

Sarah Lynn Lopez

*The Remittance Landscape: Spaces of Migration in Rural Mexico and Urban USA*

The University of Chicago Press, 2015

It is rare for a book to provoke a radical rethinking of familiar frameworks, but this is precisely what Sarah Lynn Lopez has succeeded in doing in her ground-breaking study, *The Remittance Landscape: Spaces of Migration in Rural Mexico and Urban USA*. The effects of migration on cities and urban landscapes around the world have been the focus of innumerable studies, but Lopez moves beyond familiar histories of spatial negotiations between immigrant and host communities. Instead she charts a seismic shift in building practices made possible by remittance payments and policies, which have profoundly reshaped rural landscapes in Mexico, especially in the central bajío state of Jalisco, and urban environments in the United States, particularly in California and the Midwest. Drawing on meticulous fieldwork, extensive interviews, and a deep understanding of physical environments, cultural practices, and economic policies, Lopez reveals how remittances have transformed material landscapes and social worlds, from extravagant mansions constructed as hometown monuments to former residents invested in demonstrating their successes in the United States and massive new rodeo arenas recently erected across Jalisco, to cultural centers and rodeo circuits established in and around Chicago. Timely and incisive, Lopez's book should be required reading at a moment when the US-Mexico border is subject to hyperbolic rhetoric and deliberate misrepresentations.

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