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Angaben zur Veröffentlichung / Publication details:

Hoggan, Chad, and Tetyana Hoggan-Kloubert. 2021. “We all are migrants’: migration and the learning needs of society.” In *Adult learning in a migration society*, edited by Chad Hoggan and Tetyana Hoggan-Kloubert, 1–13. London: Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003124412-1>.

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“WE ALL ARE MIGRANTS”

Migration and the Learning Needs of Society

Chad Hoggan and Tetyana Hoggan-Kloubert

Migration has been an integral part of all, except perhaps the most remote, societies throughout history, and it is an integral and (likely) permanent characteristic of the modern world. In the best of cases, migrants leave their home country in search of better economic opportunities or novel experiences. In more difficult situations, they flee from poverty, genocide, or civil war; seeking the possibility of a life for themselves and their families free from terror or suffering. With an estimated 270 million people crossing national borders each year (World Migration Report, 2020), migration is exposing an urgent need for societies to re-think notions of ‘us’ and ‘others,’ and what it means to treat people first and foremost as human beings, regardless of their accidents of birth. To this end, this book is an exploration into new possibilities, especially as they relate to learning, change, and even transformation in a migration society.

The explorations in this collection highlight individual stories of migrants, showcase innovative research methods, and explore concepts and theories that might be usefully applied toward learning needs in a migration society. Through this multiplicity of perspectives, we wanted to create an international perspective on the role of adult education in addressing migration. Countries represented in this book are: Austria, Cyprus, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Sweden, United Kingdom, and USA. While reflecting on the particularities of migration in specific societies, there is a focus on common challenges and questions, current practices, and unresolved problems. We believe such international comparisons hold great potential for seeing new possibilities in any single country, whether in Europe, North America, or across the world.

Migration and Its Challenges

Countries which are (currently) relatively stable and prosperous, and which are therefore on the receiving end of migration, face legitimate concerns about how to

accommodate large inflows of people, with possibilities for employment, and in some cases with support during a transition period, perhaps with housing, clothing, and/or food.¹ We do not dismiss these practical realities. However, we see them as an issue of ‘how’ rather than an issue of ‘whether.’ We refer to the famous quotation of German writer Martin Walser: “Dem Gehenden schiebt sich der Weg unter die Füße” (“The path moves itself under the feet of the walker”). To us, it seems that the issue is not that migration challenges are insurmountable, but rather that there needs to be a commitment to addressing them. Society’s values are manifest in their priorities, in the questions, goals, and tasks to which they devote themselves. The challenges arising from migration are difficult, but surely not so onerous as, for instance, the obstacles overcome in developing nuclear weapons, space travel, or vaccines against deadly diseases. If the general population saw a benefit to an influx of migrants, the attendant practical considerations would probably be overcome very quickly.

And in fact, people should; the OECD consistently reports on the economic benefits of immigration (see for example, OECD, 2014). But one should not have to provide an argument that migration benefits the receiving society. There exists, we believe, a moral obligation to help those in need. If we aspire to be more than a dog-eat-dog world, then it is incumbent on people to support others who are in vulnerable situations, who are suffering, who are fleeing from terror or poverty. Legitimate concerns about society’s ability to provide space and opportunity for migrants are often conflated with what we believe are falsely-based apprehensions, such as a dilution of the culture, values, norms, and social/legal achievements of the receiving country. In each epoch and locale, migration is connected with specific manifestations of xenophobia or, in more general terms, tribalism; caring only for those perceived to be in one’s circle of social kinship. The particular brand of challenges arising currently in Europe and the U.S. highlights the juxtaposition between their lofty espoused values (e.g., “unity in diversity,” “all men are created equal ... with certain unalienable rights ... life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”), and the fears and prejudices born of particular differences between receiving countries and their current influx of migrants. In a pronounced way, then, migration is revealing and highlighting important societal questions: of solidarity, of identity, of transition and transformation, of human rights and obligations.

