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C/o Metropolitan University Prague

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The Editor in Chief of CEJISS, Mitchell Belfer, welcomes a guest introduction on:

Borders in the Americas

Towards the end of the 20th century, the circumstances of globalization led, as Sassen put it, to ‘novel assemblages of territory, authority and rights.’¹ Enhanced by a larger context of the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the ideological barriers, the decade of 1990s seemed to suggest that borders had lost their importance. The world had apparently entered the era of “de-bordering”.

However, while the processes of globalisation and movement of goods, persons and capital seemingly rendered borders less effective, they continued to have acute relevance as a source of identification for citizens, or as territorial frameworks for action by national governments. The importance of borders was once again put to the forefront in the early 21st century by the tragic events New York and Washington, as well as those in Madrid and London, and most recently Paris. The practice of bordering has, ever since, become gradually dominated by security concerns, as well as by the adoption of enhanced migration policies focusing on the control of unwanted human mobility. What is being contested is not only the issue international borders, but also inner societal borders of ethnicity, class and/or religion.

The ambition of the present volume is to contribute to a booming field of border-related research by focusing on the region of the Americas. This area is, indeed, highly relevant for a comprehensive understanding of bordering processes. Reasons abound both in past and present days: in the early 19th century, different regions of the Western hemisphere pioneered the decolonisation process by claiming their independence from Spain, an effort accompanied by processes of the nation-building and border demarcation.

In the late 19th century, the influential concept of the American borderlines as a threshold between ‘civilization’ and ‘savagery’ was formulated by the North American historian Frederick Jackson Turner. In an effort to emancipate the history of the United States from the discursive models of European historiography, Turner pointed out the signif-

importance of the Western frontier for shaping the American identity. He perceived the frontier as 'hither edge of a free land,' an advancing line of settlement upon the no-man's land – in explicit contrast to Europe, where, in his understanding, the frontiers have been 'fortified boundary lines ruing through dense populations' (image not altogether true).² Turner's thesis received enthusiastic response at home and abroad, and in the decades following, several attempts were made to transfer his frontier model to different geographical areas such as South America, Australia or Russia, or, in the case of Walter Prescott Webb, upon the whole process of European colonial expansion.³

In early 21st century, the 3,000 kilometres long international border between the US and Mexico epitomises most of the bordering practices nowadays, as well as different processes of human mobility. Ever since the tragic events in September 11, 2001, the so-called "securitisation" paradigm monopolised the public and media discourse, as well as policy development relating to this border. These have tended to lump together issues of migration, terrorism, and organised crime.

In this volume, analysis of the current situation is set against the scholarship on earlier border processes with regards to the Americas. Several case studies concerning contemporary dynamics along the border between the US and Mexico (R. Cruz Piñeiro, L. Argüellová, L. Whitley, T. Jiroutová Kynčlová) follow the first batch of texts delving into colonial and societal aspects of bordering processes in the variety of locations ranging from the Amazon to the US and Mexico (L. de Mello, D. Pěničková, Z. Erdösová). The analysis of the ideological impact of the Cold War over bordering practices is taken into consideration (M. Zourek). These eight studies are bracketed by two theoretical reflections: opening with the analysis of the contemporary bordering practices in the Americas (K. Březinová), and concluding with the scrutiny concerning the relationship between secessionism and the principles of territorial integrity, self-determination and legitimacy (J. Castan Pinos). What comes across from both historical and present day reflections of different authors in this volume is the conviction that redefining what a state border actually is, where it is located and how it is to be enforced has become crucial. The ultimate challenge is how to maintain the borders open and societies communicating, while keeping them secure.

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Notes

- 1 Saskia Sassen (2008), 'Neither Global nor National: Novel Assemblages of Territory, Authority and Rights,' *Ethics and Global Politics* 1:61-79, available at: < http://www.columbia.edu/~sjs2/neitherglobalnornational_Sassen.pdf> (accessed 04 August 2015).
- 2 Frederick Jackson Turner, 'The Significance of the Frontier in American History', *Annual Report of the American Historical Association* 1893, pp. 199-227; further elaboration of the concept in Walker D. Wyman, Clifton B. Kroeber (eds.) (1965), *The Frontier in Perspective*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press; Ray Allen Billington (ed.) (1966), *The Frontier Thesis: Valid Interpretation of American History?*, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. The image of European borders as 'fixed', immovable, and thus contrasting to the fluidity of colonial borderlines developed further Lucien Febvre (1973), 'Frontière', in Peter Burke (ed.), *A New Kind of History: From the writings of Lucien Febvre*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, pp. 208-218.
- 3 Walter Prescott Webb (1951), *The Great Frontier*, Austin: University of Texas Press; also H. C. Allen (1959), *Bush and Backwoods: A Comparison of the Frontier in Australia and the United States*, East Lansing: Michigan State University Press; William J. Eccles (1976), *The Canadian Frontier, 1534-1760*, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

From Imagined Communities to Bordered Societies?

Kateřina
Březinová

Bordering Processes in the Americas in the Late 20th and Early 21st Centuries

Kateřina Březinová

This study explores the meaning of borders in the late 20th and early 21st centuries in the Americas. It argues that borders can best be understood as the result of *bordering practices* which are socially defined and constructed. Following the theoretical framework proposed by Popescu, I analyse borders in the Americas through the prism of several trends: (1) de-bordering, which implies the decreased relevance or even disappearance of some international borders and (2) simultaneous re-bordering, which suggests the demarcating of new borders or their renewed relevance due to (3) the process of border securitisation in the early 21st century. This analysis of the current situation is set out against a survey of earlier border scholarship regarding the Americas. Current trends in bordering practices are highlighted through a case study of the international border between the US and Mexico.

Keywords: Borders, the Americas, de-bordering, re-bordering, border securitisation, US-Mexico border, globalisation, bordering, Latin America, North America, migration

Introduction

The work describes and analyses the meaning of borders in the late 20th and early 21st centuries in the Americas. It argues that borders today are best understood as the effect of bordering processes and practices which are shaped by parallel trends of “de-bordering” in the context of globalisation and “re-bordering” in the context of growing



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security concerns. This analysis of the current situation is presented against a survey of earlier border scholarship especially regarding the Americas. Current trends in bordering practices are then illustrated through the case of the international border between the US and Mexico.

When Benedict Anderson coined the term “imagined communities” to refer to national identities in modern nation states, he based his observations on processes of national identification in Latin America in the 19th century.¹ Indeed, the early decolonisation of this region was followed by parallel processes of building national consciousness on the one hand and demarcating borders in what had previously been administrative regions of the Spanish Empire on the other. Borders in the Americas bear testament to the fiction of exclusive state sovereignty overlapping with a specific territory, a notion which has become the bedrock of the understanding of the modern nation state. Moreover, this pioneering notion was implemented in the highly ethnically diverse societies of the Americas, consequently dividing single communities across different states; this is the experience of the Chiquitano population, split between Bolivia and Brazil and the Maya people, who are dispersed across Mexico, Belize and Guatemala. At the same time, understandings of the meaning of state borders in the Americas also changed considerably over the course of the 19th and 20th centuries.

