

Book Review

Migrant Men

Edited by Mike Donaldson, Raymond Hibbins, Richard Howson, and Bob Pease

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Due to the increasing number of people moving across the national borders and social changes caused by these movements, migration has become one of the hottest social issues in the contemporary world, attracting social scientists' attention. However, similar to other fields of social science, feminist scholars criticized the migration studies in the early stages because of their lack of gender-sensitive analysis on migration. Feminist studies on migration challenged the notions that consider gender as merely one of variables that influence migration and women only as dependents of male migrants. Furthermore, current gender-sensitive studies have explored how gender plays in pre- and post- migration as well as how migrants reform their identities, seeing migration as a gendered phenomenon. The efforts aimed at gendering migration have analysed what Castle and Miller called "feminization of migration," which is now commonly used to characterize contemporary international migration.

Despite of the growing academic concerns regarding the relationship between gender and migration, less attention has been paid to men and masculinity in migration studies. While many studies have dealt with various aspects of gender and migration, these tend to focus exclusively on female migrants. The relationship between male gender identity and migration has not been fully examined. Actually, the early migration studies, which ignored women's role and considered only men as migrants, also ignored male migrants' experiences and their identity "as men" therefore, they failed to consider gender as an important factor in migration. For this reason, *Migrant Men: Critical Studies of Masculinities and the Migration Experience* is relevant and meaningful project.

This volume mainly discusses the ways men understand, reconstruct, and negotiate their masculinities in their experience of migration. When hearing the title and main theme of this book, the readers may begin to question just how the experience of migration influences gender relations. Can their migration experience bring some changes into their relationships, such as household division of labour and decision-making in the family? *Migrant Men* considers male responses to this question, which are summarized in the last chapter. Although many existing studies that focus on female migrants have discussed this issue, this book offers male perceptions. Studies on female immigrants have argued that there is a potential for women to gain certain power after migration, but they also found that traditional gender role still remain in various relationships. *Migrant Men* suggests that re-negotiation of masculinities in the new setting in the host country does not necessarily lead to fundamental change in gender relation or guarantee gender equality. Instead, their ideas about masculinity and traditional gender role behaviours may remain the same or even reinforced. For instance, male responsibility as a breadwinner and a representative can still be found in the family as well as wider ethnic community, as discussed in chapter 6 and 11 in particular.

This edited volume consists of two parts: Part 1 entitled “Theorizing Masculinities and Migration” and Part 2 entitled “Regional Patterns of Masculine Migration.” The first part contours theories about masculinity and migration, and the second part provides empirical explorations that include six different case studies of African, Latin America, Lebanese, Chinese, Indonesian, and Maori men, and one research on broad migrant population in Australia.

Based on the belief that ethnicity strongly influences the construction of masculinities, this book explores men’s experiences in order to examine interaction between masculinity and ethnicity in the specific set, Australia, which is well known for being a multiethnic society. Each migrant group has its own home culture regarding gender and has different migration history, population size, and adaptation strategy, among others. This diversity can widen case studies and deepen our understanding of the interrelation between ethnicity and masculinity as well as plurality of masculinity.

Migrant Men suggests rethinking the concept of masculinity. To do this, the book focuses on marginalized groups of men and analyses mas-

culinity from the standpoint of men who are not categorized as dominant group in the host society. It tries to challenge the traditional concept of masculinity that is based more on Western convention. Experiences of subordinated groups of men can help us understand various aspects of masculinity, for example, how to challenge (or reinforce) hegemonic masculinity, and provide useful data for understanding the plurality of masculinities. This book describes case studies that address these issues by exploring not only what migrant men experience and conceive regarding their own masculinities but also how they perceive Australian masculinities. In other words, these cases describe not only how one perceives masculinity -the "others' masculinities"- but also about how dominant discourse is dictated by how others perceive masculinity -masculinities through the eyes of the "others."

Surely, other significant social matters, such as class, can shape migrant masculinity. This book's argument that class should be accounted for is convincing, given that many migrants could experience downward social status and migration itself involves economic factors. These migrants' lives as men are influenced not only by cultural aspects that shape gender norms in their home country but also by their economic resources. In fact, economic activities are a key part in these men's negotiation of masculinities, as stated in chapter 5 by Bob Pease.

Even though migrant men share common experience of economic marginalization and social exclusion to some extent, the migrants' social status, circumstances, and experiences are wide and diverse. Because this book analyses individual groups, the audience may have presumptions that could lead to homogenisation of groups, although of course the editors and contributors did not intend to do it. For example, readers may conceive that migrants' home countries have single homogenous masculinity while the host country has more diverse and new masculinities. This book is a good resource for understanding men and migration as long as the readers avoid making these assumptions and understand that there are differences within an ethnic migrant group (for instance, generation gap among Chinese men addressed in chapter 9).

This book can provide insights into research areas of both masculinities and migration. In fact, the book contributes to contemporary scholarship on masculinity. However, a remarkable contribution to the field of migration studies would require a more nuanced and detailed consideration. In

order to go further, beyond just examining the male side of migration or providing male version of the same answers about gender-migration relationship as the existing studies, the book and future studies should explain how masculinity works in gendered migration, which considers motivation for migration, process of migration, settlement in the host society, and transnational relationships. This research area should be further explored in order to explain “world gender” reconstructed by globalization. This book shows that there is a wide range of issues for scholars to consider in the future.

Biographical Note: **Young Jeong Kim** completed her PhD at the Department of Sociology, London School of Economics and Political Science, after she had worked at feminist organizations in South Korea. Her doctoral thesis entitled *Imagining “Home” : Korean Migrant Women’s Identities in the UK* deals with young Korean women’s migration trajectories and their relationships with home nation, host society, and their own ethnic communities in the UK. Her research interests include migration, gender, “race” and ethnicity, and nationalism.