

KİTAP TAHLİLLERİ / BOOK REVIEWS

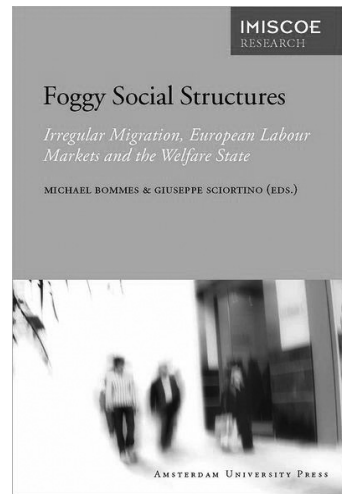
Foggy social structures: irregular migration, European labor markets and the welfare state, edited by Michael Bommès and Giuseppe Sciortino.

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Due to global economic development, an increased number of individuals have moved across national borders worldwide. In European countries, at the age of migration, the majority of them are irregular labor migrants. Despite growing number and greater importance, they have, until recently, largely fallen unstudied. A collection of essays, *Foggy social structures: irregular migration, European labor markets and the welfare state*, edited by Michael Bommès and Giuseppe Sciortino, makes a significant contribution to the study of international migration, and East-West flows in Europe in particular.

This collection, unlike many edited volumes having weakness of ‘many branches, no roots’—each section perhaps is compelling but all together fail to form a coherent whole, sets an excellent model for framing individual chapters. Despite multiple theoretical perspectives on different ethnic groups within different European states and diverse methodological approaches using various types of data, the contributors share one objective: to shed light on the relationships between three primary elements



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in this book, irregular migration, the labor markets and receiving countries' strategies in Western Europe, and how such relationships change across periods of eastern enlargement of the EU, as well as their effects on migrants' spatial mobility across the Continent.

The volume has five parts. The first part, Introduction, briefly presents two perspectives, scientific and humanitarian perspective, to explain the existence and effects of irregular migration, and offers background and sets the stage for a conceptual framework to analyze this structural phenomenon. The second part (Chapter 2 to 4) provides detailed examination of three irregular migratory systems against a backdrop of eastern enlargement, and attempts to see the changes it makes. The third part (Chapter 5-6) deals with the relationship between irregular migration and European welfare regimes. Using case studies to demonstrate all attempts to tackle irregular migration embedded in informal economies some European countries make, the fourth part (Chapter 7-9) explores how irregular migration interacts with European states' strategies and practices. The final part, Epilogue, summarizes many relevant theoretical questions, and endeavors to establish a conceptual framework for irregular migration investigation.

There are three valuable points of this book. First, irregularity, a key word throughout the collection, is interpreted from a dynamic and two-way rather than a static and one-way perspective. On one hand, having observed '(...), there are no irregular (or illegal) migrants, but only individuals who have—in a specific space and for a specific time—an irregular (or illegal) status' (p.216), editors advocate treating irregularity as a set of statuses that vary depending on contexts rather than an clear-cut condition. In this sense, defining an individual as irregular in a country, a means of social exclusion, implicitly captures a process featured by increased or decreased vulnerability to marginalization, rather than describes a current circumstance in sharp contrast to social inclusion (Gallie, 2004; cited in Wang, 2012, p. 46). Besides, considering the process relates to 'character of the social system' and 'the dynamic development of social structures' (Byrne, 2005, p. 2; cited in Wang, 2012, p. 47), this dynamic interpretation provides an insight into the changing social institutional mechanisms in Europe, through which migrants negotiate their identities. On the other hand, irregularity is deemed as a legal status that features an interactive relationship between migrants and each destination country rather than characteristics of migrants per se. This interaction is embedded in Foucault's claim that 'irregular migrants' is 'an outcome of governmental practices' (p. 69) in Chapter 4. An emphasis on two agents allows a better understanding of the nature of domination-subordination involved in the interaction.