From the Frontier to the National Security Border

Before proceeding with the detailed analysis of bordering processes around the turn of the 21st century – which is this study’s core concern – it will be useful to briefly trace the genesis of the meaning of borders in the Western hemisphere, as outlined in earlier scholarship. At the outset of the 19th century, borders in the Americas were widely conceived of as *frontiers*. They generally represented unmarked zones where the territory of one state or empire faded into that of another, providing a kind of “buffer zone” between one empire and another. The free and open nature of the Western frontier in the American North gave rise to Jackson Turner’s influential thesis about the frontier’s significance in shaping the American character and democracy, an idea first proposed in 1893 that was a widely accepted framework for border scholarship until the mid-20th century.² This thesis was developed further through the writings of Prescott Webb, who argued that the ‘great frontier’ dis-

covered by Columbus was the stimulus for the rise of wealth, capitalism and democracy.³

The *borderlands* has been another important notion concerning borders in the Americas. These areas are generally understood not as lines but as zones surrounding the international boundary line. Their extensions are sometimes specified by relevant governments for the purpose of cross-border exchange and cooperation: the US-Mexico borderlands, for instance, are said to stretch 100 kilometres to the south and north of the international boundary.⁴

Lastly, the meaning of the border has often fused with the idea of a *boundary*, a physical line demarcating the separation of two states, each of which has full sovereignty over its territory. As we will see, this notion of the border has increasingly come to describe a fenced, policed and otherwise enforced political line between states.

Towards the end of the 20th century, the effects of globalisation challenged the idea of state sovereignty over a single territory. Globalisation processes led, as Sassen argued, to 'novel assemblages of territory, authority and rights.'⁵ Enhanced by the larger context of the end of the Cold War and the collapse of ideological barriers, borders appeared to lose their importance. The world seemed to have entered an era of *open borders*. This shift was felt on many fronts in the Americas. Regarding trade, unprecedented flows of capital, goods and services started to circulate among the US, Canada and Mexico thanks to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) signed in 1993. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other global economic institutions had a crucial role to play in the economic policies of most countries of Latin America in the same period. Transnational corporations acquired more wealth and relevance than many existing nation states. At the same time, the global human rights regime and its universal jurisdiction threatened to reach divisive Latin American leaders such as Augusto Pinochet in Chile and Alberto Fujimori in Peru.

It was precisely in this decade between the end of the Cold War and the beginning of the 21st century that the function of borders as so-called *gateways* from one state to another was emphasised and their previous depiction as fixed and uncontested dividing lines challenged. Scholarly research became increasingly interested in processes of bordering, understood as the result of the efforts of powers to order social relations in space. The discursive and symbolic construction of borders in terms of "us" and "them" and the role of public debate and the

media came to the forefront of the analysis. Concepts of borders such as Bhabha's idea of an 'in-between' ambivalent space of intercultural contact proliferated.⁶

The terrorist attacks on New York and Washington in 2001 and on Madrid (in 2004) and London (in 2005) represented milestones in our understanding of borders, abruptly inaugurating the new border paradigm which Payan has called the 'national security border.'⁷ Since those tragic events, international borders have ceased to be seen as the always open gateways that the optimistic 1990s had suggested they were. At the same time, they have been given the new task of becoming selective filters. As well as enabling the free movement of goods and capital, borders are expected to purify societies and protect them from the negative side effects of enhanced transnational exchanges in the age of globalisation. As a result, most border narratives since 2001 have been constructed around this ambiguous discourse of "open borders" on the one hand and "border securitisation" on the other. The latter has referred to practices including enhanced border policing, the use of "smart borders" and the adoption of aggressive migration policies focusing on the control of unwanted human mobility. In discursive terms, the border securitisation approach has been inclined to lump together issues of migration, terrorism and organised crime. While these border securitisation measures originated in the US, they can today be seen to constitute a new border regime worldwide.

As this brief survey of the genesis of our understanding of borders in the Americas suggests, although borders – as physical divides – may be fixed and static over time, their meanings, physical appearance and political importance are continuously shifting.

The next parts of this study attempt to highlight some of the main features of the new border realities in the Americas. Following Popescu, I examine current processes of bordering in the Americas through the prism of simultaneous trends: (1) de-bordering, which implies the decreased relevance or even disappearance of some international borders and (2) re-bordering, which suggests the demarcation of new borders or their renewed relevance due to the process of (3) border securitisation in the early 21st century.⁸ My ambition in this work is also to describe larger processes of bordering in the Americas and thus create some contextual background for the other contributions in the present issue.

Processes of De-Bordering

During the 1990s, forces of globalisation were the main reason for the proliferation of free trade agreements and the selective open borders regime that allowed for greater cross-border exchange and cooperation in the Americas. Important transnational actors such as the IMF and the World Bank championed this model throughout the region. One of the results of these globalising forces was the emergence of 'third spaces'.⁹ Such spaces are no longer exclusively national or global, and they should be perceived instead as an 'assemblage of elements of each [space]'.¹⁰ NAFTA (coming into effect in 1994), the free trade agreements between the US and Chile (2004) and the US and Colombia (2011) as well as the establishment of Mercosur (1991) exemplify such third spaces born out of the effects of globalisation in the Americas.

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In the case of NAFTA, for instance, the free trade agreement meant the expansion of existing and robust commercial ties between the US and Canada, which share an almost 9,000-kilometre long and barely protected border. Further, it extended the free flow of goods and services into the vastly asymmetric market of Mexico, the US's southern neighbour with which it shares a 3,000-kilometre border. At the same time, however, the issue of human mobility was strictly excluded from NAFTA's provisions.

Due to these supranational integration projects and trade blocs such as Mercosur and the Andean Pact/Andean Community, there has been a vibrant cross-border exchange in South America over the past two decades. This is especially so in the Tri-Border Area between Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay, as well as between Chile, Peru and Bolivia. The de-bordering process in the Americas is exemplified in several steps taken by the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) to promote free human movement: visa requirements for tourist travel between Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname and Uruguay were waived in 2006. Passport-free movement within UNASUR's member states allows current South American nationals to travel within the continent carrying only their personal identity card. In late 2014, UNASUR Secretary General Ernesto Samper announced plans to introduce South American citizenship, suggesting a future of free movement across the region, opportunities to study and work in any of its parts and mutual recognition of high school diplomas.¹¹

Processes of Re-bordering

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Notwithstanding the demise of borders as dividing lines in the age of globalisation that I have described above, new borders have actually been created at surprising speed since the 1990s. According to Foucher, more than 26,000 kilometres of new borders have emerged worldwide in this period.¹² The Amazon rainforest, which spans eight South American countries (Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Guayana and Suriname) as well as the French overseas department of French Guiana, has been the focus of demarcation efforts aided by precise satellite technologies. The same can be observed in the Arctic whose area of over 20,000,000 square kilometres is the object of a fierce contest for sovereignty and the conquest of one of the last remaining frontiers on the planet.

