BOOK REVIEW

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Wimmer, Andreas. *Ethnic Boundary Making: Institutions, Power, Networks.* **Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. vii + 293 pages.**

Chunked with introductory, three empirical, three theoretical and concluding chapters, *Ethnic Boundary Making* contains Andreas Wmmer's the very powerful concept of ethnic boundaries. In Ethnic boundary making, Wimmer explains about why ethnic boundaries are less or more important in someplace in time and how ethnic boundaries are constructed. In doing so, Wimmer developed a comparative investigative ethnic form a worthwhile contribution to comprehend how ethnicity matters in different historical and social matters. Wimmer's analyses on nationalism and ethnic conflict are based on his own previous works. Taking divers neighborhoods of Switzerland and national and international evidences, he encounters the customary assumptions of how ethnicity and culture render formation and revision of boundaries. He organizes his endeavor to nullify the notion that ethnicity works and has effects in similar manner everywhere based on empirical facts and theoretical assumptions.

His work, *Ethnic Boundary Making: Institutions, Power, Networks* anchored in main strands of ethnic boundary, Herderianism and Radical Constructivism. The first strand of ethnicity, Herderianism view, originated from Johann Gottfriend Herder who viewed the world made of peoples- different in unique culture and identity, live together by "communitarian solidarity, and bound by shared identity" (p.16). The view of Herderianism is that ethnic boundaries are unquestionably relevant, stable and pre analytically given. The second strand of *Ethnic Boundary Making: Institutions, Power, Networks* is a radical constructivism which induces an idea that ethnic boundaries are contesting, unstable and fluid across temporal and spatial settings. This thought emanates from situationalist school view of ethnicity. The notion is that ethnic sectarianism and division arise out of boundary irrespective of cultural differences. Ethnic identities are not mutually exclusive rather rational.

As an alternative to the above mentioned two approaches of to investigate ethnic boundary, Wimmer designed a comparative analytic middle ground which explores the dynamic nature of ethnic boundary. This middle ground approach forged out of the notion of Barth's three concepts of boundary metaphor, Bourdieu's stress of political classification struggle and Wever's notion

of social closure. As Wimmer argues his middle ground method differs from the above two method in three ways. The first difference is his middle ground framework does not follow the static logic of standard typologies to analyze comparative ethnicity, secondly his framework articulates that defendant and independent variable of the same group do not guarantee a prediction and for this reason his theory departs from mainstream social science, and thirdly his theory of framework lump together both micro and macro levels of sociological research.

In this alternative middle ground, Wimmer justifies about the mode- the strategies which changes either by expanding or contracting inclusion or exclusion the main feature, location and meaning of ethnic boundary making, and the means- consisting of classificatory schemes which enhance social reality into social boundaries. Incorporating or amalgamation of different ethnic groups is another method of nation building. Regarding the second typology, the means of ethnic boundary making, the means of ethnic boundary making are identified and presented. These means of ethnic boundary making are coercion, movement, the use of symbols and discrimination.

Three empirical cases were employed to comparative analysis framework of ethnic boundary making. Association and dissociation were analyzed by using three Swiss urban diverse neighborhoods. What Wimmer discovered that norm, civility and order which cut across ethnic lines are the factors of boundary work rather than ethnic differences and categories between Swiss and immigrants from different countries. As he advocates, since Herderian approach treats different ethnic groups as community, then, it could not properly address the case of the diversity and boundary making in urban of Swiss. For Wimmer, classification or ethnic boundary is not primarily the result of ethnic divisions rather ethnic or racial divisions are secondary factors for ethnic classification.

Wimmer points out the fact that high degree of racial closure and homogeneity has to be critically ascribed to racially favored preference of individuals. Instead of hemophilic boundary making, other micro level processes like reciprocity or mutual dependence, kinship or propinquity and balancing better explain same race friendship and homogeneous aggregation. He, then, concludes that it is important to disentangle different homogeneity producing mechanisms to properly comprehend and estimate any form of ethnic classification or boundary making in any social system. Wimmer falsifies the assumptions that ethnicity is a matter of cultural difference and between two ethnic groups their normative value is more divergent. Finally he remarks the fact that equating ethnic diversity with cultural difference is problematic. Ethnicity and cultural backgrounds play insignificant role in the values individuals hold. The difference mainly comes out of political stigmatization and exclusion. A conducive environment for the existence of ethnic social boundaries is an ethnic community with poor solidarity and immature identities. In other expression, the absence of well developed identities and solidarity of ethnic community is the factor of the emergence of ethnic boundaries.

In the final chapter Wimmer explain and analyzes the result of his study and points the gap for further study in future. The striking point that he finally concluded out of his study is that

politically discriminated and disadvantage groups and minorities are culturally different from the majority. As a result he recommends that strategies of ethnic closure, stability and change should be systematically dealt with a great care. The reason to systematically engage in the study of strategies of ethnic closure, stability and change is to avoid "overcomplexity by introducing a clear set of hypotheses about what drives boundary-making processes" (p. 214).

Ethnicity is unsettled issue. Wimmer demonstrates the much more the dynamic nature of ethnicity and ethnic classification. It is a worthwhile book for understanding ethnicity. Howevr, the fusion of boundary with group lacks clarity and can confuse readers. Furthermore, conflating boundary with group becomes beyond Wimmer's designed theoretical framework of ethnic boundaries.

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