

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Grabowska, Izabela, Garapich, P. Michał, Jaźwińska, Ewa & Radziwinowiczówna, Agnieszka (2017) *Migrants As Agents of Change. Social Remittances in an Enlarged European Union*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 251 pp.**

Based on 124 interviews, *Migrants As Agents of Change. Social Remittances in an Enlarged European Union* offers a cutting-edge contribution to the research on social and cultural remittances. Through multisited ethnographies, the authors unpack the role that human agency plays within the process of social remittances in three Polish towns: Sokolka, Pszczyna and Trzebnica. Special focus is dedicated to everyday interactions among migrants, stayers and returnees taken in a micro-scale. The main questions the book aims to answer are as follows: who does the social remitting and why? What effects do they bring in? Are migrants the agents of change? The main content of acquisition results to be norms of politeness, driving culture, attitudes toward minorities, diversity and informal aspects in the work place.

This book benefits from the cooperation of researchers from different fields. Grabowska Izabela is professor of Social Sciences and Humanities at University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Warsaw, Poland; Michał P. Garapich is a social anthropologist whose main research interests relate to migration and multiculturalism; Ewa Jazwisnska is a senior lecturer at the Institute of Sociology, Warsaw University and Agnieszka Radziwinowiczowna is a social anthropologist, member of the Centre for Migration Research, Warsaw.

While in literature remittances have been defined as relating to a broad range of different transfers (internal and abroad, material, financial and not financial), the scholarship on social remittances is described as an underdeveloped field (Levitt & Nieves 2011: 4-5). The anthropologist Peggy Levitt (1998: 933-935) coined the first definition of 'social remittances' by distinguishing three types: 1. normative structures, namely, ideas, values and beliefs; 2. systems of practices that consist of the actions shaped by the normative structures and 3. social capital. Moreover, in recent theoretical elaborations, she and Nieves (2011) described social remittances as something that may 'scale up' and 'scale out', meaning that their impact may go from local to national and influence other domains of practices. Additionally, in international literature, it is underlined that remitting is not a one-way process: migrants transfer their social remittances from the country of origin to that of destination and vice versa. Grabowska *et al.* start from Peggy Levitt's definition as a reference point to further develop a new inter-disciplinary theoretical framework that can operationalise social remittance process.

The authors first describe the main theoretical contributions on the field and support how 'social remittances at any stage are bounded by agency' (p. 12). In order to grasp this process, they recur to 'adaptive theory' and to 'diffusion theory'. While in relation to human agency, the approach offered by Emirbayer & Mische (1998) is taken as a point of reference in the book. The authors suggest 'a complex viewpoint on the concept of agency including both the structural context and the temporal nature of human experiences' (p. 20). The second chapter proceeds by illustrating working concepts and their operationalisation. The process of acquisition is articulated in 'three modalities: resistance, imitation and innovation'. Resistance specifically is described as a form of agency within power relationships or to say it better as a 'tactic' to select, transmit and then accept – in the domestic context – social and cultural remittances (p. 30). Grabowska *et al.* conclude this chapter by formulating their own hypotheses for a conceptual framework and disaggregate all stages and modalities related to the process of social remitting by putting 'human agency at the forefront' (p. 33).

The methodology (chapter 3) is one of the main strengths of this book. Its longitudinal and comparative approach, as well as the brilliant capability of the authors to vividly sustain this comparative dimension among the three contexts of study, makes this approach very interesting. It allows to widen the nature and quantity of data and narratives collected. At the beginning of the chapter, the authors declare that they mean to 'show the hows and whys of social remit through the eyes of individuals, both movers and stayers of different communities' (p. 35). The study lasted three years of repeated visits among the three selected towns in Poland and the UK, where ethnographies were conducted simultaneously. The sample was divided into local observers and migrants, and people were chosen for their role in the community (p. 47).

Chapter 4 describes in depth 'the main characteristics of the researched communities' (p. 106) in Poland where the study took place. Chapter 5 introduces the main findings. The concept of resistance, in particular, is described as emerged through participants' narratives in relation to the process of acquisition. Authors' conclusions confirm how 'individuals remain the main agents of control – [who decide] what to remit and how and what not' (p. 136). Chapter 6 discusses the effects of acquisition. The authors conclude that outcomes of social change take time/long process to be visible since it is very difficult to make a clear separation between what is caused by the effects of migration and what is caused by the other factors.

