

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Bangstad, Sindre (2014) *The Politics of Mediated Presence: Exploring the Voices of Muslims in Norway's Mediated Public Spheres*, Oslo: Spartacus Forlag/Scandinavian Academic Press, 318 pp.**

This book dwells on the experiences of young individuals of Muslim background who, over the past years, have exercised their freedom of expression by their extensive involvement in public debates over Islam in Norway – and the price they have paid for this engagement. In the recent decade, we have witnessed an increasing number of Muslim youth voicing their views on how Muslims are portrayed in the mainstream and new social media and what they conceive the role of Islam to be in defining their way of life. Often, young Muslims contrast their experiences to former ‘spokespersons’ from their parents’ generation who are seldom viewed as representative for the new or ‘second’ generation, born and bred in Norwegian society and with Norway as their primary frame of reference. In parallel to this development, a range of ‘critical events’ have brought challenges of Muslim integration and growing anti-Muslim sentiments in Western Europe into core political issues of our time. While writing this review, in November 2015, France has again been subjected to a terror attack, allegedly organised by ISIL. It is reported that during the attack, 130 people were killed in restaurants, bars and concert venues in Paris, raising the danger of an even more polarised debate over the current refugee crisis in Europe, as well as raising anti-Muslim sentiments to ever higher levels. Suffice it to say, Sindre Bangstad, a social anthropologist currently affiliated with KIFO Institute for Church, Religion, and Worldview Research in Oslo and the author of *Politics of Mediated Presence*, has chosen a topic of extremely high relevance.

The book is organised into six voluminous chapters. In the first and second chapters, Bangstad presents the theoretical framework and background for the book and provides an introduction to the Norwegian context, with particular emphasis on Norway’s Muslim population and how Muslims often are depicted as a threat to freedom of expression in public debates. Here he also explains what is meant by ‘politics of presence’. The term may point to how liberal democracies are increasingly concerned with an adequate representation of different social groups (although with mixed success), but also to how ordinary citizens engage in questions related to human rights, equality and justice. Bangstad uses the term in both ways, by analysing how young Norwegian Muslims use the opportunities offered by the Norwegian media to engage in questions

over Islam and Muslims in Norway. By adding ‘mediated’ to the term, he signals that the book’s focus is on opinions expressed through traditional mainstream media channels, and that any participation in these media is mediated – in the sense that opinions are structured through editing and that publishing is ultimately a matter of editors’ discretion. And by interviewing two groups of individuals – 12 well-known (they are presented by full name) young Muslim men and women who have been active participants in mainstream Norwegian media over the past years, and a smaller selection of prominent editors who have been central in granting these young people access to the public sphere – we get access to experiences and motivations from both sides.

Due to the fact that debates over Muslims and Islam tend to be heated and controversial, Bangstad claims that the opportunity for public engagement is particularly great for individuals of Muslim background. Importantly, however, he also claims that Norwegian media is characterised by a liberal-secularist hegemony, which privileges Muslim voices (and particularly Muslim women) who serve as potential ‘modernisers’ and ‘reformers’ of Islam. Indeed, he states that ‘in the hierarchy of voices of Muslim background that are privileged by Norwegian mainstream media, we often find agnostics and atheists who rank at the very top in terms of the space and coverage provided’ (p. 27). This claim has previously been made by the Norwegian social anthropologist Marianne Gullestad (2006) who, based on analyses of Norwegian media debates over immigration in the late 1990s and early 2000s, argued that the media operates with a ‘star system’ in which Muslim women who are critical of conservative Islam are ranked at the very top.

Whether or not Gullestad was right in making these observations almost two decades ago, Bangstad’s book really does not provide any empirical evidence of the continued relevance of such a ‘star system.’ Perhaps with the exception of Amal Adan, a pseudonym for a Norwegian-Somali author and activist who has written several books and articles in which she has been critical to practices in the Somali community in Oslo, none of his interviewees are, in fact, very critical of the Muslim community or Islam as such. In Chapters 3 (published as an article in *Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale* in 2013), 4, and 5, we are introduced to a number of prominent Muslim individuals in Norway. Particularly, in the two latter chapters, we get in-depth presentations of their family backgrounds, their paths to the influential positions many of them have today, as well as of their views on Islam and their experiences with the media. Among these individuals are some of the strongest, most eloquent critics

of racist and anti-Muslim rhetoric in Norwegian society and several of them are religiously conservative. Inhabiting these positions has resulted in experiences of hatred, intolerance and harassment. Surely, these experiences are extremely important to document and Bangstad has done an excellent job in doing this. However, his choice of interviewees and the fact that many of them have used their influence to occupy nuanced in-between positions in debates over Muslims and Islam in Norway really serve as a demonstration of the diversity of young Muslim voices that are present in the Norwegian public sphere today.

