comme langue de communication, a permis des échanges sur les questions importantes de la recherche féministe : "comprendre et transformer les multiples situations des femmes et les rapports d'inégalité entre les sexes" (5). Ces échanges ont associé des chercheuses du Sud et du Nord, du Sénégal, de la France, du Canada et d'autres pays surtout africains.

Malgré la volonté de Sow, la plupart des communications reproduites n'ont pas été actualisées et incluent presque exclusivement des références bibliographiques remontant au 20e siècle. D'où un certain malaise face à la grande variété des sujets débattus au colloque et reproduits plutôt en tant que communication courte qu'analyse détaillée et approfondie d'un sujet.

Les contributions ont été regroupées autour de six thèmes : 1) La langue française : un outil linguistique commun ; 2) Les représentations, théorie et pratiques féministes ; 3) L'écriture des femmes sur les femmes ; 4) Le sexe du politique ; 5) Le corps est politique ; 6) Les constructions sexuées dans le monde de l'éducation et du travail.

L'article introductif de F. Sow essaie de donner un certain ordre à la multiplicité des sujets et est intéressant dans la mesure où l'auteure arrive à démontrer quelques aspects de la particularité des *gender Studies* en France et dans les pays francophones où l'on constate une faiblesse institutionnelle des théories et pratiques féministes. Cette recherche féministe francophone associe "réflexion et action afin d'assurer le partenariat entre centres de recherche et associations œuvrant sur le terrain" (29). Et F. Sow continue ainsi : " 'L'engagement' de la recherche en faveur de la cause des femmes a donc été un point consensuel solide, lors du colloque" (29). Pourtant, ce sera cette approche militante qui rendra difficile l'implantation institutionnelle dans des universités francophones où les instances du pouvoir relèvent plutôt du genre masculin.

L'atout de l'ouvrage, et notamment la grande variété des contributions, peut également être considéré de causer un certain malaise au lecteur / à la lectrice qui cherchera des études plus approfondies. La plupart du temps, les auteures ont à peine touché à un sujet. Pourtant, la faible quantité des études sur les femmes et les genres dans l'espace francophone rend méritoire les grands efforts entrepris par F. Sow pour proposer un ouvrage dédié aux femmes du monde francophone et essayant de donner une voix au discours français dans le domaine des *gender Studies* dominé par les chercheures anglophones.

Ulrike Schuerkens

Spener, David: Clandestine Crossings. Migrants and Coyotes on the Texas-Mexico Border. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 2009. 320 pp. ISBN 978-0-8014-7589-4. Price: $ 24.95

In this excellent book David Spener describes and analyzes contemporary Mexican migrants and the *coyotes* that assist them across the US-Mexican border. The book which focuses on the South Texas-Northeast Mexican boundary is based on eight years of research that included Spener's own in-depth ethnographic interviewing in rural Mexico, South Texas, and on the border with migrants, people who helped migrants cross the border, law enforcement officers, local police officers, prosecutors in the U. S. Attorney's offices, and human rights activists, analysis of quantitative data collected by the Mexican Migration Project and the Encuesta sobre Migración en la Frontera Norte de México, and analysis of media accounts and court cases.

The book begins with a very useful discussion of the "Terminology Used in This Book" that summarizes the important themes and perspectives of the work. Spener stresses a view of migrants that sees their movement as a form of resistance to the restrictions limiting the travel of some international visitors. He presents migrants as active agents or "autonomous migrants" who cross the border despite state efforts to prevent them from doing so.

In an excellent "Introduction" Spener describes the recent growth of migration, the conditions both in Mexico and the U. S. that have contributed to that growth, and U. S. immigration policies that have made it necessary for Mexican migrants to cross the border without papers. In the introduction he also discusses his approach and clearly explains the main concepts he utilizes: global apartheid, structural and cultural violence, autonomous international migration, everyday resistance, social capital, and funds of knowledge.

Chapter 1, "The Unfolding of Apartheid in South Texas," focuses on the Northeast Mexico-South Texas border region which was the most important border crossing corridor from the late 19th century until the 1960s. Today that crossing still accounts for 30 per cent of autonomous migrants. Beginning with the passage of the Immigration Reform and Control Act in 1986 and then the launching of the Operation Blockade in 1993 the number of border crossings was reduced. But, Spener points out, that this did not mean the number of autonomous migrants decreased.

In the second chapter, "Clandestine Crossing at the Beginning of the 21st Century," based on his rich interview data with migrants, Spener describes how migrants circumvented the increasing restrictions, often at great cost in money and pain. He begins in a community he calls "Carmela" in San Luis Potosí, a traditional sending region, and follows migrants as they begin to leave their home community and make the trip across the border. He describes the many challenges they face at the border: avoiding being shaken down by Mexican migration officials and being robbed by gang members; crossing the Rio Grande, steering clear of U. S. checkpoints and Border Patrols, and then making their way through the brush and on to their U. S. destinations. He stresses how given the conditions in Mexico, their survival depends on resisting "their forcible territorial confinement within Mexico," and he pointedly comments: "They did not wait for governments to either come to their assistance or grant them permission to migrate" (86).

