

Book Reviews

WOMEN, GENDER AND LABOUR MIGRATION: HISTORICAL AND GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Pamela Sharpe, Ed. London:
Routledge, 2001.

REVIEWED BY
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Before the mid 1970s, many historical studies on migration rested on the explicit and implicit assumption that migration was a gender-neutral process and migrants were primarily men. There was little recognition that many women, apart from moving around as members of their families, migrated as autonomous migrants to fulfill labour needs.

Women, Gender and Labour Migration, a collection of historical studies of gender-specific migration in the nineteenth and the early twentieth century, is one of the more recent attempts by migration historians to balance this gender bias in the historical study of migration. In this regard, the book highlights and makes visible female migrants in international migration by demonstrating that women have long been involved in long-distance migration for work purposes. Using gender as a tool for analysis, readers are informed of the historical location of women as family members and as migrants in various societies in Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin and North America.

The book is worth reading for those who are interested in women and migration, feminist study, family and gender studies. I found that the majority of the selections in the book are accessible and well illustrated. Yet, for novices in the historical study of migration and those who are unfamiliar with specific geographical and socio-cultural contexts that the authors refer to, extra effort and concentration may be needed when reading each chapter.

The focus of the book is on long distance voluntary migration of women and men who migrated internally and internationally. Quantitative and qualitative materials are used in most of the fifteen chapters. Sarasua's, Henkes's, and Tidswell's chapters, for example, effectively make use of both data sources in their analysis, demonstrating women's historical experience of migration as individuals as well as their positions in broader contexts of economic class, gender, race, and culture. Some contributors are less successful in integrating individual testimonies or other qualitative materials with quantitative data (Mager's chapter), which could possibly be due to the insufficient qualitative data on women's migration in this area. Other contributors make use of micro data of internal and regional migration in their studies, due to the lack of macro or state-level data on women's migration. However, this turned out to be a very useful source of information. See, for example, Hahn's chapter.

Many chapters illustrate, to different extents, how both the viability of migration for women and their status have been related to gender rela-

tions in their original and host societies. All studies show that jobs men and women migrants could obtain in the host societies were gender-specific. As shown in Sarasua's, Hahn's, Gothard's, and Henkes' chapters, the majority of women migrants occupied reproductive work (wet nursing, domestic work, or providing room and board for other migrants) in the destination societies. Job opportunities, which were shaped by the women's fixed gender role as care giver and nurturer, were more limited than those of men.

Nagata's chapter clearly illustrates that women who migrated internally in Japan to take jobs in big cities still held strong ties with their families by sending remuneration back home. Some, however, who could afford to live on their own in big cities where job mobility was possible migrated permanently and rarely kept in touch with their original families. The answer to the question as to whether migration would enable women to be independent from families is, then, still inconclusive. This is probably because, as Pauline De Ros Reyes says:

the impact of gender, though hardly uniform, varies in different historical and cultural contexts and also in relation to other structures of power.

Another recurrent theme from the book is the fact that women migrants, especially in Europe and Australia, have often been controlled and sanctioned by state and religious organizations (See Sarasua's, Hahn's, Gothard's, and Henkes' chapters). These institutions often projected

the image of migrant women as innocent and prone to all kinds of temptations and who needed to be protected against all evils. Independent women migrants were often seen as living outside established social norms and so were seen as moral threats to their original as well as their destination societies. For instance, as seen in Mager's chapter, migrant women were depicted in the literature as amoral and family wreckers rather than as agents and problem solvers. Mager argues that not only the state imposed image of women, but also the studies on gendered histories of migrant labour in Southern Africa, were problematic.

All contributors in *Women, Gender and Migration* indicate that patterns of women's migration and work opportunities in the past were shaped and reshaped by political, social, cultural, and economic forces. At the end of the twentieth century, women migrants from the South still occupy work in the reproductive and service sectors (domestic work, sex work, invisible labour in marriage) when they move to work in Europe and North America. They still hold strong ties with their families in countries of origin. Transnational families like those of Italian migrants (see Gabaccia's chapter) are more common nowadays. It can be concluded that despite changes in the economy and labour pattern through globalization process, women's major migration patterns still remain the same but evolve in different forms, and locations (See Reyers's chapter for more details).

GENDER AND GLOBAL RESTRUCTURING: SIGHTINGS, SITES AND RESISTANCES

Marianne H. Marchand and Anne Sisson Runyan, Eds. London and New York: Routledge, 2000.

REVIEWED BY DIANA HUET DE GUERVILLE

In order to address the significant gender gap in the literature on globalization, Marianne H. Marchand and Anne Sisson Runyan have gathered together twelve diverse, yet complementary feminist analyses of the complex set of changes occurring as part of what the editors term "global restructuring." Marchand and Runyan believe that "gender analysis (in its several variations) is particularly well-equipped for developing a better understanding of globalization's multidimensionality," and the contributions to this volume certainly bear out that claim. Taken together they provide a wide-ranging and multifaceted picture of global restructuring that is often missing from supposedly 'gender-neutral' accounts, showing women not just as victims but also as agents of change.

The book is thoughtfully organized, framed by an excellent introductory chapter that sets the context for the volume by defining key terms and explaining the editors' intent and rationale. Though this collection seems geared specifically

towards academics in the field of International Political Economy and related disciplines, the introduction offers an engaging and comprehensive overview of important concepts that may provide readers coming from a wide variety of perspectives with enough of a background to enjoy the entire volume.

The chapters are divided into three sections: Sightings (feminist conceptualizations), Sites (concrete spaces of restructuring), and Resistances (women's agency in various forms), which I found worked quite well as an organizing structure. Each section also has its own introduction, explaining the overarching theme even further and summarizing the relevance of each contribution.

'Sightings' introduces some exciting theoretical concepts which show new ways of thinking about restructuring from a variety of perspectives, revealing complexities that are usually hidden. For example, the first two chapters both use the example of Filipina maids working in Hong Kong to illustrate the contradictions inherent in global restructuring. Chapter One makes a distinction between "techno-muscular capitalism" (also termed global restructuring I, or GI) and its often-invisible shadow, a "regime of labour intimacy" performed largely by women (or GI^{II}), and both pieces address the maids' resistances to these processes. Chapter Two explores how the maids challenge the "patriarchal prism" by visibly overtaking public space en masse on Sundays, while Chapter One shows the retreat into either "tomboyism" (an accepted