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UNDOCUMENTED MIGRATION FROM THE OTHER PERSPECTIVE: COLONIALITY, SUBALTERN SUBJECT, AND MIGRANT MAPPING

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INTRODUCTION

With special emphasis since the second half of 2015, and each time more frequently and dramatically, the media presents us with the sinister reflection of the reality that millions of people in the world experience. In the images of desperate people abandoning their homes and coming

to countries that I refer to generally as the Global North,[1] we are witnessing poverty, violence, and despair stampeding to the gates of more favored territories. These images are not new: in the middle of the 1990s, we became familiar with *La Bestia*, the unending Mexican trains filled with Central Americans going to the United States; meanwhile, the insurrection of "*sans papiers*" showed the failures of multiculturalism in France. Ten years afterwards, canoes and boats sought to connect Sub-Saharan Africa with the Canary Islands or continental Europe through the Mediterranean Sea. We saw how a desperate person could defy the laws of physics and reason by putting oneself in the motor, trunk, or seat of a car. Today, migration sails to Italy and Greece in inflatable boats, crowds refugee camps in Macedonia, rushes through the Balkans, and jumps fences in Hungary hoping to arrive to Germany or reach Calais in their way to the United Kingdom. In the Andaman Sea, huge ships filled with Rohingya people escape religious persecution and economic despair. Those who are trafficked end up enslaved and sold if they are lucky. *La Bestia* continues its duty, moving a continuous flow of migration and unending violence. The infinite trickle of pain, suffering, and death impacts our consciousness and presents one of the most complicated contemporary social processes: international migration.

This is not any type of migration, but one that occurs in the most brutal conditions, suffers every danger, has no rights, and is the most disgraceful and wounding. The forced movement of people who are displaced without documents to prove their identity turns them into criminals. It is difficult to face the complexity of a phenomenon that is presented as problematic, chaotic, in constant transformation, and as the silent images of desperate people barely heard because they are at the margins of legality, at the limits of humanity. They are not illegal, nor aliens. They are people forced to migrate without documents. But the sensation of ungovernability and its problematic representations allows operations of management and control, restriction of fundamental rights, and further violations of already vulnerable bodies. These sets

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[1] By Global North (and South), I refer to a nongeographic category that characterizes the regional spaces by their positioning relative to the global distribution of power, with the North being defined by its centrality and hegemony and the South by its peripheral and subordinated character. This differs from the conventional categories of North-South and developed-underdeveloped-developing countries.

of analysis and approaches are self-justified in the media through the horror of the migrant's condition and the corresponding fear of invasion.

That narrative leaves in the shadows the true and sinister complexity of undocumented migration by centering an issue framed as urgent and problematic. In the current context of such crises, it is not surprising that nationalist, racist, and xenophobic feelings have emerged in the societies of the Global North.[2] There is no real political will to face the structural roots of the problem. The actions and ideas used are that the control and management of these displacements, constructed around the migration-development-security nexus, maximize their potential benefits. The discourse that is constructed around these migrations has justified the creation of an ad-hoc architecture to deal with the problem. However, the discourse of human rights in particular, legitimates the imposition of greater control and coercive policies that overlap with policies around security and terrorism. This is the core of the Human Security doctrine.

Today, the security variable is without question the central issue, allowing the humanitarian one to be relegated to the side. The range of proposals presented between the middle of 2015 and early 2016 include: the preemptive bombardment of migrant vessels before they leave Libya; a hypothetical German exit from the Schengen Zone; unilateral limitations on European free movement imposed by Denmark and Sweden; the confiscation of refugee seekers' goods; the creation of a European Union border police that can act above the sovereignty of each nation-state; the construction of walls on the Hungarian border with the non-Schengen Area; or, in the case of Mexico and the United States, building a thousand kilometers long wall, and the deportation of 11 million undocumented immigrants. As much as they can be considered futile or useless, these proposals empower current discourse to construct both the problem and the range of possible actions.[3] Since the

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[2] The examples are multiple. It is enough to cite the polemic in Germany during the first days of 2016, when a news story about the increase of rape against women during the last day of the previous year served as an argument to blame the rising number of refugees in the city of Colonia. This idea becomes a pretext for the formation of "gentlemen" who defend German women from invaders, thus hiding new xenophobic policies of migrant criminalization under patriarchal discourse. Brigitte Vasallo, *Vienen a violar a nuestras mujeres*, PIKARA (Jan. 8, 2016), http://www.pikaramagazine.com/2016/01/vienen-a-violar-a-nuestras-mujeres.

[3] These proposals have arisen exactly in the three most powerful countries of the modern world, part of what I defined as the Global North: France, Germany, and the United States. For the most part, human rights discourse is used to justify the orchestration of these proposals.

beginning of the so called "refugee crisis" of 2015, during which near-ly one and a half million people reached the European borders of the Mediterranean (the largest displacement since World War II), Europe has only accepted 272 requests of the 160,000 that the countries had promised to manage. And in Turkey, two million displaced persons are still waiting.

Under this structure, which I explain using the analytical frame-work of post/decolonialism, a hegemonic global system forges itself to legitimize and naturalize the perpetuation of highly profitable injustices. The contradictory statements made by political leaders are relevant insofar as they demonstrate those leaders' deep-seated feel-ings about migration. Faced with catastrophe, leaders like the French Prime Minister Manuel Valls declare that migration is a "crisis that endangers even the European project."[4] The Director General of Inter-national Organization of Migration (IOM), William Lacy Swing, said in December of 2015: "we know that migration is inevitable, necessary, and desirable . . . migration must be legal, safe and secure, or all—both for the migrants themselves and the countries that will become their new home."[5] The International Monetary Fund seems to support this idea when deciding that the arrival of refugees presents an economic opportunity for the growth for European economies but that the use of migrant labor in certain cases may merit the elimination of minimum wages for these people.[6]

All of these ideas broadly characterize the analytical framework–the map–of this work. I introduce this analogy with maps because the notion of mapping and the possibilities of critical cartography have triggered this research and become fundamental through the method-ological proposal of migrant mapping that I will introduce at the end.

