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**Tanja Višić: *Peripheral Labour Mobilities. Elder Care Work between the Former Yugoslavia and Germany.* Frankfurt a.M.: Campus Verlag, 2022. 426 pages, ISBN 978 359 351 6417, 45,00 EUR**

In “Peripheral Labour Mobilities”, a book based on her dissertation project, Tanja Višić presents pioneering work in the field of female labour migration in the European context. Her ethnographic study gives the reader deep insights into the world of female Serbian and Bosnian care workers who travel to German private households to care for the elderly – generally unlawful and highly dependent on ‘semi-legal’ recruitment agencies and private employers.

Although the irregular care labour market is constantly expanding, notably in recent years, causing increasing demand for care workers, attracting an “army of women willing to put themselves on the move” (p. 192), their activities mostly remain unnoticed and invisible. The research presented is the first of its kind to shed light on the often-precarious working and living situations of care workers from former Yugoslavia, showing how they navigate the ‘care mobility industry’; a highly “unregulated, ethicized, gendered, yet legally allowed market of commodified care” (p. 264). This is vividly illustrated through an impressive range of cases of care workers and their narratives, and complemented by Višić’s ethnographic observations.

First, we learn about the pathways into care labour mobility, the women’s aspirations and motives for doing care work abroad, how they find jobs and how tough the competition in this field is. Second, we learn about the often-dangerous, anxious and uncertain journeys between the women’s homes and workplaces in Germany together with the circumstances behind them: Citizenship regulations, migration policies and different border regimes strongly determine the migration prospects of women care workers. We also gain insights into the ways in which care workers’ mobility trajectories are influenced, facilitated and controlled by various actors in the ‘migration industry’. Here, a very unpleasant role is played by the “semi-legal Hungarian agencies for home care recruitment” (p. 275) with their own informal minibus transport systems and which force women to use them. Blackmail, for example by threatening to call in the police, is a common mechanism for controlling and disciplining care workers. Third, we see what “feeling, thinking and doing care work” (p. 234) looks like for the typically untrained care workers (some have at least a personal experience of caring for family members). We hear about the often-precarious working conditions that come with 24/7, home-based, informal caregiving: highly unstable jobs, encounters with completely different situations and tasks than previously described, denial of rest periods, sick leave or holidays, overtime work, missing salaries, emotionally and physically highly stressful tasks, not to mention the psychological strain of being isolated and far away from home and family, and we also hear about incidents of mistreatment, and (sexual) harassment.

We also learn what lived 'illegality' means for the care workers' everyday life from their own perspective and its "experiential, embodied and sensory dimensions" (p. 263), which are probably transferable to the lives of other illegalised migrants. It is particularly outstanding that Višić also shows the women's coping strategies in all aspects of their work and life situations and thereby focuses on their agency. We see in the ethnographic data how the women actively interpret and navigate through migration regimes and we gain a unique understanding of their border-crossing practices. Nevertheless, Višić concludes that the organisational form and distribution of care work as a 'shadow economy' leaves care workers vulnerable to multiple forms of discrimination, exploitation and abuse.

By conducting 'mobile fieldwork' in multiple locations and countries, Višić takes ethnography to a new level: she travels with the women on their sometimes 20-hour bus journeys, visits them in the private homes of their employers, sits with them in cafés and parks and, as a major strength of her research, keeps in touch with them over long periods of time via Skype, Instant Messenger or Facebook. It is impressive to see how close she has become with the women and managed to create a space for their narratives. Her high level of immersion in the research field is also revealed in her personal stories that she occasionally weaves in and which make the research material even more reliable and sound. In so doing, she authentically brings reflections on her own social position and insights into her personal life and struggles into the book (we read about her own difficulties with crossing the border).

One of the great achievements of this outstanding book is that it brings a multitude of previously unknown topics to the surface. Since migration research largely focuses on receiving countries, this work stands out in many respects: its extensive consideration of the sending side of the care chain, its focus on Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina as non-EU member states, and with regard to the group of middle-aged women. Also for this reason, the presented research contributes to critical knowledge production concerning female labour mobility, an area dominated by concepts developed in Western countries and hence often not applicable to countries 'on the semi-periphery' like former Yugoslavia. Accordingly, the empirical data enrich established concepts and theories of (care) migration and in some cases challenge them by adding completely new insights and taking account of the particular historical and geographical contexts of this specific European care mobility. The empirical data and additions are especially revealing with respect to the concept of 'motility' (namely, mobility capital / Kaufmann), which states that the 'motility' of these women is mainly based on access to social networks both online and in their local communities. The only shortcoming of this book is that in some places the division of the chapters is somewhat unclear and confusing. A clearer presentation of the material would highlight the brilliant content even more strongly, yet this is no easy task given the density, richness and complexity of the presented research material.