

## BOOK REVIEWS |

**Ambrosini, Maurizio. *Irregular Migration and Invisible Welfare*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. 256 pages (ISBN: 9781137314321).**

*Irregular Migration and Invisible Welfare* is a fascinating study providing an extensive review of the current state of irregular migration and its role in the expansion of an informal welfare system in Europe as well as presenting detailed descriptions of the life and professional experiences of migrants and their families.

The first two chapters present the main argument and the link between irregular migration and invisible welfare. It does so by focussing on the seemingly incongruous situation in which migrants crossing the borders of a country without proper authorisation end up providing fundamental support to that country, especially in the roles of carers for the younger and the elderly. Domestic and care services represent, in fact, pivotal sectors of employment for unauthorised migrants across Europe.

Indeed, Western countries are faced with serious challenges in relation to the care needed for a growing number of ageing people, mainly due to an inefficient official system of provision. This is acutely analysed in the third chapter, where the author illustrates the care gap between the needs of services for the families, the provision of services from migrant care workers and the apparent clash of these practices with the existent migration policies. However, the high number of migrants working in these low-skilled and low-paid care jobs suggests that many of these workers manage to enter destination countries outside official labour migration channels. Indeed, it seems that migration policies are bypassed through the use of different types of visas (student, tourist...) with the apparent compliance of the system. In brief, the system increasingly relies on the employment of migrant care workers as a relief valve to these criticalities. However, although, low-skilled migrant care workers are employed in great numbers in the care sector, the official information relative to this workforce is lacking, due to their relative invisibility. What is paradoxical here is that undocumented migrants, whose entrance in Europe is actively obstructed at the borders, provide essential assistance to families increasingly in need of caregivers. It is for this reason that some countries, like Italy, from time to time apply amnesties through application in order to allow migrants, mainly employed in the care sector, to regularise their position. Ambrosini develops his argument that immigration law is what makes immigrants 'illegal' and 'irregular', by removing these definitions from the migrant's status ("no human being can be defined as irregular, illicit, or even clandestine", p. 3) and appropriately putting them in relation to the laws of the country they wish to enter and/or reside.

The fourth chapter interestingly investigates the role of migrants as individuals in charge of their own subjectivities and in control of their autonomy based on a series of studies conducted in the North of Italy. Although, many migrants live in a country without authorisation, they are never passive recipients of identity or citizenship. Their 'localised identity' is negotiated from below through their interaction with the members of the families they work for, the participation in the local community, co-ethnic networks and access to services and opportunities. In this chapter, through the words of the care workers themselves, Ambrosini discusses the resources available to them and how they manage to survive underground: their access to public services and the



healthcare system and those provided by NGOs and solidarity institutions, mainly of a religious nature. However, a special attention should be devoted to section 10: the involvement in familial relationships. It is in this section that the words of the respondents depict vividly their role within the family, the attachment to their work and the people they work for, the moral support they provide to the persons they work for and vice-a-versa. As Anderson underlines, “it is the worker’s ‘personhood’, rather than the labour power that the employers is attempting to buy” (2000:2)<sup>1</sup>. It is evident that there is an unmistakable overlap between work and affection/emotional bind, which makes this relationship much more than a work related one, having been transformed into a ‘multi-faceted interpersonal relationship’ (p.136) consisting of blurred boundaries between work and personal life (especially for the live-in care workers) and a threatened private sphere.

Ambrosini stresses that the hardship that the migrants endure while away from home is always mitigated by their awareness that their work is fundamental to the welfare of those left behind, through gifts and remittances and the constant contact thanks to the new communication technologies. This is a role mainly covered by women, who may be younger with children still in school, often left in the care of the grandparents, or by more mature women, mainly of Eastern European origin, now representing almost half of the immigrant population in this sector. The age and the geographical origin of these care workers has effects on their parenting practices consisting of regular visits and circulatory forms of migration, if of European origin, or active engagement in the promotion of family reunification, if originating for further away (e.g. Philippines, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Latin America, etc.). Interestingly, this fifth chapter refers to the phenomenon of the feminisation of migration and clarifies how female-led family reunifications are quicker and more common; however, it also emphasises the heaviness of the repercussions on the man of the family who might experience loss of status and a sense of dependence.