This point relates to another critical remark I have to Bangstad's analysis. Throughout the book, I believe he understates the actual diversity of opinions among journalists and editors in Norwegian newspapers and their motivations for attracting new voices to the public sphere. Although he is clearly correct in pointing out that media coverage of Muslims in Norway often has a negative focus (a criticism raised on a number of occasions and from a variety of scholars as well as Muslim youth themselves), it is not evident that editors and journalists have a preference for liberal-secular Muslim voices that 'denounce their own kind' (p. 31). Indeed, all of his interviewees have experiences of being encouraged to participate by the very editors representing what Bangstad calls a 'liberal-secularist hegemony of the contemporary Norwegian media' (p. 21). Of course, 'having a voice and being provided access to the public sphere is not synonymous with being heard nor being heard in the precise way one would like to be heard' (p. 23). However, as Bangstad has not included any of the individuals who presumably rank on top of editors' hierarchy of Muslim voices, his interviewees' experiences are never compared to the experiences of individuals of Muslim background who do not self-identify as practicing Muslims, which would otherwise serve as an interesting contrast case.

In the sixth and final chapter, Bangstad revisits some of the most severe examples of harassment, verbal threats, and even physical assaults that his interviewees had experienced. There can be few doubts that his work sheds light on important aspects of the dynamics of the public sphere in Norway. The harassment, threats, and racist speech minorities risk experiencing when participating in public debates have received growing scholarly and political attention in recent years, and the awareness of right-wing and anti-Muslim extremism has substantially increased since the July 22, 2011, terror attacks, in which Anders Behring Breivik assassinated 77 individuals, a majority of them politically active youth.

Still, I believe Bangstad has a too pessimistic interpretation of the societal effects of the mere presence of these young Muslim voices in the public sphere. His interviewees include people like Hadia Tajik, former Minister of Culture, now Deputy Leader of the Labour Party and Chair of the Standing Committee on Justice in the Norwegian Parliament; Mina Adampour, medical doctor and former leader of Norwegian Youth Against Racism; Ilham Hassan, the first qualified lawyer of Norwegian-Somali background in Norway; Abid Raja, lawyer and Member of Parliament for the Liberal Party (Venstre); and Shoaib Sultan, former Secretary General of the Islamic Council of Norway, today adviser at the Norwegian Centre Against Racism and Member of City Council of Oslo representing the Norwegian Green Party. No doubt, many of these individuals have paid a high price for their public engagement. Nevertheless, I disagree with Bangstad that 'the mediated public presence of Muslims in contemporary Norway may in fact matter less than we think' (p. 232). By virtue of their influential positions and the various ideological and political dispositions they display, these individuals serve as powerful representatives of and role models for a new generation of Norwegian Muslims currently

coming of age. And of no less importance: Over the longer run, I believe they will contribute to changing our conceptions of what constitutes the Norwegian mainstream society.

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**Kaya, Mehmed S. & Fauske, Halvor (eds.) (2014) *Innvandrere på utsiden av samfunnet*, Oslo: Abstrakt forlag. 213 pp.**

Immigrants and their so-called integration (or supposed lack of integration) are disputed topics in Europe and beyond. This book deals with several social issues related to immigration in Norway. It has been written for an audience of students, practitioners, and the interested public. The views in Norwegian debate, which as in so many other European countries, question both the economical and social costs of the arrival of asylum seekers and other migrants, and in this context, this publication is a welcome contribution. Here, scholarly experts, by sharing their knowledge in a comprehensible way, give substance to inflamed discussions. The editors underline the heterogeneity among immigrants and intend to answer why some end up in vulnerable and marginalised positions.

