

***Christien van den Anker:  
The Political Economy of New Slavery***

*New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, 272 pages, ISBN: 1-4039-1523-7.*

The editor of this book, Christien van den Anker, is lecturer at the Centre for the Study of Global Ethics at Birmingham University, where she focuses on the intersection of international normative theory, globalisation, and human rights. She is a convenor of the British International Studies Association's Working Group on Global Ethics.

This book is the result of a workshop that took place at the Centre for the Study of Global Ethics at Birmingham University in 2002. It is a collection of independent analyses related to contemporary slavery. The term *contemporary slavery* is used here mainly because it is a powerful and vocative word that draws rapid attention to the drastic need for the public and governments to act to end it.

Part I, containing the first two chapters, is entitled *Causes and Perspectives*. Part II, *Cases and Recommendations*, contains chapters three through nine, and the third and final part, *Strategies and Frameworks for Change*, contains chapters ten to thirteen. As a whole, the book provides analyses of current forms of slavery in various parts of the world connected with globalisation and migration. The use of terminology in this field is explained. A number of chapters together provide a good overview of current international law and policies against slavery, offering a wide range of possible strategies for such efforts.

This work appears to be the first contemporary collection of analyses on modern-day slavery and the effects of migration and economy on its many forms – human trafficking, bonded labour, human smuggling as result of illegal immigration, etc. Much has been written on slavery as a historical phenomenon – abolished many years ago – without recognising that it is still flourishing in many parts of the globalised world. In addition, a number of publications have been released on the topic of human trafficking – as it is an issue brought into open debate only recently – but these works have mainly summarised the situation, and lacked empirical evidence. In comparison, the authors in this collection have contrived to use groundbreaking approaches their analyses of slavery and its forms.

In Chapter 1, entitled “Contemporary Slavery, Global Justice and Globalization”, the author and editor of the entire collection, Christien van den Anker, writes about the concept of contemporary slavery, providing the reader with its roots, and the development of acts associated with it. She identifies the word *slavery* as such. According to her, slavery is one of the results of globalisation. She defines globalisation from a political standpoint as a long-term political project. Examples of the effects of globalisation on contemporary forms of slavery are discussed in detail. The issue of slavery is also analysed from the perspective of the *moral wrong of it*.<sup>1</sup> International law banning

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slavery is an important asset here, and a number of examples of countries are given to illustrate the gaps in the international system, concluding with five principles to guide policy-making. As author of the first essay, it is unfortunate that some of the information given seems contrary to the current situation of victim protection in many EU countries. She wrongly states that the only countries where victims of trafficking are offered legal means to stay are Belgium, the Netherlands and Spain. Most EU countries, including the Czech Republic, have now implemented a functioning system of victim support, cooperating with local NGOs and the International Organisation for Migration to assure a combination of victim reintegration and trafficker persecution.

Chapter 2 is entitled "Migration and Security: The Wrong End of the Stick?" and is written by Jeroen Doomernik, Program Manager and Lecturer at the Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies, University of Amsterdam. He connects slavery with the migration flows created after the collapse of the Communist block. Migration is a security issue in the globalised world. The national interests of states facing asylum seekers are compared with global interests. Illegal migration in the form of people smuggling is explained, and the different ways of reaching a final destination identified. Doomernik argues that increased border security causes an increase in organised crime, and leads to its strengthening. As solution, he offers liberalisation and an opening of borders. By doing that, the countries in question would cause the international groups of organised crime to go out of business, so the money formerly used to combat it could be used in many other ways. Doomernik's theory comes at a time when states are strengthening border controls, and trends show that this is what they currently prefer. As self-critique, he admits that many countries may not currently be prepared to do what he suggests. He also makes the fairly brave statement that the Iraqi government might have been involved in, and profited from, ridding itself of dissidents by providing easy access to smugglers. Such a suggestion deserves more exploration and evidence.

David Ould, Director of Anti-Slavery International, is author of Chapter 3, entitled "Trafficking and International Law", giving a historical overview of the connections between human trafficking and slavery. Different forms of slavery and exploitation caused by trafficking are listed, acknowledging the problematic availability of statistical data, and calling for increased research and investigation. Ould further describes the changing patterns of women-trafficking, and the first definitions of trafficking and smuggling, distinguishing between these two terms. He also explores the international protocols outlawing trafficking. A classification of trafficked women is provided based on their previous awareness of the type of their future occupation, which is particularly important when determining whether any one is or is not a victim of trafficking. Steps taken by individual states to help victims are outlined, noting that many still act for their own benefit. Most importantly, Ould introduces the idea that individual states should provide victims with the capability to bring civil claims for compensation against their traffickers, as well as with sufficient economic support to prevent them from being re-trafficked. The idea of civil claims against the trafficker is a breaking point that seems very difficult at present, given the psychological pressure on the vic-

tim and lengthy asylum procedures. This should, however, be incorporated into the work of NGOs and governmental victim social programs in the future. Furthermore, since Ould suggests a form of financial support for the victim, it would be appropriate to suggest where this financial support should come from, which he does not.

