

Book Review

Gillian Wylie and Penelope McRedmond, eds (2010)

Human Trafficking in Europe: Character, Causes and Consequences

Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

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Gillian Wylie and Penelope McRedmond have edited a highly accessible volume on human trafficking in Europe for labour and sexual exploitation – a problem that stretches across Europe, and one requiring legislative, political, and social responses. Unlike others who might see human trafficking as a problem that may be addressed through unilateral means, Wylie and McRedmond argue that it should be incumbent on transnational political institutions to act in concert with one another in order to adequately meet the challenge confronting all European states.

The editors of this volume have spent considerable attention to this field in their careers. Wylie is a lecturer in international politics and gender, and war and peace at Trinity College Dublin, and McRedmond is a solicitor and legal research and training consultant with many years' experience researching and developing training programs in the field of human trafficking. Both argue that, "while it is not the first time that both the issue of tackling contemporary forms of slavery has generated international policy concern [...] the near universal acknowledgment that trafficking in persons constitutes an international crisis requiring worldwide response is unprecedented" (p. 1).

This comparably short volume is comprised of fourteen chapters including the introduction and conclusion. The first introduces human trafficking as a hotly contested issue, particular responses to which have been "criticized for the weakness of [their] victims' rights and protection measures" (p. 3). From the very beginning, according to Wylie and McRedmond, "the issue of human trafficking was seen [...] from the perspective of law enforcement, and in many initiatives as being crime-based, and more particularly organized crime-based" (p. 3). Assessing the various causes of human trafficking in Europe and the many incoherent attempts at abating the growing problem, it is appropriate to make the *j'accuse* that no single approach alone can formulate a definitive answer to the burgeoning problem of trafficking in all corridors of Europe. "The narrow focus on prostitution regimes," for example, "leads campaigners to [remain] unmindful of the role that states themselves play in constructing the prostitution labor market through the range of economic, social, geographical, ideological, legal and political factors that shape the market" [p. 10].

A major theme within this volume and one predominantly informing the content of each contribution is the general ambiguity revolving around this egregious challenge. "[W]e [...]

remain in a situation," assert Wylie and McRedmond, "where uncertainty persists about what exactly is going on in terms of the nature and extent of human trafficking into and through Europe, and how responses should be framed" (p. 10). The editors explain that sufficient overlap existed among the various chapters to avoid dividing this volume into specific sections. This format further serves an exploitative purpose in that particular methodological approaches and theories can properly serve as structural mechanisms for all of the contributors' works. The first several chapters address the history of and longstanding impact of human trafficking in Europe, followed by the book's middle chapters, which tackle empirical accounts of trafficking in humans within a state-specific context. The latter part of the book presents an examination of European legislative and policy responses.

In chapter two, Ronaldo Munck unearths the forces fuelling human trafficking, revealing that global inequalities and societal dislocations are chief among them. He challenges archaic assumptions regarding slavery, maintaining that contemporary forms of slavery are actually inevitable products, mechanisms, and *modus operandi* of the modern economy. Lorena Arocha dissects the meaning of slavery in chapter three, exposing the currents of this age-old practice to new modes of thought, arguing that, "we are moving towards the consolidation of 'contemporary forms of slavery' as the new preferable labor arrangement" (p. 11). In chapter four, Daria Davitti delves into a detailed analysis of child trafficking from Afghanistan to the United Kingdom (UK), showing the correlation between the practice of trafficking in children and Western military interventionism.

Chapters five to ten present case studies from various regions of Europe, and launch a rigorous examination of the policy questions and obstacles that emerge from this domain. In chapter five, Marcin Wiśniewski addresses the Polish dimension of trafficking for sexual and labor exploitation by looking at such factors as the "estimated number of victims of trafficking, cases brought to trial and convictions under the Polish Penal Code" (p. 11). In chapter six, Caitlin Deighan traces the shape of trafficking in women from Russia and Ukraine. She highlights the role of government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in responding to crimes of this nature, arguing that, "the trade in women and children is not a new phenomenon in Russia or Ukraine, though, due to globalization, these crimes have acquired a new, transnational dimension" (p. 94).

