

ROOTS & ROUTES

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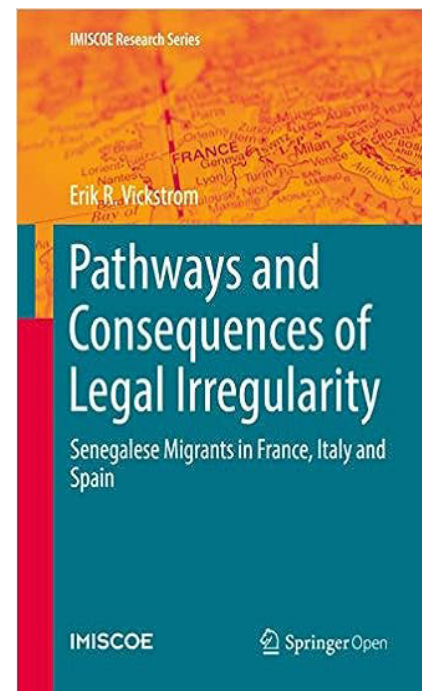
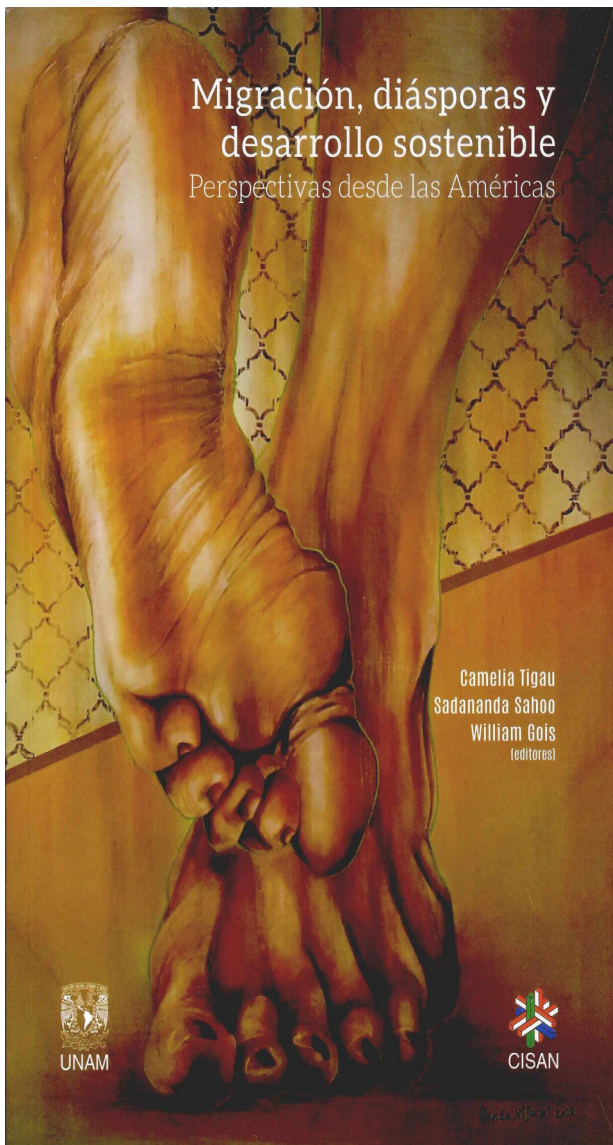
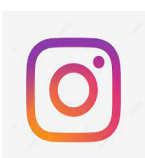


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Email: editorinchief@grfdt.com

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Dear Readers,

Greetings!

In the current issue of Roots & Routes, we explore the historical accuracy of films, which is a more controversial and subjective issue. In this issue, we also focus on the stories and experiences of refugees.

In the current issue, we present a diverse range of articles and a book review that explore the causes, consequences, and challenges of migration and refugee movements in different contexts and regions. The first article, titled “How accurate are historical films?” by Himani Chauhan focuses on historical films. Historical films are a popular genre of cinema that often claim to be based on true stories or events. But how accurate are these films? How much do they distort or embellish the facts for entertainment? And does it matter if they do? The article discusses the historical accuracy of films depicting the transatlantic slave trade. The article explores the reasons behind the lack of attention to slavery in British history and cinema and the challenges of portraying such a complex and controversial topic.

