

be unintentionally forestalling a politics of liberation. But he is also realistic in suggesting that such a paradigm shift may usher in an unknowable future in which Latino identity as we know it may no longer exist. Such an argument is as compelling as it is disquieting.

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LYNN STEPHEN: *Transborder Lives: Indigenous Oaxacans in Mexico, California, and Oregon*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007.

“To understand multisited communities,” Lynn Stephen writes (p. 66), “we have to offer multisited histories.” In this comprehensive and multifaceted book, Stephen has shown us how deeply a single skilled ethnographer with the benefit of decades of experience and eight years of sustained work can render understandable multisited communities. Using the term “transborder” as a welcome conceptual shift away from the worn term “transnational,” Stephen profiles indigenous Oaxacans whose lives cross not only national boundaries but also the boundaries of class, ethnicity, and gender as they migrate within Mexico and between Mexico and the United States. Living lives across borders, indigenous Oaxacans are as likely to find themselves across borders that have shifted through time as they are to cross a border actively through migration, by changing their status, or through other forms of mobility. Among the many contributions that Stephen gives us with this volume is a solid understanding of how migration permeates the lives and livelihoods of people who never emigrate, situating the experiences of migrants and permanent residents within wider historical and social contexts that influence home, community, political, and economic processes such as the Cargo system.

The book is organized into ten chapters that range over a broad territory. Chapter one introduces the term “transborder,” differentiating it from transnational while preparing the reader for what becomes the book’s consistent and generally engaging style: mixing individual and family narratives with theoretical, cultural, social, and historical analysis. More than most anthropologists, Stephen teaches us through the voices of indigenous Oaxacans as much as through her own interpretation. In the epilogue, she describes her ethnography as being in line with the thick description of Geertz, and her work certainly is that—at times, to my thinking, a bit too thick, the personal histories droning on a little too long and the more general narratives of social, economic, and historical processes covering ground with which many of us are familiar. Her discussion of the disruptive consequences of neoliberal policies on Mexican peasant agriculture, for

example, is well known to most migration scholars, although given Stephen's obvious mission to tell the whole story, these few digressions are understandable.

Stephen's thoroughness is particularly revealing in her insightful chapter on surveillance and invisibility. While many of us are familiar with analyses of surveillance along the Mexican-U.S. border, Stephen demonstrates how surveillance and its mirror experience, seeking invisibility, continue to dog undocumented and even documented immigrants well inside the United States. Labor contractors and supervisors at job sites, as well as Immigration and Customs Enforcement personnel, scrutinize immigrant Oaxacans to an extent that creates fear and emotional trauma that hounds some of them for much of their lives. Again, while some researchers have documented similar experiences, Stephen's use of Oaxacan voices adds emotional value to her analysis that is a cornerstone of solid ethnography.

In two chapters at the heart of the volume, Stephen likewise personalizes accounts of Oaxacans crossing the borders of gender (chapter six) and race and ethnicity (chapter seven) as they experience the traumas of leaving children behind in Mexico while entering racialized environments that mark them for speaking Mixteco or Zapotec. In these environments, use of their indigenous tongue can be a source of pride and discomfort. Youth find it especially difficult to maintain indigenous language use, suffering peer pressure from the nonindigenous Mexicans of California and Oregon, and their parents lament the loss.

The final part of the analysis offers lessons for Oaxacans who hope to move away from the many troubles that follow them across Mexico, California, and Oregon: one on grassroots organizing and a second on Oaxacans' use of digital technologies. In the small Oregon community of Woodburn, south of Portland, as well as in their home towns in Mexico, Oaxacans have successfully organized social justice movements in part through tried and true methods of institutional organizing and in part by networking well with new and existing organizations. Stephen profiles five such grassroots efforts whose memberships overlap, including a labor union and a women's cooperative service organization that were once under the same organizational umbrella but, in 2002, separated in response to the increasing success of both groups. The women's group has since sought methods of marketing Christmas wreaths via internet connections, a development that has led to what Stephen refers to, in the second to last chapter, as "identity construction" via the internet.

In short, Stephen has produced a comprehensive volume that is generous in representing indigenous Oaxacans through their own words, through her interpretations, and with the help of a great body of theory and literature on international migration. One would hope that *Transborder Lives* will enhance the study of international migration by offering a somewhat different twist to

the prolonged preoccupation with transnationalism. Already Stephen has moved the subject forward by placing the migrant community inside a broader context that includes those who are left behind and native residents of the communities that immigrants join.

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THOMAS GLAVE (ed.): *Our Caribbean: A Gathering of Lesbian and Gay Writing from the Antilles*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008.

“... he is dancing, a poet, a black boy / in a culture where masculinity is code,” says the voice of Kevin Everod Quashie, a poet from St. Kitts, in his 2003 poem “Genesis”. What is said and sung by Quashie may well stand for the root emotion and intellectual drive behind this gathering of queer presences from the region where, according to the late Antonio Benítez Rojo, the island repeats herself (Antonio’s island is female), but is not quite the same in becoming identical with being beside herself. I refer to the desire and cognitive need to reclaim cultural and political ground denied to gays and lesbians by codes and norms, written and unwritten, aimed at immunizing the representative nation and community against the human species misrecognized in any gathered queerness.

In saying “misrecognized”, I echo Lacan’s term *méconnaissance*, in this case as the prejudiced and often loud and bashing failure to acknowledge and to recognize oneself in the other because of being so injured by one’s own hate and fear. The specific phobia at work in prejudiced misrecognition widens the inherent gap at the heart of knowing (and of knowledge of) the other: knowledge warped by disavowal, by the denial of the other’s twisted and queer siblinghood with and within oneself.

So clasped in each other’s enactment of knowing and grasping embodied difference (of catching one’s identity caught in one’s difference), the ontology of recognition and misrecognition involves possession and dispossession and the polemics of *ownership*; as in Thomas Glave’s allegory of native growth, “Whose Caribbean? An Allegory, in Part” (2005), a representative and pivotal essay and the recommended starting point for sampling the anthology (177-190). Memory is conjured up by Glave and sublimated and queered into a tryout of scriptural themes. The essay is one among several in which “theory” veers into testimony and biographic confession, under a signature phrase like: “this is what was mine to live” or *esto es lo que me tocó vivir*. The elegiac tone and substance found in these pieces transform the actuality of the gathering into an occasion to glance back at the past in the spirit of affirmative mourning for lost lives.