

economic root cause of human trafficking, is provided as a complementary measure to eradicate human trafficking under the measures recommended.

In a nutshell, the book is a detailed analysis of human trafficking in the selected South African nations and provides a deep insight into the problem of human trafficking as a global issue. The policy response stated by the author to deal with the problem gives an excessive weightage to the super-structural forces, including tightening of border security and implementation of strong laws to combat human trafficking by considering the economic base of the problem in terms of extreme poverty and economic inequality existing in different regions as a supplementary cause of the problem.

**Harjinder Singh** has completed M.A. in Economics from the Department of Economics, Punjabi University, Patiala, Punjab. He is currently pursuing his Ph.D. in Social Sciences, focusing on International Migration with a multidisciplinary approach.

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**Sonia Shah (2021), *The Next Great Migration: The Beauty and Terror of Life on the Move*, ISBN-13: 978-1635571974**

In *The Next Great Migration*, Sonia Shah retraces the biological and ecological roots of migration through the movement patterns of humans, flora, and fauna. The book centers on the “idea of migration as a disruptive force” (24) to which Shah grounds her thesis on the “wild exodus” or the next great migration that has begun to unfold. Shah criticizes modern paradigms of biogeography which tend to center on the idea of stillness, in that we were taught to believe that “plants, animals, and people belong in certain places”

(21), whereas migration is seen as a “form of disorder” (27) that could be disruptive and even dangerous. These scientific ideas also bleed into popular culture and fuel the fearmongering that underlie many anti-migrant political agendas. Shah offers profoundly human and scientific perspectives that will remind readers of what most cautionary tales and theories on today’s crisis-driven migrations tend to overlook. As she poignantly puts it: “Perhaps migration takes hold during periods of opportunity, not crisis. It’s possible that our restless ancestors, rather than reluctantly escaping from bad conditions, capitalized on good ones.” (321)

The chapters are arranged thematically, covering a vast array of concepts using select case studies across different periods and fields. In the first chapter, Shah distinguishes between the constraints to migration for biota versus people. That is, while biological capacities are the key constraints to wild species’ movement, the migration pathways of people are “shaped primarily by abstractions” (19) such as political borders, international law, and economic costs of cross border travel. Certain chapters explore these abstractions more explicitly than others and they cover the commonly discussed topics on migration in contemporary political discourse. For instance, in the second chapter, Shah discusses the anti-migrant narratives invented during post-Cold War America which framed migration as a national security threat. She compares this to the recent European refugee crisis which instigated a similar kind of “social panic about migrant-driven criminal anarchy” (73) across the region. She also links this to fears that migrants are disease-carriers, a narrative perpetuated by the Trump administration in 2018 which presumed Haitian refugees “all have AIDs” (87).

Her navigation of these scientific and political narratives on migration were interspersed by Shah's own perspectives as a migrant. Throughout the book, she provides snippets recounting her experiences as a child of immigrants in America and, later, as a newcomer in Australia. As she delves deeper into the biased scientific findings that perpetuate these anti-immigration agendas, the influence of Shah's personal background on her thesis also becomes more apparent. In the ninth chapter, opines that "asking why people move reveals more about us and our expectations and fears than it does about migrants or migration" (324-5). Shah is very careful not to reduce these social dynamics, emphasizing that "genes rarely provide instructions for a single trait, especially not for a complex behavior such as migration" (330).

