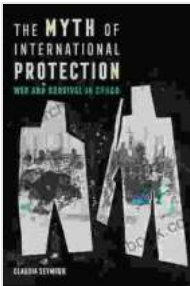


Unveiling the Myth of International Protection: A Critical Examination of its Realities



The Myth of International Protection: War and Survival in Congo (California Series in Public Anthropology

Book 43) by Vesna Tenodi

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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The concept of international protection, often hailed as a cornerstone of global human rights architecture, evokes images of sanctuary, refuge, and a beacon of hope for those fleeing persecution, violence, or disaster. However, a closer examination of its historical evolution and contemporary practices reveals a complex and often disheartening reality that falls short of the lofty ideals it espouses.

The Historical Roots and Evolution of International Protection

The origins of international protection can be traced back to the aftermath of World War II, when the horrors of the Holocaust and the plight of

displaced persons prompted the international community to establish a comprehensive framework for protecting refugees.

The 1951 Refugee Convention, the cornerstone of this framework, defined a refugee as someone who has a "well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion." This definition has served as the basis for international refugee law and has been instrumental in providing protection to millions of refugees worldwide.

The Limitations and Biases of International Protection Systems

Despite the noble intentions behind international protection systems, they are not without their limitations and biases that often undermine their effectiveness in protecting those most in need.

Geographical Limitations

One of the most glaring limitations of international protection is its geographical scope. The Refugee Convention and other international agreements only apply to refugees who are able to reach and enter a country that is party to the convention. This leaves millions of people who are displaced within their own countries or who are unable to cross borders without facing persecution or violence without any form of international protection.

Political and Economic Considerations

International protection systems are also influenced by political and economic considerations that can impact their effectiveness. Countries may be reluctant to grant asylum or provide protection to certain groups of refugees based on their nationality, religion, or political affiliation. This can

lead to arbitrary and discriminatory treatment, with some refugees being granted protection while others are denied.

Lack of Enforcement and Accountability

Another challenge facing international protection systems is the lack of enforcement and accountability. Many countries that have signed the Refugee Convention do not fully implement its provisions, and there is no effective way to hold them accountable for their failures.

Case Studies: Exposing the Failures of International Protection

The Syrian Refugee Crisis

The Syrian refugee crisis, one of the largest humanitarian crises in modern history, has exposed the glaring inadequacies of international protection systems. Despite the immense suffering and the displacement of millions of Syrians, the international community has failed to provide adequate protection and support.

Neighbouring countries have been overwhelmed by the influx of refugees, and many have closed their borders or imposed strict restrictions on entry. Meanwhile, Western countries have been slow to offer asylum and resettlement opportunities, leaving countless refugees stranded in dangerous and often inhumane conditions.

The Rohingya Genocide

The Rohingya, a Muslim minority group from Myanmar, have faced decades of persecution, culminating in a genocide that began in 2017. Over 700,000 Rohingya were forced to flee to neighbouring Bangladesh, where they live in overcrowded and unsanitary refugee camps.

Despite international condemnation and calls for accountability, the Myanmar government has refused to allow the Rohingya to return to their homes. The international community has failed to take meaningful action to protect the Rohingya and ensure their safe return.

Challenging the Myth: Towards a More Just and Equitable Global Protection System

The failures of international protection systems demand a critical re-examination of our assumptions and a fundamental shift in our approach to protecting those fleeing persecution, violence, or disaster.

Expanding the Definition of Refugee

The narrow definition of refugee under the Refugee Convention excludes many people who are in need of protection. We need to expand this definition to include those who are fleeing other forms of persecution, such as gender-based violence, climate change, or economic deprivation.

Strengthening Enforcement Mechanisms

To ensure that countries comply with their obligations under international law, we need to strengthen enforcement mechanisms and hold them accountable for their failures. This could involve creating an international tribunal to adjudicate cases of non-compliance or imposing sanctions on countries that violate international protection standards.

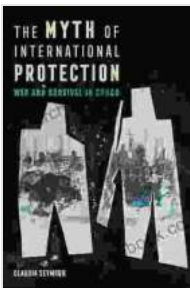
Promoting Global Solidarity and Responsibility Sharing

The responsibility for protecting refugees should not fall solely on the shoulders of a few countries. We need to promote global solidarity and encourage all countries to share the burden of protecting those in need.

This could involve creating a global refugee resettlement system or providing financial assistance to countries that are hosting large numbers of refugees.

The myth of international protection is a dangerous illusion that obscures the harsh realities faced by those seeking refuge. While international protection systems have played a vital role in protecting millions of people over the years, they are far from perfect. Geographical limitations, political biases, and a lack of enforcement undermine their effectiveness and leave countless people without the protection they desperately need.

It is time to challenge this myth and demand a more just and equitable global protection system that truly lives up to its promise of providing sanctuary and hope for those fleeing persecution, violence, or disaster.



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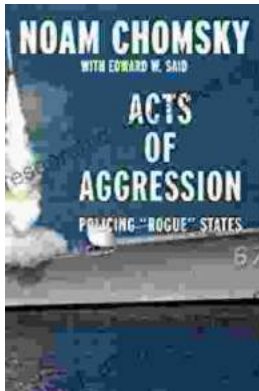
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