

## Review

Mexican indigenous migrants in the United States: Labor, politics, culture, and transforming identities

*De las Luchas Indias al Sueño Americano: Experiencias Migratorias de Jóvenes Zapotecos y Tojolabales en Estados Unidos.* By Alejandra Aquino Moreschi. Mexico: Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Xochimilco, 2012. 350 pp. ISBN 978-607-486-210-2.

*Zapotecs on the Move: Cultural, Social, and Political Processes in Transnational Perspective.* By Adriana Cruz-Manjarrez. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2013. 249 pp. ISBN 978-0-8135-6070-0.

*Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States.* By Seth Holmes. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. 234 pp. ISBN 978-0-52-27514-0.

*Voices of Indigenous Oaxacan Youth in the Central Valley: Creating Our Sense of Belonging in California.* Oaxacalifornian Reporting Team/Equipo de Cronistas Oaxacalifornianos [ECO]. Santa Cruz, CA: U.C. Center for Collaborative Research for an Equitable California. Research Report No 1, July 2013 (bilingual English/Spanish). 123 pp. Available at <<http://ccrec.ucsc.edu/sites/default/files/ECO%20book%20english%20web%20CHANGE.pdf>> accessed 5 Sep 2014.

Who is an indigenous migrant and how do processes of claiming an indigenous identity vary as people move from one location to another? How do politics and labor conditions in one country affect the experience of migrants in another? What kinds of racial/ethnic hierarchies are indigenous migrants inserted into and how? What forms of discrimination do indigenous immigrants experience? What is the role of culture in providing positive venues for asserting indigenous ethnicity in immigrant communities? What forms of collective action and organizing can be successfully mobilized to re-define immigrant indigenous ethnicity from a point of agency? What happens as multiple generations of indigenous people born in one country are socialized in another? Do they continue to identify as indigenous or do they combine that identity with others?

In 2004, Jonathan Fox and Gaspar Rivera Salgado edited *Mexican Indigenous Migrants in the United States*, a pathbreaking interdisciplinary volume which offered detailed analyses of indigenous migration processes and their social, economic, cultural and civic impacts in Mexico and the United States. Since that time, the study of indigenous migrants has grown significantly as a research topic with dozens of graduate students concentrating on this area and new studies appearing regarding indigenous Peruvians, Ecuadorians, Bolivians, Guatemalans, and others. In this essay I attempt to partially answer the questions outlined

above through the lens of four publications that explore the experiences of indigenous migrants from Oaxaca and Chiapas in the US and in Mexico.

The publications discussed here on indigenous migrants offer important lessons for understanding the uniqueness of the experiences of indigenous migrants but also suggest commonalities with many other immigrant groups, particularly in terms of the ways that second-generation immigrant youth born as US citizens become strongly socialized by American culture. These books collectively also point to the importance of moving beyond viewing indigenous immigrants and migrants primarily as laborers and paying close attention to the role of culture, place, language, ideas, and the ways that transnational space and institutions are produced and experienced. Finally, they also suggest the ways in which the historical construction of indigenous peoples in Mexico and the US as inferior can continue to operate in the racial and ethnic hierarchies of labor, access to medical care, housing, and social services, but are also simultaneously being broken down and reconstructed through the affirmative political and cultural work of recent indigenous migrants. Much of the initial literature on indigenous migrants has focused heavily on questions of labor, political economy, and transnational politics. While the books reviewed here continue these trends to some degree, they also make important contributions to filling gaps in the literature on the ways in which immigrant cultural forms contribute to politics and identity formation, and can be used to construct community.

Three of the four books I discuss are ethnographies which as a set provide a detailed look into the experiences of Zapotec, Triqui, and Tojolabal indigenous migrants in Los Angeles; Biloxi, Mississippi; Kern, Tulare, and San Joaquin counties in California; Skagit County, Washington; Yalalag and the municipality of San Miguel Copala, Oaxaca; and the municipality of Las Margaritas in Chiapas, Mexico. Written as multi-sited studies, they follow people and ideas across borders and into multiple locations and timeframes. All three ethnographies reviewed here set their stories within a broad framework of economic and political binationalism and the ways in which cultures, languages, social relations, and local, national, and ethnic-specific identities and race have affected indigenous migrant communities and the specific ways in which people self-identify as indigenous.