The contributors are researchers with extensive empirical knowledge about the Norwegian context and with an ability to communicate their research findings in a neither too academic nor too superficial way. A mix of sociologists, social anthropologists, and political scientists examines and problematises diverse issues in relation to immigration, which are easily recognizable from news media. They mostly do so by discussing various case studies and empirical material that they have themselves collected. Apart from adding to the knowledge on the situation of immigrants, the aim of the book is to widen the societal debate and even open a space for immigrants to have a say. This is an admirable ambition. On the other hand, the strong focus in the book on different 'problem areas' in relation to migration and integration risks to reproduce images of immigrants as only being hindrances and inconveniences. In addition, these problems seem to have been defined by the media, the Norwegian welfare state, and the general public, not by the researchers and their interlocutors. The researchers' acceptance of this 'outsider's perspective' leaves me with a certain discomfort that I will come back to later.

The book can be divided into three main parts. First, there is an introduction where the basic scholarly debate about migration, minorities, and marginalization is outlined. Fauske writes about different terms used within migration research and how the conceptualization also informs the questions we ask and our understanding of a problem and its solution. For instance, the Scandinavian habit to lump together people under the term 'immigrants' (innvandrere, invandrare, indvandrere in Norwegian, Swedish and Danish respectively), regardless of diverse political statuses, national backgrounds, migration histories, and life experiences, is brought up as an example of risky simplification. It is a fine introduction to today's state-of-the-art within migration studies

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although I would have wished that the writer had brought up racial discrimination and illegality in host societies as additional dimensions in processes of inclusion and marginality. I also note that Fauske's fine discussion about what it means to be on the margins of society, rather than outside of it as the book title suggests, adequately describes the situation of many immigrants in Norway.

In the second part, the five chapters discuss particular issues relating to immigrants in Norway. Chapter 1 by Mehmed S. Kaya deals with Kurdish and Turkish immigrant women and their participation in the labour market. The main argument is that rural–urban divides in the country of origin has a large impact on labour participation in Norway. Women with a countryside background tend to remain outside the labour market since their self-realization is often connected to being a housewife and a mother rather than being a professional. It would have been interesting to know more about how the women from rural areas understand motherhood. I also think that the author should be more careful when he generalises about traditional Muslims as being especially keen to keep women from working outside the home. In my experience from the Middle East, there are both Christian and Jewish groups that resist women's participation in the labour market.

Chapter two by Hogne Øian brings up immigration and social integration more generally and briefly examines three public debates in relation to immigrants (arranged marriages, headscarves and honour-related violence). Chapter three by Kirsten Danielsen discusses transnational marriages that end in divorces from the point of view of migrating women from Pakistan, Ukraine and Germany. It is an interesting contribution building on life histories. I appreciate the author for discussing class and educational differences between the migrating women although it is difficult to understand why Danielsen does not highlight the hierarchies between Western and non-Western migrants that I assume is present in Norwegian society as elsewhere.

The fourth chapter is based on a longitude study and focuses on Tamils in Norway, having left the fishing industries in northern Norway in search of community and spirituality in the capital. Here, the author outlines the complexities and many ambiguities involved in feeling oneself at home in a new country. In search of spiritual well-being, those Hindus also make use of diasporic networks stretching over several nation-states. There is, for instance, a woman who prefers visiting a Hindu temple in Paris to the one in Oslo, since she thinks the Parisian place of worship is more powerful. The angle of this chapter is refreshingly different from those of the other chapters. The author, social anthropologist Anne Sigfrid Grønseth, puts the meaning-creation and the concerns of the migrants in focus, not those of the welfare state or the majority population. Grønseth finally argues for accepting and giving equal value to cultural differences in Norway. Her informants' needs of social networks, spirituality, and consumption should be as valued as the needs of other Norwegians.

Trude Brita Nergård has written chapter five. It focuses on ageing immigrants and the negotiations among immigrant families from three different countries (Pakistan, Vietnam, and Sri Lanka) on how to properly care for the elderly. We also get to know how the elderly themselves prefer to be cared for. This chapter includes some interesting comparisons and it also becomes clear that change is indeed part and parcel of the experiences of migrants. Despite strong cultural norms about caring for family members at home and lack of experiences with nursing homes, many of the elderly could actually accept help from outside.

Lastly, two chapters are focused on methods that aim to include and organise immigrants or to deal with social problems in a more hands-on way. The sixth chapter, by Ida Hydle and Anja Bredal, gives the reader an insight into a methodology built on dialogue and

mediation in cases of honour-related family conflicts. What stays with me after reading this piece is the theoretical background of the method, building on Levinas and Bakhtin (see Aarnes 1995; Bakhtin 1996), and the examples that suggest a need for translation of the parents' culture to youth growing up in Norway – a proof of cultural change and integration in itself. Finally, Marianne Takle's chapter focuses on so-called immigrant associations and diverse ways to understand processes of integration as either a one-way, two-way or three-way process. I appreciate the description of how the Norwegian welfare state's distribution of economical support to and organisation of immigrant organisations seem to hinder these organisations to become any real threat to Norwegian power structures.

