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***Critical Perspectives on Migration in the Twenty-First Century*,
eds. Marianna Karakoulaki, Laura Southgate, & Jakob Steiner,
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pp. 243**

In the abstract of the book we can read that: “This book provides a critical overview of recent migration flows and offers answers as to why people flee, what happens during their flight and investigates the various responses to mass migratory movements” (p. 7). The book addresses long-running academic, policy and domestic debates, drawing on case studies of migration in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia Pacific. Coming from a variety of different fields (pedagogy, sociology, psychology, philosophy, cultural studies, political science), the contributors provide an interdisciplinary approach and open the discussion on the reasons why migration should be examined critically. Each of the chapters is worth discussing and reviewing.

The book starts with the introductions prepared by editors, and the chapters are presented in two parts: “Perspectives”, and “Drivers and Responses”.

“PERSPECTIVES”

In the first chapter, Thomas Nail uses a theoretical lens to discuss the modern philosophical history of the political centrality of the migrant. Nail reveals the existence of a common figure defined by movement and he claims we are now in

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a position to move forward with the consequences and political history of this figure for the twenty-first century. He wrote: “This means developing new theories of citizenship, sovereignty, borders, rights and nations – all from the perspective of the migrant. This means returning to political history and identifying all the old figures of the migrant and regimes of expulsion like the nomad, the barbarian, the vagabond and the proletariat that remain continuous with and inform the present. The present is still defined by the history of these techniques” (pp. 25–26). Nail’s chapter provides an answer to the most divisive debate of the past couple of years by discussing the history and theory of the migrant.

In the second chapter, Amadu Wurie Khan looks into the identity of migrants and argues that they can have multiple identities and are not restricted to a ‘singular’ national identity. He considers the United Kingdom (UK) government’s formulation of restrictive and assimilationist citizenship policies, and the impact of such policies on aspiring UK citizens. He wrote that: “Immigrants construct Britishness as culturally and ethnically diverse, to which they aspire to orientate” (p. 39). Khan explores this internalisation of cultures and identities through examination of the experiences and views of 23 asylum seekers and refugees residing in Edinburgh and Glasgow in Scotland, with interview questions covering a range of topics from naturalisation and statelessness, participation in British citizenship classes, and transnational cultural practices.

In her chapter, Emma Larking examines the universality of human rights, which she seeks to expose as a false premise. According to this argument, the universal enjoyment of human rights is in fact heavily circumscribed, with access to rights linked to citizenship of just a few states. For Larking: “Members of wealthy, rights-recognising states must confront what are genuine threats to their lifestyle, rights and culture. These threats do not stem directly from forced migration, but from global inequalities combined with the corrosive effects on the rule of law within states from designating forced migrants as unlawfully present and denying them equal recognition and protection under the law” (p. 52). As Larking seeks to show, re-casting human rights along recommended lines is possible, and can do more for self-determination than continuing to uphold an outdated conception of sovereignty.

In the next chapter, Susana S. Ferreira argues that the EU has entered a crisis mode, with increasingly negative and xenophobic statements leading to the securitisation of the migration crisis. Ferreira explores perceptions of European citizens, and the growing support for nationalist and populist parties in Europe, to claim that there has been an acceptance of this securitisation by the public. For Ferreira, if the EU does not move beyond a securitisation approach, security, stability and

the free movement of people are at risk. She wrote: “to sustain the Area of Freedom Security and Justice (AFSJ), the EU needs to move beyond a securitarian approach and adopt a coherent and comprehensive strategy regarding migration management, which ensures the security and stability of external borders while preserving the freedom of movement” (p. 68).

Chapter five sees Marianna Karakoulaki’s attempt to shed light on the refugee crisis in Greece. By using ethnography as a methodology, Karakoulaki tells five different stories that took place in five different periods between 2015 and 2017. These stories are an attempt to examine the way in which borders create violence, the kinds of violence they create and how this violence can be fought. She wrote: “One chapter is not enough to fully explain or even understand the concepts of violent borders and the theory of a no borders politics. However, I hope it can be a starting point of the discussion on how these two notions interconnect and how we can take them one step further in order to find new ways of approaching the notion of borders” (p. 86). Karakoulaki concludes that the violence of the borders can be eliminated with a no borders politics.

