**Pilar Hernández-Wolfe.** ***A Borderlands View on Latinos, Latin Americans, and Decolonization: Rethinking Mental Health*****. Washington, DC: Jason Aronson, 2013. 141 pp.**

Multicultural approaches to mental health practice have been gaining in popularity, due in part to the increased recognition that a global perspective is critical at the outset of the 21st century. These approaches have brought an important focus to therapist training in the form of cultural competence and sensitivity, as well as intervention development and adaptation (e.g., Bernal & Domenech's 2012 *Cultural adaptations: Tools for Evidence-based practice with diverse populations*). The impact of these perspectives has been considerable, as evident in the increased attention to cultural factors in mainstream journals and funding agencies.

However, despite the increased attention to multicultural perspectives in mental health care, there continue to exist important limitations to these contemporary approaches. These limitations can be seen in the fact that mental health care remains poorly accessed and utilized by individuals from a range of racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds (Alegría et al., "Disparity in depression treatment among racial and ethnic minority populations in the United States," *Psychiatric Services*, 2008). Most saliently, many contemporary multicultural perspectives unintentionally essentialize cultural differences by virtue of positioning themselves against the dominant Western, medical-model of mental health. This has contributed to the proliferation of scholarship evaluating clinical work with particular racial/ethnic groups (Miranda et al., "State of the science on psychosocial interventions for ethnic minorities," *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 2005), which invariably loses the important nuances of individual social location (Lakes, López, & Garro, "Cultural competence and psychotherapy: Applying anthropologically informed conceptions of culture," *Psychotherapy* 43, 2006). Moreover, because these perspectives emerge from the dominant U.S. and European models of mental health, they run the risk of disseminating paradigms of mental health and illness to populations for whom they are poorly suited.

Hernández-Wolfe provides a welcome addition to this growing library of multicultural clinical approaches with her book, *A Borderlands View on Latinos, Latin Americans, and Decolonization*. Her six-chapter book describes an approach to family therapy that differs from most mainstream multicultural approaches in that it is grounded in theories of colonization, power and privilege, as well as hope and resistance. Indeed, Hernández-Wolfe disavows an explicit emphasis on culture and cultural differences, arguing instead that a focus on power, privilege, and oppression allows important cultural elements to emerge organically. This approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of individual and familial social location that recognizes that experiences of privilege, power, and oppression are present in all relationships. As such, individuals may experience oppression in one sphere of life (e.g., racial minority) while gaining privilege and power in another (e.g., gender). Throughout her book, Hernández-Wolfe uses the imagery of the borderlands to illustrate her theoretical arguments with rich descriptions of individuals and families navigating their in-between existences of multiple worlds, identities, and experiences as they work to overcome historical and contemporary trauma, intergenerational transmission of domestic violence, and structural barriers to their efforts to improve their lives and those of their loved ones.

A particularly striking aspect of the book is Hernández -Wolfe's discussion of the powerful resistance that emerges out of the colonization experience. She uses Gloria Anzaldúa's concept of the *nepantla* – the in-between space where transformative change can occur – to show how alternative approaches to dominant practice emerge precisely out of the experience of being suppressed. This perspective is empowering and optimistic, turning on its head the commonly held view of oppressed groups as helpless victims. Hernández-Wolfe bring this to life in her description of a therapeutic approach for domestic violence in Colombia that emerged following a failed attempt to provide individual therapy. This approach, termed *Encuentros de Voces*, replaced the individual, medical-model approach with a participatory, community-based approach whereby women would come together to share their personal stories under the loose guidance of trained facilitators. In addition to providing benefit to the participants, there appeared to have been a larger benefit to the communities in which these conversational spaces were held.

One weakness of this book is the limited consideration of how these approaches might be incorporated into existing mental health systems of care. The examples she provides (i.e., *Encuentros de Voces*, Transformative Family Therapy, Just Therapy) are fascinating models that provide alternative conceptualizations of family-level struggle, but Hernández-Wolfe does not push readers to consider how current systems of care

might incorporate these approaches. In her preface, Hernandez-Wolfe encourages readers to imagine a mental health field not governed by insurance companies and managed care. Unfortunately, this is not the field of today and unlikely to be the field of the near future. For these approaches to gain traction, advocates will need to speak the language of Western science (i.e., efficacy, cost-effectiveness). My sense is that these conversations are indeed possible given the transformative power evident in Hernández-Wolfe's examples, and so I recommend this book to both clinicians and researchers who wish to challenge themselves by finding innovative ways to incorporate a larger social justice agenda into their work those most in need.