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[4] *Migrant crisis: EU at grave risk, warms France PM Valls*, BBC (Jan. 22, 2016), https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35375303.

[5] *A million refugees and migrants flee to Europe in 2015*, UN Human Rights Council (Dec. 22, 2015), https://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2015/12/567918556/million-refugees-mi-grants-flee-europe-2015.html.

[6] *El FMI prevé un leve aumento del PIB europeo por la llegada de refugiados*. El País (Jan. 20, 2016), http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2016/01/20/actualidad/1453281400_978540.html.
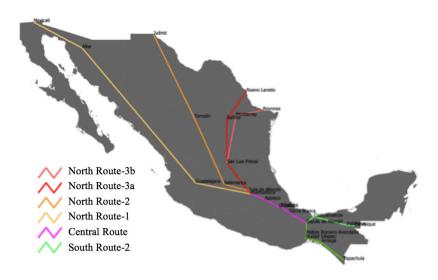
I.   From Pretext to Problem Through Maps

Migration interests my mind intellectually, but undocumented migration[7] is of particular interest because it impassions my heart emotionally. This is an open wound with deep roots that no one cares to heal. Nearly the entire world benefits from undocumented migration: the private sector, social networks, businesses, governments, banks, the economy in general, and also organized crime both legal and extralegal. However, these migrants resist and persist: in too many cases, for multiple reasons, migration is their only option. Forced and undocumented migrations usually occur hand-in-hand and are part of a system that is difficult to stop: the migration industry.[8]

Let me begin with the images that awake my specific interest. *La Bestia* (in English, "the Beast") in Mexico at the end of the 1990s constitutes the first example of the problematic media representation of undocumented migration. *La Bestia* refers to a set of Mexican trains utilized by migrants to travel across the country. They are railways solely for cargo (as Mexico's project of privatization during the 1990s eliminated the transport of travelers considered unprofitable) but, for undocumented immigrations, are increasingly well suited for transport across Mexico. This is the precarious and dangerous mode of transport of those undocumented migrants with few economic resources. Now, two decades later, the images repeat and multiply, not only in Mexico but in the entire world. As a result, I ask what might exist beyond the "reality" that is presented to us as so problematic and urgent. It was *La Bestia*—its name, appearance, and purpose—that first attracted my attention and to which I dedicated my research interest. The first task was looking at it in full on a map. Broadly speaking, these are the main routes:

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[7] Undocumented migration refers to the processes of crossing national borders without identification documents showing place of origin.

[8] The idea of the "migration industry" was first presented in Stephen Castles and Mark Miller, The Age of Migration (1998). Afterwards, the idea was furthered by authors like Rubén Hernández who focused on the Americas region. Hernández details and reconstructs the multiple forms of the migration industry: facilitation and recruitment (coyotes, lenders, transport carriers, remittances, banks, employers, lawyers), the industry of control (border control, prison, deportation), the industry of rescue (la recuperación or rehabilitation of migrants) and bastard industries (the exploitation of kidnapping, trafficking, and forced recruitment). León Hernández, *La Industria de la migración en el sistema migratorio México-EE.UU*, 61 Trace 41 (2012).

Map 1: Principle Migration Routes to the United States

One section in particular captured my attention: North Route-2. I remembered from my previous research a map with all the colonial routes at the peak of Castilian hegemonic expansion.[9] According to Bakewell, these routes connected the ports of the continent with the principle points of exploitation and settlement, frequently located around large mineral deposits.[10] For example, Buenos Aires sent Bolivian Potosí silver (extracted thanks to the mercury of Huancavelica, Peru) to Castile through the *Ruta de la Plata*. There was however, yet another colonial route that allowed Veracruz to receive, with the same objective, the wealth of the mines of Zacatecas and Guanajuato via Mexico-Tenochtitlán: *el Camino Real de Tierra Adentro*. Through recovering this old map, I was able to visually see that one of the lines of *La Bestia* today (in Map 2, the color yellow) coincides almost exactly with the historical *el Camino Real de Tierra Adentro* (in red).

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[9]   Sergio Prieto Díaz, "Cartografías del poder postcolonial: de las rutas del mineral (s.xvi) a las rutas de la migración (s.xxi)," II Congreso de Estudios Poscoloniales, Buenos Aires: National University of General San Martín (Dec. 11, 2014).

[10]   Peter John Bakewell, El sistema colonial en la América española (1991).

Map 2: Routes of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro and La Bestia

The coincidences were not limited to the tracing of these routes. A deeper comparative analysis reveals similarities in terms of its instrumentality as spaces of application of policies aimed not only at the continuity of its extractive function, but also at the creation and control of populations and their movements.

Until the middle of the sixteenth century, what would later become known as *el Camino Real de Tierra Adentro* was a barely-existent route that connected Tenochtitlan with Zacatecas.[11] In that era, both the route and the populations connected by it could be considered the only points of real colonial power. As Bernard and Bruzinski show, the route was also a border between cosmovisions.[12] Further to the north, the process of colonial expansion found one of its strongest opponents: the nomad people occupying what is generically known as *Gran Chichimeca*. The collision between the route-border and these nomadic people put at risk the colonial business: it was much easier to attack the convoys that crossed its territory than to attack the emerging city-fortresses. These attacks affected the core function of the route by cutting the umbilical cord that provided the colonial enterprise its wealth. Confronting and

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[11] Chantal Cramaussel, *De la Nueva Galicia al Nuevo México, por el Camino Real de Tierra Adentro*, *in* El Septentrión Novohispano: Ecohistoria, sociedades e imágenes de frontera 39–72 (Salvador Bernabéu Albert ed., 2000).

