

Paul, Regine, *The Political Economy of Border Drawing. Arranging Legality in European Labor Migration Policies*. Berghahn Books, 2015, 246 pp. \$39 Hardcover.

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Book Review

Even before the recent rise in the number of refugees in Western Europe, migration had been a heated topic in Germany, France, and the United Kingdom (UK). One can hardly picture an election campaign in any of those three countries without references to ideas about who is allowed to enter a country, who should have the right to work, whether the country needs migration – and for what purpose – or not. Therefore, Regine Paul’s recently published dissertation “The Political Economy of Border Drawing” on the labor migration policies in three major economies in Europe gets to the heart of current political and research topics. In order to understand the underlying logics of labor migration regulation in the three countries mentioned above, Paul combines up-to-date debates from the varieties of capitalism literature, the welfare regime literature, the citizenship literature, and the migration policies literature.

In her book, Regine Paul takes an interpretative policy analysis approach in order to understand the labor migration management of three large European Union (EU) member states, Germany, the UK, and France. The book finds that in all three cases, migration policies prefer high-skilled migration and aim to encourage it, as the states see themselves in a global competition for high-skilled migrants. Because of that, all three, France, Germany, and the UK, offer immigration paths for high-skilled migrants, which they perceive as a “tool for growth.” Policy makers interviewed in all three countries regard high-skilled migration as beneficial for innovation and the competitiveness of their respective countries.

In addition to the skill level, migration policies in all three case studies relate to the argument of scarcity for selecting migrants. Filling free positions that cannot be covered by domestic labor supply with migrant workers is seen as a necessary approach in supporting the economic development in the country. Paul shows that in this way, the three countries under review move toward implicit consensus on what she refers to as “economic border drawing” based on skill level and labor scarcity. The book introduces this concept of “border drawing” that is rooted in a Bourdieusian perspective referring to states “mak[ing] use of their symbolic power over ‘legitimate classification’ to draw borders between several ‘legal’ and ‘illegal’ positions for migration workers” (p. 20). Borders are here not understood as territorial borders between two different countries, but as constructed by states by

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conveying different statuses to migrants based on welfare policies, security policies, etc.

For skilled migration, Paul outlines differences along the differentiation of Germany, the UK, and France in the varieties of capitalism literature. In Germany and France, the state decides on the perceived scarcity of labor, whereas, in the UK, the employer determines whether there is a lack of workers on the labor market. For skilled migration, in contrast to high-skilled migration, Paul finds in all countries a demand-led immigration policy, instead of a supply-led one. Skilled migrants, in contrast to highly skilled migrants, are seen by the states as in need of support for integration.

With respect to low skilled migration, the idea that low-skilled positions should be filled by migrants from within the EU dominates. Significant differences in the underlying rationales of national labor migration management are aspects relating to the country of origins, domestically acquired skills, anticipated welfare or socio-cultural cohesion effects, and annual caps. Paul explains these differences by referring to social and civic border drawing, which turns out to be more country specific than the economic border drawing outlined above. In the UK, there is no recruitment from third countries, but instead the UK opened up the labor market for migration from new EU accession states early; however, it takes a restrictive approach towards third-country migration, which it justifies by referring to EU free movement for workers. France faces more irregular employment and undocumented migration of post-colonial migrants, and has been trying to detach itself from its former colonies. By focusing on EU free movers in low skilled positions and restricting migration from third countries, specifically its former colonies, France contains an undocumented migrant work force from these countries. Germany, in addition to focusing on free movement within the European Union, continues to have bilateral recruitment agreements in specific fields with Eastern European countries. This can be understood as geopolitics influencing Germany's labor migration policies towards Eastern Europe, which it sees as supporting EU integration. In Germany, approaches towards skilled and unskilled migration are influenced by debates on its decreasing population as well as ideas on socio-civic imaginary on integration abilities based on domestic qualifications and earned migration. Overall, Paul finds that the economic, social, and civic border-drawing combined create structured "arrangements of migrant legality," which differentiate labor migration into legal and "illegal" migration (p. 189).

