BOOK REVIEWS

McGregor, JoAnn and Ranka Primorac (eds.). 2010. *Zimbabwe's New Diaspora. Displacement and the Cutural Politics of Survival*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books. 268 pp. Hb.: $80 / £47.00. ISBN: 978184546580.

At the time of writing, the tragedy of Mugabe's Zimbabwe, which has resulted in the displacement of several million Zimbabweans, remains to be resolved. This topical multidisciplinary collection focuses on the lives of Zimbabwe's new diaspora based in South Africa and Britain since 2000. Events in Zimbabwe, not least among them, the notorious 2005 state mass urban demolitions, Operation *Murambatsvina* ('Remove the Filth'), form a poignant background to the analyses offered here. McGregor's comprehensive introduction to the volume evocatively sets the scene for the discussions that follow and delineates the ways in which the Zimbabwean case might illuminate broader discussions about diaspora and transnationalism. McGregor highlights the manner in which the collection 'retains an emphasis on human agency and creativity, conveyed through its focus on the 'cultural politics' of survival in new locations' (p. 5.) and outlines the ways in which Zimbabweans have taken up the terms 'diaspora' and 'diasporans'. She points to the complexities that lie behind such terms with particular reference to the relevance of class and 'race' in experiences within the diaspora.

The volume is divided into three parts: *Zimbabwean Diasporic Communities in South Africa*, *The Cultural Politics of Survival in Britain* and *Diasporic Identities and Transnational Media*. Contributors are from various backgrounds, including academic disciplines such as geography, social anthropology, media and migration studies and postcolonial Zimbabwean literature, along with policy analysts, journalists and a writer. In a brief review of this kind, it is impossible to do justice to the twelve short chapters.

In the first section, Muzondidya draws particular attention to the role of class, gender and education in the historically differentiated experience of Zimbabwean migrants' experiences. He highlights the degree of xenophobic violence and racism experienced by both skilled and unskilled Zimbabweans, encapsulated in the term *Makwerekwere*. In the following chapters, Rutherford and Kriger explore the contested legal status of, first, farmworkers in Limpopo Province, and then Zimbabweans more generally in South Africa. Kriger documents public debates about whether Zimbabweans should be defined as 'labour migrants' when they 'do not fit the conventional legal definition of refugees' (p. 94).

Turning to Britain, Pasura's analysis is supported by a wealth of ethnographic detail, gained by participant observation, of activities, of homes and of social haunts in his demonstration of how diaspora may be made and unmade. He identifies several types within the membership of the diaspora. There are those described as visible and intensely active in political and diasporic life, the 'epistemic', intellectuals who may confine their involvement in the diaspora largely to cyberspace, the 'dormant' and, lastly, the 'silent' members. The latter, both black and white, are a minority, who choose to 'conjure an alternative belonging' (p. 107). Pasura documents varying degrees of political engagement by Zimbabweans living in London, Coventry, Birmingham and Wigan and describes such activities as the Vigil outside the Zimbabwean embassy in London, where white Zimbabweans play a prominent role that can become contentious.

In the next chapter, McGregor draws upon interviews and upon her own involvement with a Zimbabwean asylum-seeker support group. She highlights a particular aspect of life in Britain for most, though not all, Zimbabweans – 'the acute loss of status' (p. 122) and the subsequent experience of 'abjection'. McGregor demonstrates the ways in which Zimbabweans who arrive in regular ways become criminalised, by overstaying or by breaching work restrictions and, most particularly, by the asylum system itself in which it has become increasingly difficult to make claims or appeal negative decisions. However, she also notes a range of diasporic associations that provide support and other organisations, such as burial associations (described in some detail by Mbiba in a subsequent chapter), football clubs and churches.

In her account, Chinouya draws attention to the complexities and particular demands of transnational families for HIV positive women with a particular focus on stigma and yet also on faith and the support that such women gain in Zimbabwean church fellowships. Recognising the importance of remittances, and offering a nuanced account of the role of intimacy, she highlights 'the economic and emotional content of long distances exchanges' (p. 168). Chinouya offers a nuanced account of emotional support of kin back home, and also of their continuing demands, and of the complexities around disclosing HIV status.

The third and last part of the volume offers accounts of contrasting internet forums, first by Mano and Willens, and later by Peel. The former analyse online debates of national identity and citizenship. They suggest that exchanges about the participation of a Zimbabwean nurse, Makosi Musambasi, in the British version of the television show *Big Brother*, revealed Zimbabwean understandings on such matters as identity, morality and womanhood. Drawing upon Habermasian concepts of public discourse, Peel focuses on 'internet sites that bring together sub-national collectivities and serve particular sectional interests among Zimbabweans abroad' (p. 229) – in this study those who identify as Ndebele and those who identify as Coloured. He demonstrates the role of the public sphere in which 'validity claims' are traded and contested.

Primorac first analyses twenty-first century diaspora-related narratives revealed in novels and autobiogaphies. Her stated aim is 'to show how recent texts by displaced authors who claim white Zimbabwean identities… may be related to (gendered) blueprints for the performance of "white African" identities reminiscent of the colonial era' (p. 204). Later in the volume, Primorac introduces a short story (*One Dandelion Seed-head*) by Brian Chikwava, a Zimbabwean living in London. The final chapter offers an interview that Primorac conducted with Chikwava, which, together with his story, draws out many of the themes of the volume.

