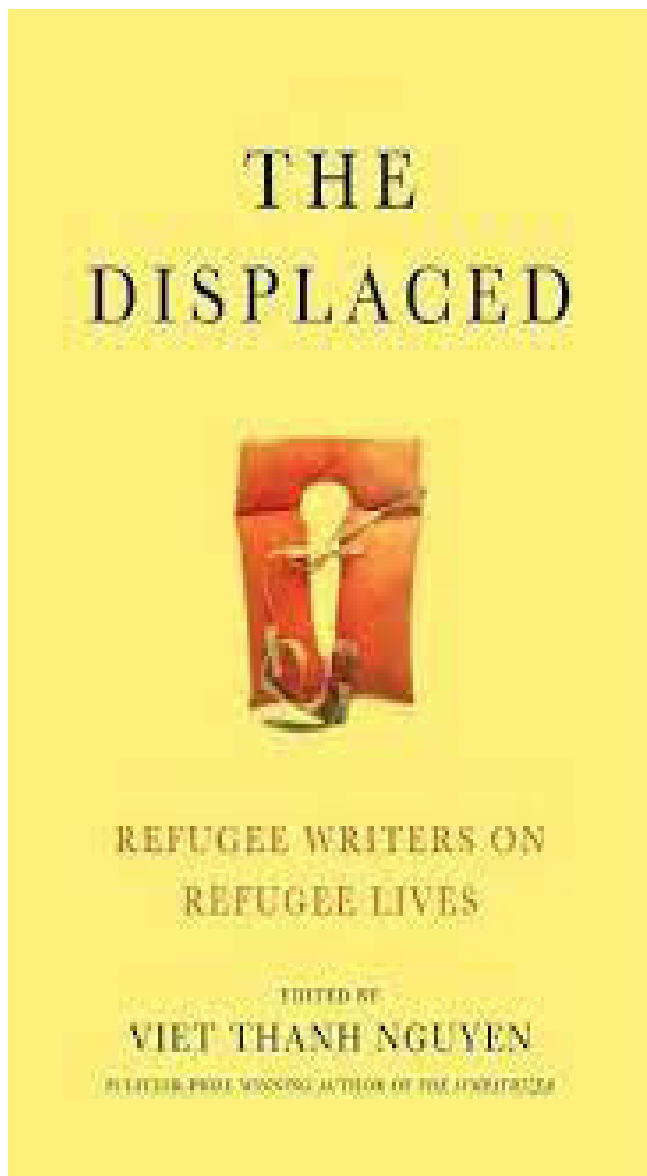


ROOTS & ROUTES

Vol 11, No. 8, August 2022



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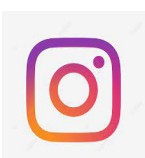
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Editor's Note



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Dear Readers,

Greetings!

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) is the first ever global agreement that focuses on all the dimensions of migration. Under the initiatives of the GCM, 23 objectives were enacted for better management of migration and its related issues at local, national, regional and global levels. GRFDT, along with the other organizations, is continuously working on achieving objectives of the GCM. It has organised webinar series on the 23 objectives of GCM and covered all objectives. All the videos from the GCM webinars are available on GRFDT's official YouTube channel.

The current issue of Roots and Routes presents a report, an article and a book review. The report is associated with the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF). The report deals with the first virtual roundtable discussion on international cooperation in the governance of international migration, aimed at encouraging and motivating the pact's signatories to align their actions with their commitments. The report was prepared by Jesula Simon.

The current issue presents a brief article by Benedict Kuol that focuses on the conflict and gun culture in the Great Lake region of Africa. The water masses that provided the potential place for human settlement are transforming into conflict zones due to a spark of communal, national, and state-funded conflict. The current issue also carries a book review titled "The Displaced: Refugee Writers on Refugee Lives," written by Angelo Gianturco Coletta.

We invite readers to participate and share their experiences with us to have a meaningful engagement. You can communicate with us through email at editorinchief@grfdt.com. We wish you happy reading and look forward to your suggestions and comments.