The fourth book is a collaborative research report which explores the questions, 'how do young adults who grew up in Oaxacan immigrant families in California's Central Valley get involved in civic life' and 'how do indigenous migrant youth build on their peoples' cultural legacies while integrating into both the Mexican and American communities in the Central Valley' (p. 8).

## **Who are indigenous immigrants, how are they counted and why does it matter?**

Indigenous immigrants, as all immigrants, have a stake in being seen and counted. The most important venues for defining and counting indigenous peoples are censuses. In the year 2000, when the Mexican census included both language and self-identification to

identify indigenous status, the size of the indigenous population increased significantly—by as much as 17 percent according to one study (Fernández, García and Ávila 2002; see also Gabbard et al. 2012). In 2008, the National Institute of Indigenous Languages in Mexico published a catalogue of national indigenous languages and variants that listed 11 linguistics families, 68 linguistic groupings (formerly labeled as ‘languages’) and 364 linguistic variations (Instituto Nacional de Lenguas Indígenas 2008). According to the Mexican census of 2010, which included a question that allowed people to self-identify as indigenous, 15.7 million people of three years or older self-identified as indigenous (INEGI 2010: 67). This is 14.9 percent of the total population measured in 2010. Of those who identified as indigenous, 6.6 million stated that they spoke an indigenous language and the majority, 9.1 million, did not (INEGI 2010: 67). In Mexico, the ways in which indigeneity was understood shifted from being simply language-based to become more inclusive of self-identified indigenous heritage tied not only to language but to ancestral territory, culture, forms of governance and justice, ritual, and other cultural elements.

In the two most recent US censuses, indigenous immigrants have to specify an ethnicity (Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin) and a race. Analysis of the 2000 and 2010 census data suggest if Mexican or Guatemalan indigenous immigrants registered their ‘race’ as American Indian they would then have to ignore the instructions about writing in the name of ‘their enrolled or principal tribe’ and instead write in the name of their ethnic/language group such as Mixtec. (Kissam 2012: 2). They do not have tribal designations. In the 2010 census, in which the long form was replaced by the American Community Survey, indigenous Latinos were tabulated simply as ‘some other race’. The options of ‘white’ or ‘other’ do not permit expression of how indigenous immigrants self-identify—which is in relation to ethnic/language groups such as ‘Mixtec’, ‘Zapotec’, ‘Triqui’, and others (Kissam 2012: 3). Experts such as Ed Kissam estimate that there are about 1.8 million indigenous Latinos who are first- and second-generation immigrants from Latin America (Kissam 2014). This is a sizeable group of people with important ethnic, linguistic, national, and other forms of variation within it.

In the US, being officially labeled as an indigenous immigrant may bring access to bilingual education in an indigenous language. But being defined by others as an indigenous immigrant can also bring double discrimination coming from both non-indigenous Latino individuals living within immigrant communities who see indigenous peoples as lower ranking than others and from Anglo-Americans who may see them as part of the undocumented Latino masses and label them as brown and illegal. When self-labeling as indigenous, immigrants often connect this with a sense of ethnic pride and are mobilizing a positive sense of their indigeneity to assert particular rights and claims.

## How politics and labor experiences in one country affect indigenous experiences in another

Globalized integrated economies that operate inside the spaces of multiple nation-states produce transnational experiences of politics and work for indigenous migrants. Alejandra

Aquino's *From Indigenous Struggles to the American Dream* (my translation) explores the links between movements in Mexico for indigenous autonomy/sovereignty and how being a part of those movements translates into the transnational migration and labor experiences of indigenous migrants. Her book provides an important glimpse into how people in local communities in southern Mexico formulate their own immigration policy in the context of the US–Mexican binational political economy.

The first two chapters of the book document two different experiences of indigenous social movements—one in the Zapotec community of Yalalag, Oaxaca and the other in a Tojolabal community in the municipality of Las Margaritas in the Lacandon Jungle of Chiapas. In the 1980s, Yalalag built a local community movement to elevate collective rights and responsibilities and to promote collective forms of justice and governance. There, these forms of political and social organization are important in defining indigenous identity as is the Zapotec language.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) launched an indigenous movement aimed at returning control of territory, governance, economic development, education, and health to indigenous communities in western Chiapas. The EZLN's movement not only consolidated what it meant to be indigenous in specific places in Chiapas but also joined with many other local and regional indigenous movements with ethnically specific identities (Yaqui, Purepecha, Zapotec, etc.) to spark a pan-indigenous rights movement in Mexico.