The final chapter of the “Perspectives” section, by Nicola Langdon, examines the Syrian refugee crisis through the lens of the British press. Langdon focuses her attention on British media ‘threat’ framing, ‘othering’ and cosmopolitan framing, which she argues, have impacted upon public understandings and perceptions of refugees. For Langdon, by framing the refugee movement as a threat and manipulating the proximity of the event, the British media has shaped our compassion for those suffering from violence and insecurity, and our support for policy formation in the wake of the Syrian crisis. She wrote: “In encouraging us to view through a cosmopolitan frame, the media may go some way to alleviate the hostility around issues such as immigration, strengthening human bonds and moral responses, and mitigating against a dereliction of the suffering of ‘others’ or the perpetuation of difference and indifference that contributes to a ‘threat’ construction and fear response” (p. 103).

“DRIVERS AND RESPONSES”

In the first chapter of this section, Kamel Doraï examines the movement of Syrian refugees towards neighbouring countries and assesses the socio-political consequences of the mass arrival of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan since 2011. Doraï focuses on the gradual changes of migration policies in both countries and their consequences on migration patterns, with special attention placed on Pales-

tinian refugees from Syria, and the forms of settlement of the Syrian refugees. For Doraï, the large influx of refugees from Syria has had a significant local impact on host societies and has led to the development of restrictive migration policies in neighbouring countries. He concludes: “The settlement of hundreds of thousands of refugees put pressure on the rental market and can lead to the deterioration of security in some areas. In most cases, the role of the refugee population in these processes has not been evaluated. Middle Eastern countries are not an exception” (p. 123).

Özlem Özdemir’s chapter examines an often-ignored issue; women refugees during the flight. Özdemir claims neither the migratory route nor transit camps are safe for women refugees. Through a gender and human security analysis, Özdemir looks into the specifics of women’s displacement by placing her focus on Syrian women refugees during the recent refugee crisis. The author wrote that: “international organizations such as the United Nations, NGOs and official authorities should develop a gender-based perspective, paying more attention to the specific needs of refugee women” (p. 137). Özdemir showcases the gendered nature of migration and concludes human security during migration needs to be examined through a gendered lens.

In her chapter, Sally Clark examines Australia’s asylum policies and its transit camps, as she explores the effects of developed nation-states’ aggressive border security policies on forced migrants and the transit countries that host them. For Clark, these practices are designed to exclude forced migrants from territories where the rights of asylum are enshrined. In her examination of the Australia-Indonesia relationship, Clark ascertains that Australia, in a bid to protect itself from unwanted migration, has implemented border security policies that have had an instrumental role in reconfiguring the search for asylum in Southeast Asia. In so doing, migrants have been left desperately searching for ways to seek protection. She wrote at the end of her chapter: “the architecture of international refugee protection appears intact, despite the purposeful dismantling of almost all legal ways for asylum seekers to access such rights, delegitimising the search for asylum and exposing people to increasingly vulnerable situations in legally ambiguous spaces in the process. To overcome this situation it is imperative that states implement migration policies that reflect the unique status of asylum seekers” (p. 154).

In the next chapter, Andriani Fili provides an in-depth examination of containment practices in Greece. Fili argues that Greece’s policies towards irregular migration have increasingly relied upon detention and deportation, to the detriment of human lives. Driven by an interest in the Greek notion of hospitality, Fili considers the primary characteristics of the Greek detention system. Fili claims

that Greek detention practices have been legitimised through a narrative of deterrence, the rationalisation of deportation and the denial of both policies' racialised nature. As a result, Greece's humanitarian and leftist ideals have been abandoned, and its migrants are left at risk and unaccounted for. She wrote: "The multiple crises that Greece is dealing with have fallen from view in the rest of Europe. It is now time to raise our voices for the people who have an inalienable right to live somewhere safely" (p. 173).

