

The remainder of this paper extends these insights on the role of emotions in mediating society, politics, and space to analyse how transversal webs of connection engender affinity ties. The paper conceptualises affinity ties as an analytical framework in which webs of connections enable transversal dialogues that generate perceptions of shared biographies and empathetic identification. The case of Kachin internal displacement shows how mobilising affinity ties enables humanitarian workers to negotiate geopolitical constraints and contested territorialities at the China-Myanmar border. It argues that affinity ties not only function as an analytical tool for empirical research on intercultural relations, but also potentially constitutes an ethical stance for wider migration and citizenship struggles.

**Methodology**

This paper draws on multi-sited fieldwork conducted from 2012-2015 in Kachin state (Myanmar) and Yunnan province (China) in towns or villages along the China-Myanmar border. The research evolved from an earlier study on Chinese migration in Myanmar and cross-border interactions, which gave rise to fieldwork at the China-Myanmar border. The Chinese and the Kachin people live alongside or have regular social interactions with one another, including under the humanitarian situation highlighted here. The fieldwork entailed ethnographic observations and in-depth
interviews at the sites where the Kachin humanitarian workers carry out their work and through which I interacted with KIO government representatives, volunteers and other brokers of humanitarian aid. This paper focuses on the challenges of delivering humanitarian work at the China-Myanmar border as well as the opportunities afforded through cross-border connections. The Kachin humanitarian workers include representatives from secular community-based and non-governmental organisations as well as faith-based organisations. This spread of organisations enabled research access to several IDP camps for observing the work done by or the constraints faced by the humanitarian workers.

The paper uses the emic labels, “secular” and “faith-based” organisations, and “government-controlled” and “KIO-controlled areas”, as mentioned by the humanitarian workers when they describe their work. They also used the phrase “Myanmar military” and “Myanmar government” interchangeably, reflecting a power structure that has pervaded politics and society for decades and which persists despite political democratisation. The humanitarian workers interact regularly with international agencies so most of the interviews could be conducted in English. Interviews with humanitarian brokers on the Chinese side of the border were done in Mandarin. The author is bilingual and conducted these interviews with a Kachin translator on standby. Interviews and conversations conducted in Mandarin have been translated into English by the author. Detailed fieldwork notes, including verbatim quotes, were taken during and after each fieldwork opportunity. The majority of the interviews were not recorded at the request of the research participants or so that they would speak more freely. Thirty-nine people were interviewed for this study, which was conducted across four fieldwork sites and included visits to six IDP camps. Figure 1 depicts the spread of IDP camps at the China-Myanmar border. The humanitarian workers mentioned felt it is important to make known the humanitarian challenges they face because this raises international awareness of the IDP situation in Kachin state and at the China-Myanmar border. However, the fieldwork sites within Kachin state and at the border area will not be specified so as not to jeopardise the safety of the research participants.
Contested territorialities and the geographies of humanitarianism

This section sets out the context of territorial contestation in Kachin state that precipitated internal displacement. It also highlights a geographical division of labour amongst the Kachin organisations that stepped up to deliver humanitarian relief when international humanitarian organisations faced difficulty accessing the IDP camps in the KIO-controlled areas. The discussion here establishes the geographical constraints that make affinity ties matter in the delivery of humanitarian aid while the next section will examine how affinity ties are forged across the border and mobilised for humanitarian relief.

In the backdrop of the conflict in Kachin state stands the legacy of colonisation and decolonisation in Myanmar, accompanied by the exigencies of attaining national integration in postcolonial states. British colonialism demarcated the international boundaries that define Myanmar today and also institutionalised racial difference. James C. Scott (2009) observes that colonial racial categorisations were based on influential linguistic theories (during the 1911 and 1931 censuses), which classified similar languages under the same “tribe” or “race”. The Myanmar military-led government continued with such classifications by subsuming diverse tribes under umbrella categories that it considers official “races”. The “Kachin” is one such umbrella category that actually comprises six distinct tribes. Of the six tribes the Jingphaw (or Jingpo in Mandarin) tribe exercises leadership and functions as interlocutors for the non-Jingphaw tribes categorised under the collective label known as “Kachin” (Sadan, 2013). The conceptual taxonomy of independent Myanmar includes the Kachin as one of the eight official races entitled to citizenship. But cognitive and symbolic borders amongst Burman nationalists who dominated the military government ranked ethnic minorities as socially inferior to the Burman race, resulting in policies that subordinated ethnic states.