Migration and Adult Education

It would be difficult to find a living person who is *not* a product of migration at some point (and likely many points) of their family history. The prevalence of migration means that any given society is constantly being influenced by the blending of cultures, traditions, and norms. And, given that migration has been a constant phenomenon since at least the beginning of recorded history, there never has been such a thing as a static, homogenous society. Societies have always been in a state of flux, of development, often transformation.

Adult Education has traditionally been a companion and promoter of social change and societal developments, providing assistance and facilitation in times of crisis and transition, helping people accommodate to new social, economic, and political phenomena; in short, posing questions and offering possible answers to socially urgent challenges (see e.g., N.F.S. Grundtvig, Jane Addams, Anna J. Cooper, Albert Mansbridge, Myles Horton, Paulo Freire). Migration is such a socially urgent challenge, and adult education can aid in this broader work of helping society develop adequate responses to it. This book therefore seeks to explore concepts, theories, and approaches with which to think about, discuss, and shape the societal processes of ‘dealing with’ the challenges, real and imagined, arising from migration. Addressing the topic of migration also offers an opportunity to re-think and re-negotiate old and established assumptions and to push forward in search of new, if tentative, answers.

Migration is ubiquitous. At any given moment, society is being influenced by the blending of cultures, traditions, and norms. Both new arrivals and the longer-settled members of society are (at least potentially) lifelong learners who constantly develop and improve the capacities necessary to better understand the complexities of their social worlds (in order to function better in them), and to co-shape their shared society. Adult education, as an aid to lifelong learning, therefore holds the potential to help facilitate the development of migration societies—at the individual and collective level. The role that adult education might play in such development is the central theme of this book, which is based on a series of underlying premises and possible resulting tensions that we briefly mention here.

First, we assert that adult education is committed to the ideals and principles of democracy, and its core task is to foster, promote, and develop a democratic society. In addressing the challenges of migration, adult education may find itself between two demands. There is the demand to make educational processes effective and efficient in pursuit of learning objectives, which seek to integrate migrants into the receiving society. However, an overemphasis on this leads to an imposition of certain principles and values onto migrants (which verges on indoctrination rather than education), and there exists an ethical demand to respect adults’ autonomy and right to self-determination. On the other hand, too much emphasis on self-determination can be problematic, for instance, when learners’ principles and values contradict the ethical norms or legal standards of society. Recognizing and negotiating this tension is essential.

Second, promoting democracy requires a nurturing of social solidarity, which includes the strengthening of social cohesion and a sense of belonging to communities. In the case of migration, this can easily translate into a false or forced ‘homogenization’ of society. We see here a tension between fostering cohesion of different groups into a ‘whole,’ and a commitment to honoring individuality, subjectivity, and difference. There is a balance that must be negotiated between the goal of social cohesion and a respect for dissimilarities and divergences (and, yes, potential conflicts), which requires cultivating social, collective engagement by enhancing the capacities to participate in the various contexts in which an individual lives.

Although we argue that society needs to learn, develop, and possibly transform in the wake of migration, we do not advocate for using a sledgehammer to crack a nut, to destroy all the established principles and values (of the receiving society, but also of migrants) in order to re-negotiate them anew. The tension here involves the norms and (ethical) achievements of one's society that are non-negotiable, even in the course of societal change brought about by the mixing of cultures. What are the foundations of our society that we must keep (e.g., human rights)? Alternatively, which norms are merely idiosyncratic cultural products that can coexist or co-mingle with the idiosyncratic products from other cultures (e.g., festivals)? And, what might need to be discussed and collaboratively developed by a new diverse 'we' in our societies (e.g., legal holidays)?

This question could be connected to the German debate about the benefits and dangers of the so called 'Leitkultur'—the guiding culture or value systems considered as an intersubjective agreement on the rules and practices of a society's coexistence. Leitkultur can be seen as requiring a set of common basic values, shared by all citizens and newcomers. It can become problematic, however, when it is (either explicitly or implicitly) shortened to the thesis that newcomers must adapt to the majority culture. This insistence on homogeneity implies a devaluation of the person in their uniqueness and undermines a culture of respect and recognition.