These new processes of bordering are also occurring at an intrastate level in the Americas. An emblematic case is Brazil, which in the 1990s saw extensive political efforts to demarcate the borders of autonomous indigenous territories. In 1992, the tribal land of one of the country's large indigenous tribes, the Yanomami, was officially "homologised" by the president of the republic, a decision affecting an area of 94,000,000 square kilometres in the northern Amazon bordering on Venezuela.¹³ Over the past two decades, this process of intrastate bordering has involved over a hundred more indigenous communities though control and law enforcement in those territories remain hotly contested.¹⁴

Additionally, borders have taken on new importance after the terrorist attacks in the us and Europe. While not entirely relinquishing their "gateway" function, these borders have a new role which has been likened to filtering: even as they allow for the free movement of goods and capital, they are expected to guarantee the security of societies by monitoring human mobility and "purifying" them of unwanted elements. In this regard, Franco Aas notes that efforts to maintain a 'bordered society' via border controls are intertwined with efforts to achieve an 'ordered society'.¹⁵

Finally, over the past two decades, we have seen active steps to physically reinforce some international borders in the Americas. This is the case with the 3,000-kilometre long divide between the us and Mexico. In the most exposed urban localities and traditional crossing points for migrants such as Tijuana-San Diego, el Paso-Ciudad Juárez, the construction of border fences actually started in the early 1990s, anticipating the securitisation process after 2001. Since that date, these

efforts have been stepped up with the building of intimidating barriers of two or three rows of barbed wire. This infrastructure is equipped with the latest surveillance technologies. While the US-Mexico border is the most infamous example, the reinforcement of the Mexico-Guatemala international border within the Southern Border Program (El Plan Frontera Sur) launched in 2015 also highlights this re-bordering process.¹⁶

Border Securitisation

The new security paradigm which stemmed from the 2001 terrorist attacks and the political and public discourses that followed gave borders a new task: to stop unwanted human movement and, at the same time, allow the flow of capital, goods and services (so-called good mobility). Based on this logic, borders came to be seen as 'sites where transnational mobility can be securitized.'¹⁷ Spearheaded by the US, this "border securitisation" process was soon implemented in EU countries, with other states following to such an extent that it has since become the new standard early 21st-century border regime worldwide. In the case of the Americas, we find that this new paradigm has monopolised all border-related agenda in the North while in South America, by contrast, its impact is so far only limited.

The shift to border securitisation is exemplified in public policies which focus on enhancing security and selectivity at international borders. Accomplishing these goals has not solely been a matter of the physical enforcement and increased policing of borders. Rather, the new security paradigm seeks to assess the mobile security risks arising from transnational movement and globalisation. Redefining what a state border actually is, where it is located and how it is to be enforced has thus become crucial.

Another key aspect of the new border securitisation has been the transfer of a series of border management responsibilities, previously reserved solely for government, to private or quasi-public actors and institutions. As a result, the border has come to be understood as something dispersed throughout a society. As the popular phrase has it, "the border is everywhere": it does not only exist at the margins of state territory and it is no longer the exclusive concern of border agents. Local police along with companies and universities are required to check on the immigration status of their employees and stu-

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dents and to report on this from deep within their societies. Biometric technologies are increasingly being deployed as tools to conquer the “ultimate border” – the body. Unique human body metrics such as iris data and fingerprints are captured by former military technologies to guarantee the imagined reduction of security risks.

In a third shift, the migration control agenda has been exported outside state territory to third countries: in the EU, for example, the Frontex agency has succeeded in de facto extra-territorialising European borders. In the region of the Americas, Mexican and Central American nationals wanting to travel to the US are now required to obtain their visa before leaving their home country: this requirement alone is one of the most powerful filters when it comes to determining who enters legally (“good” mobility) and who does not. The dividing line between those who can travel and those who cannot oftentimes corresponds with ethnicity, gender and economic status. In this way, the new selectivity imposed at the border connects with existing inequalities, resulting in race-biased immigration policing which can be set off anywhere. As Bauman has pointed out, in a world otherwise marked by transnationality and freedom of movement, immobility has become a prime form of social exclusion.¹⁸

The Case of the US-Mexico Border

The 3,169-kilometre long international border between the US and Mexico serves as a clear illustration of most of the border paradigms and bordering practices that have been outlined so far. Although the current physical boundary between these countries was agreed in 1853 in the Gadsden Purchase Treaty, the border to the US southwest corresponded with the notion of a “frontier” until the early 20th century; sources depict it as an open area of free movement of goods, services and persons with hardly any obstacles. It appears that at the very end of the 19th century, there were just four immigration service inspectors along the entire southern border. When US officials described “illegitimate immigration” in the first decades of the 20th century, they spoke of Middle Easterners, Europeans and Japanese and Chinese people who were trying to avoid tougher immigration controls by entering the US through the southern border. Records of arrivals through the US-Mexico border were kept from 1908. Mexicans were perceived as “legitimate immigrants”; on arrival in the US through official ports of

entry, they faced a head tax and a literacy test. Mexico's only border-related measure was the establishment of a special customs police which was supposed to help collect tax revenues from cross-border contraband activities.¹⁹

The us Border Patrol was established in 1924 and entrusted with guarding the border against the illegal transit of people and goods. This institutionalised both a heightened anti-immigration mood in the United States and the advent of the prohibition era concerning alcoholic beverages. The Border Patrol started with several hundred agents, and this number grew to 1,500 in 1965.²⁰ Today, it has 11,000 personnel, most of whom are stationed at the southern border.²¹ Since the time of the Border Patrol's institutionalisation, border crossings have been monitored and bureaucratic—though the rest of the border has hardly been guarded. Over the decades, the growing economic, social and geopolitical asymmetries between the us and Mexico have led to an increasing perception of Mexicans as foreigners. Still, they continued to move across the border with relative ease until the 1970s. The bilateral Bracero guest worker programme, which from 1942 brought 4.6 million temporary workers from Mexico into the us agriculture industry, was ended in 1964. In the following decade, large-scale undocumented migration began from Mexico to the us. Primary determinants of the trend included the population boom and low rates of job creation in Mexico as well as the constant pull of work offers in the us.

The Reagan administration introduced a number of measures that have since influenced the us government's approach to the border: first, it launched a series of law enforcement initiatives to protect the us from the perceived "flood" of undocumented workers coming from Mexico. Second, it increased the policing of the border in response to an important shift in drug trafficking routes. That change after 1982 diverted the lucrative Colombian cocaine trade from the Caribbean towards the southern border between the us and Mexico where marijuana and heroin smuggling had gone on for decades. The us Border Patrol personnel and budget grew further as efforts to "protect" the border were stepped up. Since this time, a sense of urgency has dogged policy debates about undocumented migrants from Mexico.