Second, Simmel's notion of 'secret society' (1950: 330) is used to delineate the 'social fog' created by collaboration between irregular migrants and informal institutions. In Chapter 8 where Engbersen and Broeders analyze governmental management of irregularity in Netherlands, there is a dialectical relationship identified between informal institutions deemed as 'secret societies' and public worlds seen as 'manifest societies': the latter creates the former, and the former affects the latter in turn. This connection challenges the 'underworld' metaphor, a conventionally defined proxy for irregular migration, and helps to better understand the meaning of 'foggy social structures' as the link 'between irregular migration and broader processes of informality within any social fabric' (p. 225). Given the complex nature of foggy social structures—it stays in both the manifest societies and the secret societies, and results from conflicting economic, social and judicial forces, as well as the impossibility of its absence, Engbersen and Broeders express positive yet practical attitudes towards irregularity in European migratory systems. This not only enables them to give creative suggestions on policy improvement in European irregular migration, but also encourages studies of other modern societies with similar structures to tackle this structural phenomenon with a strategic rather than parametric approach.

Third, this book, unlike many traditional migration studies that are either structure-based or agency-oriented, emphasizes human agency and societal structures simultaneously, and more importantly, demonstrates how to explore the interaction between them in a compelling way. Contributors advocate the effects of social conditions on irregular migrants, and meanwhile highlight the significance of irregular migrants' interaction with the receiving society. For instance, in Chapter 4 where Ukrainian and Polish migrants working in domestic sector in Italy are concerned, on one hand, irregular migration is seen as an effective means of solving the structural mismatches (e.g., labor supply and demand in the labor market) embedded in modern Italy, and also a representation of social structure and values (e.g., stereotypes about live-in care workers) in the society. On the other hand, irregular immigrants, when facing marginalization in the labor market, change their options and develop new strategies to facilitate their survival there. For example, one may quit the job with indecent pay and low prestige and use accumulative resources to find another. No doubt, an investigation of how irregular migrants 'act independently within and against the structures of society' (Wang, 2011, p. 2) challenges two extremes within migration area.

There are two points editors could have dealt with more appropriately. The first one deals with less in-depth exploration of intersectionality in Chapter 4 by Nare. In order to test whether and demonstrate how work relations in informal and irregular practices involve personalized and moral judgment, Nare compares Ukrainian and Polish female migrants taking live-in domestic work in Naples. Having observed that paid domestic work practices are stratified by gender and race and meanwhile, stereotypes are gendered and racialized rather than neutral, Nare implicitly emphasizes the notion of 'intersectionality'. However, he never uses it to conceptualize experiences of these minority female migrants who have double social categories of identity. Consequently, two identities (i.e., minority and female) are treated independent and separate analytic categories, and each female migrant with two intersecting identities is thought to suffer 'the distinctive forms of oppression' related to her 'subordinate identities summed together' (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008, p. 378; cited in Wang, 2012, p. 56-57). This is against the fact and premise of the intersectional theory that each individual's identities are interdependent and interact to produce his/her unique and simultaneous experiences (Mehrotra, 2010, p. 421; cited in Wang, 2012, p. 57). Thus, it might be better to use intersectionality to further explore how these female migrants suffer prejudice or discrimination in Naples.

The second concerns an inadequate understanding of the relationship between two micro-level theories that elaborate accommodation processes through which Romanian irregular migrants employ strategies to move and resettle in Italy. In Chapter 2, with a focus on push factors of migration, Anghel uses a mixed theoretical perspective, including not only macro approach but also micro approach that contains the network perspective on migration and the theory of cumulative causation. These two micro-level perspectives differ from each other— the network perspective on migration stresses migrants' specific mechanisms to facilitate the development of migration from Romania to Italy, whereas the cumulative causation theory highlights the importance of accumulation of social and cultural capital in this migration process— however, they share a focus on social capital. This can be found in the process where migrants create kinship and friendship as migration networks to progressively form border-crossing mobility and achieve social integration in destination countries. Clearly, two micro-level theories are closely related and cannot be arbitrarily divided. In places, due to the absence of a lucid interpretation of the relationship between them, readers are left uncertain whether and how these two theories operate to analyze migrants' mechanisms and development of migration from Romania to Italy.

In all, despite some limitations, editors, who have brought together several accomplished immigration scholars across disciplines and across countries to analyze European irregular migration, should be praised for their competent entry into a heretofore neglected field of study and for contributing an insightful and extraordinary must read for academics and practitioners interested in this topic. The organization and language make often complex ideas accessible to a broad audience.

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