

BOOK REVIEWS

Black, Richard, Engbersen, Godfried, Okólski, Marek & Panțiru, Christina (eds.) (2010) *A Continent Moving West? EU Enlargement and Labour Migration from Central and Eastern Europe*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. 331 pp.

This is a comprehensive work on a timely topic: is moving west the best for 'the rest'? Here 'the rest' stands for the part of the world which does not belong to 'the West' (Ferguson 2011). The volume's advantage lies in providing the perspective of sending societies, pointing to an abundance of literature which is not always readily available to a western audience and is not widely known. The book aims to gain insight into contemporary migration processes from Central and Eastern Europe to Western Europe in post-enlargement EU, examining its impact on national and local labour markets and migrants themselves on both sides of the migration circuits. It also covers the implications of increasing labour mobility for policy making and welfare provision in both sending and hosting societies.

The striking incoherence of the volume is that its contents fail to meet the expectations inspired by the title. While the editors admit that 'perceiving the region as homogeneous with regard to migration would be a misleading simplification' (p. 8), the 'super-diversity' (p. 13) of migration patterns on 'the continent moving West' is represented by as few as three 'moving societies': Poland is the country in focus in seven papers while Bulgaria and Romania are the focus of attention in two papers each. Due to this disproportional representation of EU-related CEE countries the book lacks sufficient material for a comprehensive overview of migratory trends in the geographic region under study as well as for 'a greater understanding of the phenomenon of East-West migration from CEE countries since the accession' (p. 18) as aimed by the editors.

The volume's introductory review discusses the specifics of migratory processes in post-socialist countries under scrutiny focusing on estimates of the total of migration flows from 1989 to 2004. A particular emphasis is laid on 'incomplete' or 'liquid' migration, a concept used to describe the 'complex, transitory and temporary patterns of transnational work and settlement' (p. 12) in post-enlargement Europe. The core of the volume is structured along four thematic sections. The first one spotlights economic aspects of the new labour migration from CEE to Norway, UK and the

Netherlands, representing three transitional regimes in the EU-15: 'general access' in Norway; 'free access' in the UK; and 'restricted access' in the Netherlands. Two contributions of this cluster are focused on Norway. The chapter by Jon Horgen Friberg deals with working conditions of Polish constructors and domestics in Oslo, with emphasis on gender specifics of labour market segmentation, inclusion and the role of policy for male and female migrants. The contribution by Joanna Napierała and Paulina Trevena discusses patterns and determinants of migration of Polish construction workers to Norway, regarding it as a sub-regional phenomenon given that the majority of migrants originate from four regions in Poland. The UK is scrutinized by Stephen Drinkwater, John Eade and Michal Garapich who trace the dynamics of recent migration flows from Poland to the UK focusing on demographic and labour market characteristics of migrant newcomers. Romanian and Hungarian professionals and graduates in London are addressed in the chapter by Krisztina Csedő, studying labour market incorporation practices of this group of migrants by qualitative methods. The Dutch experience of 'liquid migration' from CEE is tackled by Godfried Engbersen, Erik Snel and Jan de Boom who characterize this process as temporary, fluid and uncertain by nature. Due to this, Dutch policy makers are at pains developing a sufficiently flexible infrastructure for temporary labour migration that could be supported by the local population in Holland.

The second section focuses on Poland, viewed as a hub in the debate on the economic impact of EU enlargement. The chapter by Marta Anacka and Marek Okólski analyses direct demographic consequences of post-accession migration for Poland drawing from the Selectivity Index. Here it is argued that the post-accession outflow was not only highly selective, but significantly more selective than the outflow in the immediately preceding period, especially with respect to such characteristics of the population as sex, age and education. The chapter by Paweł Kaczmarczyk reports on the scale and structure of migratory flows of the highly skilled Poles and the consequences of this process for the national economy and society at large. This thematic thread is taken over by Izabela Grabowska-Lusinska, who examines the challenges unemployment, emigration and skill shortage in Poland, arguing that although periodic emigration may be a solution for high unemployment, in the long term it contributes

to brain drain, while incomplete migration may lead to a disharmony of employment activity of indigenous labour resources both in short and long terms.