It is unfortunate that this informative and timely volume has been poorly served by inadequate proof-reading. The book is littered with typographical errors that at times threaten to distract the reader's attention.

Anthony Simpson
University of Manchester (United Kingdom)

Berdahl, Daphne (edited by Matti Bunzl, foreword by Michael Herzfeld). 2010. *On the Social Life of Postsocialism. Memory, Consumption, Germany*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 192 pp. Pb.: $24.95. ISBN: 9780253221704.

This compendium of articles are a tribute to the thinking of Daphne Berdahl, a consummate ethnographer of post-socialism and East Germany. The articles, almost all published elsewhere between 1994 and 2009, show this scholar's evolving thinking on post-socialist and capitalist conditions, consumption and memory through the struggles of her East German interlocutors. Arranged chronologically, the collection demonstrates Berdahl's increasingly assured hand, from the discussion of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial as a site of healing and cross-over between personal and collective commemoration, to her analysis of the hit film *Goodbye Lenin* as a recognition and farewell to lives spent in the GDR. Berdahl worked with great skill to evoke the life-worlds, contexts and the often poignant quotes and subtle observations that make her argument come alive.

Her discussion of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington chronicles the belated creation of a site that publicly recognises and heals the experiences of soldiers and their relatives. As in her later chapters on 'ostalgia' (nostalgia for the East), she argues that personal and public memory pursue a power-inflected dialogue with each other. She notes a shift in memory practices, a routinisation accompanied by 'museumifying': certain kinds of commemoration become the 'done thing', while remaining heart-felt. Berdahl indicates that the reception of the Gulf War was shaped by these forms of commemorating Vietnam, a hint I would have liked to hear more about.

In several chapters, Berdahl uses a fantastic range of ethnography to describe a new form of citizenship and stratification through politicised and 'competent' consumption in East Germany – the cosmetics seminars promising to equip East German women with the 'image' claimed necessary to find scarce work, a trickster tycoon who becomes a folk hero in Leipzig. In her later chapters, she draws on Jean and John Comaroff's notion of 'millennial capitalism': East Germans find that full membership of the prosperous Germany requires a certain cultural competence in consumption. Inspired by Appadurai, Berdahl treats us to the social life of the Trabi car, from a much loved and much hated scarcity in the GDR to its de-valuing in the immediate aftermath of re-unification and its later rediscovery as a (more less tongue-in-cheek) symbol of defiance and East German identity. She shows us that while in the GDR, resistance might be expressed by harboring Western goods, now the opposite may be the case, for example by re-donning GDR house-smocks. Here are citizens remembering themselves as proud producers and workers, rather than consumers. Berdahl is careful to show that such 'commodified resistance' both contests and affirms the new Germany. Indeed, at several points she is close to asserting that it was consumer choices, rather than political freedoms which people most missed in the GDR and which caused its downfall. Returning to her interest in memorials, she discusses two GDR museums, one a state-sponsored portrait of a repressive regime, the other a collection recovering discarded GDR products from the 'dustbin of history', in which many East Germans more easily recognise their own life-experience. As elsewhere, Berdahl is attentive to the multiplicity of experiences and mixed feelings – of dispossession, promise, betrayal – that these sites of

commemoration evoke. She argues that expressions of 'ostalgia' do not have one political cause or feeling at root, and firmly critiques triumphalist narratives which dismiss positive associations with life in the GDR as a dangerous belittlement of an oppressive regime. She claims that labelling a fondness for Trabis as a 'cult' phenomenon is an attempt to devalue eastern German critiques of re-unification. It is at such moments that I wished for a more comparative perspective to draw out the specificity of the German case, and feed her argument on a general sea-change in citizenship practices.

A highlight of the collection is *Mixed Emotions*, an essay in which Berdahl shares a deeply affecting moment of fieldwork. Witnessing her very ill friend Johanna's profound devotion during a church service, Berdahl is jolted out of her frustration with her friend's trust in religious rather than medical authorities, and entertains the possibility that it is faith itself that is keeping her friend alive. Berdahl courageously allows us an intimate view of her frustrations with the village priest and Johanna, to good effect. It offers us the chance to recognise ourselves in the power relations and personal circumstances we move within, especially when they tempt us to act as 'Besserwessis' – Western know-it-alls. The author points to the deceptive familiarity of her European fieldwork site, which in fact masked profound differences, and predicated her demand that others behave as she would. Though highly effective, this chapter also provoked some unease: did her intimate description of Johanna and the village priest not make them all-too recognisable?

The case of a fraudulent real-estate mogul who developed much of inner city Leipzig and became a local hero shows how much the contemporary financial markets rely on appearance rather than fact, and how the citizens of Leipzig celebrated tricking the big bosses of capitalism. Berdahl's suggestion that the experience of post-socialist citizens de-naturalises capitalism and affords us a valuable standpoint of critique is well worth pursuing.

The book also offers an interpretation of the massively successful film *Goodbye Lenin*, which accomplished many things at once: it captured the roller-coaster of euphoria, insecurity and disappointment of the early 1990s, gave 'Ossis' the opportunity to acknowledge and value memories, acted as a rite of farewell and united 'Ossis' and 'Wessis' in laughter – though perhaps at different things.