The second article “Waiting for Refuge With a Newborn Back Home: The Story of a Ugandan Political Dissident”, is a personal account of a Ugandan refugee named Johnny Collins who fled to Canada after being persecuted for his political activism. The article is written by Camelia Tigau. The article explores the challenges and opportunities that Collins and other refugees face in Canada, such as trauma, health issues, deskilling, reskilling, and integration. The article also highlights Canada’s generous refugee resettlement policy and its role as a safe haven for people seeking peace and democracy.

The current issue also carries a book review titled “Pathways and Consequences of Legal Irregularity”. It has been reviewed by Bharati Maurya.

We invite readers to participate and share their experiences with us to have a platform for rigorous and innovative research, as well as a forum for dialogue and debate among scholars, practitioners, and policymakers. You can communicate with us through email at editorinchief@grfdt.com. We wish you happy reading and look forward to your suggestions and comments.

Feroz Khan

HOW ACCURATE ARE HISTORICAL FILMS?

Historical Context

Many historical events have been made into historical films; however, these films often tend to misrepresent the events that took place. One such event would be the Transatlantic Slave Trade – also known as the triangular trade – which occurred between Europe, Africa, and America. These trading voyages began as early as the seventeenth century. In 1807, Britain abolished slavery, though many slave voyages continued during the nineteenth century. Despite slavery's large role in Britain's history, it receives no attention. Many films based on this historical event were released 150 years after Britain's abolition. In the Twentieth century, *Tamango*, *Slaves*, and *Cobra Verde* were released. The Twenty-First Century saw the release of *Amazing Grace*, *The Last Slave*, and *12 Years a Slave*. This research paper aims to show how more Twentieth century films on the Transatlantic Slave Trade are historically accurate than Twenty-First century films.

How historically accurate are Twentieth Century films on the Transatlantic Slave Trade?

From the mid-Twentieth century, films featuring the Transatlantic Slave Trade were released. *Tamango*, *Slaves*, and *Cobra Verde*, released in the Twentieth century, depict more historical accuracies than inaccuracies.

In 1958, John Berry directed the French film *Tamango* – the first film to depict the Transatlantic Slave Trade, particularly the African side (Harris, 2007). *Tamango* failed to capture the origins behind African enslavement since the African experience remains in the film's first few minutes (Harris, 2007). *Tamango* depicts both historical inaccuracies and historical accuracies. For example, the inter-racial love triangle depicts how elders viewed such relations with disgust (Harris, 2007). In contrast, the female characters' central role in the rebellions onboard depicts historical accuracy since females often knew crucial information

that would help the rebellious enslaved individuals to escape (Stevenson, 2018). Female characters in the film highlight the Maroon Society's work, especially key figures like Queen Nanny, La Virreina Juana, and Nansi Wiggins, who did not stop fighting for their freedom (Landers, 2013). Despite females existing as minorities, *Tamango* accurately highlights their central roles in the slave trade.

In 1969, Herbert Biberman's film *Slaves* was released (Huelsbeck, 2010). Biberman hoped that *Slaves* would help viewers to understand America's history as he portrayed slavery in its true form (Pinkowitz, 2019). For example, Biberman depicted how enslaved individuals were thrown overboard; unfortunately, these scenes outraged viewers, causing the film to raise controversy (IMDB, n.d.). Consequently, the film has become forgotten about in today's world since the only way to access it survives in the University of California, Los Angeles' Film & Television Archive (Huelsbeck, 2010). Despite *Slaves* showing historical accuracies, the film reflects how viewers prefer to watch something light-hearted/humorous over something that sheds light on horrific historical accuracies.