The third cluster of chapters places emphasis on migration in most recent EU entrants – Bulgaria and Romania – viewed as ‘typical immigration countries, characterized by temporary and partly irregular flows’ (p.13). The chapter by Eugenia Markova aims to identify the size, nature and the dynamics of emigration from Bulgaria, providing empirical evidence on the economic and social costs and benefits of emigration for the country and discussing the most recent government measures to optimizing migration effects. The contribution by Vesselin Mintchev and Venelin Boshnakov scrutinizes return migration to Bulgaria. Drawing from the micro-data of a representative household survey it shows that although the bulk of Bulgarian migrants are engaged in low-skilled temporary jobs, returnees are usually satisfied with the results of their work abroad. In line with this argument are findings of Dumitru Sandu on Romania, showcasing that temporary work abroad serves as a modernizing factor for Romanian society, making an impact on individual- and community-level attitudes that reflect ‘modernity’. The view on migration as a modernization tool is maintained in the chapter by Swanie Potot, suggesting that transnational activity of Romanians is a survival strategy to counter the economic hardships of post-socialist transformations, which works in favour of the transition process.

The last section of the volume is focused on welfare implications of new migration fluxes incited by the EU enlargement, aiming to measure the pressure of migration on social protection systems in the enlarged Europe (contribution by Krzysztof Nowaczek) and to define whether the EU Directive on Free Movement is a challenge for the European welfare state (contribution by Wolfgang Ochel). The former chapter concludes that in the UK, Ireland and Sweden the amount of social benefits received by immigrants coming from new member states has been relatively small and has not proved to be a major challenge for welfare state systems, but it seems to grow in scale and might become problematic in terms of public and policy discourse shortly. The conclusions by Ochel are more pessimistic considering the risks he associates with the enactment of the Directive on Free Movement, which in the author’s opinion might impose excessive demands on the solidarity of EU citizens in hosting societies.

Overall, it is mainly the latter two chapters which regard migration as potentially problematic. It is notable that ‘the worst’ part of migration is voiced by authors on the demand side, which defines and bolsters a ‘moving West’ of cheap labour from ‘the rest’. This is paradoxical given that it is hosting societies who ‘come to rely ever more on immigrants to balance supply and demand in labour markets, and more generally to fuel economic growth’ (OECD 2007: 11), and whose population would decline without migrants (Phillips 2008). Meanwhile, the contributors in this volume from the supply side (some coming from the demand side) tend to favour the migration toward the West, turning a blind eye to ‘bitter berries of better life’ (Tolstokorova 2010) for ‘the rest’, such as high-risk migration resulting in trafficking of human beings, labour and sex-slavery (Caritas 2010), the growing backlash against immigration and negative public attitude to it in host societies (Papademetriou 2012) and most importantly, the ‘human cost of displacement for development’ with its severe consequences, including ‘the loss of cultural identity, shifts in family and gender roles, and fractured relationships between generations’ (Bennett & McDowell 2012). Therefore, for a better understanding of East-West labour migration in Europe which ‘is becoming increasingly diverse, fluid and sub-regionalised in nature, as well as gendered

and differentiated in its consequences for individuals, labour markets and the wider society’ (p.20), more research is required with a wider representation of the ‘continent moving West’ and more focus on the human component of this process for both ‘the West’ and ‘the rest’.

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Fortunati, Leopoldina, Pertierra, Raul & Vincent, Jane (eds.) (2012) *Migration, Diaspora, and Information Technology in Global Societies*, New York and London: Routledge. 271 pp.

The topic of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) and its appropriation by migrants and diaspora communities is an emerging interdisciplinary field of study. In recognizing the multifaceted aspects of new media and its relation to migration, this edited volume brings together scholars from a variety of academic backgrounds such as sociology, anthropology, psychology, communication, information science and cultural studies. The aim of the editors is to explore which role new media technologies play in the life of migrants and how these influence diasporic conditions.

The broader idea of the book has been aptly set out in the preface, written by Daniel Miller, whose current research projects are dedicated to social media and digital anthropology. With the introduction of ‘new media’ due to the affordability and global presence of digital technologies, a shift can be observed from migrants being seen as passive objects in the news to active contributors to media production. Interestingly, Miller explicitly points out that migration is not a special case as such and states that ‘what matters most to these migrants is exactly the same as what matters most to non-migrants’ (p. xiv). Likewise, the use of new media is a topic everyone can relate to as it is increasingly blending into the activities of our daily routine. However, as several contributions underline, especially in the life worlds of migrants, the availability of ‘Polymedia’ is of great

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importance as these digital media infrastructures play a mediating role in relationships, which enhance processes of co-construction of contemporary societies.

The book consists of an Introduction and sixteen separate chapters accompanied by relevant and up-to-date bibliographical references. The chapters are broadly divided into five thematic sections and there is a useful index at the end of the book. In the Introduction the editors refer to Putnam's notions of 'bonding' and 'bridging' social capital to highlight as a connecting theme the interplay between ICTs that allow migrants to network with people of their own culture as well as venture out into new worlds. A conceptual perspective on migrants' active participation in the current broadband society opens the volume, while the four subsequent thematic sections consist of more empirical oriented research studies.