The Kachin people are concentrated in an area of northern Myanmar that extends to the border shared with China on the eastern side and India on the western side. Myitkyina, the capital of Kachin state, lies under the control of the Myanmar government and military but parts of Kachin state, especially at the border area.

5 For fuller accounts of Kachin history and identity, refer to Dean 2007 and 2011, and Sadan 2013.
adjacent to China, are under the control of the Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO) and its military arm, the Kachin Independence Army (KIA). Also living in Kachin state are other ethnic groups such as the Shan and Burmese-Chinese. The KIA/KIO mobilised as an insurgency force for the Kachin people in 1960 as a result of the failure of federalism promised during the Panglong Agreement of 1947. It established a government at the border area adjacent to Yunnan province in China. Local authorities in Yunnan close an eye to the insurgency presence because of incentives such as access to casinos (otherwise banned in China) or natural resource extraction opportunities in the KIO-controlled areas. Despite threats of conflict spilling to its side of the border, China exercises sovereignty flexibly by leaving that part of the border as a space where the KIO/KIA maintains territorial control while the sovereign power of the Myanmar government (and military influence) is partially suspended. Fighting between the Myanmar military and the KIA ceased in 1997 until 2011 when renewed conflict drove villagers from their homes. The current spate of violence between the KIA and the Myanmar military is also triggered by the ambitious development projects of Mainland Chinese investors in Kachin state, backed by the Myanmar or KIO governments (depending on who has de facto control of the land).

As a result of the conflict, the IDPs are compelled into involuntary migration and a situation of dispossession when they flee from their villages. They leave behind personal possessions and land that ends up under the control of the warring parties. The Kachin humanitarian workers informed me that most of the IDPs do not have land titles; even if they return to their villages many will not be able to prove their rights to land that they had left behind. Initially the IDPs sought refuge in churches and monasteries. As their numbers swelled, dedicated camp spaces were set aside to accommodate them. But those who resettle in the Myanmar government-controlled areas face the possibility of being criminalised through alleged association with the

---

6 The KIO and KIA maintain distinct identities: the KIO is seen by the Kachin people as the administrative and diplomatic arm of government while the KIA refers to the armed forces that engage in offensive or defensive strategies. During fieldwork, leaders of the Kachin organisations were careful to maintain this distinction, recognising that the KIA has recruited child soldiers and its military tactics continue to trigger human suffering. The Kachin organisations distinguish their humanitarian activities from those by the KIO as this allows them to maintain neutrality. Nonetheless, different groups liaise with the KIO so as to minimise duplication of efforts and to extend humanitarian reach.

7 The Chinese government also exercises flexible sovereignty towards other armed groups like the Wa and Kokang at the China-Myanmar border.
KIA. Kachin humanitarian workers and volunteer lawyers said that several of the IDPs have been randomly accused of joining the KIA and arrested even though they are staying in camps. Subsequently not only are they are detained without trial, but allegations of torture under arrest are also rife in the community (fieldwork interviews 2014).

As an example, a highly publicised case concerns a Kachin IDP known as Brawng Shawn (see Nyein 2012 and 2013). After being forced to flee from fighting at his village, he sought refuge in Myitkyina at a church compound that had been converted to an IDP camp. Not long after that he was arrested and charged for serving as a KIA colonel. Church workers and legal aid lawyers led a protest campaign. During the trial, the prosecution’s stance against Brawng Shawn shifted from his alleged role as a high-ranking KIA colonel to a lower ranked soldier, suggesting the shaky grounds of those claims. Nonetheless, he was sentenced to three years imprisonment. The camp should be a space of protection but detained IDPs are treated as a pre-defined risk to the security of the nation and exiled “before they have done anything” (Mitchell 2010, 254; emphasis original). According to the Kachin humanitarian workers and volunteer lawyers, the uncertainty of protection in the Myanmar government-controlled areas force more IDPs to flee to parts of the China-Myanmar border that are controlled by the KIO government. This geography of internal displacement affects the extent of humanitarian assistance rendered to them.