[12] C. Bernard & S. Gruzinski, Historia del Nuevo Mundo. Del descubrimiento a la conquista: la experiencia europea (1996).

eradicating the so-called *Chichimeca* threat was critical. In this way, by the end of the sixteenth century two new forms of colonial-state policy were created and justified by the existence of groups identified as problematic for staying (or moving) on a territory considered strategic: first, through "blood and fire" (persecution and death or slavery) and, later, through "pacification through purchase and assimilation."[13]

More than 400 years later and over the same territory, the trace of the ancient *Camino Real de Tierra Adentro* maintains itself anew. The hegemonic powers have changed: the route deals not with the Spanish metropolis but, rather, the United States. Its passengers no longer travel on mule carriages but in cargo trains. Its extractive function, aside from the inherent modifications of history, remains intact, and continues to transport minerals, although now accompanied by other products such as hydrocarbons and automobiles. As in the past, those who travel the route are a conflicted population: this new nomadic group trigger a change in the current discursive paradigm by justifying the development and application of novel policies aimed at controlling and managing both the path and its function, as well as those problematized populations.[14]

TABLE 1: Historical Approximation between Problematized Mobile Social Groups

	Undocumented (21st Century)	**Chichimeca (17th Century)**
Characterization	"Illegal"	"Barbarian"
Space of Appearance	*La Bestia*	*Camino Real Tierra Adentro*
Problematization	Crosses foreign and private territory	Inhabits and walks over coveted soil
	Enters hegemonic territory	Resists conquest/colonization
	Uses the routes	Attacks the routes
	Affects routes and borders	Affects the route/border
	Ungovernability	Form of life, knowledge of territory and arms, makes the enemy elusive and dangerous
Approach	Subject of policies (control/management)	Subject of policies (blood/peace)

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[13] P. W. POWELL, SOLDIERS, INDIANS & SILVER: THE NORTHWARD ADVANCE OF NEW SPAIN (1952).

[14] The colonial policies from 'blood and fire' to peace by 'purchase and assimilation' have interesting continuities with the foundations of the doctrines of national security and human rights which I will discuss moving forward.

The presence of these continuities (in the outline, in the hegemonic-extractive function, and in the emergence of problematized populations as political subjects) is enough to deepen the analysis of the emergence of contemporary undocumented migration. Within the context of post/decoloniality, it is possible to problematize this emergence by approaching undocumented migration to the notion of subaltern subject.

II.   Towards a Post/Decolonial Frame

It is necessary to review the academic production of knowledge over this topic to situate the most important points that define the problem,[15] on which basis I will establish specific aspects relevant to this Article. I can accept that migration forms an integral part of human history, but just because we recognize this fact does not mean we must consider all movement natural. In certain cases, we can find migration factors that lead to such conditions (population increase, climate change, the free movement of those who can, etc.), but the specific determinants of undocumented migration are hardly natural and very much constructed.

The current approaches that deal with the migration problem, classified by Vázquez Covarrubias as classical and critical,[16] come from the same site of enunciation: the modern occidental conscience, which is allegedly universal, objective and impartial. Despite the fact that both approaches would seem to conflict, they are biased in their analysis towards economic factors; a brief review reveals an almost surgical dissection of the migration phenomenon, but a barely-residual treatment of the particularities of undocumented migration. Even if each trend uses its own terms and have opposing viewpoints, both prioritize migration analysis in terms of its economic function inside neoliberalism and its greater or less voluntary (but always voluntary) nature.

The classical paradigms have historically been legitimated by the dominant cultural trends, and, today, are naturalized in the public opinion due to their widespread adoption by academic centers, governments, and the media. The classical trend includes theoretical approaches from

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[15] *See generally*, Joan Lacomba, *Teorías y Prácticas de la Inmigración de los Modelos Explicativos a los Relatos y Proyectos Migratorios*, 5 Scripta Nova 94 (2001); Douglas S. Massey et al., *Teorías de Migración Internacional: Una Revisión y Aproximación*, 10 Rev. Derecho Const. Euro. 435 (2008).

[16] Humberto Vázquez Covarrubias, *Desarrollo y Migración: Una Lectura Desde la Economía Política Crítica*, 14 Rev. Migración & Desarrollo, 59–87 (2010).

demography,[17] neoclassical economics[18], dual market labor theory,[19] and new economics.[20]

Within the critical approaches, we find neomarxist economics and its expressions as political economy or critical development studies;[21] the migration industry;[22] migration network theory and the causality of migration.[23] The critical trend brings a theoretical, conceptual and political option to confront the dominant view; but it is only relatively transformative, because as far as migration is concerned, its advocates do not attempt to recover the voice of migrants–either in its theoretical elaboration or its methodological proposals–and end up, for the most part, reproducing the errors and omissions of classical approaches. Briefly, I identify two principles and apparent disagreements of both approaches in order to verify their complementary nature, demonstrating the limits they share and the need for a new paradigm.

The first disagreement refers to the voluntariness in the decision to migrate: the classical approach emphasizes free choice, whereas critical scholars consider migration a result of forced processes. However, both insist on characterizing these migrant flows within an economic labor analysis, casting migrants as disorganized, criminalized and over-exploited auxiliaries that are part of a larger accumulation. Even in the critical approach, we do not find a more complex analysis of the undocumented migrant. The migrant is either characterized from an from an outside position that does not consider their organization or solidarity networks, leading them to contest and resist projects imposed on top of them, or the migrant is centered in the analysis but only to use their problematized existence as a means to justify policies that exploit and maintain their condition. In each one of these approaches, critical or classical, the particular situation of the undocumented migrant appears as marginalized

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[17] The precursor to this work is E.G. Ravenstein The Laws of Migration (1885).

[18] An example is the work of Arthur Lewis and Michael Todaro in the 1960s.

[19] *See e.g.*, Michael J. Piore, Birds Of Passage: Migrant Labor In Industrial Societies (1979).

[20] Oded Stark & J. Edward Taylor, *Relative Deprivation and International Migration*, 26 Demography 1 (1989).

[21] An example is the rise of 'dependency theory' in Latin America as proposed by Raúl Prebisch, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, and Faletto Enzo from the 1950s to the 1980s.

[22] *See infra* note 9.

[23] *See e.g.*, Douglas Massey et al., Worlds In Motion: Understanding International Migration At The End Of The Millennium (1998).

and impotent excess, without voice and without the capacity to react, talk, or show agency.

