

*Sociologists in a Global Age: Biographical Perspectives*, edited by **Mathieu Deflem**. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007. 273pp. \$99.95 cloth. ISBN: 9780754670377.

**ROSANNA HERTZ**  
Wellesley College  
rhertz@wellesley.edu

Personal biography matters in research, even though it's only a recent development that more sociologists have begun to give equal billing to their research topics and their personal lives. The charge to the authors in this collection was extremely broad: to explain how their theoretical orientation was influenced by political and social contexts and to identify the people who shaped their lives in the most significant ways.

This unique edited collection features the intellectual development of 16 global scholars selected by editor, Mathieu Deflem. They are defined as such because their professional work involves international and/or comparative investigations. These autobiographical accounts chronicle the trajectory of the discipline and the profession at a time in which U.S. institutions were the "epicenter" of sociological training, even though sociological figures that were critical to various discourses were often European. The rise of historical and comparative sociology and its move to center stage is also captured through these essays.

The volume is divided into three parts. The first part traces the evolution of global scholars by tracing the research and employment careers of sociologists in Europe. Globalization is etched into the personal lives of contributors who recount poignant struggles to have their work accepted and to find communities of like-minded scholars. While all the scholars in this collection have fascinating stories to tell, Saskia Sassen's tenacity in remaining a scholar despite repeated rejections is the most admirable.

The second part of the book highlights the shifting nature of sociological work. This set of essays is quite diverse but almost all the essayists tell stories of marginality (in childhood, and then in professional terms), of contributing historical events in their home countries, and about how the desire to escape became crucible experiences that alter-

nately pushed (and pulled) them on the path to creating comparative/global research agendas. In some ways, their research agendas (and often their learning of multiple languages) allowed them to escape their homes (see especially Piotr Sztompka's account of the ingredients essential for leaving Poland in the 1950s). Eclectic and interdisciplinary interests (in history and economics, especially) enabled some to move to the U.S., a refuge especially for European scholars at that time.

Although the research agendas of the authors in Part 2 are quite diverse (including Pierpaolo Donati on the study of modernity, Ewa Morawska on immigration, Leon Grunberg on workers' conditions, Runt Veenhoven on happiness), they share in common a blending of global (Western) influences with local traditions. This is to say that there are struggles about theoretical orientation but there are rarely questions about the Western development of these theories (and methodologies). A notable exception is the essay by Hyun-Chin Lim from South Korea, who writes specifically about the need to not simply import American and European sociology to his country but, instead, to become an independent force within sociological theorizing and development.

Part 3 focuses on the transformation of sociological identities. The scholars in this section move across worlds of interests (such as Piotr Sztompka who writes about moving from music to academics) as the authors consciously attempt to balance cultural influences (such as Eiko Ikegami's constant movement between the U.S. and Japan) or Tiankui Jing's effort to avoid imposing a Western progression of economic growth on China's economic and social transformation.

The majority of the scholars featured in this edited collection were born outside the United States. Historical circumstances and age seem to be the most significant influences on whether authors relate their research to the dominant "Western" thinking of an historical period or elect to develop their own perspective out of the transformations they are observing in their home countries. Yet, all the authors acknowledge a debt to the generosity and hospitality of U.S. scholars when they immigrated to the U.S., sought graduate or post-doc education here, and/or applied for fellowships and teaching jobs. Their stories are ones of welcoming U.S.

scholars who gained in these exchanges, particularly at the top, premier institutions from the 1950s to the present. Younger scholars still dependent upon their mentors are more likely to move between their home countries and the U.S. as they develop hybrid-selves. Older scholars come full circle returning to their first countries as part of the dramatic changes in technology and communication (as well as political circumstances) that have occurred over the last sixty years.

A shortcoming of this collection is the overabundance of detail about the operation of various departments (such as Harvard and Princeton) in their heyday, the authors' thoughts on every seminar, the course content, and its relevance to their personal research agendas and their professor's teaching style. Further, the tension in the larger discipline between theoretical schools, even in the same department, becomes redundant after several essay writers recall the same key figures who wielded power and control over various departments. This sort of information might be useful to these department's histories but they detract from more important points about how careers unfold. Mentors made a difference in encouraging scholars to pursue a line of research. The old-boy network (including the placement of the few women in this collection) heavily relied upon one another's recommendations when recruiting for jobs as well as for invitations to larger colloquium and conferences. This is not new news but the essays display the way in which "outside" scholars—often partly trained in other countries—became part of the U.S. scene.

---

*Tourism, Ethnic Diversity and the City*, edited by **Jan Rath**. New York, NY: Routledge, 2006. 222pp. \$135.00 cloth. ISBN: 9780415333900.

**SHAUL KELNER**  
*Vanderbilt University*  
[s.kelner@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:s.kelner@vanderbilt.edu)

---

An \$800 billion global industry, tourism is the world's leading item of foreign trade. It has generated a flow of people across borders unprecedented in scope. The latest volume in Routledge's series on geographies of leisure, tourism, and mobility examines what happens when this transient flow of tourists

meets that other global population flow—migrants—in the post-industrial city. In *Tourism, Ethnic Diversity and the City*, Jan Rath has assembled an interdisciplinary group of scholars who take us across four continents to explore the commoditization of immigrant and ethnic cultures for consumption by tourists.

Integrating literatures on tourism, post-industrial cities, global migration, and cultural commoditization, C. Michael Hall and Jan Rath's opening chapter lays out a straightforward thesis: in an economy where capital is less bound to any particular place, competition for investors and consumers leads post-industrial cities to work at differentiating themselves. One of the increasingly common strategies they use to establish their unique "brand" is to treat their immigrant communities as a commoditizable cultural resource. Like the Little Italies and Chinatowns, which drew tourists a century ago, new immigrant neighborhoods are being promoted as tourist destinations. If the strategy works as intended, it increases tourism revenues for the city, infuses money into immigrant communities, and creates an aura of cosmopolitanism which attracts investors and residents.

The remainder of the volume turns on the question of how and why it does not always work out this way in practice. Here, the strength of the book is revealed. Rath dangles before us a deceptively cogent storyline, and, having sparked our imagination, then forces us to recognize the contradictions that make it complex and contested. Gastón Alonso's chapter on Little Havana's inability to capitalize on Miami's tourist trade, and Susan Fainstein and John Power's chapter on similar difficulties in New York City's outer boroughs are the two counterexamples, which best complement Hall and Rath's introduction.

The book is organized in three sections: one on immigrant entrepreneurs, one on immigrant workers, and one on the use of ethnic diversity in urban place promotion. The major themes that cut across these divisions include issues of economic and cultural exploitation, the racialized division of labor, visibility/invisibility, and the obstacles to commoditizing diversity.

Two chapters argue that were it not for immigrants working for substandard wages, it would be much harder to commoditize di-