For the IDPs in the KIO-controlled areas, access to humanitarian assistance depends on the willingness of the Myanmar government (in which military officers have considerable influence) to allow international humanitarian organisations to visit and assess the conditions of the camps. Despite the escalating humanitarian crisis, the Myanmar government initially restricted international humanitarian organisations from accessing the IDP camps in the KIO-controlled areas by citing concerns over the safety of international personnel who travel through conflict-prone areas. Certain organisations such as the World Food Program and UNHCR delegations have been gradually allowed to visit and assess the IDP camps. But the Kachin humanitarian workers and KIO representatives inform me that those visits are sporadic. One of them, a humanitarian worker in a secular Kachin organisation that negotiates visits for the international humanitarian organisations, said:
The UN convoy has to negotiate with both the KIO and the Myanmar government. The KIO government welcomes them but permission from the Myanmar government is needed. In 2012 the UN Convoy was permitted to visit only twice but in 2013 they [have been] allowed to visit more.\(^8\)

Although the conflict and displacement escalated from November 2011 onwards, it took more than a year for the UN to negotiate access to the IDPs resettled in the KIO-controlled areas. The UN convoy visits are essential for the international community to assess the living conditions of the IDPs and decide on the extent and type of humanitarian assistance, such as food supplies, clothes and building materials, to be provided. The Kachin organisations estimate that there were at least 120 000 registered IDPs in 2015 (previously 100 000 in 2013), of which more than 70 000 stayed in the KIO-controlled areas (RANIR, 2015). The geographical location of the Kachin IDPs in the KIO-controlled areas contested by the Myanmar military exacerbates their vulnerability. Considered potential supporters of the KIO/KIA, the Kachin IDPs have been treated as surplus populations by the Myanmar government and military through both punitive measures (dispossession, forced migration, violence and criminalisation) and the denial of international humanitarian aid, which compromises their “survivability” (Tyner, 2013, 704).

To fill the gaps in international humanitarian assistance, various Kachin organisations stepped forth to provide food and assistance to the IDPs in the KIO-controlled areas despite considerable constraints. These organisations tap into their national and international networks for assistance. Several had been involved in development or peace-building work prior to 2011. As a result of the IDP situation, their role quickly evolved to take on a humanitarian dimension too. Of these, Shalom and the Metta Development Foundation, are two prominent organisations with national-level offices and they advocate peace and development agendas in Myanmar. Also active are religious organisations such as the Kachin Baptist Convention (KBC) and the Catholic-run Karuna Myanmar Social Services (KMSS). Other organisations based in the KIO-controlled territories joined in the humanitarian relief efforts, including the Kachin Development Group (KDG) and Bridging Rural Integrated Development and

\(^8\) Fighting renewed in mid-2014 and kept the UN convoys from accessing the IDP camps in the KIO-controlled areas again.
Grassroot Empowerment (BRIDGE). The diaspora-based Kachin Women’s Association Thailand (KWAT) incorporated humanitarian relief into its women’s rights agenda as soon as the IDP situation became apparent. Members of the Kachin diaspora elsewhere also engage in fund raising efforts for the IDPs. Further, the IDP situation saw new local organisations and networks established to tackle unmet humanitarian needs or to coordinate the extensive humanitarian effort across contested territories. Two other groupings from the KIO-controlled areas, Wunpang Ninghtoi (WPN) and the Relief Action Network for IDP and Refugee (RANIR), started operations in 2011 as a result of the IDP situation.

The Kachin organisations devised a geographical division of labour to circumvent restrictions arising from the unregistered status of some Kachin organisations in Myanmar.\(^9\) This division of labour also allows them to negotiate the complexities of cross-border and international relationships for humanitarian relief efforts. For example, a representative from a KIO government office that manages the internal displacement crisis expressed:

```
Most IDPs are inside Kachinland\(^{10}\) so it is difficult to find space for survival. They cannot go to other countries and the only and biggest help they have is from the international organisations… For camps in KIO areas we can manage food, health and shelter but in the Myanmar government-controlled areas only the leaders from faith-based organisations can access [such sites].
```

Elaborating separately on the geographical division of labour evinced, a Kachin humanitarian worker working in a secular organisation explained:

```
In the KIO-controlled areas, the IDP camps are helped by [organisations that are not recognised by the Myanmar government], but faith-based organisations have greater flexibility to reach the IDP camps in the Myanmar government-controlled areas and also the border. The secular organisations are registered with the Myanmar government and recognised by the KIO so they can also
```

---

\(^9\) The registration process has been restrictive for organisations and associations deemed potential threats to the military-led government. The Association Registration Law that came into effect on 20 July 2014 allows for voluntary registration and does not criminalise non-registration, however its implementation remains uncertain.

\(^{10}\) ‘Kachinland’ refers to the territory associated with a pan-Kachin identity, which is distinct from the label ‘Kachin state’ that is used to describe the area under the political jurisdiction of the Myanmar government.
move freely in the Myanmar government-controlled areas and the KIO-controlled areas. The faith-based organisations aim to protect [the IDPs] but there are sensitivities so the secular organisations work with other religious denominations instead.