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**Ilan Stavans and Jorge J.E. Gracia. *Thirteen Ways of Looking at Latino Art*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2014. 240 pp.**

In *Thirteen Ways of Looking at Latino Art*, Ilan Stavans and Jorge J. E. Gracia engage in spirited and incisive philosophical conversations about thirteen works of art produced by Latinos from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century, including Einar and Jamex de la Torre, María Brito, Andrés Serrano, Francisco Oller, Mariana Yampolsky, Carmen Lomas Garza, BEAR_TCK, José Bedia, Luis Cruz Azaceta, Martín Ramírez, Jean-Michel Basquiat, María Magdalena Campos-Pons, and Adál . The cultural critic Ilan Stavans is no stranger to the genre of the conversation, as evidenced by the syndicated PBS show, *Conversations with Ilan Stavans*, that he hosted from 2001 to 2006 and the interviews which Neal Sokol conducted with Stavans on his Jewish and Latino heritage published under the title *Ilan Stavans: Eight Conversations* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004). For Jorge J.E. Gracia, who is a scholar of classical, medieval, and analytic philosophy, the book's structure is reminiscent of Plato's dialogues in which Socrates and his students engage in intellectual inquiry, not so that one might emerge victorious from the contest, but that all might achieve a deeper level of understanding. As Stavans and Gracia discuss the art works reproduced in color in *Thirteen Ways of Looking at Latino Art,* they reveal a great deal about themselves. It becomes evident that their unique backgrounds and experiences, which they arrived at mostly by happenstance, have an influence on the ways in which they view the works in question and, by engaging the other in dialogue, each is able to expand and deepen his perspective. At times they appear to be striving towards some kind of synthesis of their disparate views, but this does not always happen. In fact, sometimes the discussions

appear to break down, something which they do not appear to mind as, for them, the pleasure is in the intellectual exercise itself, not in achieving resolution.

It is clear that the interlocutors have much in common. They are both Caucasian males, Latinos, and prominent scholars who value Latino art, but they are also different. Stavans is a cultural critic of Jewish descent who was born in Mexico with its rich indigenous cultures and traditions; whereas, Gracia is a classical and medieval philosopher who was born in Cuba at a time when the country was predominantly Roman Catholic, although Santería (the synchretic religion of the African slaves) was also practiced; he fled the island, first to Canada and then to the United States, after the Revolution. While careful not to fall into the trap of essentialism most of the time (they are human after all), the authors suggest that the differences which they enjoy make it possible for them to approach and interpret art in different ways. For them, while it is often helpful to know something about the artist, the real creators of these works are the viewers. Their conversations never lead to one, clear answer but rather reveal the complexity of issues such as the self and identity, race and ethnicity, artistic freedom and censorship, the violence of the photograph, history as labyrinth, the nature of art, the ugly and the beautiful, the notion of artistic madness, the expression of tragedy and pain in art, the juxtaposition of words and images, and the role of Spanglish in Latino art.

On several occasions throughout this book, I felt that the authors were inviting the reader to contribute to the discussion. This was an important move on their part, because at times I felt that the authors were not different enough in their backgrounds and ways of seeing. For example, as a Cuban-American woman of Lebanese/Syrian descent who continues to practice her Catholic faith despite the secular world of academia in which she spends considerable time, I found myself wanting to add something to the discussions and at times to object strongly to some of the authors' comments. But that is to be expected, or perhaps even desired, and the authors have solved the problem by leaving their conversations open and inviting the reader (whomever she or he might be) to participate. It is the reader who forms the third member of this conversation, transforming it into a three-way exchange not unlike that represented in María Brito's painting *Conversation* (1984) which the authors discuss in Chapter 2. As the authors model the kind of critical thinking, lively discussion, and open-ended intellectual inquiry that we strive to teach our students who too often seek absolutes, this would be an excellent book to include on a syllabus for an undergraduate course on Latino culture. At the intersection of art and ideas, this book also demonstrates that Latino art (with its treatment of such universal themes as loneliness and alienation and the human spirit's quest for freedom, among others)

is not just a minority art but and art with which everyone can identify. It is art for the ages, without ceasing to be moored within a particular context.