Chapters 3 and 4, "Coyotaje as a Cultural Practice Applied to Migration," and "Coyotaje and Migration in the Contemporary Period," are fascinating discussions of

https://doi.org/10.5771/0257-9774-2010-2-682
Generiert durch IP '3.137.210.89', am 12.10.2024, 10:02:41.
Das Erstellen und Weitergeben von Kopien dieses PDFs ist nicht zulässig.

the cultural and historical origins of the practice of *coyotaje*, and how it operates today to help migrants cross an increasingly militarized the border. He stresses that using *coyotes* to facilitate various legal or bureaucratic procedures is an everyday practice in Mexico and that the use of a *coyote* to assist an undocumented migrant across the border is part of a process involving many others including labor recruiters, employers, friends, relatives, and a network of people who assist in the actual crossing. He provides a much needed critique of the negative U. S. government and media accounts which have portrayed border crossing as linked to organized crime, drug trafficking, and international terrorism with little evidence to document their exaggerated accounts. Spener provides a useful classification of *coyotaje* which shows the complex network of people (ranging from those who take people across the river in boats to professionals with extensive knowledge of river-crossing points, trails, and freight trains to collaborators who can pick migrants up and people who assist with contacts inside consulates and/or the U. S. immigration enforcement bureaucracy.

The fifth chapter, "Trust, Distrust, and Power," shows how migrants find more knowledgeable and trustworthy *coyotes* by relying on social relations, especially experienced migrants from their home communities. In the next chapter, "Passing Judgement," Spener describes diverse views of *coyotaje*. Many see *coyotes* as untrustworthy, villains, corrupted by "easy money" and/or dangerous thugs. It is this view that dominates the public discourse and which, as his analysis of data from U. S. Federal courts in Texas and other records indicate, are much less common than the public discourse suggests.

Less commonly heard are the more positive views he found among migrants in Mexico and the U. S. Among the characterizations in these accounts were that *coyotes* provide valuable services and that they are experts, that is, they are migrants whose knowledge makes border crossing more successful. These counternarratives also provided an important distinction between *coyotes* that migrants and their families, friends, and neighbors knew from their home communities, who were viewed as more reliable, and those that were contracted at the border. In this chapter, Spener also addresses gender socialization of men and suggests that in many rural communities migration to El Norte is a rite of passage to prove one's manhood. Here, too, he touches upon the problem of sexual violence against women committed by the various males involved in the journey, including law enforcement officials as well as other migrants or *coyotes* who get most of the public attention.

The conclusion stresses that his view of migrants and those who help them is different than that which is often portrayed. He suggests three policy changes that are necessary: legalization of migrants already living in the U. S.; increasing the number of immigrant visas for Mexicans who wish to live and work in the U. S.; and investment in Mexico to change the conditions that force many to move.

The book is extremely valuable for its portrayal of migrants and *coyotes* as struggling to survive under the difficult circumstances of their lives in Mexico, at the border, and in the U. S. By humanizing the subjects of the research (including both migrants and *coyotes*), who are often depicted as criminals, and portraying them as active agents rather than victims, he provides a deeper and more complex account of what is too often presented in misleading oversimplifications. The only weakness of the book is the scarcity of material on women. He acknowledges the absence of women in his research and attributes it to the fact that the border crossing experience at the Northeast Mexico-South Texas border is largely a male experience. One wonders, however, if any women from Carmela do migrate and how. To understand male migration, however, the book is well worth reading by scholars, policy makers, and students. It is very clearly written, well documented, and important.

Frances Rothstein

Staller, John Edward (ed.): Pre-Columbian Landscapes of Creation and Origin. New York: Springer Science + Business Media, 2008. 389 pp., CD-ROM). ISBN: 978-0-387-76909-7. Price: $ 99.00

Der Titel des Sammelbandes ist als Programm zu verstehen, sich der Frage von Landschaften – natürlichen und anthropogen veränderten – in Zusammenhang mit autochthonen Vorstellungen über Ursprung und Herkunft der darin lebenden Menschen in präkolumbischer Zeit zu widmen. Dies ist auf den lateinamerikanischen Subkontinent in ausgewählten Beispielen bezogen. Jedoch sind es nicht nur präkolumbische Kulturkomplexe, deren archäologische Befunde unter diesem Blickwinkel eine Interpretation erfahren. Wie eben archäologisch erschlossene prähistorische Lebenswelten ohne den ethnographischen Vergleich nur unzureichend in ihren kosmologischen Dimensionen erschlossen werden können, so sind ethnologische Interpretationen rezenter Kosmogonien auch mit einer weit in die Vergangenheit zurückreichenden Verbindung mit archäologischen Befunden von außerordentlichem Interesse. Wo entsprechende Verbindungen herstellbar sind, ergeben sich ganz neue Möglichkeiten, noch erhaltenes Mythengut über die rituellen Aktivitäten in den heutigen Gesellschaften zu erschließen.

Dies ist für den aus mehreren unterschiedlichen Beiträgen zu Mesoamerika bestehenden ersten Teil des Buches der Fall. Die kulturelle Klammer, welche die verschiedenen Gesellschaften Mesoamerikas verbindet, wird in neuer Art deutlich: es geht vor allem um die Sicherung der Ergebnisse von landwirtschaftlicher Produktion mittels ihrer rituellen Einbindung in die mythischen Vorstellungen vom "Berg des Reichtums" (auch als "Lebensmittelberg" bezeichnet) als Ursprungsort sowie von Höhlen als Durchgangspforten zwischen den Welten, dem Diesseits und den Jenseitswelten, der aktuellen und den vergangenen Welten.

Im ersten Beitrag widmet sich R. Koontz den Ballspielriten, Vorstellungen vom Paradies und den Ursprüngen von Macht in der archäologischen Kultur der klassischen Zeit von El Tajín in der Golfküstenregion Mexikos. Das "stirb und werde!", die Quelle des Lebens vermittels

https://doi.org/10.5771/0257-9774-2010-2-682
Generiert durch IP '3.137.210.89', am 12.10.2024, 10:02:41.
Das Erstellen und Weitergeben von Kopien dieses PDFs ist nicht zulässig.