The authors in this book problematize these and similar tensions in a variety of ways and seek a balance for adult education between consent and dissent; between adaptation and resistance; between personal integration and societal transformation; and between uncritical embeddedness in and overcritical distancing from one's social milieu. Learning in the wake of migration certainly includes individual qualifications and competencies, but also goes beyond these requirements. If we take the commitment of adult education to democracy seriously, then co-shaping a pluralistic, heterogeneous society means not only individual work and participation, but also interpersonal cooperation and collaboration, joint actions, and deliberation in a public sphere.

In different forms, with multiple arguments and examples, the authors in this book argue that learning in a migration society necessarily includes social change. The corresponding educational efforts emphasize the need for mutual recognition and a plurality of views, in order to develop collaborative possibilities for present and future interaction. Only in this way can citizens (with or without a recent migration experience) take part in the processes of critical discussion, on which depend the quality and legitimacy of a democracy.

Transformative Learning

A key premise of this book is that the learning required in a migration society is transformational in nature. Life in migration societies requires an ability to re-orient oneself in new contexts, to become acquainted with differing perspectives and ways of life, and to think beyond personal and established frames. This explicit

distinction of the ‘transformative dimensions of learning’ was first articulated by Mezirow (1978, 1991). From this perspective, humans are continuously engaged in a process of making meaning of their experiences, using mental frameworks to shape how they perceive themselves and the world around them. Important for our discussion in this book are the two types of mental frameworks. The first is a ‘meaning scheme,’ which is a “constellation of concept, belief, judgment, and feelings which shapes a particular interpretation” (1991, p. 223). An example of a meaning scheme might be a person’s views, biases, and feelings toward migrant groups from a particular country or of a certain religion. These meaning schemes are deep-seated and habitual, but at least they are relatively easy to become aware of. It is possible, for instance, through meeting and getting to know a migrant from a particular background, to realize one’s inaccurate and unfair biases, and then to critique and change them.

In contrast to meaning schemes are ‘meaning perspectives,’ which are broad, orienting predispositions; these operate behind the metaphorical scenes of our meaning making. And, when possible to be noticed, they often seem like common sense. Meaning perspectives are therefore exceedingly difficult to truly assess. They might include, for instance, that *of course* there is a significant difference between national and, say, state or city borders, and that these national borders create (again, ‘*of course*’) an important distinction between ‘us’ and ‘others.’ They might also include an acceptance of tribalism, that *of course* a person is justified in caring primarily for those in their own social circle, and not particularly feeling a kinship with those outside of that group.

Sometimes in our lives, these meaning perspectives are contradicted and shown to be inadequate to explain what we are experiencing. Mezirow called this a ‘disorienting dilemma.’ Such dilemmas can cause us to take a closer look at the frameworks we are using to understand the world. In essence, he argued that the real task of adulthood is to examine our meaning schemes and perspectives that were developed during our formative years, and to decide for ourselves what we think they should be in order to have a better understanding of ourselves and the world.

Adulthood is the time for reassessing the assumptions of our formative years that have often resulted in distorted views of reality. ... Changing social norms can make it much easier to encounter, entertain, and sustain changes in alternative perspectives. ...

Perspective transformation may be individual, ... group, ... or collective. ... (It) is the process of becoming critically aware of how and why our pre-suppositions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand, and feel about our world; of reformulating these assumptions to permit a more inclusive, discriminating, permeable, and integrative perspectives, and of making decisions or otherwise acting upon these new understandings. ... Meaning perspectives that permit us to deal with a broader range of experience, to be more discriminating, to be more open to other perspectives, and to better integrate our experiences are superior perspectives. (Mezirow, 1991, p. 13–14)

In the decades since Mezirow introduced his theory, many scholars expanded on his work, emphasizing how the process of transformation can take many forms. Based on this larger scholarship, Hoggan and Browning (2019) describe six facets of meaning perspectives described in the literature. These are one's:

- Worldview (e.g., assumptions, beliefs, values, expectations);
- Self (e.g., identity, personal knowledge, personal narrative, personality);
- Epistemology (i.e., habits related to knowledge, how one determines what they know);
- Ontology (e.g., dispositions, tendencies, felt experience of life);
- Behaviors; and
- Capacities (e.g., cognitive complexity, spiritual connectedness).

