
Someone Needs to Care: Caregiving Practices beyond the Family and the State

Azra Hromadzic and Monika Palmberger, eds., *Care across Distance: Ethnographic Explorations of Aging and Migration* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2018), 183 pp., 15 illus., \$110

Care across Distance, which has four parts and eight chapters, presents an ethnographic outlook of different migrant trajectories through which the authors investigate the concept of care as a multifaceted phenomenon. Each case analyzes the different consequences of migration on eldercare and the transforming care relations within and outside the family and the state. By looking at diverse sociocultural settings, the authors break preexisting divisions between the roles of caregiver and care receiver. The volume explores care in four dimensions: care and materiality (part 1), care and spirituality (part 2), care and community (part 3), and failures of care across distance (part 4). To build on each dimension, the authors explore different ethnographic settings, including the United States, Tanzania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Austria, Ecuador, Mali and Niger, Suriname, the Netherlands, Turkey, India, and Nepal.

Part 1 has two contributions, by Retika Desai and Andrea Kaiser-Grolimund. Desai depicts the transitions experienced by resettled Nepali-Bhutanese refugees in Syracuse, New York, and how practices of care have been influenced by monetary, humanitarian and anonymous care. Similarly, Kaiser-Grolimund shows how middle-class elderly people in the city of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and their children in the United States overcome physical distance, caring for each other using new technologies and communication media.

In part 2, Susan Rasmussen and Namgyal Choedup address the changing roles of spirituality in the context of caring across distance through two different examples. The two chapters show how mobility changes the spiritual and cultural concept of aging. Rasmussen's study within the Tuareg rural to urban migrating households underlines that the concepts of caregiving and reciprocity convey a variety of meanings across cultural settings. Care changes over the life course of Tuareg intergenerational relationships not only because they are influenced by personal choices but also as a response to larger political and economic constraints. However, I found the chapter on Tibetan exile settlements, written by Namgyal Choedup, to be even more explicit on the precarious relationship between aging and migration. It shows clearly the different conceptions of care among young and elderly Tibetans who find themselves obliged to rethink the link between settlement and the Buddhist religion.

In part 3, Monika Palmberger and Ann Miles zoom in on the important role of communities for elderly migrants. I found Palmberger's contribution especially useful in demonstrating that the degree of integration of Turkish elderly labor migrants into community associations is not indicative of their social embeddedness in Austrian society. Pointing at the lack of studies on migrant associations as an addition to family- and state-provided care, this chapter underlines their importance for the cultural, political, and religious well-being of retired people from Turkish origin. From a different perspective, Miles examines the retirement imaginaries of American retirees of Ecuadorian origin who choose Cuanca for their retirement. Despite remoteness, traffic congestion, short days, and a conservative culture, Cuanca has become the "number one retirement destination in Ecuador."

Finally, part 4 discusses the cases of the Surinamese diaspora in the Netherlands and eldercare in contemporary Bosnia and Herzegovina. Both chapters present the commodification of caregiving as one of the main reasons for depersonalization of the needs of elderly people and their social-emotional isolation in old age. I found that Yvon van der Pijl's contribution is an important demonstration of how the allocation of responsibility for the elderly between families, the state, and the market is not well articulated and remains often ambiguous. In turn, Azra Hromadzic depicts why elderly people in post-war and post-socialist Bosnia and Herzegovina have been neglected by both state and welfare regimes. Social and financial deprivation has eroded the cultural and even constitutional expectation for elderly care in the former Yugoslav state. The analysis offered by Hromadzic provides insights on the devastating impact of mobility and youth migration in the whole region of the Balkans.

With its ethnographic exploration, the volume is a strong contribution to cross-cultural studies on the role of older adults within a rapidly globalizing world. It provides the reader with vivid accounts of the intimate life experiences of people of different ages and religions, bringing together diverse geographical settings and cultural understandings about care across distance. Through each different part of the volume, the reader gains insight into the ways intergenerational roles are challenged by distance while remaining dependent on preexistent social structures. The book is a must-read for researchers analyzing the process of aging as a transnational and (im)mobile phenomenon that is heterogeneously experienced across territory.

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