The collection gives insight into Norwegian society as a host country and the book's strength is the examples of lived experiences of migrants. Read one by one, the chapters are interesting and most provide in-depth case studies. However, the book does not question the majority society's problem description, but rather reinforce it. Neither does the book convincingly answer why many migrants end up in vulnerable and marginalised positions. The problems related to the struggle for re-establishing oneself in a new society cannot only be understood by a focus on the background of the migrants. I wish that there was a more critical look at Norway as an accommodating society in all the chapters. Immigrants' experiences of Norway do not only deal with institutions and representatives of the welfare state but include also encounters with neighbours, colleagues at work, and class mates, for instance.

A book of this kind cannot cover everything, of course. Despite that, I cannot help but wonder about the perspectives of immigrants themselves. In my view, only a few of the chapters focus on those perspectives. What kind of problems and joys could immigrants themselves have liked to debate in this book? Although many probably would agree that there are real social problems such as misunderstandings and even violence between the generations in many families, there must be other concerns as well. Where are the experiences of discrimination in the Norwegian labour market, for instance? How do immigrants, especially those on the margins of society, understand the Norwegian welfare state and its complexities? How do people try to deal with their worries about family members in different war-torn parts of the world? Are parents afraid of losing their children to a way of life and a language they do not fully master themselves? And last but not the least, what kind of gains and joys have life in Norway provided?

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**Singla, Rashmi (2015) *Intermarriage and Mixed Parenting, Promoting Mental Health and Wellbeing. Crossover Love*, Houndmills, Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave MacMillan. 249 pp.**

Mixed marriages has been an issue that has defined the limits and borders of normality and accepted love in Danish society, as Rashmi Singla's newly published book clearly shows. Dr. Rashmi Singla, an

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associate professor at the Department of Psychology and Educational Research at the Roskilde University in Denmark, and her research team, have conducted a research about eight couples with Danish-Asian backgrounds. Singla has then used the interview material for widening the cultural theory perspectives to mental health counselling and family therapy. In this book, Singla discusses the questions, challenges and possibilities that mark the journey of mixed marriages in a Nordic society from the mixed couples' own point of view. Her analysis attempts to combine both the everyday life experiences and her own experiences of psychosocial practicing (p. 60), which makes the aim unique and challenging. Themes in the book discuss the meaning-making processes of everyday interactions among mixed families (p. 59), which Singla has done by analysing narratives of interviewed people, and their negotiations of identity.

The book consists of nine chapters. Singla starts with the introduction to Danish history of mixedness, the research material and interviewees. Analytic chapters concentrate on couples' narratives of falling in love, everyday life practices such as bringing up children, and finally public gaze, and implications on mental health counselling. Singla uses the concepts of transnationalism and intersectionalism to explain the experiences of cultural mixedness.

Singla writes that one of the inspirations for the book is the science of intimate relationship (Fletcher et. al. 2013). She explains that a common, universal goal for human life is to achieve a romantic, intimate partnership and love, often in a permanent or long-term relationship, and the conditions for searching for that love have changed due to globalization process (pp. 2-3). This assumption of basic need for intimate relation and love lead the book and analysis. Singla emphasises that love marriages are not only Western forms of marriages but they are psychologically common and found in some form in all cultures. This can be seen as opposite to a discussion of culturally defined categories of 'love marriage' and 'arranged' or 'forced' marriages (pp. 23–25), the latter typically connected to non-Western, Asian cultures. In relation to this topic, Singla shows examples from the interviews: she argues that love marriages are culturally approved in the Nordic society, and so Danish-Asian mixed couples emphasise their love marriage to defend their 'true' love and normality in relation to experienced 'otherness'. As mixed couples may confront many prejudices, they constantly need to keep their marriages looking (like) happy in the eyes of the other people. As Singla writes, the couples in the study reflect their marriages in the light of other people's expectations and reactions, and talk about love in relation to these aspects (p. 73).