In the late 1990s and in 2003 after the Mexican government failed to successfully legislate accords it signed with the EZLN, Zapatista communities were organized into coordinated local and regional autonomous forms of governance, education, and health despite a lack of recognition from the federal government. 2003 also marks the year when significant numbers of young Zapatistas, primarily male, began to leave Chiapas and migrate to the US, following the networks of nearby non-Zapatista communities which were established in California. Aquino documents the ways in which the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the privatization of many resources and public services in Mexico, and the militarization of the US–Mexican border was the larger frame within which Tojolabal migration took place. The integration of Chiapas into the large US–Mexican political economy results in the production of a localized indigenous immigration policy in southern Mexico.

Aquino details how the cultural institutions identified with indigeneity in Chiapas were affected by migration. Initially, the EZLN prohibited migration, but as young people began to leave the policy became more flexible and locally-based. Migration produced tensions in the Zapatista community Aquino studied, not only between generations, but also between the deliberate egalitarian culture fomented in EZLN communities and the kind of material and ideological differences produced by migration. As more young people left, Zapatista communities moved to a politics of negotiation around migration, requiring migrants to set a specific time period for their absence (three years, for example) and also to pay a specific amount of money to cover their share of communal labor known as *tequio* and for their *cargos*. *Cargos* are a system of volunteer jobs from mayor to school board members that keep many indigenous communities functioning. According to Aquino, by the late 2000s, almost every family in the Tojolabal community she studied had a member working or residing in

the US. The book thus demonstrates how sending communities come to develop their own politics of migration, return migration, and re-integration.

## The insertion of indigenous immigrants into racial/ethnic hierarchies in the US and resulting forms of discrimination

Within Mexico, indigenous peoples are incorporated into a colonially-inherited system of merged racial/ethnic classification where they are ranked below ‘mestizos’ (a constructed category of ‘mixed race’) and ‘White Spaniards’ who supposedly have preserved their Spanish heritage over 500 years. While such categories are certainly historically and culturally constructed and not biological, they continue to operate with political and social force in many parts of Mexico as well as among Mexican-origin populations in the US. On the ground, indigenous peoples in Mexico continue to experience discrimination in their everyday interactions. If you move this Mexican racial/ethnic hierarchy into Los Angeles, Biloxi, Mississippi or into rural Skagit County in the state of Washington you can see the partial reproduction of this racial/ethnic hierarchy and subsequent discriminatory interactions between indigenous immigrants and others. In the US such interactions are also inserted into existing regional racialized labor relations (see [Stephen 2007](#): 209–30).

In Seth Holmes’s compelling ethnography *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies*, indigeneity is omnipresent throughout the book, primarily through the blatant racism expressed towards indigenous Triqui workers who are at the bottom of the racial/ethnic hierarchy of farm labor in Washington State. Holmes situates the plight of transborder Triqui farmworkers in the fields, in labor camps, in their native community in Oaxaca, and in the clinics and hospitals they land in as they attempt to heal their broken bodies and sometimes spirits. A majority of Triqui farmworkers speak Triqui as a first language with many barely fluent in Spanish. Language is one of the key components of their indigeneity as imposed on them from the outside, but also from their own subjectivity. Holmes relates the importance of Triqui theories of health and healing as farmworkers attempt to cure themselves by working both with native healers or *curanderos* as well as with medical personnel in local clinics.

Holmes’ book provides a tour through the structural hierarchies and human relations surrounding indigenous migrant laborers’ experiences of work and health care as he examines the social suffering, racism, invisibility, and marginalization of workers in the US and Mexico. His discussion of segregation and discrimination on one farm based on perceived race and ethnicity is striking. At the top are farm executives and crop managers (mostly white males), below them are crew bosses and supervisors (mostly US Latinos, with a few white US citizens, a few mestizo Mexicans and one indigenous Mixtec), followed by administrative assistants (female, mostly white with a few Latina US citizens) and checkers (local white teenagers). All of these people are above the fieldworkers paid by the hour (mostly mestizo Mexican men and a few Mixtec men) and the majority of fieldworkers paid by weight (largely Triqui workers, and a small crew of white teenagers under age 16 who work fewer hours than Triqui workers). These ethnically and racially segregated labor roles

correspond from top to bottom with decreasing housing quality, fewer opportunities for advancement and increasing anxiety, less control over time and labor conditions, and increasingly difficult physical labor conditions such as long periods of kneeling for pickers. Holmes documents how the Triqui workers at the bottom are viewed by managers and non-Triqui workers as more purely indigenous if Triqui is still their primary language. Here language results not only in being read as indigenous but results in judgments about the capacity of the Triqui as workers and people. 'They are more simple' according to those who work with them. Holmes writes bluntly: 'The Anglo- and Japanese Americans inhabit the pole of civilization. The Triqui are positioned as the opposite: indigenous peasants, savages, simple children' (p. 85).

