

Josefa Carpena Mendez, Indigenous Pedagogies and the Intergenerational Re-creation of Knowledge in Migrant-Sending Communities in Mexico

A constellation of neoliberal policies have worked in synergy to uproot Mexican peasant, indigenous youth from local subsistence economies and to incorporate them into transnational migratory circuits in search of a future in the US. The transnational migration of indigenous farming communities has become a youth process. A common assumption is that rural youth do not have an interest in agriculture and that schooling and transnational migration disrupt the process of intergenerational transmission of agro-ecological knowledge. However, young migrant returnees initiated transnational sustainability projects based on the production of native blue corn for the global neoliberal market of healthy foods, transforming so-called traditional agricultural knowledge into an ethnocommodity. By revisiting Chamoux' work on the existence of a Mesoamerican indigenous pedagogical system (Chamoux 1986) in light of recent theoretical developments on the shared production of knowledge-making between minds, bodies and environments this paper examines processes of knowledge transmission in the context of the spatial and temporal displacements of indigenous youth's mobile livelihood strategies. Youth's experiences of circular migration and work in the opposite extremes of the global food system (as subsistence farmers in their childhood and later in restaurants in the US) have facilitated the re-appropriation of knowledge and re-creation of agricultural practices, processes that in turn hinge on the cognitive introjection cultivated by indigenous pedagogies.