

The multiple pasts and futures of the Mexican nation can be seen in the faces of the tens of thousands of indigenous people who each year set out on their voyages to the north, as well as the many others who decide to settle in countless communities within the United States. To study indigenous Mexican migrants in the United States today requires a binational lens, taking into account basic changes in the way Mexican society is understood as the twenty-first century begins.

This collection explores these migration processes and their social, cultural, and civic impacts in the United States and in Mexico. The studies come from diverse perspectives, but they share a concern with how sustained migration and the emergence of organizations of indigenous migrants influence social and community identity, both in the United States and in Mexico. These studies also focus on how the creation and re-creation of collective ethnic identities among indigenous migrants influences their economic, social, and political relationships in the United States.

"We all know that we are in the midst of a great new migration to the United States and that the majority of these newcomers are from Mexico. We assume they speak Spanish, eat enchiladas, love soccer, and listen to mariachi music. The truth is we know little about the 'Mexican' communities that are settling in every region of the country, from the coastal urbs to the tiniest heartland towns. Here, finally, is a work that gives nuance to the Mexican migrant community in the United States.

"To say that this tome is cutting-edge would diminish its importance: it is beyond all the edges of our literature, in that it deals with communities excluded on all sides. 'Dirty Indians' in Mexico, 'dirty Mexicans' in the United States, the indigenous communities represented here have carved out social, cultural, economic, and political space by and large on their own. It is a space that will become increasingly visible in the coming years, one that will rewrite our notions of 'Mexican-ness,' of 'Indian-ness,' of 'migrant-ness.'

"The migrant Mexican indigenous story is a narrative of organic solidarity, a veritable primer for organizing in the shadow of global capital. And by going the extra step of allowing the indigenous to represent themselves—the first chapters are authored by the 'subjects'—this collection is also a model for a democratized academe that must work at the service of the subject rather than itself."

*Rubén Martínez, associate professor of creative writing
University of Houston
author of Crossing Over: A Mexican Family on the Migrant Trail*

"This collection sheds fresh empirical and conceptual light on a growing but heretofore little studied phenomenon. The essays offer richly detailed analyses of indigenous (trans)migration processes and their social, cultural, gendered, and civic impacts, paying particular attention to the formation and transformation of ethnic identities among migrants and to how those identities shape their economic, social, and political relationships in the United States and in their country and communities of origin. Deploying a binational, multidisciplinary lens, the collection provides unique insight into the dense organizational webs that configure an expanding, transborder migrant civil society. It will interest students, researchers, and practitioners alike."

*Sonia E. Alvarez, professor of politics
University of California, Santa Cruz
vice president and president-elect of the
Latin American Studies Association*

Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies
Center for Comparative Immigration Studies



FOX
and
RIVERA-SALGADO

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Edited by Jonathan Fox and Gaspar Rivera-Salgado

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