The racial and ethnic hierarchies Holmes documents on the farm, whereby being pegged as indigenous results in differential treatment, also extend, not surprisingly, into clinics and hospitals. Holmes documents and analyzes the almost complete disjuncture between the frameworks used by nurses, physicians, and physical therapists and those of Triqui farmworkers in relation to physical pain and mental anguish.

Holmes's book offers substantial evidence of the ways in which anti-indigenous discrimination which still permeates many parts of Mexico moves easily back and forth across the border. Through his ethnography in the fields and in clinics, Holmes suggests that the pain, suffering, and blatant discrimination experienced consistently by Triqui farmworkers becomes naturalized by those who interact with the laborers, and most sadly, may even be internalized by some Triqui workers themselves. In these stories, being identified as indigenous and indigenous self-identification is not empowering.

Aquino's book also contains a chapter detailing the dismal labor conditions experienced by Tojolabal workers in Biloxi, Mississippi in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. While some were victims of the hurricane, they quickly became the labor which cleaned and repaired the extensive damage, working around the clock for weeks. Once this work dries up they begin working as janitors and hotel housekeepers in local casinos where gradually their hours are cut back and their schedules become so erratic that many decide to leave. The chapter suggests the ironies of a labor system which is flexible in terms of not requiring legal proof of the right to work in the advent of an emergency and also allows 'other Mexicans' to work, but then slowly squeezes out undocumented workers as locals return who have the right to decent labor conditions and schedules. Holmes's and Aquino's ethnographies support the findings by other researchers that indigenous immigrants suffer high levels of discrimination at work, in finding housing, as well as in securing access to social services, and basic rights as workers, parents, and spouses.

In Oregon, where I have conducted research among indigenous farmworkers, it is estimated that 40 percent of approximately 100,000 farmworkers are indigenous and at least 50 percent are undocumented. A survey of nearly 200 Marion County farmworkers paid by 'piece-rate' (i.e. by the pound) in the 2009 berry harvests found pervasive violations of Oregon's minimum wage law: 90 percent of workers reported that their 'piece-rate' earnings were consistently less than minimum wage (*Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN) 2009*). Average daily underpayment was about \$25.00. Extrapolating from these findings, the report estimates that the aggregate underpayments in the 2009 strawberry, raspberry, and blackberry harvests could exceed \$9,000,000 (*PCUN 2009*).

A lack of attention to indigenous systems of knowledge, gender roles, and cultural systems of kinship and marriage often results in marginalization, lack of information, and in the worst cases detention, arrest, incarceration, institutionalization, and loss of parental rights. Ignorance of the wide range of indigenous languages spoken in Mexico (60) and Guatemala (14) and lack of access to translation can result in tragic consequences such as removal of children from their parents because the parents are deemed inadequate. Here is a case in point. Cirila Baltazar Cruz speaks only Chatino, barely any Spanish and no English. In November of 2008, she went to Singing River Hospital in Pascagoula, Mississippi, where she lives, to give birth to a baby girl, Rubí. The hospital called the state Department of Human Services (DHS) who removed Rubí from her mother right after she was born. The interpreter who interviewed Baltazar Cruz for DHS spoke Spanish and not Chatino, one of Oaxaca state's 16 indigenous languages. Baltazar Cruz who spoke no English, little Spanish and could not read and write was interviewed in a language she could not communicate in. DHS ruled that Baltazar Cruz was an unfit mother in part because of her lack of English and that this fact placed her unborn child in danger and would place her in danger in the future. Baltazar Cruz was reunited with her daughter a year later in November 2009 shortly after an investigation by the US Department of Health and Human Service's (HHS) Office for Civil Rights and Administration for Children and Families. Such cases along with others have been widely documented by researchers who work with indigenous immigrants in the US. Programs to train indigenous interpreters for legal and medical purposes have been important in areas such as Los Angeles, California where there are high populations of indigenous immigrant workers.