The results and final considerations, particularly the redefinition of agency, are offered in chapter 7. The authors choose to distinguish

the process of social remitting and the roles of agents of change in the process itself. They identify the features and contextual conditions that enable some migrants to become agents of change such as having opportunities for acquisition, proper channels of diffusion, social recognition and the trust in the community of origin (p. 210). In chapter 8, conclusions are drawn. The authors focus on the crucial role that the interaction among structure, agency and power relations has in the social remitting process. However, Grabowska *et al.* also highlight that 'migration is not the only factor' (p. 217). Migrants themselves need to possess specific features, such as personal traits and opportunities for contacts and useful role in a community in order to stimulate social and cultural diffusion and transfer. All these elements enable 'spillover effects' (p. 220). Finally, the authors propose their model of the process of social remittances (p. 216) and declare to have found two categories of social remittances: 1) observable such as social skills and communication skills and 2) latent such as 'cultural diversity, value pluralism and civic participation' (p. 221).

In my opinion, thanks to the richness of data and the collaboration of scholars from different disciplines, this research has the potential to bring forward further elaborations and innovative contributions by grasping the circular nature of social remittances as well as their transformation and impact on other scales and fields. Indeed, two dimensions leave grounds for further questions and could have been explored and analysed more in depth in order to bring forward theorisation. The first dimension concerns the circular dimension of social remittances that do not go 'one way' from the country of destination to that of origin – therefore, a further elaboration or an explanatory description to motivate the reason why this dimension is not fully developed in this book would have been beneficial. In spite of the very rich collection of data, the social and cultural changes that occur in the UK, thanks to the polish migration, do not emerge in this contribution. Second, a reader could expect further theoretical elaboration on power relations among migrants and non-migrants and how these influence the process of social remitting. In fact, several authors affirm that remittances reinforce asymmetric relationships and how mobility itself 'is a strategisation of power that reinforces certain versions of development' (Raghuram 2009: 109; see also Levitt & Lamba-Nieves 2011; Vari-Lavoisier 2016). This dimension was fully developed while illustrating theoretical framework, but then, in the conclusions (chapters 7 and 8), more space could have been dedicated to connect the literature with the authors' findings (p. 222). Thus, scrutinising more thoroughly these asymmetries and the impact they have on social remitting and diffusion in countries of origin would have given even more depth to the analysis. However, despite these few critical remarks, this volume as a whole constitutes a highly significant contribution to stimulate debate on the circularity of social remittances. It can be recommended for those (students, researchers, as well as policymakers and stakeholders) who would like to learn more about processes that activate cultural changes in an enlarged European Union.

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**Inge, Anabel (2017) *The Making of a Salafi Muslim Woman. Paths to Conversion*, New York: Oxford University Press, 320 pp.**

If there is one group within Islam that has attracted much attention during the last years, this is certainly the Salafi movement. In many cases, Salafis have been stereotyped by the media and experienced prejudiced attitudes, especially after terrorist attacks in Western countries. A number of scholars have tried to study the Salafis (Cavatorta & Merone 2017; Lauzière 2015; Wiktorowicz 2006), but apart from historical, theological and political perspectives, it is of high interest to learn how Salafis live in Western societies through sociological and anthropological approaches. For this reason, this book of Anabel Inge is really illuminating, since it casts light on a stigmatised Salafi community in the UK. Her particular focus on Salafi women is both methodologically and theoretically important addition to literature since existing researches on Salafism usually study men, because of the security framework under which Salafism is confronted. The book consists of an introduction, six chapters, conclusion, a useful glossary, information on the interviewees and the interview question guide. The first two chapters discuss the presence of Salafism in Britain and explain the methodology used, while the following four chapters present the main findings.

According to the author, some of the main questions that triggered her in this research were the following: Why do young women in 21<sup>st</sup> century Britain become Salafi? If it is a devout Islamic identity they are looking for, why not pick a less restrictive interpretation within Islam? Why wear a burqa instead of a simple headscarf if no one is forcing them to do so? (p. 6). In the introduction and chapter 2, the author presents her methodology, which consisted of ethnography/participant observation and formal and informal interviews (p. 6) in order to examine the biographical, social, political, ethnic and local contexts that shaped women's religious choices and provide an in-depth understanding of how ordinary Salafi women see and participate in the world.