It is true that NAFTA allowed for the unprecedented movement of trade in goods and services among the us, Mexico and Canada following its implementation in 1994 and it remains a prime example of de-bordering processes at work. Nevertheless, this agreement occurred

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at the same time that several military-style operations were carried out along the us-Mexico border by the Clinton administration. Their objective was to “get serious” about border enforcement and strengthen the “main gates” against undesired human movement and drug trafficking. These re-bordering processes included Operation Hold-the-Line (1993) in Texas, which fortified 30 kilometres of the El Paso-Juárez metropolitan area; Operation Gatekeeper (1994), which started in the San Diego-Tijuana area in California and extended border protection from the Pacific Ocean to Yuma, Arizona; Operation Safeguard (1994), which began in Arizona but lacked significant funding; and Operation Rio Grande (1997), which was launched in the south valley of Rio Grande, Texas. The number of us Border Patrol agents more than doubled in the 1990s.²²

Aside from being an enormous financial investment, the building of fences at the most exposed parts of the border between the us and Mexico had the secondary effect of diverting migrant flows into the Sonora and Arizonan deserts. Over the same period, the number of deaths of migrants trying to avoid being caught crossing the border grew exponentially. From 1994 to 2001, there were approximately 1700 migrant deaths reported along the border, a toll which rose, as Cornelius has reported, in tandem with the intensification of border enforcement.²³

Following the tragic events of 11 September 2001, the border securitisation paradigm dominated approaches to the us-Mexico border. All matters related to the border and its surveillance were placed under the jurisdiction of the newly created Department of Homeland Security and reframed as national security issues. In 2005, then president George W. Bush announced the Secure Border Initiative (SBI), a governmental strategy characterised by a unilateral law enforcement approach; its concerns were the increased patrolling of borders, expansion of detention and deportation powers, hi-tech detention and surveillance tools, infrastructure improvements and the increased internal enforcement of us immigration laws. Data gathered by Payan indicate that the ‘budgets for border security and surveillance increased even more than they had in the 1980s and 1990s, reaching 7 billion usD in 2006.’²⁴ More federal agents were deployed to the southwest border for the purpose of immigration and customs enforcement.

The construction of a “virtual border” along the more than 3,000-kilometre border between the us and Mexico was proposed in

2005 as part of the SBI. After its implementation on an 80-kilometre stretch of border in Arizona at a cost of almost \$1 billion USD, plans to install this high-tech surveillance system along the whole border were abandoned in 2011 due to technical problems and the high cost. Other tailor-made initiatives were announced for the remaining parts of the border. Border management responsibilities, previously reserved for federal US government agents, simultaneously passed to private/quasi-public actors and institutions. Those entities included employers, universities, local police, private subcontractors and, in some cases, even armed vigilante groups active in Mexico border states like Arizona. Moreover, as part of its response to these border securitisation developments, the US decided in 2005 to increase the border zone for law enforcement purposes to 160 kilometres inside of any US external boundary.²⁵ This expanded notion of the borderlands encompasses approximately two-thirds of the entire US population as well as the largest US cities and entire states. This move resulted in the significant extension of the area of action of the US Customs and Border Protection agency as well as Border Patrol agents. They are now able to check an individual's immigration status with the support of one of the many internal checkpoints throughout the country. While most of these checkpoints are located in the southern borderlands, a number also exist in the states of New York and Maine. Since 2001, those crossing the border have been treated as suspected terrorists.

This case study of procedures at the US-Mexico border at the turn of the 21st century bears witness to the three parallel trends described above: the practice of de-bordering in the context of globalisation, the use of re-bordering in the face of growing security concerns and finally, the rise of border securitisation after 2001. We can observe a general inclination to close the border as well as the escalation of both US policies and public discourse that are border-focused. This logic of escalation continues well into the second decade of the 21st century and has affected subsequent democratic administrations. President Barack Obama deployed 1,200 national guardsmen at the US-Mexico border in 2011.

Conclusion

Recent world events have shown that borders are far from being fixed and uncontested in the 21st century. While the enhanced movement of

commodities, capital, services and people might seem to render borders less effective, they remain central to processes of globalisation contrary to what was expected in the 1990s. At the same time, borders continue to be acutely relevant as a source of identification for citizens. As Fredrik Barth has pointed out, borders are not drawn to separate differences; it is because we have drawn up borders that we actively seek out differences and become acutely aware of their presence.²⁶ This study has focused particularly on tracing the shifting understanding of borders over the last three decades moving from the 20th into the 21st century. It has, thus, tracked their transition from “gateways” to “purifying filters” and from lines of division to smart and securitised borders that can materialise anywhere in a society.

Against the background of the changing international context caused by the fall of ideological borders in the late 20th century and the new security threats of the early 21st century, I have considered how processes of de-bordering and re-bordering and the securitisation paradigm have affected contemporary border regimes across the Western hemisphere, and specifically the border between the US and Mexico. It may be concluded that the region of the Americas epitomises the present era of simultaneous and contradictory bordering processes. On one hand, increased economic and political integration seems to have influenced the prevalence of the de-bordering paradigm in the southern part of the Americas. On the other hand, the notion of borders as sites where human mobility is scrutinised has ascended in the northern part of the Americas. Border securitisation has come to be seen as an adequate response to mobility-related risks in the era of globalisation.

I began with the recollection that it was Benedict Anderson who famously described the nation as an ‘imagined community’ based on research into early national movements in Latin America. This act of imagining, he suggested, operates through processes of inclusion and exclusion. Such processes help to establish the boundaries of the nation: who is “in” and who is “out.” Today, several decades after Anderson’s concept was formulated, it is curious to see how some scholars are revisiting it. This new work refers to imagined identities that are being fabricated by applying sophisticated technologies to specific bodily metrics in an attempt to control the transnational movement of people.

The case study of the us-Mexico border helps to illustrate how the escalation of political and public discourses since 2001 has established explicit connections between immigration, terrorism and organised crime and resulted in “one-size-fits-all” border securitisation policies. These policies collapse these three very different concerns into a single approach that has so far been hugely ineffective and costly in both financial and human terms.

Kateřina
Březinová



KATEŘINA BŘEZINOVÁ is affiliated to the department of International Relations and European Studies at Metropolitan University Prague where she serves as Head of Research at the Ibero-American Centre. She may be reached at: *katerina.brezinova@mup.cz*

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The Body as Border?

Using Arizona's SB1070 to Rethink the Spatiality of the US-Mexico Border

Leila Whitley

Arizona's SB1070, or the Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighbourhoods Act, is a piece of us immigration legislation which was passed in 2010, making it one of the first of a number of state-level immigration bills in the us in recent years. The cornerstone of SB1070 is the requirement that police officers verify a person's immigration status should they develop a "reasonable suspicion" in the course of a traffic stop or other law enforcement act that the person may not have legal status. Through this provision, the bill legitimates "suspicion" as a valid motive for detaining an individual and checking their documentation and also raises the question of what it means to "look illegal." In this study, I argue that not only does Arizona's SB1070 draw on racist ideas of national belonging, but the immigration policing practices that it relies on highlight questions about the location and function of the border. What does the consolidation and intensification of migration policing across the interior of national space do to conceptions of that space and to the border? And how does a racialised and racist immigration policing practice, which can be triggered anywhere and at any time based on a body's coding as belonging/not belonging, alter the understanding of the border and its locations? Against the wider context of us immigration policy, I argue that SB1070 necessitates a non-territorial theory of the border that understands borders as existing in relation to the bodies they police and control. SB1070, I contend, places the border not in geographic space, but directly on the human body. In this way, what SB1070 legalises is the treatment of the body as a border.