Learning is transformative when some combination of these facets of the meaning-making process are sufficiently different from previous ways that they “result in significant and irreversible changes in the way a person experiences, conceptualizes, and interacts with the world” (Hoggan, 2016, p. 71).

The process of transformation is understandably difficult. It involves, *inter alia*, intense emotions, imagining new possibilities, and ‘trying on’ new societal roles (Mezirow, 1978). Acknowledging the difficulty, we nevertheless assert that this is exactly the type of learning that is being prompted by and is necessary for a migration society. And, although not every chapter in this book explicitly draws on this theory, they all are consistent in their underlying messages that individuals and societies need to engage in the difficult task of questioning their deep-seated meaning perspectives about what is normal, good, and right, especially when it comes to situations such as migration that often involve human vulnerability, suffering, and exploitation.

Migration Society, Postmigrant Society, and Superdiversity

The book is a response to the inducement to learn caused by the experience of migration, for migrating individuals, but especially for the larger society. There is a need for scholarship that provides new concepts; that names and reframes phenomena in order to challenge problematic (individual and societal) meaning perspectives. The scholarship in this book draws from and builds upon existing concepts and analytic lenses. Several terms are used throughout the chapters to describe society in the wake of migration, including: ‘migration society,’ ‘post-migrant society,’ and ‘superdiversity.’ In the following, we provide a short introduction of these terms and their related contexts.

To describe society today, most of the authors refer to the term ‘migration society.’ According to Mecheril (2016), this term indicates the various aspects, structures, and processes of a dynamic, mutually constitutive social reality, such as the emergence of transnational spaces, new and multiple affiliations, and the hybridization of ways and concepts of living. It promotes dialogue about such

notions as foreignness, alterity, racism, belonging, prejudices, and attributions. *Migration society* points to old and new phenomena that are developing through interaction between different individuals and groups, and those phenomena are relevant for migrants, as well as for the receiving society.

Some authors in this book use the term ‘post-migrant society,’ which primarily indicates a certain research perspective, namely a post-structural or post-colonial² lens that criticizes and renounces the hegemonic ‘integration paradigm’ and refuses to accept existing power relations as given and unchangeable. A post-migrant perspective also means including marginalized stories into the research and discourse, telling the story of migration anew, and radically rethinking the entire field, going beyond the so-called hegemonic discourse (Yildiz, 2015).

‘Superdiversity’ as a term emphasizes the extensive heterogeneity and complex social patterns within modern societies due to migration and other factors. Expanding traditional categories of diversity, superdiversity acknowledges social class, societal status, health and disability, gender, age, aesthetic preferences, and so forth; with emphasis on issues of inequality, prejudice, and power relationships (Vertovec, 2007). Superdiversity describes recent societal transformations which occurred in the course of global migration processes, characterized by phenomena such as diversity not only between migrants and their receiving countries, but also increasing diversity amongst migrants themselves. This diversification includes, for instance, multiple types of migrant (e.g., refugee, undocumented migrant, secondary migrant), new and varying legal statuses for migrants, and different patterns of migration itself (e.g., from more countries, with continued connections by migrants between their receiving and home countries). The term *superdiversity* became so popular that Vertovec (2019) updated it with a typology of its various usages in the research literature. He found the term used to indicate:

