

REFUGEES AND RESISTANCE: ENACTING GOD'S MISSION IN LIMINAL SPACES

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The paper explores the role of refugees in enacting God's mission in the world. In many places in the world today, ecclesial communities and faith-based organizations play a major role in refugee support. Often coming from cultures with long histories of wounding through violent conflicts, those with heightened vulnerabilities are women, girls, and people with disabilities. (UNHCR 2018) The author uses liminality as a lens for investigating how refugees might be viewed as enacting God's mission in spaces like refugee camps, detention centers, and border crossings. In recent years, nation-states in Europe and the Americas have heightened the securitization of borders in an effort to keep refugees out rather than offer them a place to start a new life. The dominant neo-liberal narrative portrays refugees as illegals that, if allowed entry can potentially bring in with them disease, criminality and other threats to national security and the dominant culture. Refugees resist these practices that are based on oppressive ideas around sovereignty and power of nation-states. The author argues that this resistance is theologically significant. It resonates with resistance literature in the Hebrew Bible and in stories of christian origins. The category "resistance" will be discussed in the context of "power, inequalities and vulnerabilities" alongside stories of how refugees perform their faith through acts of everyday resistance. Fresh proposals are given on how to push the boundaries of mission studies and missiological research further to meet these social realities.