In 1987, Werner Herzog's *Cobra Verde* was released (Harms, 2007). Inspired by "the Brazilian-born slave trader Francisco Felix de Souza", in "Bruce Chatwin's novel *The Viceroy of Whydah*", *Cobra Verde* tells Manoel da Silva's story (Harms, 2007, 74). Da Silva's portrayal depicts some accuracies with de Souza. For instance, the Dahomean king arrests da Silva in the film to force him to turn into an agent in the illegal slave trade, which de Souza experienced in real life (Harms, 2007). Other similarities include their involvement in the Transatlantic Slave Trade, such as loading chained enslaved individuals onto slave ships, helping the king's brother seize the throne, as well as serving as the Portuguese Fort's governor (Harms, 2007). Although *Cobra Verde* depicts a fictional film, these specific scenes reflect historical accuracies faced by enslaved

individuals.

These films show how more historical accuracies are depicted than inaccuracies. *Tamango* depicts both historical accuracies and inaccuracies, whereas *Slaves* and *Cobra Verde* depict historically accurate films. In an age of globalisation and greater resources, more historically accurate films are expected to be developed in the Twenty-First century. Interestingly, that is not the case.

How historically accurate are Twenty-First Century films on the Transatlantic Slave Trade?

As 2007 marked Britain's bicentenary since abolishing slave trade, the Twenty First century saw more films release. *Amazing Grace*, *The Last Slave*, and *12 Years a Slave* were released where more historical inaccuracies were depicted than historical accuracies. This is interesting because these films were released in a century with greater access to resources, yet they fail to accurately represent the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

Michael Apted's *Amazing Grace*, based on William Wilberforce's role in Britain abolishing the slave trade also included key figures like John Newton, Thomas Clarkson as well as Olaudah Equiano (Walden Media, n.d.). The film was originally released in 2006 at the Toronto International Film Festival with a cinematic release in 2007 to mark the bicentenary (Ball, 2013). Apted takes a different approach in his film as the characters mostly talk about the horrors, rather than scenes depicting them (Brown, 2014). The scene where Equiano removes his jacket to reveal his branded chest to Wilberforce reflects the only historical accuracy in the film (Ball, 2013). However, everything else in the film remains historically inaccurate as Apted humourizes the horrific experiences by having "Great White Men" narrate them (Brown, 2014). These figures' experiences with religion significantly differ in real life as well as in the film. For example, the film shows Newton converting to Christianity after writing the hymn *Amazing Grace*, where he becomes "a sackcloth-wearing penitent", whereas in real life he continued his work as a slave trader after converting (Tunzelmann, 2015). The inaccurate instance reflects how Apted does not stay true to the facts in *Amazing Grace*.

In 2007, Julia Harrington's *The Last Slave*, was also

released to celebrate Britain's Bicentenary. In 2005, Paul Kerr had the idea to retell Britain's history of slavery by emphasising the last legal slaving voyage through oral histories (Kerr, 2009). Kerr reached out to David Monteith when researching the families involved in the last voyage; however, the company he worked for declined to use oral voices to retell history (Kerr, 2009). Instead, they told him to focus solely on a single person involved in the voyage; Monteith's "great, great, great, great grandfather" (Kerr, 2009). *The Last Slave* constructed a series retracing family ancestry without going into historical details, reflecting how it failed to provide a historically accurate account of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

Steven McQueen's 2013 film *12 Years a Slave* – based on Solomon Northup's 1853 testimonial with the same name – depicts how a captured, free African American became forced into slavery on the Southern American plantations (Brown & Davis, 2014). While reading Northup's testimonial, McQueen saw the details, adventure, horror as well as humanity reading like a script which inspired him to create the film (Kellner, 2017). McQueen accurately captures what working in the plantations looked like. For example, he depicts enslaved individuals harvesting cotton while singing on the plantations, which gives insight into something that other films have failed to do (West, 2014). McQueen also captures how buyers purchased these enslaved individuals since men as well as their children, nakedly approached them so buyers could determine if they could endure longer voyages, while buyers judged women's bodies for more breeding (Brown & Davis, 2014). Consequently, causing children to separate from their mothers (Brown & Davis, 2014). McQueen thus provides the most historically accurate film in the Twenty-First century.