The next chapter by Anitta Kynsilehto examines different types of migrant solidarity action, both those with a humanitarian orientation, and those geared towards advocacy. For Kynsilehto, the distinctions in solidarity action are becoming increasingly difficult to uphold. This is due to inequalities that actors at all levels regularly witness, and the radical undermining of human rights frameworks. She wrote: "Not everyone can physically go and work for weeks or months in order to provide help where it is needed the most, be it for financial reasons, family commitments, emotional capacity or other reasons. For this reason, we need to acknowledge these are not the only available ways to 'do something', to act in solidarity. Every encounter counts. Everyone is needed" (p. 192). Kynsilehto addresses the spatialities and temporalities of solidarity activism, and the critical practices and politics of movements, before addressing the tendency of criminalising solidarity action and the long-term impact on actions of solidarity.

In the next chapter, Valsamis Mitsilegas assesses legal meaning in the Common European Asylum System. Mitsilegas seeks to demonstrate the limits of a state-centred approach to solidarity. In this view, claims of solidarity have been advanced with states as beneficiaries and reference points. Instead, Mitsilegas advocates a concept of solidarity centred on the individual, achievable by the application of the principle of mutual recognition in the field of positive asylum decisions. Mitsilegas argues for a uniform refugee status across the European Union, which can act as a catalyst for a strengthened refugee-centred solidarity. He wrote: "Such a centralised system has the potential to achieve the aim of a uniform refugee status across the EU and it can act as a catalyst for the transformation of solidarity under the essential condition that it places the agency and preferences of asylum seekers at its heart" (p. 206).

The next chapter by Benjamin Hulme and Dora Kostakopoulou analyses the European Union's migration policy. Hulme and Kostakopoulou examine a number of historical developments in the European Union's migration policy, before moving on to focus on more recent developments in EU policy. These recent developments include the creation of a new European Coast Guard, and new forms of 'third-country' agreements and the harmonisation of 'third-country' information.

The authors wrote: “External cooperation is further complicated by each ‘third country’ having its own economic and political concerns to balance with those of the EU. As demonstrated by states such as Morocco, future developments in the policy will rely not only on the political goodwill of the ‘third country’, but also the EU being able to reconcile the often opposing interests at play in such a politically-sensitive area” (p. 219). The authors highlight a number of concerns with regard to these developments, including the need to respect human rights and provide effective protection to those in need. However, for Hulme and Kostakopoulou these developments are a significant step forward in the development of a truly Common European Asylum System.

The last chapter of the book, by Jenny Poon, is an in-depth examination of the legal responses to the refugee crisis. Poon argues that the international and regional legal responses to the refugee crisis have been inadequate and far too late. At the international level, Poon claims that guidelines imposed by the UNHCR permit group recognition of refugee status, rather than the processing of applications on a case-by-case basis. At the regional level, it is argued that the European Union’s process of swapping one asylum claimant for another promotes violation of the principle of non-refoulement. She wrote: “As demonstrated, both the UNHCR and EU responses to the migrant crisis have been anything but adequate and timely. The UNHCR’s proposal to establish group-based recognition of refugees appears to be problematic, given that the individualised interview and, therefore, the right to be heard would be curtailed. The EU’s proposal to return asylum claimants or refugees back to Turkey where the asylum system is deficient, violates non-refoulement obligations and the prohibition against collective expulsion” (p. 234). For Poon, change should be implemented at both levels in order to properly safeguard the rights of asylum claimants and refugees.

The topic of migration is one that has no end. Whilst it is difficult to grasp all aspects of migration fully, this book tries to bridge the gap between different fields and frameworks and provide an insight into the current migration crisis. The ultimate goal of the editors is to encourage discussion on the utility of the critical perspective as a theoretical tool of analysis, and the interdisciplinary nature of migration and refugee studies.

One important strength of the book is that the authors consider in great detail the philosophical history of the migrant, the language and framing of migration, and narratives of security, sovereignty and identity. The other important strength is that the collected authors critique current approaches and offer new and innovative ways to address migration in the twenty-first century. Without a doubt, this book is a very valuable item.