

Sonia E. Alvarez, Claudia de Lima Costa, Veronica Feliu, Rebecca Hester, Norma Klahn, Millie Thayer with Cruz Caridad Bueno (Edited volume) *Translocalities / Translocalidades: Feminist Politics of Translation in the Latin/a Americas*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2014. 496 Pages. 29.95 (paperback). ISBN: 978-0-8223-5632-5

Translocalities/ Translocalidades is an ambitious project stemming from an interdisciplinary feminist working group practicing a feminism of solidarity through which they were able to evoke “a multiple, intersectional, multi-sited consciousness” (4). One of the triumphs of this collection of essays is its breadth and depth regarding the notions of translation, translocation and the intersections of feminism, activism and language in and across many of the cultures within Latin America, and U.S. Latina/o diasporic communities. Within the U.S. academe, there is a sizable body of theoretical work addressing “Third World Feminisms,” even within Duke UP’s own collection there are important works that address transnational feminisms and decolonial praxis, such as Chandra Talpade Mohanty’s *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity* (2003) and edited readers such as *Chicana Feminisms: A Critical Reader* (Arredondo, et al. 2003).

Nevertheless, this unique anthology, with two introductions and twenty individual chapters, provides much-needed transdisciplinary scholarship that teases out complexities and contradictions regarding race, class, gender and the transnational flows of not just bodies, but ideas, theories and practices of social mobilization within and around Latin America, as it is broadly conceived, geographically, linguistically, culturally and affectively. Simultaneously, this edition makes visible the invisibility of translation, foregrounding not just the practice of finding linguistic equivalencies, but questioning whether translation of concepts, such as those of the U.S. “women of color,” or practices, such as those of Anzaldúa’s bilingual language of the borderlands are even attainable in different socio-political contexts of the South

Because this collection is written in English by a diverse group of women from across the Americas, it invites English-language readers to familiarize themselves with academic production from outside of the English-speaking world, stubbornly refusing to cede unquestioned primacy to U.S. or western scholarship and its embodied feminisms. We are repeatedly reminded that the travel across multiple borders and boundaries, the translocation of theory and practice is a two-way street, that flows, albeit, at times unequally, from South to North, not just North to South.

Sonia Alvarez introduces the project, signaling its aim to “foster a renewed feminist and antiracist episteme for reimagining and retheorizing a revitalized Latina/o American feminist studies travestida (cross-dressed) for the globalized, transmigrant Americas of the twenty-first century” (17) and explaining its conceptual divisions. Claudia Lima de Costa provides a conceptual introduction which acts as a theoretical framing for the entire project. Citing Shohat (2002), she reminds us that the practice of translation is not being deployed as the “rescue” of other women (32) and suggests that “feminists in the North and South can disturb hegemonic narratives of the other, gender, and feminism itself through practices of translation that make visible the asymmetrical geometries of power along the local-regional-national-global nexus” (33).

In part 1, “Mobilizations: Mobilizing Theories/ Texts/ Images,” Norma Klahn engages theories of translation as she explores women’s writing primarily in Mexico and at the U.S.-Mexico border, advocating for the publication of critical editions that make translation visible and “historicize the story being translocated” (52). Ana Rebeca Prada examines the travels of theory focusing on Anzaldúa’s (im)possibility in Bolivia, and its re-

conception as embodied by the *Mujeres Creando* movement, a radical performance collective with a rich and fraught history. Simone Pereira Schmidt, whose chapter is translated from Portuguese by Ramayana Lyra, reads characters from literary and filmic texts against the historical practice of slavery in Brazil suggesting that “the most urgent task for a feminist theory constructed from ‘outside the center’ is to reread its history against the grain, establishing a contact zone in which the history of women’s movements in Latin America and the theories produced within the academy, translated from their contexts in the major hegemonic centers, are placed in positions of dialogue” (90) after all, her characters remind us, “Women live their exclusion through their bodies” (92). Isabel Espinal examines her own work translating the Dominican poet Yrene Santos’s *El juego incansable*, becoming *The Untiring Game*. She holds up the translations side by side, highlighting Juan Flores’s (1993) concept of trans-creation, “a translation of constant re-creation” (105). Finally, Marisa Belausteguigoitia Rius pairs Subcomandante Marcos’s postscripts with Anzaldúa’s *Borderlands/ La frontera* through the lens of Rosario Castellanos’s *indigenismo* to outline a “pedagogy of the double, a maneuver that makes visible what is refused due to an excess of difference related to national, gendered, racial, and sexual identities” (112).