In chapter seven, Imelda Poole explores sexual and labour exploitation in the Albanian case, drawing on her own personal experience in Albania during her work with an NGO. These roles of women and children are reflected upon in chapter eight by Eilís Ward and Gillian Wylie, who present their findings on the exploitation of women and children in Ireland. Ward and Wylie debate the corollary between the demand in the sex industry and trafficking in the sex trade as well as "trafficking for sexual exploitation by examining the phenomena of lap dancing as part of the 'red light milieu'" (p. 108). Maria Papandreou and Torsten Moritz reveal the customer side of the prostitution industry in chapter nine through case studies of Greece, Cyprus, and Germany. Their research places an emphasis on the factor of demand, which previously been seen as a neglected facet within this field of scholarship. In chapter ten, Cezara Nanu casts the analytic lens over trafficking issues as they relate to Moldova. Beginning with an explanation of the factors that caused Moldova to emerge as a nation of trafficking in women for sexual and labour exploitation, the author questions whether "current approaches to trafficking prevention are in any way fruitful" (p. 12).

In chapter eleven, the investigative lens is narrowed as Alison Jobe explores the experiences of 23 trafficked women into the UK. She argues that the government's inability to adequately address this problem lies in the very foundation of its approach, given that the UK has traditionally viewed trafficking as "a migration rather than as a human rights problems" and as a result, "policies and actions have tended to focus on the

prosecution of traffickers and migration control rather than on the protection and needs of victims/survivors" (p. 165). In chapter twelve, Penelope McRedmond explores the reasons why so little is known about human trafficking by examining the role of organized crime. She argues that there is a need to "effectively and appropriately define organized crime within the context of human trafficking" (p. 13). Ina Farka looks at the case of Albanian children trafficked into Greece in chapter thirteen. The argument is made that the government of Albania must accept a responsibility to protect its own citizens, particularly Albanian children, not merely within its own borders. Farka identifies the core of the war against human trafficking as "[t]he need for effective extra-territorial jurisdiction" (p. 198). The final chapter concludes this volume by looking at when the issue of human trafficking was first detected in the European space. Addressing the nature of trafficking and the various policy responses implemented to combat its destructive devices, the editors contend that exploitation in this context should not necessarily be considered an aberrant force but "as part of the norm in a globalized capitalist economy" (p. 222).

This volume raises two main questions regarding the contemporary debate on human trafficking. The first asks "how much do we know about the extent and nature of human trafficking in Europe today?" (p. 216). The second question centered on "how states and Europe's international bodies should respond in their policy choices to the issue of human trafficking" (p. 216). The contributions to this work show that the perversity of this issue is a product of policy actions by the very states seeking an end to the problem they contribute to. *Human Trafficking in Europe: Character, Causes and Consequences* is a provocation, and casts a critical calling for policy-makers and academics alike to widen the interpretive lens on this problem in order to formulate more practical and 21st century-appropriate responses to it.

The contributors courageously traverse the contentious landscape of political and gender correctness to mirror the persistence showed by those willing to support the trafficking of nearly 2.4 million persons each year. Since no single collection can adequately cover this vast topic, certain empirical gaps appear throughout this book. For example, the numbers presenting in terms of children are covered in certain regions of Europe but not others. While an admirable attempt is made to navigate the various regions of Europe, some regions are omitted altogether from the overall analysis. Thus, researchers and practitioners interested in gaining insight into the goings on of human trafficking in Nordic countries will need to search elsewhere. Accordingly, this concise book cannot be considered a complete authority on the issue but it is, however, a lurid uncovering of the true nature and impact of human trafficking in the European dimension with respect to some of Europe's trafficking flashpoints. The salient observations and assertions made throughout this book should be considered as vital foundations to future research and approaches in this field. In nearly every way the chapters have been faultlessly researched, and based on a commendable range of both primary and secondary sources. It might well be seen as vexing to traditional approaches to crimes against humanity that are now seen as comparably ineffectual in their grasp of the poisonous effect of human trafficking.