The second relevant disagreement is their interpretation of human rights. Human rights could either be subordinated to the rights of capital or be considered instruments that the nation-state and capital use to transform society through new values (e.g., equality, solidarity, common good). However, both approaches defend a top-down vision that does not consider the interpretations of these not-so-new values that other people or social groups have: from the practices of these groups arise new alternatives systematically invalidated by the hegemonic views, showing that the human rights framework can be imposed without discussion of alternatives, such as the collective rights of peoples.[24]

Having outlined the analytical weaknesses of dominant approaches in conceptualizing undocumented migration and the role of human rights,[25] one can identify their links with the development and evolution of the capitalist system; the convenience of justified and instrumentalized global inequalities; the expansion and naturalization of asymmetrical agreements of cooperation, commerce, and security; the universal argument of human rights; and a Global Hegemonic System of Migration Control and Management, a notion already noted by others such as Mezzadra and Domenech.[26]

I am interested in exploring the possibilities of using post/decolonialism as an epistemic tool for the analysis of the rising of undocumented migration as a central problem of globalization. I point to a broader reflection where the subaltern migrant subject becomes central in any proposed analysis and solution. Some examples that do not claim this

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[24] The Collective Rights of the People, as they were defined in the Argel Act (1976), are understood as "alternative rights, anti-supremacy, emancipator" in clear opposition to the universalist idea of human rights. Its understanding has allowed the configuration of the International Tribunal of Conscience of Peoples in Movement, created in 2010 at the Social World Forum of Migration (Quito) as an anti-supremacy response to the World Forum of Migration and Development (Mexico). The quote is from a private conversation with Jose Antonio Foronda, director of Migrant Prevention, Training, and Defense, A.C. (PRECADEM, 2015).

[25] Joaquin Arango, *La Explicación Teórica de las Migraciones: Luz y Sombra*, 1 Rev. Migración & Desarrollo 1 (2003).

[26] Sandro Mezzadra, "Capitalismo, Migraciones y Luchas Sociales: Notas Preliminares para una Teoría de la Autonomía de las Migraciones," Indeterminate! Kommunismus. Conferencia Magistral, Frankfurt, Germany (Nov. 7–9, 2003); Eduardo Domenech, *Las Migraciones Son Como El Agua: Hacia la Instauración de Políticas de Control con Rostro Humano*, 35 Rev. Polis 3 (2013).

epistemical position but can be suspected of agreement with it could be Neil's work,[27] which analyzes migration as an axis of modern world development and not as a sub-product, or that of De Genova, Mezzadra, and Pickles,[28] who undertake a collective investigation in search of new concepts and categories that surpass the dialectic between the two dominant approaches. Zibechi corroborates the necessity of these new paths because of the limits of the prevailing paradigms, affirming that "the westernized left forgets in its emancipatory project those condemned and marginalized by the capitalist world . . . Eurocentric theory, including Marxism, does not allow understanding of the "zone of not being" of the oppressed . . . those who suffer more cruelty of capitalist, colonial, patriarchal, heterocentered and imperialist power."[29] This is the anchor of the decolonial Latin American approach that the author shares with Aníbal Quijano,[30] Ramón Grosfoguel,[31] or Silivia Rivera Cusicanqui,[32] and others more.

A. *Methodological Considerations*

Post/decoloniality is understood as an interpretative paradigm more than a theoretical trend, one that allows analyzing contemporary processes from the persistent significance of ideas, relationships and structures that have an origin in colonialism. This paradigm has a triple scope:

- From a temporal perspective, it refers to a period beginning with the end of colonialism at the second half of the eighteenth century (with the independence of the United States) to the present. We must acknowledge that this is not a completed process since today there are still territories under European colonial rule.
- Structurally, it emphasizes the persistence of coloniality despite the end of colonialism, which differs only in form compared to before.

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[27] Thomas Neil, The Figure Of The Migrant (2015).

[28] Nicholas De Génova, Sandro Mezzadra, & John Pickles, *New Keywords: Migration and Borders*, 29 Cultural Stud. 55 (2014).

[29] Raul Zibechi, Descolonizar el Pensamiento Crítico y las Rebeldías 16 (2015).

[30] Aníbal Quijano, *Colonialidad del poder; eurocentrismo y América Latina, in* La Colonialidad del saber: eurocentrismo y ciencias sociales 246 (Edgardo Lander ed., 2000).

[31] Ramón Grosfoguel, *La Descolonización de la Economía Política y los Estudios Postcoloniales: Transmodernidad, Pensamiento Fronterizo y Colonialidad Global*, 4 Tábula Rasa 17 (2006).

[32] Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, Oprimidos Pero No Vencidos (2011).

This persistence flows from the structures and hegemonies created by colonialism.

• From an epistemic standpoint, it highlights the centrality of peoples, groups and collectives that have historically been subordinated, both in the theoretical analysis and in the methodological proposals.

Understanding the various constitutive processes of the undocumented migration problem, I will consider three scales of analysis related to the aforementioned scopes. On a global scale, I question the emergence and the evolution of the hegemonic paradigms or discourses that define and approach undocumented migration as a problem.[33] On a regional political scale, the privilege is set on institutions, legislations and normative changes adopted and adapted to each particular context: in this case, the Southern Border Program in Mexico. Finally, I consider a subaltern scale that cares about the inclusion and centrality of the knowledge, practices, and resistance of migrants, whom I approach through the methodological proposal of Migrant Mapping.

The use of maps makes sense as a methodological proposal that integrates the three previous scales in visual graphics. First, maps were what gave me the pretext to start researching: specifically, the coincidence in the map of colonial and contemporary routes was the tip of the iceberg to identify other traces of colonialism. On the other hand: what tool helps us define and follow the migration processes better than a map? It could be said there is no migration without a map, and that maps guides migrations. In a third sense, maps have historically been tools designed for hegemonic power's interests, and increasingly are used in mass and innovative forms to trace, follow, detect, control or support migrants.[34] Given these premises, we can begin to think cartography and maps as resources for the benefit of the very same migrant people.

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[33] I understand hegemonic paradigms as the normative concepts and discussions, emanating from the Global North, extended to and imposed on (in a semi-coercive way) international relations, in particular, relating to migration. These paradigms are, in chronological order of appearance: national security, human rights, and human security.

