Book Review: Extinct lands, temporal geographies: Chicana literature and the urgency of space. By Mary Pat Brady. Durham, NY: Duke University Press 2002. ISBN 0-8223-2974-3

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The next three chapters present the case studies of the cities of Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar and Lusaka. These are based on interviews, fieldwork, documentary analysis and the research of other (often local) scholars. After an introduction to the city in question and its sustainability programme, each chapter is organized around the book's four themes. All three cities share a history of stark inequalities of British colonialism and experiments with socialism, before facing the rigours of the present era of neoliberalism with its harsh consequences for the poor and their environments. Intricately detailed, the case studies describe the complexity of environmental (mis)management against a backdrop of shifting economic and political circumstances and cultural conflict.

A brief concluding chapter explains the author's doubts about the sustainable cities initiative, while a postscript locates the book within postcolonial studies.

A volume in the Re-Materialising Cultural Geography series, this book has much to commend it to anyone interested in the kind of cities in which a growing proportion of the world's urban population lives. Like the work of AbdouMaliq Simone (*For the city yet to come*, Duke University Press, 2004), in whose footsteps Garth Myers claims to follow, this is a demonstration of the value of carefully constructed case studies of the changing African city, from which urban studies in general has much to gain.

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Extinct lands, temporal geographies: Chicana literature and the urgency of space. By Mary Pat Brady. Durham, NY. Duke University Press. 2002. 274 pp. ISBN 0 8223 2974 3.

Since the early 1990s, a new generation of Latina/o studies scholars have taken up Edward Soja's challenge to emphasize the locality of power, and the particularity of its performance, through a new attention to geography. The new wave of Latina/o spatial studies scholars – Juan Flores and Raúl Homero Villa, to name only two – collectively provide a provocative re-centring of social theory at the site of the barrio, whether it be in East LA or in Manhattan. But despite this profound grounding of new historical subjects, most spatial studies work continues to frustrate precisely because of its unavoidable fetish on a particular locality as the principal site for the performance of insurgent subjectivities. The local always emerges as an *axis mundi* even despite Walter Mignolo's articulation of the local and the global a decade earlier.

Mary Pat Brady's intervention into spatial studies theory and practice, ironically, benefits precisely from her archaeologies of the interstitial spaces in different places, from cities to small towns, border crossings and, of course, the pages of a book. Indeed, her work, grounded in Chicana lesbian and straight feminist authors Patricia Preciado Martin, Gina Valdés, Gloria Anzaldúa, Terri de la Peña, Sandra Cisneros and Cherríe Moraga, is less concerned with privileging any particular geographical place for the performance of Chicana identity and empowerment than with exploring various power

negotiations themselves. Her readings of Chicana literature offer a Foucauldian model of power as fluid and always already in negotiation, but without going over the postmodern edge of arguing that power never can, or already has been, subverted. Her third chapter, 'Intermarginalia: Chicana/spatiality and sexuality in the work of Gloria Anzaldúa and Terri de la Peña', is exemplary for its explications of the symbiotic relationship between statutory and cultural regulations of space and Chicana subversions of these norms.

Brady's study is laudable for adding more depth and range to the spatial studies canon also because the interstitial spaces she studies are inter-geopolitical as well. She notes how the US–Mexico border is anchored in the 'materiality of national borders' even as it has become a wildly loose floating metaphor in social theory, especially after Valdés's and Anzaldúa's testimonial works. This obvious but refreshingly critical reassessment both arrests the overextension of a metaphor and still allows for its usage. In this way, she succeeds in freeing spatial studies from its lingering fetish on localities like Los Angeles or Manhattan, or specific places in between or beyond, as the primary battleground in the articulation of subjects-in-struggle. After all, for women, especially lesbians, the battle is not confined anywhere, but always already exists at the site of their bodies, which Chicana authors locate everywhere.

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Rethinking urban parks: public space and cultural diversity. By Setha Low, Dana Taplin and Suzanne Scheld. Austin. University of Texas Press. 2005. xii + 226 pp. £14.95 paper; ISBN: 0292712545.

Over the years, the Public Space Research Group, housed at the City University of New York and headed by Setha Low, has received a series of commissions to analyse the use and meaning of large urban public spaces such as landscape parks, historic sites and beaches. To meet the goals of the commissions, members of the PSRG utilized what they call Rapid Ethnographic Assessment Procedures (REAP) – in essence a programme of observation, interviews with park users and 'experts', and the analysis of whatever documents can be brought readily to hand, all conducted in a very short time frame. *Rethinking urban parks* reports the results of these studies. Examining two urban beaches, two historic sites and one landscape park, the authors find that different cultural groups (e.g. Puerto Ricans, Italian Americans, youth, the elderly) like to use parks in different ways. Some like to play dominoes, others like to play drums. Some like to hike in the wooded areas behind the beachfront, others like to lie in the sand and talk. Some like to barbecue and picnic, others like to play soccer or softball. They also find that within cultural groups, not everybody thinks alike. They find that historical sites, like Independence Mall in Philadelphia, do not always serve as destinations for different cultural groups. In this latter case the authors attribute this fact, no doubt correctly, to the way history is presented in the park (as a heroic narrative of