A key strength of this volume is that it presents a substantial range of different, yet complimentary articles. The diversity of approaches is illustrated for example in several contributions that focus on China. These case studies offer a fresh insight into the intersection of media use and internal and international migrants, addressing new cartographies of electronic mediated communication. In contrast to most of the work presented in this volume, Pui-lam Law addresses the flip side of new media technologies and observed weakened family ties of migrant workers in southern China who tend to use cyberspace to indulge themselves in escapist entertainment. In studying the Chinese diaspora in Prato, Italy and Melbourne, Australia, Tom Denison and Graeme Johanson describe the function of ICTs for Chinese migrants in positive terms as global virtual networks which serve as 'portable safety nets to shore up culture and identity' and reiterate the main observation and central tone of the book. Going beyond the potential benefits and disadvantages of ICTs for migrants, David Kurt Herold examines how expatriates in China share their experiences with the world and hereby function as crucial mediators by taking up the role of 'bridge bloggers' and contribute to reporting on China. Such a multidimensional view on the use and meaning of ICTs is seen in other parts of the volume as well, which makes it stand as a versatile research tool for researchers in the field of new media and migration studies.

In addition, this edited volume contains original and innovative approaches to the study of how new media contributes to processes of co-construction. For example, while the bulk of the literature focusses on adults and first generation migrants, Lelia Green and Nahid Kabir take the point of view of migrant children's ICT use in the negotiation and construction of their future in Australia and their identity as youngsters. This pioneering research shows that it is of great value to investigate how youngsters in the diaspora are influenced by the media use of their parents and how they develop a sense of belonging and express themselves through ICTs. By looking into Moroccan, Russian and Turkish migrant communities in Germany, Andreas Hepp, Cigdem Bozdog and Laura Suna shed an interesting light on the multiplicity of migrants' media use and communicative connectivity. These authors design a typology in which they distinguish between origin-, ethno- and world-oriented migrants. Although the lion's share of the inquired mediated migrants is ethno-oriented, they observed that diasporic media cultures are much more differentiated than is often assumed and are able to go beyond origin and bi-cultural networking as these contain transcultural and cosmopolitan potential. This demonstrates that studies which go beyond questions of integration reveal more dynamic social relationships occurring in the broadband society.

One general criticism of this rich collection is that by largely celebrating the overall potentials of ICTs for migrants, the authors

neglect to address the contested terrain of digital media, which includes the discussion of issues of safety, security, racism and discrimination. In studying new media as a lens to look at migrations from an intercultural perspective, it is unfortunate that this volume does not go much beyond the processes of divergence and convergence and the dichotomy of integrative and insulating potentials of digital media for migrants. Although I share the editors' view stated in the introduction that 'we are all migrants in the virtual space' (p. 8), this might create expectations that the volume will analyze the reality of migrants and non-migrants together, as both are conceptualized as digital contributors and consumers sharing similar experiences of 'virtual migration'. In actuality, studies are not specifically taken up in this volume that include both digital linked migrants and non-migrants related to other interesting topics worth exploring such as (ethnic) e-commerce, online learning, the role of ICTs for remittance-based development and philanthropy, issues of free expression and censorship on the net, Internet activism and the creation of global solidarity networks or transnational sharing and its potential for enhancing global citizenship in multicultural societies. However, it is understandable that not all the wide-ranging modalities of the development of a knowledge society and its implications for mobile actors in the global economy can be dealt with in one single cohesive overview.

By going beyond isolated observations and framing the adoption of ICTs by migrants within an intercultural approach, this volume nevertheless examines an interesting compilation of diverse research topics, including gender, generational transformative processes, and religious and socio-cultural dimensions. By drawing upon the concept of migrants as e-actors, this volume acknowledges their active and creative role in the development of the information society. A great strength of the book is the combination of conceptual work and empirical case studies, which allows readers to acquire a nuanced understanding of the personalized use of ICTs and its social implications in an increasingly mobile world. The editors succeed in avoiding a western-centric perspective by not only focusing on Western regions but by including empirical material on Jamaica, the Philippines, Paraguay, Congo and China as well. Furthermore, the research presented is based on a variety of quantitative and qualitative research methods, including ethnographically oriented methodologies, interviews, life stories and survey data.

In conclusion, this thoughtful work which reaches beyond disciplines and borders should be of great interest to a wide audience of students and scholars interested in migration, media, communication, diaspora studies and transnationalism. This volume demonstrates the ambivalent characteristics of ICTs and the agency of its users while exploring its multiple potentialities. The relationship between technology and society and its intersection with migration is a challenging and thought-provoking research domain to which this book offers a myriad of suggestions for further investigation.

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Guild, Elspeth & Minderhoud, Paul (eds.) (2012) *The First Decade of EU Migration and Asylum Law*, Leiden and Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers. 485 pp.