These films show how more historical inaccuracies are depicted than accuracies. *Amazing Grace* and *The Last Slave* portray more historical inaccuracies through the character's backgrounds in their stories, whereas *12 Years a Slave* includes historically accurate information. However, relevant comparisons need to be made to show whether Twentieth century or Twenty-First century films are more historically accurate.

Are Twentieth Century or Twenty-First Century

films on the Transatlantic Slave Trade historically accurate?

In conclusion, Twentieth century films are more historically accurate than Twenty-First century films. *Tamango* portrays both accurate and inaccurate historical accounts. On the other hand, *Slaves* and *Cobra Verde* portray specifically accurate instances. In comparison, *Amazing Grace* and *The Last Slave* portray more historical inaccuracies through the character's backgrounds in their stories. *12 Years a Slave* is the only historically accurate film that was released in the Twenty-First century. Thus, showing how films released in the Twentieth Century are more accurate than those released in the Twenty-First Century. This is interesting because we would expect more historically accurate films to be made in a Century where more digitalised historical records and scholarly articles exist on the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

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Himani Chauhan is an International Relations & History graduate and is currently pursuing a Masters of Migration Studies from Victoria University of Wellington (New Zealand). She comes from a family of immigrants which has shaped her experiences, views, and interests in wanting to further explore and work in this area of study. Her area of interest includes – Migration, History and Human Rights.





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New book explores migration, diaspora and sustainable development in the Americas

MEXICO CITY, MEXICO, Date: A new book titled “Migración, diásporas y desarrollo sostenible Perspectivas desde las América” (Migration, Diaspora and Sustainable Development Perspectives from the Americas) has been published by UNAM, CISAN. The book is edited by Camelia Tigau, Sadananda Sahoo and William Gois, and features contributions from experts and scholars from different countries and disciplines. The book examines the complex and dynamic relationship between migration, diaspora and sustainable development in the Americas, with a focus on the social, economic, cultural and political aspects. The book aims to provide a comprehensive and multidisciplinary perspective on the challenges and opportunities of migration and development in the region.



WAITING FOR REFUGE WITH A NEWBORN BACK HOME: THE STORY OF A UGANDAN POLITICAL DISSIDENT

Canada's generous refugee resettlement policy is unique in its power to engage private sponsors and a wide range of NGOs specialized in refugee talent recruitment. Toronto in particular is a meeting point and rescue hub for people from all over the world who seek peace and a chance to rebuild their lives. They can arrive at a safe haven while keeping one foot back home, as they seek to resolve the conflicts that expelled them. This is, in fact, the most traditional way of developing diaspora networks, based on immigrants who never forget where they came from.

I met Johnny Collins at a Ugandan diaspora protest event in High Park, Toronto, on August 13, 2022. A group of about a hundred people congregated with red t-shirts holding bloody red images of fellow Ugandans who had been tortured or beaten as a means of political suppression. One of the posters read "You said we are the leaders of tomorrow, stop the redline murders."

Collins is 35, as I later learned in a meeting we had at the Munk School of Global Affairs, which hosts my research with the Global Migration Lab. He arrived in Canada only a month before the protest I witnessed. He is a political runaway, not only from his country but also from his family. After being beaten for asking for democratic elections, he went into hiding to protect himself, his two kids and his pregnant wife. He phoned her to say he was in Canada without ever having a proper goodbye. While here, his new baby boy was born.

Uganda has had the same president for 36 years. "We never had democracy in Uganda," said Collins. Nonetheless, he sacrificed his personal safety in a quest for democratic elections, along with other friends and intellectuals who are now here in Canada. He was

interviewed by the Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition International (TASSC) as part of a project to document the impact of the Museveni regime.