Geographical demarcations between the Myanmar government-controlled and the KIO-controlled territories lead to a division of labour amongst the Kachin organisations so as to maximise their access to the IDP camps. The physical terrain surrounding several of the camps and poor road conditions within northern Myanmar further impact the reach of humanitarian assistance. In the hotspots where fighting is ongoing, roads have been closed off or destroyed.

Seven IDP camps located north of Laiza (also the headquarters of the KIO government) are accessible only via China. This means negotiations have to be made with China if international humanitarian organisations are to access these camps. But the Chinese government treats persons fleeing persecution as irregular migrants with economic motivations rather than as refugees. For example, the same Kachin humanitarian worker related:

The UNHCR said there are Kachin refugees in China and informed [the] Beijing government but China said [there are] no refugees in China. As soon as [the Chinese] got the information they asked the refugees to return to Myanmar.

Such action by China casts the IDPs as populations considered unworthy of political recognition and protection; they are neither citizens nor refugees. Both sovereign powers (China and Myanmar) treat the Kachin IDPs as pre-determined risks that can jeopardise what the ruling elites frame as the sovereignty of the nation-state. For the Myanmar government, the Kachin IDPs are suspected of supporting Kachin separatism through alleged association with the KIO and KIA. For China it is the risk of territorial encroachment by border populations that share co-ethnicity with those Chinese nationals who identify as Jingpo.\textsuperscript{11} China’s refusal to allow displaced persons

\textsuperscript{11}Yunnan province consists of several autonomous prefectures, including Dehong province where the Dai and Jingpo (Jingphaw) minority groups are found. The Jingpo are one of the 56 ethnic groups officially recognised by Chinese government. Concerns arise over the political unity of the People’s Republic of China in autonomous prefectures because such minority groups are linked to co-ethnics in another country which give rise to separatist movements such as those in Tibet or Xinjiang.
to cross the border, deploying heavily armed police and the threat of follow-on violence, exacerbates their vulnerability and abjection in Myanmar as surplus populations to whom humanitarian assistance can be denied.

Given this geographical and geopolitical context, the Kachin organisations turn to wider webs of connection that draw in the assistance of co-ethnics and other brokers of humanitarian aid in China. While the border represents contested territorialities to states and aspiring states, the next section shows that the border also provides opportunities for leveraging on webs of connections forged through shared biographies or spatial sensibilities that produce affinity ties. The next section conceptualises affinity ties as an analytical lens for understanding how transversal webs of connections help bridge people of differential social positionings, in this case to render assistance to the Kachin IDPs who have been treated as surplus populations by sovereign states.

**Forging and mobilising affinity ties**

This section first contextualises the geographical, geopolitical and cultural constraints the Kachin humanitarian workers face when delivering humanitarian aid to the Kachin IDPs via China. Second, it draws out a constellation of relationships and the emotional symbolism of place to argue that these contribute to forging affinity ties between the IDPs, co-ethnics in China (from the Jingpo tribe) and Chinese intermediaries that broker humanitarian assistance (e.g. volunteers, suppliers and church networks). Affinity ties enable the Kachin humanitarian workers to mobilise the citizenship resources of empathetic Chinese nationals for negotiating humanitarian constraints at the China-Myanmar border. The discussion in this section establishes why affinity ties matter as well as how they nurture empathetic identification and caring relationships.

The restrictive conditions described in the previous section mean supplies for humanitarian assistance to the IDP camps are organised through a complex map of procurement, transportation and distribution networks spanning the China-Myanmar border. Regulations by international humanitarian organisations demand that supplies are procured from Myanmar and transported to the IDP camps. These daily necessities range from food supplies such as rice, pulses, cooking oil and salt, to
hygiene kits that include dental care items, soap and washcloths. One Kachin organisation estimates that it transports up to 150 metric tonnes (150 000 kg) of monthly supplies to six camps that accommodate nearly 10 000 people altogether. Describing the vulnerability of the IDPs located in remote areas, a humanitarian worker in the faith-based organisation recounted:

Last month because of an earthquake the only road accessible to some camps had to be repaired. It took one month and three camps were affected; luckily the last batch of supplies sent in May lasted till the repairs were completed.

Yet certain camps located in mountainous terrain of the China-Myanmar border are accessible only via roads from China. Kachin organisations have to procure supplies and arrange for transportation to such camps through suppliers based in China. However, there are restrictions on exporting food from China to Myanmar. To deliver the supplies to the IDPs, trucks also have to clear one of five border crossings (Laiza, Hkachag, Kampaiti, Bajiao, Hpare Bbp). Since China does not officially recognise the IDPs or allow international humanitarian assistance, procurement and logistics operations by the Kachin organisations are done clandestinely. The clandestine nature of procurement along with the large volume of supplies means the Kachin organisations need to secure the trust of the suppliers. But they face several challenges.