The First Decade of EU Migration and Asylum Law is the 24th volume in the Jan Niessen and Elspeth Guild-edited series, *Immigration and Asylum Law and Policy in Europe*. Volume 24 is a celebration of the first 10 years of the *European Journal of Migration and Law (EJML)*

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and its 16 chapters are a combination of specially commissioned pieces on issues that have had particular impact on the development of the field along with updated versions of some of the most significant articles to appear in the EJML over the course of its first decade.

The book is divided into four sections dealing with, respectively, EU citizens, EU borders and irregular migration, EU immigration and asylum, and a final section entitled 'The Right to Have Rights'. Lack of space prevents detailed engagement with each of the 16 chapters which, though consistent in the depth and rigour of their analysis, are widely varied in terms of the aspects of EU immigration and asylum law with which they deal.

Instead, I will read *The First Decade of EU Migration and Asylum Law* as an evaluation of efforts to develop a common EU immigration policy since the Treaty of Amsterdam transferred competence over asylum and immigration to the EU in 1999. The important matters in such an evaluation concern the extent to which the power of Member States to dictate immigration law and policy has been diluted and how this has impacted on immigration law from a human rights perspective. In other words, to what extent has there been a move from intergovernmentalism to Europeanisation in the field of immigration and how has an increasingly harmonised EU approach to immigration impacted the human rights situation of those whose lives are most directly affected by EU action in this field?

The volume makes it clear that entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009 may have altered the EU legal landscape such as to significantly enhance creation of common EU immigration rules. Moreover, the changes wrought by Lisbon increase the possibility that any common EU immigration rules would take account of human rights considerations.

Under the Lisbon Treaty the European Parliament, viewed as more migrant-friendly than other EU institutions, had its role as co-legislator extended from matters concerning irregular immigration to legal immigration; the Court of Justice of the EU (CJEU) was empowered to give preliminary rulings to any national court or tribunal on the validity of acts by EU institutions in the area of freedom, security and justice (AFSJ); and legal force was given to the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Sergio Carrera's chapter, on the impact of the Lisbon Treaty and the Stockholm Programme, the EU's third multi-annual framework setting out policy priorities for the AFSJ, illustrates the extent to which the Treaty changes emboldened the Commission to articulate its own agenda in the context of the Stockholm Programme.

Carrera characterises the ensuing Commission-Council contretemps as symptomatic of a clash between Europeanisation and intergovernmentalism (p. 243) and makes clear that the power of the Council to dictate legislative action in the AFSJ has been diluted. The Commission has shown itself to be willing to go beyond the policy priorities set by the Council, notwithstanding the Treaty-based prerogative of the Council to define the strategic guidelines for legislative and operational planning within the AFSJ. A similar assertion of independence by the European Parliament in its resolution on the Stockholm Programme may indeed suggest that considerable distance has been travelled on the road from intergovernmentalism to Europeanisation.

Diego Acosta's chapter on the adoption of the Returns Directive, however, casts significant doubt on the extent to which the Parliament's role as co-legislator will mean a more human rights-compliant common EU immigration policy, and indeed the extent of the dilution of Member States' power to dictate the rules of the game in the field of immigration. Acosta suggests that one of the reasons the Parliament approved a piece of legislation that codified

at EU level a rights-deficient expulsion regime (Baldaccini 2009: 2) was pressure from national governments. To counter the increased powers of the European Parliament national governments may have encouraged their MEPs to follow the position taken by Member States in the Council (p. 200).

Another feature of the post-Lisbon landscape which will be key to ensuring a human rights-compliant common immigration policy is the Charter of Fundamental Rights, the subject of a chapter by Steve Peers. While the Charter is addressed to EU Member States and institutions only when they are implementing EU law, most of its provisions are applicable to all persons in the territory of the EU, regardless of their status.

Peers ends his chapter, and indeed the volume as a whole, on a positive note. Pointing out that the Charter recognises a number of immigration-related rights that have heretofore not been included as human rights in other international instruments, such as the right to social security after moving to another country and the right to asylum, Peers essentially highlights the Charter as evidence of the progress that has been made from discretion to rights: at the very minimum the Charter is hard proof of the extent to which many aspects of immigration law are now rights-based rather than discretion based (p. 468).

Such an optimistic endnote to the book has, however, to be viewed in the context of much of the justified criticism of EU immigration law and policy which animates some of the other contributions to *The First Decade of EU Migration and Asylum Law*. Ryszard Cholewinski's chapter, with its 51 pages making it more than twice as long as most of the other contributions to the book, is an updated version of an article that appeared in the EJML in 2000. While Cholewinski points out that initial discussion of the need for a common EU approach to dealing with the issue of irregular immigration took a dual approach, focusing both on prevention of irregular immigration and protection of those in an irregular status (pp. 129 - 132), measures adopted since entry into force of the Treaty of Amsterdam betray a preoccupation with security, particularly since the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 (p. 178).