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**Jorge J. Barrueto. *The Hispanic Image in Hollywood: A Postcolonial Approach*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2013. 224 pp.**

The field of Latino Film Studies has recently moved forward to a transnational approach that mainly focuses its attention on new processes of mixture and association of apparently opposed cultures, as we can observe in the case of Latino and Anglo presence in contemporary Latino films (Beltrán 2009; List 2013; Aldama 2014). For this reason, the work by Spanish and Latin American scholar Jorge Barrueto is a novelty in the field as it offers a postcolonial approach to the Latino depiction made by Hollywood cinema, thereby emphasizing the "metaphors of difference" in contrast to recent examinations which explored means of resemblance. These Latino representations, as Barrueto states in the introduction, are popular constructs that reflect other social praxis affecting Hispanics who are believed to be outside the idea of American nationhood.

This book situates itself within Latino film theory and criticism and postcolonialism, placing Latinos as the dominated ethnic Other and the U.S. film industry as the colonial, Eurocentric authority. This symbolic discourse is displayed by Barrueto in terms of ethnic components, social beliefs, geographic origin or skin color, creating an image of negative stereotypes based on a postcolonial discourse. The aim of Barrueto's book, thus, is to underline the effects of European colonization on Hispanic people and its recreation in contemporary film productions. The film representation, as the author points out, is a "Western commodity geared to consumption not just by audiences but also institutions of power and politics" (15).

This volume is composed in five chapters in which each of the segments explores a key point of articulation between negative Hispanic images and the deconstruction of the postcolonial dissemination in Hollywood films. The first chapter examines the enduring presence of the Hispanic gangster, which is tied to the "natural" predisposition of Latino communities to social transgression. In the next segment, the Latino woman takes an added dimension through an analysis of her figure both as a danger and an exotic threat. The Latin American geography and the filmic satire and humor are part of the next two chapters as an illustration of the U.S. industry's manipulative apparatus.

And finally, the last chapter moves from the negative depiction of Latino images to the subversive representation conveyed by Chicano films.

The first chapter, "The Making of Tony Montana," examines through *Scarface* (Brian De Palma, 1983) how the immigrant origin of the gangster and his proclivity to crime is a reflection of his own physiognomy. In other words, human behavior has a biological basis and vice versa, preserving in this way the hierarchy of races and establishing a clear link with the mental pathology applied to natives in colonial societies. Combining scientific scrutiny and ethnic prejudices, Barrueto claims that the character of Tony Montana also serves as the supporter of the American status quo, an external threat surrounded by violence, drugs and crime that encapsulates the fears behind American society and its dominant consciousness.

The next chapter, "Hotel Maid in Manhattan," recovers the traditional perspective on Latino women dispensed by a patriarchal Western viewpoint, which is established in a duality based on fear and desire. The presence of this dichotomy is analyzed by Barrueto in order to disseminate Jennifer Lopez's character in *Maid in Manhattan* (Wayne Wang, 2002), where the actress typifies both the myth of the exotic Other and the Anglo temptation. As in colonial times, where the Hispanic female was seen as a peril for the stability of European communities, here we have the white Anglo male counterpoint which epitomizes the Western civilization and its crusade in order to preserve the racial homogeneity.

The Western Othering of Latin American geography and its people is put to the test in "Latin American Geography in the Movies," a chapter where the geographical space is perceived as an archaic and dangerous locus but which also represents a place of renewal and opportunity for Westerners. In order to do so, Barrueto traces the historical importance of Christopher Columbus and his exploitation of the native's natural resources by comparing it to the current ownership of nature and imposition of socio political leadership carried out by Western cultures. Driven by similar ambitions, Hollywood glorifies conquest and minimizes the harm to the environment by displaying Latin American geography as a European icon of desire and destiny.

A postcolonial approach to humor is the center of "Cinematic Humor and Difference." Here, the author punctuates humor as an expression of power in Western artistic representations, a tool of ethnic appraisal that has reflected ethical and biological differences between U.S. and Latin America. This emphasis on racial and cultural dissimilarities is put into practice by displaying some examples regarded in contemporary cinematic works, such as ordinary sexuality, the political corruption and the rule of dictatorships. These naïve portrayals, which aim to ridicule Latin America

society and undermine its political system, understand American ethnic humor as a validation and support for inequality and the preservation of social categories.