## Culture as a resource: creating an indigenous presence, sustaining binational networks, and social remittances

Culture functions as an important medium for indigenous immigrant community network building, for building positive models of indigenous identity to counteract discrimination, and as a source of social remittances. Cultural practices such as music, dance, food, sports, and religious festivals are some of the ways that recent authors have explored processes of indigenous identity creation and connection.

Cruz-Manjarrez's book, *Zapotecs on the Move*, is centered on the ways that culture functions as a medium for indigenous immigrant community network building and identity creation. Cruz-Manjarrez also takes on questions of ethnic identity and indigenous identity and how they are reconfigured through the processes of migration and settlement in Los Angeles and then reimported to Yalalag, Oaxaca. In this book, social remittances or the circulation of ideas, knowledge, and information happens in two directions: from Mexico to the US and back again.

Like Aquino, Cruz-Manjarrez frames her discussion between Yalalag in the Sierra Juárez of Oaxaca and Los Angeles. The similarity between the two books ends there. Because she concentrates her analysis on the ways in which identity construction, cultural production (dance in particular), religion, and ritual are affected by transnational

migration, Cruz-Manjarrez takes special care in outlining in detail how these different factors are a part of community building in Yalalag and Los Angeles and between the two locations. By looking at the fiesta of San Antonio Padua in both locations she is able to demonstrate how this saint—who is now the patron of immigrants and the most important community saint—reigns over a transnationalized social and religious space. By following the specific activities, cultural elements, dances, and ways of relating that support the celebration of San Antonio Padua and other neighborhood saints in two locations, Cruz-Manjarrez is able to show quite effectively how transborder communities function in multiple locations through specific social relations. Institutions such as *bailes* to raise money, *gzon* or mutual aid, communal service or *tequio*, and other forms of communal participation bind people together in multiple locations through ritual and religious celebrations.

To illustrate how binational social remittances work, one chapter describes the ways that Danzas Chuscas which are performed in Yalalag as a part of patron saint celebrations reflect the perspectives of Yalalteco non-immigrants on those who have adopted ‘American’ behaviors and/or remitted what may be seen as negative values and behaviors from Los Angeles to Yalalag. Dances such as ‘Los Mojados (The Wetbacks), Los Cocineros (The Cooks), and Los Cholos (Los Angeles Gangsters) suggest the new roles that migrants from Yalalag play in the US. Other dances signal return migrants as outsiders, with labels such as Los Nortenos (The Northerners) and Los Turistas (The Tourists). Las Minifaldas (The Miniskirts), where female characters wear ‘colorful blouses, miniskirts, pantyhose, high heels and blond and brunette wigs’, suggests the uneasy integration of American-inspired dress and behavior as well as highlighting ‘the historical continuities and discontinuities in gender and class relations that characterize contemporary Zapotec life in Oaxacalifornia (the transnational field binding Oaxaca and California)’ (p. 167).

The case studies highlighted in *Voices of Indigenous Oaxacan Youth in the Central Valley* also offer compelling examples of how Oaxacan youth have mobilized cultural activities as an effective vehicle for civic engagement, constructing positive public images of Mexican migrant indigeneity, and engaging in supported self-exploration of what indigeneity means to them on a personal level. This point is brought home, for example, through Juan Santiago’s discussion of his participation in the Se’esavi (son of the rain) dance troop. He participated in Guelaguetzas (a Oaxacan celebration of ethnic diversity and culture through a sharing of dance performance, food, and music) across the state of California, learned about the principle of *tequio* and participated in the massive immigrant rights marches in Los Angeles in 2006. He has also participated in a hometown association linked to his community, El Comité Popular del Pueblo Coatecas Altas (COOPPCA) in Madera. With COOPPCA he organized a cultural festival, participated in a community leadership group, and created a Zapotec collective theatre project known as Fandango Zapoteco which describes how traditional weddings are performed.