Cholewinski's argument that the EU has failed to devote sufficient attention to irregular immigrants' rights is substantiated by the chapter of Acosta on the adoption of the Returns Directive which illustrates how the negotiations on the Commission Proposal for a Returns Directive resulted, on the whole, in a piece of legislation which was far less immigrant-friendly than the original Proposal.

Irregular immigrants are not the only category of third-country national, however, whose rights are adversely affected during the law-making process. Louise Halleskov Storgaard's chapter on the Long-Term Residents Directive illustrates the extent to which this particular piece of legislation was watered down from the initial Commission Proposal and how far short the Directive falls of the aim articulated in the Tampere Conclusions that long-term resident third-country nationals would be granted 'a set of uniform rights which are as near as possible to those enjoyed by EU citizens.'

What conclusion, then, are we to draw in relation to the development of a common EU immigration policy on the basis of this book? In the introduction to the volume, written by Kees Groenendijk and brimming over with arresting insights and thought-provoking opinions, the author takes a positive view. He argues that the CJEU's gradual restriction of Member States' discretion with regard to EU citizens and their family members is reproduced in new measures on third-country nationals, the Europeanisation of immigration law bringing Member State' actions traditionally excluded from external scrutiny within the purview of lawyers and courts (p. 3). Groenendijk

concedes that some directives allow Member States to continue to apply national rules or policies, and that there has been a tendency for them to bring their national law into line with EU minimum standards by making national standards more restrictive. He argues, however, that the last decade has witnessed a transfer to the EU of most law-making competences concerning admission and expulsion of non-citizens, with Member State authorities not yet fully aware of the extent of the loss of discretion and sovereignty in this area of law (p. 9).

We might thus conclude that while the last decade has witnessed considerable progress in the development of common EU immigration rules, particularly in the field of irregular immigration, such development has seen the human rights of third-country nationals take a back seat to EU concerns with security and migration control. While it would be fanciful to suggest that this characterisation of EU immigration law and policy will require revision in the immediate future, the changes wrought by the Lisbon Treaty do present us with a legal and institutional landscape in which the human rights of immigrants may be more easily mainstreamed into the creation of EU immigration law than was heretofore possible. These are just some of the many conclusions to be drawn from this welcome addition to the burgeoning canon of EU law and migration literature, an addition which will be of interest to immigration lawyers and academics alike.

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Jacobsen, Christine M. (2011) *Islamic Traditions and Muslim Youth in Norway*, Leiden and Boston: Brill. 419 pp.

Islamic Traditions and Muslim Youth in Norway is a rich ethnographic study of two Muslim youth organizations in Norway: the General Assembly of the Muslim Youth of Norway (*Norges Muslimske Ungdom*, abbreviated NMU) and the Muslim Student Society (*Muslimsk Studentsamfunn*, abbreviated MSS). The book consists of an introductory chapter that sets out the focus of the study and presents the main theoretical presuppositions that have guided the enterprise. Besides the introduction, the book consists of seven empirical chapters that present the findings from the field observations and interviews, and excerpts from texts and speeches produced by the two youth organizations. The aim of the study is to provide 'in-depth ethnographic material about young Muslim's active engagement in (re)defining Islamic traditions, Muslim identities and their future in the Norwegian context' (p. 4). Building on the theories of Talal Asad and Saba Mahmood, Jacobsen pays special attention to issues that can broadly be related to processes of individualization, authority, the formation of pious subjectivities, hybridization and the authority to interpret. The study is well-written. Jacobsen is clearly in command of the complex theories used in the book, and there is a good balance in the study between empirical findings, analysis, theoretical reflections and meta-discussions.

In chapter one the ethnographic context is described and the study is related to earlier research on Muslim youth in Europe. Thereafter, in chapter two the author introduces the two studied organizations

and relates them to the context of Islam and Muslims in Norway. By studying practices that are related to marriage, consumption and ritual, she then focuses on chapter three on Muslim narratives and imaginaries of identities and shows how these identities construct belonging. Tensions between the so-called global Muslim community, Euro-Norwegian Muslims, family and ethnic diaspora are explored and related to questions of identity. In chapter four she analyses how young Muslims and their respective organizations take part in and relate to public discussions on Islam and Muslims. The aim is to highlight and investigate 'Muslim organizations as arenas for the creation and expression of a Muslim political subject position' (p. 12). The next chapter focuses on the transmission of Islamic traditions and knowledge and contains information about how 'this' knowledge is discussed and inculcated in the family, the Koran schools and among young Muslims. Generational differences and differences over interpretation are highlighted and analysed in relation to the experiences of the young Muslims in the study. In chapter six Jacobsen examines 'the ways in which people are made to respond to Islamic discourses and knowledge, and how they are subjectified by means of a set of techniques of the self' (p. 13). The last chapter is in one way a conclusion, but it is also a 'theoretical elaboration of the key issues addressed throughout the book' (p. 13).

