



Archived at the Flinders Academic Commons:

<http://dspace.flinders.edu.au/dspace/>

This is an Author's Accepted Manuscript of an article published in *Australian Planner*. The final version of the article as published in the Australian Planner [June 1 2013] [copyright Taylor & Francis], available online at:

[www.tandfonline.com/10.1080/07293682.2012.685082](http://www.tandfonline.com/10.1080/07293682.2012.685082)

doi: 10.1080/07293682.2012.685082

Please cite this article as:

Levin, I., (2012), "Book review: Translocal Geographies: Spaces, places, connections" (eds. Katherine Brickell and Ayona Datta), *Australian Planner*, 50(2), pp. 178-179.

Copyright (2013) Taylor & Francis. All rights reserved.

**Please note**

that any alterations made during the publishing process may not appear in this version.

## **Translocal Geographies: Spaces, Places, Connections**

Edited by Katherine Brickell and Ayona Datta, Surrey, UK, Ashgate, 2011, xi + 226 pp., \$AU80.5 Hbk. ISBN 9780754678380.

Iris Levin

Flinders University and the Brotherhood of St Laurence, Australia

The cover photograph of the edited volume *Translocal Geographies: Spaces, Places, Connections* is a brilliant and very engaging choice. It depicts a large number of people sitting on deckchairs beside round tables on a green, grass-like surface, in a place that is at once out of context but very much in place. People of different ages and diverse cultural backgrounds talk to each other, relax and enjoy each other's company on a pleasant summer day, in a place that cannot be defined because it is nowhere and everywhere at the same time. It is hard to capture the concept of translocality through an image, but I think this is exactly the premise of this book - that translocality means being in place and at the same time being connected to other places.

The notion of translocality has been around for some time now, gaining prominence through the recent publication of a number of books which deal with it in different regions and societies (e.g. Copeland-Carson 2004; Lanchenmann and Dannecker 2008; Oakes and Schein 2006). In its early form, this idea is attributed to Appandurai (1996a, 1996b), who wrote about translocality while criticising the idea of nation states as bounded by territory. Appandurai argued that contemporary social life is structured along a 'range of spatial horizons' that act separately to national borders (p. 8). This book explores the notion of translocality in a way that expands it beyond Appandurai's understanding and beyond the debates on transnationalism. As the editors explain in the introduction, 'translocality is now widely seen to be a form of "grounded transnationalism" – a space where deterritorialised networks of transnational relations take shape through migrant agencies' (p. 3). The editors argue, however, that there is a need to understand translocality in other spaces, places and scales beyond the national. Thus they interpret translocality as 'groundedness' during movement, including those everyday movements that are not necessarily transnational. Nevertheless, the editors understand them as translocal because they believe that these places and spaces need to be examined both through their situatedness and their connectedness to a variety of other locales (p. 4).

This is a book edited by two emerging researchers in the field of transnational migration who aim to further develop the idea of translocality and thus have gathered different empirical examples. The book has three main parts which cover different scales of translocal geographies. The first scale is focused on home and family and discusses the translocal nature of Cambodian homes (Chapter 2, Brickell), translocal family relations among the Lahu in northern Thailand (Chapter 3, Tan and Yeoh), and British families and their homes in Singapore and Britain (Chapter 4, Hatfield). Of the three chapters in this first part only the last chapter explores traditional translocality involving transnational migration, while the other two chapters deal with other kinds of translocality, as promised by the editors. The second scale focuses on neighbourhoods, with chapters on Polish

migrants in London (Chapter 5, Datta), a multicultural suburb in Sydney (Chapter 6, Wise), and translocal landscapes in Buenos Aires after the Argentine economic crisis (Chapter 7, Centner). Lastly, the third scale focuses on urban translocalities with chapters about Douala, Cameroon and London (Chapter 7, Page), Greek migrants in Athens, Berlin and New York (Chapter 9, Christou), and Washington D.C. and Addis Ababa (Chapter 10, Chacko).

This book is a rich and varied collection of case studies that broaden the concept of translocality, and use a range of methodologies. It also brings together locales from across the globe – Europe, Africa, South and North America, Asia and Australia, as well as a blend of established and emerging scholars. The book is well presented and includes some photographs in black and white. It could be a useful text book in subjects such as geographies of migration and movement or transnational geographies. I truly recommend this book to everyone who is interested in movement, migration, locales and the relationship between them, as they appear in different parts of the world, in different scales and in different forms.

#### **References:**

Appandurai, A. (1996a). *Modernity at large: Cultural dimensions of globalisation*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Appandurai, A. (1996b). Sovereignty without territoriality: Notes from a postnational geography, in, *The geography of identity*, edited by P. Yaeger. Ann Harbour: University of Michigan Press. 40-57.

Copeland-Carson, J., (2004). *Creating Africa in America: Translocal identity in an emerging world city*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Lanckenmann, G., Dannecker, P. (2008). *Negotiating development in Muslim societies: Gendered spaces and translocal connections*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

Oakes, T., Schein, L. (2006). *Translocal China: Linkages, identities, and the reimagining of space*. London: Routledge.