



Recounting Migration: Political Narratives of Congolese Young People in Uganda

Christina R. Clark-Kazak

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Millions of citizens from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) have been killed or displaced during decades of political corruption and military conflict. Many forced migrants are young people, who are often seen either as passive victims or as radicalized and amoral child soldiers perpetuating the cycle of violence. Recounting Migration refutes these stereotypes by presenting young Congolese refugees' nuanced understanding of the complex power relations that affect their everyday lives. Christina Clark-Kazak, a former international aid worker, uses extensive interviews done in Kampala and Kyaka II refugee settlement, Uganda, to present the narratives of ten young people living as refugees. Their accounts reveal both political awareness and individual agency in everyday and extraordinary circumstances. The author shows how refugee youth seek to influence decision-making processes in families, communities, and at policy levels through formal and informal mechanisms, as well as through non-political channels such as education and music. She juxtaposes their interpretations of the situations with the discourse and bureaucracy of international aid organizations, showing the sometimes radical differences between these perspectives. Clark-Kazak not only provides insight into the politics of labelling but offers recommendations for future research, policy, and programs for refugee young people. A remarkable and compelling look at the lives of young refugees, Recounting Migration challenges stereotypes by giving these migrants a long-overdue opportunity to speak for themselves.

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