First, few of the Kachin humanitarian workers are proficient enough in Mandarin to conduct business transactions with Chinese suppliers, many of which are *waishengren* (internal migrants from other Chinese provinces) who cannot speak the Jingphaw language. Second, the Chinese suppliers, prior to signing a contract, require verification of Chinese nationality and residency but the Kachin humanitarian workers only bear border passes that allow them to remain in China for seven days at a time. Third, the Kachin organisations cannot openly tender for quotations. In order to navigate such challenges, mobilising co-ethnic networks across borders proves necessary.

Through Jingpo co-ethnic networks in China, a Kachin organisation recruited Mandarin-speaking volunteers for translation purposes and to contact potential suppliers. Since the Kachin organisation is not registered in China, suppliers ask for a guarantor when it procures food and other basic necessities for the IDPs. The Jingpo
in China undertake a degree of the risk by acting as guarantors for business transactions or personally transporting humanitarian supplies across border checkpoints to the IDPs on the Myanmar side of the border. There are restrictions in China on exporting food supplies such as rice, which the Chinese authorities want to reserve for domestic consumption or stockpiling. Nonetheless, the Jingpo in China agree to partner the Kachin organisations in Myanmar on account of a sense of affinity that is premised on historical and cultural ties.

Relating the historical depth of Jingpo relations with the Jingphaw in Myanmar, a volunteer in China told me a story of how his tribe lost touch with their cultural practices during the Cultural Revolution (1965-1968) when communist cadres set out to eradicate traditional elements from Chinese society. The manau poles that characterised Jingpo culture were removed from most Chinese villages. Decades later, a younger generation of Jingpo could not recall how many poles a manau should have. The only one they located in a Chinese village had four poles and that became the prototype for years until isolationist policies in both China and Myanmar ceased. As cross-border exchanges grew, the Jingpo who went to Kachin state realised that the manau posts there have six poles. The Jingpo volunteer believes that his people will gradually recover their language and cultural practices through more exchanges with the Jingphaw in Myanmar. Regardless of the authenticity of this story, what it signals are the deeply entrenched historical and cultural beliefs that lend towards cultivating a sense of affinity and expressions of care towards co-ethnics in distress.

There is another motivating dimension that populates such webs of connections: co-ethnicity is entangled with religiosity. Many of the Kachin people practise Christianity or Catholicism, including the Jingphaw in Myanmar and Jingpo in China. Their religious networks extend from the Kachin churches in Myanmar to Jingpo churches on the Chinese side of the border and non-Jingpo churches in distant Chinese provinces. Amongst the latter are churches in Sichuan province that had experienced a devastating earthquake in 2008. Empathising with the plight of the Kachin IDPs, non-Jingpo churches from Sichuan and elsewhere had donated ceramic water purifiers and dried food supplies to the IDPs. Empathetic identification denotes an orientation to care for or show concern for those who are differently positioned to self (Pedwell, 2012, 164); in this case it is not only co-ethnicity or religiosity, but also
shared experiences of displacement and an emotional connection that helps bridge physical and social distance (also see Bosco, 2007).

Emphasising only the centrality of co-ethnicity or religion diverts attention from other types of affinity ties evinced in this study. Here, both people’s relationship to place and perceptions of co-inhabitation in the past or present (also see Dallman et al, 2013) are key to creating affinity ties. I illustrate this through two examples. In one case, a delivery truck carrying food supplies for the Kachin IDPs was stopped by the Chinese police who suspected the rice would be transported out of China for consumption in Myanmar. The police detained the delivery truck for several hours and the food supplies risked confiscation. Anxious Kachin humanitarian workers informed a Jingpo pastor in China who in turn called a Chinese pastor he knew in that village. That Chinese pastor secured safe passage for the delivery truck by claiming that the food is for his congregation. When I queried why the Chinese pastor would put his congregation and his own personal safety at risk, the Kachin humanitarian worker who narrated the incident to me said that religious commonality mattered but the village is also proximate to where the Kachin IDPs had resettled. Place proximity heightened consciousness towards the suffering of the Kachin IDPs and precipitated empathy towards their displacement and loss (also see Dallman et al, 2013; Griffiths, 2014; Pedwell, 2012).