Happy Reading!

Feroz Khan

Taking Steps Towards the IMRF's Realization

The United Nations is hosting a series of roundtable discussions on migration's progress and challenges. And further discussing the progress towards achieving the goals of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration ahead of the International Migration Review Forum in New York in May 2022. It is a virtual space where representatives from states that have signed the Global Compact and members of national and international organizations can discuss migration issues. The first virtual roundtable was held on January 19, 2022, and was moderated by Michelle Leighton and David Kodour, Chief of the International Labor Organization's Labor Migration Branch and UNDP Human Mobility Advisor respectively.

Laxman Basnet, General Secretary of the South Asian Trade Union Network, stated during this webinar that the Chinese government is negotiating the working conditions of migrants between the two countries. According to him, migrant workers, who are the most visible people affected by these negotiations, have no say. Basnet, who criticizes the absence of migrants in these negotiations, requests that discussions about workers' working conditions should take place between workers and employers. According to him, when an agreement on migrant workers is signed between the countries of origin and destinations, the latter will not have a legal obligation to respect it, as is the case with the GCM. They will have a moral obligation to these instruments. As a result, Basnet advocates for a paradigm shift.

Canada supports the establishment of common migration routes to facilitate both permanent and temporary migration

Cindy Munro, Immigration Counsellor, Canadian Mission to the EU, stated that Canada strongly supports the establishment of regular channels to facilitate permanent and temporary migration. "Common pathways can be used to meet labor market needs, drive

innovation, support family reunification, grow the economy, and assist vulnerable migrants." Furthermore, by providing opportunities for regular migration, we provide alternatives to those who may believe that they have no choice but to resort to irregular migration, which can put migrants in vulnerable situations, says Munro. Simultaneously, she announces the implementation of Canada's plan to welcome new permanent residents at a rate of approximately 1% of the Canadian population per year for the next three years. According to her, despite a complex environment due to COVID-19, Canada met its goal of receiving 401,000 new permanent residents in 2021.

COVID-19 has lifted the veil on migrants' roles in host countries

The COVID-19 pandemic, according to Canada's EU representative, has helped to highlight the role of migrants in various communities and sectors of the economy. It has deepened public discourse on migrants' positive contributions. She stated that her country prioritized worker protection and encouraged other countries to join the global policy network on recruitment, which directly supports achieving Objective 6 of the GCM.

According to Sweden's Representative, informal labor markets, in particular, are a major impediment to migrant integration

Kristof Tomas, Sweden's representative, commented on the Global Compact's Objective 2 on minimizing negative drivers and Objective 5 on regular migration pathways. According to Tomas, objective 2 provides more options for individuals to either stay or leave the country in search of work. However, it is not only the unemployed who leave their countries; people with jobs also migrate in order to earn higher wages, according to Tomas. In this regard, he believes that international cooperation through ODA and FDI must be highly targeted in order to effectively address the negative

drivers of involuntary migration.

In terms of improving regular migration channels, he believes that collaboration is required to remove the barriers that prevent migrants from using them. Furthermore, Tomas believes that informal labor markets, even for regular migrants, pose a significant barrier to integration. As a result, the private sector can play a role in migrant recruitment by facilitating fair and ethical recruitment and ensuring that migrant workers are recruited in accordance with applicable legal frameworks and protection needs. According to Tomas, Sweden has supported the [IRIS](#) initiative to increase the certainty and predictability of migration procedures. He advocates for the creation of integral and inclusive migration policies, as well as the reduction of the costs of immigration, visa, and permit procedures. It also encourages the development of regional systems for mutual recognition of skills and qualifications, as well as the validation of professional certifications and teaching diplomas.

Morocco takes steps to promote migrant inclusion

Moroccan diplomat MajdaMoutchou emphasized her country's efforts to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on migrants. According to him, a national strategy on immigration and asylum has been implemented in accordance with King Mohammed VI's vision for humane, responsible, and united migration governance. She claims that Morocco has always included migrants in the COVID-19 vaccination plan.