[34] De Genova presents us with some projects from public institutions or security such as collectives that assist migrants, incorporate the use and visual of maps: WatchTheMed (www.watchmed.net), Transit Migration-Mig Map (www.transitmigration.org/migmap), or Antiatlas of Borders (www.antiatlas.net). The incorporation of the newest technologies and the use of maps in investigation and activism in migration depend on other references such as the Transborder Immigrant Tool of the University of California (https://post.thing.net/node/1642), the proposal from MigranTIC from the University Metropolitan of Mexico (www.migrantic.mx), or the virtual group WorldMapper (www.worldmapper.org). De Génova, *supra* note 28.

In this way, I share Vladimir Montoya Arango's point of view,[35] and need to introduce the notion of cartography in a broad sense, understanding it as a material representation of geographic structures, environments, and policies that shape the world. I also consider the map as an ideological representation, an instrument used in the pursuit of hegemony throughout history to define, limit, and appropriate territory, peoples, resources, and symbolisms. Its function is to simplify deep knowledge and create an interpretation of a territory in a rational and functional manner, classifying natural resources and population's characteristics to serve the particular interests of those who carry out the mapping. The sense I want to give to the notion of cartography is in questioning the classical process whereby is converted into a map, a material expression of knowledge and its specific underlying interests.[36] I thus assume the possibility of another interpretation of territory that surpass the way traditional maps are understood: as the explicit expression of a determinative vision that functions by hiding or making invisible alternative interpretations.

I propose some innovative considerations, both methodological and symbolic, for newer form of mapping: collective elaboration, an orientation towards migration, experiential and emotional representation, and the integration of new technologies. Critical and collective mapping refer to a reflective practice where the map is only one more tool that allows a better and deepen understanding of territories, social problems, geography, and subjectivities.[37]

B. *Global Discursive Scale*

1. UNDOCUMENTED MIGRATION: A NEW GLOBAL SUBALTERN SUBJECT

Post/decoloniality is not by itself a theory, but instead refers to a certain analytical viewpoint that considers the continuity of dynamics, practices, and notions originating from "colonial harm"; a question that Mignolo characterizes through the overlap of capitalism, colonialism,

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[35] *See* Vladimir Montoya Arango, *El Mapa de lo Invisible, Silencios y Gramática del Poder en la Cartografía*, *in* UNIVERSITAS HUMANÍSTICA 155–79 (2007).

[36] SIMON GARFIELD, EN EL MAPA: DE CÓMO EL MUNDO ADQUIRIÓ SU ASPECTO (2012).

[37] Mapping, as a medium and not as an end, implies for collectives like the Iconoclasistas or Tinta Limón, to consider the centrality of aspects like reflection, socialization of knowledge and practices, stimulus for collective participation, work with unknown people, interchange of knowledge, the dispute of hegemonic spaces, the problematization of key nodes, the visualization of resistance, and broadly, the marking of power relations.

and patriarchy as an occidental and Eurocentric vision.[38] Post/deco-
loniality uses a multiplicity of prisms to interpret reality through the
persistency of coloniality, which manifests, according to Quijano, in the
areas of power, being, and knowledge.[39] Coloniality must be understood,
then, within the framework of a dynamic history marked by imperialism.

Interpreting the emergence of undocumented migration from a
post/decolonial perspective takes a closer look at the notions of hege-
mony and subaltern subject, both of Gramscian origin.[40] The category
of the subaltern subject is an attempt to broaden the Marxist concept of
the working class. For Gramsci, the subaltern class suffers three oppres-
sions of power: economic exploitation, political domination, and cultural
negation. Therefore, the problem is not only their invisibility but also
that their voice is silenced, and thus their humanity, denied. This Gram-
scian notion has similarities with *The Wretched of the Earth* by Fanon,
which also comes from a related analytical perspective.[41]

While Gramsci was not yet postcolonial, the School of Subaltern
Studies of India reexamined the idea of the subaltern subject. This
School in general (after the publication of Subaltern Studies in 1988),
and Spivak, in particular, question the preconceived image that assumes
their voice as historically silenced.[42] Spivak establishes not only that the
subaltern can speak, but also that they make themself heard selectively,
inhabiting and making new spaces of identity and resistance from the
margins to which they are pushed, where their voices, knowledge, and
practices are centered. This potential is what is systematically denied
when creating an image of undocumented migration that justifies pol-
icies instead of creating opportunities. This perspective crystalizes the
fear that the images at the beginning of this Article started.

The notion of the subaltern subject allows us to identify and under-
stand the perseverance of colonial discourses, hierarchies, and practices
as necessary for said hegemony, which comes from the creation of a

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[38] WALTER MIGNOLO: LA IDEA DE AMERICA LATINA: LA HERIDA COLONIAL Y LA OPCION DECO-
LONIAL (2009).

[39] Quijano, *supra* note 30.

[40] Specifically, the subaltern is discussed in Chapter XXV of ANTONIO GRAMSCI, CUADER-
NOS DE LA CÁRCEL (Ana María Palos trans., Instituto Gramsci 1975) (1934).

[41] *See* FRANTZ FANON, LOS CONDENADOS DE LA TIERRA (Julieta Campos trans., Fondo de
Cultura Económica 1963). (1961).

[42] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, ¿Puede hablar el subalterno? 39 REV. COLOMB. ANTRO. 297
(2003).

problematic other. This global subaltern subject—the undocumented migrant—is created in a way that keeps migrants marginalized, both in existence and in decision-making regarding the context of which the undocumented migrant is part. This marginalization is apparent, especially since it is central to the system's maintenance and justification for political decisions. The undocumented migrant is thus an object of politics more than a subject of rights.

2. Global Systems of Migration Control and Management: Hegemonic Doctrines

Approaches to the problem of migration have been produced hand-in-hand with different doctrines adapted to the historical and regional contexts in which they arose. The argument used to justify the adoption of policies over the subaltern and "problematic" subject has evolved from the traditional nation-state doctrine of national security to the pseudo-universalist emphasis of human rights, to the more recent move towards a hybrid of both, only superficially opposed: the doctrine of human security. Let me briefly review the evolution of each of these doctrines that define and address the global issue of undocumented migration.

