1. Introduction to the *Handbook on Migration and the Family*  
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Migration is inextricably tied to complex and varied familial relationships, some of which are supportive and nurturing, others violent and oppressive. Ideologically, the family functions as a ‘deep-rooted social institution’ (Yeoh et al., 2018, p. 413) that articulates with the state and capital to create the conditions of modern life (Ong, 1999). States often promote circumscribed definitions of family (nuclear, heterosexual), and immigration regimes reflect dominant and idealised values (Teo and Piper, 2009), facilitating the mobilities of ‘typical’ families that fit the norm while denying entry to other (atypical) households that are deemed illegitimate. The slippage between state regulation of what constitutes the accepted family and family life on the one hand, and the messier lived realities from grounded perspectives on the other hand, reflects some of the most significant ongoing tensions and negotiations within the social order.

Understanding migration dynamics also requires attending to the social institution of the family at both a societal and a personal level. The family domain is integral to how certain inequalities are bolstered and maintained; and inextricable from the way power is frequently exercised by one group over others. Women and children are, habitually, disadvantaged within the family sphere through migration: gendered relations privilege male employment over female careers, and children have little or no voice when it comes to their mobilities. In the example of marriage migration, women who cross borders as foreign brides often have diminished power over decision-making and are completely dependent upon their male sponsors for their legal status in host countries (Yeoh et al., 2013). Within the domestic sphere, migration can heighten unequal responsibilities, placing far more burden on women to maintain social reproduction in an unfamiliar and uncertain environment. Conversely, migration can also lead to masculinities being challenged and upended, women’s heightened sense of freedom, and children having a say, as several chapters in this *Handbook* attest. Thus, there is not one narrative of how families experience migration or, indeed, what a migrant family is, but multiple ones.

We begin this Introduction by reflecting on how research on migration and the family has changed over the past half-century, from an almost exclusive focus on men, male careers and the masculine experience. Where families were included in this narrative, they were part of a nuclear unit, wherein immigration involved a main (male) applicant and so-called dependents. We then consider the work of feminist scholars who, through their critique of ‘gender-blind’ discussions of migration, highlighted the role of the family as an important site wherein relational and gendered power dynamics were played out. We relate this work to scholarship on transnationalism which has, *inter alia* and as a consequence of feminist interventions, more recently provided a complex and nuanced exploration of familial relations. Within transnationalism, migration involves the spatial separation of family members, and emergent and diverse forms of ‘householding’ are evoked, as long-distance transnational social formations emerge (Yeoh et al., 2018). As Parreñas (2005) has written: ‘Migration engenders changes in a family … Contemporary transnational households have a different temporal and spatial experience
from … families of the past’ (p. 317). It is this evolution, of both thematic ideas and migrant experiences, that we seek to tease out in the first half of this Introduction.

This broad temporal sketch of key ideas relating to the cross-currents in migration and family research leads to a more grounded overview of the Handbook chapters. These chapters are organised into four interrelated themes: gender relations and subjectivities; age and inter-generational relationships; power, social inequalities and social mobility; and spatialities and temporalities.

THE UNENCUMBERED MALE MIGRANT AND ‘ECONOMIC MAN’

Historically, migration studies paid scant attention to the family and its role in migratory movements. In some instances, families were completely ignored: migrants were conceived of as lone and unencumbered travellers, usually male, and always interpreted through an economic lens. Employment or career mobility was seen as a key driver behind much migration in multiple contexts, including Western Europe (Kofman, 2004) and Asia (Yeoh and Huang, 2011). Discussions were dominated by human capital approaches, which treat migration as an individual investment (Cooke and Bailey, 1996). Later, primarily male migrants were accompanied by their ‘trailing spouses’ (Harvey, 1998). This term represented a subtle shift to recognise that many migrants had partners and families, but still they were viewed as largely unimportant appendages or, worse, as obstacles to successful professional migration (Yeoh and Willis, 2005).