The government's strategy is also reflected in the ability of immigrants to access administrative services, as well as the labor market for children to obtain the necessary education and training. It also gives women and girls access to gender information," says Moutchou.

At the same time, Moutchou applauds Moroccan institutions in charge of migration-related issues for coordinating their strategies with national and international NGOs in order to provide a suitable space for migrants to live in dignity.

Sri Lanka-Azerbaijan is banking on digitization to facilitate ethical migrant recruitment

DasunNalinda, speaking on behalf of the Ceylon

Employers' Federation, reminded the audience that Sri Lanka has established a national skills assessment system for migrant workers. He does, however, point out that there is no systematic method for recognizing workers abilities. As a result, some of the latter may lose their jobs.

He stated that, with the assistance of the International Labor Organization, the Higher and Vocational Education Commission of the Ministry of Skills Development and the Ceylon Employers' Federation had implemented a passport system. It is a common platform that allows you to view a detailed history of the worker's basic skills, employment history, and compatibility of his skills with the vacancy. This common platform provides information about migrant workers, Sri Lankan workers, and other workers.

Mr. Ulvi Aliyev, the representative of Azerbaijan, for his part, reported increased efforts to promote and improve digitalization and services to ensure that the whole-of-society approach is in place, with a focus on the convenience of migrants and offering more flexible routes.

The Federation of Domestic Workers criticizes the absence of regulatory mechanisms

Poverty and climate change, according to the representative of the International Domestic Workers Federation, continue to be major drivers of forced migration. Furthermore, once migrants arrive in their destination country, they are left in the hands of placement agencies due to the government's lack of recruitment mechanisms with legal and regulatory frameworks.

According to an IDWF representative, the plight of migrants has worsened as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, citing, in particular, an increase in migration costs and drop in income. This made it more difficult for destination employers to hire migrant domestic workers than usual.

Conclusion

This first virtual roundtable discussion on international cooperation in the governance of international migration aimed to encourage and motivate the pact's signatories

to align their actions with their commitments. It served as a warm-up for the first International Migration Review Forum (IMRF), which will be held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from May 17 to 20, 2022. The goal will be to assess progress in implementing the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) at the local, national, regional, and global levels. It is worth noting that more than 300 people from various countries took part in this virtual event.

Jesula Simon holds a Master's degree in Public Policy, and she is currently a University Diploma in Conflict Management and Resolution, Mediation and Interculturality. She is a human rights defender, works as a journalist, and has experience in communication and media, public policy, project management, education, protection, community mobilizing with private media, public services, and international organizations. In her work, she particularly enjoys dealing with issues related to migration, and she works at Haiti Migration Group.

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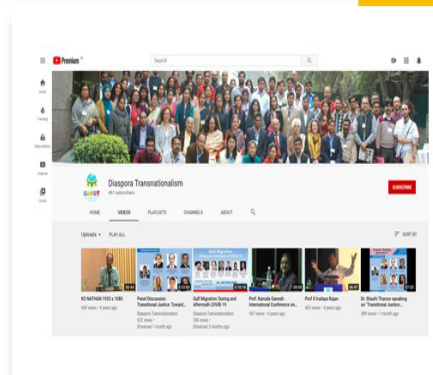
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Borders and Gun Culture Across the Great Lakes Region and Sudd Africa and Its Migration Implications