It took time for us to set up a meeting and discuss his life story and current state. Even though Collins has applied for refuge and lives in a shelter, his time or availability to talk seem limited. Like many other refugees, Collins suffers from trauma and has difficulty sleeping and generally putting his mind to rest. According to a survey I conducted with refugees and displaced professionals from 12 countries, most of them have suffered depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, digestive problems, arthritis, or high blood pressure, to mention just a few of the most common ailments. As can be imagined, it is not easy for Collins to speak up and tell his story. Like many others who have similar experiences of war and conflict, he appears on the outside to have achieved a sort of equanimity by pretending to be just fine. They do not cry, nor do they seem furious. They try to be objective and identify the actors who are guilty – their own government, the international community that does not exercise the responsibility to protect, or an invading government.

Other displaced professionals I met in Toronto are also accepting the challenge of building a new life with a strong state of mind. For this, finding a job is key not only as occupational therapy, but as a win-win strategy for themselves and their new country, Canada, currently suffering from worker shortages in key industries.

Some refugees are ready to take any survival job despite being overqualified, while others wait for opportunities that better assess past experience. Still others are not in a position to start again, like when age prevents them from taking out education loans to learn new skills, as a Ukrainian medical doctor, aged 58, was telling me. Deskilling (being hired below one's level of experience) and reskilling (learning a new job) are, according to social workers and other migrants, the great challenge

of the Canadian migration system for economic success. While migrants and refugees look for jobs, employers search for a wide range of occupations that do not necessarily fit the “best and brightest” official attraction policy. In general, the displaced people are a great pool that may resolve some market needs in Canada, along with their own integration.

Camelia Tigau is a Visiting Professor at the University of Toronto, Global Migration Lab and a researcher at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), Center for Research on North America. She is also a regional vice-president of GRFDT. She would like to thank the General Department for Academic Support (DGAPA) at the UNAM for the scholarship that made possible the fieldwork for this article.

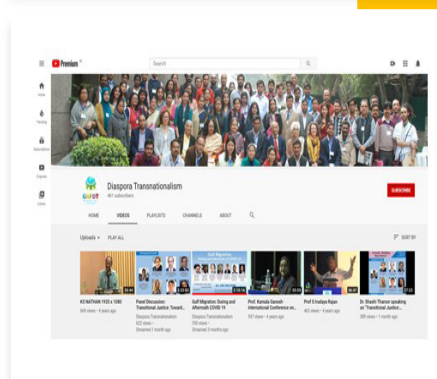
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PATHWAYS AND CONSEQUENCES OF LEGAL IRREGULARITY

The book 'Pathways and Consequences of Legal Irregularity: Senegalese Migrants in France, Italy, and Spain' investigated the production of irregular legal status among Senegalese migrants in three European countries: France, Italy, and Spain, as well as the consequences of irregularity configurations, using an unexplored quantitative data source, the Migration between Africa and Europe (MAFE) study for empirical analysis. Its cutting-edge perspective allows for the investigation of circulation, return migration, and international behaviours. A historical chapter traces the emergence of immigration policies in each country, which establishes the boundaries for irregular legal status. The book's author highlighted three critical features of Senegalese migrants in European countries: irregular migratory paths, immigration policy, and the link between legal status and transnational activities. The author concentrated on three empirical evaluations based on existing literature and a secondary data source of MAFE.

The introductory chapter defines the concept of irregularity and is divided into three sections. The first section investigates the framework of immigration policy and control mechanisms across several settings of reception in order to comprehend the legal establishment of pathways to various types of irregular status among Senegalese migrants in France, Italy, and Spain. Its motive is to analyze the variance in policies within each setting over time and across different contexts. The second part is an empirical analysis that combines ideas from the first part's policy variation and applies them to a conceptual framework capable of making

sense of numerous paths towards irregular status. The book's final section considers the implications of legal status configurations for Senegalese migrants' economic integration in France, Italy, and Spain, as well as their continuous transnational engagement in their homeland. Secondary data from the Migration between Africa and Europe (MAFE) project were used for this empirical study, which aimed to collect comparative and representative data on Sub-Saharan African migration using a multi-sited data collection methodology. These methods emphasize migration systems linking Africa and Europe in which people, culture, money, and ideas circulate transnational. Furthermore, it details the African countries and several European destinations for each of these African hubs, including the old colonial powerhouse and one or more new destinations; old colonial powerhouse in France while Italy and Spain are new destinations for Senegalese.