Over time, thinking became extended to recognise the role families could play in (economic forms of) migration. Mincer (1978) was one of the first scholars to include the family in discussions of migration and human capital, articulating ‘profit maximising’ and the ‘net’ benefits brought through the migration of dual earner households to the (nuclear) family (Cooke and Bailey, 1996). This dominance of human capital perspectives and an overriding concern with *Homo economicus* blinded scholarship, for a time, to the messy, complex and all-too-human aspects of family migration (Ley, 2003), where financial considerations are only one of many driving forces behind, and outcomes of, migration (or, indeed, they may be inconsequential at any given time). In particular, feminist scholars argued for the importance of examining the gender-differentiated power geometries at work in both the labour market and the workplace, as well as within the family sphere, in shaping who moves, who stays, who gains and who sacrifices (Yeoh and Willis, 2005; Kofman and Raghuram, 2006). This vein of work disrupted assumptions that household decisions regarding migration were guided by ‘principles of consensus and altruism’; instead, these decisions may ‘equally be informed by hierarchies of power along gender and generational lines’ (Mahler and Pessar, 2006, p. 33).

Nation-states also actively help to create and maintain this human capital view of migration, within which family narratives have been drowned out. Several countries in the Global North, during the 1980s onwards, made changes to their immigration criteria and introduced business immigration programmes, in an unabashed attempt to attract skilled and wealthy migrants from overseas (particularly from the so-called ‘Asian Tigers’). Ley (2010) describes this ‘new immigration paradigm’ as a shift away from humanitarian and family reunion routes of immigration to Canada, during the 1980s, towards ‘economic migrants’ and selection processes seeking ‘well educated and adaptive skilled workers, for assessments confirm that skilled migrants speedily make net economic contributions to their host’ societies (p. 8).
Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and the United States have all explicitly selected migrants on their ability to make a valuable (narrowly defined in economic terms) contribution to society, and other immediate family members were able to join them as dependents on that basis. As far as states were concerned, however, the family was an incidental by-product of this immigration, rather than a goal, even though so-called dependent immigrants, over the past 30 years, have had a profound impact upon many major cities around the world, transforming their social and cultural geographies in myriad ways.

FEMINIST APPROACHES, TRANSNATIONALISM AND THE FAMILY

A paradigm shift within academic research on international forms of migration occurred with the widespread adoption of a framework of transnationalism, from the mid-1990s onwards. Transnationalism has famously been defined by Basch et al. (1994, p. 7) as:

the process by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement. We call these processes transnationalism to emphasise that many immigrants today build social fields that cross geographic, cultural and political borders. Immigrants who develop and maintain multiple relationships – familial, economic, social, organizational, religious, and political – that span borders we call ‘transmigrants’. An essential element of transnationalism is the multiplicity of involvements that transmigrants sustain in both home and host societies.

However, while early work on transnational migration tended to shift the focus away from the purely economic towards migration’s multiple dimensions, there was ‘nothing inherently transgressive or emancipatory’ about transnationalism (Pratt and Yeoh, 2003, p. 159). It took feminist scholars to emphasise the significance of complex power relations within (transnational) households. Feminist scholarship encouraged relational approaches to understanding transnationalism and highlighted the salience of gender politics within the family sphere; Pessar and Mahler (2003) critiqued early work on transnationalism as being ‘inattentive’ to ‘gendered geographies of power’ which, significantly, involved the family as a key unit or social institution within which gender was embedded. Gendered, socialised norms structure migrants’ lives, produce marked inequalities, and restrict the kinds of activities they are able to undertake (and the lives they are able to live) (Pessar and Mahler, 2003).

However, Pessar and Mahler (2003) also stressed that while gendered politics are enacted in and through the family or household, these politics are often supported and upheld by the state (despite the implication that transnationalism somehow bypasses or undermines state power); something that we touched upon above. As Ong (1999) has likewise argued, the (Chinese) family is an ideological construction promoted by the state for its own ends, ultimately seeking to uphold and maintain patriarchal structures. Thus, the linkages between the family and the state must be always held in mind when discussing transnational family formations.

