

bleibenden Kapitel zu "Schutz und Anleitung", "Performance", "Abschied" und die meist thematisch gruppierten "Gegenüberstellungen" im besonders langen siebten Kapitel. Sie sind gut recherchiert, vermitteln eine Vorstellung von Bedeutungssystemen in Europa und Afrika und warten vor allem mit hervorragenden Objekten auf. Immer wieder werden in intelligenten Beiträgen scheinbar selbstverständliche Annahmen zu bestimmten Objekten oder Ikonografien außer Kraft gesetzt und dadurch andere Betrachtungsweisen nahegelegt.

Insgesamt ist das Buch sehr einladend gestaltet. Die übersichtlichen und informativen Katalogeinträge animieren zur genauen Betrachtung der zahlreichen und qualitativ ausgezeichneten Reproduktionen. Hier wurde kein Aufwand gescheut, um die Objekte ins richtige Licht zu rücken.

Allerdings bleiben einige Fragen offen, so beispielsweise die Überlegung hinter dem Entscheid, afrikanische Objekte, die hauptsächlich aus dem 19. Jh. stammen, überwiegend europäischen Objekten der Renaissance und des Mittelalters gegenüberzustellen. In nur wenigen Fällen handelt es sich um zeitgenössische Objekte, die historisch miteinander in Beziehung stehen. Auch wichtige Provenienzfragen werden zwar früh im Katalog kritisch zur Diskussion gestellt, aufgrund des beschränkten Platzes und der Komplexität des Themas jedoch nur im Ansatz verfolgt. Die Provenienzforschung ist selbstverständlich nur ein Teil postkolonialer Versuche, mit kolonialen Sammlungsbeständen umzugehen, muss aber sicherlich als wesentlicher Bestandteil des Anspruchs verstanden werden, den eurozentrischen Blick aufgeben zu wollen. Dieser Anspruch ist – auch wenn die Qualität der gezeigten Objekte darüber hinwegtäuschen mag – leider keineswegs eingelöst. Dies scheint auch daran zu liegen, dass die Herausgeber-schaft (und insbesondere die ersten zwei Kapitel) von einem eher konservativen Publikum ausgeht, das die Berliner Sammlungen nie in Frage gestellt hat, das koloniale Denken erst zu hinterfragen beginnt und sorgfältig an die kritische Reflexion herangeführt werden muss, die unter international vernetzten Experten seit gut dreißig Jahren zu einer Selbstverständlichkeit geworden ist.

Auch stellt sich die Frage, warum keine Objekte aus dem Museum Europäischer Kulturen Eingang in die Ausstellung gefunden haben (man denke an die im Katalog erwähnte und reproduzierte Perchtenmaske, Abb. 27, S. 93). Die etwas polare Gegenüberstellung europäischer und afrikanischer "Kunst" wäre dadurch wesentlich abgemildert und auch etwas komplexer geworden. Dies wird jedoch durch die Präsentation von Objekten mit einer komplexen Geschichte des Handels, der Diplomatie und der Eroberungen eingelöst. Sie stehen exemplarisch für die Auflösung vom "Eigenen" und "Anderen", Europäischen und Afrikanischen, repräsentieren sie doch entscheidende Momente der Begegnung und der Verflechtung der Kontinente bereits in und vor den Geburtsstunden der Globalisierung und des Kolonialismus.

Entgegen der impliziten Behauptung im Ausstellung- und Katalogtitel, dass afrikanische und europäische Kunst unvergleichlich sei, werden solche Objekte durchweg in ein Zwiegespräch gebracht, insbesondere im siebten und längsten Kapitel. Im Unterschied zur Ausstellung, wo diese Gegenüberstellung zeitweise formal und etwas plump wirkte, wurde für den vergleichenden Katalogteil ein kluges Layout gewählt, das einen rein formalen Vergleich vermeidet. Indem oft (jedoch nicht durchgehend) die besprochenen Objekte gewissermaßen Rücken an Rücken – und nicht nebeneinander – auf den Buchseiten reproduziert sind, bewahren sie ihre ästhetische Autonomie, wobei sie von den erläuternden Texten wie mit einem Scharnier in einen inhaltlichen Bezug gesetzt werden. Entscheidend dabei ist, dass einige Objektzusammenstellungen tatsächlich formale Ähnlichkeiten aufweisen, das Zwiegespräch aber deutlich darüber hinausgeht und vor allem in Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschieden der sie bestimmenden Ontologien, Glaubenssysteme und kulturellen Praktiken zur Geltung kommt. Das ist eine besondere Stärke des Katalogs, die die Ausstellung nicht erreicht.