Victoria Firmo-Fontan, Post-Doctoral Research Fellow at Sabanci University, Turkey, is the author of Chapter 5, on “Responses to Sexual Slavery: From the Balkans to Afghanistan”. Although little is written about Afghanistan, a very attention-grabbing point is made here by labelling the trade of women *an unfortunate result of peace*.<sup>2</sup> Peace and war are the core phenomena here, with the study of their influence on societal behaviour and perceptions of trafficking and its results, especially with regard to Bosnia and Herzegovina. International missions in this region should be a positive element there, she says, when instead they are often involved in the issue of trafficking, yet are also frequent guests to local brothels. That international missions and programs are often disorganised, and their members often undereducated about trafficking, is very important here.

Chapter 6, entitled “Migrant Domestic Workers and Slavery”, was written by Bridget Anderson, of the Institute for Social and Cultural Anthropology of the University of Oxford, and a worker for the Kalayaan organisation. Her paper analyses the possible means of exploiting migrant domestic workers, placing them in connection with the particular social standards people tend to adopt, and calling for us to examine our own attitudes towards slavery and its victims: “*The confinement of tasks to those merely necessary for individual survival would enable most productive workers to service themselves. ...It is necessary work in that without domestic work humanity would not continue.*”<sup>3</sup> Changes to the current visa, immigration, and labour codes are criticised and examples of how potential victims can protect themselves are given. Although Anderson is correct when stating that most migrant domestic workers are women, we must not forget the small percentage of men that fall prey to their employers. Almost the entire paper operates with the pronoun, which I view somewhat incorrect.

Chapter 8 was written by Rachel Nizan, graduate of London Institute of Latin American Studies, and is titled “Child Labour in Latin America: Issues and Policies in Honduras”. Yet the chapter offers a new look at *childhood*, and how its perceptions vary globally. Nizan explains two theories of the relationship between children and work: one that the two are incompatible, and the other that children have the right to work and that work gives them a status in society. “*...These skills would basically prepare children for adulthood, which was seen much more as a gradual process and not a complete separation of childhood and adulthood, as it often is perceived in the West. These skills develop the child’s sense of belonging and a sense of responsibility...Child labour is acceptable, as long as the child is not subjected to hazardous and exploitative forms of work.*”<sup>4</sup> Nizan also works with two terms – child work and child labour – clarifying the need to differentiate between the two. All of the above is demonstrated with the example of Honduras.

Amanda Berlan, research student at the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology of Oxford University, is author of Chapter 9, entitled “Child

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Labour, Education, and Child Rights among Cocoa Producers in Ghana". The chapter gives a detailed description of Ghana's cocoa industry, including the reasons for poverty and child labour there, warning against certain myths that sponsors of free trade have created. Berlan identifies Ghanaian culture, with all its particularities affecting child labour, as well as the particular status of children there. She warns against the common idea that education is for children a viable alternative to work, stating the contrary: "*Many children see caning as part of school life in the same way as learning to read or write, and never question this practice because they have grown accustomed to it. The experience of children in rural Ghana indicates a need to remain pragmatic when promoting school attendance. It also reinforces the need to improve conditions in deprived schools in order to make education a real alternative to child labour.*"<sup>5)</sup>

Van den Anker states that the main aim of this book is to contribute towards an ending of contemporary slavery. She achieves that by providing analyses of current forms of slavery, introducing the results of recent empirical research and providing strategies and frameworks for change. The education of the world about the evils of global slavery is a worthy and just cause. If politicians, academics and policy-makers read these essays, they would find a wealth of informed articles and a good overview of international law and policy-making on which to base their decisions. One of the main thrusts of the book is that we cannot be complacent in the fight against global slavery. The book shows how, through innovative methods, this problem can be tackled. Yet there are some issues in this book to the detriment of this cause. These are repeated definitions of slavery-related terms, statistical data from international organisations, and listings of international legal documents, and also some minor inaccuracies concerning the current systems of combating trafficking in selected countries.

The collection is a valuable resource for students, academics, NGO workers, or anyone who wishes to gain good overall knowledge of the global human trafficking situation and forms of slavery. Also, that the currently equally used terms of Kosovo and Kosova are spelled here as *Kosov@* is gratifying to advocates of correct terminology. *The Political Economy of New Slavery* is a worthy book that deserves to be read to educate the public about global slavery more effectively. Despite its minor flaws, it is recommended.

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Van den Anker, Christien (2004), *The Political Economy of New Slavery*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 93.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 109–110.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 142.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 174.