Chapter 2 examines the evolution of policy in diverse circumstances of reception. The author uses this range of destinations to investigate how variance in the socio-legal aspects of different receiving environments causes complicated legal status trajectories for this brave group of migrants. Tables 2.2 (pp 36), 2.3 (pp 57), and 2.4 (pp 64) summarize important immigration policies in France, Italy, and Spain and their effects on migrant irregularity. In outline, this chapter demonstrated that differences in reception environments resulted in various socio-legal configurations that gave birth to irregularity paths. For most of the 1960s and 1970s, Senegalese citizens held de facto regular status in France. As the preferential regime crumbled, irregularities became

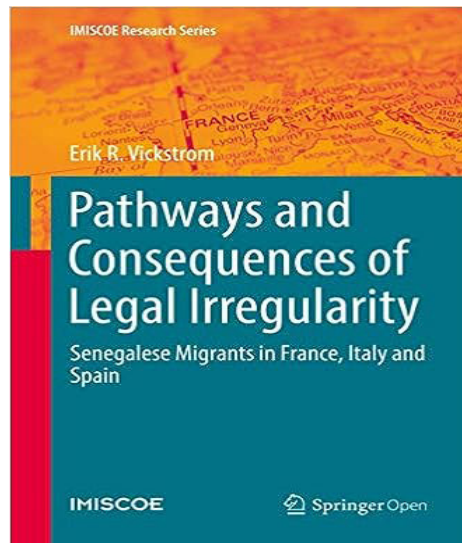


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more common among Senegalese.

Chapter 3 evaluated the numerous pathways into irregular status for Senegalese migrants, stated that irregularity is “legally manufactured” by immigration rules, and urged for a context-dependent, multidimensional, and longitudinal complexity of temporal and categorical irregularity in Figure 3.1 (pp 77). The chapter hypothesized that context, measured by both destination and period, would structure both geographic and status flows into irregularity, drawing on literature that argues for both a multidimensional definition of irregularity and recognising the important role that socio-legal contexts play in setting the parameters of irregularity. From 1960 to 2008, Table 3.1 also showed the legal dimensions of irregularity for Senegalese migrants in France, Italy, and Spain (pp 80). The multidimensionality of irregularity investigates the many routes migrants take during their journeys toward irregularity.

For this purpose, a limited set of three concrete pathways into irregularity were identified for empirical examination, and the pathways of no-visa («irregular») entry, overstaying- are more susceptible to both contextual variables and access to forms of capital, implying that both state control and migrant agency shape these pathways. Besides, Befallen irregularity is less connected to contextual variance, possibly because immigration laws and enforcement resources are not focused on migrant integration. Three hypotheses are used for the variation in irregularity pathways: the legal and social production of irregularity, migrant capital and strategic action, and links between irregularity pathways in host country institutions, which are significantly associated with irregularity. This study discovered that prior legal status was required for all pathways. Understanding the possible structure and path dependency of irregularity forms might provide fresh insight into the influence of irregularity on migrants' life chances.

Chapter 4 studied the relationship between legal status and economic absorption of Senegalese migrants for the gendering of immigration policies in France, Italy, and Spain, using a strategy sensitive to the multiplicity of female migration patterns while also comparing women to males. At the same time, women migrate outside

the legal reunification procedures, either as informal reunified migrants or as autonomous migrants with a variety of legally recognized statuses. The present research on migrant economic inclusion is mainly incapable of dealing with this variability since it does not consider either uneven labour-force participation or the relationship between legal status and gender. Senegalese men would have greater possibilities for labour-market entry regardless of their legal status. Women's labour-market involvement would thus be shaped by their legal status, with women reuniting with spouses at a destination less likely to work than autonomous women or males.