Fiona Siegenthaler

**Chávez, Alex E.:** *Sounds of Crossing. Music, Migration, and the Aural Poetics of Huapango Arribeño.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2017. 425 pp. ISBN 978-0-8223-7018-5. Price: \$ 29.95

The study is about the music-making capabilities (*huapango arribeño*) of specific Mexican immigrant groups who perform on both sides of the U.S./Mexico border for their respective communities in the late 20th and early 21st century. Chávez's argument is "the performance of Mexican *huapango arribeño* – an understudied musical form – as a lens with which to understand the cultural and spatial contours and politics of this transnational migrant world" (5). The text is organized into six chapters: 1) Aurality and the Long American Century, 2) Companions of the Calling, 3) Verses and Flows at the Dawn of the Neoliberal Mexico, 4) Regional Sounds: Mexican Texas and the Semiotics of Citizenship, 5) From Potosí to Tennessee: Clandestine Desires and the Poetic Border, and 6) Huapango sin Fronteras: Mapping What Matters and Other Paths. The author supports his thesis with books, articles, interviews, songs and verses, and internet resources. For the purposes of this book review, the reader will examine in more detail the genre of Mexican *huapango arribeño*, and how this music serves as a cultural and commentary bridge for an immigrant community in between Mexico and the United States.

In his introduction, Chávez describes the difficult crossing of the U.S./Mexico border by his parents: his mother in a trunk of a car in Juárez, and his father near Ojinaga, Chihuahua, walks for almost a week through dense and thorny bushes. Later in the United States, they would meet and marry in West Texas. Their stories are never forgotten, and the author explains how their

struggles have shaped who he is as a professional (2). Chávez continues his personal narrative with an incident that takes place at a wedding reception in a local VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars) in a small town. As he and his fellow musicians are performing *huapango* songs, Anglo U.S. veterans drink, listen, and watch from a bar opposite the building. Chávez and an “intoxicated Anglo man twice ... [his] age, presumably a veteran,” meet in the bathroom, and the gentleman comments with a slurred speech: “You know, I tell them you all paid good money for this place, and they shouldn’t get upset about it. It’s good business” (2). The author takes the remark as a threat, and the cultural exchange between a Mexican and Anglo will set the tone for the entire investigation: “us” against “them.” Chávez then positions himself to discuss the issues of immigration reform, border walls, Latino politics, and the racist ideology of conservative America with the slogan “Make America Great Again” (4). And though it may seem that there is no voice from this fragmented community, it is alive and well if one cares to listen to the music and lyrics and witness the dancing and singing of these immigrant people in various places throughout the United States.

*Huapango arribeño* is a music from the Mexican states of Guanajuato, Querétaro, and San Luis Potosí. The Nahuatl word *cuahpanco* signifies “atop of the wood” where people dance various styles of music with an emphasis on their footwork (*zapateado*); while *arribeño* (highlander) “refers to the mountainous regions of Guanajuato and Querétaro – *arriba* means ‘above’ – and also to the midregion of San Luis Potosí” (5). The four-member ensemble, usually all male, consists of two violins, a *vihuela* or *jarana huasteca* (small stringed instruments used for their percussive characteristics), and a *guitarra quinta huapanguera*, playing to a 6/8 meter. This special type of music, poetry, and dance for these *huapangueros* is known as *el destino* (the calling), a philosophical and aesthetic theory based on the relationship between the audience and poets (7). But it is the *topada* (meeting or encounter) and *décima* (style of poetry) duel between folk poets which sets *huapango arribeño* apart from other Mexican regional music. The *décima* is a ten-line stanza with a rhyming scheme of “abbaccddc” which oftentimes includes a *planta*, a base quatrain, at the beginning to be glossed by a set of four *décimas*, one for each verse of the *planta*. This poetic tradition in Mexico dates to the arrival of the Spaniards in the New World, and it is still practiced in various parts of Latin America. Although themes can range from baptisms, weddings, and other specific themes, *décimas* of cultural conflict take precedence in Chávez’s study to document the tension between Anglos and Mexican immigrants. In this regard, the author credits and aligns himself with Américo Paredes and his pioneering work in folklore, music, ethnography, and border studies (8).