Overall, while hugely admiring her ethnography, I was often left wanting a more explicit discussion of her broader claims, such as how exactly she saw personal and public commemorations relate to each other, the question of 'resistance' through consumption or the relationship between the production of locality, individuals, the nation and global capital. Though her emphasis on multiple meanings of phenomena such as 'ostalgia' rings true, such an emphasis is also somewhat inconclusive. As a posthumous publication and deserved labour of love, this compilation understandably has some repetitions and loose ends, but also highly suggestive arguments that remain ours to pursue. It is a pleasure to follow Berdahl's lines of thought and growth as a scholar, her consummate fieldwork and writing.

JEANNE FÉAUX DE LA CROIX
Zentrum Moderner Orient (Germany)

Weszkalnys, Gisa. 2010. *Berlin, Alexanderplatz. Transforming Place in a Unified Germany*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books. xii+224 pp. Hb.: $60 / £35. ISBN: 9781845457235.

Published in the Bergahn Books' edition *Space and Place*, Gisa Weszkalnys' monograph is an ethnography of urban planning related to a particular space, Berlin's Alexanderplatz square that, not for the first time in its history, became an arena of city's self-reinvention in the 1990s. Envisioned as a centre of the DDR's Berlin during the socialist era and 'as an exemplar of an emphatically modern socialist city: a centre of societal life, a place for trade and communication and an embodiment of socialist internationalism and technological progress', Alexanderplatz is today perceived as 'a waste of valuable inner city land and break with Berlin's historical structures' (pp. 11–12). Examining the discourses and practices of Berlin spatial reordering after the unification, Weszkalnys depicts today's socialist-capitalist Alexanderplatz as a chronotope, a 'plural time-space,' and examines ways in which this specific locale 'comes into being in different domains and with different effects'. What she offers to readers is a rich ethnography not of diverse 'constituents' of Alexanderplatz, but rather an insight into ways in which it is multiply constituted (p. 2).

The book consists of seven chapters. In the introductory chapter, the author situates the object of her research in the broader framework that goes beyond negotiation and imagination of the city's identity and includes questions such as citizenship and belonging, expertise and planning, time and space, the nature of ethnography and the object of anthropology (p. 2), 'the nature of ethnographic field, the distribution and distributedness of our anthropological objects, and the engagement with some of those most emphatically "modern" domains of contemporary life' (p. 29). As an enquiry that drives the book, she emphasises the question 'whether we are willing to see anthropology as both descriptive and, as such, as a problematising knowledge practice,' and sees as a goal of the anthropological account of Alexanderplatz 'to convey its multiple constitution, whilst recognising that people live different Alexanderplatzes simultaneously' (p. 29). The second chapter serves as a prelude to the story about Alexanderplatz, as it introduces a set of discourses through which Berlin's future was imagined. These future imaginaries include Berlin as the capital, the metropolis, the global city and the European city. Most of the talks about what Berlin should become in the future, the author points out, are talks about how to fill Berlin's emptiness, since 'it seems impossible to talk about Berlin after unification without attending to its empty spaces' (p. 61). And in most of imaginations of Berlin's future, Alexanderplatz as an oasis of socialist planning had come to appear inadequate.

In the following, third chapter, the author moves more closely toward her ethnographic object – Alexanderplatz – and points out to its disorderly materiality. She offers an insight into ways in which discourses about Alexanderplatz's post-unification disorder provides a 'channel' for set of socially relevant discourses: these discourses enabled discussions on the present day dislocations and the vanishing of a socialist ideal; they also enable linking the square's physical disintegration with the disintegration of the GDR state. Talk about disorder may also function as a commentary of failures of government.

The forth chapter deals with the process in which Alexanderplatz was identified as a problem of urban planning, which led to development of new design for the square.

The next chapter turns toward critiques of the urbanistic re-design of Alexanderplatz, closely looking at attempts of citizen initiatives and experts to challenge the planners' visions and procedures that made these visions legitimate.

The sixth chapter highlights dynamics of changing ways the square and the city are governed urbanistically, as well as the ways in which 'the social' is articulated in city planning through the prism of the project initiated by a group of social workers who worked with young people in Alexanderplatz.

The concluding chapter, entitled *Whose Alexanderplatz?*, highlights the relation between planners and citizens and suggests that 'the mix of numerical, participative and more "narrative" knowledge practices that planners now deploy have yet to translate into newly conceived kinds of composite and possibly inconclusive results' (p. 164). The author asserts that the counterpoint to the planners' Alexanderplatz are not various citizens' visions of the square, 'but rather the square where disorder and disintegration become manifest' (p. 165). She pays particular attention to the vision of Alexanderplatz 'that sometimes appeared to be "more real" than the others:' the one that is related to economic and money. For administrative planners, Alexanderplatz 'was not just a public square but simultaneously an investment project where ownership is distributed between private developers and the public hand' (p. 168). This concluding chapter also provides readers with a reflective look-back to main issues brought in the study. One of them is the notion of assemblage as an ontological concept applied to a place; the discussion of Alexanderplatz highlights the historicity of assemblage and its conflictual nature.

