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Claudine Attias-Donfut, Joanne Cook, Jaco Hoffman and Louise Waite (eds), *Citizenship, Belonging and Intergenerational Relations in African Migration*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, UK, 2012, 224 pp., hbk £55.00, ISBN 13: 978 0 230 25274 5.

In this globalised era, most researchers working on ageing and older adults would – ideally – recognise that understanding the cultural backgrounds and present realities of the people we study is paramount to social gerontology's main objectives, especially in the context of international migration, and thus of societies with multiple ethnic minorities. Whilst settling in a new society, international migrants learn to navigate not only between cultures but also between different generations' notions of family values, practices, obligations, expectations and gender relations. Exploring the lived experiences of international migrants in the context of family intergenerational relations could expand our sociological interpretation of the dynamics of migration, especially considering how little theorising and empirical evidence on this field is available. *Citizenship, Belonging and Intergenerational Relations in African Migration* contributes to addressing such paucity of research by comparing settlement experiences of African migrant families across Britain, France and South Africa.

The book is divided into two sections and eight chapters, written by 12 authors altogether. The first part (Chapters 2 and 3) draws on the historical and socio-political contexts of sub-Saharan African migration flows to Britain, France and South Africa. It presents the theoretical and conceptual framework that underpins the analysis of the research project. Chapter 2, by Barou, Aigner and Mbenga, examines both differences and similarities between the three migrant destinations. In Chapter 3, Attias-Donfut and Waite engage in an interesting discussion of key theories on migration and various notions of 'citizenship', 'identity' and 'sense of belonging'. I particularly like the concept of *unchaining generations*, which refers to the cultural discontinuities between generations: '[p]arents and children, having been raised in completely different social environments, don't share the same life experiences, which results in a generational discontinuity in almost all domains: social milieu, way of life, family memory, values, if not religious beliefs' (p. 51).

The second part of the volume (Chapters 4–7) uncovers the empirical findings of the comparative study whilst contextualising them against theories and concepts relevant to current migration studies. Methodologically, all three case studies adhered to a qualitative lifecourse approach and carried out focus groups and biographical interviews with over 200 participants amongst African migrants' families across two generations. Focus groups and interviews were organised according to gender, age and community of origin. For instance, Vera Roos *et al.* (Chapter 4) map out the various pathways of African migration into Britain, France and South Africa, which included four types: labour, education, forced migration and family joining. The informants' accounts presented in this chapter help to illustrate the meanings that both older and younger generations ascribed to their lives

before and after migrating, particularly in relation to notions of 'identity', 'belonging' and 'intergenerational relations'. Interestingly, the significance of these themes differs considerably depending on the migrant destination, and more specifically the level of xenophobic violence at the time.

Chapters 5–7 present each of the cases of African migration to France, Britain and South Africa. The authors further explore and contextualise the lived experiences of parent and child generations of migrants around the topics of transnationalism, multiculturalism and acculturation with specific emphasis on the informants' experiences of work, education, welfare, social mobility, family life, care expectations and responsibilities, gender relations, language, faith, and discrimination and xenophobia. As is often the case with edited volumes, the quality of the different chapters is somewhat uneven. Despite the interesting discussions offered within the book's empirical chapters, at times it seems that the excerpts from interviews and focus groups have been *forced* into fitting specific theoretical concepts and arguments without offering a more in-depth analysis of the informants' accounts. Although the study adopted a biographical approach in order to capture 'lived experiences and personal accounts of human agency' (Chamberlayne, Bornat and Wengraf, cited on p. 111), the voices of the African migrants seem to fade away, taking a background stance in favour of theoretical generalisations.

Chapter 8, by Attias-Donfut, Cook and Hoffman, however, offers a strong discussion of the empirical findings from a comparative perspective whilst offering conceptual, methodological and policy considerations. The authors draw on three main set of themes that have emerged throughout the book: (a) work, education, social mobility and discrimination; (b) intergenerational relations, gender and cultural transmission; and (c) citizenship and belonging, 'as interpreted from the lived experiences and perspectives of [African] migrants' (p. 187) of two generations.

To the reader interested in African migration, this book offers new insights into the dynamics of migration in the context of family generations. To the migrant, as myself, this book enables a serious reflection about the process of negotiating one's own cultural belongings and identities.

University of Nottingham, UK

MEIKO MAKITA