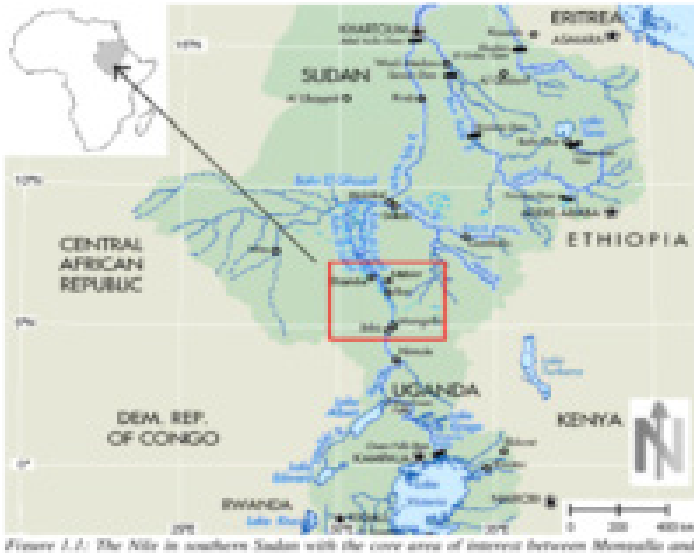


Figure 1.1: The Nile in southern Sudan with the core area of interest between Khartoum and Lake Nasser.

Background

The great lakes region and the Sudd are located in Eastern Africa in a place that famous anthropologist late Louis Leakey described as the cradle of man. His research in the region and anthropological discoveries led to the conclusion that “Sub-Saharan Africa climate as the world shifted from the ice age was ideal for evolution and settlement of early man.” The savannah and abundance of water masses allowed food abundance and settlements (Leakey, 1965).

Therefore, taking from great Louis Leakey, we can conclude that the region in the maps has abundant resources suitable for the human race. It has a climate that promotes population growth, being suitable tropical most of the year, abundant water sources, and suitable flora for animals. In modern times the region accommodates a population of six hundred million individuals (World Population Review, 2022). Compared to the small groups of ancient men, there is significant pressure on resources in the region.

Being an inhabitant of the region and being raised in a

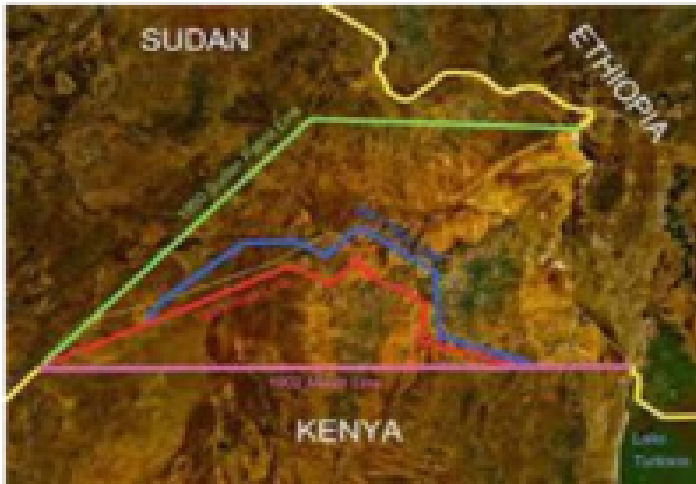
period of two civil wars, and having parents from two volatile nations, I can conclude it is the ‘land of men.’ Referencing the two maps, data and studies, including the ones by Louis Leakey have shown most settlements are near water masses. A direct relationship exists between the size and alkalinity of a water mass and the size of a settlement, seasonality being permanent and constant. The water masses and scarce resources are, therefore, a spark of communal, national, and state-funded conflict.

As African countries became independent, the perception has been of politically induced conflicts with international backing, which is only half of the picture. Nearly all countries in the region have experienced an internal disturbance that states have tried to control or crash quickly. In Kenya, it was the Shifta menace and tribal militias battling it out for autonomy and scarce resources. Similar incidents have manifested in Uganda in the Karamoja region, Ethiopia along the Omo River, evidenced by Bruce Parry, South Sudan along the Nile and Sudd, and the great lakes in the Congo.



Gun Culture

The origin of the gun culture in the region can be traced to the political instability created as a result of the cold war as the west, and the east made pawns of us. Rebellions became a daily terminology in most countries; in Nairobi, there was a special spot in most newspapers to assess the 'Shifta' menace. One conflict in one country, such as the Sudanese civil war, saw the availability of weapons in another country as sister communities battered goods. A good example is the correlation of communities in the volatile Ilemi triangle.



