

she is hiding herself from the intrusive gaze of the photographer, which at the same time also shows her defiance. On the other hand, however, this gesture emphasizes a division between the power of the “white gaze” and the powerlessness of the “black body” which becomes even more powerless and objectified when deprived of its own eyes and its own gaze. This black-and-white picture gains more figurative shades and colors inside the book that reveal many layers of meaning hidden in the asymmetrical power relationship between white watchers (gazing, painting, and photographing) and the black objects of their gaze (being watched, gazed at, painted, and photographed).

Zeller organized his book around a variety of such visuals that document “Western” colonial and postcolonial discourses about Africa. Special emphasis is put on German iconography. The majority of the pictures are from the fantastic private postcard collection of Peter Weiss (Sammlung Peter Weiss; [www.postcard-museum.com](http://www.postcard-museum.com)). Zeller also uses his own iconographic material as well as the pictures owned by various institutions and private collectors. These are mostly postcards as well as photographs, leaflets, printed advertisements, and posters. The illustrations date back mostly to the first half of the twentieth century (but there are also quite a few pictures from earlier and later periods). The author does not discuss the material in a chronological order; instead he is interested in tracing common views, stereotypes, and popular concepts about Africa. These ideas were created and shared by Europeans in colonial times, but they are also – sometimes surprisingly – still present today in popular culture and in imagery.

Zeller orders the visuals into eighteen thematic chapters that are designed for both picture-viewing and text-reading. Each chapter consists of a short written introduction followed by carefully chosen illustrations with detailed captions. The captions not only provide a reader with the information about the origins of illustrations, but also contain short historical commentaries in which Zeller proposes his interpretations and his *readings* of the pictures. The book is thus consciously composed as a photo-essay. And for a reader who is going through the pages, the processes of viewing and reading seem to be a coherent whole – with the text and the image intertwined. The visuals might not be as explicit as written words, but they can definitely communicate and inform, and thus create opinions and shape our perception of reality. In the process of viewing and *reading* them, one is caught up in a complicated dynamic that includes those who were taking the pictures, those who were presented in them, and those who were original recipients (for whom the pictures had been designed).

The eighteen chapters of Zeller’s book also describe (and illustrate) various ambivalent – and sometimes contradictory – popular concepts about Africa and Africans. The African “others” were perceived as nonhuman, animal-like creatures that were frequently displayed in European capitals as integral parts of various colonial exhibitions. Some of them also appeared at curiosity shows, next to “dwarfs” and other examples of “deformed” bod-

ies. In another popular discourse, the black – often naked – bodies were seen by “civilized whites” as the image of the lost paradise in which our “living ancestors” lived in harmony with “natural environment.” This fear and fascination also went along with the “scientific” approach toward Africa(ns). Introducing a visual typography of various African tribes and physiognomies was one of the means of “taming” the “dark continent” and its people. Zeller remarks that in the context of colonial economy, Africans were often depicted and perceived as anonymous masses, primitive natives, barbarians, and cannibals who were “naturally” predestined for slavery. Additionally, visuals show infantile images of Africans still present and still popular in various games and imagery destined to be used by children. Zeller concludes that humor and jokes about Africans (represented in visual materials, e.g., comical stories and caricatures) should not be seen as neutral but rather weighted with colonial, paternalistic, or even racist ideology.

A truly shocking chapter consists the unambiguously racist “black disgrace on the Rhine” (or “black shame on the Rhine,” German: “Schwarze Schmach am Rhein”) campaign. This infamous campaign appeared as a reaction against the stationing of French African troops in the Rhineland after World War I. Racist opinions and various allegations against the black soldiers were reinforced by the image of a “black uncivilized beast.” In this section, Zeller also displays propaganda images (produced during World War I), which depicted cruelty and barbarism of black soldiers fighting for the French. These pictures are followed by the anti-black and racist imagery produced in the Third Reich. Zeller observes that – once created – racist images used in war propaganda can be easily reused in different historical circumstances. The power of stereotypical images is based on their durability.

Other topics that Zeller addresses include such issues like love and intimate relations between Europeans and Africans in colonial and postcolonial periods. He also recalls a distinct fascination with the exotic African art and black artists in the form of the “black glamour” that was in fashion in Germany of the 1920s. At the same time, there occurred also certain popularization of images of black bodies as sexual objects and symbols of sexual potency. The author finishes his book with stories (written and visualized) of an Afro-German population (from its beginnings through the present day), and presents examples of some antiracist imagery.