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Keywords: Arizona, SB1070, US immigration legislation, immigration policing, racism, the body-as-border, spatiality

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Introduction

The border that divides the us from Mexico is strongly spatially marked. It runs for nearly 2000 miles from the Pacific to the Atlantic oceans, dividing the continent of North America. Since the late 1980s, it has increasingly been shaped by militarised structures of division, including a border wall and the surveillance infrastructure that reinforces it.¹ Nevertheless, to conceive of the us-Mexico border only in terms of the physical space that divides the two countries is to think in a very limited way about this border, its functions and effects. How is the border enacted? To what extent is this enactment in fact the border itself? And what can we learn about the border and the way it addresses different populations by thinking beyond the territorial installation of the border even when it is this territorially overwhelming?

These questions point to the need to think critically about the spatiality of the border. Even when a border is as spatially imposing as the one between the us and Mexico, thinking of it as only a line of territorial division is inadequate to the task of understanding what borders do. It is also inadequate to the challenge of thinking about *where* borders are. This is because, as I argue below, *what borders do* is not confined to the space that is traditionally recognised as the border.

In making this observation, and in pushing critically against the current theorisation of borders, I do not mean in any way to undermine the importance of the physical space of the border. The physical installation of the division has important effects, which include the production of illegalised populations and exposure to the risk of death for those who are illegalised.² It is well documented that the militarisation of the territorial space of the border changes the way that people move and live and also exposes some people to significant violence.

Instead of denying or minimising these experiences of the border, what I am interested in doing in this study is attempting to think of the us-Mexico border as more than a line. This involves considering the functions, effects and consequences of this border beyond the site where it is nominally thought to exist. The questions I ask here include: What does the us-Mexico border do? Where does it do this? And to whom does it do this? In order to think through these issues, I work

from a piece of contemporary border legislation in the us which I take to be indicative of the current border politics in the country: Arizona's SB1070, or the Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act.

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Arizona's SB1070 and Attrition through Enforcement

In spring 2010, the US state of Arizona passed a state-level immigration bill known as Senate Bill 1070 or the Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act. This is one of the first state-level immigration bills to be adopted in the US in recent years and it belongs to a cluster of similar legislation.³ The bill extends immigration enforcement powers in Arizona, particularly by recruiting local police to perform immigration policing and by creating new penalties and state crimes related to immigration.⁴ In an op-ed published in the *New York Times*, Kris Kobach, one of the bill's authors described it as legislation that 'makes it a state crime for an alien to commit certain federal immigration crimes.'⁵ In this way, SB 1070 contributes to the criminalisation of immigration violations. The cornerstone of the law is, however, the requirement that police officers verify a person's immigration status should they develop a "reasonable suspicion" in the course of a traffic stop or other law enforcement act that the person may not have legal status.⁶ With this provision, the law does two things: first, it devolves responsibility for immigration control to state police officers. Historically, only immigration agents had the power to legally inquire after a person's immigration status in the US. The change, thus, extends immigration policing by linking it to day-to-day policing. And second, the bill legitimates suspicion as a valid motive for detaining an individual and checking their documentation. Through this, the legislation makes the consequences of not carrying papers dramatic—not only is everyone mandated to carry documentation of their immigration status with them at all times (particularly if they are a person liable to be the target of police suspicion, whether a citizen or not), but they may be taken into custody if they fail to produce this documentation.⁷

Arizona's SB1070 is part of the "attrition-through-enforcement" framework of immigration policing, which seeks to enforce all possible laws already in place while also instituting new laws, ostensibly to force undocumented migrants out of the country.⁸ The rationale openly given for this intensified enforcement is to exhaust undocu-

mented migrants by increasing the difficulties they face in their lives in the US, thus encouraging them to “choose” to leave the country. A 2005 paper by Mark Krikorian, director of the right-wing think tank the Centre for Immigration Studies, is credited as the origin of the attrition-through-enforcement strategy and, as such, provides an important perspective on the strategy.⁹ In this article, Krikorian advocates reducing the ‘illegal population to a manageable nuisance.’¹⁰ While he is clear that mass deportation of those without legal status in the US would be his preferred means to achieve this goal, he dismisses this strategy as impractical.¹¹ Instead, he proposes that a strategy of enforcing immigration laws already on the books be combined with the verification of legal status at various points in order to ‘make it as difficult and unpleasant as possible to live here [in the US] illegally.’¹² As Krikorian reiterates later in the piece, the goal of this intensified identification and policing is ‘not mainly to identify illegal aliens for arrest (though that will always be a possibility) but rather to make it as difficult as possible for illegal aliens to live a normal life here.’¹³

Building on such right-wing intellectual foundations, Kobach advocates that government may potentially gain strength by maintaining a ‘credible threat of enforcement.’¹⁴ Applying this logic to the enforcement of immigration laws and echoing Krikorian, he argues that there is no need to actively deport those who lack legal status. Instead, he claims that migrants without legal status can be pressured into leaving by appealing to them as rational decision makers. He writes: ‘If the risks of detention or involuntary removal go up, and the probability of being able to obtain unauthorized employment goes down, then at some point, the only rational decision is to return home.’¹⁵ It is exactly this principle of forced rational decision-making which is manifested in Arizona’s SB1070. In Kobach’s own words, the premise of the legislation is that through ‘a concerted strategy of attrition through enforcement’ which ensures that ‘the risk of detention, prosecution and involuntary removal increases, and the probability of obtaining employment decreases,’¹⁶ life will become so difficult for those without documentation in the US that it is untenable.

Based on these descriptions, it is clear that the attrition-through-enforcement model of immigration policing relies on heightened policing practices and day-to-day harassment. There is no subtlety to what Kobach and Krikorian are suggesting. The very choice of the word “attrition” in their policy’s name is telling as it denotes the process of

grinding or wearing something – or someone – down. The *Oxford English Dictionary* definition is as follows:

1. The action or process of rubbing one thing against another; mutual friction.
2. The process of rubbing away, wearing or grinding down, by friction. b. The wearing down of the enemy’s strength and morale by unremitting harassment, esp. in phr. *war of attrition*.¹⁷

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Since the first two definitions here seem to refer to objects as opposed to people, the third definition is the most useful for our purposes. Drawing on this definition, attrition-through-enforcement legislation can be equated with a *war of attrition*. In other words, this type of legislation treats migrants as enemies and attempts to *wear down their strength and morale by unremitting harassment*. It is therefore amounts to the conscious legal enshrinement of harassment as a migration policy in the us.

Do I Look Illegal?

Arizona’s SB1070 functions by multiplying the risk of being questioned by a police officer about one’s immigration status if one is viewed as a person who might not belong in the us. Exactly who is being targeted here is an important issue. The language used in the legislation is “reasonable suspicion,” but to whom does a reasonable suspicion of not having legal status in the country adhere? Another way to ask this is to ask what it means to look illegal. This is the question that has been taken up in protests against the implementation of Arizona’s SB1070: Do I look illegal?¹⁸ The question confronts the presumption inherent in SB1070 – and in other pieces of anti-immigrant legislation passed in states across the United States – that a person’s legal status in a country can be treated as information visible on their body.