The poison soon spread into the hands of linguistically and culturally linked communities. A pastoralist community used to holding spears and the shepherd's staff was soon armed with AK 47s' machine guns (PKMs), and explosives. A good example is the story of one Turkana family who had to evolve due to the Shifta menace in 1990s Kenya (Al-Jazeera, 2015). There is a Nordic saying, 'we met the devil, and he became a part of us.' The communities evolved quickly into dreaded militias that adopted Shifta culture of murder and rustling.

State agencies have adopted countermeasures in all nations in the region. They include a direct counter-insurgency, economic empowerment, and incentivized disarmament. Taking South Sudan as a good case study, the United Nations, as well as the national army, have utilized all strategies discussed. A relative of mine led disarmament in Jonglei state in collaboration with United Nations Mandate for South Sudan. This was in September 2012, only to be countered by a civil war that

engulfed the disarmed communities. The result was the rearmament and utilization of communal armies, the most famous white army (Tribune, 2012).

State support evident in many dimensions of tribal militias is from direct community representatives with prosecutions in all countries. Members of the community in the national army particularly provide ammunition and intelligence to their traditional militias. Another support mechanism is the state intelligence engine from a strategic perspective. In the case of the Ilemi triangle, tribal militias are utilized to fight for the state and hold its claim in the disputed region.

Stability, Destruction, and Migration

KTN (2019) confirm the claim that states in the Ilemi triangle and the region are involved in funding border tribal militias for their strategic interests. This can be considered a deal with the devil, considering the banditry activities of the state-funded militias. The state contemplating whether to continue funding their militias and are under-resourced is forced to bow to the militia kingpins. In the Ilemi triangle, state authorities from Ethiopia, South Sudan, Uganda, and Kenya are forced to be pawns to flourish in the inter-border gun trade without their knowledge.

One militia group allied with one from Ethiopia looted police and an army camp on the same day before splitting their loot. The cultural and linguistic identity of these communities is greater than the colonial-drawn borders at times. International criminal law is also complicit with the states who support their respective militias. One group will destroy countless villages and hide in their 'cousins' safehouse across the border upon pursuit. Authorities in the states agree with the adage, 'It is better the devil you know than the one you do not know.' The point, however, remains that they are still a bandit militia who should not possess arms.

The same problem is faced in the Wundit triangle in South Sudan and the contested Abyei box and Heglieg (Golden triangle). The Wundit triangle is a region between three states in South Sudan and is a meeting point of traditional enemies. It is volatile and experiences regular tribe militia fighting. The Golden Triangle is of strategic interest for both Sudan and South Sudan and is under the United Nations Interim Force of Abyei.

Despite the regular clash of parties, South Sudan and Sudan offer support to forces within the box- the South Sudan People's Defense Force 'police' is present, along with Khartoum's 'People's Defense Force 'police.'

The pearl of Africa, the great Congo, also has a foreign-fueled gun culture with militias fighting for control of resources. Goma 'volcano' is truly volatile with foreign-funded militias, and the most famous is the Ituri province tribal fighting. Ituri conflict has forced the intervention of a United Nations Mission to mediate between Lendus and Himas as well as other hungry organized forces. The Great Lakes Region and the Sudd can therefore be termed as a boiling pot that had already spilled over only to calm down.

Should African states be considered guilty of the destruction caused by the immigration crisis in Europe and Asia (Middle East)? The militia's angel and devil game has led to the death of countless, instability, and a destructive parallel economy. In the quest for strategic interest, states have turned against their own kind. The consequence is the marginalization of trigger-happy society, a banditry economy, and most recently, a counter-insurgency against perceived weak and corrupt state agencies.