Identity politics and negotiations over the traditions, expectations and demands of the non-Muslim society and the Muslim community are recurring themes in the book. Contrary to popular understandings of Muslims (especially so-called pious women who adopt external Muslim attributes, i.e. the *hijab*), the study makes it clear that it is not possible to see one dominant pattern of thought or action. Negotiations and identity formations involve both external and internal expectations, and for the young Muslims included in the study the most important goal is to find a balance between a Muslim identity and a Norwegian identity. In other words, the informants' ambitions are to be 'good' Muslims and at the same time well-integrated, educated, active and responsible Norwegian citizens. In order to live up to this goal it is necessary to fight the prejudices of both non-Muslim Norwegians and believing Muslims. Sometimes it was more difficult to convince fellow Muslims than non-Muslims that it was a pious act to study at university and take part in the wider Norwegian society. A recurring theme in the analysis is how to 'establish a correspondence between the inner and outer aspects of faith and to engage in religious practices as a means of disciplining and transforming oneself according to a model of Islamic moral personhood and piety' (p. 358).

This presentation of the contents of the book above should make it clear that it is difficult to give a comprehensive summary of Jacobsen's rich study. This way of writing ethnography and its connection with advanced theories of identity processes and the formation of pious subjectivities sometimes make it problematic to differentiate between the actual empirical results, the theoretical discussions and the meta-analysis. Even though Jacobsen is clearly making use of all the theories discussed in the introduction of the book (which is not always the case), the reader will find it difficult to differentiate between the actual empirical data from Norway and the advanced theories used in the book. It is also evident that Jacobsen is heavily dependent on Asad's and Mahmood's theories and earlier studies, and sometimes her findings more or less replicate the views of these two eminent scholars. This means that an independent and critical distance from the theories employed in the study is lacking. I also miss a more thorough presentation of the material, and especially of the methods used in collecting the materials (i.e. the interviews, the participant observation and the field study). For example, there is no information about the number of informants included in the study, and

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informants' personal data are only presented very briefly. But these minor remarks aside, Jacobsen's study will contribute to empirical and theoretical discussions about Islam and Muslims in Europe and has great potential in contributing to the emerging field of studies highlighting the nexus between youth and religion.

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Johnson, Christopher H., Sabean, David Warren, Teuscher, Simon & Trivellato, Francesca (eds.) (2011) *Transregional and Transnational Families in Europe and Beyond. Experiences Since the Middle Ages*, New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books. 362 pp.

Public debates surrounding transnational families formed by migrants have become more heated in Europe in the recent years. Simultaneously, scholars of international migration have started to increasingly pay attention to family formation across national borders. This is a needed development in the field in which family migration has so far remained secondary to labor migration. However, despite this shift in the scholarly field, historical studies on transnational family formation are still few in number – a fact that contributes to the common conception that families that cross national borders are a new phenomenon in European societies (Waldis 2006: 8–10).

This is precisely the reason why *Transregional and Transnational Families in Europe and Beyond*, edited by Christopher H. Johnson, David Warren Sabean, Simon Teuscher, and Francesca Trivellato, all accomplished social historians, is a recommended read for scholars interested in families and kinship groups that extend beyond national and regional borders. The book is a collection of fourteen essays that focus on the ways geographically scattered families and kinship groups were created, maintained, and remolded in different parts of Europe (and, in some essays, in areas outside Europe but within its sphere of influence) from the Middle Ages to the twenty-first century. With this broad brush, the book contributes to the rich historical literature on the family in European societies by adding a 'transregional and transnational' perspective on a field typically characterized by studies situated in sedentary settings. The authors focus on three major themes: how power relations, authority, and discipline operated within kinship constellations; how the circulation and distribution of property mediated family relations; and how kinship structures changed in and responded to different historical transformations. These themes are discussed with varying depth in the essays, which are divided chronologically into two parts, the medieval and early modern period and modernity.