The second example is of a Han-Chinese food supplier introduced to me through one of the Kachin organisations. The female proprietor recounted her first meeting with the organisation’s Jingphaw procurer from Myanmar and the translator who is a Chinese national of Jingpo ethnicity. The proprietor said:

I did not know about their credibility so I asked for the translator’s identity card… I also saw the Kachin organisation’s documents from Myanmar to ensure it exists. I met more than eight times with the procurer to negotiate the contract. She is only a young girl but she was persistent to negotiate the lowest price possible, ensure the quality of the food and the certainty of transportation. She kept saying to me, “this is for the IDPs”. I feel a sense of affinity (yuanfen) with the IDPs because one camp is near the place where I grew up. It is literally next to my village. So I wanted to help. Now I also secure for them garlic and onions through my business contacts in Myanmar. It is delivered to China and
re-transported to the camps. When my fellow suppliers ask me, I say the Kachin organisation pays me in advance when actually I procure the supplies for them first. It is risky but I believe it is a worthwhile cause.

Her spouse, a waishengren, who was present during the interview, interjected disapprovingly several times to inform us that her decision to partner the Kachin organisation not only had slim profit margins for their business, but may jeopardise it if fighting between the Myanmar military and the KIA impacts their supply and delivery chain.

As with Bosco’s (2007) study that underlined the emotional dimensions of activism, here it is the emotional labour of the young Kachin procurer that plays a critical role in deepening empathetic identification. The procurer and the translator appealed repeatedly to the Chinese proprietor (“this is for the IDPs”), thereby creating an “emotional template” (Bosco 2007, 549) and circulatory affects (Ahmed, 2004; Griffiths, 2014) that trigger feelings of empathy for the IDPs despite the physical and social distance (also see Pedwell, 2012). Throughout the interview, the proprietor rationalised her business decision as a form of affinity arising out of perceived co-inhabitance in the border area with the Kachin people. She recounted her childhood memories of the village she lived in which is near where the IDPs have resettled. Although she does not know the IDPs personally, the emotional symbolism attached to place produces biographical ties (also see Kobayashi and Preston, 2011) that lend to the sense of affinity she expressed towards them. The “attunement” to place portrayed here is an “ontological situatedness” (Larsen and Johnson 2010, 638; 640) that prompts feelings of intimacy, empathetic identification and a willingness to intervene favourably on behalf of another person.

Nonetheless, affinity ties populating webs of connections continue to be characterised by power relations that enact closure amidst openness (also see Pedwell, 2012), unless other social relations can be mobilised for validation. For example, the empathy expressed by the Han-Chinese food supplier had to be validated against credentials provided by both the Kachin organisation to verify its existence in Myanmar as well as the translator who is from China. She asked for the identity card of the translator to confirm his Chinese nationality status. An identity card verifies residency in China.
and if the business transaction proved fraudulent, at least the supplier has recourse for police and legal action in Chinese territory. The citizenship status of co-ethnics in China acts as a resource for extending humanitarian assistance to IDPs deprived of their citizenship rights in Myanmar. But the Chinese nationals (both Jingpo and non-Jingpo) interviewed in this study also express unreservedly that it is not feasible for China to absorb populations displaced from Myanmar. In their view, residency rights in China should be reserved for nationals with the privilege of citizenship. This example indicates that grounding affinity ties in place identification ontologically should not be conflated with arguments of *jus domicile* or *jus nexi* that seek to claim membership rights in a polity for migrants based on residency or stakeholdership (e.g. Shachar 2009; Bauder 2014). Undergirding affinity ties are webs of connections that can be likened to a spider web in which there are lines tracing connections as well as gaps and tension points that mark out the contingency of social and political formations (also see Closs Stephens and Squire 2012). As an analytical framework, affinity ties encapsulate a shifting constellation of relationships and actions grounded in emotional connections and vernacular interventions, but it remains attentive to the power relations that remain within those webs of connections. Patterns of social closure must not be glossed over in affinity relationships, but acknowledged and recalibrated contextually towards socially just ends.

Affinity ties matter because they function as meaningful points of transversal connection that bridge people of different social positionings, orientate one towards empathetic identification, and respond to the needs of another in order to alleviate suffering, enact recognition and achieve fairer social conditions. Cosmopolitanism and conviviality are often invoked as conceptual tools or normative goals for addressing the social anxieties wrought by migration and cultural diversity (e.g. Honig 2001; Sandercock 2006; Amin 2012; Noble 2013). This paper recognises the value of those contributions but the discussion in this section shows how the conceptualisation of affinity ties is distinct in two ways. First, it underlines the significance of affinity ties forged through the webs of connections that transverse and bridge plural identities. Affinity ties allow for cultivating emotional attachments to a place and its people, whether through proximity or caring from a distance, and nurture empathetic identification that prompt intervention on behalf of another person experiencing oppression. Second, conceptualising affinity ties entails attentiveness to
the power geometries (Massey 2005) that populate such transversal webs of connections in everyday life. These power geometries are not only located at the national scale (i.e. sovereignty), but filter into the perceptions of ordinary people and the way they invoke different forms of authority in the spaces of everyday life.