South Sudan has seen state-funded tribal militias turn into uncontrolled looting and chaos similar to Ethiopia, the Ilemi triangle in Kenya, the Wundit triangle, Golden Valley, Kerio Valley, and Ituri Province. The major effect of the war has been displacement, and the side effect is mass migration. A documentary that I reviewed, "*We Make it or Die by BBC Africa*," highlights the perils of migrants on irregular pathways. Hundreds of thousands of citizens from the region waste resources and time and risk their lives to seek safety in other continents or countries.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the publication findings, several factors led to internal conflict in the Sudd and Great Lakes Region states. The primary factor is the state involvement at the local representative level and strategic interests, be it territory or mineral wealth. International partners and local stakeholders led by the United Nations, International Organization for Migration, and International Police Organization should audit all states

in the region. Cartels in the state implicated in arming tribal militias should be sanctioned and tried according to international law.

International gun cartels associated with corrupt and unpatriotic militia kingpins should have their licenses revoked and tried in regional and international courts. A campaign to counter the gun culture and give communities confidence should be undertaken in collaboration with local state authorities and non-governmental organizations. The campaign should be a regional effort pioneered by major international partners with a good metric code over a long-term period. Heavy investment, local empowerment, and constant assault on the international and local cartels should be part and parcel of the process.

In areas such as the Ilemi and Golden Triangle, a final solution should be reached amongst the various states. Cold war tactics such as the use of parallel armed forces in border areas should stop so that the peace prevails. As the region federalizes, territorial integrity should be less focused than strategic collaboration, such as the congruence of economic zones. In the Ilemi triangle, Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, and Ethiopia should utilize mineral resources for a unitary city for every East African. Like the Abyei and Heglieg box (Golden Triangle), territories can also be transferred upon agreement but with a compensation model.

President Uhuru Kenyatta stated, 'Borders are rather temporary such as the case of the African borders a result of an imperialist conference. Therefore, we should seek to work together and benefit each other for we are linked culturally, linguistically, and all of us are African.'

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Benedict Kuol is a finance major graduate from Strathmore University in Nairobi Kenya. He is also a student of Global Compact for Migration and a research Intern at GRDFT India. He is passionate about writing and research and aims to write and publish several books.

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The Displaced: Refugee Writers on Refugee Lives, New York

Viet Thanh Nguyen (2018), *The Displaced: Refugee Writers on Refugee Lives*, New York: Abrams Press, ISBN-978-1-4197-3511-0, 207 pages.

Since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, the right of seeking and enjoying asylum has been granted to people fleeing their country due to conflict or persecution. Even though the subsequent convention on refugee law (1951) and its Optional Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees (1967) clearly highlights the definition of a refugee and the principle of non-refoulment, there is a growing need to rethink and readapt these laws to current refugee natures and needs.

The Displaced: Refugee Writers on Refugee Lives edited by Viet Thanh

Nguyen offers a bigger picture inside refugees and their stories, detailing their struggles to adapt to their new lives, setting the bases for an enhancement of our current refugee system.

Nguyen is a Vietnamese American Pulitzer Prize winner novelist, currently serving as the Aerol Arnold Chair of English at the University of Southern California.

The Displaced gathers 20 refugee short stories from different cultural backgrounds and regions, deriving into anecdotal qualitative data that support the need to advocate for refugees and their protection.

The book starts with a heartfelt introduction by the author and his family's struggles as a Vietnamese refugee since he was 4 years old. He described how he went from his hometown to the Philippines before arriving in Pennsylvania in the USA, and how being a refugee determined most of his family's social and even

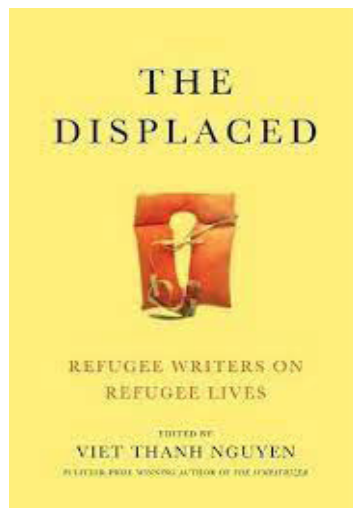
economic life. Even though he acknowledges he would hardly be considered a refugee now, the author refuses to detach from the word and all its related challenges, on what could be considered an advocate position on his part. He states:

"Those displaced persons are mostly unwanted where they fled from; unwanted where they are.; and unwanted where they want to go." Pp.17.