Simultaneously, the chapter hypothesized that females reunited might have an easier time eventually transitioning into the work market. The empirical investigation also addressed the gender viewpoint, focusing on the employment patterns of men and women. At the same time, family reunification may be associated with women's inactivity during the year of arrival. However, it does not necessarily preclude eventual labour-market participation, as evidenced by retrospective biographical data on Senegalese migrants' economic activities, union formation, childbearing, and administrative history. The author's findings also indicated that the Senegalese males are consistent with research indicating that migrants in such countries do not incur an “ethnic penalty” in the likelihood of employment but may encounter problems in occupational mobility. In comparison, Senegalese women with legal status configurations suggestive of family reunification were more likely to be economically inactive upon arrival than women with other legal status configurations.

The author discovered that male Senegalese migrants' chances of finding work in all three nations were unaffected by their lack of legal status. On the other hand, employment is not restricted by irregular status, although irregularity may hinder Senegalese migrants' capacity to join the official labour market. The legal status enhances the precariousness of these migrants, demonstrating the legal reality that limits the global movement of migrants with completely irregular status. However, the mechanism of this legal restraint remains somewhat ambiguous.

Chapter 5 addressed Senegalese migrants' legal status, geographical confinement, and transnational activities in France, Italy, and Spain. Through the perspectives of territorial confinement and blocked transnationalism, the author investigates the relationship between legal status and transnational activity. It hypothesizes that irregular legal status leads to direct territorial confinement—the inability to visit one's homeland—and indirectly cages non-mobile transnational activities. The withering of affective links associated with diminished physical co-presence with relatives and other vital persons in the homeland, from whom migrants frequently derive their feeling of status, is the cause of this caging. Ch 5 also looked at how irregular status limits non-mobile transnational operations by excluding them from institutions in the destination country.

The literature on transnationalism has frequently praised migrants' ability to defy governmental authority through cross-border activity. The author discussed the relationship between Senegalese migrants' legal status and their transnational activities in France, Italy, and Spain. The empirical research also projected that migrants' inability to traverse numerous institutional restrictions that would stymie their non-mobile transnational activities would be hampered. This evidence found that legal status is a significant predictor of transnational participation, mainly when the direct legal limitation on physical mobility is considered in conjunction with other non-mobile kinds of cross-border action. Simultaneously, the resilience of most transnational activities' social and affective infrastructure suggests that legal status may restrict but does not totally define cross-border behaviour. This chapter demonstrates that even migrants who lack both residency and employment permits have a non-zero chance of crossing the destination state's geographical border for a brief visit to Senegal and engaging in other transnational activities.

Overall, the book examined the growth of these immigration laws in depth throughout the book, seeking to understand how measures aimed at limiting irregular migration created new channels into irregular status. A quantitative examination of these routes found that irregularity was more prevalent in destinations and periods when rigorous restrictions were imposed.

Furthermore, legal statuses substantially impact women's economic inclusion, with legal status configurations linked with family reunification increasing women's economic and administrative reliance through lower labour-market involvement. As a result, a fragile group becomes even more susceptible. At the same time, the findings indicate that tight immigration rules do not always prevent migrants from arriving, staying, and working illegally in France, Italy, and Spain. The major impediment to their efforts is legal uncertainty in the destination nations, which damages these social ties. It is the most fundamental aspect of destination countries' immigration policies, and sending-country measures do nothing to modify the inherent legal exclusion many migrants confront. Finally, the migrants and their communities face the weight of this incoherence. Effective immigration policies in Europe and Senegal would benefit from harmonizing their aims to encourage general human development and capacity-building and establish chances for economic engagement and circulation between the destination and the motherland.

However, the author did not investigate the Senegalese migrants' education, income, or socio-economic background. Consider that the author could develop a historical model employing life course data from the survey to investigate the various employment probabilities in host countries. In such a situation, we can see an accurate picture of the legal irregularities along those pathways.

Reviewed by Ms. Bharati Maurya

Bharati Maurya is a research scholar pursuing Ph. D. at the International Institute of Population Science in Mumbai, India. Her research interests include migration, remittances, urbanization, diaspora, migration policy, public health, ageing and gender issues. Email: <bharati.iips@gmail.com>