While feminist scholarship was instrumental in recognising and highlighting the importance of the family and family relations within international migration, through its focus on gender and relationality, particularly interesting for this Handbook is the way in which it challenged transnational approaches to be more attentive to familial relations and inequalities. Feminist inspired work on migration and transnationalism (particularly dating from the early 2000s),
rendered visible the centrality of family relations within contemporary migration (e.g. Hardill, 2004), in the way that it indicates the ‘multi-stranded’ and spatially extended social relations (comprised, primarily, of familial relations) that contemporary immigrants often maintain, spanning several nation states (Basch et al., 1994). Here we discuss how a transnational perspective, guided by feminist approaches, has enriched our understanding of the family within migration in a number of ways.

First, it has emphasised the importance of families in all types and forms of migration: documented and undocumented, economic and humanitarian, educational and lifestyle-related (Levitt et al., 2003; Pratt and Yeoh, 2003). Family members often directly support and facilitate migration, whether through financial or material resources, social capital or proffering knowledge of immigration processes. Family can also precipitate the migration of individuals: migration can be a means, for some, to escape the suffocating pressures placed upon them by wider familial relations and expectations (particularly for young women around marriage and childbearing) (Ryan et al., 2009; Walton-Roberts, 2004).

Second, feminist scholars have demonstrated the differential impact of transnational migration on family members, notably parents, children, spouses, siblings and grandparents (Ryan et al., 2009). Adult women within transnational families, for example, have often been forced to suspend or forgo their careers as a consequence of migration (Waters, 2002); migrant children can provide significant caring in the form of ‘sibling support’ (Baldassar and Brandhorst, 2021). Men can struggle with their identities following challenges, wrought by migration, to their masculinity (Waters, 2010; Walsh, 2011). And transnational grandparenting has significantly increased, changing the age demographics of contemporary migrants in unforeseen ways (Ho and Chiu, 2020; Nedelcu and Wyss, 2020). These different roles and experiences play out within the context of the transnational family, challenging the view that families are inscrutable, and invariably unified in their pursuit of migration goals.

Third, by attending to linkages between home and host country, transnationalism emphasises the often crucial role played by non-mobile family members in the migration process. For example, grandparents caring for children as parents migrate overseas for work (Hoang and Yeoh, 2012), and left-behind children providing direct support for siblings in the absence of parental oversight (Parreñas, 2005), are both central to sustaining transnational families and yet they are, themselves, not migrants. Female migrants such as healthcare and domestic workers, in particular, have notably relied on extended family back home to provide care for their own children in their absence (Bryceson, 2019).

Fourth, transnationalism has challenged the spatial imaginaries attached to family life, promoting the idea that life can be lived within transnational social spaces that transcend ideas of here and there, home and away, and the physical co-locatedness of domesticity. Digital media are having a profound effect on how transnational families are experienced (Madianou, 2016; Wilding et al., 2020), and this has only been heightened with the mobility restrictions imposed around the world as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Madianou (2016, p. 183) develops the concept of ‘ambient co-presence’, to describe ‘peripheral yet intense’ awareness of ‘distant others’ made possible by the developments in social and digital media in the context of transnational families.

And finally, the very categories that migration scholars have used to discuss migration have been dismantled through transnationalism. Binary categories such as immigrant and emigrant, host society and home society, find roots in methodological nationalism, where the nation-state (and its overriding concern with assimilation, initially, and later integration) has
dominated the framing of migration. As mentioned above, these categories have taken their lead from human capital approaches to understanding migration. Whilst such terminology is still prevalent within policy and grey literature on international migration, academic discussions are consequently much more nuanced and ‘decentred’ in the ways in which they label and demarcate migration and migrants. Whilst the nation-state often continues to be highly important in shaping family life and livelihoods, the thickening of transnational flows in the form of money, material goods, ideas, knowledge, care and emotion across borders has meant that the frame of reference for families is not always the nation-state, as seen in the day-to-day lives of transnational families, who take as much interest in the quotidian mundanity of family members living overseas as they do in those living in close proximity (Madianou, 2016). As will be seen below, many of the chapters in this Handbook owe some significant debt to the ways in which transnational perspectives pushed boundaries and challenged thinking on contemporary migration and family from the mid-1990s onwards.