In Western history mixed marriages have been controlled, condemned and questioned, and foreign spouses have been largely ignored in Denmark. Danish nation is pictured as monogenic, ethnically and religiously simplified, white, Christian, and despite the presence of minorities, this image has been strong. Danish history of marriages is based on the idea of intra-cultural marriages, and mixedness is commonly ignored in publicity. As Singla reminds, one can still talk about racial illiteracy in Danish society. Thus, intermarriages challenge images of family and normality, Singla argues (p. 40), and she continues by referring to Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim (2002) who said that intermarried couples constitute a problem of social order in a Danish culture. The experiences that immigrants and mixed families go through are present in public discourses and experiences of all 'coloured', and this book aims to give a voice for those who are ethnically, visibly different (p. 1).

The final, and possibly the freshest, part of the book was about the implications that were made for understanding the culture-specific questions in family therapy – even if it could have been a bit wider in

scope. Singla starts by saying that dynamics within an intermarriage are related to mental well-being of families and its members, and relationships and family formation are culturally negotiated (p. 59). In mental health and family therapy, patients and clients are treated without taking their cultural background into account, and that is something that the author criticises: good intentions of cultural equality may end up in racial illiteracy, which ignores questions that are related to multicultural identities. The author reminds that cultural issues may raise challenges that so-called normal couples do not have, but intercultural questions are often neglected in family therapy sessions (pp. 220-225). Singla goes on to add that it often seems that both couples and therapists refuse to accept culture's effect on the marriage. If so, a professional should be able to see a full picture and analyse the couple in wider context, to understand cultural and societal situation in which an immigrant spouse is living in, and how power hierarchy is constructed in the family and in the cultural context. This demands a lot from a therapist, and as Singla emphasises, academic research about cultural aspects and migration is seldom present in practical therapies (pp. 220-225). The author herself has an Indian background, which she openly admits, and at the same time uses as a tool to get closer to research participants. Singla has been able to use her immigrant background for understanding the issues related to topic and it is likely that this has helped her to discuss the sensitive cultural issues as well.

On the other hand, the book reminds us that even if cultural traits, habits and tradition have their impact on individual's life, the intersections of age, socio-economic status, education and personal history should be seen even more important than ethnicity and culture. Intersectionalism is used as a tool for understanding the experiences that people have in a contesting, multi-layered environment, and for mixed couples those intersections pose challenges when they try to create common lives. Personal, educational and social factors are often more important than ethnic or cultural issues in individual's life course. Singla uses the concepts of 'Global North–Global South' to describe Danish-Asian marriages and global movements from 'poor South' to 'prosperous North'. The stereotypes of gendered marriage migrants may create hierarchical assumptions between spouses, and later on, spouses may unconsciously recreate those stereotypes in their everyday lives. The book finally leaves the question, how these stereotypes can be overcome but cultural background still taken seriously.

Singla manages to enlighten the experiences of mixed couples and asks important questions about multi-cultural counselling and its challenges in her book. Singla shows from the material that the marriages may go through three different phases in their lifecycle, and couples' narratives are related to the phase that their marriage is currently in (pp. 90–91). The honeymoon phase, family establishment phase and the settled phase are present in everyday discussions and practices, and most of all different phases create different challenges and solutions in therapy.

Singla's notions about cultural and individual intersections in couples' lives are illustrative and intriguing, but author's simple idea of marriage and love slightly troubles the reader. Even though the book has a strong, culturally sensitive background and it discusses the cultural aspects of marriage and tradition, the analysis concentrates mostly on modern, narrow understandings of human life and love. However, the book discusses topical and challenging issues in Nordic countries and narratives of interviewed couples make the study worth reading. Also the impact on mental health perspective could have been wider: the analysis of narratives and everyday life experiences is interesting, deeply needed knowledge, but stronger



practical implications or applied aspects might have brought the book on to another level, as it now concentrates more on general cultural analysis and gets occasionally lost in multiple themes. The book is anyhow a fascinating and valuable opening for discussion about immigration, mixed marriages, family therapy and mental health.