In attempting to capture this complexity, the book covers a wide scope of topics and some discussions tend to be convoluted or sporadic. On several occasions, there were huge temporal jumps within a single chapter as Shah discusses one popular scientific theory that emerged in the context of an earlier period to compare it with one that did at a much later time. Those who are particularly interested in the continuities and discontinuities of these theoretical developments would benefit from additional sources to fill these wide gaps. Hence, the arguments presented in the book do not provide a comprehensive overview of the field-specific scholars, findings, and theories pertinent to these intersectional developments. Although Shah weaves the scientific and political dimensions with commendable skill for the most part, there are moments when the perspectives from these two were discussed as one without necessary contextualization with respect to each field. For instance, Shah's evaluation of Charles Elton who she described as

having “cherry-picked only the most disruptive of introduced species” (179) does not cover the broader scientific discourse on the ecological impacts of migration-driven activities. Although Shah correctly points out the lack of emphasis on the benefits of introduced species in their new environments, there are equally valid findings on the costs and damages they may present in the long-run. These were presented by lesser-known scholars from niche sub-disciplines whose studies on invasive species illuminate how human, animal, and plant migrations could influence the gradual extinction of other species. However, these were not discussed with the depth they warrant since the book is more focused on predominant narratives on migration and the scholars during that period who were at the forefront of these paradigms.

The greatest strength of the book emerges when Shah delves into widely-accepted scientific underpinnings that have systematically reduced our awareness that migration is fundamental, perhaps even encoded, in most species. Shah rigorously discusses how these Eurocentric biases emerged and the ways in which they side-stepped the role of migration in shaping our biodiversity. For instance, the third chapter investigates the legacy of Carl Linnaeus whose work as a natural historian has come to define modern science itself. Shah links Linnaeus’ invention of taxonomy to the Europeans’ preoccupation with “distinctions between peoples” (79) which glosses over the key role of migration in natural selection and refuses to accept our biological commonality. She argues that Linnaeus’ own aversion to foreignness may have also influenced his inclination to highlight differences rather than similarities. However, as Shah argues, even Linnaeus struggled to construct a system based on differentiation since many of the ascribed dif-

ferences were rather blurry in practice. These limitations manifested when he “likened botanical sexual organs to those of humans” (83) and described certain plants as hermaphrodites, among other notions deemed sacreligious in eighteenth-century Europe. By illustrating the limitations of a taxonomic framework that aims to differentiate, Shah presents migration as a necessary explanatory mechanism for the overlaps in our scientific biodiversity.

Such topics do not typically come to mind in discussing migration today, yet Shah uncovers the links between these ingrained scientific biases with contemporary frameworks of migration. For instance, the fourth chapter investigates the “scientific proof of a racial hierarchy” (115) that was used to justify the racial segregation in America and its colonies in the early twentieth century. The superficiality of these differences were exposed later when racial scientists confirmed the common ancestry of the human race as well as our “border-crossing tendencies” (109), exemplified by migration patterns when humans engaged in opportunities for trade and conquest, which blurred the distinctions as we evolved. Similarly, the sixth chapter tackles close-border agendas that emerged in the late nineteenth century as wealthy nations sought to control migrant populations from poor nations. These anti-immigrant agendas were perpetuated by assumptions that non-white migrants are *homo progenitiva* with “traditionally high fertility patterns” (189), in contrast to the *homo contraceptivus* Americans and Europeans who have smaller families.

Overall, this book provides a much-needed reminder of the intrinsicity of migration by revisiting long-standing scientific assumptions we still allude to despite the biases and errors underlying them. In doing so, Shah recal-

brates the way we ought to discuss migration beyond the political connotations often attached to it. Despite the limitations of the book, there is a great merit in Shah's critique of boundaries and differentiations invented to regulate migration throughout history. While most would debate whether borders should be opened or closed, Shah deftly illustrates why and how they were invented in the first place. More importantly, she reminds us that these abstractions are manmade and that migration could be reframed as a solution the sooner we accept that it is "integral to life on a dynamic planet with shifting and unevenly distributed resources" (378). *The Next Great Migration* addresses the crux of these contemporary debates in a fundamental way that many tend to forget in the chaos and noise of politics surrounding the concept of migration today.

**Patricia Miraflores** is a graduate student pursuing a joint Master's degree in M.A. Euroculture at the University of Groningen and Uppsala University. She is a recipient of the 2020 Erasmus Mundus scholarship award from the European Commission.