The complexity of the issue is reiterated in the last chapter where the author challenges the negative views often associated with irregular migration and insists on the need for accounting those phenomena of inclusion of those individuals who are actively engaged in providing a fundamental service to the countries who do not officially recognise them. This is one area of tension that creates a gap between the policies in place and the real world. Ambrosini also emphasises how peculiar is the fact that the migrants are mainly employed by middle and lower class families, the same ones forming the public opinion suggesting stricter rules for migration and closure of borders to immigration, which is a second area of tension. A third area of tension is represented by the care drain phenomenon, consisting in the transferral of emotional labour into the country of residence, while depriving of it the country of origin.

Another interesting aspect described in this chapter is that the women of the receiving families, traditionally care-givers, have become care ‘managers’: individuals delegating the most demanding tasks to the migrant but also able to liaise with the outside services for any financial, bureaucratic, medical and emotional needs the employee might have.

Through this study, Ambrosini clearly requests a less hypocritical approach to policy matters. As the ageing of the European population in the coming years will certainly increase the need for care workers, we have the moral obligation to dispel the aura of

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<sup>1</sup> Anderson, Bridget (2000). *Doing the Dirty Work? The Global Politics of Domestic Labour*. London and New York: Zed Books.

criminalisation of their irregular immigrant role and put in place more favourable systems of arrivals and permanence of this type of work force. It would also be fundamental to be able to recognise the migrants' status adequately, considering the very delicate tasks they normally perform. The author concludes the book by suggesting a series of possible interventions and new policies that could be useful in the abolition of the existing contradictions between the current welfare system and the hiring of irregular care workers.

I believe that this is a fundamental reading for all scholars interested in the analysis of care work and irregular migration, as well as to all the people doing research in the field of gender and migration, for its meaningful analysis of women's role in this type of migration.

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**Cohen, Jeffrey H., and Ibrahim Sirkeci. *Cultures of Migration: The Global Nature of Contemporary Mobility*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2011. xiv + 165 pages. (ISBN: 9780292726857).**

This book apparently came out of a long-standing joint research and scholarly conversation between Cohen and Sirkeci, who separately worked on migration research in Mexico and Turkey. According to the authors, migration scholars have produced an extensive literature significantly advancing our understanding of migration and migrants which ranges from definitions to theories of migration, from typologies to outcomes of migration, and from linear assimilation experiences to varied acculturation and integration strategies of migrants. However, until recently this literature was largely focusing on issues of migration relating either to the origins or destinations of migrants, with particular emphasis on the social, cultural, economic, and political impacts of migrants on their destinations.

The study of immigrants and immigration offers a plethora of important contributions to the field of psychology. The discipline of psychology has much to contribute to our understanding of immigrants and the process of immigration. Psychology aims to demonstrate the influence of cultural factors that have an effect on the development and display of individual human behaviour. Cohen and Sirkeci underlines the culture as an essential feature of human mobility. In terms of psychological perspective, individuals often act according to cultural influences and expectations, which influence their migration decisions. *Cultures of Migration* represents a distinguished addition to this body of literature and offers a fresh and convincing perspective on migration studies and theories.

Distinguished from mainstream approaches, Cohen and Sirkeci's "Cultures of Migration" proposes a new model for migration studies that incorporates the strengths of the humanities and the social sciences in examining migration as a cultural process with an added emphasis on insecurity and conflict model to explain initiation and maintenance of population movements across time and space. The proposed model entitled "cultures of migration" focuses on the dynamic "social universe" of migrants and migration outcomes in relation to conflicts and emerging cultures of mobility. This "meso-level" model offers the possibility of bridging the existing "micro-level" models built upon examinations of individual decisions in the migration process and the "macro-level" models derived from studies of national outcomes in migration studies.

Similar to their previous joint works, Cohen and Sirkeci suggest the use of "mobility" and "mover" in place of "migration" and "migrant" as a starting point to universalize all people who move one direction or another. They strongly argue that the differentiation between internal and international migration is simply administrative and does not contribute to our understanding of the process. Similarly, they emphasise the overwhelming role of non-movers (aka non-migrants) in migration decision-making. Their dynamic understanding of migration that embeds previous theories explaining partially different aspects of human mobility is very convincing. Their "cultures of migration" model is built partly on cumulative causation model and the conflict model which has been apparently key focus for Sirkeci's research since the 1990s.