In part 2, “Mediations: National/ Transnational Identities/ Circuits,” Claudia De Lima Costa addresses the history, goals and outcomes of Brazil’s *Revista de Estudos Feministas*, “the only refereed, interdisciplinary feminist academic journal in Brazil that is national in scope” (138) as it acts as a gatekeeper of foreign theory, while Margara Millan examines the intersecting histories of three feminist publications in Mexico: *Fem* (1976), *Debate Feminista* (1990), and *La correa feminista* (1991), as well as the newspaper supplements *La doble jornada* that would later become *La triple jornada* examining their political and social differences as they pertain to an acceptance or rejection of international theoretical frameworks. Rebecca Hester affirms that “women’s bodies are a key site for the negotiation of power relations in ‘modern’ society” (169) as she examines Triqui and Mixtec communities in California and the concepts of “health promotion” that require considerable cultural translation from the neoliberal logic of the individual to the collective consciousness of these translocated indigenous communities. Kiran Asher addresses the confrontation between “development feminist” work in the non-profit sector and the academic theories of postcoloniality that focus on discourse and representation, reconciling the two seemingly-opposed notions in her study of Afro-Colombian women whose struggle is situated “geopolitically to understand the dynamic nature of domination and resistance and the uneven and multiple power relations within which women act” (206). Macarena Gomez-Barris examines the Chilean jazz/funk/hip-hop artist Moyeneı Valdes, noting that in her confrontation of the conservative values of a post-authoritarian transition, “She breaks through western-defined universality through disidentification and finds aesthetic forms of identification with cultural historical traces” (214).

In part 3, “Migrations: Disrupting (B)orders,” Teresa Carrillo examines the implications of translation and power differential between employers and employees when U.S. households employ migrant domestic service. She cites the “feminization of migration” (228) and the overwhelmingly gendered nature of domestic service, implicating feminist organizations’ lack of response to what they perceive as a mere labor issue. Meanwhile Veronica Feliu explores domestic service in Chile, drawing similar conclusions about the racialized and gendered nature of oppression, and the overwhelming exploitation of Mapuche and other indigenous women from Peru in that setting. Suzana Maia addresses the ways that Brazilian exotic dancers in New York embody a national gendered fantasy of miscegenation, detailing the lives of several middle-class Brazilians who claim their “morena”

or brown-skinned status only upon immigration to the U.S. setting, and Adriana Piscitelli outlines an opposite flow, of sex-tourism in Brazilian cities, and how many women there “translate themselves to suit sex-travelers’ expectations” (278).

In part 4, “Movements: Feminist/ Social / Political/ Postcolonial,” Maylei Blackwell explores transnational feminist coalition building undertaken by Puerto Rican women in New York, Indigenous women from the U.S. with Zapatistas in Mexico, and Chicana and Mexicana lesbians. Blackwell discusses how in the face of rampant neoliberal globalization that exacerbates social inequity, “translocalism [...] involves actors who, despite being multiply marginalized in their national contexts, create linkages with social actors across locales to build new affiliations, solidarities, and movements” (300). Pascha Bueno-Hansen interrogates the term “queer” as it travels from women of color feminists in the north to lesbians in Lima, Peru, noting that each group has different political reasons for adopting or eschewing the term because of a perceived insertion of sexuality into political solidarity in the former and a presumed erasure of lesbian struggles in a still patriarchal movement in the latter. She aims to reconcile these seemingly opposed positions by suggesting that “Cultural translation is critical for facilitating friendship-based feminist solidarity because it urges us to take time, step out of our own worlds for a moment, and get to know each other’s struggles within context” (325). Ester Shapiro confronts the near-impossibility of translation of the foundation Boston Women’s Health Collective *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, sharing stories from the trenches while outlining the history of the collective move to translate a comprehensive and culturally modified version for Latin America, in “trialogue” an “evolving, conflictual, negotiated collaboration between three perspectives, none of them uniform” (341): the original U.S. feminist model and methods, a team of U.S. Latinas whose task it was to translate for a new context, and additional texts and contexts from Latin American and Caribbean feminists who favored collectivity over individuality in many cases. Victoria M. Bañales examines the failure of previous scholars to apply a gendered reading to the translation of *I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala* (Menchú, Burgos-Debray 1984). Agustín Lao-Montes and Mirangela Buggs explore Afro-latinidad and remind us that “Afro-feminisms are now integral to the political culture of the field of black politics in Latin America and the Caribbean” (397). Finally, Millie Thayer traces the history of SOS Corpo, a radical Brazilian feminist group begun in the 1980s to address social and health inequities in rural Brazil who would come to reject notions of body and empowerment from the north, as they transformed into an NGO with a gender perspective in the 1990s. The flow of theories reversed, now south to north, and “Accountability, in their translation, was not just a means of exacting compliance from the South with the criteria of the North. Instead, it required mutual commitment to advancing the cause of gender and social justice” (419).

As with any inter and trans-disciplinary anthology, not all chapters will be of interest to all scholars given the wide range of studies, methods and concerns: from literary to sociological, medical to musical, politically activist to primarily theoretical, Brazil to Bolivia, Peru to Puerto Rico, Mexico to California to New York, and many places in between. However, this collection not only demonstrates excellent scholarship across many disciplines, it maintains a high degree of cohesion, as if each chapter were conversing with its neighbors, weaving together themes of travel, re-location, and even the treachery of translation, finding what is lost in the interstitial spaces within and across the Latin/a Américas.

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