The volume closes with a "Contestation of the Colonial Past," an approach to the Hispanic self-analysis of the interaction and vicissitudes between Latin American and Anglo inhabitants in the U.S. According to Barrueto's view, Hispanic self-questioning about Hispanic culture and their role in American society engenders a transformation of the Hispanic subject that counters former representations. Although the challenge to ideological hegemonies is not the unique basis for the transformation of Hispanic stereotypes, Chicano cinema has widely used this narrative device in order to enhance the Hispanic's depiction in cinema. This challenge to colonial perspectives is based on education, integration and multiculturalism, among other features provided by Barrueto.

To conclude, *The Hispanic Image in Hollywood: A Postcolonial Approach* opens up a whole new line of research in Latino Film Studies, where the linkage of culture, geography and race to pathology and crime is connected to dominant institutional discourses embedded in postcolonial contexts. This approach brings up an enriching and valuable contribution to the field that broadens both Latino and Latin American studies in a readable and enlightening way.

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**Alejandro Morales. *Little Nation & Other Stories*. Trad. Adam Spires. Houston: Arte Público Press, 2014. 178 pp.**

*Little Nation & Other Stories* de Alejandro Morales es una compilación narrativa sobre la lucha de la comunidad indígena, mexicana o chicana por su propio espacio, sea este a nivel individual o universal, y a través del tiempo, en la época de la conquista o en la actualidad. Esta narrativa expresa cómo la violencia y la injusticia que han vivido los mexicanos determinan la urgencia por este propio espacio. Aunque se vislumbra la esperanza de lograrlo meritoriamente contribuyendo y sobresaliendo en la sociedad, al final resulta ser momentáneo pues los protagonistas terminan relegados al margen por los grupos en el poder. La portada del libro dilucida este espacio incierto: el hogar en un trasfondo obscuro y tenebroso. Esta humilde "casita" color de rosa, con lo esencial en la cosmogonía latina –la vital conexión con la naturaleza, la Virgen de Guadalupe, y los sentimientos de pertenencia familiar y comunitaria– es el trasfondo idóneo de las

cinco historias narradas. La silla en el frente de la casa es símbolo del acomodamiento en este espacio. El título *Little Nation & Other Stories* guía la atención a la familia, a una pequeña nación, a una comunidad unida que narra sus propias historias en su trayectoria por alcanzar su "Aztlán," símbolo del origen perdido e inalcanzable. Esta pérdida se evidencia desde el principio, en la primera historia "Quetzali." La protagonista indígena del Valle de Anáhuac, a modo de presagio para la obra entera, observa y describe el inicio de un ciclo de despojo e injusticia: la familia conquistada, forzada a desmantelar sus templos sagrados, convertida en objeto poseído y desvanecida para, después, retornar en tiempos y espacios diferentes –heterotopias modernas– a injusticias, violencias, e inequidades similares, y continuar el ciclo. Regresa cada miembro de la familia: el hijo en "Mama Concha" y "Prickles," el esposo en "The Garden of Versailles," la hija en "Little Nation," y la mujer omnipresente que da cohesión y progresión lógica a toda la obra. La narración es a varios niveles y el lector se encuentra escuchando entre los personajes mismos historias de este mundo mexicoamericano –microcosmo del marginado en los EE.UU.–, que grita a pecho descubierto su hastío de los abusos que sufre día a día en su continua lucha. En *Little Nation & Other Stories* se reafirma la causa –la lucha por el propio espacio–, *leitmotiv* en la obra de Morales. La introducción de Spires, traductor del texto al inglés, es útil para familiarizar al lector con toda la obra de Morales, pues comenta amplia y detalladamente sobre el estilo poco convencional del autor, de su compromiso inquebrantable por dar voz al marginado, y del tono autobiográfico, aquí protagonizado además por el barrio que lo ve crecer: Montebello. *Little Nation & Other Stories* conmueve con su lenguaje, ya sea por la violencia o ternura de los personajes o por la chocante fuerza con que se expresa lo más íntimo, lo más personal de sus adversidades. Ante el control y violencia de las pandillas y la policía, se humaniza a la comunidad latina resaltando sus sentimientos nobles, sus logros, su conexión con la naturaleza, su solidaridad, respeto, y dignidad ante el infortunio. Un rasgo sobresaliente de la obra es la dicotomía respeto/indignación por los íconos religiosos, en la cual se borran los límites de "moralidad religiosa" para mezclar los aspectos tiernos y grotescos del protagonista, como es el caso con la rareza física en "Prickles," epítome del Otro. Además, la intertextualidad y referencias a canciones y a toda una biblioteca de fotos, grabaciones, lugares o personajes reales corroboran otra historia y existencia actual y real del latino y sus antecedentes. La última historia, "Little Nation," es culminación de los conflictos y circunstancias de su barrio, sus causas y su lucha constante por erradicarlos. La protagonista, Micaela Clemensia, es ícono de la beneficencia por las minorías, símbolo encarnado de la supervivencia, su acción y voz omnipresente ante la injusticia de la sociedad. La comunidad la escucha, la observa, la sigue, siente sus emociones y hasta su compromiso por lograr un cambio. Al final, el lector se queda