Throughout the book, Weszkalnys insists on multiplicity as inherent characteristic of Alexanderplatz. In her own words, '"ambiguity", "fluidity" and "elusiveness" might be the last words that come to mind when one looks at Alexanderplatz, this concrete plane, and the sturdy buildings around it. Yet, they seem to be the words that encapsulate it best' (p. 167).

A detailed and multi-layered ethnography of the place, Weszkalnys' study essentially belongs to studies of post-socialism, too, since most discussions around Alexanderplatz cannot be detached from its embodiment of a particular historical moment – now defeated, outdated, 'a peace of the East' that city builders cannot accept. Throughout the book, the author highlights post-unification tensions and the temporal experiences of East Berliners 'as the inhabitants of this city that is to be rewritten, and the continuing salience of the gradually obliterated socialist period in their life trajectories' (p. 166). This kind of obliteration, a common post-socialist condition, becomes particularly exposed in multiple visions and temporalities of the re-united city.

TANJA PETROVIĆ
Scientific Research Center of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (Slovenia)

Herring, D. Ann and Alan C. Swedlund (eds.). 2010. *Plagues and Epidemisc, Infected Spaces Past and Present* (Wenner-Gren International Symposium Series). New York: Berg Publishers. 416 pp. Pb.: £15.99. ISBN: 9781847885470.

Contributors to this volume examine epidemics that have had serious social as well as health effects on communities in various parts of the world. Their anthropological perspectives bring together the counting/accounting aspects of epidemics with moral perspectives on plagues. By stressing outbreaks of diseases in various parts of the world, such as the social settings of AIDS/HIV in aboriginal communities in Canada and the US, or malaria, influenza, or dengue as 'syndemics', the diversity of the papers converges around the complementarity of medical and social understandings. Syndemics (Singer, Chapter 2) as a 'theory' of diseases in social contexts provides ideas discussed in each of the papers. The volume aims to introduce 'interesting and novel ways' that the contributors to this Wenner-Gren symposium were thinking about epidemics and plagues as *ideas*... and about the political, cultural and biological configurations they take' (p. 2).

This convergence carries medical anthropological studies forward to demonstrate how social science and medical science are becoming mutually supportive. The final paper in the volume by Lindenbaum on the epidemic of *kuru* among the Fore in Papua New Guinea illustrates how her involvement with that community through fieldwork and with scientists studying the kuru epidemic led to new insights. It provides an example of the meeting of different viewpoints on epidemics, whether they are seen from a contamination perspective or from a configurational perspective. Discussions from both viewpoints have led to greater understanding of the *kuru* epidemic and its ultimate control.

The strength of the volume lies in each author developing the concepts of Syndemics, as discussed by Singer (Chapter 2), building on Rosenberg's (1992) useful considerations of epidemics as social as well as health events in relation to a diverse range of diseases in different communities around the world. Several authors emphasise the value of looking beyond an epidemiological transition approach to situate an outbreak, say of cholera in Gibraltar (Sawchuk, Chapter 6), or the 1919 influenza epidemic in Massachusetts (Swedlund, Chapter 9) in a wider framework of time, space and social impact.

The emphasis on numbers in epidemiological accounts of epidemics is considered too limiting, as such 'counting' overlooks social 'accounting'. Several authors (e.g. Trostle for civilian mortality in Iraq, Chapter 4) raise concerns that mortality figures provide only one aspect of an epidemic, as they do not reveal the expense of the effects of one disease on the general health of a population and the ability to continue to operate effectively as a social unit for years to come. Goodreau's paper on epidemic modelling (Chapter 12) as 'a tool with which to account for the intertwining processes at all levels, using relatively advanced methods of counting' (p. 215) challenges us to analyse epidemics through ways of knowing other than just mechanical use of numbers.

Considerations of the moral aspects of plagues that distinguish them from epidemics draw to the fore those 'other ways of knowing' that medical anthropologists use. Whether looking at yellow fever and Chagas disease in Latin America (Lowy, Chapter 15), or tuberculosis in New Zealand (Littleton et al., Chapter 7), several value sets are

challenged. Herring and Lockerbie (Chapter 10) present the coming pandemic (in 2005) of H5N1 influenza as a 'viral panic' out of Asia that is perceived on several levels, whether as bioterrorism, or pharmaceutical market exploitation, or the consequences of loss of income to rural Vietnamese chicken farmers. Their paper affords opportunities for assessing such a plague from a number of different moral positions, including the media, racial and political messaging.

My one concern with this volume is the difficulty of accessing references as cited in individual papers. References are not placed at the end of each paper but collated in a combined bibliography at the end of the whole volume. Unfortunately readers are handicapped when they wish to follow up on one particular set of ideas, or to work with one particular paper out of the volume. Those students who photocopy a particular article in order to explore it further will miss out on the value of sources of ideas that author has cited. I prefer references to be placed at the end of each article, both for ease of consideration when first reading it, or for later reference.