The main theoretical background the author builds upon, apart from the literature on Salafism and its expansion in Britain discussed in chapter 1, is related with conversion and new religious movements (NRMs). With regard to conversion and based on McGuire (2001), she uses the term conversion inclusively to mean the simultaneous transformation of one's self with that of one's basic meaning system, a transformation that comprises both cognitive and behavioural changes (p. 7). In this sense, conversion is not seen as a mere swapping of one faith system for another. It rather incorporates a range of identity transformations, switching religious communities within the same tradition and born-again experiences. Such an approach seems to be really productive and useful when one studies conversion, because as the author states, the process of adopting the Salafi identity and the following lifestyle is not instant or linear but rather long term. It is more a process, probably without an identifiable start point or end and all the changes that might

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accompany conversion can occur over a period of many years or never be completed (p. 7). With regard to the NRM literature, she has mainly followed scholars (Sedgwick 2007; Dawson 2010 and others) who have argued that comparisons with NRMs or 'cults' from other traditions can help illuminate certain new Muslim groups. In her view (p. 21), the seven characteristics attributed to NRMs by Eileen Barker (1995), i.e. small group size, atypical representation of the population, first-generation membership, charismatic leadership, new belief systems, emphasis on the 'us/them' divide and subjection to external hostility, can all be recognised, to some point, in Salafi groups. The book tries to draw on the literature beyond Salafism and even Islam in order to understand the conversion trajectories and dynamics of Salafi women in the context of wider trends in contemporary religion (p. 21).

The third chapter focuses on how and why young women become Salafis. Current literature has mainly focussed on women's conversion to Islam in general (Mansson McGinty 2006; van Nieuwkerk 2006), and for this reason, this book has an added value. Inge recognises two main trends, one related to the international events and the following interest about Islam in general and Salafis in particular (e.g. after 9/11 or 7/7 in London) and the other related to a 'fashion' of conversion to Islam erupted in 2000s, peaking between 2003 and 2006, especially among young Afro-Caribbean in South London (pp. 69-71). From her analysis, two groups of converts emerged: those who seemed to have internalised Islam from a young age but were not practicing it strictly and those who described that they had led haram lifestyles until something happened to make them reassess their life choices (p. 74). There were also those who had a Christian background and decided to follow a completely different religious path (p. 76).

In this process of becoming a Salafi, social networks have played a crucial role. After entering the group, commitment and sense of belonging were two very important aspects of the whole process, and these are discussed in chapter 4 of the book. In this respect, important points were how close women felt with each other, how much they followed the Salafi teachings and if they attended the mosque and/or other community activities (e.g. public discussions, conferences, classes, etc.). Here, the role of the circles of knowledge led by Salafi teachers was crucial, because they are those who provide Salafi women with all the necessary guidelines on their everyday life practices. Commitment, however, is not an easy accomplishment within a Western liberal society, especially for Salafi women, and this was recognised by the women themselves and some of the Salafi teachers.

The problems faced by young Salafi women are mainly found in their place in local communities, household, higher education and employment, where clashes between Salafi ideals and societal realities frequently occurred (p. 143). All these are discussed in chapter 5, which analyses how difficult it is to proceed from theory (Salafi teachings) into practice (liberal society). More specific issues include wearing the niqab, reactions from the part of the family when decided to follow this stricter religious path, problems in their universities for those who were already there or wanted to attend (e.g. male-female mixing) and employment obstacles (e.g. daily prayers or mixing with male colleagues). According to the author, because of these difficulties faced, each woman actually weighs the pros and cons and when it comes to major compromises, she tends to construct her decision-making processes as cost-benefit calculations (p. 167).

The final issue approached in chapter 6 is that of marriage among the Salafi women. In this chapter, all the practices used

within the Salafi community for match-making are described. The main outcome is that while on the one hand, it is very difficult for women to find a suitable husband among a very limited number of candidates, on the other hand, it seems that they are those who choose either through the collection of information from friends and relatives or through the social media and the use of a series of structured questionnaires. This procedure gives the impression that Salafi women despite all the other restrictions and the strict rules and teachings, they are guided to follow they still have the freedom to thoroughly scrutinise and decide who their future husbands will be, giving them a kind of autonomy.