- Very much diversity (synonymous with diversity, but emphasizing the expansion of different categories);
- Backdrop to a study (used to describe scene-setting, such as superdiverse places, superdiverse times or circumstances, and ‘digital superdiversity’);
- Methodological reassessment (combined with an intersectional approach to offer a new interdisciplinary lens to research);
- More ethnicity (emphasizing that the current migration has brought more ethnic groups to the host societies than has been the case in the past);
- Multidimensional reconfiguration of various social norms (emphasizing the need to take multiple variables into account when trying to measure diversity and calling attention to how variables and attributes are combined);
- Beyond the focus on ethnicity (highlighting that ethnicity must be cross-tabulated with other categories to develop better analyses of current diversity); and
- New or other complexities (referring to ‘liquid’ migration, non-linearity of migration processes, blurring of distinction, formation of new hierarchies and powers with migrant groups).

In this book, while describing and analyzing the complex and entangled contexts of migration, the authors use the term ‘superdiversity’ in one or several ways of this typology.

Genesis of Book and Themes Explored

This book is the result of a focused effort by a group of researchers to reflect on their work involving migrants and migration. In the fall of 2019, we reached out to a number of scholars across Europe who might be interested in exploring with us the connection between transformative learning and migration. We were (originally) interested in the learning that is required of migrants; learning that is transformational in nature. So, we invited scholars to participate in a two-day symposium. The idea was that everyone would write a paper on this subject (the connection between migration and transformative learning); we would all read each other’s papers prior to the symposium; and then we would spend our time together in discussion of the various ideas, interconnections, and implications. The symposium was planned for March 2020, and therefore after all the planning, logistics, hotel reservations, purchasing of plane tickets, and so forth, the emergence of covid-19 required us to cancel all plans to meet together face-to-face. Instead, we met virtually for a series of four 3-hour meetings spread over a weekend. An initial insight explored was that all of us are migrants—if not in our own lifetime, then at least sometime in our family line. What began as an exploration into the learning needs of migrants, quickly expanded also into meta-reflection about our combined experience of research, about the ways that our implicit assumptions and the resulting research designs influence the outcomes, about the theoretical lenses used in and currently lacking for migration research.

Another evolution was our focus on where the most important learning was required. People in the process of migration will certainly always need to learn, in both cumulative and transformative ways. However, the more important learning is almost certainly that of society. How are we (as societies) thinking about our cultural identities and how they are ‘threatened’ by newcomers? How do we develop new senses of home and belonging? How do we categorize people between ‘us’ and ‘others,’ and how might we begin thinking in terms of all people as deserving of human dignity regardless of where they are born? The conversations were so intriguing, the insights so rich, that we decided to meet again for more discussions, and thus began our Migration Research Consortium. In this collection are some tentative responses to the questions raised during this research we conducted with each other.

Several themes arose during these conversations, which the authors have explored in various ways. First, we noted that the discourse around migration and adult education often portrays migrants in terms of their (very legitimate) needs. They seek support for acquiring new skills and competencies (which are required in the new society) and/or aid during their process of transition. In these cases, migrants are presented as people who need help, who are receivers of our support.

This situation is representative, however, of only a brief amount of time in the lives of people who migrate (Jõgi & Ümarik, Chapter 7; Gravani & Barkoglou, Chapter 5). Chapters in this book illustrate ways that even well-intentioned efforts by those seeking to help migrants can manifest power (Beck & Gelardi, Chapter 3) and paternalism (Kukovetz & Sprung, Chapter 11), and that migrants' lives are defined by more than just their temporary experience of migration (West, Chapter 4; Malec Rawiński, Chapter 6).

Another theme was the role of adult education as being more than addressing immediate learning needs, such as learning a language or a new profession. It extends also into developing capacities for participation in the broader social and public sphere (Hoggan-Kloubert & Hoggan, Chapter 9). Chapters speak of the need for opportunities to voice divergent critical positions in the public realm (Finnegan, Chapter 2), as well as the role of adult education in the process of emancipation and decolonization (Brown, Gravani & Borg, Chapter 8).