This volume is a welcome progression of ideas from several fields that come together as medical anthropology. The papers represent new approaches that anthropologists are introducing to counter reductionist views of health as assessed from a single cause or by an individual's state of being. Singer's concept of 'syndemics' provides a broad framework within which social and biological factors, in the past as well as the present, whether counted or described, can be used to account for epidemics or plagues as societal occurrences. The multiplicity of aftermaths of Hurricane Katrina, or the Haiti earthquake, or the Bangladeshi floods have all left their mark on the health and wellbeing of those populations, and others, and will be variously considered in the future. The editors of *Plagues and Epidemics* have presented key concerns for current considerations, while having strong implications for the future of medical anthropology.

NANCY J. POLLOCK
Victoria University (New Zealand)

Rockefeller, Stuart Alexander. 2010. *Starting from Quirpini: The Travels and Places of a Bolivian People*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 320 pp. Pb.: $24.95. ISBN: 9780253222107.

Stuart Rockefeller's book is about how the people of Quirpini, a rural community in the Bolivian Andes, 'make the places they live in and live in the places they make' (p. 4). Drawing on insight from the philosopher Henri Lefebvre, Rockefeller envisions places as *produced* through dynamic interconnections with other places, and the movement of people, things, and ideas within and through them (p. 3). Places are also produced through struggle: 'Agents of power bring forth structures… which act as representations… of people's spatial practice; these representations are in turn realized in the lived space that results as people incorporate (or do not) these new constraints into their spatial practice' (p. 269). So, much of the place-making discussed in this book has to do with movement, efforts to influence and control movement, and the tension between the two (p. 4).

After recounting an initial walk through Quirpini, where he describes the landscape, the location of the school, the road and so on, Rockefeller writes: 'although I could learn something about Quirpini just by walking around, articulating the parts of the terrain through my own movement, as long as what I saw remained static… as long as I was not engaged with the life of the place so as to appreciate the movement that interconnected everything there, then what I was seeing was not the place itself… that would only become real for me when I saw how it *moved*' (p. 7, my emphasis). For Rockefeller, then, 'Quirpini is not a place on a map, nor is it a territory that contains a culture or people. It is… a pattern of movements, a conjunction of forces, a set of spatial strategies and struggles, a situational context for people's action' (p. 9).

In each chapter of the book, he realizes this vision of Quirpini by focusing on movement, showing how movement makes places from small (the *wasi* or house) and large (Bolivia). His focus is thus on *movements*, but more specifically, on the poetics of movement. 'It is largely through repetition that movement is creative of social space' (p. 268), and he utilizes the concept of schemata (following Maurice Merleau-Ponty) as an analytical tool to talk about the permanent effect of such repetitions. Not only does repetitive movement produce social space, schemata – circuits, concentric visits, circular movement of corn, migration to Buenos Aires and back to Quirpini – exist at different scales.

This ties into Rockefeller's central theoretical goal, which is to resolve the disjuncture between the anthropology of lived space and that of large-scale space. He believes that this can be achieved methodologically by scaling up from the space of bodies and experience to the large-scale spaces of nations' population movements and other large-scale phenomena. Even a small community like Quirpini is constituted by a complex tangle of movements operating to different ends at different scales (p. 27). For instance, large scales, like 'the world', or 'the nation' can only exist through localities. This ineffability of large-scale phenomena requires them to exercise as much control as possible over local actions and meanings to exist at all. Large-scale realms are *made* real in localities through manipulations of context (p. 269). Scaling up becomes an apt way to relate a lived space to contexts that affect it: 'by approaching spaces and places at the scales of experience,

and investigating the ways in which large-scale institutions and forces manifest themselves in experience, a work like this is more likely to remain true to the many scales at which reality happens' (p. 27).

The structure of the book itself reproduces the movement from small to large scale. It is organized into three parts: Part 1, *Inscriptions*, contains an introduction and a chapter that introduces the reader to the places where the Quirpinis live, and the movements between those places, the 'sprawling and intertwined spaces, with their varied scales and deep historical roots' (p. 59). Part 2, *Facets of a Place* is about different aspects of Quirpini and social formations within it. Specifically, Rockefeller writes about houses, corn planting, and the carnival as places and social relations that are dynamic products of action and movement that themselves produce Quirpini as a place. Part 3, *From Quirpini*, focuses on external entanglements that affect the world of the Quirpinis: the regional political system that ensures the domination of the elite town of San Lucas over the *campesino* village of Quirpini, the invocation of the Bolivian state in Quirpini through context-making rituals at school, and labour migration to Buenos Aires (p. 29).

The conclusion is entitled *Coming Back to Quirpini* and closes the book with biographical vignettes of people and households, 'showing how their lives are put together out of multi-scaled movement, their own and others' (p. 251). Following those vignettes, he closes with a review of the different mutually implicated scales of spatial action that make up life for the Quirpini and reviews his main techniques used to elucidate the dynamic and multi-scalar reality in which the Quirpinis live. Indeed, he asserts that everyone in Quirpini created an existence by taking part in and influencing movement at many different scales (p. 259). Migration, especially international migration, extends tremendously the circuits that animate and create the community and households of the Quirpinis.

By the end of the book, it is clear that although places seem simple and stable they are actually complex amalgams of geography, memory, movement, and power (p. 261). Places are also multi-scalar and defined by places they contain, are linked to, and those that they are contained by (p. 261). As well, Rockefeller shows that far from being relegated to a static past, 'Quirpinis are very much agents in their own present and that their actions are molding the future… they and their fellows are building and feeding cities, transforming international borders, and re-forming the national identities of both Argentina and Bolivia' (p. 19).