Zeller’s book reveals the power of images and the power of the gaze. Looking is hardly a neutral act and images of Africans and their bodies created by “Westerners” document not so much the depicted objects, but rather what was present in the minds of the “white observers.” In this way, Zeller discloses and systematizes a variety of meanings hidden in black-white relations. The book clearly demonstrates how this kind of iconographic material can be *viewed* and interpreted as if they were reflected in a multilayered mirror because they capture mutual relations between depicted “objects” and those who look at them.

Anna Niedźwiedz

**Zontini, Elisabetta:** *Transnational Families, Migration, and Gender. Moroccan and Filipino Women in Bologna and Barcelona*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2010. 268 pp. ISBN 978-1-84545-618-4. (New Directions in Anthropology, 30) Price: \$ 90.00

The book of Elisabetta Zontini joins the growing literature on the feminisation of migration in Southern Europe and it enriches the latter in different ways. The aim of the work is to develop a comparison on gender and domestic labour in two urban contexts of Bologna and Barcelona, and with reference to two different ethnic communities: Filipino and Moroccan. Different reasons support this choice. First of all, the author aims at exploring the macro- and micropolitics of domestic labour in two regional contexts which have historically been reputed as the most progressive in their national contexts, and yet have approached migration either as a problematic issue or through a celebrative attitude unable to substantially address migrants' needs and rights. Secondly, and importantly, the book aims at going beyond the representation of the "domestic worker" as a homogeneous category, and delves into internal and crosscultural differences which characterise the *most* (Filipinos) and *least* (Moroccans) favoured nationalities in the racialised niches of domestic labour. In developing a "double act" of comparison – across geopolitical locations and migrant communities – Zontini will succeed in unravelling how certain features of immigration generally ascribed to Southern Europe (shift from emigration to immigration countries, asymmetric sex distribution, lack of coherent legislation, and ethnic fragmentation) differently connote the dialectic between locality, transnationality, and heterogeneous women's experience.

After introducing the peculiarities of Southern European immigration and the similarities and differences between Bologna and Barcelona, the author moves to review the existent literature on gender and transnationalism. The second chapter maps the progressive shifts in the existing literature from a stereotypical representation of women as passive subjects in migration to the growing scholar awareness of the multifaceted and complex role that women have historically played in international mobility. Zontini stresses the importance of connecting studies focusing on structural forces underpinning migration with an analysis of how different women have actually actively negotiated the meanings and purposes of migration. The author rightly questions the representation of Moroccan women as "passive followers" and of Filipino

ones as "active workers," and unravels how economic, family and personal reasons and ambitions frame the experience of migration in both cases. This is ethnographically documented in the central part of the book (chapters 3 and 4) through the presentation of different life histories and narratives. An important feature which emerges from this analysis is the ambivalence of kinship in both sustaining and constraining migration. Zontini notes how migration decisions are rarely taken within the household and are more often than not negotiated within the wider kinship group. Gendered normative expectations certainly mould the extensive "kinship work" in which Filipino and Moroccan women are differently engaged across national territories. At the same time, these norms intertwine with the possibility of creating novel kinship experiences or the attainment of autonomy in framing personal destinies.

Although Zontini is certainly right in stressing the need to develop more accurate analysis of how transnationalism both affects and is shaped by kinship, I would have expected her to develop in the central part of the work a more detailed dialogue with the existent and important literature on transnational households and marriages (among others: Gardner, Charsley, Grillo, and Shaw). This would have considerably strengthened the theoretical and rich ethnographical analysis developed in the book. In the final two chapters, Zontini concludes reasserting the need to go beyond the uncritical association between capitalism and patriarchy in moulding migrant women's experiences, and to analyse in detail the individuality of everyday experiences and the new types of families which emerge through migration. In relation to this, it seems to me that while Zontini successfully develops a comparative analysis of how Moroccan and Filipino women create and transform their kinship relations, the promise made in the introduction – namely, to explore how Western families have also been transformed through immigration and domestic labour – remain somehow unfulfilled. I warmly hope that this work would also lead the author to subsequent analysis of how the politics of domestic labour shed light on the equally heterogeneous and multifaceted "Italian" or "Spanish" kinship and families. Nevertheless, and beyond certain limits of (any) work, the book of Zontini makes an important and original contribution to studies of migration, gender, and transnationalism. It will certainly be of much interest to scholars as well as students working in these fields.

Ester Gallo