

Uncertain identity. International migration since 1945.

SPELLMANN, Willian M.
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Professor of History and specialist in English history and European political thought, Spellmann exposes a condensed analysis of great themes connected to economic and involuntary migrations, with intercontinental reach, including deep details on different contexts, which makes it a global and local survey at the same time.

The volume is unfolded in five chapters, where the author makes a transversal historical interpretation focusing on migration, together with political and economic analysis of the facts related to the human mobility processes. Starting from Europe, in each chapter a continent is presented: Americas, Africa and Asia, save for chapter 4, where the author considers the Medium East specifically, also integrating a broad view on the movement of people in the Islamic World.

Spellmann doesn't plunge into the subject of *uncertain identity*, but he broadly elucidates about the aspect of the current migratory flows all over the world and the treatment these migrants get, especially in the destination countries. His reading perspective indicates how the identities that feel threatened by the policy makers and citizens in countries that adopted the globalization to control transfer of goods, services, money and ideas across international borders, but cannot accept neither understand or manage the circulation of the rights-bearing citizens, who want to live outside the country of their birth. In his study, the author focuses on the involuntary migration, although he reminds the elevation on the amount of people migrating away from developed countries, voluntarily. Regardless of particularly analyze the reality of countries and contingent situations that

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forced involuntary migrations – that marked many States’ historical moments during the study – the author supports that the population movements will persist, as he historically explains: “Given the level of organized and state-sponsored violence around the globe during the second half of the twentieth century, the deep poverty and the burden of overpopulation in developing and failed states, it was remarkable that the level on international migration remained so modest (p. 208)”.

The main themes expose by Spellmann as interpretative keys to the current crisis on the migratory matter are: the political and belligerent crisis, the demographic dynamics, the factual poverty of the origin countries, the consequences of the colonialism, the ethnic and religious segregation and the international community inability to intervene where the involuntary migration becomes the only way out. Despite representing only 3 per cent of the world population, the people in mobility still represents a threat to the developed countries that are intensifying the borders’ control and criminalizing the migrants, once the borders’ shutting did not discontinued the flows.

The author’s final question – that essentially leads the whole study – remains:

“Why has migration remained such a glaring exception to globalizing trends, particularly in light of the fact that the movement of humans across international borders has direct implications for human rights and social justice in the twenty-first century” (p. 210)?