THE HANDBOOK

The Handbook on Migration and the Family offers a timely and important contribution to debates concerning contemporary forms of mobility and complex familial ties in the face of changes in how space is configured and experienced, internationally. It argues that the family is not incidental but central to understanding migration. The book prioritises migration that involves the crossing of international borders and boundaries (as opposed to internal or within-state migration). Indeed, borders of one sort or another are a central trope running throughout all the chapters (Silvey, 2005).

The Handbook takes a largely qualitative and social science approach to research on migration and the family, aiming to capture a range of views and perspectives across multiple disciplines, including diverse constructions of what constitutes ‘family’ (for example, nuclear, extended, heteronormative, same-sex) and different types of family structure (traditional, patriarchal, matriarchal, those headed by grandparents or other family members, children as carers, and so on) as well as the role that family members may play in migration itself (some, for example, may be themselves ‘immobile’). The chapters provide readers with a critical and insightful review of cutting-edge scholarship on how migration and families have been conceptualised together, providing an overview of key themes in this area. Taken as a whole, the Handbook attempts to capture the diversity of family types, arrangements and strategies on display in a global setting.

The Handbook is organised into four parts, reflecting key and dominant themes: ‘Part I: Gender Relations and Subjectivities’, ‘Part II: Age and Intergenerational Relationships’, ‘Part III: Power, Social Inequalities and Social Mobility’ and ‘Part IV: Spatialities and Temporalities’. It comprises 22 chapters in total, including this Introduction. However, as will become clear, several chapters would fit within multiple parts. The parts are designed as a guide and not as an exhaustive categorisation of the chapters contained within. Contributions are primarily theoretical/conceptual, all addressing, in different ways, the relationship between family and (international/transnational) migration in contemporary times, and the implications of this. The parts are devised to reflect the most recent debates and agendas within social science research on migration and the family. In what follows, we provide a brief overview of each part of the Handbook and the main contribution of each chapter contained within.
OVERVIEW OF THE PARTS AND CHAPTERS

Part I: Gender Relations and Subjectivities

Gender has emerged as a key variable in analyses of migrant families over the past two decades, in recognition of the sometimes extreme inequalities in experiences and outcomes that men, women and non-binary individuals face. Research has explored, for example, the fact that women may relinquish their career through migration or find themselves relatively trapped in the home, whilst their male spouses continue to work (experiencing ‘business as usual’). Women often find themselves in a subservient position compared to their male counterparts when it comes to their migration status, and yet can also be seen to negotiate and rework this position through, for example, the sending and controlling of remittances (Yeoh et al., 2013). Same-sex couples have faced long-standing discrimination when it comes to immigration laws and policies (Fletcher, Chapter 17, this Handbook). We have also, in this part of the Handbook, sought to highlight the diversity and socially constructed nature of gendered subjectivities and gender relations (Butler, 2002).

Early work on gender within migration studies invariably prioritised the female experience of international migration within the confines of the heteronormative family. This is understandable and necessary, of course, when we consider the relative neglect of women’s experiences and voices within research hitherto. Several chapters in this Handbook consider women’s experiences of migration.

The domestic space is increasingly a space for transnational familial relations that are also highly gendered. Rosie Cox, Terese Anving and Sara Eldén (Chapter 2) explore the growing phenomenon of privatised childcare in relation to migration and the family. As is increasingly well documented, care work and domestic forms of labour are heavily dominated by (female) migrant workers. This migration has the inadvertent effect of connecting local families employing migrant workers with globalised networks of care. The chapter recognises the state policies that underpin domestic and care work, and seeks to highlight these regimes of care, migration, welfare and work, comparing the cases of the United Kingdom (UK) and Sweden. Although showing interesting differences in many ways, in both countries the employment of domestic workers and au pairs has bolstered extant gender inequalities and assumptions about women and domestic work. Also exploring domestic space, but this time in relation to marriage, Neil Amber Judge and Margaret Walton-Roberts (Chapter 3) attend to the roles and experiences of women in transnational marriage migration. Marriage migration, they argue, can offer women opportunities to exercise agency by engaging in transnational marriages that have the potential to provide them with relative autonomy and social status. Nevertheless, structural factors, including immigration policy, constrain this ability for agency. They note the increasing implementation of ‘stronger policies and stricter rules’ for the entry of marriage migrants, reflecting states’ attempts to craft a ‘national imaginary’. The authors draw on the case of marriage and family migration between north India and Canada to illustrate these points, highlighting that ‘immigration policy can interact with forms of already existing patriarchy to reproduce social stratification and hierarchy that is damaging to women’s security’.