The volume is a comprehensive text on the labor management of the three countries and in its comparative approach contributes to an understanding of the underlying logics of labor migrant selectivity in Germany, the UK and France. Paul sees the emergence of a common cultural political economy of labor migration, influenced by common norms, such as competition and economic utility in France, Germany and the UK. Her approach of taking a Bourdieusian perspective and including the idea of symbolic power into state theory and migration studies is especially worth mentioning. The interdisciplinary perspective that she develops, combining approaches from legal studies, with ideas from political science and political economy, allows for a better understanding of the complex issue of labor migration and policies addressing labor migration. It helps to comprehend the attribution of meanings in legislation and policy making, which shape border drawing and selectivity of migrants.

This book therefore deals theoretically and empirically with major questions of explaining labor migration policies and finds explanations by referring to interpretative policy analysis and Jessop and Sum's cultural political economy approach. Nevertheless, it also serves as an example for potential future case studies of analyzing economic, civic, and social selectivities and in this way, its

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theoretical framework can enable us to understand other cases and migration policies of different countries as well. In that sense, Regine Paul's book is a big step for theorizing migration policies and also relating migration studies to other disciplines and their approaches. Paul innovatively combines migration research with political economy and interpretative policy analysis.

The concept of border drawing is helpful in showing the state's logic of admission policies for labor migration, especially as it does not just include admission, but also points to the importance in stratifying migrants along aspects of the welfare regime, the citizenship regime, and the varieties of capitalism as well. Here, the author could have more strongly related the argument to the debate on the stratification of migrant rights and more pointedly referred to other types of migration such as asylum migration and detailed the other side of the coin: undocumented migration. While the book aims to show classification processes that categorize migrants as "legal" vs "illegal" via policies, it focuses mostly on this differentiation, overlooking the gray area of "illegality" and the different dimensions of "illegality" of migration. Debates on labor migration usually include references to asylum migration and implicitly pay attention to refugees. Within a similar framework it would be great to analyze whether similar rationales and imaginaries are at play in different areas of migration. Still, with its focus on labor migration, it significantly sheds light on the creation of legality and the distinction of legality and illegality. As one research project cannot cover all aspects of migration, it is still very impressive how comprehensively this volume sheds light on labor migration in three countries.

While this book is a significant step in understanding the logics behind selectivity of labor migrants in three large European economies, Germany, France, and the UK, further research would be helpful in explaining economic as well as civic and social selectivities regarding labor migration in other European countries. Are similar logics at play in medium size or small size economies? With Germany and the UK, Paul shows that the EU free movement policy, especially in respect to the Central and Eastern European accession, serves as a provider of labor in case of labor supply shortage. Another region of Europe that would for instance be interesting to look at Central and Eastern Europe, which now serves as a provider of these workers, as these countries also have (im)migration policies that follow economic, civic and social imaginaries, but their cases are often overlooked, especially in the English-language research. The book leaves the question of how national economic ups and downs influence the border drawing unanswered. Nonetheless, the multidimensional approach that combines the stratification of migrants along different regimes and is able via a cultural political economy basis to explain the specific border drawing of the states is, unique and enriching, particularly for the study of migration.

Generally, the volume is a must read for anybody interested in the political economy of labor migration in Europe, but it is also helpful for students in understanding cross-country comparative research designs in complex fields such as labor migration.

Overall, the book is exceptional in its three country comparison that in a complex and detailed way sheds light on the underlying normative basis of migration policies that is often uncontested in the public discourse and points to the fact that labor migration regulations are shaped by economic, civic, and social imaginaries. Just as important as underlining the differences in migration policies for skilled and unskilled migration that is mostly shaped by civic and social imaginaries, rooted in the country's positioning as a welfare state regime and a citizenship regime, is the finding that the countries share common economic imaginaries and rationales in respect to highly skilled migration, which are also

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visible within the EU discourse. Competition for high-skilled migrants based on the “assumed” need of innovation and competition and the assumption that these migrants help increase the ability of a country to be innovative and competitive. While in general, the debate on competitiveness, innovation, and migration seems Europeanized, Regine Paul reveals that while these norms underlie migration policies in the analyzed countries, differences also appear in imaginaries that influence skilled and unskilled labor migration, such as colonial ties, ethnic closeness, geopolitical position, etc. Additionally, this book is a great example of interdisciplinary research that combines different theoretical approaches to an overall coherent conceptualization and framework for analysis



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