

In conclusion, the book *Pioneers and Partisans* encourages us to further consider these and other questions, hopefully including in succeeding works by Anike Walke herself.

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Jennifer Suchland, *Economies of Violence: Transnational Feminism, Postsocialism, and the Politics of Sex Trafficking*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2015. 280 pp.

*Economies of Violence* is an important work, because it explicitly discusses a blurry distinction between the losers and victims of globalized economic activity. It provides convincing answers to a number of critical questions. What determines whether certain people are cast as victims in need of saving or losers whose plight is taken as an inevitable consequence of their inability to win economic competition? This is not a trivial question, and this study convincingly demonstrates that precarious labor and economic exploitation are common for both those involved in sexual work and those toiling for pennies in other industries, in services or manufacturing. Even the distinction between these lines of work can be thin and blurry.

The power differential between employer and employee may be so great that voluntary labor may quickly transform into forced labor, depending on whether or not the employer is a person or entity respecting basic human decency. If not, the employees are clearly open to abuse and exploitation since they often lack the power to prevent such treatment or to exit without ruinous consequences for themselves and their loved ones. For women working in domestic environments, for example, good working conditions depend on many factors, but the power undeniably concentrates in the hands of their host families. The same is often true about the people working in sweatshops or in agriculture, and the weaker and more vulnerable the person, the more precarious and less voluntary such work must feel.

*Economies of Violence* clearly shows that the most recent interpretation of human trafficking was spurred by the emergence of the “Natasha” trade after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Many in the West saw the trafficking in seemingly educated white women as an aberration of transitional environments that should go away as soon as the second world completed its movement from socialism to capitalism. The second world, on the other hand, was likewise not ready to compare itself to the third world. The dominance of neoliberal economics in the policy-making of the day only reinforced these attitudes.

The assumption about the ability of the second world to easily move towards the free market and democracy also led to the silencing of discourses that approached human trafficking from a structural perspective as a natural outgrowth of capitalist economic development in environments with highly unequal distribution of resources. The West did not simply impose this one-sided individual-based approach informed by the hegemonic discourses of the Cold War. Rather, it could take root because of the disdain post-socialist audiences felt towards identity and welfare politics once advocated by the Soviet Union. This disdain links to the loss of trust and disappointment in the policies that the socialist governments proclaimed but failed to implement for decades (Fitzpatrick 1985, 2000).

Although I agree that the current discussion of human trafficking needs to become more comprehensive and to include perspectives other than the strict focus on identifying and locating individual victims, it is less clear that the alternative should strictly focus on structural forces and normative discussion of exploitative labor. Such discussion would still be incomplete.

Institutional analysis can provide at least one additional alternative that can inform a different approach to anti-trafficking efforts. Institutional economics tries to analyze human activity through identifying the relevant players and institutions, or “rules of the game” (North, Wallis, Webb, and Weingast 2009). The economies of violence do not emerge in a vacuum, and structural forces do have their impact. However, we must include all the players in our analysis. Exploitative labor conditions and forced

labor emerge in environments where violence is a legitimate tool in economic activities, often in locations with corrupt, weak, or absent state institutions. The power vacuum cannot exist for long—other players like organized crime quickly fill it.

Handling human trafficking through policy on migration, labor, criminal justice, and social services definitely has its merits. However, I suspect such interventions are likely to result in only limited improvements, because they address the supply of potential precarious labor cum victims of human trafficking from the standpoint of eliminating vulnerable populations and discouraging precarious labor. It is likely impossible to improve all the areas that need help simultaneously, and trying to do so is likely to stir resentment from the well-to-do, as the recent rise of the alt-right in the US politics demonstrates.

The social policy-focused approach also misses the active role organized crime may play in creating the supply of vulnerable labor by violent means. If the law enforcement apparatus suppresses such active criminal enterprises inadequately—and it is common for such failures to occur even in mature democracies with well-established rule of law—the general unwillingness to enter sex work or other forms of precarious labor may not help to reduce the supply of recruits. From this standpoint, remediation of the systemic corruption of law and order that allows organized criminal activity to prosper seems like another way to deal with the issue. Politically, however, addressing the link between the state and organized crime is a difficult task, because the state has no incentive to acknowledge that such links exist, while organized crime has tools to influence public policy that go well beyond what ordinary politicians and the public can do.

Sadly, it seems unlikely that society can eliminate human trafficking any time soon, but we should try to diminish its destructive effects through all approaches available, including identifying and recovering victims, working with vulnerable populations, and addressing the activities of organized crime.

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