The household model is also used to point the role of families in migration decision making and the outcomes of migration. Households depending on their abilities and resources may facilitate or bar international mobility, as well as internal mobility. Cohen and Sirkeci make an inroad here to reject the typology of internal and international movers but explain these simply by different desires, perceptions and perceptions about achievements in different destinations.

Their debating of migration versus mobility is very powerful. They argue that in contrast to migration, mobility is envisioned as more fluid and dynamic and able to capture regular and irregular flows of populations. It also goes beyond the typical migrant but embraces all other short term and long term movers within a single conceptual frame. Cohen and Sirkeci, thus talk about commuting and cross-border commuting which is apparently a common phenomenon in several parts of the world.

Perhaps the most innovative is their proposal of conflict model as part and parcel of cultures of migration across the globe. Their scope of conflict, drawing upon the definition by Ralf Dahrendorf, is very broad ranging from familial strife to personal disagreements to labour market competition to overt violent conflicts and wars. While they expect no-migration at the absence of conflict, at the other extreme end of their typology, mass outflows are expected. Thus, one way or another their contribution is about highlighting these risk minimising attitudes driven by conflict perception and over time, the ways in which these strategies turn into a culture of migration.

Cohen and Sirkeci draw upon a very rich array of studies including their own research on Turks, Kurds, Mexicans, Dominicans, minorities in Britain and the USA, but they also work with numerous articles they have published in *Migration Letters*, a leading and well-recognised journal in the field of migration studies that they jointly launched back in 2004.

"Cultures of Migration" has already won a few prestigious prizes including their achievement of outstanding academic title by Choice magazine in the USA for 2013. It is accepted and recommended as a text book for undergraduate and graduate courses across North America and Europe including top universities. The book's main contribution is twofold: it presents a powerful model of conflict, and unveils the dynamic understanding of mobility, and non-mover and mover nexus in migration process. Cohen and Sirkeci's theory rings a bell and challenges the mainstream, old and tired approaches in the literature. There is time for change and their call is heard hopefully.

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***Dedeoğlu, Saniye. Migrants, Work and Social Integration: Women's Labour in the Turkish Ethnic Economy, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. 216 pages. (ISBN: 9781137371119)***

*Migrants, Work and Social Integration: Women's Labour in the Turkish Ethnic Economy* is based on Dedeoğlu's field research on Turkish migrants in London. During her fifteen-month research, she met employers, families and non-governmental organization representatives, who participate in ethnic economy, composed of migrants from Turkey, and had in-depth interviews with 60 migrant women, selected through snowball and chain-referral techniques.

In the introduction, the impact of London-resident Turkish migrant women's positioning in ethnic economy on the community's social integration is discussed. The focus of the book is stated as the consequences of social inequality as reflected in migrants' experiences as well as the experiences' impact on the theoretical and methodological approach. The research is predicated on the assertion that Turkish community has developed their own ways of integration in Britain. According to the author, in this process, social bonds, family connections and gender play crucial roles. Gender specific issues in social integration of women migrants in Britain constitutes the core of this study.

The author argues that the qualitative method and the biographical approach are the most suitable modes of inquiry for this research, focusing women's integration in the labour market and society. Qualitative methods reveal more flesh through stories.

The book is composed of eight chapters. A general overview of the study is presented in the introduction. In the second chapter, role of gender in ethnic economy and social integration of the migrants are explained. The relationships between migration and work, migration and social integration, work and social integration and relationship among work, social integration and gender are discussed. The third chapter is on the extent of Turkish ethnic economy growing in Europe and contribution of this economy to the entire European economy; the chapter examines labour opportunities of Turkish migrants, provided by this growing ethnic economy and the effect of this economy on the migrants' survival strategies. The fourth chapter begins with a description of Turkish people resident in London. Although this group is described as "silent" and "invisible" in the literature, the author claims to make migrants' contribution to British economy visible. In the fifth chapter the migrant women's lives and motivations in the ethnic economy are analysed. What is discussed in this section is the women's influence on and participation in migration process via concepts such as patriarchy, marriage, social networks through a sociological perspective. In the sixth chapter, changing roles of women in ethnic economy are reviewed through time and transformation of industry marked by the collapse of textile sector and growth of catering sector. In this chapter, many striking examples showing women's disadvantaged position in the household. The seventh chapter is reserved for the paradoxical relationship between women's social integration and work life, which is characterized as a zigzag path in social integration by the author. As opposed to what the literature indicates, Dedeoğlu lays stress on the first generation women migrants' effort for their children's integration and success in this section. In the concluding chapter, a general summary is followed by a section on women's integration in mainstream society and the impact of their traditional roles as mother, wife and sister in ethnic economy on this integration process (zigzag paths to social integration) are discussed (p.12-15). Although a balance structure exists in the book, there is a good deal of repetition particularly regarding the position of women in ethnic economy.