Although, in some parts of the book, there are references on how women's family and social environment have reacted to their conversion decision, I think that a separate chapter on the reactions from friends, family and broader society during or after the conversion could have been included in order to give a more complete account. On the whole, this is a very interesting, well-structured and informative book that adds new knowledge on a variety of research fields: conversion, Islam, Salafism, Muslim women and ethnography. Especially with regard to Salafi women and the methodology used, I would argue that it offers many new insights not only on the difficulties faced during fieldwork but also on the suggested ways of confronting them.

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**Jünemann, Annette, Fromm, Nicolas & Scherer, Nikolas (eds.) (2017) *Fortress Europe? Challenges and Failures of Migration and Asylum Policies*, Wiesbaden: Springer VS. 188 pp.**

The edited volume *Fortress Europe* addresses the timely subject of migration – one that is currently challenging states, politics and societies on a large scale. The book is a follow-up to an international workshop that took place at the Helmut Schmidt University in 2015 and was associated with the 'Europe and the MENA Region' working group. The book focuses on immigration from North Africa and the Middle East (in particular, Morocco, Egypt and the Gulf region) and addresses the current refugee crisis in Germany, which the authors

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view as a 'humanitarian crisis of refugees' (p. 1). Contributions are from academics and policy practitioners. Three of the thirteen authors have non-European backgrounds; two articles are also written in French.

The various contributions are organised into three parts. The first part views migration from different legal, economic and political perspectives. The second part evaluates European Union (EU) migration policies and describes 'an ambiguous picture of Fortress Europe'. The third part focuses on Germany's integration debate, viewing it from the perspective of a 'societal challenge'. This includes an analysis of the nationalist, anti-immigrant protest movement Pegida (Patriotic Europeans against the Islamization of the Occident) and the right-wing populist party AfD (Alternative for Germany).

In the introduction, the editors Annette Jünemann, Nicolas Fromm and Nikolas Scherer outline their goal. In the context of the largest refugee crisis since the end of World War II, fear, anxiety and mistrust govern the public debate in Europe. By offering a more evidence-based discussion and an analysis of the root causes of migration, the editors attempt to confront the populist forces that are "challenging not only the political 'establishment', but also ideas of an open and humanitarian society". They propose an examination of the concepts, mechanisms and consequences of inter-regional migration patterns, as well as the challenges of migrant integration in receiving countries. The following paragraphs explore whether these goals were successfully met. Owing to space constraints, I left out some of the contributions.

In her article on 'Root causes and changing patterns of migration in the Mediterranean', Ummuhan Bardak, a political scientist from Turkey, focuses primarily on socioeconomic factors as key migration determinants. She differentiates between four distinct peak periods of immigration, each corresponding to specific socioeconomic events and shocks within the complex macro-political structure. These are: 1) the occupation of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein and the subsequent Gulf wars; 2) migration from Egypt, Yemen and Jordan into oil-producing Gulf countries during the 1970s and 1980s; 3) the expulsion of Palestinians, Egyptians, Jordanians and Yemenis from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Gulf Emirates following the political cleavages among the Arab nations and growing antipathy towards Iraq (for which many Arab migrants held political sympathy) and 4) the pattern of Gulf monarchies increasingly recruiting Asian migrants ('who are not only cheap to bring in, but also socially and politically easy to manage') (p. 41). Her contribution strikes me as particularly helpful on the subject of labour migration in a region that is often overlooked. She also provides a succinct theoretical overview that distinguishes between various determinants of migration such as wages, income inequality, migrants' agencies and labour markets. Among her findings is that 'on average, the region has the lowest labour market activity rates in the world, varying between 40% and 50%, mainly due to very low female activity rates'. Furthermore, 'the region has the highest youth unemployment rate in the world' (p. 44). According to Bardak, unemployment tends to increase with education in this region (p. 44). In short, '[T]he frustration of young people who are increasingly well-educated but at the same time denied agency and acceptable futures that led to the Arab Spring still remains'.