con la memoria viva de la lucha interna y externa del latino en sus circunstancias. *Little Nation & Other Stories* es indudablemente una excelente obra de liberación, rebosante de historia y conciencia para todo mundo.

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**Rolando Hinojosa. *The Valley – Estampas del Valle*. Houston: Arte Público Press, 2014. 232 pp.**
**Rolando Hinojosa. *Klail City – Klail City y sus alrededores*. Houston: Arte Público Press, 2014. 246 pp.**

Composed of an updated dedication, original prologue, and English/Spanish language sections, *The Valley/Estampas del Valle* and *Klail City/Klail City y sus alrededores* are republished editions of the 1973 and 1976 Spanish-language originals. *Estampas de Valle* and *Klail City* are pillars of the fifteen-work series that comprise what has come to be known as the *Klail City Death Trip*. *Valley/Estampas* constitutes the first bilingual edition of Rolando Hinojosa's canonical *Estampas del Valle*, winner of the Quinto Sol prize in 1973. *Estampas*, grittily real but post-modern in its fragmented format, is a micro-narrative of the South Texas Tejanos, and it placed Hinojosa in the pantheon of Chicano writers along with figures like Tomás Rivera and Rudolfo Anaya.

Both books are attractively bound in color paperback. The cover of the new *Klail City* features a small Texas downtown street scene with a section of a water tower with the words "Klail City" photoshopped thereon, a wink to the 1987 English language Arte Público edition that featured a Klail City city limits sign, contributing to the impression that the fictional Klail is a real town in the Rio Grande Valley. Fortuitously, the sketch map of Belken County, Hinojosa´s Yoknapatawpha /Macondo, first published in the 1983 Bilingual Press edition of *The Valley*, also appears at the beginning of the Spanish language section of this new edition.

The books' English/Spanish bilingual format in two separate sections seems to be aimed at the English language reader, quite possibly the assimilated, Latino-heritage Spanish speaker. This format also makes the books ideal for use as texts in any cross-listed English/Spanish university class on Chicano or U.S. Latino literature.

Readers and researchers alike should be careful, though, in treating the works as examples of faithful translations. The English language versions were written by Rolando himself, and he terms them "recreations" rather than "translations." The English recreations are loose as translations, and the order of the chapters drastically changes

from *The Valley* to *Estampas*. The *Klail City/Klail City y sus alrededores* book, contains an episode of Jehú's high school reunion, in which memories of bigotry are recounted and coldly friendly relationships with Anglo classmates are reconnected. But the *Klail City* English version downplays the discrimination, eliminating any translation of the frequent Spanish language ethnic descriptors like "raza" and "bolillo" for Latino and white classmates and softening the courteous hostility between Chicanos and Whites in the Valley. The difference could be attributed to the fact that the first *Klail City* was published in 1987, eleven years after the Spanish language original, and decades after the timeframe when the Texas Rangers evicted Tejanos from their properties at the behest of the *bolillada*, Anglo Texans who called all the shots in the Valley. Later works of Hinojosa's series capture the progress towards what the Valley is today, overwhelmingly Latino and governed and served by Latinos at the city and county levels.

The current U.S. cultural and electoral discourse, though, especially the political no-man's-land of immigration reform, reminds us that *Estampas* and *Klail City* are far from quaint literary artifacts. They constitute mileposts along a road towards justice with many intersections and off-ramps. Don Manuel Guzmán, Hinojosa's intermediary between the new and old worlds for the Tejanos of the Valley in another book of the series (soon to be republished), *El condado de Belken*, gives Jehú his blessing to leave the Valley to attend college, but entreats him to "not forget us."