There are too many essays to be discussed in detail here, but they generally conform to the goals of the book, as spelled out in the introduction, written by Sabean and Teuscher. Together, the fourteen chapters paint a picture of transregional and transnational families that operated creatively, strategically, and, for the most part, cohesively when attempting to gain status and power, create beneficial private and public relations, and accumulate different kinds of resources from capital to information. The book is successful in bringing the study of kinship and the family out of the constraints of national histories. For decades, 'kinship' was studied in non-Western, 'primitive' societies, or if in the European context, it was associated with rural communities or urban working class (Franklin & McKinnon 2001: 8). However, the authors argue convincingly for the importance of kinship as a category of analysis also among elite groups and in time periods from the Middle Ages

to modern times. The essays included in the book clearly show that kinship relations played a central role in the organization of European societies and did not lose their meaning in transition to modernity. As Sabean and Teuscher point out in the introduction (p. 2), the study of kinship groups dispersed across Europe 'offers the possibility to reexamine European narratives (...) and transgress European boundaries'.

While the majority of the essays focus on Western Europe, they do cover an impressive breadth of locations, from India to the Caribbean. They mostly touch on elite members of European societies. While this is an understandable choice considering the aforementioned focus of European kinship studies on rural peasants and urban working class, a more varied look on different social classes would have been a welcomed addition. The essays also bring into focus different forms of kinship from the spiritual kinship of the Moravians of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Mettele's essay) to elite political households in military patronage states, using the Egyptian Mamluks as an example (Piterberg's essay). The strongest essays in the collection discuss the main themes of the book in an insightful manner and use a rich array of archival sources. Johnson, for example, analyzes the genealogies of three intersecting families in eighteenth and nineteenth century France to offer an account of the emergence of the nation-state that departs from the traditional political, institutional, and ideological explanations. By analyzing the families' correspondence and journals, he shows how these families 'branched out into the nation' through marriage alliances, relationships to relatives within the nation (especially in Paris), and ambitious strategies to advance their economic, political, and social interests. In addition, Johnson, as well as some other authors such as Michaela Hohkamp, points to the pivotal role of women, usually married aunts or sisters, in the creation and development of kinship networks. Through their role as mediators in the family, the women ultimately became 'full participants in the process of nation building', as Johnson puts it (p. 210).

In terms of geographical and temporal scope, as well as thematically, Jose C. Moya's chapter, which follows the introduction, seems somewhat disconnected from the other essays. Nevertheless, his account provides an important reminder of the problem when using the term 'transnational family' in historical studies with a broad temporal scope, such as the one under discussion. Transnationality generally applies to the time period since the emergence of nation states; following this definition, as Moya puts it (p. 24), 'transnational families have existed at most for the last five centuries'. However, his genealogy of international families shows that the formation of families in the context of human migration is a phenomenon that extends from the Paleolithic era to the modern times – another important reminder for those engaged in discussions surrounding geographically scattered families today. This brings us to the question of why, exactly, the authors included the term 'transnational families' in the title, whereas most of the essays do not actually use it (with some exceptions, such as the essays by Chamberlain and Rutten and Patel). Migration scholars have been criticized for using the term 'transnationalism' too vaguely and uncritically, as a 'catch-all' phrase. Similarly, in this book the use of the term 'transnational' – as well as 'transregional' – family lacks definitional precision.

On the whole, the book still offers a welcomed departure from the traditional, sedentary setting of studies of family relationships and kinship in Europe. The essays cover a great breadth of subjects, regions, and time periods. Anthologies can often be uneven and inconsistent, and the one under review is not entirely free of these shortcomings. Nevertheless, it serves as an important reminder of

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how ideas regarding family, marriage, and kinship are constantly in flux. Therefore, in addition to the expected audience of social historians and historians of the family, it is a recommended read for all those interested in family formation and kinship networks crossing national or regional borders.

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Witalisz, Alicja (ed.) (2011) *Migration, Narration, Communication: Cultural Exchanges in a Globalised World*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang. 208 pp.

The volume under review is a collective body of work that deals with aspects of identity, belonging and inter-cultural contact, from the perspective of literary, socio-linguistic and cultural studies. The book's editor, Alicja Witalisz, is a Poland based linguist who has specialized in English linguistics, aspects of language contacts and language loans. The volume is a compilation of sixteen papers: an outcome of the preparatory work, done by each of its authors for the 'Migration and Narration' LLP (Lifelong Learning Program) ERASMUS Intensive Programme. The focus placed on language issues in contact is thus noticeable from the start.

The volume is divided into four, arguably interlinked sections and focusing on: the analysis of cultural identity and belonging as portrayed in literary works, the analysis of the cultural (re)presentation of humour, the approaches to language as a social construct, and the issue of student mobility as fostering European identity. On the book's back cover, the project is described to be 'an interdisciplinary discussion of the phenomenon of migration and mobility in the modern globalised world and their impact on multiple aspects of culture and communication.' With such intended aims in mind, it is useful to look more closely at the composition and presentation of the papers themselves, as they are divided in the aforementioned sections.