The second section of the book starts with Michael Köhler's contribution on 'Comprehensive crisis management' in the EU. Köhler has a leading post in the European Commission, where he is responsible for cooperation with Mediterranean Arab countries and Israel. This and the title are useful background information to put the article in perspective and even more so when he writes that the EU is using a full range of tools to both tackle root causes of migration and

support integration of refugees and migrants in host countries (p. 73), followed by a listing of the different EU programmes and the money spent on each. When taking into consideration the large number of people who have lost their lives attempting migration to Europe, a discourse such as this strikes this reviewer as being cynical. At the same time, the text provides probably the key to why the situation remains unresolved: the people responsible in the EU commission remain out of touch with the reality of the migrant experiences.

Köhler's assessment is in sharp contrast to the following contribution by Jan Claudius Völkel ('When Interior Ministers play diplomats. Fatal ambiguities in Europe's securitized migration policy'). Völkel's article strikes me as the best of the whole volume in its analytical clarity and description of the effects of specific political measures on peoples' lives. He asserts that although the EU has the world's most advanced asylum regulation framework, this does not result in better protection for refugees since 'there is a fundamental difference between migration-related practices and migration-related discourses' (p. 84). One example he refers to is the much-debated 'deal' with Turkey, initiated mainly at the instigation of the German government. Tragically, the prevalent view is that of migration as a security problem and not that of a humanitarian disaster. Ironically, as he points out, it is this strict concentration on securing Europe's borders that is leading to the high number of deaths and injuries among undocumented immigrants; but it is, in the end, not making the EU any safer because the ways to legally enter the EU have become increasingly difficult. By exploring the issue in detail, he finds another contradiction: the majority of undocumented persons who enter the EU do so legally with short-term visas and then overstay those visas. However, increasing amounts are spent on border protection. The amount of money spent on border securitisation is breathtaking; the annual budget of Frontex reached 114.00 million Euros in 2015, according to Völkel.<sup>1</sup>

The last section of the book is dedicated to migration as a societal challenge in Germany. Naika Foroutan, a well-known researcher from the Humboldt University, identifies Muslims as a primary target group in the anti-immigration debate – a group that represents only 5% of Germany's current population (p. 128). In his contribution titled 'Reassessing the opinion-policy gap. How PEGIDA and the AfD relate to German immigration policies', Hannes Schammann deals with the perceptions of Germans who do not have a migratory background. He concludes that there is, in fact, no opinion-policy gap but an opinion-policy congruence (p. 153), played out in the areas of identity, security, and economy. Jana Sinram's piece, in turn, addresses the phenomenon of hate comments directed at refugees in Germany and how to deal with them. The last contribution, by Annette Jünemann, deals with emotions, in particular, fear and non-empathy in German reactions to the 'refugee crisis'.

As the title *Fortress Europe* indicates, the securitisation of the European borders is a repeated theme in the book. Of perhaps primary importance is the fact that the volume points out the disparity that exists between the huge sum of money that is spent on securitisation and the human costs of the effort, including not making Europe more safe. The book also succeeds in pointing out other contradictions, such as the contrast between member states' restrictive actions and the legal framework. Also the first part of the book could be more legally concise and clear in describing the gap between theory and practice. What becomes apparent in reading these articles is that the lack of political will by the international community, in providing staff and financial means to enforce the existing international laws and in responding to the humanitarian effects of the immigration crisis, prevents helping many of those who are currently seeking refuge,

were it not that resources have been diverted to securitisation efforts. What is unfortunately lacking in the book is information on the key roles of the German Federal Ministry of Migration Affairs and Ministry of the Interior, which have willingly set aside the rule of law and the right to asylum in the name of security. The book does succeed, however, in providing a helpful analysis of two of the nationalist, anti-migrant movements and parties – the AfD and Pegida – which are tied to the quest for securitisation and capitalise on the fears in the population brought about by migration. Overall, the book does successfully address some of the challenges and failures of migration and asylum policies. It is a useful reading for policymakers, researchers, students and activists who work in the field of migration and integration.

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## Note

1. In 2016, Frontex already had 254 million Euro at its disposition, whereas, by contrast, the European Police Force Europol had only 100 million Euro at its disposal (Baumann 2016. Bpbhttp://www.bpb.de/gesellschaft/migration/kurzdossiers/179679/frontex-fragen-und-antworten?p=all).