In the literature, studies with a focus on gender issues has increased noticeably in recent years. The author criticizes the literature for being male-oriented and argues that women's circumstances in the immigration countries are ignored. The author then justifies her choice of methodology but possibly without the strongest of substance. For Dedeoğlu, neoliberal theory interprets migration decisions through individual choices shaped by structural factors and Marxist approach reduces the migrants to a proletarianised mass, seen as a reserve army of labour needed within capitalism. She suggests that these theories are inadequate to explain the migrants' family relationships and the social bonds they build.

Many studies on migration are conducted by academics who do not know the research site well. Dedeoğlu lived in London for about ten years when she was a student and it appears as an advantage. Her acquaintance with migrant families in her student years and her residency in Green Lanes area in north London where Turkish population is concentrated helped a lot in enhancing her grasp of integration processes. The author found the opportunity to observe the migrant women closely by participating in their social gatherings, marriage ceremonies, religious rituals, and special occasions. She states that "such events enabled" her "to better observe those women out of patriarchal oppression".

Turkish population in London is largely concentrated in the north where Turkish enterprises are in abundance too. This may have an impact on Turks' social integration processes. Potential isolation in other parts of the city and the country may offer more opportunities to interact with people other than the Turks whereas in North London, Turks have strong networks and opportunity for daily interaction among themselves. This interaction has an influence on integration process.

Snowball technique used for sampling in this study may lead to a composition of sample having similar characteristics. The book offers very little detail about the methods and sampling and data. For example, it is not clear which parts of London, the respondents were chosen. Is it acceptable to treat London as a homogeneous single unit while studying integration?

Theoretical approaches used in the literature of sociology, anthropology and labour economics in order to demonstrate various migrant communities' positions in ethnic entrepreneurship such as disadvantage theory, cultural theory and middleman theory are referred in the book. Ethnic economy emerges when migrants become self-employed to meet their own needs primarily through social, cultural and economic collaboration after they adopt their sedentary lives. In this context, Dedeoğlu interprets entrepreneurship as a reaction to the migrants' disadvantaged positions in the host country. "Entrepreneurship is seen as a response to migrants' disadvantageous positions in their host societies, and as way of adapting to some of the social and economic trends that affect them directly, including discrimination, lack of qualifications, industrial restructuring, unemployment, welfare retrenchment and labour market deregulation" (p.46).

Turkish migrants' ethnic economy in London saw the collapse of the textile industry and turned to small businesses running convenience shops, cafe shops, *döner kebab* houses and the like. The study examines in detail how these enterprises developed, organized as family business; and the connections they built with other migrants who are living in other European countries and dealing with similar businesses. As for Turkish migrants' inclination to be self-employed, it is stated that this was almost compulsory for the first generation immigrants when the jobs in textile disappeared. Furthermore, immobility due to poverty, discrimination and lack of knowledge about the local culture

reinforce migrants to organize in small family businesses. The second generation's language proficiency and knowledge about English way of life facilitate the ethnic economy's development. The author relates this success of ethnic economy to Turkish community's strong ability to mobilize ethnic solidarity and to utilize inner-community networks. In fact, the migrants in need of capital usually take advantage of their relatives and compatriot connections rather than applying for a bank loan. There are many salient cases in the book, representing inner-community solidarity networks' effectiveness. Just as a textile sector bankrupt migrant's assertion as to his collection of 75 thousand pounds by knocking door to door within a single day to open an off license.