A different perspective on gender relations and migration in the context of the family is provided by Biftu Yousuf and Jennifer Hyndman (Chapter 4). Their chapter discusses human rights advocacy among former refugees from Sri Lanka and Ethiopia living in Canada. They reveal the disagreements that occur within communities, which can arise around the ways
in which national identity both ‘back home’, and within the diaspora, can and should be expressed. Yousuf and Hyndman argue that transnational practices of kinship care, and expressions of pain and suffering, are highly gendered; and whilst both women and men participate in gendered transnational cultural practices, women’s roles in reproducing the nation socially, culturally and symbolically were particularly distinct in the research that they encountered.

Male subjectivities and the relations between genders are often neglected within gendered perspectives on family and migration. Chapter 5, by Lan Anh Hoang, examines the experiences of men in Vietnam whose wives and partners had emigrated as labour migrants. The chapter recognises the fluidity and plurality of notions of femininity and masculinity and how, most importantly, they can be seen as relational constructs. How do ‘stay-behind’ men respond to the migration of their female spouses? Men, in this context, have to juggle competing pressures of the norms associated with masculine subjectivities, and their daily realities encompassing significant uncertainty and unpredictability. They are seen to carve out ‘new standards of masculinity’ which are not, Hoang points out, necessarily more egalitarian in nature.

Finally for Part I, the chapter by Yang Hu and Earvin Charles Cabalquinto (Chapter 6) takes a broader look at transnational intimacy within the context of the family in the face of mass use of digital communications media and highlights important gendered dynamics. The authors develop the concept of the ‘transnationalisation of intimacy’ to explore critically the ‘performance, embodiment and experience of intimacy’ within a fast-moving and increasingly digitised society. The transnationalisation of familial intimacy is characterised by both family change and continuity, signalling both changes to how familial relations are characterised and enacted whilst also, frequently, reinstating established gender norms, relations and ways of ‘doing family’. Taken together, the chapters in this part of the Handbook offer a rich tapestry of different perspectives on gender ideologies, relations, and practices within contemporary migration formations.

Part II: Age and Intergenerational Relationships

Migrant families invariably encompass individuals of varied ages and life-stages, with differing roles, pressures and expectations attendant to this. And yet, age has for many years been neglected by researchers studying migration (White et al., 2011). This is partly a reflection of the methodological nationalism inherent in studies prioritisering immigration policy: states have an ‘ideal age’ for recruiting potential immigrants, and consequently economically productive migrants have, historically, been the most prolifically researched. Likewise, children are often excluded from the discussion because they are not deemed economically productive; they are also a dependent of another family member and therefore not independently significant; and ethically, it is often difficult to research children apart from their parents/carers (Dobson, 2009). Separately, but of course relationally, intergenerational relations raise some different issues and concerns revolving, largely, around conflicts and divergencies in ideas and identities between grandparents, parents and children (Parreñas, 2001). Intergenerationality can also be embodied within a single migrant; a female migrant, for example, can simultaneously be a grandmother, a mother and a child (with different responsibilities to different generations of their family emerging concomitantly). Consequently, a complex tightrope of expectations and responsibilities must be walked (Yeoh et al., 2013). This part of the Handbook explicitly addresses, from different perspectives, the significance of age and intergenerational relationships within migrant families.
Part II begins with Chapter 7, by Sin Yee Koh and I Lin Sin, on capital accumulation and intergenerational transfers among transnational families, focusing on children’s perspectives. Three themes are highlighted from their critical review of the academic literature: the values and meanings attached to global mobility and the significance of intergenerational social reproduction; the deconstruction of children’s presumed privilege and homogeneity in capital transmission from parents to children; and the need to amplify the ‘voices and choices of children in familial capital/mobility projects’. Importantly, the chapter also considers, from a methodological perspective, how researchers might better take account, going forward, of children’s perspectives in family migration projects.

