Weaving Translocal Lives, Bridging Ageing Experiences
Turkish-born Women in Sweden

av

Merve Tunçer

Akademisk avhandling

Avhandling för filosofie doktorsexamen i sociologi,
som kommer att försvaras offentligt
fredag den 27 Oktober 2023 kl. 13.15,
Hörsal F, Örebro universitet

Opponent: Docent/biträddande Professor Monika Allgurin Wilińska
Högskolan i Jönköping
Jönköping Sverige

Örebro universitet
Institutionen för humaniora, utbildnings- och samhällsvetenskap
701 82 ÖREBRO
Abstract


This thesis explores Turkish-born women’s experiences of ageing in a translocal setting by looking into the narratives of women who lived in Sweden for 40 years on average. It is based on semi-structured in-depth interviews with 20 Turkish-born women who are between the ages 60 and 78. The overall aim of the thesis is to contribute to new knowledge about the diversified later life experiences of ageing migrant women from an intersectional life course perspective. The following research questions have guided the analysis: How do Turkish-born women construct their sense of belonging after almost 40 years in Sweden? How did the migration to Sweden influence the women’s understandings of gender norms? How do they make sense of ageing and care in a migration context? And how can we explore the complex power dynamics that have been produced over the life course of ageing migrant women? The study incorporates a cross-fertilisation of intersectional and life course perspectives to emphasise the simultaneous influence of agency and structural forces to reveal the racialised and gendered experiences of migrant women. The analysis shows that sense of belonging is constructed at a translocal scale that extends national borders and has a temporal nature. The women construct their sense of belonging through family and kin ties and become rooted in certain localities through negotiations and re-negotiations over the years. Care and work come to the fore as important sites of such negotiations as the women age in Sweden. Both care and work arrangements carry gendered patterns as they do and undo gender by performing household work, paid work and care for family and kin. The analysis shows that the women often have one foot in traditional gender norms while having another foot in gender equal norms. Moreover, the ‘doing’ of gender extends to old age. The women do age through negotiating intergenerational and gendered care with other actors in their lives. The study suggests an intersectional life course perspective to expand our gerontological imagination.

Keywords: translocal ageing, intersectional life course, doing age, doing gender, Turkish-born women, Sweden, care

Merve Tunçer, Sociology
Örebro University, SE-701 82 Örebro, Sweden,
e-mail: merve.tuncer @oru.se