In addition, contemporary statistics are included in the book, which illustrate Turkish migrants' current situation in British economy. One can receive up-to-date statistical data such as that Turkish population works mostly in retail and catering sector (e.g. throughout the UK, Turkish migrants have the highest self-employment rate with 35 %). Recent increase in number of *döner kebab* take away shops, corner and coffee shops in London offer employment opportunities for Turkish community on the one hand; it also reveals intra-community relationships based on exploitation. Indeed, in some of these family based businesses unpaid or pauper family labour is used extensively. Besides, enlargement of ethnic economy depends on newcomer migrant flow, for they are human resource of this economy. In this respect, labour of newcomer migrants in London and students lie at the core of "ethnic enclave". Migrants obliged to spend their five years working under hard conditions in order to obtain residence permit benefiting from the Ankara Agreement, students, illegal migrants fall within this category. Dedeoğlu describes this type of labour, performed through long hours and low wage, as cheap and docile labour. Family members constitute basic labour force in Turkish ethnic economy and fresh labour force need is fulfilled within this circle. This system of exploitation is the very reason of ethnic economy's success in Britain.

Women's role in ethnic economy and its influence on social integration is the key focus of the book. According to Dedeoğlu, exploitation of women's labour the building block of some family businesses' progress. However, the author objects to feminist theory's "generalizing" gender perception suggesting that the women migrants are mere followers of their husbands, uneducated, and victims of patriarchal culture and values. One of the claims Dedeoğlu raises is that contrary to dominant opinion, women have active roles in migration processes. Since the share of women and men among Turkish migrants is balanced, the male oriented migrant studies proposing that women participate in the migration process via marriage and pushing women to the backseat are already outdated.

While women worked in textile sector, their positions in their families were much more powerful than today. Along with the collapse of the textile sector, women went back to their traditional mother and wife roles. Since, in exchange for woman's informal, unpaid labour in small scale family business; motherhood, sisterhood and wife status are given; a woman never can be a "worker" in the full sense of the word (60% of women work unpaid and their status in business life is unclear). Dedeoğlu emphasizes that women's roles in Turkish ethnic economy is not limited to unpaid or cheap labour; they are also carriers of ethnic, religious and cultural identity. Women migrants serve a substantial function in reproduction of national ideology and identity; they are symbolic figures important for education of children, maintenance of social and religious practices.

The ones who work outside the family economy does not have a much different experience. In fact, the women who earn less than minimum wage and work for a longer

period of time in the ethnic economy are forced to bear this situation in order to continue receiving social benefits. Since many do not have language proficiency, they cannot go outside the “ethnic enclave”. Nevertheless, it is necessary to emphasize that men’s working conditions in family and ethnic businesses are not so better than women. Under the authority of “senior member of the family” (father, elderly brother) and got stuck in-between the cycles of traditional relations, men does not have better working conditions than women.

“Integration” is an open ended process with various aspects such as cultural economic, social and political. Reproduction of patriarchy in multiculturalist framework of integration is criticised thus allowing room for domestic violence against women. Dedeoğlu, who proposes that in theoretical discussions the issue of integration is usually handled gender-blindly, describes women’s contribution to social integration as zigzag path. In this sense, there is an inverse correlation between women’s integration and their labour as well as their contribution to ethnic economy. She argues that women’s contribution to ethnic economy prevent them from being fully integrated to British society. Nonetheless, they pay great effort for their children’s integration and success. At this point, the author points out to multidimensional character of migrants’ integration. Policy makers are interested in providing economic integration of migrants at the outset. The result of this prioritisation of economics is migrants’ weak social integration. For example, while migrants integrate into labour market, they may stay out of civil society and politics.

Although differences within and divisions among Turkish migrant groups are mentioned, the impact and role of these identities in gender roles and integration are not expanded on. For example the differences between Alevis and Sunnis, Turks and Cypriots are not detailed and discussed. This might be partly due to the blindness of Feminist approaches over class and ethnic identity for the sake of highlighting the gender. These ethnic, religious and class differences do not appear clearly in the book.

In conclusion, Dedeoğlu’s book offers us an opportunity to comprehend the dimensions of Turkish ethnic economy in London without overlooking its own historicity while making it possible for us to contemplate on some rigid approaches in the migration literature. Women’s roles in migrants’ social integration is one of them.

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