**Conclusion**

This paper has directed attention to the way that affinity ties are forged and mobilised to deliver humanitarian aid at the China-Myanmar border. The Kachin IDPs experience displacement and dispossession because of conflict between the Myanmar military and the Kachin Independence Army (KIA). The Myanmar government (in which the military retains considerable influence) considers the IDPs as predetermined risks and treats them as unwanted surplus populations (also see Mitchell, 2010; Tyner, 2013), such as by punishing them on account of alleged connections to the KIA or restricting international humanitarian organisations from accessing the IDP camps in areas controlled by the Kachin separatist government. China’s refusal to allow the Kachin IDPs refuge denies them recognition as refugees and discursively associates those who attempt to cross the border with surplus population categories such as the unauthorised or undocumented migrant (also see Tyner, 2013). Moreover, China has restricted international humanitarian organisations from accessing the IDP camps at the border even though these are accessible only via Chinese soil due to the physical terrain and poor road conditions in Myanmar.

Nonetheless, the paper argues that such geographical and geopolitical constraints are circumvented by the inventiveness of the Kachin organisations, producing what this paper refers to as the “geographies of humanitarianism”. The local organisations adopt a geographical division of labour and turn to wider webs of connections to navigate the limitations posed in areas of contested territorialities (also see Dean, 2011). Studying the geographies of humanitarianism means paying attention to the manifold ways in which physical and social locations matter in constraining or facilitating appropriate responses to those in distress. The paper shows that it is through the vernacular interventions of a range of ordinary people (in Myanmar and across the border in China) who feel a sense of affinity and empathy for the IDPs that other means of accessing humanitarian aid are availed.
Studying the geographies of humanitarianism leads this paper to develop the concept of affinity ties as an analytical framework that is attentive to how malleable aspects of culture and a shifting constellation of social relations forge transversal webs of connections that can precipitate expressions of care for those experiencing oppression. Affinity ties bridge functional and cognitive borders, thereby helping to establish a sense of mutual wellbeing that is based less on isolated conceptual taxonomies and social hierarchies (also see Yuval-Davis, 2013), and more on common identification to do with people’s biographical ties and emotional connections. Crucially, the paper underlines the emotional symbolism associated with place both through proximate dwelling and from a distance, as well as the expressions of care that may manifest in vernacular ways (and remain as such) or coalesce into durable ties of activism. Therefore despite physical and social distance, affinity ties cultivate emotional connections that enable political possibilities (also see Bosco, 2007; Griffiths, 2014 and 2015), even if these exist only as vernacular interventions that do not explicitly seek political change.

What purpose might conceptualising affinity ties serve? Much of the scholarship on citizenship and migration has focused on describing and analysing the dynamics of boundary-making and social closure in society (see Brubaker 2014). Apart from intercultural contestations, the politics of co-ethnicity (i.e. social cleavages within ethnic groups) is becoming increasingly perceptible in multicultural societies. Such divisions are discussed in a different context of internal displacement and cross-border relationships in this paper but they resonate with developments in immigrant societies that are experiencing renewed anxieties over social complexity. The migration of both new ethnic groups and co-ethnics from other places have accentuated cognitive borders and social hierarchies (Mezzadra and Neilson, 2013; Yuval-Davis, 2013) that has to do with, not only ethnic difference, but also nationality, language, religion and socio-economic status amongst other axes of social identity.

In intellectual and political agendas, this has arguably led to an impasse where social difference is flagged up for analyses and discussion, but we regularly stop short of asking how more meaningful social relations can be forged across social difference to cultivate bridging ties in societies that are grappling with social complexity. Arguments of conviviality and cosmopolitanism have been suggested in this respect
(e.g. Sandercock 2006; Noble 2013). This paper proposes another approach in which the emphasis paid to affinity ties leads us to purposefully draw out the transversal webs of connections that bridge people of differential positionings and which can trouble the exclusionary identity categories that are often used to support autochthonous claims to define inclusion or exclusion from a community (Anderson 2000; Honig 2001; Geschiere 2009; Yuval-Davis 2013).