The next chapter by Caitríona Ni Laoire (Chapter 8) focuses on intergenerationality and the role it plays in contemporary migration. It explores the complex situation of multigenerational transnational Irish families, and the chapter develops a conceptualisation of the transgenerational reproduction of migration and (im)mobilities, taking account of familial migration histories and legacies. These histories and legacies shape young people’s own migration trajectories. Likewise, C. Cindy Fan, in Chapter 9, takes an intergenerational perspective on the phenomenon of long-term split households, and intersects this discussion with consideration of the importance of gender, drawing useful links with chapters in Part I of the Handbook. The chapter turns the spotlight squarely onto split households, providing a comprehensive and insightful review of the academic literature in this area, ultimately demonstrating beyond doubt that split households matter significantly and should be subject to further academic enquiry.

Weronika Kloc-Nowak and Louise Ryan in Chapter 10 provide a fascinating look at the ‘sandwich generation’ of migrant families originally from Poland living in the UK: with caring obligations for their children, but also receiving and providing care at a distance from/to ageing parents and other family back in Poland. One of the factors they touch on is Brexit (the UK’s exit from the European Union) and the ongoing (in)ability of Polish parents to rely on occasional childcare from grandparents, due to the mobility restrictions that have arisen as a consequence. The chapter explores how migrants negotiate current care arrangements and foresee future intergenerational care needs, navigating shifting political and social circumstances.

The final two chapters in Part II focus on younger migrants: children and youth. Rhondeni Kikon and Roy Huijsmans (Chapter 11) reflect upon the general absence of significant scholarship exploring the concept of generation and youth migration, reviewing literature from across several countries. Their ideas are illustrated through a case study of youth migration from an Assam tea plantation (in Northeast India), linking family, a ‘generationed political economy’ with a plantation labour regime, and the predisposition for youth migration. By contrast, Katie Willis, Sue Clayton and Anna Gupta’s chapter (Chapter 12) explores the particular phenomenon of unaccompanied child migrants, where the family has been left behind. The chapter explores children’s relationships with distant family members and, in addition, how children can be seen to create new families. They explore how notions of the family and family life become mobilised in both national and international law and protocol to facilitate and/or police migration. Finally, the experiences of other family members, such as parents in the country of origin, are discussed in the context of unaccompanied child migration.
Part III: Power, Social Inequalities and Social Mobility

As suggested in the opening to this Introduction, families are the nexus of particular power configurations, which inevitably result in the exacerbation of social inequalities, both within the family itself and within wider society (Walton-Roberts, 2004). Families are also units of social mobility: spaces within which practices promoting social mobility are focused and sustained (Ong, 1999; Waters, 2006; Finch and Kim, 2012). The migration of one or more family member (as a worker or student, for example) often has the objective of securing social mobility for all family members (Coe and Shani, 2015; Robertson and Runganaikaloo, 2014). The chapters in Part III provide insight into these different relations, but notably focus on how the exercise of power intersects with social inequalities and social reproduction. The first chapter, by Johanna L. Waters and Zhe Wang (Chapter 13), acknowledges the importance of educational migration as a familial strategy to promote social mobility amongst contemporary migrants. Whilst the strategy may be seen to be often successful, a focus on different family members renders a more complex picture, where the ‘messy reality of emotions’ (Yeoh et al., 2018, p. 423) comes into play. Sometimes, these strategies fail. Always, they result in different outcomes and experiences for different family members, as their focus on emotions and educational migration exposes.

The exercise of power is amply demonstrated through the experiences of so-called ‘elite migrants’, embodied in the idea of the corporate expatriate worker. Sophie Cranston and George Tan, in Chapter 14, explore the notion that the expatriate is frequently discussed without due attention given to the significance of family within this elite form of migration. They explore literature that foregrounds the motivations and experiences of family members and call for a refocusing on the temporal as well as spatial and relational aspects of expatriate migration. They draw on two case examples (of British and Australian migrants in Singapore) to exemplify these entanglements through time and space.