From a musical perspective, Chávez explains in chapter 1, “Aurality and the Long American Century,” the

socio-political context in Mexico and the United States to situate the lives of Mexican immigrants, especially the undocumented, and importance of *huapango arribeño*. He argues that in the United States, Mexican music is understood racially as “(1) primal festivity, (2) care-free and unserious expression, and (3) pastoral backwardness – all of which brace parallel beliefs about ethnic Mexicans as a whole” (42). Thus, *huapango* music suffers on both sides of the border: it is an inferior sound from the U.S. mainstream view and one which goes against Mexican modernization, clinging instead to a life on the *ranchos* where “machismo, fatalism, [and] defensiveness” define one’s manhood, culture, and existence (45). But *huapango arribeño* for Mexican immigrants does the opposite, according to the author. The performance of this music allows for improvisation and change from a community who is active, present, and aware of its reality, narrating, documenting, and reclaiming its space and dignity in everyday life (60).

Chapter 2, “Companions of the Calling,” describes the art of *huapango arribeño*: its history, development, instruments, arenas, and musical poets who have kept this tradition alive in the central region of Mexico and now in the United States. Chávez explains that most scholars have ignored this specific type of music and have opted to generalize and cluster its rhythmic “son” with other similar sounds in Mexico like the *son jarocho*, *son huasteco*, *son de Tierra Caliente*, and *son de la Costa Chica* (70). His knowledge of this music is multifaceted examining the lyrical structure of its verses, the improvisational style of its poetic conventions, the context, and rules which guide the performance, along with stories from *huapangueros* (76). At the core of this music is the *topada* (encounter) where two poets showcase their knowledge, experience, and expertise in the art of verbal dueling. The performance generates something new and unique which is transmitted to the audience (74f.). The marathon between ensembles can last from seven to twelve hours; therefore, to become a *huapanguero* requires skill, courage, and fortitude to appreciate *el destino* (the calling) where people’s lives come together through art and consciousness.

Chapter 3, “Verses and Flows at the Dawn of Neoliberal Mexico,” focuses on the “relationship between performance and labor migration, between poetics and political-economic realities” and birth of the *huapango* festival in Xichú, Guanajuato, Mexico in 1982 (136). Chávez shares the story of Guillermo Velázquez, a troubadour who plays an important role in the founding of the *huapango arribeño* festival. His group, “Los Leones de la Sierra de Xichú,” have become a center piece for the immigrant experience by building community support with their lyrics and music. Velázquez describes his difficult life in Mexico City and decides to return to Xichú after three years away from home. He meets other *huapangueros* and begins to follow his calling for music, using it as a vehicle to voice the struggles and hardships of the common folk. The labor of these efforts culminates with the end-of-the-year celebration

where the *topada* remains at the center of the event (157). It is a community affair where veteran musicians share their skills with younger students, where annual fundraisers support the cause, and where women, children, and men all take part in the organization of this event. At the *huapango arribeño* festival one experiences the beauty and significance of live musical performances, of narratives which speak of life's trials and tribulations, of community interaction with young and old generations, and of place and belonging which is still regarded as home (165).

Chapter 4, "Regional Sounds," attempts to discredit the pioneering work of Américo Paredes to make space for *fuereños* (Mexican outsiders) and *huapango arribeño* music in Texas. Chávez states that in his research, Paredes is ambivalent toward the presence of Mexican immigrants in Texas and the United States in general (218). He believes that Paredes's oeuvre focuses mainly on the original settlers of this region and that all other newcomers to the area contributed very little to this way of life. The author then discusses his first musical experience as a *huapanguero* to lend creditability to his argument. Chávez offers a history of the *corrido* (folk ballad) in South Texas, and how Mexico-Tejanos, along with Anglos, discriminate against Mexican immigrants. He states that "Mexican migrants are not considered human beings north of the U.S.-Mexico border: they are laborers, criminals, or, most egregiously, 'drop-and-leave culprits' and rapists" (221). Chávez ends his essay with a *topada* between Graciano and Don Lencho – two folk poets who perform live for their audience in central Texas – to demonstrate the new reality and presence of immigrant people in Texas (230).

Chapter 5, "From Potosí to Tennessee," continues to track the *huapango arribeño* community from Mexico and into the United States. By documenting the lives of these immigrants, Chávez gives a voice and presence to these people and their fortunes and misfortunes across the U.S./Mexico Border. Their marginalized existence in the United States is one of "cultural violence," in which they are seen and treated as a "disposable form of human life" (247). In Georgia, for example, undocumented immigrants cannot obtain driver's licenses or receive state social services like medical care (240). *Huapango arribeño* serves as an antidote for their lives as it expresses and records their daily scorn and hardships in a foreign land. Folk poets create stories and greet (*saludar*) others who may or may not be present, but their songs are a reminder of the yearning for presence, intimacy, and community (261). Those who listen and dance to this shared experience cannot help but to feel alive and proud alongside the celebration of life with others as themselves (275).