To examine the nature of “reasonable suspicion,” we can begin by looking at the text of the legislation. The term appears in Article 8 (Enforcement of Immigration Laws). The relevant section of SB1070, which amends the previous statute, reads as follows:

For any lawful stop, detention or arrest made by a law enforcement official or a law enforcement agency of this state or a law enforcement official or a law enforcement agency of a county, city, town or other political subdivision of this state in the enforcement of any other law or ordinance of country, city

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or town or this state where reasonable suspicion exists that the person is an alien and is unlawfully present in the United States, a reasonable attempt shall be made, when practicable, to determine the immigration status of the person, except if the determination may hinder or obstruct an investigation (emphasis added).

While the statute goes on to detail the ways that immigration status legally may and may not be verified as well as the permitted modes of information-sharing, it does not state what constitutes reasonable suspicion. Instead, it leaves this term undefined. This is a curious oversight in a law that is painstaking in its definitions of other items, including what identification will be accepted as proof of documented status. Thus, even as “reasonable suspicion” is placed at the core of SB1070, what this suspicion refers to is never articulated or clarified.

Tucson police officer, Martin Escobar, provides a particularly cogent formulation of the precise indicators that are evoked by a term like “reasonable suspicion.” Just five days after the legislation was signed, on 28 April 2009, Escobar filed a lawsuit opposing SB1070. In this filing, he objected to the law on the basis that it would require him as a police officer to make race-based decisions about the likelihood that a person did or did not have legal status. Moreover, he pointed to the ways that SB1070 appropriates racial profiling for the task of immigration policing. Here, he speculated on the cues that an officer might rely on when acting on SB1070’s mandatory reasonable suspicion clause. The substance of his lawsuit was, thus, a statement of ways in which the implementation of SB1070 would necessarily rely on racial criteria. In its points 20-28, the suit addressed nine different possible indicators of status in the country. These included skin colour and physical features; manner of dress; using the Spanish language or speaking English with an accent; listening to Spanish language radio, music or television; using vehicles stereotypically owned by Hispanics; using public transportation; having Mexican licence plates on a vehicle; and residing in the kind of home that stereotypically belongs to Hispanics.¹⁹

What Escobar’s list of hypothetical indicators demonstrates is that the only possible sources of suspicion of lack of legal status have to do with ways of appearing or behaving that are associated with – or stereotyped as – being Mexican, Hispanic or Latina/o. I include all three terms here because of a degree of messiness around them, or what Masouf and Delgado have described as the merging of different

groups like Mexicans, Mexican-Americans and Latinos.²⁰ Where these groups are referred to, each one is understood in a stereotypical manner and the three are also blended together. Under SB1070, a person may be suspected of being in the country illegally because (s)he looks or behaves as though (s)he is Mexican – or, more precisely, because the way (s)he looks or acts has been stereotyped as a Mexican way of appearing or behaving. By enumerating possible sources of suspicion in his lawsuit, Escobar is able to show clearly that suspicion regarding immigration status is not only based on unreliable or manifestly wrong indicators, but in fact, this suspicion cannot be race neutral. Any attempt to police immigration on the basis of these sources of suspicion amounts to racial profiling and to the racist collapse of racialisation with presumptions about legal status. Escobar's suit concludes convincingly with the statement that 'there are no race neutral criteria or bases to suspect or identify who is lawfully in the United States.'²¹ He, thus, establishes that the law that requires him as a police officer to act on suspicions during immigration policing thereby mandates him to make race-based decisions about the likelihood that a person is legally present in the United States.²²

SB 1070 does not target those who lack official status, but rather those who are "raced" as illegal – those who *look* like they might not belong. Put in the service of immigration policing, racial profiling is incapable of distinguishing between the person racialised as foreign (in this case, visually coded as Hispanic) who is a citizen and the person racialised as foreign who is undocumented. Thus, if the attrition-through-enforcement plan seeks to harass people until they volunteer to leave, then the basis of this harassment is racism. While the consequences of being stopped and questioned differ greatly, it is not only the undocumented or non-citizens who will be stopped and questioned, but all people who fit the racialised idea of what it is to be foreign or non-American and who are therefore targets of police suspicion. This amounts to the harassment of an entire racially-defined group of people who are stigmatised as not belonging in the country in which they live.

To enable its implementation, SB1070 relies on what is effectively racist "common sense." This racist common sense equates Mexican-ness with illegality. Mexican migrants are commonly called up in mass media discussions of illegality.²³ These migrants have also been constructed by immigration laws as the specific group of "illegal migrants" that exists in the United States.²⁴ These are some of the ways

that illegality is racialised in the US and attached particularly to those of Mexican origin. As Nicholas De Genova writes, ‘the figure of the “illegal alien” has long been a pronounced feature of the racialisation of “Mexicans,” in general, in the United States.’²⁵ The Arizona law necessarily draws on this racist common sense—without it, implementing the legislation would not be possible. While migration status is not something legible on the body or made evident through behaviours or practices, SB1070 attempts to treat it as if it were. In this way, the law tries to identify illegality by scrutinising bodies and not documents. What this means is that Arizona’s SB1070 places racialised – termed “reasonable” – suspicion at its core and then mandates racial profiling in the service of immigration policing by requiring that police officers act on racist suspicions of unlawful presence.

For the remainder of this work, I want to address some of the important ways that the practices of immigration policing represented in Arizona’s Senate Bill 1070 raise the issues of the location and function of the border. What can be learned about bordering by looking at this piece of legislation? In particular, what does the consolidation and intensification of migration policing across the interior of national space do to conceptions of that space and to the border? And, perhaps most importantly, how does a racialised and racist immigration policing practice, which can be triggered anywhere and at any time based on a body’s coding as belonging/not belonging, affect the understanding of the border and its locations?

European Challenges to Linear Thinking

A body of scholarship focused on the European Union often, though not always, appearing under the name Critical Border Studies (CBS), has tended to reassess the spatiality of borders. At the same time, it has begun to move away from a straightforward idea of border geography as marking an inside and an outside of national space. I draw on this work as a theoretical basis from which to challenge the conception of the US-Mexico border as a linear structure.

The movement away from thinking of borders as lines has a particular historical context within Europe. It is the integration of the Schengen zone that has drawn scholarly attention to the location of borders in the EU and to the ways that borders function both within and beyond the geographical space supposedly demarcated by the border as

a fixed line.²⁶ The Schengen Convention removed fixed sites of internal border policing between EU member countries while maintaining a high level of policing and control at the external boundaries of the Union. The removal of formal border sites between member nations has not, however, meant that borders within Schengen have vanished. Instead, these internal European borders between member states have been reformed. Rather than existing as traditional checkpoints at the territorial limits of European nation states, they have been displaced and dispersed. For example, border checks within the Schengen zone are now carried out at random – or at least wherever and whenever those performing the checks choose to institute them. Border officials may request documentation at any site within the Schengen space. William Walters describes the internal existence of ‘a more diffuse, networked, control apparatus that is no longer territorially fixed and delimited.’²⁷ In other words, borders in the EU have moved unevenly into the internal national space so that there is now an internal border.