The most avid supporters of the national security doctrine have primarily been Global North nation-states, and more specifically the United States and the European Union. This doctrine is the result of the world reconfiguration that began with the end of the Cold War, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the consequent opening up to the western political-economic system. This doctrine, that progressively continues constructing itself as a regional and global vision, assures the interests of the winning powers. Sandoval shows how this paradigm responds to three concrete objectives of the United States: secure itself a transnational labor reserve; impose a security vision on migration through the criminalization of undocumented migration; and establish territorial geostrategic control over the borders.[43] Under the guise of a 'loss of control' provoked by the

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[43] Sandoval himself points out that United States policy has habitually constructed migration as a threat, at least since the nineteenth century. The author points out his assimilation to processes of religious subversion (Irish in the first half of the 19th century), politics (European revolutionaries of the early 20th century), economic, or racial, both individually and intermingled. J.M. Sandoval, *La securitización de la migración y de las fronteras en América del Norte*, *in* Mercados de trabajo y migración internacional 253 (2011).

great Central American migrations of the period,[44] there is a qualitative leap made in terms of United States military control over border areas with Mexico and the application of the same low-intensity warfare used in Central America. In this context, migration joins drug trafficking and terrorism as a problematic and potentially destabilizing phenomenon that must be fought.[45] This vision of migration as a national security problem was reinforced after the events of September 11, 2001. From this moment, the issue of migratory security became an anti-terrorist issue, and, with that in mind it is necessary to interpret the creation of the Department of Homeland Security in 2002 as a border control and migration policy being put to the service of anti-terrorist security.

The human rights doctrine crystallizes in the idea of migratory governance. Faced with the impossibility of maintaining a fundamentally militaristic outlook towards a phenomenon composed of extremely vulnerable people, the discourse of human rights emerges as necessary to its governability.[46] It is a view that tends to promote the management of these populations, opposed to the emphasis on control of the previous one. In this doctrinal framework, defending this paradigm it is no longer a matter of individual nation-states, but of multinational institutions and with regard to migration in a very particular way, of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). This entity, which is frequently identified as part of the United Nations system, is in fact a private organization that has consolidated itself as the global standard bearer of this doctrine. However, their true intentions do not have as much to do with the defense of the migrants' human rights as with the exercising of an objective, global, and universal position that allows the migratory legislations of the sending countries in the Global South to be adapted to the needs of the countries in the Global North.[47] The institution is a vehicle for hegemonic ideas, paradigms and policies: a living, organic expression

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[44] This is a product both of the policies of structural adjustment during the so-called 'lost decade' and of the armed conflicts and dictatorships that characterized hegemonic conflicts in the Cold War.

[45] "Alien Terrorist and Undesirables: a Contingency Plan" (Immigration and Naturalization Services, Investigative Division, Department of Justice 1986).

[46] Lelio Mármora, *El desafío de las políticas migratorias: su gobernabilidad*, *in* Migración, Integración Regional y Transformación Productiva 89 (1996).

[47] R. Andrijasevic and W. Walters, *The International Organization For Migration and The International Government of Borders*, *28* Enviro. & Planning: Soc'y & Space 977 (2010).

of the coloniality protected in the migration-development-remittances nexus and the discourse of human rights.[48]

Another, more recent doctrine is that of human security. Its name indicates that it is a hybrid of the previous, complementary in their articulation but going beyond the apparent antagonism of their respective definitions. Contradictory in name but nevertheless justified, this doctrine allows the adoption of progressively more restrictive and controlling policies through the discursive relationship between migration, development, remittances, and security.[49] The emphasis on human rights and the development of the human rights doctrine clashes these days with a global environment that is dominated by terror and the fight against international terrorism, which refers to the first doctrine of national security in which undocumented migration plays a major role. Now it is not specific nation-states that are classified as dangerous, but rather the people, who allegedly must be protected even from themselves.

In this way, in speaking of a Global Hegemonic System of Migration Control and Management (GHS), I refer to the emergent formation of a network of notions, discourses, institutions and structures that create, define, surveil, control, direct, order, justify and naturalize a phenomenon superficially presented as a problem, not interested in attacking the causes but rather in naturalizing it to justify its perseverance. It is in this framework that we can identify hegemony's survival as coloniality, and where undocumented migration fulfills two central functions: sustaining the global economic dynamic of each nation-state and self-justifying the need for said GHS. Let us examine how this global system operates in practice.

C. *Regional Political Scale*

1. *Mexico and the Southern Border Program*

Undocumented Central American migration bound for the United States across Mexico is, for many reasons, a paradigmatic and

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[48] International Organization for Migration, The Migration-Development Nexus: Evidence and Policy Options (Nicholas Van Hear & Ninna Nyberg Sørensen eds., 2003); International Organization for Migration, World Migration Report 2008: Managing Labour Mobility in the Evolving Global Economy (2008); International Organization for Migration, World Migration Report 2013: Migrant Well-being and Development (2013).

[49] Inter-American Development Bank, Remittances as an instrument of development (2006); World Bank Global Economic Prospects 2006: Economic Implications of Remittances and Migration (2006).

representative example of the issues considered by this research. The United States is the hegemonic power of the contemporary world, upon which the region depends and to which the region is subordinated in broad aspects: the transit of people trying to reach US soil is surely one of the most relevant in the world;[50] several of the countries of origin involved are among the major senders worldwide; the Mexican territory is a large cemetery of migrants where we see a high concentration of the diverse types of violence against this collective;[51] and, along both Mexican borders and throughout the territory, the most innovative policies of control, monitoring, management, and prosecution are applied. It is in this region where the doctrine of human security appears for the first time in the world through the Southern Border Program.[52]

　　In light of recent events, Mexico has become a paradigm of the human security doctrine. Some events show the historiography of this phenomenon and the dynamics fueling it, although trends might first go unnoticed. The massacre of 72 migrants in San Fernando, Tamaulipas, in August 2010, showed the public for the first time a real dimension of the problem. In a way never seen before, this tragedy showed the extent and overlap of the global networks dedicated to the human trafficking business: among the victims were not only people of Mexican or Central American origin, but also from Ecuador, Brazil, and even India.[53] Today

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[50] Up to 6 percent of total migrants in the world cross the Mexican Border with the United States as their final destination E. Rodriguez Chávez, S.B. Sandoval, & L.F. Ramos Martínez, *Migración centroamericana de tránsito irregular por México. Estimaciones y características generales*, 1 Apuntes sobre Migración 1 (2011).