**Mata-Codesal, Diana & Abranches, Maria (2018) *Food Parcels in International Migration. Intimate Connections*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 223 pp.**

While extending conversations already begun by sensuous scholars and scholars of intercultural studies, *Food Parcels in International Migration* innovatively implicates food within the flows of migration. This vital academic collection helps us to understand the importance of care packages of coveted foods sent on often arduous journeys with no guarantees that they will reach before perishing. Diana Mata-Codesal and Maria Abranches, the editors of this collection, offer the focus on food as a piquant insight into the 'materiality of migration' for what it symbolises – safe emplacement, homeliness and nostalgia – and also for the recalibrations triggered as a result of the paradoxical performances around food that migrants enact. The volume consists of eight robust ethnographic studies of food within the lives of international migrants. The materiality of food is the fulcrum to explore a whole host of conundrums within intersecting disciplinary interests from anthropology, migration and development studies and food scholarship.

The book examines the practices and entwined meanings of the gifting and acceptance of food parcels by international migrants. Varying degrees of doing family and friendship in transnational contexts through food and foodwork are uncovered as arenas not innocent of power and always laden with significance. The editors convey the sustenance food parcels provide physically, socially, culturally and spiritually. This collection gives life to the ground-up transnationalisms from various national boundaries and across 'migration corridors' in Europe, Africa, America and Asia and across a spectrum of migrants such as international students, asylum seekers, professional transnationals, low-skilled labour migrants, irregular migrants and reunited relatives (p. 4).

Divided into three sections, the book starts with individual identity work to macro supply chains across geopolitical boundaries. The first section titled 'Food, Identity and Belonging' emphasises how food can temporarily fix space through forming and voicing

identities midst movement. Food parcels become a tangible anchor, something tasteable in transnationalism. Maja Povrzanovic Frykman provides important methodological offerings in her article, 'Food As a Matter of Being: Experiential Continuity in Transnational Lives' (chapter 2). By arguing for 'methodological individualism' – which 'allows transnational practices motivated by individual habits and preferences to be treated as equally important as the practices that may be typical for particular groups of migrants' – she aims to 'avoid the epistemological trap of the ethnic lens' (p. 16). Her work contributes offerings within streams of work which critique 'closed culture' approaches (Werbner 2012).

Reading Raquel Ajates Gonzalez's article (chapter 3), one learns how new migrant subjectivities can create layers of hyperconscious, differently informed ethics and moralities around food consumption. 'New assimilated and constantly changing yardsticks used to judge familiar food items' (p. 16) can result in implications for reconstructions of selves as consumers. Her work is fascinating and important with respect to how traditional food appreciation may not be continued dogmatically or unreflexively, rather in antecedence to (perhaps acquired) pragmatism in new homes, health concerns, personal changed preferences and sustainability concerns. Her autoethnography (pp. 57-60) on three food parcels sent to her in the UK by three close relatives from Central and Southern Spain was an engrossing read because it dealt sensitively and lucidly with notions of ethical consumer responsibility and the tensions of this with group memberships based on food.

The second section, titled 'Transnational Kinwork', deals primarily with food employed in the challenges of bridging and bonding work of families spread across nations. The section explores modifications around foodways, adaptations and inventions of tradition (Hobsbawm & Ranger 2012) across sites, dismantling the flawed notion that food back home remains pristine and unchanged even if ideologically and nostalgically conceived by migrants that way (see Karolina Bielenin-Lenczowska's Chapter 6, 'Spaghetti with Ajvar: An Ethnography of Migration, Gender, Learning and Change'). More centrally, the section deals with the tensions between performances of abundance away from 'home' and genuine acts of generosity versus sometimes overly inflated expectations about gastronomical articulations of 'success', 'love' and 'remembrance'. It provokes questions around notions of altruism. Food parcels deployed strategically and over time become anything but benign – structurally and intimately.