A third theme was the importance of creating dialogue, venues for contact and exchange, spaces of encounter and recognition in our societies, where individual life-trajectories, stories, images, and worldviews can be shared and valued (West, Chapter 4). The challenge is to arrange opportunities for learning from others, especially across difference. Examples include learning that occurs: *en passant* while taking a hike (Formenti & Luraschi, Chapter 10), through the sharing of pictures and images (Alexa & West, Chapter 13; Luraschi & Finnegan, Chapter 14), by analyzing life paths and breaks (Malec Rawiński, Chapter 6; Gravani & Barkoglou, Chapter 5; Jõgi & Ümarik, Chapter 7), and by discussing historic trauma and collective memories (Beck, Chapter 12).

Overview of Parts and Chapters

What resulted from the collaboration among our Migration Research Consortium were explicit attempts to name the 'so-what' of the research and/or theorizing that each of us had done. These insights took different forms, which we use here to organize the various chapters. We begin in Part One with theories and concepts to better understand learning in a migration society, to re-think and re-negotiate 'old' and established assumptions of our disciplines, and to push forward in the search for new (if tentative) answers. In "Migration and Transformative Adult Education: Reflections on Complexity, Criticality, and Counter-Publics in the Age of Super-diversity," Fergal Finnegan explores the interconnections between migration education and social learning processes. Weaving together concepts from several critical theorists, this chapter provides a 'reconstructive critique' of transformative learning theory in ways useful to envisioning what an emancipatory adult education might look like.

Next is "Entangled Narratives: On the (Un)Learning about Migration and Integration in a Post-Migrant Society," by Elisabeth Beck and Lea Gelardi. Using German educational requirements for migrants as a touchstone, this chapter uses a post-migrant and postcolonial perspective to problematize the focus on integration of

newcomers into society. Concluding this section is “Migration, Learning and Its Enemies: ‘Us,’ ‘Them’ and the Possibilities of Cosmopolitan Learning,” by Linden West. This chapter employs an ‘interdisciplinary psychosocial framing’ to explore some of the traumas inherent in migration. From this, West presents a vision for adult education as a space of sharing stories, conviviality, generosity, appreciation of a shared humanity, and thereby also a mutual collaborative learning.

Part Two explores the learning that migrants experience. Education in a migration society is based on the notion of multiple identities and commitments, as well as different but overlapping circles of belonging. Contrasting different experiences of migration, these chapters provide valuable comparative analyses in order to shed light on the varying ways that migrants learn, change, and adapt to their new environments. This section begins with “Exploring Adult Migrants’ Learning Needs Using an Empowerment-Critical Approach: A Biographical Research” by Georgia Barkoglou and Maria Gravani. These authors demonstrate the ‘heterogeneity and a non-linearity in transformation’ through the life stories of four adult migrants. Similarly, in “The Constant Negotiation of Belonging: Experiences of Aging Polish Migrants in Sweden” by Małgorzata Malec Rawiński, the life stories of two older Polish migrants are shared, providing insights into the reality for migrants of living between two cultures, and the distinction between one’s place of living and place of belonging.

In “Seeking Hope, Safety and New Perspectives: Learning and Adapting for Adult Migrants,” Larissa Jõgi and Meril Ümarik present the stories and analysis of two migrants to Estonia. These cases present contrasting life trajectories and personal narratives, in which there can be seen a complex interplay of individual agency and contextual factors (including the role of education) in shaping migrants’ adaptation as a transformative learning process. In “Adult Migrant Education as a Mediator of Democratic Citizenship in Postcolonial Contexts: Inferences from Adult Migrant Language Programs in Malta and Cyprus,” Maria Brown, Maria Gravani, and Carmel Borg conduct a cross-case analysis of language learning programs for migrants in Malta and Cyprus. The initial development of tolerance and differentiated thinking they observed in these courses contrasts sharply with common populist mis-representations of migrants in both countries, but it did not necessarily develop into decolonizing and emancipating practices.