On the one hand, the concept of affinity ties serves as an analytical tool for empirical research to capture the transversal webs of connections that bridge social differences and prompt caring relationships. On the other hand, it also serves as an ethical stance to press for mutual respect across social difference and demand appropriate interventions, whether in an individual or collective capacity, in order to recalibrate unequal power geometries in culturally diverse societies. Although seemingly amorphous in quality (also see Wilson, 2016 on the ambiguity of encounters), affinity ties can be grasped by locating the axes of identity that shape it as well as through its spatial vectors (e.g. the characteristics of spaces and places that nurture bridges of shared identification). Also important are the historical and contemporary contexts in which such social relationships play out, such as geopolitical tensions or colonial legacies and postcolonial contexts. These contribute to power geometries that continuously redefine the bridges of shared identification, pointing to the contingency of social and political formations. Focusing on the affinity ties that emerge from transversal webs of connections and the spatial sensibilities that bridge people of different social positionings at a particular moment or across time might present us with new possibilities for moving beyond the said intellectual and political impasse in wider migration and citizenship debates.
References


Allen J 2011 Topological twists: power’s shifting geographies Dialogues in Human Geography 1 283–298

Amin A 2012 Land of Strangers, Polity Press, Cambridge and Malden, MA


Balibar E 2012 The “impossible” community of the citizens: past and present problems Environment and Planning D: Society and Space 30 437–449

Baillie Smith M, Laurie N, Hopkins P and Olson E 2013 International volunteering, faith and subjectivity: Negotiating cosmopolitanism, citizenship and development Geoforum 45 126–135

Bauder H 2014 Domicile citizenship, human mobility and territoriality Progress in Human Geography 38 91–106


Clough N L 2012 Emotion at the center of radical politics: on the affective structures of rebellion and control Antipode 44 1667–1686

Closs Stephens A Squire V 2012 Politics through a web: citizenship and community unbound Environment and Planning D: Society and Space 30 551–567


Day R J F 2004 From hegemony to affinity: the political logic of the newest social movements *Cultural Studies* 18 716–748

Dean K 2007 Mapping the Kachin political landscape: constructing, contesting and crossing borders in Gravers M ed *Exploring Ethnic Diversity in Burma* NIAS Press, Copenhagen 124–128

Dean K 2011 Spaces, territorialities and ethnography on the Thai-, Sino-and Indo-Myanmar boundaries in Wastl-Walter D ed *The Ashgate Research Companion to Border Studies* Ashgate, Farnham, Surrey and Burlington, VT 175-190

Dupuis-Deri F 2010 Anarchism and the politics of affinity groups *Anarchist Studies* 18 40–61


Griffiths M 2014 The affective spaces of global civil society and why they matter *Emotion, Space and Society* 11 89–95
Griffiths M 2015. I’ve got goose bumps just talking about it!: affective life on neoliberalised volunteering programmes Tourist Studies 15 205–221


Hyndman J 1999 A post-cold war geography of forced migration in Kenya and Somalia The Professional Geographer 51 104–114

Jöns H, Mavroudi E and Heffernan M 2015 Mobilising the elective diaspora: US-German academic exchanges since 1945 Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers 40 113–127

Kingston L N and Datta S 2012 Strengthening the norms of global responsibility: structural violence in relation to internal displacement and statelessness Global Responsibility to Protect 4 475–504

Kobayashi A and Preston V 2007. Transnationalism through the life course: Hong Kong immigrants in Canada Asia Pacific Viewpoint 48 151–167

Li T M 2010 To make live or let die? Rural dispossession and the protection of surplus populations *Antipode* 41 66–93


Mezzadra S and Neilson B eds 2013 *Border as Method, or, the Multiplication of Labor* Duke University Press, Durham


Mitchell K 2010 Pre-black futures *Antipode* 41 239–261


Noble G 2013 Cosmopolitan habits: the capacities and habitats of intercultural conviviality *Body & Society* 19 162–185

Pain R 2009 Globalised fear? Towards an emotional geopolitics *Progress in Human Geography* 33 466–486


Relief Action Network for IDP and Refugee (RANIR) Displaced Villages Profiling: A Study on Displaced Villages in Kachin State and Northern Shan State March 2015 (personal communication)

Sadan M 2013 Being and Becoming Kachin: Histories Beyond the State in the Borderworlds of Burma Oxford University Press, Oxford.


Scott J C 2009 The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia Yale University Press, New Haven


Tyner J A 2013 Population geography I: surplus populations Progress in Human Geography 37 1–11

van Schnedel W 2002 Geographies of knowing, geographies of ignorance: jumping scale in Southeast Asia Environment and Planning D 20 647-668


