



TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE AND DISPLACEMENT

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BOOK REVIEW

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This is a thick, soft, dark volume designed to introduce practitioners, scholars and students in forced migration studies with interest in transitional justice to some possibilities, tensions and challenges of incorporating transitional justice into humanitarian response to displacement concerns. The book is divided into eight solid chapters. The Introduction, "Incorporating Transitional Justice into the Response to Displacement" while acknowledging transitional justice's failure to address issue of displacement, provides a foundational underpinnings as to why and how transitional justice measures can be use to respond to justice claims of displaced persons.

In Chapter one, "Contributing to Durable Solutions: Transitional Justice and the Integration and Reintegration of Displaced Persons", the author explores how achievable and durable are transitional justice solutions in facilitating integration and reintegration of displaced persons. Chapter two, "Addressing Concerns About Transitional Justice in Displacement Contexts: A Humanitarian Perspective", clearly emphasis major concerns of humanitarian actors regarding the incorporation of transitional justice in response to displacement issue. In essence the author stresses the fact that, even though displacement persons are not adequately involved in transitional justice processes; at the same time, such efforts has the propensity to adversely affect the goals of humanitarian assistance by "provoking national authorities to restrict access to those in need."

Chapter three, "Protection in the Past Tense: Restitution at the Juncture of Humanitarian Response to Displacement and Transitional Justice", the author examines the issue of restitution for displace person from the perspective engaging humanitarian actors with the principles and practices of transitional justice to harness development. In Chapter four, "The Potential for Redress: Reparations and Large-Scale Displacement", the author, while focusing on the idea that reparations program should provide specific redress for displacement, centered his arguments on four themes: (1) what reparations should look like in the context of redress for large- scale displacement, (2) how to define *displacement* and whether the concept exists within international protection discourse of reparations, (3) who the stakeholders are in a reparations effort, and (4) what the redress should be for?

Chapter five, “Truth-Telling and Displacement: Patterns and Prospects”, examines the frameworks and principles of truth-telling processes especially regarding how such processes include displaced persons and refugees as key players in truth commissions. Chapter six, “Criminal Justice and Forced Displacement: International and National Perspectives”, the author confines his debate to highlighting legal sources complementary to accounting for crimes committed against displaced persons, other than transitional justice. Chapter seven, “Ensuring Long-Term Protection: Justice-Sensitive Security Sector Reform and Displacement”, the author presents two research findings scenarios to suggest that the principles of Justice Sensitive Security Reform are crucial for developing security and justice needs for displaced persons, both temporally and in the long-term. Chapter eight, “The Nexus between Displacement and Transitional Justice: A Gender-Justice Dimension”, presents a gendered perspective on transitional justice and forced migration. Purporting the significance of gendered perspectives in accessing justice after conflict and displacement, the author argues that, embedding gendered perspective in transitional justice intervention is a matter of necessity in achieving the goals of transitional justice, especially considering the fact that women and girls disproportionately suffer gender-based abuses during conflict.

One would have to read this book several times to completely absorb its multifarious layers, and I cannot recommend it highly enough. Equally fascinating is the careful selection of topics in presenting critical and balanced views on a highly controversial, sensitive and challenging issue: transitional justice and displacement. This is the first time these two somewhat separate and opposition dialogue have being scholastically constructed comprehensively. While maintaining the difficulties of reconciling the complexities of incorporating transitional justice into the response to displacement, the author explores the possibilities of adopting durable solutions in efforts to integrate transitional justice in humanitarian assistance especially in situations of conflicts where truth-telling, redress and other forms of legal remedies are used to address the needs of displaced populations.

The book has its weaknesses. For a fact, it upholds the lopsided notion that forced displacement happens only in the global South. Although, few references are made to displacement issues in Bosnia and Yugoslavia, there in no mention made of displacement of Aboriginal and Indigenous peoples in North America, Australia and New Zealand. Maybe, if *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement's (1998)* definition of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) was used as a basis for the arguments presented in this book, then, a broader perspective of displaced persons would have been encapsulated. Furthermore, the more controversially, I think the book could have also squarely address the issue of lack of prevention and early warning systems within the UN bodies responsible for forced migration, especially, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Arguing about the incorporation of transitional justice in displacement response program and further tensions it creates *entre* humanitarian actors and legal providers; is not enough. Practitioners, advocates and scholars working in this area must begin to strategize ways and means to prevent the massive lost of lives, property, rights and dignity in the first place.

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Veronica P. Fynn, PhD Candidate, LLM, MPH, BA, BSc (Hons)
Editor-in-Chief, Journal of Internal Displacement
jid@evresearch.ca