



*A woman with a bike,
crossing the way in Ritsona*

Who is a refugee?

Aus dem griechischen Auffanglager in Ritsona schickt der Blog *Birds of Immigrants* die Stimmen von Geflüchteten in alle Welt. Text Nummer 19 vom März 2020 reflektiert darüber, wer oder was das ist, ein*e Geflüchtete. Von Parwana Amiri

A refugee is someone who, once, had a normal life, a home for his family, a school for his children, a hospital. He enjoyed respect and dignity. He had friends, relatives and basic humans' rights. He had dreams, hopes, plans for the future. What he did not have was safety. That was taken from him by political and economic games.

A refugee is that brave father and that courageous mother, who pluck their courage to protect their family and chose to leave their country and undertake a voyage with death lurking along the way.

A refugee is a person who struggles many years, in many countries, his safety always threatened, his days filled with the sounds of bombs and explosions. A refugee is a person who has seen the hospitals and schools destroyed under fire.

A refugee is a person, who amid the bombs, the explosions, the fires, he does not give up his hopes for a new life for himself and his children, for safety, for peace, for nights with dreams rather than nightmares. A refugee dreams of a day when the news does not report numbers of killed or injured, does not recount bloody suicide attacks.

A refugee is a human being who is as normal as thousands of other human beings who constitute the population of this world. The difference between him and those others is the place where his luck decided he would be born.

A refugee is a mother who gives birth to children whose lives she will not enjoy. She does not rejoice at their birth. A pregnant refugee woman can listen to the heartbeat of her baby inside her, but she cannot hear her child's laughing or crying in the crowded, noisy and chaotic world of refugee life.

Parwana Amiri,
eine junge afghanische Frau, verbrachte Monate im völlig überfüllten Lager Moria, bevor sie mit ihrer Familie in das kleinere Lager Ritsona aufs Festland ziehen konnte, weil ihr Vater schwer krank ist. Sie veröffentlicht weiterhin Geschichten, die Menschen in Moria erleben, auf ihrem Blog. Nachzulesen hier: birdsofimmigrants.jogspace.net/

A refugee is that powerful, courageous and freedom seeking member of a family, who cannot accept that his rights and freedom are repressed. A refugee is an orphan child, a single mother, old parents, vulnerable people, victims of wars who gathered all their courage in a backpack and who, holding their children's hands, passed thousands of miles of distance, walked over mountains, often losing their way, tolerated hunger and thirst, crossed borders, faced all sorts of difficulties, including humiliations and indecencies by border guards who treated them as criminals. The women, among them, faced the worst physical violence, being raped not only during the voyage, but even in the camps where they found themselves enclosed. Those women did not face violence from strangers alone. Even more tragic, they faced the violence from their fathers, brothers and husbands, violence unleashed, in them, by the horrible conditions of their lives.

Yet, in spite of all these hardships, a refugee is the one who did not resign, but held in the back of his mind the promise of light that for millions of refugees was the light called Europe. Thus, a refugee is someone who after many failed attempts, after a number of pushbacks, even deportations, insists on reaching that promised light, that Europe.

And what does any and every refugee find reaching that promised land of Europe? Certainly not a new life! What awaits him are discrimination, inequality, repression, segregation as if prisoners, exclusion and deprivation of the most basic human rights — all these in a climate of total uncertainty about their future. A

refugee is a single woman, an unaccompanied girl who is put in the so called 'safe zones' where life is threaten by those very people who live inside such a zone. A refugee is single mother living in a tent near a tent of men who drink alcohol and lose control over their actions.

A refugee is a fighter who struggles to keep his hopes and not to give up. Yet even those fighters can be

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defeated and find solace in suicide. But there are dreams behind their clenched fists, there are demands behind their

repressed voices. There are pains behind their smiling faces. There is passion in their writings, there are sparkles in their eyes, there are wings in their soul, there are screams in their strained throats.

A refugee is a girl like me, who is writing every night what she experiences every day. Every night, before she falls asleep, she proclaims her dreams in the hope that she will reach them one day. She is fighting against injustice, like many who are fighting against repression.<

Die deutsche Übersetzung des Textes findet ihr auf unserer Website unter www.hinterland-magazin.de