

**Faranak Miraftab 2016: *Global Heartland: Displaced Labor, Transnational Lives and Local Placemaking*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press**

The depth and breadth of this book show it was a decade in the making. Miraftab has carried out a rich multi-sited ethnography to help us understand the transbordering factors and relations that produce and revitalize Beardstown, a meatpacking town in Illinois. According to the latest census (2010), Beardstown is 39% non-white (including 32% Hispanic). Yet the first people of color, immigrants from Mexico, arrived only in the 1990s. This used to be a 'sundown town', where black workers were not allowed to stay after dusk.

Miraftab unveils the transnational processes, policies and conditions that produce the workforce for the Cargill Incorporated plant (Beardstown's largest employer, with 1,800 production workers), the impact of local historic and contemporary race and labor dynamics in the integration of current workers, and the complex renegotiations of social and ethnoracial relations among the groups within and outside the workplace.

Interviews with workers from Detroit and from Mexico and Togo (where the majority of immigrant Cargill employees come from) help us to understand the global in Beardstown. The lowering of wages and the increasing severity of labor conditions turned the meatpacking industry to minority and ethnic labor. In addition, the workers' translocal and transnational families help sustain them in Beardstown, effectively restructuring social reproduction at the global scale and further subsidizing the powerful corporation that employs them. Beardstown exemplifies the wide-ranging localities at the heart of present-day capitalism—still largely overlooked by the globalization and planning literature—where multi-scale processes collide.

The book is structured in five parts. Part I analyzes Beardstown, its history and current conditions, depicting a rapid demographic, economic and spatial transformation that transmuted it into 'Porkopolis'. Part II examines the systemic causes and conditions that displaced Cargill's workers from Michoacán, Mexico; Togo, West Africa; and Detroit, Michigan. Part III demonstrates and compares the 'global restructuring of social reproduction' distributed across these faraway places. Part IV brings us back to Beardstown to examine the different ways Cargill attempts to control and discipline workers inside and outside its plant, and the creative ways workers exercise agency in their attempts to improve their working and living conditions.

Miraftab's approach is that of framing relationally. Instead of prioritizing an either ethnographic or political economic analysis, she practices 'multi-sited global ethnography through an interscalar analysis that moves across and between micro-worlds of specific practices and places and macroworlds of political economic processes and policies' (p. 15). In this effort, she skillfully weaves interviews, oral histories, community surveys, archival research, participant observation, photo illustration and descriptive statistics to illuminate the interconnectedness and complexity of production and reproduction of worker and migrant labor and lives in Beardstown.

Miraftab uncovers the violence that produces cheap labor forces and illustrates how the stiff price of local revitalization in the US is largely paid by the most vulnerable of workers and their transnational relatives and communities. Women and faith groups in particular are heavily burdened with the care of children who remain behind and the elderly who return home when they lose their working edge. Miraftab expands the understanding of social reproduction beyond biological care to also include practices and ideas that provide displaced workers with a sense of self and pride through their participation in cultural obligations and imagination of their homelands, which emotionally sustain them in their places of destination.

From the point of ethnic, race and migration studies, Miraftab also makes a contribution beyond the analysis of relationships between people of color and/or immigrants and US-born whites. Rather, in this study, Miraftab engages in examining inter-racial relations across new resident groups and their translocal and transnational interactions.

Miraftab also asks: what difference does place make? The materiality of a place, she argues, is a determinant factor of how labor dynamics evolve in particular locales, as well as the definitions and effects of politics of in-placement. She examines these specificities in the workplace, homes, schools, libraries, childcare centers, parks and playgrounds of Beardstown (chapter 8). These socio-spatial politics produce and reproduce fluxing, relational categories of belonging by ethnicity, race, native language, English proficiency, citizenship and immigration status. Miraftab demonstrates how 'different groups are ethnicized, racialized, and classed by dominant white locals, by each other and by themselves' (p. 75). These processes in turn produce unstable solidarities and tensions among groups relationally varying with context, place and time.

In both the cases of immigrants from Mexico and Togo, dispossession of their livelihoods in their homelands prompts their displacement in search of opportunities in the US. Global dynamics and policies such as the NAFTA free trade agreement decimated the small-scale farming that had sustained Mexican peasants for generations. For well-educated Togolese, the US diversity visa provides a few with a legal way into the US to work in low-skilled jobs, provoking a dispossessing process from brain drain to brain waste. The African American Detroiters also arrive in Beardstown dispossessed in and displaced from their community of origin. The capital accumulation by dispossessions and displacement accruing to multinational corporations and revitalized towns constitutes a racial surplus value that reifies and reproduces white privilege. Produced surplus labor in one place is recruited for higher-risk and lower-paid jobs in another.

Global inequalities, Miraftab convincingly argues, are a necessary condition for global labor mobility and hence globalization and immigration. In a tragically unequal world, there is a more fruitful ground not only for displacing the labor force but also transferring away or contracting out the cost and risks of social reproduction—to others, to a distant elsewhere (p. 152).

Yet, Miraftab's relational theorization of the transbordering politics of place invites us to supersede binaries of victimhood and heroism, registering the effects of both global capital forces and workers and their allies' renegotiation of relationships and agency to make a new home in their global heartland. A notable contribution to the fields of planning, geography, labor studies, ethnic studies, and globalization and transnationalism studies, Miraftab superbly enriches our comprehension of place and placemaking in the wake of the new century and exposes 'the human cost of our local privileges' (p. 223).

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**Brian J. McCabe 2016: *No Place Like Home: Wealth, Community and the Politics of Homeownership*. New York: Oxford University Press**

Brian McCabe's *No Place Like Home* is a historically and empirically embedded critique of the ideologies surrounding homeownership in the US context—particularly longstanding beliefs that homeowners are 'better citizens'. The entrenched ideals of homeownership are twofold: key to building household wealth on the one hand and strengthening communities through improved civic engagement on the other. McCabe posits instead a 'paradox of homeownership' where the increasing importance of housing as a tool for asset accumulation up-ends the role of homeowners in their