

***Countering Displacements: The Creativity and Resilience of Indigenous and Refugee-ed Peoples*, edited by Daniel Coleman, Erin Goheen Glanville, Wafaa Hasan, and Agnes Kramer-Hamstra (University of Alberta Press, 2012)**

In 'Reflections on Exile' Edward Said characterises 'our age ... [as] the age of the refugee, the displaced person, mass migration' (174). While Said's depiction is quite apt and while many books, collections, and articles continue to describe the complex lives of displaced persons, too few of those works explore the ways in which these populations constructively respond to and reshape their realities. *Countering Displacements: The Creativity and Resilience of Indigenous and Refugee-ed Peoples* intervenes in these conversations with eight essays that examine specific instances of displacement and the creative countering response offered. The challenge for this collection is in effectively bringing together the seemingly unrelated groups of indigenous populations and refugees into one, focused collection. Given the somewhat broad scope, it should not be a surprise that the impetus for this collection comes from a 2008 conference on displacement and like many other works that emerge from conferences, the editors of the volume, Daniel Coleman, Erin Goheen Glanville, Waffa Hasan, and Agnes Kramer-Hamstra, weave somewhat disparate essays together into relatively cohesive edited volume through a thoughtful introduction.

The introduction succeeds when it ceases to justify the somewhat tenuous connection between indigenous and refugee-ed populations and instead provides a more in-depth examination of the theoretical concerns surrounding displacement. Specifically, the sections of the introduction that address the tension between the nation-state structure and displaced populations coupled with the importance of agency and narrative allow the work to reply to systemic issues through creative endeavors. As a result the introduction does much of the theoretical work of the volume and thus permits the essays to work together in constructively addressing these larger concerns. In fact, the opening pages offer one of the few spaces in the collection that gesture toward macro level issues regarding displacement for these groups. Additionally, the rationale for the organisational strategy provided by the editors is helpful in guiding readers through the narrative of the essays.

The first essay, Jon Gordon's 'Displacing Oil: Towards "Lyric" Re-presentations of the Alberta Oil Sands,' maps the concept of displacement onto the land through a rhetorical analysis of official government and industry narratives juxtaposing those positions with Jan Zwicky's idea of 'lyric'. Gordon locates this theoretical manoeuvre in a short story and play by Rudy Wiebe, but the importance of this essay lies in its ability to challenge readers to reconsider dislocation in nonhuman terms. By documenting the dis-integration of the Alberta Oil Sands, Gordon chronicles the continued detachment of humans from the natural world. The regional focus of the essay should not overshadow the contribution this essay makes to larger conversations on ecocriticism. It would not be difficult to imagine Gordon's analysis being incorporated in discussions of dam projects in South America or the extraction of precious metals in Congo.

Jean McDonald's article 'Citizenship Studies and Migrant Illegality' surveys the landscape of current conversations on citizenship studies and intervenes through the position of illegality. Unfortunately throughout most of the essay the author's argument is overshadowed by the extensive review of contemporary work in the field of citizenship studies. McDonald's work on illegality seems to build on Arendt's premise in *The Origins of*

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*Totalitarianism* that to be without citizenship leaves one outside legal frameworks and subsequently outside humanity, but ultimately, the essay offers little of the creative countering that the volume sets out to provide. The strength of this essay is that it provides a robust resource guide to the work being done on migrant illegality and citizenship for readers.

The third and fourth essays, Mazen Masri's 'Israel's Wall, Displacement, and Palestinian Resistance in the West Bank' and Catherine Graham's 'Theatricality and the Exposure of Exclusion,' address Palestinian displacement. Masri examines direct and indirect Palestinian dislocation resulting from the construction of the Israeli dividing wall and the responses to this segregation through legal action and popular organising. The informative nature of the essay is helpful for readers who might not be familiar with the details of this particular situation; however, the argument would benefit from further exploration of the complexities of Palestinian identity in regards to legal legibility in Israel and in the international community. This move would keep the essay in line with discussions of citizenship, indignity and legal rights. Graham's contribution frames the Israeli/Palestinian conflict through an examination of a theatrical performance staged for a European audience. Theatre has long served as a space of resistance and social commentary and Graham draws on this legacy, suggesting that theatre should be a site of public intervention in order to revitalise something akin to Habermas' public sphere. Together Masri and Graham's essays work to describe the issues of displacement many Palestinians face and the creative response that allows for multiple, often contesting, narratives to emerge.

Pavithra Narayanan situates her study of displacement in the Indian state of Manipu. 'Mapping Manipur' traces the normative narrative of Indian national identity and juxtaposes it with an alternative narrative that incorporates subaltern voices, particularly those of women in Manipur, as a way of addressing the disjuncture between the way individuals define themselves and the way they are defined by the nation. Narayanan sees Manipu youth as the victims in this struggle between local and national identities. 'Mapping Manipur' continues the work of postcolonial theorists like Gayatri Spivak and Partha Chatterjee through the continued focus on the legacy of colonialism in postcolonial nations and the struggle for individuals and groups to narrate their own lives and histories. Chapter Six maintains the regional focus on South Asia with Subhasri Ghosh's study of the practical and political response to dislocation by refugees in post-partition West Bengal. The essay describes the failure of the Indian central government to provide policy and plans for the influx of refugees from East Bengal and the consequent solutions enacted by refugee communities. Ghosh's research on the squatters' colonies of West Bengal demonstrates how displaced populations can impact public policy and alter the perception of problems from refugee issues to human rights issues.

In the penultimate chapter, Agnes Kramer-Hamstra explores how Shelley Niro's work, film and photography, seeks to destabilise fixed images of First Nation populations in Canada. Jan Zwicky's theory of 'lyric' makes another appearance in the collection with Kramer-Hamstra employing 'lyric' as a frame from which to read Niro's films *It Starts with a Whisper* and *Suite: INDIAN* as sites of contestation over the representation of First Nation populations. Ultimately, Kramer-Hamstra argues that Niro's films restore the everyday realities and contexts to the characters which in turn break the fixed pasts that have imprisoned these populations. The essay would have benefited from a more explicit examination of the poststructuralist approach to identity formation that underscores Kramer-

Hamstra's reading of the films.

The final essay in the collection, Maroussia Hajdukowski-Ahmed's 'Creativity as a Form of Resilience in Forced Migration', places the discourse of medical trauma that establishes refugees in the role of victim with a psychological approach that treats refugees as survivors in a Bakhtinian dialogical interface in order to understand the plurality of experiences that have shaped these individuals. The article suggests that creativity provides a space that can reshape trauma, pain, and degradation into expressions of hope and agency. Interestingly, Hajdukowski-Ahmed finds a correlation between resiliency through creativity and political participation. This essay is a bit of an outlier in the collection as it draws on specific case studies and employs a more scientific methodology to the study of displacement. The essay is useful in understanding current approaches to refugee resiliency.

The localised and specific nature of many of the essays makes it difficult for the collection to maintain its unity of message at times. Some of the essays might be better suited as standalone work, allowing them more scope and breadth. The choice of putting indigenous and refugee-ed populations does not completely work as there are too many detailed issues relating to each group respectively that remain underdeveloped. That being said, *Countering Displacements* does fill a void in the field of refugee and indigenous studies. What is particularly important is that the essays do not naively suggest the positive potential for displaced persons and transnational identities like many of the celebratory theoretical approaches of the 1990s. This collection provides a thoughtful response to a rising global issue. Throughout the collection there is an underlying presence of human rights rhetoric and although not explicitly stated, it is worth noting that the trend toward moving human rights out of juridical and legal frameworks to humanities based research is helpful in developing creative solutions to problems of displacement.

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