Nguyen then moves on to discuss the concept of borders and how they have played a major factor in our history and legal scene, how the proximity of bringing different cultures together could enrich humanity and, at the same time, be terrifying. Stressing the importance of the refugee stories to come in the next chapters and, even more, the importance

of hearing those refugee voices to create a world of social, economic, cultural, and political opportunities.

Despite of the majority of the writers are now occidental countries nationals, through its 20 stories, *The Displaced* approach how being a refugee shaped the writer's life. Joseph Azan, Afghanistan describes his identity journey once arrived and lived in the United States, and how he decided once becoming an American citizen to choose a more Americanize name. David Bezmozgis, an ex-Soviet Union refugee from Riga, narrates how despite having relatives in other countries, the UN refugee system allocated him and his family to Canada, and how the separation from other loved ones severely affected his family. Fatima Bhutto, a Pakistani refugee because of his father's political persecution, connects through a virtual reality exhibit of the gruesome experience of crossing the US-Mexican border. A graphical representation of refugee life by Thi



hoto Credits: <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/35888417-the-displaced>

Bui, a Vietnamese refugee. Ariel Dorfman is a Chilean immigrant who found hopefulness in a Latin American supermarket in the US from former president Donald Trump's politics. Lev Golinkin, an once child refugee from Soviet Ukraine fled with his father to Austria states how the transition from regular citizen into a refugee does not happen overnight "...it is a gradual process, a bleaching out, a transition into a ghostly existence." (Pp. 76). Marina Lewycka, born in a refugee camp narrates how her UK identity was a challenge after the spurts of anti-immigrant sentiment. Mazza Mengiste, originally from Ethiopia, and her unexpected connection with a black immigrant sentiment in Italy. Kao Kalia Yang, a Hmong refugee, writes his memory of the children in the refugee camp and how they constantly fought for their life. Reyna Grande, now a successful American writer, narrates her family migration story from Mexico to the United States, a decision made "...not for their lives, but for life—seeking economic refuge from a country that couldn't or wouldn't give them the means to provide for her family" (Pp. 82), and how that decision ended up with her abandonment from both her parents, and destroying the remanence of her family.

Overall, the book aims to give voice to more than 26 million refugees worldwide, hoping to raise awareness among the general public through engaging stories, simple in structure, yet profound in content, providing a much-needed context on the subject. The author successfully introduced and framed the bases for a proper understanding of refugee matters, inducing the readers' empathy in the stories to follow. Tackling the justice versus law contradiction, Nguyen invites us to reflect on needed reforms to prevent those who seeking refuge, fleeing from conflict and persecution, ending

up as "criminals" for crossing borders without proper documentation, or even without the possibility to applied for refugee status, as the case of Reyna Grande where her family should have been consider as "economic refugees", and how only a global community based on empathy and understanding can help us achieve a durable solution.

The Displaced is not indented to offer any new approach, nor solution to alleviate refugee struggles. And despite lacking quantitative information, it does portray in a raw narrative way how the refugee "tag" chases and shapes their life. Nguyen goes further to state that even when the United Nations cease to use the word refugee after a new and permanent home is assigned, detaching from what it meant to be a refugee is not an easy task for those who experience it. The implied and constant feeling of loss chasing refugees forever, loss of loved ones, countries, identities, and even themselves. Due to its literature nature, and engaging structure, *The Displaced* reaches a broader audience, from social science scholars to avid readers, offering a fast immersion into the refugee crisis while promoting the critical thinking of the readers.

Angelo Gianturco Coletta is an Independent Scholar. He holds an Economy Bachelor, MA in Humanitarian Action and Peace-building, and Conflict Resolution Specialist with experience in sustainable development empowerment project for vulnerable women in Venezuela. He is working both in the private and NGO sector as a consultant.

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