Arte Público's republication of these important works does the same, challenging us to remembrance.

Mark McGraw
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**Tino Villanueva. *Así habló Penélope*. 2ª edición. Traducción de Nuria Brufau. Madrid: Universidad de Alcalá / Instituto Franklin, 2013. 101 pp.**

Tino Villanueva, autor de siete libros de poesía entre los cuales figuran *Hay otra voz poems* (1972), *Shaking off the Dark* (1984), *Crónica de mis años peores* (1987), *Scene from the Movie GIANT* (1993), y *Primera Causa / First Cause* (1999), ahora aporta un nuevo tomo a su trayectoria poética: *Así habló Penélope*.

Este libro bilingüe resulta digno de estudio por la cantidad de sentimientos que despierta en el lector. A través de 32 poemas ordenados cronológicamente a partir de "donde hace dos años abracé a Odiseo,/…por última vez" ("Así habló Penélope" 11), Villanueva da cuenta de lo que es capaz de sufrir una mujer enamorada durante

una espera que dura veinte años. Y es que Penélope, la enamorada de Odiseo, es de carne y hueso, y aunque sobrevive por su amante, tiene dudas; en ocasiones no sabe si es viuda o esposa y pide a los dioses con todas sus fuerzas que le den algún indicio de su situación. A veces siente remordimientos cuando la pasión despierta en su cuerpo, cuando presa de una espera desesperada cuestiona mentalmente su fidelidad: "¿Cuánto tendrás de esposa, acaba preguntando mi conciencia,/ si mañana sucumbes y aceptas a otro hombre por compañero?" ("A veces, en calma" 39); "¿Cuánto más, me pregunto, puedo aguantar/ las visitas de Afrodita,…/ que hacen que me tiemblen las rodillas?" ("A su tiempo" 45). La protagonista sobresale por hacer frente a numerosas dificultades como la de amar a distancia o la de educar en solitario a su hijo Telémaco que crece sin un padre al lado.

A lo largo de las 101 páginas los cinco sentidos del que lee experimentan numerosas sensaciones. Es un libro que sabe a sal y en el que se percibe el aroma a mar. Asimismo, permite contemplar con los ojos cerrados el brillo del cielo repleto de estrellas y escuchar el rumor del oleaje, "el susurro sonoro del ir-y-venir de la espuma" ("Dios de las extensas y azules aguas" 63), esa melodía natural capaz de adormecer a cualquier insomne. Las palabras permiten revivir el placer que se siente al fundirse en un abrazo con un ser querido.

El libro acaba con el momento soñado, "pasadas ya las agonías del amor" (99), con el regreso de Odiseo a Ítaca y con la unión de los amantes, con el triunfo del amor "más allá de las palabras" que es lo que da vida a la vida, "sabedores de que el amor, como siempre, es la luz que ilumina nuestras vidas" ("Veinte años de espera" 101).

En esta obra, Tino Villanueva ha sabido plasmar de manera sencilla una historia tan difícil de vivir y tan complicada de contar como la de Penélope. Distinto en tema y tono a su obra previa, *Así habló Penélope* pone en evidencia a un maestro de la palabra. Es un placer viajar a través de los versos y experimentar momentos deliciosos gracias a un lenguaje repleto de emoción y cargado de belleza.

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**Brandon D. Shuler, Robert Johnson, and Erika Garza-Johnson, eds. *New Border Voices: An Anthology*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2014. 265 pp.**

*New Border Voices* is an anthology that sets out to undo –or at the very least challenge– what its editors consider a meme that has fossilized the notion of Borderland studies. In their reading, Glora Anzaldúa's multicultural, polyglot, physical,

and metaphysical third space has been usurped by academia and "reduced to de facto ethnic studies…essentially marginalizing each ethnic group and the Border space to a nexus of us versus them binaries" (xiii). To make their point, Shuler, Johnson, and Garza-Johnson offer a collection of forty-eight authors from different walks of life whose contributions may rightly be called "an accurate portrait of the Texas/Mexico Border at the beginning of the twenty-first century to help refocus Borderlands studies to a collected discipline of area and not of ethnicity" (ibid.). This portrait sets itself apart from previous anthologies such as *Puro Border: Dispatches, Snapshots, & Graffiti from the US/Mexico Border* (2002), *Lone Star Literature: A Texas Anthology* (2003), and *Hecho en Tejas* (2008) in its attempt to be inclusive of the many "new" voices that comprise Texas border writing. And this is where, despite its content, *New Border Voices* undoes some of what it sets out to challenge.