In particular, the following chapters within the second section explore the allure of distant places materialised through food parcels and how they come to symbolise staggered returns of sometimes long-term migrants. The authors, Clement Camposano (chapter 4) and Karina Hof (chapter 5), through rich case studies with Filipino (ever) migrant domestic workers, explore how customised love and affection are encapsulated with the culinary contents of care packages as a sort of high-currency capital in kind. The irony that often the process of shipping food parcels back home costs economically more than to remit cash to buy the same good locally but is still done anyway shows the reader that food parcels are more than just about gifting food for physical sustenance. Their chapters on *balikbayan*<sup>1</sup> (repatriate) boxes, transnational familial power dynamics and gendered notions surrounding breadwinning, provisioning, cooking and caring help make sense of this popular phenomenon. 'Love in a Box' (p. 77) cannot simply be understood through the lens of economic rationality and financial calculus. The voluminous parcels, packed till its limits, make Camposano observe that 'One might playfully remark that, from afar, these migrants look as if they are literally trying to ship themselves home through these boxes'

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(p. 79). Yet 'the process reproduces physically absent women's emplacement as sources of care and nurture in the households they left behind' (p. 81). In her chapter, Hof shows how 'in sending balikbayan boxes, Filipino migrants take on the role of host vis-à-vis their non-migrant compatriots who, in turn, receive the exported hospitality and, in so doing, become guests in their own homes' (p. 98). Her explication on the unnerving paradoxes between hospitality and control makes for riveting analytical insight.

Finally, the third section 'The Circulation of Nourishment' examines how food (care) chains are constructed and kept current as well as the delinking of food consumption to the site of its origin. It broadens the notion of food by including items and ingredients that offer spiritual sustenance. This section would have benefited from focussing more on the 'social therapeutic networks' (Chakrabarti 2010: 362) of such food arrangements as it could have extended the analysis further.

Minority food items (Amber Gemmeke, in Chapter 7), maternal labours (Camposano, in Chapter 4), insider knowledge (about *ajwar* in Frykman's chapter 2), the lingering ghosts and spoils of packaged love and ancestral foods (Tiago De Oliveira, in chapter 8) are introduced. What is missing in the book is some attention to festival foods as opposed to everyday comfort foods, the gendered symbolisms associated with 'mother's cooking' and how food is appreciated or revealed in the different life course transitions of migrants.

This anthology makes for captivating reading and insightful analysis. There are more than a few pencilled in stars, asterisks and urgently written proclamations of 'brilliant!' in the margins of my copy. The book's interdisciplinary nature is its strength. Rather than wading through diluted approaches to food and migration, the reader is gifted with accessible, coherent and sharp writing. The book is a breath of fresh air to regular research within development studies, and one wonders why a collection like this was not produced earlier. I would highly endorse this collection on an underresearched, underrated yet highly evocative, emotional, embodied, dynamic and effervescent field. May these ideas nourish and travel far for they link private domains of intimate ties anchored through consumption practices to the sociopolitical concerns of broader, sociocultural, national and increasingly mobile milieus. I would recommend this book to ethnographers and qualitative social scientists with interests in food, migration and diaspora studies.

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## Note

1. *Balikbayan* literally translates from Tagalog into 'return home country'. *Balikbayan* boxes are often filled with both consumables and carefully curated items shipped directly to left-behind family members from overseas Filipino workers.

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Väyrynen, Tarja, Puumala, Eeva, Pehkonen, Samu, Kynsilehto, Anitta & Vaittinen, Tiina (2017) *Choreographies of Resistance – Mobile Bodies & Relational Politics*, London: Rowman & Littlefield. 127 pp.

In 2015, more than a million migrants arrived in Europe across the Mediterranean Sea. Dominant public discourse described them in many terms, most often as natural forces such as waves hitting the shores of the European Union (EU). *Choreographies of Resistance – Mobile Bodies & Relational Politics* looks beyond the numbers and depicts migrants as mobile and relational subjects resourcefully navigating across the nation-states of the EU. The book consists of research depicting lives of both refugees and migrants: asylum seekers, beggars, undocumented migrants and migrant nurses. Their mobile lives reveal nation states' attempts to govern them. However, the main focus in the book is given to migrants' capacities to resist and claim agency, often occurring in unexpected spaces and places. The multidisciplinary writing team consists of five scholars from the Tampere Peace Research Institute (TAPRI) in Finland. Lead of the team, Dr. Tarja Väyrynen, is a professor of Peace and Conflict Research. Scholars Anitta Kynsilehto, Samu Pehkonen, Eeva Puumala and Tiina Vaittinen form a group of experts on Political Sciences, International Relations, Peace and Conflict Studies as well as Human Geography. All authors have published extensively on peace building, migration, global mobility and resistance.