The first section titled simply *Literature* is comprised of eight papers dealing with issues of migration and inter-cultural contact as they appear in popular literature. While all essays analyse specific and distinct bodies of modern literature, what seems to link these papers is their general focus on literary works that deal with consequences of cultural encounters: be it the distinct experiences of first and second generations immigrants, the clash between immigrant and host culture, the inner contradictions within individuals holding multiple national belongings or those who cannot find their place in either home or host countries. In all these papers, literature and poetry are introduced not only as simple descriptions of culture, but as additional means of counter-framing the most stereotypical assumption of what defines cultural identity. In this sense, authors and poets alike are introduced to us as contributing to literary discussions on the topic of cosmopolitan identity, immigrant belonging and

cultural diversity. Thus, albeit from different positions, all the papers in the first section focus on ways in which literary works (re)present contemporary and complex issues of cultural globalisation and inter-cultural communication.

The second section – titled *Migrating Humour* – moves the focus on a rather different topic: the intriguing link between humour and cultural studies. The three papers introduced here are a particularly interesting mix, since they deal with the analysis of humour in very different ways and in very different settings: looking at ways in which jokes shift, or as the author of the first paper puts it 'migrate' when adopted in different national contexts; analysing the visual, satirical representation of the 'other' in English and Portuguese journals regarding the colonial rivalry between the two countries; and the appreciation of humour in anti-proverbs in the case of Hungarian and American respondents. What is particularly interesting is that the papers introduced here are a mix not only of different approaches to humour but also of different methods to analyse it: on the one hand, the use of qualitative methods in the first two papers (critical and visual discourse analysis) and the use of quantitative methods in the third paper (a comparative overview of two national surveys concerning anti-proverbs and the correlations authors establish between appreciations of humour, ethnicity, age and sex). It thus provides readers with insight into the very diverse ways in which the link between culture and humour can be investigated, both thematically and methodologically.

The book's third section – *Language contacts and translation* – moves more clearly, as its title also suggests, into the realm of socio-linguistics. It comprises four papers and, again, the mix between qualitative and quantitative methods points towards the volume's intended interdisciplinary approach. These four papers are linked together by the attention they all pay to language as a social construct: either by looking at how migration contributes to structural changes in the language migrants use, by questioning the validity of the linguistic globalization-cum-linguistic homogenization debate, by analysing the dominance of the English language in Internet slang or by investigating how translation of literary texts is never devoid of the influence and subjectivities of its translators. While the first section of the book reflectively dealt with how modern literature contributes to the study of cultural diversity, and while the second section introduced the importance of studying humour and its link to cultural studies, this third section's strength lies in its opening up discussions of linguistic diversity and linguistic globalisation in contemporary society.

The last part of the volume – *Erasmus mobility as modern European migration* – features only one paper, which looks specifically at the relation between the aforementioned educational programme and European identity. The assumed link between the two has in fact been one of the reasons behind the implementation of the Erasmus project in the first place and the paper elaborates on this issue by investigating the opinions of students who had taken part in educational exchange programmes. Although having an admittedly limited sample of respondents, the paper concludes that student mobility does contribute to, if not an enhanced European identity, then at least to a more open attitude in embracing cultural differences.

The volume under review is an arguably bold project, as it tries to go beyond the dominant academic takes on international migration, cross-cultural communication and cultural identity. By introducing us to approaches taken by literary scholars and linguists on these matters, all papers open up interesting discussions of cultural diversity, beyond the exclusive realm of sociology, anthropology, or political science. What the book lacks however is a more balanced

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or structured look at the themes it introduces. The first section takes up the largest part of the analysis and much less space is devoted to the other three sections. This makes the volume look somewhat unbalanced, as mainly the study of literary works rather than the interdisciplinary discussion it envisioned itself to be. The last chapter in particular is somewhat puzzling: since it is comprised of only one paper it makes this reader wonder why the need to address it in a different section. Given that the book is, as discussed early on, based on the preparatory work done for an ERASMUS programme it is understandable why the editor would want to introduce papers discussing the ERASMUS projects. Yet, since the topic of student mobility and European identity is only loosely linked to all the other papers, the last section of the book risks in appearing as an annex

to the volume rather than as addressing a different topic altogether. Introducing more papers or essays on the issue would not only have given more weight to the volume but would also have explored in more detail an undeniably intriguing yet little researched phenomenon: ERASMUS mobility and its link to aspects of identity building.

Nevertheless, despite these few structural critiques, the book edited by Alicja Witalisz is a useful, interesting and informative read, particularly for students of cultural studies or those interested in literary and linguistic approaches to the issues of (inter)cultural communication in today's globalised and globalising society.

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