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**Thym, Daniel & Zoetewij-Turhan, Margarite (eds.) (2015) *Rights of Third-Country Nationals under EU Association Agreements*, Leiden & Boston: Brill & Nijhoff. 299 pp.**

In times when unrest in the Middle East shows no signs of abating and ever larger waves of refugees are fleeing to Europe, as well as in light of the continuing globalisation process, cooperation between the EU and neighbouring countries plays a crucial role for stability and growth in the continent. A cornerstone of the European project is free movement of persons – an indispensable feature of the EU integration, which distinguishes it from other forms of international economic cooperation. Over the last few decades, the transformation of the EU from an economic to a political community has manifest itself in expansion of rights, resulting in the introduction of the EU citizenship, as well as creation of a general right to permanent residence for EU citizens and their family members. Yet, when it comes to bilateral relations with neighbours, the neighbours find themselves in a somewhat ambiguous situation between membership and partnership. The status of their citizens remains a challenge for the EU institutions, which need to decide: should they opt for a categorical distinction between 'citizens' and 'foreigners' or should they develop intermediate categories?

The book *Rights of Third-Country Nationals under EU Association Agreements* edited by Daniel Thym and Margarite Zoetewij-Turhan, aims to answer this question. The volume addresses the grey area by examining the role the free movement of persons plays in EU association agreements. In their contributions, 12 scholars in the field of migration law argue that, instead of creating distinctive categories, the EU tends to opt for 'intermediate solutions' by establishing degrees of free movement and citizenship. While providing a general insight into the interaction between EU law and association agreements, the main focus of the book lies within the Association Agreement between The Republic of Turkey and the European Economic Community (EEC) (further referred to as the Ankara Agreement). Signed in 1963, the Agreement initiated the process towards the future accession of Turkey to the EEC by aiming to strengthen trade and economic relations between the parties and facilitate development of the Turkish economy. The principle of free movement is one of the cornerstones of the Agreement. Together with its Additional Protocol and Association Council Decisions (*Ankara Acquis*), it provides for the progressive securing of freedom of movement for workers, as well as abolition of restrictions on freedom of establishment and freedom to provide services. Currently, the Agreement provides certain guarantees to Turkish workers who are legally resident in the EU, with regard to their working conditions and social security rights.

As outlined in the introduction, the decision to focus on the Ankara Agreement has been dictated by a number of reasons. First, the Agreement concerns the legal status of some 2.3 million Turkish citizens, which constitutes about 10 per cent of all third-country nationals living in the EU. Second, there is a substantial body of case-law on the migration-related aspects of the Ankara Agreement. Third, its interpretation by the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) has influenced the development of European migration law at large. The analysis of case law, presented in the book, largely revolves around two crucial aspects: the *Polydor* principle<sup>1</sup> and the so-called standstill clauses of the *Ankara Acquis*<sup>2</sup>. The former requires the Court, when interpreting EU association agreements, consider the wording and purpose of the specific provision. The latter have developed into meaningful legal instruments through the CJEU case law.

The volume is structured into three parts. The first part focuses on the role of CJEU in interpreting EU association agreements, in general, and Ankara Agreement, in particular. Daniel Thym, for example, examines the implications of the Ankara Agreement from a broader legal and constitutional perspective. He argues that in comparison to the CJEU's position on other treaties, the case law on EU-Turkey agreement has always been 'quite lenient'. This can be explained by the fact that its provisions on workers and the self-employed relate back to the economic paradigm of the single market. On this basis, the CJEU held that these rules should be interpreted by analogy with EU free movement rules so far as it is possible. This formula, however, does not always provide a clear guidance on the resolution of the cases. Thym shows that economic and non-economic considerations overlap, one bright example being the case of passive service reception. In particular, the CJEU held that passive service reception is not covered by the standstill provision of the Additional Protocol and, therefore, regular tourists may be required to obtain a visa for Member States, which did not prescribe one when the Protocol entered into force. Nevertheless, as Thym notes, one could argue that the 'passive' freedom to receive services was covered by the economic dimension of the Ankara agreement and there is no clear division of what is and what is not covered by economic ends.

The second part of the book moves beyond the realm of the Ankara Agreement and engages in a comparative analysis of rights provided for different categories of third-country nationals under European migration law. In their chapter 'Pretending There is No Union: Non-derivative Quasi-Citizenship Rights of Third-Country Nationals in the EU', Dimitry Kochenov and Martijn van den Brink explicitly show that EU law provides for an set of complicated, at times overlapping and confusing statuses, which resembles all but a comprehensive system. As the title of their contribution suggests, the EU has failed to develop an inclusive common approach to those Europeans who do not have the Union citizenship. One particular example is the long-term residents' directive, according to which those third country nationals (TCNs) who resided five years in one Member

<sup>1</sup>The principle originates from the CJEU judgment in *Polydor and Others v Harlequin and Others (C-270/80)*, according to which interpretation of agreements concluded by the EU depends, *inter alia*, not only on their wording but also their aim and particular context. Therefore, the fact that the provisions of an EU association agreement and the corresponding EU Treaty provisions are identically worded does not mean that they necessarily must be identically interpreted.