SARA V. KOMARNISKY
University of British Columbia (USA)

Melhuus, Marit, Jon P. Mitchell and Helena Wulff (eds.). 2010. *Ethnographic Practice in the Present*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books. 196 pp. Hb.: $75.00 / £44.00. ISBN: 9781845456160.

Ethnographic Practice in the Present, a joint publication of Berghahn Books and the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA), consisting of 11 chapters along with an intorduction and two epilogues, is part of the EASA Series. The volume is the result of two workshops held at the EASA conference in Vienna 2004, entitled 'Ethnographic Practice in the Present' and 'Ethnography: The Costs of Success'. As the title of this volume suggests, the authors deal with not only the practice but also the notion of ethnography in the contemporary world, which is marked by globalisation, rapid and continuous change, mobility, fragmentation, complexity, multi-sitedness, and transnational practices. As it states in the introduction, the chapters are preoccupied more with *fieldwork* practice than with the practice of *writing*, which are both parts, often inseparable, of what we mean when we use the word 'ethnography'.

The introduction, an expanded version of an already-published chapter written by one of the volume's editors, Jon P. Mitchell, considers the history, reflections and critique of ethnography – which are some of the chapter's subheadings – proceeding from the 'legend' about the invention of ethnographic method by Malinowski, and giving a brief but informed review of these issues.

Apart from Johannes Fabian's chapter, in which the author deals with the importance and meaning of memory and remembering in ethnographic practice, which is an amended version of a chapter from his book *Memory Against Culture*, and the above account by Mitchell, the other chapters are published for the first time in this volume. Nevertheless, many of the authors reflect upon previous pieces of work and, in particular on their (past) fieldwork. Some of the chapters focus more on particular cases of fieldwork (but do not totally exclude theoretical thinking), and some deal with more theoretical issues (but also consider particular cases of fieldwork practice).

One of these is Judith Okely's 'Fieldwork as Free Association and Free Passage'. Drawing mainly on her own fieldwork experiences but also on interviews with some anthropologists, the author uses Freud's concept of free association – which is, in simple terms, about the openness of the mind to everything that one comes across – and tries to apply it to fieldwork practice on different levels.

The increasing popularity of ethnography outside its 'native' discipline, anthropology, is something that has certainly encouraged debate within anthropology about its own distinctiveness – something that can be seen when reading this volume. This issue forms the basis of Thomas Widlok's chapter about the costs and benefits of methodological traffic, traffic of ethnography, across disciplines. Widlok presents material from current multimedia language documentation research and suggests that the borrowing of ethnography by other disciplines or sciences may be fertile, not only for them but also for anthropology itself.

The other issue presented in many of the volume's chapters, if not in all of them, in one way or another, is the issue of the new conditions of the globalized world

for ethnography and its practitioners. Christina Garsten's response to this challenge is an ethnography of corporate social responsibility where the 'field' is not located in any particular place and where forms like conferences and electronic message boards become anthropological fields.

One of the volume's chapters is written from the perspective of supervising doctoral dissertation research projects. Its author, George E. Marcus, presents the context of pedagogy as the context 'where the crucial structural changes in the discipline are actually occurring, and where altered norms and forms of practice will eventually need to be ratified by discussion, debate and new expectations in the training of students'. One of the ways that he suggests we can deal with the new conditions of fieldwork practice – as in ethnographies of the production of knowledge – and achieve some sort of ethnographic depth is a technique of 'nested dialogues'.

Although each of the chapters, at least implicitly, deals with ethics in ethnographic practice, one of them is entirely dedicated to the question of ethics in the context of its increasing contemporary codification and bureaucratisation. Sharon Macdonald, as an ethnographer and a representative of social science research interests, participated in the making of the ethics policy at the University of Sheffield, which was very strongly influenced by the field of biomedicine. For the purpose of this chapter, the author tried to recall the process of making the ethics policy by doing a form of retrospective fieldwork. One can see how and why it was hard 'to find space for the kinds of concerns about ethnography' that Macdonald had wanted 'to interject into the process'.

The only chapter written from outside the Western tradition of sociocultural anthropology is by Alexei Elfimov, who deals with some issues from the history of Russian (Soviet) anthropology. He presents the methodologies of large-scale statistical and qualitative surveys and of multiple case studies, and rallies against their abandonment or replacement. Considering the new conditions of doing ethnography and the fragmentary nature of the contemporary world, Elfimov suggests that effort should be made to adapt these practices, and especially that of multiple case studies, 'rather than trying to replace it with the classic Western model of participant observation'.

Some of the authors describe the processes of their own fieldwork in detail, where they dealt with different subjects in different ways. Aud Talle, who works on the subject of 'female circumcision in exile', describes her relationship with her gatekeeper, a woman from Somalia now living in London. She shows how her previous fieldwork in Somalia and most importantly her knowledge and experience generated from previous fieldwork and from her various relationships, especially the one with her gatekeeper, has influenced her present ethnography. Ute Röschenthaler presents her fieldwork in the Cross River Region of Cameroon and Nigeria, and the mobile method that she had to use to create the reconstruction of dissemination histories of the various associations in the region.

