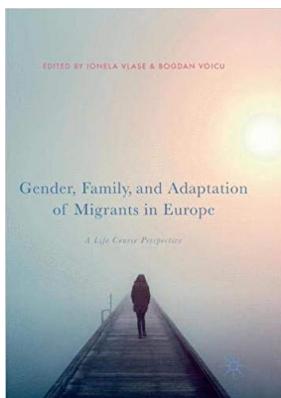


Book Review

Ionela Vlase and Bogdan Voicu (Eds.). 2018. *Gender, Family, and Adaptation of Migrants in Europe. A Life Course Perspective*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. 239 pp. ISBN 978-3-319-76657-7 (eBook); ISBN 978-3-319-76656-0 (Hardcover).

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In a moment of economic crisis as the background of the European migration, *Gender, Family, and Adaptation of Migrants in Europe. A Life Course Perspective* “aims to offer a fresh analysis of dilemmas and ambiguities reflected in migrants’ narratives regarding their life choices” (p. 5). Without any doubt, they are the actors of this book who depicts their life uncertainties during life transitions in both destination and origin countries.

The titles of each chapter suggest that migration is not a unidimensional process, but one in which several intersections are at play at individual, social and political levels.

The collection of eight chapters edited by Ionela Vlase and Bogdan Voicu builds on several research projects on authors’ expertise on migrants’ family, employment, gender, and education issues that intermix qualitative and quantitative approaches and a cross-sectional and longitudinal perspective. Through the combination of sound theories,

empirical evidence and refined analyses, the contributors identify new patterns to further understand the complex migration trajectories experienced by Romanian, Polish, Spanish, Italian and Portuguese migrants in different countries in Europe considering their unique positions and highlighting intersections and heterogeneity in their migration experiences.

In the first chapter, *Fringed life satisfaction? A life-course perspective on the impact of international migration on subjective well-being*, Bogdan Voicu navigates through several theories on hyper-vulnerability, personal events and life satisfaction. Based on panel data that covers more than two decades, the author analyzes the effects of personal events such as transitions from one marital status to another and parenthood on life satisfaction of both German people and migrants.

The second chapter truly justifies Justyna Salamońska's expression "walking alongside" as it makes the readership fully engaged in the life stories of Oskar and Anita and their unique pattern of migration. In *'Walking Alongside' Polish Migrants in Ireland – Individual Life Courses in the Context of Political, Social and Economic Change*, the subjectivity of Oskar's and Anita's voices permeate the paradox that migration trajectories involve since the employment and lifestyle opportunities also bring responsibilities and loneliness. The style and the analyses of the author create an innovative thread of the story line and the chapter ends on a cliffhanger leaving the readership in a suspense of what happens to Oskar and Anita at the transition point of their lives.

'And we are still here': Life courses and life conditions of Italian, Spanish and Portuguese retirees in Switzerland lacks the gender perspective that could have shown more nuanced outcomes for both women and men. Still, Claudio Bolzman and Giacomo Vagni demonstrate the effects of intersections between the recruitment policy, length of stay in the country, and the possibilities of access to the Swiss nationality on the socio-economic and health related advantages/disadvantages of Italian,

Spanish and Portuguese retired men. Despite using a quantitative perspective, the authors interconnect the data by applying advanced statistical analyses thus demonstrating the cumulative effect of disadvantages on mental health issues.

In *Gendered migratory pathways: Exploring the work trajectories of long-term Romanian migrants*, Alin Croitoru identifies the interlinked nature of the structural factors that influenced women's and men's decision to migrate with the engendered work experiences during migration. The decision to return is also not a gender-neutral phenomenon. Women and men face different challenges when deciding to return, and factors such as work experience, marriage and childbirth play a differential role for each of them. Overall, women tend to further their work experiences through improving their education while men are interested in opening a business as entrepreneurs.

In *Fragmented careers, gender, and migration during the Great Recession*, Francesca Vianello draws upon the concepts of career and life course perspective exploring intersections between working conditions and class, gender, family status, life stage, and country of origin to shed light on the role of the economic crisis in migrants' lives. The chapter also highlights the effects of the economic crisis on gender roles and gender relations. While women return to traditional fields such as the domestic sphere, men need to face new challenges because of the new dynamics created by the fact that they are not seen as the principal breadwinners. The chapter pinpoints an interesting idea, namely, changing the gender roles is a complex situation since reality shows that women and men are breadwinners at the same time.

Immigration, transition to parenthood and parenting (Anca Bejenaru) identifies the voices of Romanian women who experienced motherhood during migration. The psychological analyses of the author are very fine, and they aim to disentangle the complex constellations of past experiences from women's childhood and personal experiences as migrants in a

different country. Through the participants' narratives, the chapter combines a dialogue between two generations (women migrants and their mothers) coupled with affect and respect while understanding and discovering their own experiences as migrant women and mothers.

Through a gender lens, *Women's stories of migration: Youth, personal agency, and linked lives* brings to light that economic reasons motivate the migration for both men and women. However, women look for employment opportunities, education, and health care improvements in their destination countries. The author highlights how women navigate their life choices related to romantic relationships, families, and marriage while exploring new experiences and studying to expand their chances for employment and increase their standard of living.

As one of the first contribution working on Romanian migrants' masculinities, Ionela Vlase analyzes how Romanian migrants perform hegemonic masculinities during migration and upon return in *Men's migration, adulthood, and the performance of masculinities*. In their narratives, Romanian migrants do not seem to be influenced by the gender roles of the destination countries. However, the patterns of their threatened or exacerbated masculinities are unique.

Overall, the contributions of this book are critically important. The audiences that would appreciate this book include scholars who work in the migration field at an international or European level, policy makers, as well as any person who is just curious about migrants' subjective life experiences (despite the academic way of organizing some of the chapters). It reveals the need for a different perspective about migrants' experiences and more complex analyses on intersections that shape those experiences.