Chapter 6, "Huapango Sin Fronteras," concludes the analysis of *huapango arribeño* music. Chávez begins with the mass protest that takes place in Austin, Texas because of the Border Protection, Anti-terrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005, better known as H.R. 4437, the Sensenbrenner Bill. As an ethnographer

and performer, he is invited to play as a *huapanguero* for an audience of over eleven thousand in attendance to show resistance for the criminalization of undocumented immigrants in the United States (280). The author states that a particular *decimal* "capture[s] a critical sense of citizenship cognizant of the relationship between transnational labor and capital, and how they are bound up with the politics of migrant mobility" (286). From here, Chávez re-examines concepts of "Mexican-ness" (*lo mexicano*) and challenges intellectuals like Octavio Paz and other scholars about the fatalistic view of these people (291). Simply stated, Mexican immigrants do not possess a pessimistic view of the world if they are willing to sacrifice themselves to seek a better life. Home for these immigrants is here and there, past and present, crossing borders, and building community against resistive forces (315).

Alex E. Chávez has made an important contribution in the fields of cultural anthropology, ethnomusicology, folklore, history, and immigration studies with his work, "Sounds of Crossing. Music, Migration, and the Aural Poetics of Huapango Arribeño." As a child of undocumented immigrants, his story will resonate with others as the topic of "illegal" immigration continues to escalate in the United States. Chávez allows the reader to reconceptualize the discipline of anthropology and to view *huapangueros* as ethnographers themselves who transcribe the joys and sorrows of life in poetic verse for their audiences. These stories serve as one of the strengths of the investigation: the reflective interpretation of life between poet and listeners is polyphonic as it is shaped and agreed by the community.

But the text is not free from criticism. The language is very dense in certain sections and uses a lot of academic jargon which makes it difficult for the reader. To be clear, the *son mexicano* includes the various genres like *son jarocho*, *son huasteco*, *son mariachi*, and the *son arribeño* is part of this musical category. For some reason, Chávez wishes to suggest that it is something separate when in fact it is one of several regional formats of *son* heard in Mexico. In addition, *huapango* is a term which may be applied to various forms of music: *son jarocho*, *son huasteco*, the *huapango norteño*, and the *huapango son* genre. The *son arribeño* is part of this group. In many cases, *son* and *huapango* are synonymous and people talk about *son huasteco*, *huapango huasteco*, *son jarocho*, *huapango jarocho*, *son arribeño*, and *huapango arribeño*. And as the author notes, *huapango (fandango)* can refer to a gathering of musicians and dancers in some *huasteco* and *jarocho* contexts as well (36 f.). What is more, there is such a category as a *huapango song (canción huapango/huapango estilizado)* such as *Cucurrucucú Paloma*, *Cielo Rojo*, *El Pastor*, and *Serenata Huasteca*. These are songs (*canciones*). *Huapango arribeño* once more belongs to the *son mexicano*; therefore, *son arribeño* compositions are *sones* and not *canciones*. Perhaps Chávez may wish to call these *son arribeño* "pieces," "selections," or "compositions," or simply *sones*.

Another criticism is with the usage of Spanish grammar and omission of accents. For example, in Ricardo's flight from Homeland Security agents, the narrative in colloquial speech has too many inaccuracies for Spanish readers (244 f.). These include *se nos pegó* ("to follow us" in the past tense because without an accent [pego] the phrase becomes unintelligible); *mi* (indirect object vs possessive adjective); *más* (more vs yet as a conjunction); *iba a quedar* (missing "a" between words for future tense); *sí* (yes vs if); *por qué* (why vs because); and *llevó* (took vs take). In Spanish, accent marks are important because the meaning of the word can change, but in this case the errors appear to be more of an oversight than anything else.

And finally, the author's admiration for Américo Paredes's legacy is inconsistent. At first, he praises the Mexico-Tejano's pioneering studies in Chicana/o anthropology and folklore only to criticize him later. In his efforts to validate the lives of Mexican immigrants in the United States, Alex E. Chávez is uncomfortable that Paredes did not do more for this group of people. "Given ... [Paredes's] ambivalence toward Mexican migrants, it might have disturbed Paredes's presumed cultural atlas to know that the décima – his first love – made a comeback of sorts, but not among the people in the southern Texas region his scholarship celebrated" (211). Does anyone really know how the late Américo Paredes (1915–1999) might have reacted? Could it have been much different? And what may have been his response to such a change in border music? No one really knows. Thus, this type of criticism is not necessary because it takes away from Alex E. Chávez's important contribution. Besides, scholars familiar with Paredes's oeuvre know that it was a brief on behalf of his people: the first settlers of Nuevo Santander (1749) who understood the *gringo* from the north and *fuereño* from the south as outsiders. There was no ambivalence. Yet despite these minor mistakes, the study is a must read for those interested in the lives, experiences, and music of undocumented people in the United States.