Cathy McIlwaine, in Chapter 15, focuses specifically on gendered power relations and how gender norms and associated practices are enacted both locally and transnationally ‘across multiple spheres from the state to labour markets’. Notably, however, these relations are crucially centred on the family and the space of the household. They also vary according to the power of the woman within the migrant family: whether their migration was independent or dependent, whether they moved as workers or for marriage, or whether they were victims or survivors of trafficking and smuggling. Other factors also come into play: the domestic space can be a space of refuge from wider social hostility, or one of violence or abuse. This chapter considers and discusses the complexity of gendered power dynamics within the context of families and migration, including highlighting the structural and institutional inequalities within immigration processes. It draws, in places, on empirical work with international migrant women in London.

Yanbo Hao and Maggi W.H. Leung (Chapter 16) review the literature on academic mobility, arguing that the family has rarely been placed at the centre of these debates. Their critical overview of the academic literature in this area provides a very useful corrective to this as they endeavour to unpack the family from the perspectives of gender and intersectionality, arguing that academic mobility remains an uneven mobility field. They also highlight some ongoing areas where research has been limited or non-existent and some directions for future research.

In Chapter 17, Claire Fletcher moves the discussion away from heteronormative and nuclear family formations to discuss the unequal socio-legal rights granted to lesbian, gay, bisexual,
transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) migrants. There are, she notes, significant ‘discrepancies in legal provision for LGBTQI people’ when it comes to migration, where ‘legal rights that have been granted have been provided only to same-sex unions that replicate the heteronormative ideal’. Using the example of bi-national same-sex partnerships and migration policy in the UK, the chapter explores how immigration rules limit which families are seen as legitimate, and ‘deserving’, and therefore granted entry and citizenship rights. Power is exercised by the state to uphold particular, circumscribed notions of family.

**Part IV: Spatialities and Temporalities**

Migration is an inherently spatial issue: not only is it seen to unfold over and through space (and distance), but family migration also actively creates (diverse) spaces. Families are often multi-sited and yet still operating together, ‘in sync’. More recently, however, scholars have been attentive to the combined spatialities, materialities and temporalities as a key feature of transnational families (Acedera and Yeoh, 2019; Pascucci, 2016; Xu, 2021). Transnational lives are lived through daily domestic rhythms, whilst they must at the same time contend with the complex temporalities of the state and state institutions (Waters and Leung, 2020). In a pragmatic sense, for example, the state may prescribe whether a stay is temporary or permanent, and this situation can and often does change and mutate over time (Baas and Yeoh, 2019). On a different register, time can affect a migrant family’s experience of transnationalism, as Waters’s (2011) longitudinal study of women migrants in Vancouver has shown. The chapters in Part IV take different but complementary views on temporality and its role in understanding families in migration.

In Chapter 18, Denise L. Spitzer and Sara Torres tackle head on the implications of spatial and prolonged (and indeterminant) temporal separation of families through migration, resulting from the out-migration of labour migrants. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, enshrine in law the right to family reunification. And yet, as the authors demonstrate, nation-states situated in the Global North continue to act as gatekeepers through their migration policies that determine the shape and composition of migrant families and the timing of their resettlement, resulting in the stratification of family migrant households. They explore the complexity underpinning the reunification of family members under migration regimes, which is underpinned by particular conceptions of the family. Furthermore, whilst reunification is often, at first, an emotionally uplifting experience for the family in question, the actual process of resettlement can involve the recalibration of gendered familial roles in a way that can be painful for the individuals concerned. They argue that the process of family reunification, and the recalibration of family life that this invariably entails, needs to be related to ‘the dynamics of the host society’ which serve either to support or undermine families’ attempts to adjust to life in their new country and home.

Annabelle Wilkins’s chapter (Chapter 19) looks explicitly at the issue of temporality within migration and families research, and how this is often overshadowed by an emphasis on spatial approaches. She argues that extant scholarship on the ‘temporalities of home’ can advance such discussions. The chapter begins by providing a critical overview of the literature on time, migration and the family, highlighting research on the temporal effects of immigration regimes and the micro-temporalities of transnational family life. The chapter then engages with research on Vietnamese migrants and refugees in East London, informed by work on care
temporalities, time and the life course, and temporalities of home and the city. Wilkins argues that a lens of ‘home’ and temporality can enhance understandings of transnational family practices and how these intersect with different timescales of migration.

