Latino Immigrants and the Transformation of the U.S. South

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Ecuador, and Guatemala are absent. Nonetheless, this book is an important addition to the comparative history of cartography.

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LATINO & BORDER STUDIES

Latino Immigrants and the Transformation of the U.S. South. Edited by Mary E. Odem and Elaine Lacy. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009. Pp. xxvii, 175. Maps. Tables. Notes. Index. $59.95 cloth; $24.95 paper.

This book is an excellent and timely overview of the U.S. south's most recent demographic transformation. Edited by two historians, the book brings together a highly qualified group of scholars from history, education, and the social sciences to assess the state of the new Latino south at the end of the 2000s. Four admirable features of the book stand out. The first is geographic range. Together, the chapters cover aspects of Latino life not only in two southern "economic opportunity" states (Georgia and North Carolina), as sociologist Carl Bankston has coined them, but also in four southern "limited migration" states (Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Tennessee), which until recently have trailed the opportunity states along both economic development and immigration indicators. Consequently, the various chapters bring together an intriguing look into how Latino immigration has transformed various subregions of the south—in six different states, in both highland and lowland areas, and in both urban and rural areas.

The second admirable quality is topical focus. Although some of the chapters focus most heavily on Latinos and work, others on Latinos and politics and policy, others on Latinos and activity across nation-state borders, and others still on Latinos and inter- and intragroup relations, in essence all of the chapters touch on aspects of each. Furthermore, they do so in an interactive manner, analyzing both how Latinos are moving and adapting to various features of southern life, and also how native southerners are reacting and adapting to the newcomers in turn. This wide-ranging focus builds on the earliest scholarship on Latinos in the region, which mainly concerned itself with Latinos' work trajectories and economic and fiscal impacts, extending it outwards to address the emerging (and at times more contested) social, cultural, and political ramifications of rapid demographic change.

The third, and arguably most important, feature of the book is temporal contextualization. Various scholars of Latino immigration in the south now describe a shift from the more welcoming, hospitable, or at least benignly ambivalent context of reception that greeted newcomers in the 1980s and 1990s (especially in the region's rural areas) to a more openly hostile and negative one after 2005. Appropriate attention is awarded to this shift throughout the book, most explicitly in the introduction and conclusion. We learn how deteriorating economic conditions after 2005 have mixed with the growing visibility of Latinos in the region, rising concern about terrorism and illegal immigration throughout the nation, and the implementation of key restrictive policy measures—such

as E-Verify, the REAL ID Act of 2005, the Georgia Security and Immigration Compliance Act, and cross-deputization of law enforcement under Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act—to make life much more difficult for southern Latinos. This shift provides a good context for understanding why so many Latinos are now describing life in the region in more ambivalent and contradictory terms than they used to, since they have come under increasing attack from natives (especially politicians and working-class whites and blacks, as the various chapters illustrate) for their allegedly harmful cultural and criminal attributes.

The fourth key feature is muted optimism. While the chapters alert us to important problems faced by Latinos in the south at the end of the 2000s—most notably poverty, illegal status, and growing resentment among natives—they also identify ways in which various stakeholders have organized to assist Latino newcomers in local "place-making" projects. These stakeholders include, but are by no means limited to, employers, business and community leaders, unions, immigrant rights and race-based coalition organizations, faith-based organizations, journalists and newspaper editors. As such, the various chapters in this book not only document the kinds of complex local contestations that are taking place over Latino immigration at a crucial moment in the U.S. south's history. They also provide an abstract blueprint for how individuals and communities throughout the nation could respond to immigration—one of the most salient consequences of globalization—in a more practical and humane way, should they decide they want to.

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Crossing Borders with the Santo Niño de Atocha. By Juan Javier Pescador. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009. Pp. xxiv, 256. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. $34.95 cloth.

Historian Juan Javier Pescador presents a well-researched account of an important religious icon of the Mexico-U.S. borderlands, the Santo Niño de Atocha. He traces its journey from a symbol of Spanish imperial power, to a symbol of resistance among northern Mexico's migrants, bandits, captives, prostitutes, sick, and other impoverished peoples, to a patron of safe border crossings in Mexico and the United States. The research is largely based on archival materials, including parish records, private letters, church inventories, property records, and official state documents. Also analyzed are impressive quantities of religious media.

Chapter 1 begins the story of the Santo Niño in sixteenth-century Spain, as a mother and child statue known as Our Lady of Atocha and the Holy Child. A symbol of Spanish military, political and economic power, worshiped by royals and wealthy elites, the image came to Mexico and was revered exclusively by Spaniards as a symbol of Spain's hegemony. With the Mexican Independence War (1810-1821) and its aftermath, Spanish elites fled or were expelled from Mexico and the icon began to be seen as a savior of the poor. By the late nineteenth century, the Niño, previously a mere attachment to Our