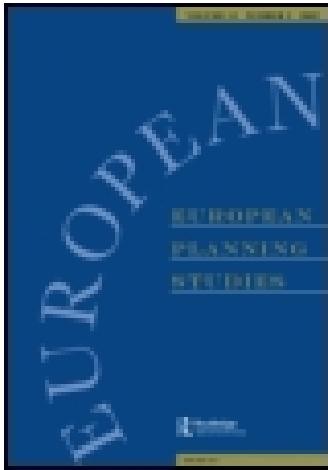


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The International Handbook on Gender, Migration and Transnationalism: Global and Development Perspectives

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Book Review

The International Handbook on Gender, Migration and Transnationalism: Global and Development Perspectives

Laura Oso & Natalia Ribas-Mateos (Eds)

Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, 2015, 471 pp., £45.00 (paperback), ISBN: 978-1-78254-772-3

Sometimes women migrate in greater numbers than men, and sometimes the reverse. In such cases, it is obvious that women and men do not experience identical migrations. Drastic imbalances of sex ratio will lead to drastic differences in women's and men's migration experience. But, even when migrants arrive in families, women and men are likely to differ in respect to settlement, adaptation, labour, cultural change and so forth. For all these reasons, migration studies now pay separate attention to women's issues, whereas, in the past, women's special status was subordinated to the overall migration story, and was likely to be addressed in passing, if at all. Of course that was a distortion because as Chairman Mao famously declared, "women hold up half the sky".

Since migration is heavily (but not completely) influenced by economic globalization, it follows that a comprehensive and contemporary literature has to consider women's issues in the context of globalization and development. This ambitious book intends to do just that. In their introductory chapter, Laura Oso and Natalia Ribas-Mateos, two Spanish sociologists, announce that their volume is about "gender ... in the nexus of migration and development". This is the ignored subject that, the editors claim, existing studies of female migrants, quite voluminous already, have underemphasized to the detriment of a global picture such as the editors wish to create. It is, after all, one thing to discuss and depict women's employment chances in a country, but quite another to understand how those employment chances came into being, thanks to a shifting international division of labour. The latter task is obviously harder than the former, but is required to complete the former. The contributors did not shy away from the extra work that their task imposed.

This handbook is divided into six parts, each subdivided into several chapter-length contributions. Consisting of three contributions, Part 1 addresses the editors' central concerns, gender, migration and transnationalism from a global point of view. Part 2 departs from the handbook's central preoccupations to address new but related theoretical and methodological issues in women's migration. Part 3 offers empirical case studies, the only ones in the book. Two of these concern Africa, and one China. Migration and transnationalism come back again in Part 4, which contains five separate contributions, rendering it the largest section of the book. Global production in commodity chains is the subject of Part 5. In Part 6, the final section, the editors introduce four contributions on the topic of global case chains, which turn out to be women "working in the care sector" from a global point of view.

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As befits a handbook, this compilation contains 471 pages of text. It offers 21 separate chapters, and identifies 34 authors, a few of whom contributed more than one essay. More than half of the authors are sociologists or anthropologists. The others are from other social sciences, especially geography and economics. The contents are rarely quantitative. This is a European collection. Only four of the contributors are employed in the US. All the others are Europeans, mainly Spanish. Several articles were previously published in languages other than English, and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the globalization of migration and production has brought forward a globalization of national social sciences, now repackaged in the English language for more general consumption around the world. That strikes me as a very useful and overdue achievement, but readers should not expect an easily accessible product. The handbook is clearly intended for specialists who already have knowledge of (and interest in) the topic.

Now I wish to discuss individual chapters to give a better flavour of the whole. Benería, Deere and Kabere (Chapter 2) presents the feminization of most migration flows from a perspective of globalization. Stolcke (Chapter 3) addresses migrants' cultural issues that threaten (or are perceived to threaten) the national identity of receiving countries in Europe. Chant (Chapter 4) explores the influence of The World Development Report 2012 on gender justice. Using the case study of Andean migration in the European Union, Cortés (Chapter 5) shows that South–North female migration flows significantly contributed to global economy development and global productive chains. Verschuur discusses (Chapter 6) the difference between social reproduction and care and concludes that social reproduction and care chain cannot be merged.

Sáiz López provides (Chapter 7) an Asian perspective on the articulation between production and reproduction chains, acknowledging the contributions of female migrants to business development through a case study of Chinese migrants in Spain. From an African perspective, Bledsoe and Sows explore (Chapter 8) transnational family issues resulting from African immigrant parents in the US who send their children back to the homeland for education. Haas and Fokkema (Chapter 9) show that intra-household power inequalities, tensions and conflicts of interest significantly contribute to the issue of return, studying Moroccan labour migrants who migrated to Europe in the 1960s and 1970s.

Writing in Part 4, Hondagneu-Sotelo suggests (Chapter 10) new directions in gender and migration research after going through a review of recent issues of the *International Migration Review*. New research has focus on global care chains, on sexualities and sex trafficking, and on migration as gender process. Caterino and Morokvasic's study (Chapter 11) focuses on gender and women in migration in France and shows how in France "the emphasis has shifted from work to sexual/sexualized issues and from class to ethnicity". The following two chapters both are about the second generation of international migration. Bachmeier, Lessard-Phillips and Fokkema (Chapter 12) describe the gendered dynamics of integration and transnational engagement in the context of Europe. Christou (Chapter 13) focuses on gendered and emotional spaces of international migration, in response to citizenship and belongingness in the context of Nordic-Hellenic. In Chapter 14, Parella provides a good overview of transnational families from a gender perspective by using the case of Bolivian migrants in Spain.

Through different case studies and mainly focused in Spain and Latin American countries the fifth part describes global production. Vidal-Coso and Miret Gamundi (Chapter 15) study the internationalization of domestic work and female immigration in

Spain during a decade of economic expansion (1999–2008). The next two chapters in this part both focus on remittances in Ecuador; Mata-Codesal (Chapter 16) takes gender into consideration in the relationship between remittance senders and receivers and provides an explanation of how the effects of remittances are gendered. Using a Bayesian framework in Chapter 17, Campoy-Muñoz, Salazar-Ordóñez and García-Alonso seek the cause–effect relationships among these determinant factors in remittance flows and conclude that Ecuadorian migrant women who reside in Spain are more likely to remit money to their families back home.

Part 6 is dedicated to global care chains. Setién and Acosta’s study (Chapter 18) explores the rights and obligations in working in the care sectors which attracts many immigrant women. They interview 67 immigrant, female care providers in Spain and Chile. In Chapter 19, Safuta and Degaavre aim to examine how undocumented migrant domestic workers use Polanyian reciprocity in their employments based on their interviews with undocumented migrants in Belgium and country experts. They found two main categories of usages of reciprocity: people anticipate to be “commodified” if they are able to participate in market exchange; if not, reciprocity are used to supplement or temporarily replace market resources. Aijón’s case study in Chapter 20 highlights a specific type of temporary female migration who are from the South to Riffian families and settle down as extended families through transnational family networks. Case study by Cieslik in the closing chapter, Chapter 21 articulates the consideration of professional women and their interaction between the productive and reproductive spheres by using the example of Polish migrants in the UK. The chapter points out the important role of family planning decisions in international migration mobility.

From my point of view, the handbook lacks a chapter on women’s entrepreneurship, which is surely related to economic development. That said, this handbook is an authoritative and much-needed reference work that specialists will want to consult.

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