Its contributors, for example, are mostly from the northern side of the Río Bravo/Rio Grande, undoing a balance that *Puro Border* carefully considers even though many of its authors are alien to the border spaces they address. *Hecho en Tejas*, on the other hand, is not focused on the border region, makes no attempt to go beyond the geographic parameters determined by its title, and is clear in its wishes to showcase Mexican American literature in Texas. *New Border Voices* –at least with its title– stakes a claim for a representative sample that goes beyond an author's ethnic background and that will include authors that go beyond the confines limited to the space between El Paso and Brownsville near the Gulf of Mexico. In part this is accomplished as both Mexican American and non-Mexican American authors are included, however it does fall short in its very minimal inclusion of authors that are not somehow connected to the Texas border experience. Similarly, it is a bit difficult to accept the designation of all its contributors as "New Voices." Leaving José Limón and Rolando Hinojosa aside, the sole voices in Part I and set apart in the anthology in order to offer some context for what follows in Part II, many of the contributors might be new to certain readers, but certainly not new to writing. Ray González, for instance, has been publishing since the mid-1980s and is the author of over 15 books of mostly poetry but some fiction as well. To list someone like Gonzalez or Pat Mora –whose first book of poetry dates back to 1986– next to Isaac Chavarría under the "new voices" rubric doesn't quite sit well.

But besides these minor tidbits, the anthology succeeds in retaking that third space, a Texas third space that is less concerned with ethnicity and more with experience in its many variations, regardless of the author's place of origin. Suffice to say that the texts, a healthy mixture of poetry and prose, offer glimpses of the experience "of area and not of ethnicity" as quoted above. Undocumented immigrants, coyotes, border checkpoints, drug trafficking, curanderas, corridos, and the Juárez femicides

are present, as are parades with marching bands, family rites, nostalgic reminiscings of adolescence, sins of the flesh, and youth baseball games. Present then is a plurality of border existence, where the border as place takes center stage, as it is experienced by the many different kind people that inhabit the region.

That is not to say that authors' contributions are all tied to geography. Take, for example, Ray Gonzalez's "One Pinto Bean." A short, one page narrative that begins "One pinto bean is all I have left from my stereotype, an image I gave up decades ago when I got tired of my brown shadow" (29). Though the narrator saves this one pinto bean as a reminder of who or what he used to be, there is an element of nostalgia despite his belief "in the freedom to separate myself from my past." In the end, tired of what the bean represents, the implication is that it he will get rid of it, consume it in a pot of vegetable soup before it consumes him. While the "pots of frijoles, stacks of tortillas, and handfuls of hot jalapeno peppers" of his past are ethnic markers, the us-vs.-them paradigm the editors wish to eschew is here complicated by the internalized dichotomy that forces the narrator's deliberations.

But Gonzalez's text is here the minority. Most of authors in the collection are "tongue-tied to the border" as Gene Keller's poem "Border Illusion" states (82) and address the geographic realities and struggles of the border region. In "The Loss of Juárez," for instance, Sergio Troncoso recounts with sadness how the violence south of El Paso has become a barrier preventing him and others from crossing into Mexico where his elemental, spiritual origins reside. The innocence of his youth, of border life, trampled upon by drug violence leaves Troncoso wondering what the future holds, certain only that what has been lost will remain exclusively "in the memories of those who survive" (177). Chuck Taylor also looks to the past in "My Better Border" as he recalls a time where the U.S./Mexico frontera was porous "like the border between Canada and the United States" (252). His outlook, though, is optimistic as he remains hopeful that "The borders, wherever they are, will grow peaceful again" (254).

*New Border Voices* is an accomplishment and does a wonderful job of bringing together many voices, some new and some seasoned, from throughout the Texas Mexico border region. The mosaic it presents refocuses Border Studies to a sense of place (to refer to Hinojosa's essay in the anthology), and away from strict ethnic parameters. This does not in any way mean that ethnic strife is not present, but it is no longer the stilted us-vs.-them dichotomy set along traditional lines. The border is more complex than this, and *New Border Voices* makes this quite evident.

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