

driveway. "They've found Biniam," I thought.

A Pass Lake resident had responded to Biniam's request for water. An ambulance driver had spotted him sitting by the side of the road then departing into the bush near Pearl. Later in the evening, an off-duty R.C.M.P. officer found Biniam's body hanging from a hydro pylon. Biniam had climbed the twelve feet and hanged himself by a rope he had fashioned from joining three strands he had found along the highway. He had bound his hands with his belt in such a fashion that would not interfere with his proposed plan of action.

A memorial service was held the following Sunday—our moments with Biniam were recounted, along with expressions of our own guilt, "What if we...?" Questions we could not answer. Biniam was gone. We talked about his honesty, his friendship and our concerns about lost dreams and hopes.

The obituary in the Chronicle Journal concluded: the work of the Lord never ends,

to find the lost  
to heal the broken  
to feed the hungry  
to release the prisoner  
to rebuild the nations  
to bring peace among people  
to make music in the heart.

We will miss him. ■

**NOW AVAILABLE**

**Taking Refuge: Lao  
Buddhists in North America**

by Penny Van Istenk

ISBN 1-81044-04-01

Price: \$12.95 (+ shipping and GST)

This study examines Lao  
refugee resettlement and  
their attempts to recreate  
their Buddhist institutions  
in Canada and U.S.A.

To order your copy, please contact

York Letter Press

Box 116, Toronto

### Book Review

## Storm and Sanctuary: The Journey of Ethiopian and Eritrean Women Refugees

By Helene Moussa

Dundas, ON: Artemis Enterprises, 1993.

ISBN 1-895247-08-x. \$18.95. 288p.

Reviewed by Yohannes Gebresellasie

There are more than seventeen million refugees worldwide today. The majority of these refugees are women and children and many of them are from the Third World countries, particularly, Africa.

A few scholars have contributed extensively to the study of African refugees (Rogge, 1989), (Gaim, 1990), (Rogge and Akol, 1989). However, their studies have not been based exclusively on a gender perspective. Thus, research on women in general and on African women in particular has been neglected despite the particular difficulties these refugee women face.

By presenting the personal experiences of Ethiopian and Eritrean refugees who fled their country of origin during the years 1974-1991 (the time when Ethiopia was under the military regime lead by former Ethiopian dictator Mengestu Haile Mariam), Helene Moussa explains the unique situation that refugee women encounter not only as refugees, but most importantly as refugee women. Also, to explore the refugee issue from a gender perspective, Moussa reaches out directly to these refugee women from Ethiopia and Eritrea who now reside in Canada. She encourages them to share their experiences and, in her book, skilfully presents their personal interpretations in a very direct and frank way. This book, which consists of ten chapters (284 pages), focuses mainly on gender and refugee law, and refugee and other labels or identities. It also deals with the politics involved in doing research exclusively on refugee women as opposed to refugees in general. In the book, one can clearly understand that "refugee" is not a "homogeneous entity" because each refugee experience varies even among refugee women themselves.

The book thus brings out all the differences that are not assumed in settlement policies. It also provides an overview of the Ethiopian revolution of 1974, the complexities of the nationality question within the context of Ethiopia and the conflicts and wars that followed. Here, the reconstruction of the experiences of the refugee women in question, in particular, their decisions to leave and the processes they recall, become the focal point of Helene's analysis.

The book covers a much broader argument than the current immigration policy which has historically defined the term "refugee" as gender neutral; thus, the term has been confused. Moussa's work is therefore a valuable contribution in highlighting the needs of refugee women with regard to refugee assistance or with regard to resettlement or repatriation. This study contributes highly to a gender analysis of women's experiences which are widely misunderstood or perhaps intentionally neglected in a traditionally patriarchal society. The book also provides statistical data, figures and an extensive bibliography covering a number of areas on women refugees useful for academics as well as for policy makers. The methodology is very different because a constant interchange was maintained between the author and the people in question.

The reader will find the book very passionate and clear. Its content is essential for anyone who would like to understand the problems women refugees experience before, during and after they are traditionally labelled as "refugees" as well as the courageous struggle they have to endure to maintain their identity as women wherever they are. ■

Yohannes Gebresellasie, Laval University,  
is a research exchange scholar at CRS

*Refuge*

York Lanes Press

Centre for Refugee Studies

Suite 351, York Lanes, York University

4700 Keele Street, North York

Ontario, Canada M3J 1P3

Phone: (416) 736-5843 • Fax: (416) 736-5837

Electronic Mail via Bitnet Address:

REFUGE@YORKVMI

Postage Paid in Toronto, Canada

Second Class Mail Registration No. 5512

Return Postage Guaranteed

## REFUGEES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

A one-day Conference to discuss the links between Forced Migration and Environmental Change organised jointly by King's College London,

The Royal Geographical Society and

The Refugee Studies Programme, University of Toronto

Wednesday, September 23, 1993 at 10.00 a.m.

at Royal Geographical Society, London, England

Mass population movement remains one of the most disturbing problems of the modern world, with currently as 40 million people currently displaced as 'refugees' within or outside their own country by war, civil strife or lack of basic human rights. This human tragedy also has environmental implications, as rapid ecological change is often seen both as a cause and consequence of mass forced migration.

This one-day conference will examine the links between forced migration and environmental change, and shifting environmental meanings. It will deal both with the problems of access to resources and potential environmental degradation in areas hosting large numbers of refugees, and with the emerging product of displacement caused by environmental change and conflict. The meeting will also include a general overview of research and policy, presentation of case studies, and action-orientated workshops designed to address potential responses to damaging environmental changes in refugee-affected areas.

*Who should attend?* All those who work with refugees or environmental change, whether in a research context or as a practitioner in government or NGO, as well as students of refugee or environmental studies. In particular government agencies, policy makers and opinion formers, development and aid agencies, teachers, academics, researchers and students.

For further information, please contact:

Alison Glazebrook, Royal Geographical Society,

1 Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AR

England

Tel: (44) (0)71 275 3447 Fax: (44) (0)71 275 6197

Final date for registration is September 22, 1993