<sup>2</sup>The standstill clauses provide that the Member States and Turkey may not introduce new restrictions on the freedom of establishment and the freedom to provide services (Additional Protocol), as well as the conditions of access to employment applicable to workers and their family members legally resident and employed in their respective territories (Association Council Decision 1/80).

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State can obtain a long-term residence permit, while those who have moved between Member States cannot. As the authors conclude, such a practice goes against the spirit of the Union, 'contributing a great deal to othering and humiliation' (p. 80).

The third part of the volume goes back to the Ankara Agreement, now seeking to provide in-depth insights into different aspects of its interaction with EU free movement law. Margarite Helena Zoetewij-Turhan focus on the readmission agreement with the EU, considered by Turkey as a 'necessary evil' on its way on visa liberalisation with the EU. She argues that, apart from entering into such agreement, other preconditions for visa liberalisation, including the respect for human rights, have yet to be fulfilled. In this context, it is interesting to look at the issue from the perspective of Ozan Turhan who argues that visa regime and associated costs put obstacles to the activities of Turkish entrepreneurs operating in the EU market.

The chapters written by Kay Hailbronner and Narin Tezcan deal with interpretation of the standstill clauses of the Ankara Agreement. Both researchers focus on judgements introducing the concept of public order, which in certain cases, allow Member States to change the status quo with regard to rules of access to EU labour market by Turkish nationals. Other contributions explore different situations faced by beneficiaries of the Ankara Agreement in the context of free movement law, for example the legal position of children of Turkish workers and the rules applicable to social security benefits acquired by Turkish citizens in an EU Member State.

The book represents an important and timely contribution to the area of EU free movement and citizenship law. While most studies in the field tend to limit their scope to Union borders, the volume addresses the crucial but somehow understudied area of intersection of EU rules and association agreements. The authors have made a broader attempt to provide a comparative overview of rights enjoyed by different categories of TCNs within the EU, which, in turn, raises critical questions of the significance of the European project and the directions of its further development.

The main focus of the book is on the Ankara Agreement, with most chapters concentrating on free movement rights of Turkish workers in Germany. This is understandable, given the large Turkish population living in this country. However, it would have been interesting to compare their situation to that of Turkish nationals residing in other EU Member States. The UK certainly is another country worth a closer inspection.

Although I find the structure of the book partly repetitive and at times missing deeper elaboration of each topic, altogether it makes an interesting read and provides a solid background for further research. The book is a highly recommended reading for scholars whose interests include EU free movement and citizenship law, as well as legal interpretation of EU association agreements.

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**Van der Velde, Martin & Van Naerssen, Ton (eds.) (2015) *Mobility and Migration Choices. Thresholds to Crossing Borders, Border Region Series*, Farnham: Ashgate. 287 pp.**

*Mobility and Migration Choices. Thresholds to Crossing Borders* focuses on the process of migration decision-making, which according to the blurb printed in the first pages of the book is 'a complex process involving both cognitive and emotional processes'. The edited volume under review is an attempt to test the so-called threshold approach with different types of migration. The approach

was developed by Martin van der Velde and Ton van Naerssen (2011), the editors of the book, in an article where they examined the process of becoming a migrant among potential and real labour migrants in the European Union (EU). They argued that there are three thresholds that need to be crossed before mobility occurs: the individual's mindset about migrating (mental threshold), choosing a destination (locational threshold) and figuring out the specific routes across borders to reach that destination (trajectory threshold). This is not necessarily a linear process, as some thresholds may overlap or even be indistinguishable from each other. In this edited volume, the approach is used in 16 empirical cases from across the globe by an interdisciplinary group of authors, including anthropologists, sociologists, human geographers and researchers focusing on border, development and migration research.

The book is also an attempt to close a gap in migration theorising: the analytical and methodological 'mobility bias' (Schewel 2015; Koikkalainen and Kyle 2015), where researchers are content with studying those who migrate while paying little attention to those who choose to stay. Several of the edited volume's articles tackle this dichotomy. The article by Lothar Smith, for example, examines how the aspirations of young Ghanaians for migration or non-migration develop. The article by Zaheera Jinna studies the role of personal and structural factors and processes in the context of mobility and immobility in Somalia, Alexander Izotov and Tiina Soininen look at the mobility and immobility of tourists contemplating whether to cross the Finnish–Russian border, while the article by Xavier Ferrer-Gallardo and Keina R. Espiñeira analyses the involuntary immobility experienced by migrants wishing to enter mainland EU via the *limboscape* of the Spanish city of Ceuta located on the African continent.