José R. López Morín

**Coletta, Michela, and Malayna Raftopoulos** (eds.): *Provincialising Nature. Multidisciplinary Approaches to the Politics of the Environment in Latin America*. London: Institute of Latin American Studies, School of Advanced Studies, 2016. 192 pp. ISBN 978-1-908857-20-0. Price: £ 25.00

Quizá uno de los rasgos más destacados de este interesante libro sea su ambición, tanto temática como metódica. Aunque una buena parte de este libro se concentra en países sudamericanos (Ecuador, Bolivia y, sobre todo, Brasil), la mayoría de sus capítulos intenta abordar las diversas realidades contenidas en una región tan inmensa como Latinoamérica. Esta amplitud geográfica – en la que caben, además, algo excéntricamente, un caso centroamericano (El Salvador) y un trabajo sobre la "Poética de las plantas en la literatura latinoamericana"

(de Lesley Wylie) – se corresponde, además, con cierta aspiración analítica. En efecto, el capítulo inicial (escrito por las editoras) no sólo señala la gran variedad de temas que atraviesa el libro – desde la seguridad alimentaria hasta las formas alternativas de conceptualizar la naturaleza, pasando por la llamada "indigeneidad" –, sino también su búsqueda de una "interconexión" (*interconnectedness*) de diferentes dimensiones (xvii) y de una "multidireccionalidad" (*multidirectional*) de diversos niveles (xviii).

Ahora bien, aunque el conjunto pueda dar la sensación de una pretensión algo desmedida, la base de sus preocupaciones quizá lo amerite. A lo largo de sus páginas, esta compilación de Coletta y Raftopoulos está salpicado de recuentos de problemas tan graves (y sublevantes) como las brechas en los fondos de un programa REDD+ – sobre el que existe una inmensa bibliografía (M. Brightman, Carbon and Biodiversity Conservation as Resource Extraction. Enacting REDD+ across Cultures of Ownership in Amazonia. In: C. Vindal Ødegaard C., and J. J. Rivera Andía (eds.), *Indigenous Life Projects and Extractivism*. Basingstoke 2018: 195–216) – todavía dependiente de una veintena de organismos públicos provenientes de un puñado de países del hemisferio norte (en el caso descrito por Anthony Hall), los problemas nutricionales de los doscientos millones de latinoamericanos que pertenecen al "billón inferior" del mundo (65), o los treintaicinco millones de campesinos que no logran satisfacer sus requerimientos alimenticios diarios a pesar de vivir en una "cornucopia ecológica" como la de Latinoamérica (66) (resaltados por Graham Woodgate).

Frente a estas realidades, todos los autores aquí reunidos – en su mayoría, establecidos en el Reino Unido – parecen compartir el desasosiego que las crisis del llamado Antropoceno infunden a trabajos recientes como "Staying with the Trouble" (D. Haraway, Durham 2016), "The Arts of Living in a Damaged Planet" (A. L. Tsing et al., Minneapolis 2017), o "Designs for the Pluriverse" (A. Escobar, Durham 2018), dedicados a explorar las diversas formas en que los colectivos indígenas componen sus medioambientes (tácitamente ligadas, además, a nuestra capacidad para re-diseñar, urgentemente, el nuestro) (57).

Estas tribulaciones conducen, en el caso de varios autores, a un reclamo por cierta radicalidad. Así, por ejemplo, frente a propuestas como las del Banco Mundial que impulsan desarrollos tecnológicos, liberalización del mercado y extensión de programas sociales para luchar contra la inseguridad alimentaria y la degradación medioambiental, Woodgate resalta la propuesta de la organización "La Vía Campesina" como "más radical". Encontramos un reclamo similar, aunque invertido, en la descripción que Marieke Riethof hace de las ambivalencias de las políticas medioambientales brasileñas en eventos como el de Rio+20 – inundado por activistas que revelan los daños causados a pueblos indígenas por proyectos energéticos sin tomar en cuenta su propio uso excesivo de energía y recursos (89) –, donde la búsqueda