Part Three focuses on the learning of members of the societies on the receiving end of migration. No modern society can be accurately described without taking into account the process, development, and consequences of different migration movements. Adult education in a migration society not only has the task of supporting migrants in their integration process, but also of developing a vision of a new inclusive social model, grounded in diversity and multiple belongings.

In Chapter 9: “Embracing Transformation: Migration and Human Dignity,” Tetyana Hoggan-Kloubert and Chad Hoggan argue that there is a fundamental requirement of respect for human dignity of everyone in the society, regardless of

where they were born. This chapter illustrates what educational programs based on this premise might entail. Next is “Building the ‘Here’ and ‘There’ in Different Sensespaces: Embodied Dialogues among Refugees and Natives” by Laura Formenti and Silvia Luraschi. This chapter demonstrates the use of an innovative research method, the sensobiographic walk, an educational and social intervention designed to foster understanding and inclusion between new migrants and members of the local community.

In “Transformative Civic Learning within Volunteering in Refugee Relief,” Brigitte Kukovetz and Annette Sprung explore the transformative effects of civic engagement in Austria. They illustrate how a ‘disorienting dilemma’ can arise from migrants’ stories of trauma, as well as from volunteers’ own experiences with restrictive migration policies and practices. The section concludes with “Learning Beyond the Obvious: Holocaust Education, Historical Education, and Remembrance in a Plural Society.” In this chapter, Elisabeth Beck offers a vision of historical education that both honors and benefits from heterogeneity. By including multiple stories, histories, and memories, such as those of migrant populations, education can go ‘beyond the obvious’ of simply trying to assimilate migrants into their new society, and in so doing promote broader perceptions of different past(s) and diverse peoples.

Part Four highlights reflections occurring through dialogue between different researchers. This is an untraditional form of scholarship (see Formenti & West, 2018), but one that we feel is helpful for exploring insights, especially those arising from interconnections between scholars’ work and their own family histories and personal experiences. This section begins with “Where is home? Migration, Trauma, and Adult Education: A Dialogue” by Stefan Alexa and Linden West. This chapter is not only a dialogue, but also an experiment in the use of fiction to explore complexities that are difficult to convey. The authors reflect on issues they have seen and experienced relative to the difficulties and traumas of migration, and what that might mean for adult education. The book concludes with “A Dialogue on Migration, Critical Auto/Biographical Research and Transformative Education” by Silvia Luraschi and Fergal Finnegan. This chapter is a conversation between two researchers about their experiences with biography: using biographical research methods, as well as exploring auto-biographical reflections of their own families’ experiences with migration.

Concluding Remarks

This book is about our origins and our paths—the arbitrariness of our places of birth and the choices that we make in our lives, about the ways:

- we leave and arrive,
- we tell stories and remain silent,
- we listen and ignore.

On these paths, we cross physical and mental borders; marking different frontiers, limitations, and divisions. Learning in the context of migration is necessary because of—and possible in spite of—these borders. It holds the potential to help overcome alienation from the old and accustomed that has been left behind, as well as estrangement from the new and unusual that we encounter.

There are no set or easy answers to the challenges that arise from migration. However, as we have tried to make clear, we believe an important first step is for society to reflect on these challenges and differentiate between those which are real and those which are largely the result of faulty assumptions and biases. How might we think differently about migrants and migration? How might we become more inclusive in our differentiation between ‘us’ and ‘others’? How might adult education more effectively facilitate learning in a migration society? To engage meaningfully in such a reflection will require explorations into new possibilities. The writing of this book was a *Bildungsreise*, an educational journey through such explorations. We hope for readers it will be the same.

Notes

- 1 Another possibility is to share responsibility, where appropriate, for living conditions in countries of emigration. This is a separate and complex issue that cannot be addressed adequately here.
- 2 The term ‘post-colonialism’ does not imply that colonialism has ended, but rather a shift of focus in analyzing the world; namely, effects of certain [colonial] ways of structuring the world are de-legitimized, and the internalization of patterns of thinking and behavior are problematized (Hall, 1996).

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