[51] It is calculated that the border between Mexico and the United States is the most lethal in the world (between 40,000 and 70,000 deaths were reported between 2008 and 2014), and a total of 20,000 people go missing every year in just the path through Mexico. M. Meyer, A. Isacson & G. Morales Gracia, Mexico's Other Border: Security, Migration, And The Humanitarian Crisis At The Line With Central America (2014).

[52] The Southern Border Program must be understood within the wider framework of transformations that Mexico is going through, largely due to the reordering of US forces and preferences in the region. We must take into account the specific contexts in which the National Development Plan (2013–2018), the Special Program for Migration (2014–2018), and the new Migration Law (August 2014) arise. Since these are so recent, there are currently no works addressing this relationship, although the following Part will propose a first approximation. So far, specific analyses have been carried out on the effects of this plan, in terms of the evolution of the number of operations, arrests made, abuse reports, invisibility, and marginalization.

[53] *Así ocurrió la peor matanza de inmigrantes en México*, BBC (Aug. 22, 2014) https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias/2014/08/140828_mexico_matanza_inmigrantes_centroamericanos_aniversario_jcps.

it is no longer strange to find people from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, China, Somalia, Eritrea or Ghana.[54] Images of *La Bestia* loaded with undocumented brown people became common and frequent thereafter, appearing daily in newscasts, social networks, and collective imaginaries. In a more or less indirect way, the migrants were presented as responsible for the derailments of the train, both as irrational people who endangered their life and affected the train's function and merchandise and as a conflictive and problematic group that provoked violence around them with their behavior.

Yet what triggered the urgency to find a "solution" to a problem that no matter the recent urgency has been occurring for decades was the so-called "crisis" of unaccompanied minors in 2014. Named and organized as a form of pressure on the Mexican authorities during the first half of 2014, the United States denounced a significant increase in the arrival of unaccompanied Central American minors to the border, like many other migrants, riding on the back of *La Bestia*. Immigration control did not halt its operations at the southern border of the United States; instead, they found it necessary to extend their reach as far into Mexican territory as possible. The minors were the perfect excuse. Following recommendations and claims by the United States, Mexico implemented the Southern Border Program in July 2014 with the alleged aim of ensuring the human rights of undocumented migrants and avoiding the risks involved in traveling on the train. But in practice, it only displaced the problem to areas where migrants are not visible, thus endangering their rights even more by forcing them to move through lesser known routes and beyond the reach of the shelters that had provided protection and attention throughout *La Bestia*.

Under the pretext of safeguarding human rights, and arguing the danger of riding *La Bestia*, Mexico's Southern Border Program deepened the persecution of undocumented migrants. Who would oppose it if it was "ideally" designed to protect the human rights of minors and women? But if the government really wanted to protect these people, why would it displaced them from the roads on which they are visible and can access different types of support? Is the solution to make them invisible again?

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[54] Manu Ureste, *Los migrantes exóticos y las redes globales de tráfico de personas que llegan a México*, Political Animal (Jan. 19, 2016), https://www.animalpolitico.com/2016/01/los-migrantes-exoticos-y-las-redes-globales-de-trafico-de-personas-que-llegan-a-mexico.

It is clear that the Southern Border Program has unofficial and different foundational goals from its stated concerns. Today, it is more difficult to find migrants along the usual paths, and therefore, their reality has been diffused. As a result Mexico stop and deport more immigrants than the United States for the first time in its history. Immigrants are not truly a problem for Mexico, since Mexico is part of the problem. There are many voices that claim that under this program what really takes place is the externalization of United States national security policy by keeping migrant populations in Mexico. The reforms initiated by Mexico under United States patronage facilitate the establishment of new *maquiladora* industries not just in the south of the U.S. border, as they were until now, but south of Mexican territory. In capitalism's current stage of flexible accumulation, it is no longer necessary to attract so many people to one's own territory because they can be exploited closer and closer to their place of origin, with equal and even greater benefits. The increase of obstacles to migration seems to be part of a macabre selective process at the end of which only the most prepared and resistant people will remain.

D.   *Subaltern Scale*

1. MAPPING AND (UNDOCUMENTED) IMMIGRANT KNOWLEDGE

Up to this point, I have limited this Article to the theoretical and epistemic levels: the emergence of undocumented migration is addressed as a critical problem in the global agenda through an alternative perspective that attempts to overcome the limitations of traditional frames of reference. This problematic emergence is explained by the hegemonic role of both global discourses and the institutional scaffolding that is created as an ad-hoc response to it. Throughout this process, undocumented migrants never remain passive, and multiple reactions of resistance, enjoyment, and knowledge (re)production arise between diverse origins, interests, and experiences immigrants. Analyzing and understanding the sources and diversity of their movements, interactions and actions is a challenge yet to be accomplished.

Adopting a post/decolonial perspective does not refer only to choosing a certain analytical framework among those available or to an unreflective exercise caused by the limitation of the dominant theoretical approaches. The choice of this point of view implies a responsibility and a commitment to positioning the voices of undocumented migrants

at the center of investigation: that is the goal of the perspectives of the other. By problematizing them as global subalterns—that is, objects of politics rather than subjects of rights—I claim that their voices, experiences, knowledge and proposals have only been presented in a decontextualized and partial way. Recovering their collective consciousness is imperative. In this spirit, I believe that my research will be incomplete, or worse, if it is reduced to theorizing, criticizing, or proposing only from my position, which is only one and very specifically mine. I am a white, Western student in Mexico, and a migrant myself, but not an undocumented one. This work would fall into the same errors that it denounces–hegemonic vision, the invisibility and silencing of the subject of study, coloniality, and more–if it did not open it widely to the people with whom I speak. In recognizing my privileges, I should be able to make them useful for those that don't have them. My hope for my research is finding the ways to incorporate their knowledge and experiences. In an attempt to get closer and rebuild their common stories, is that the methodological proposal of Migrant Mapping emerges.