## Hybrid identities among second-generation immigrants

As first-generation indigenous immigrants settle and their 1.5-generation and second-generation children are socialized in the US through educational, social, and personal

experiences, many do not identify only as indigenous—similar to what happens to other second-generation immigrants who often develop hyphenated identities. The research of Cruz-Manjarrez and the chapters written by indigenous youth in *Voices of Indigenous Oaxacan Youth in the Central Valley* suggest many have flexible and hybrid forms of identities. Cruz-Manjarrez finds that second-generation Yalaltecos growing up in Los Angeles are giving up various aspects of their indigenous culture and acquiring a sense of identity as Mexican and American. ‘Most second-generation Yalaltecos recognize an indigenous identity as Yalatecos: but this is usually linked, sublimated or even superseded by two types of national identity: American and Mexican’ (pp. 126–7). But because ‘American’ usually refers to ‘White Americans’ the solution for many is to live on the hyphen as ‘Mexican-American’. Because they are perceived by other Mexican immigrants as indigenous and often labeled as ‘Oaxaquitos’ (derogatory racial slur for small-bodied indigenous people from Oaxaca), many second-generation Yalatecos experience the racism faced by their parents and other indigenous migrants as they are slotted into a Mexican, Californian racial hierarchy. Internalized prejudices make their sense of identity as Yalalag Zapotecs weak in comparison to the other categories they may use including American, Mexican-American, Oaxaqueño/s, Chicano/a and Latino/a.

The young people featured in *Voices of Indigenous Oaxacan Youth* express identity forms that can include specific indigenous communities and ethnicities, a pan-Oaxacan indigenous identity, American identity, class, gender, and even sexual identities. They share the stories and experiences of their specific organizations and their personal perspectives on what it is like to grow up in the California Central Valley in indigenous immigrant households that are a part of diverse communities that often include other recent immigrants from Southeast Asia and elsewhere.

These young Oaxacan writers suggest that an important shift in identity construction has taken place among second-generation indigenous migrant youth. Very few identify solely as indigenous as their parents might. Youth in the American Experience Club in Bakersfield, for example, began working with a high school teacher and later organized field trips to give members experiences which other US students had which they did not. While their summer vacations might have been spent bent over picking strawberries and blackberries, other kids went to Disneyland, San Francisco, and Yosemite National Park. The club gives them those experiences they missed that others had which they labeled as ‘American experience’. The strategies they used to earn money to support the trips, however, involve cultural elements linked to their indigenous backgrounds such as producing *mole* (a traditional indigenous Oaxacan dish) for sale. The group became a peer group that gave teens a place to be active, also allowed them to learn about their roots, and debate how to navigate multiple languages and identities. They do not all think alike.

An epilogue by Mixtec intellectual Gaspar Rivera Salgado captures the complexity of the social milieu that second-generation indigenous youth operate in ‘expanding from traditional indigenous family networks to multi-cultural settings and diverse political possibilities at school and the places where they live’. Rivera Salgado underscores the multiple messages these youth receive as they sort through contradictory information about their identity. While they may value the importance of the cultural continuity their parents offer them, ‘the political realities they face are unique and required a lot of creativity on their part to forge a new path . . . to sort out new challenges they are facing such as trilingualism,

academic success, youth culture and economic survival outside agricultural work' (pp. 119–20).

Aquino suggests that older indigenous immigrants can also prioritize other aspects of their identity besides indigeneity in certain circumstances as well. Aquino's analysis documents how Yalalag women working as domestic servants in Los Angeles negotiate with and defend their rights with patronizing employers (*patronas*) and in the process remake their identities as workers and women. In doing so, they do not choose to mobilize their identity as Zapotec or indigenous. By making themselves invisible (i.e. not going to work as in the film *A Day without Mexicans*), openly defying unjust acts, and also training themselves in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), driving, elder care and other skills, Yalaltecas model active strategies and awareness of how to advance their interests and improve their work situations. Aquino's analysis suggests that at least in the context of employment, indigeneity is *not* front and center in the work lives of Yalalteca women.

Later in the book, however, she suggests the ways in which these women and others came together to participate in immigrant rights marches in Los Angeles in 2006. She states that their links through families, communities, and language were important factors. Thus for indigenous youth, men and women in the US, long-term settlement and incorporation into the work, educational, political, and economic life in US cities and towns complicates indigenous identity and is likely to produce hybridized forms of identification that work in different ways in different contexts.

## Contributions of multi-sited ethnography to migration studies

The research methodology of ethnography is a part of the overall contribution made by these publications. Through their binational and multi-sited lenses characterized by extended stays in multiple locations by the ethnographers, these books offer rich and detailed documentation capturing the complexity of individual experience and agency within the structural constraints of global political economies, racial and ethnic hierarchies, and transborder networks and communities. The hallmark of ethnography is to weave theoretical insights into rich description and produce mid-level theory which allows for comparison. These books achieve this goal and in so doing offer important insights that can be explored across migration studies.

Lynn Stephen  
University of Oregon  
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