Moral Economies in New Contexts—Not Only in Transnational Ones

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Ciubrinskas, Vytis; Schiller, Nina Glick (eds), *Transnationalities of Migrant Moral Economies in a Transforming World*. London, New York: Berghahn Books 2025. https://doi.org/10.3167/9781805399384

This collective monograph, published by Berghahn, has several distinctive features worth noting. Above all, it materialises many recent trends shaping the study of migration. Perhaps, in part due to the selection of the groups studied, it successfully addresses the need for a more balanced perspective on transnationalism—not only through the lens of destination countries but also through that of countries of origin (de Haas 2021). It addresses the paradoxes of power relations, where migrants are perceived as a vulnerable group in destination countries, while in the local communities from which they migrated, they are symbols of social success with high social capital, as the journal *Cargo* also demonstrated last year (Trhlíková 2025). It explores the interconnections between transnational and local economies. The book's dedication to Jonathan Hill and the foreword written for Hill by David E. Sutton also contextualise the book within a broader framework than migration alone, linking to anthropology in general.

Although this is a collection of studies, the editors have also left a distinct authorial mark on the publication. Following a 65-page introduction by both editors, Nina Glick-Schiller included her text, "The Twilight of Transnational Migration Studies," as the first chapter, and Vytis Čiubrinskas wrote "The Moral Economy of Transnational Reciprocity" as the chapter that follows. The separate chapters by both editors are even more interesting because they draw not only on field research but also on personal lived and family experiences. All three editorial chapters reveal the book's overall aim to present "the ethical character

of economic activities and relationships in a transnational context," while also demonstrating that they "cannot be studied separately" from broader linkages (2025: 21). I perceive a tendency here, particularly within the anthropological community, to shift—after approximately thirty years of being "enchanted by migration"—toward everydayization of migration. High mobility relativises the concepts of "migrant" and "non-migrant." Migrants become long-time residents, and transnationality is just one of many "in-betweens." The multiscalarity discussed by Nina Glick-Schiller in the first chapter is very useful in such circumstances and can demonstrate that many phenomena associated with migration and diasporas have numerous other connections and cannot be reduced to the state-generated labels of "migrant" and "non-migrant."

The era of high mobility also puts the concepts of emigration and return migration into perspective. Perhaps in part because one of the editors, Vytis Ciubrinskas, has deep experience with Eastern Europe, the book highlights—more prominently than other publications—the circumstance that migrants are not always the poor and vulnerable, neither in their countries of origin nor in their destination countries. Return migration is becoming an increasingly important component of migration studies, and this book is living proof of that.

The publication is divided into five parts and nine chapters. The first part, "Reframing Concepts of Time, Space, and Capital," provides the theoretical and methodological base for the book; the subsequent parts, second "Embedding Reciprocity," third "Migrating Women and Social Positioning," fourth "Return and Remittances," and fifth "Migration as Crisis," are devoted to specific phenomena related to migration and transnationalism. In addition to Nina Glick-Schiller and Vytis Ciubrinskas, the authors of the individual chapters are Ana-Maria Cîrstea, Anna Horolets, Marta Kindler, Nóra Kovács, Violetta Parutis, Marta Buler, Jonathan D. Hill, Juan Luis Rodrigues, Roberto E. Barrios, and Alfredo Danilo Rivera. The publication covers a wide range of immigrant groups, particularly Haitians, Lithuanians, Romanians, Poles, Ukrainians, Hungarians, Venezuelans, and Guatemalans.

The afterword of the book wrote Tricia Redeker Hepner. In it, she highlighted, among other things, the historical dimension of transnationalism as a phenomenon that has long been an integral part of economic activities and human sociability. She also emphasised the distinct role of family ties in reinforcing transnationalism. Using other words, she returned to the concept of conjunctural multiscalarity, which Nina Glick-Schiller had highlighted as a methodological starting point in the first chapter, thereby suggesting a deeper dimension of transnationalism that transcends the boundaries of current events.

The publication includes a general index. Footnotes and a list of references are at the end of each chapter.

References

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