

**Pedro Figueiredo Neto (ICS-ULisboa) | *Indistinct Boundaries Between Exclusion and Inclusion. Experiences from the Meheba Refugee Camp (Zambia)***

Refugee camps are conceived as “extraterritorial places” – places set up in the periphery of the periphery, places that do not figure in the conventional cartography and whose faith is decided by an “international community” thousands of kilometres away. Refugee camps are spaces of ambiguity, of “indistinction”, spaces where the state of exception prevails, places simultaneously inside and outside the rule of law.

It is known that refugee camps are created to contain and control fleeing alien populations. Once in a refugee camp displaced populations see the suspension of key fundamental rights such as the right of movement, the right of assembly or the right to work. However, the humanitarian infrastructures usually provide access to health care, to education and training programmes – services and opportunities often absent in the places of origin as well as in the camp’s surroundings. It is true that refugees find themselves deprived of a set of rights, but such rights are sometimes virtually inexistent among the – also -- marginal populations in areas near refugee camps. From a humanitarian and nation-state point of view, the paradox between the inclusion of the excluded ones, and the exclusion of the supposed included is evident and worth of debate.

Based on the case of the Meheba Refugee Camp (Zambia) I will explore the indistinct boundaries of inclusion and exclusion among refugees living in camps and the neighbouring populations. This paper is the result of extensive fieldwork conducted in the Meheba Refugee Camp and along both sides of the border between Zambia and Angola between 2012 and 2014.