Cristiana Bastos, as well as some of the other ethnographers presented in this volume, was interested in the production of knowledge. Doing her fieldwork in various places and contexts in Rio de Janeiro, she undertook an ethnography of responses to AIDS. In her chapter, Bastos describes various ways of doing ethnography of the kind which is not limited by one particular place or one particular group of people.

In the chapter about shifting fields on airport grounds, Dimitra Gefou-Madianou creates an ethnography of people living in the area transformed by new international airport in Athens. The author deals with many things associated with this kind of transformation, which includes the changing relationships between ethnographers and 'informants', and concludes by repeating the words from the title about 'ethnography in motion', which has to follow 'the transformations of the "place"'.

One of the two epilogues or closing contributions to the volume, entitled 'Re-presenting Anthropology' by Simon Coleman, reflects on the volume's chapters by grouping them into two sections regarding the ways they deal with two aspects of the 'field': time and space. The other, by Douglas R. Holmes and George E. Marcus, offers a 'prelude to a re-functioned ethnography', with the authors called 'emerging ethnographic practices' that this volume's contributions 'prefigure'.

Alongside the well-known critique of traditional ways of writing ethnography, there is also a well-known and well-elaborated critique of traditional ways of doing ethnography i.e. doing fieldwork. The traditional/Malinowskian design of fieldwork, although still in common use, has gone through changes and critiques in much of anthropological doing, thinking and writing. *Ethnographic Practice in the Present*, brings together many possible ways of doing fieldwork in the contemporary world and many possible ways of considering ethnography, and thereby joins the corpus of critical understanding and thinking about ethnographic fieldwork. This does not mean, of course, that it is not welcome: it can be useful and also very interesting for other ethnographers to see how their colleagues explain what they are doing in the 'field' and what they think about this.

IVA PLEŠE
Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research (Croatia)

Zontini, Elisabetta. 2010. *Transnational Families, Migration and Gender. Moroccan and Filipino Women in Bologna and Barcelona*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books. 262 pp. Hb.: $90.00 / £53-00. ISBN: 9781845456184.

The book is inspiring in many respects. Firstly, it addresses the pressing issue of the care deficit in European welfare states and the increased reliance on immigrant workers to provide care, which is at the centre of current debates on provision of care in weakened welfare states. Childcare and elder care, especially, are two sectors of high demand for immigrant women's labour. Secondly, women migrants, who are at the centre of the book, are presented as resourceful subjects who manage to develop skills and build connections that allow them to bypass national and social obstacles, thus avoiding the prevailing discourse of victimisation of women in patriarchal structures and nationalistic settings. Moreover, it provides some interesting examples of changing gender roles in times of increasing percentages of women migrants and their active involvement in the family economy, which are certainly worth noting and exploring further. Thirdly, it explores individual experiences of migration and provides interesting narratives of Filipino and Moroccan women in Bologna and Barcelona in a (twofold) comparative perspective, employing a bottom-up approach that supplements the prevai ling literature on immigrant flows to Southern Europe from a macro perspective. Finally, it is a good example of well-structured ethnographic research and an interesting subsequent sociological analysis, which is not limited to explaining the local dynamics in the two chosen cities (states), but includes the concept of transnationalism to explain a variety of practices occurring beyond confinements of individual states.

Structure-wise, a theoretical framework on transnational migration, gender and settlement is provided after the introduction, followed by chapters on immigration, work and family in Bologna and Barcelona, and a chapter providing comparative perspectives on female migration and settlement in Southern Europe. The two central chapters that present author's fieldwork in Bologna and Barcelona are structured following three key themes: the reasons behind women's migration and the legal and illegal mechanisms they use to get there, their position in the local labour market and housing situation (different ways of getting access to paid work and attitudes to work are discussed as well), and the characteristics of new immigrant families and women's roles in them, including how their roles in such transnational families influence their behaviour and choices.

In each city, the population of immigrant women from Morocco and the Philippines were chosen as a target group. Most women who were interviewed were employed as care or domestic workers, in most cases as both, but the author indicated significant differences between them that can be attributed to different attitudes towards work, as well as the host countries' attitude towards the two different ethnic (and religious) groups. While Filipinas are considered at the top of the care and domestic sector in terms of pay, rights, and ease of finding employment in both countries, Moroccan women seem to be in a more difficult and vulnerable position. They also rely less on ethnic networking that can significantly ease their lives in a foreign state (especially upon immigration when they are still searching for employment and accommodation) and more on social security provided by the state. It would be interesting to explore further why there are such differences between the two

groups, especially because the author intrigues us with the evidence of the different position of Filipino women in Hong Kong, where they are treated in the same way as Moroccan women in Southern Europe.

The issue of children left behind is also discussed in the section on transnational families, although not as thoroughly as one might expect and hope. Admittedly, the author's focus is elsewhere, but when discussing transnational dynamics and changes in family structures, this phenomenon definitely deserves more attention than attributed in the monograph. However, this should not be considered as a major shortcoming, as the book is well-balanced, well-structured and follows a consistent train of thought from introduction to conclusion, providing clear answers to the research questions posed. What I did consider a drawback is the fact that the book reads like a PhD dissertation rather than a monograph. The personal narratives that are included are in this respect a very welcome addition as they provide significant enrichment to the text.

