

Author: Pauline Vallot

Titel: *Deskilled immigrants. Higher educated people at the periphery of the French and German upper occupations*

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Summary :

Introduction. Ambivalence of an immigration combining privileges and factors of exclusion

Part 1: Questioning the “choice” of France or Germany. From public discourse on attractiveness to the social determinants of migratory orientation

- *Chapter 1: Neighboring countries competing for “talents” in social weightlessness*
- *Chapter 2: Two worlds apart. Constraints and wishes for emigration to France or Germany*

Part 2: Statutory inconsistencies. Variations in social downgrading in the country of arrival.

- *Chapter 1: Withdrawing from the professional sphere. Reconfiguration of gender relations in migration*
- *Chapter 2: Disconnection between the title and the position. Migration and statutory inconsistency*
- *Chapter 3: Access to higher professions. Stigma Visibility and Stigma Management*

Abstract

This doctoral dissertation in sociology aims to renew the analysis of contemporary migrations and of the international hierarchies that underlie them through the case of higher educated migrants. It studies specifically the case of people who migrated to France or Germany in adult life and who live in these countries by the late 2000s. This rapidly growing population is subject to mechanisms of legal and symbolic exclusion in the country of arrival that could offset the advantages due to a large amount of educational resources and international skills. This ambivalence is the starting point of this research, that is grounded on empirical data that combines statistical surveys (French and German Labor Force Survey,

Trajectoires et Origines survey) and ethnographic interviews with immigrant doctors and engineers.

The first part puts the notion of "choice" in the migratory orientation under scrutiny. First, it analyses how expert and political discourses have contributed to spread the theoretical scheme of a global market for "talents" that would turn towards the most "attractive" countries. Then it highlights the existence of two main systems of circulation that are widely separated: Africa towards France on the one hand, Eastern Europe towards Germany on the other. The first system relies on the French linguistic and educative influence on formerly colonized countries while the second system is grounded on the old economic exchanges between Germany and Eastern Europe, recently facilitated by the European integration. The second part is focused on employment and occupations in the country of arrival. The struggle to access upper occupations explains why immigrants are often in a contradiction of status compared to the social stratification of the other higher educated people. Moreover, they experience frequently a downward occupational mobility after migration. The phenomenon of deskilling varies with nationality, country of education, language and "race". It is different in France and Germany and contributes to transform gender relations. Hence, the opposition between central and peripheral countries is objectified and specified through the analysis of two contrasted contemporary systems of migration.