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The internal dislocation of border practices has been mirrored by an external dislocation of border practices sometimes described as the ‘externalisation’ of the EU border.²⁸ It is not only that a fortified border has been instituted around the outer edges of the EU under Schengen. Rather, barriers to entry and the administration of border filtering have been pushed still further afield. When they refer to the externalisation of borders of Europe, scholars particularly have in mind readmission agreements with third countries, safe third-country rules and agreements with third countries on the return of migrants as well as the location of transit-processing centres outside of the EU.²⁹ In this way, practices of EU border policing have been instituted in spaces that are geographically removed from Europe.

The shift in border practices within the European Schengen area has not only led to more diffuse internal policing and the externalisation of border controls; it has also prompted some scholars to discuss Europe’s border(s) in terms of ‘deterritorialisation,’³⁰ which refers to the ways that borders operate increasingly and variously both at sites that are geographically external to the nations being represented and within the internal space marked by the border. Seeing the European border as one that has been deterritorialised is a way of looking at the dislocation of checks once carried out at national border posts and now exercised in a spatially disaggregated way and via a variety of means. These means include roles externalised to third countries

as well as other policing measures that are carried out internally (for example, identity checks carried out by police and carrier liability legislation that makes transportation companies accountable for the people they transport).³¹ In addition to highlighting both international and external practices of bordering, speaking of a deterritorialised rather than an externalised border has the advantage of not reproducing the presumption of a neat inside/outside division between EU and non-EU space.³²

Borders emerge from this discussion in a new form, and this is captured via new metaphors. Instead of being linear structures firmly located at the edges of a territory, the borders of Europe are described as 'mobile and dispersed,' 'discontinuous and porous,' 'networked,' 'ephemeral and/or palpable' and 'biopolitical.'³³ What these accounts have in common is that they move from considering the border in the most obvious space – where it is firmly and structurally instituted at the limits of a national territory – to thinking of it as the site where the control functions of the border are performed.

The discussion of borders in European spaces, thus, shifts from considering borders in terms of spatial locations towards understanding them additionally as social, political and economic expressions of belonging and exclusion. CBS advocates treat the border as a site of investigation and also problematise the idea of the border as a line.³⁴

Recognising the limitations inherent in figuring the border as a line – as well as the inadequacy of conceptualising borders only in terms of a single and static territorial location – involves a turn to thinking of borders in terms of practices that moderate, sustain and produce them. Parker and Vaughan-Williams, two scholars working within CBS, describe this intellectual shift as one towards

thinking of [borders] in terms of a series of *practices*. This move entails a more political, sociological, and actor-oriented outlook on how divisions between entities *appear*, or are *produced* and *sustained*. The shift in focus also brings a sense of the dynamism of borders and bordering *practices*, for both are increasingly mobile – just as are the goods, services and people that they seek to control.³⁵

Since CBS considers that practices of bordering are essential for understanding borders and their functions, it is able to draw attention to

the ways that borders are performed into being. Henk Van Houtum describes this as a shift towards considering the 'human practices that constitute and represent differences in space' and states that borders should be thought of in terms of practices of bordering.³⁶ Others echo this analysis, arguing that it is necessary to look at the divisions that are produced by borders and to treat borders as active structures that rely on practices of bordering.³⁷ To think of "border" as a verb is to conceive it as something that must be done in order to come into being; it does not exist as a noun without the active and procedural *doing* of the border. Borders are not spaces marked on a map or within a territory, but instead actions that must be performed by human beings in relation to one another. Borders can be brought into being and indeed they must be *made* in order to exist. This shift requires asking not only *where* borders are, but also *what* they are and what they do. What sort of logic does a border both follow and impose? What imaginaries shape bordered societies – or, we might ask, what bordered imaginaries shape a society? Put more simply, what is a border?

Etiénne Balibar tackles the question of what borders do in his essay 'What is a Border?'³⁸ His answer begins with a warning: the question is absurd since a border has no essence. Balibar explains that the border is different in each instance and in every experience of border-crossing; crossing one border is not the same as crossing another, and crossing with one passport is not the same as crossing with a different one. For Balibar, this singularity of the border, its variable existence, makes it nearly impossible to define the border since what definition would be capable of holding these differences together? A border does not have an ontology *per se*. To this first warning, Balibar adds another: a border is the thing that defines. It marks the limit of a territory; it defines the interior and exterior of a nation state and, in doing this, it inscribes identity. Yet, any act of definition necessarily involves the tracing of a boundary and therefore the construction of a border. The definition of the border forms a recursive loop. To construct a border is to define, and to define is to construct a border. For this reason, any theorist seeking to pin a definition to the border is at risk of going round and round in circles, identifying borders by constructing still more borders. For Balibar, therefore, to attempt to answer the question "what is a border?" is to reduce the complexity of experiences of borders and also

participate in constructing new ones.³⁹ Instead of working from a definition, he recommends that we look at what borders do and at what particular borders do at particular historical moments.

In espousing that borders must be thought of in terms of what they do, Balibar's theoretical work on borders marks an important shift in border theory. The focus on function over ontology leads him to consider borders as sites of administrative control – or, rather, to argue for understanding sites of administrative control as borders. He identifies the selective checks' that filter populations and control the movement of people as functions of the border. While once it could be said that these controls were concentrated along a geographic line that marked the territorial limit of the nation state, Balibar thinks that they have now been dispersed throughout social space. Therefore, he writes that 'some borders are no longer situated at the borders at all, in the geographico-politico-administrative sense of the term. They are in fact *elsewhere*, wherever selective controls are to be found.'⁴⁰ In another formulation of the same idea, he notes that borders have become dislocated if not ubiquitous as they are 'replicated by other "checkpoints" within the territories of the European states.'⁴¹

This shift towards treating the border as the site where 'selective controls' take place provides an incredibly dynamic and flexible view of the border. If borders exist where they are implemented, then they may not only occur in many different spaces, both mapped and unmapped, but they may move, appear and disappear. Inevitably, this also means that as these practices of control take place throughout national space, the border shifts from being a liminal geographic space to something that is enacted and experienced throughout national space. While there are obvious infrastructures of control (airport border control, for example, is often explicitly termed "the border" despite its internal location within the nation), this approach also allows us to consider the less obvious sites where the border materialises. Borders can, in fact, become omnipresent when they are thought of in relation to the enactment of control.

What Balibar contributes to the discussion of borders is a clearly articulated rationale for moving away from a concept of borders as stable sites and a defence of an emerging view of what borders do that draws attention to this *doing*. By identifying the implementation of the border as the site of the border (i.e. by arguing that the border

exists where it is performed), we make borders visible as operations of power in spaces that might once have been thought of as removed from the border.

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Locating the Border

What happens to the us-Mexico border when immigration legislation allows for immigration policing to be done throughout the spaces of daily life and on the basis of racialised suspicion, as is the case with Arizona's SB1070? What does this bordering do? And where does this occur?

Balibar's concept of borders proves useful here for thinking about the effects of the Arizonan law's devolution of border policing to the local level. By focusing on the acts performed at borders as opposed to the particular space identified as the border, Balibar's work highlights the ways that borders come into being wherever they are enacted. This means that borders may potentially be anywhere but not everywhere; they exist in the precise spaces where and when they are implemented rather than being omnipresent. However, as checks are increasingly decoupled from concrete control infrastructure (such as at airport arrival terminals) and instead materialising in the form of local migration policing throughout daily living spaces, the distinction between "potentially anywhere" and "not everywhere" is becoming more blurred. In the case of SB1070, for some bodies, the moment of inspection, and therefore, the border, could potentially be anywhere and the border could materialise unexpectedly—they could appear for one body without appearing for another in that same space.