Seasonality, within migration, is one way in which temporality and spatiality clearly intersect. Thomas Saetre Jakobsen, Sam Scott and Johan Fredrik Rye, in Chapter 20, consider low-wage labour mobility as circulators rather than settlers, where transnational householding arrangements become commonplace. In other words, household social reproduction and wage work become spatially separated. The chapter asks: what lessons can be learned from the particular case of Norwegian and UK horticulture, where seasonal migrant labour usage is normalised? What impact does this seasonality have on the separation of roles within the (sometimes split) household? The authors argue that the seasonal separation of migrants and their households (in other words, a spatial and temporal division of work and family life) is pivotal to the realisation of surplus value in this sector. The ‘offshoring of social reproduction’ and its spatialities and temporalities is an area that requires more research.

How do we assemble a picture of ‘left-behind’ children (and childhoods) over time? Theodora Lam, in her chapter (Chapter 21), reviews the literature on this migration phenomenon over the past decade, of children coping with the inherent ruptures of living prolonged periods without one or both parents under the same roof, and/or under the care of surrogate parents. The chapter provides a valuable take on the evolution of research in this important area, before turning to consider, specifically, the voices of left-behind children in Indonesia and the Philippines, drawing on an empirical study of child health and migrant parents in Southeast Asia. This highlights the importance of time (as well as spatial separation and distance) in how children’s lives may have changed over the period of separation from family members.

Transnational families encounter mobility regimes not only in space but also in time as Francesca Morais and Brenda S.A. Yeoh explore in their chapter (Chapter 22) on how nation-states govern contemporary mobility. The term ‘mobility regimes’ attempts to capture the ‘complex modes of differentiation within governing structures of mobility’ and the impacts of this upon transnational family members living across nation-state boundaries. Temporality is highlighted as an important lens for understanding how the different life stages of migrants, in relation to other family members, are implicated within mobility regimes. As the COVID-19 pandemic has shown, transnational families encounter various mobility regimes with the closure of national borders, travel restrictions and lockdowns.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we offer some suggestions on using the Handbook before thinking through future directions that work on migration and the family might take in a world that has been, to a certain extent, reconfigured by the COVID-19 pandemic. As we indicate above, the chapters have been grouped in a way according to their dominant themes. However, as also noted, many chapters would sit easily within or across multiple parts. The parts should not be taken as definitive, therefore, but rather as a mere suggestion for how the chapters might be read. Although interdisciplinary in nature, the chapters are not exhaustive in the disciplinary perspectives they represent. There is a dominance of human geographical and sociological standpoints within these pages, but other disciplines and subdisciplines are undoubtedly
represented. The chapters are primarily designed as critical reviews of and engagements with lasting debates within their specific areas, but in many cases some original empirical material is drawn upon to make a particular illustrative point.

In terms of future directions of travel, the chapters indicate where gaps in knowledge undoubtedly remain. We still know little about how LGBTQI families experience migration, and disabled migrants are significantly and woefully underrepresented within contemporary research. Temporality is still largely neglected (in comparison to spatial perspectives) in studies of migration and the family (Xu, 2021), although several chapters in this Handbook have gone some way towards addressing this. COVID-19 has highlighted the fragility of mobility and the enduring power of nation-states to shut their borders and separate families for an extend period of time. It is likely that states will continue to exercise their power in this area, and into the future and post-pandemic times. The pandemic has highlighted what is possible and has normalised (to a certain extent) and heightened oppressive mobility regimes. This global crisis – and more particularly the human response to the crisis – has made it all the more important to attend to the complex entanglements of migration and family so as to grasp the multiple ramifications for the fates and fortunes of migrants and their families across the world.

NOTE

1. Many states’ immigration point systems reward applicants up a defined ‘productive age’ and significantly penalise older migrants (for example, after the age of 35, under the Canadian Points System, the number of points you accrue for your age is reduced each year to zero once an applicant reaches 47 years old. Children under the age of 18 are not usually permitted to apply to immigrate independently, only as ‘dependent immigrants’).

REFERENCES