The mass arrival of migrants across the Mediterranean to the EU marked also an increasing number of research studying the phenomenon. The book in hand allows the reader to accompany bodily migrants and refugees in their routes both across the Southern Europe and in the northern parts of the EU. Interestingly still, apart from one study, the data presented in the book do not include interviews directly with the mobile people. Instead, the scholars observe the communication through the migrants' bodies in changing physical surroundings.

Although the authors wrote the book in collaboration, they present their studies separately. The journey starts from Finland. Vaittinen studied global care economy by using multisited ethnography. She collected her research data both in ageing Finland and in the Philippines during 2011–2015. Puumala observed and interviewed bodily politics practiced by both the staff members and refugee seekers in reception centres and at a detention unit in southern Finland. Kynsilehto observed the lives of refugees and interviewed them at different transit hubs in Calais, France, during the years 2010–2016. In chapter 5, Pehkonen depicts the choreographies of resistance in Finland. He analyses the YouTube videos filmed by an anonymous local person who casted slurs on Roma people and self-reclaimed intimidations while they begged in the streets. His study reveals how the discriminative public discourse allows the locals to employ self-justified power on mobile migrants.

With the concept of 'choreography', authors employ a multistate approach in migration study. The concept combines mobility with resistance in a unique way. The connection to Michel Foucault (1990) is obvious, yet unexpectedly, authors decide instead to focus on migrants' multisited and bodily positions, leaving nation-states looming in the background. The concept of choreography demonstrates how the bodily agency may in fact be the most powerful form of resistance. Mobile bodies avoid the advanced written scripts for them and function both 'as sites of political resistance and spaces for political action' (p. 15). Thus, authors use the choreography not only as a concept but also as a methodology, successfully bridging the studies presented in the book.

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With skilful shifting of the focus between macro and micro societies, the book manages to show the relational politics and unequal power relations between the mobile migrants and the immobile majority. Insightfully, Väyrynen *et al.* highlight how 'moves and actions make visible something which was not visible earlier, even if only partially and momentarily so' (p. 14). Through these implications, states aim to manage potential agency of a migrant body, to make it less threatening for their status quo.

The book depicts how the temporality of migrating body reveals similarly the vulnerability of the concept of nation-states aiming at governing the bodies inhabiting or crossing their borders. Not surprisingly, the state borders disturb the attempts of this navigation to new safer places. Borders are depicted as both physical and psychological points for categorisation, surveillance, discrimination and policymaking. They constrain or enable human mobility through laws and institutions, depicting European colonial historiography.

Despite the extensive publication on mobility and migration since 2010, the concept of the corporeal choreography is scarcely employed in migration studies. By employing the concept of choreography as a mobile resistance, the book importantly portrays migrants as mobile bodies entangled in non-linear, situational and embodied relationality. This is done on the contrary to the 'romance of resistance' (see for example Routledge 1993 vs. Sparke 2008), which, according to the authors, falls often into the non-spatial and non-temporal terms of heroic, universalised human spirit. (pp. 23–24).

Concept of choreography as an act of resistance and social movement has been however used thoroughly in research of performance and dance (see for example Hölscher & Siegmund 2013). Moreover, the concept of resistance together with migration and physical place is rather widely employed in queer studies (see for example Halberstam 2005). The authors' use of the concept of the choreography falls in between these areas of studies. Authors could have built more direct bridge between these areas of study and to further reinforce the importance of this concept for migration studies as well.

The book certainly revokes many stereotypical conceptions of immigrants and migration in the EU and beyond. The authors show vividly how migrants navigate in physical surroundings, resist and, due to their often-situational character, renegotiate and reposition anew. The authors could have even further analysed the societal importance of their research employing the concept of choreography. This book is highly recommended to students, researchers and scholars in the areas of mobility and migration, human geography, international relations, racism and post-colonial studies. In addition, policymakers are sure to find profound insights arising from this interesting publication.

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