III. The Meanings, Objectives, and Adaptations of "Migrant Mapping"

I am now interested in approaching subaltern knowledge reconstructing what hegemony and coloniality attempt to make invisible and displace. Knowledge and practices are intimately intertwined and continuously face the power that conditions them: searching through the cracks, relying of and learning from fellow travelers, updating and adapting routes. The image of the Gramscian subaltern, reconstructed from post/decoloniality, recovers the contribution implied by their subversive experiences, their practices of resistance, and their collective knowledge. For this project, I will use both theoretical and methodological notions such as map, mapping, and cartography (as their science), historically been hegemonic tools aimed at the simplified comprehension, distribution, and management of large and complex territories. Their elaboration and approach from the scientific-technical specialization, and the exclusion in their preparation of the knowledge, memories, experiences and practices of the majority of the population stem from a clear objective: managing maps as strategic knowledge, and territories as key spaces; centralizing their production, diffusion and understanding; and omitting the relevance they have for military, geostrategic interests,

or for the resistance of alternative groups. What is at stake at this point is, clearly, the relevance of the other perspective.

The extensive discussion of the methodological proposal of Migrant Mappings far exceeds the limits and possibilities of this Article, which has sought to present the epistemic and analytical framework that sustains it. I will present this proposal in detail soon but for now I can only say that it starts from the Iconoclasistas' collective mapping. Modifying their proposal in order to incorporate the particularities of the undocumented migrant population in transit, I look for an autonomous mapping on knowledge, language, and experiences in the territory of migrants. Through mapping, migrants can locate places and dangers and aid, useful information to avoid checkpoints, or advice on how to handle situations. The knowledge that this methodology allows to identify is linked to their transit territories, and related to migrant experience and interests. Mapping also allows the emergence of deep questionings about policies, public discourses and social imaginaries, even the migrants' analysis and recommendations. Throughout 2015 and 2016, I have tested Migrant Mappings repeatedly in *la Casa del Migrante* of San Luis Potosí and improved the methodology with the contributions of the migrants who have participated.

In the framework of the research carried out at the Department of Human Geography of the University of Granada in 2015, I worked in the possibilities of engaging physical mapping with geography and Geographic Information Systems (GIS), revealing a huge potential in terms of the systematization and visualization of collected information. Through GIS, the knowledge of mapping can be integrated into new tools for data processing, visualization, and computer applications. With a solid base of Migrant Mappings, any changes to routes, the locations of aid and danger, and necessary advice to move forward could be visualized dynamically. For example, these maps could be used to reveal how certain policies are enacted, and how those might be related to the creation of *maquiladora* industries. Among the many possibilities, the most relevant would be to make available to migrants, at the appropriate points, the information contained in these mappings in their own Geographic Information Systems.

Different academic disciplines and social actors could appropriate this proposal and enrich it, including sociologists, anthropologists, social workers, geographers, informaticians, migrants, volunteers, shelters, and

universities. It is open to the community for consideration, appropriation, and collective improvement. I think it is and should be part of many larger collective projects.

Conclusion

Paradigmatic places, affected populations, dynamics, routes, terms, and debates will continue to change and adapt to the ever-changing rhythms of the contemporary global world, increasingly complicating the understanding of perverse issues such as undocumented migration. However, I hope to plant a perspective that identifies continuities in these turbulent times by abstracting from the particularities. These can be approached when we incorporate the voices, experience, and knowledge of those people and social groups that have throughout history been constructed as different, dangerous, and ignorant victims. Considering undocumented immigrants as global subaltern subjects allows us to link their functions to the multiplicity of hegemonies that naturalize and instrumentalize their existence. Hegemony takes advantage of territories and subordinates them to the global market. It expels and attracts people. It speaks on their behalf to protect them, but remains silent while they are exploited. It blames problems on them but needs them as a solution. Migrants are marginalized but claim their importance through their practices: jumping walls, avoiding checkpoints. The dynamic and interrelated nature of migration needs a broader view that considers its multifunctionality not only as a product of the global system but as a constitutive part of it.

It is imperative to look for trends and continuities, triggering pretexts, coincidences, and causalities to build interpretative bridges to endow the analysis with a multi and interdisciplinary perspective. Through this exercise of emancipation from the disciplinary chains of thought, I intend not only to propose an alternative theorization but also provide evidence of the need to delocalize our own analytical views, in turn centering the importance of those who are the subjects of our interest and the object of our studies, but above all, main characters of the problems and phenomena to which we dedicate ourselves. Considering the relevance of their experiences and knowledge, and generating spaces in which their voices are heard and affect the problem that defines them is a priority. The epistemic possibilities of subaltern studies allows us to overcome the analytical limitations of hegemonic approaches, placing in

the center of analyses, discourse and proposals, those groups that have been constructed as subaltern.

It could be said that Migrant Mappings respond to several unmet needs that come from the different fields and actors involved. The first is the analytical limitations of the main theoretical approaches in problematizing and granting centrality to this population. This granting entails considering the relevance of the experiential knowledge that these people treasure and its legitimacy to be incorporated into debates and proposals. On the other hand is the need for specific tools to access, know, understand, systematize and visualize this knowledge. An additional outcome is the establishment and reinforcement of communicative channels between academia and migrants, and, above all, tools for the immigrants themselves. A final objective is to overcome the challenge of obtaining visions and instruments generated from the bottom up; that is, those that are by immigrants and for immigrants.

The proposal of Migrant Mapping is the corollary of these analytical concerns: the dialogue between disciplines and subjects finds in this tool a relevant channel not only to help us understand the phenomenon of undocumented migration in a different way, but also a practical way to incorporate the knowledge, experiences, and discourses of undocumented migrants themselves. Migrant Mapping facilitates the crystallization of the connection between the methodological proposal and the epistemic possibility on a map: a bridge to overcome some of the walls that continue to separate us.