What stays with you after reading the book is exactly that: the inspiring narratives of interviewed women, explaining their ways of negotiating constraints and opportunities in the society of immigration. Through their narratives, the author shows that two chosen groups of women tend to migrate due to poverty, unemployment and lack of alternatives, yet in contrast they manage to use the channels that globalisation offers them to escape patriarchal power and increase control over their lives. Personal biographies are thus the highlight of the book.

MOJCA VAH JEVŠNIK
Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (Slovenia)

McCourt, Christine (ed.). 2009. *Childbirth, Midwifery and Concepts of Time*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books. 272 pp. Hb: $90.00 / £55.00. ISBN: 9781845455866.

Edited by Christine McCourt, this volume is a collection of papers that examine childbirth practices in Europe, Canada and Japan during the 20th century from an anthropological perspective. The authors, anthropologists, midwives or both, provide ethnographic evidence indicating that childbirth constitutes a transition whereby established norms and practices are negotiated.

The book is divided into three parts. The first part presents the historical and cultural shifts in the management of time and childbirth that have occurred worldwide during the modern era. In the first chapter, Christine McCourt and Fiona Dykes discuss the social and economic changes stemming from industrialisation and the emergence of capitalism that contributed to the shift from 'traditional' to 'modern' ways of birthing, initially in Europe and eventually worldwide. In the second chapter, McCourt reviews theoretical approaches to time, including those of Marx, Durkheim, Foucault and Bourdieu, and examines the ways in which they can be applied in ethnographies of childbirth.

The second part of the book is dedicated to the more specific, temporal aspects of childbirth. In the third chapter, Soo Downe and Fiona Dykes explore issues concerning the duration of pregnancy, progress in labour and the notion of the 'active management of labour'. The authors suggest that scientific evidence from protocol-based care can be contested. In a consumerist clock-oriented society, where time 'matters', partograms and the measurement of cervical dilation give merely the illusion of control. In contrast, as Clare Winter and Margie Duff describe, in the fourth chapter, the more traditional midwifery practices lie outside such strict hospital schedules and protocols.

The difference in managing time between hospital midwifery and the practices of independent midwifes is also discussed by Trudy Stevens in the fifth chapter. In contrast with midwifery in hospitals, independent midwives are more able to see one patient at a time, enabling them to more easily follow the natural rhythms of labour.

In chapter six, Denis Walsh describes the management of time and place in free-estanding birth centres in the United Kingdom. These centres differ from large maternity units, where time-defined routines and task orientation are more the rule. Birth centres prioritise the woman's embodied experience of labour, attempt to provide a home-like environment and allow women to take their time in birthing their babies.

In the final chapter of this part of the book, Gisela Becker examines the impact of western medicine on aboriginal concepts of time, childbirth practices and new-born baby care in remote communities of northern Canada. Government legislation and policies have changed the traditional ways of doing things 'when the time was right'. Now, women have to live not by nature but by the demands of a modern economy. They have to separate themselves from their families, travel long distances and pay considerable amounts of money in order to give birth in hospitals. However, the author also notes that, since 1986, there have been a growing number of midwife-staffed birth centres that observe local, aboriginal practices.

The last part of the book consists of four chapters and deploys a narrative perspective in birthing practices. Focusing on urban and rural Iceland and the United Kingdom from the mid-twentieth century to the present, Ólöf Ásta Ólafsdóttir and Mavis Kirkham explore the uses of storytelling and narrative approaches in medical research. They argue that in midwifery, storytelling is an effective teaching / learning technique; narrating stories is a mode of consolidating and of transmitting knowledge. Thus, learning the stories and the contexts within which they are appropriate is part of becoming a midwife.

In the next chapter, McCourt focuses on the relationship between the ways in which time is managed in a modern maternity unit and the ways in which it is experienced by women in labour. The latter's perceptions are anchored in their own embodied experiences rather than mediated by clock time. The final two chapters engage with issues of time and space in the context of breastfeeding. Fiona Dykes explores the notion of 'demand feeding' in UK maternity hospitals in chapter ten. Although hospitals do also suggest that women organise a feeding program by the clock or by other measures, the irregularity and uncertainty of demand feeding in particular lay great stress on women and on healthcare staff because it demonstrates the confusion of linear and cyclical time. In contrast with such Western cultural assumptions as in the UK, in the last chapter Naoko Hashimoto describes breastfeeding in the contemporary Japanese context. Although Japanese hospitals have been set up according to an American healthcare model, based on linear time, when it comes to time and breastfeeding context, the Japanese usually breastfeed according to the baby's rhythm.

This book manages to show how various people involved in childbirth (women in labour, midwives, hospital doctors, etc.) in diverse societies (Japan, England, Canada) construct and interpret their experiences of childbirth. The narratives of midwives and of women in labour give the book a marked significance. In this way, we see who the multiple protagonists are and we more fully understand their perspectives. It is also noteworthy that many of the non-anthropologist writers use ethnographic tools such as participant observation (they watch, listen take notes, even assist). For these reasons in particular, this book makes a significant call for the application of the discipline of anthropology in the field of maternity care.

GEORGIA SARIKOUDI
University of Macedonia (Greece)