The empirical range of the book is impressive: there are chapters focusing on interactions in, for example, the border regions of Germany–Poland (Bianca B. Szytniewski), Israel–Gaza (Doaa' Elnakhala) and Thailand–Cambodia (Pol Fàbrega and Helena Lim) as well as chapters that examine migration trajectories of asylum seekers in Australia (Graeme Hugo and Caven Jonathan Napitupulu), migrants moving from Bolivia to Spain (Gery Nijenhuis) and African passages through Istanbul (Joris Schapendonk). The depth and detail in which the chapters test the threshold approach varies, possibly reflecting the fact that the data of some of the cases may have been collected and analysed prior to the time when the authors were invited to take part in the book's writing process. This is slightly problematic for a reader who is expecting to read 16 detailed cases that clearly tackle the micro-level decision-making processes of different types of migrants. However, in my opinion this does not diminish the value of the cases included in the volume per se as each writer either produces their own interpretation of the threshold approach or introduces new layers and dimensions to the approach that their particular case seems to warrant.

The articles of the edited volume show that thanks to the flexibility of the threshold approach, it is a tool suitable for the analysis of very different cases, even though the cognitive and emotional dimensions of making the mobility choice are somewhat underdeveloped in many of them. The article by Victor Konrad highlights the fact that in the Canada–US border all three thresholds were very low in the 20th century but have gained more significance after an increase in border security measures after 9/11. Since then the previously almost non-existent national border has become a real barrier and hence the thresholds are now more of a factor for the decision-making processes of the individuals engaged in cross-border interactions. In the article by Ninna Nyberg Sørensen, the threshold approach is

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used less prominently, mainly as a background logic of a detailed case examining the forced deportation of undocumented Guatemalan migrants from the United States. The expected high earnings in the US labour markets, as well as the experienced local vulnerabilities and insecurities in Guatemala, help to explain the continuous flows of migrants who are ready to face the risk of death during their travels to the foreign destination. Many forcefully returned migrants have high debts from their previous clandestine trips facilitated by a complex migration industry and they try to re-enter the United States in the hope of repaying those debts. Thus for them all three thresholds are easily crossed, as re-migration may seem like the only viable option available.

In their concluding chapter, 'The Threshold Approach Revisited', van der Velde and van Naerssen discuss the lessons to be learned from the testing of the threshold approach. These include the '(...) non-linearity of the decision-making process, the concepts of borders and 'bordering', the mobility of different social groups and the changing context of the decision-making process' (p. 268). They conclude that the approach is useful for a variety of migration phenomena, as long as the concept of border is understood as broadly as possible, there is flexibility in the sequencing of the three thresholds, and the social, economic and physical context (both at the macro and micro levels) in which individual migrants contemplate mobility, is sufficiently taken into account. They are therefore willing to expand their approach: 'Besides analysing the *mental flow*, we should also look at the *decision-making field*, taking into account all factors that impact on the decision taken at a given moment in time – for example the economic situation in a region, the strength of the social network, the composition of the household and so on' (p. 273, italics in original).

The edited volume *Mobility and Migration Choices* makes an important contribution to our current understanding of the complex processes of decision-making related to migration and also non-migration. In all, the threshold model, therefore, has promise as an analytical tool, which can be used to disentangle the process of what goes on before actual mobility occurs. The approach of the book is quite interdisciplinary, but it would still have benefited from the inclusion of insights related to migrant personalities (e.g., Boneva and Frieze 2001), mental simulation (Markman, Klein and Suhr 2009),

imagination (e.g. Halfacree 2004), the role of aspirations in migration decision-making (e.g. Czaika and Vothknecht 2012; Schewel 2015) and from a wider analysis of some of the important lessons that can be learned from the wide field of cognitive social sciences and decision sciences (see Koikkalainen and Kyle 2015). In conclusion, the book is well suited for students and researchers interested in migration decision-making and the countries and migration phenomena presented in the numerous case studies, as well as for scholars interested in a model of how to test the applicability of bold theoretical ideas with on-the-ground empirical cases.

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