On this basis, as selective controls become more and more mobile and concerned with policing the spaces of everyday life, I think it makes less sense to speak of them as existing in discrete spaces and more sense to understand them as potentially, and increasingly, occurring everywhere. My argument is that what SB1070 shows us – and here it is one example from a border whose history is full of possible examples – is that the border must be thought of as increasingly dispersed throughout national space through the enactment of local level policing operations across the spaces of daily life. Subjection to bordering practices has increasingly become a *possibility* that may arise at unexpected moments in the spaces of day-to-day living. The risk of

such exposure differs for different people and different bodies. This makes it necessary to think in terms of bodies and of differential experiences of the border.

What is essential is that these bordering practices are not located at discrete sites. The border does not only appear in the instance when it is triggered, or solely at the moment of an administrative review. Rather, it is also implemented through people's vulnerability to this implementation; this means that only thinking in terms of a concrete and instituted instance is not enough and does not tell us enough about how borders are experienced and lived. If the social vulnerability of our bodies is part of the way that we are politically constituted, as Judith Butler has argued,⁴² then we are certainly not all exposed to power in the same ways, and so our vulnerability is not lived in the same ways by all. Borders are enacted through this differential vulnerability: for some bodies, these borders structure the way they move through and occupy social space regardless of whether they actually encounter a moment of administrative review or not. For others, borders are no less formative of the way that space is occupied, but they function to allow movement and passage. As such, in thinking about borders and bordering, we need to take into account bodily vulnerability to practices of bordering. Further, we must consider the ways that the threat that an administrative review will happen anywhere works as a restrictive force everywhere, changing the way that some people can occupy space and dividing those who move freely from those whose movements are monitored and checked and whose presence is put into question.

Because different bodies have different experiences of the border, the most important questions about borders and bordering concern not only where the border is or whether it is everywhere, but also *for whom* the border potentially exists everywhere. Within a system of dispersed, localised policing, the border could appear anywhere, and yet it is much less likely to appear for some than for others. Some bodies do not trigger the appearance of the border. In particular, the body racialised as white in the space of the United States is very unlikely to trigger the border outside of the institutionalised spaces of border control. For these bodies, passports and permission to enter must be shown when entering the country either through an airport or a land border, but internal instances of border control are very unlikely to occur once they have been admitted to national space. This is because

the belonging of bodies racialised in this way is presumed; it is read as evident from these body themselves. As such, to think about the border only in terms of stable sites of institutionalised control is to think only in terms of the white body and only from the perspective of those who experience whiteness.

When thinking about how the border moves away from these predetermined spaces and into the spaces of everyday life, it becomes necessary to consider who is affected – indeed targeted – by this regulation. What Arizona’s SB 1070 has made exceptionally visible in its reliance on racial profiling and its recourse to histories of racial profiling, is that the non-white body is placed under suspicion of not belonging. This amounts to the racialisation of both belonging and non-belonging. The legislation legally formalises the conflation of racialised body markers with evidence of status, and it engages in race-based policing of migration status throughout the spaces of everyday life. Another way of putting this would be to say that the statute is a means of legally codifying racialised presumptions about national belonging so that national belonging and acts of bordering are realised at the level of the body. The border appears inside the territorial nation and in the spaces of daily life, and it is removed from spaces dedicated to border control because the body itself is treated as if it could be a source of evidence about a person’s official status (or the lack thereof) in the country.

What this means is that the border does not map onto land; it is not enough to describe it as a territorial limit. Instead, it is enacted upon – and thus, placed upon – the body. Because they look out of place, some bodies may encounter this border potentially anywhere. Those whose bodies are read as not belonging and as being illegal regardless of their factual legal status, face suspicion and border controls not only in the spaces explicitly marked as sites of border control, but throughout the spaces of their daily lives. This changes how they move and live just as it changes (by enabling) the movements and lives of people whose bodies are read as self-evidently belonging. This, then, is what SB 1070 legalises: the treatment of the body as a border.

Conclusion

In this study, I have argued that by allowing local police officers to check immigration status, and furthermore, by letting them do this throughout the spaces of everyday life on the basis of racialised suspi-

cions, Arizona's SB 1070 does more than just authorise authorities to engage in racial profiling: it attempts to locate the border on the body. In other words, through its use of a "reasonable suspicion" provision, SB 1070 works as a means to (further) legally codify racialised presumptions about – and constructions of – national belonging at the level of the body. The result is that not only is belonging constructed as something that can be evident on the body – either through appearance or behaviour – but the absence of this evidence is sufficient to trigger the instances of administrative review that enact the border. Policing migration in this way amounts to implementing the border at the level of the body, so that it can be said that SB 1070 places the border not in geographic space, but directly on the human body.

The outcome of these intersecting provisions is that for some bodies, the border can potentially materialise anywhere and everywhere. Physical distance from the territorial border does not ensure that the border will not materialise, and nor is legal status in the country any guarantee that the border will not continue to appear throughout the spaces of everyday life for the body marked as foreign. This means that the border comes to be lived through the experience of vulnerability to the border.



LEILA WHITLEY is affiliated to Goldsmiths, University of London, and may be reached at: info@cejiss.org

Notes

- 1 For a discussion of effects of the border including illegalisation and exposure to death and violence, see Peter Andreas (2009), *Border Games: Policing the us-Mexico Divide*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press; Wendy Brown (2010), *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty*, New York: Zone Books; 2010; Nicholas De Genova (2004), "The Legal Production of Mexican/Migrant "Illegality," *Latino Studies* 2(2), pp.160-185; Timothy Dunn (2009), *Blockading the Border and Human Rights: the El Paso Operation that Remade Immigration Enforcement*, Austin: University of Texas Press; Joseph Nevins (2002), *Operation Gatekeeper: the Rise of the Illegal Alien and the Remaking of the us-Mexico Boundary*, London: Routledge; Mae Ngai (2004), *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- 2 See, for example, Nicholas De Genova (2005), *Working the Boundaries: Race,*

- Space and "Illegality" in Mexican Chicago*, Durham: Duke University Press; Roxanne Doty (2011), 'Bare Life: Border-Crossing Deaths and Spaces of Moral Alibi,' *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 29, pp. 599-612.
- 3 The Arizonan statute was preceded by several state-level immigration bills, including notably California's Proposition 187. I group SB1070 with a number of more recent bills (e.g. Alabama's HB56) which are very similar in form. They are often based on the Arizona legislation and even share its authors.
 - 4 Andrea Nill (2011), 'Latinos and SB1070: Demonization, Dehumanization and Disenfranchisement,' *Harvard Latino Law Review* 35.
 - 5 Kris Kobach (2010), 'Why Arizona Drew a Line,' *New York Times*, 28 April, available at: <<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/29/opinion/29kobach.html>> (accessed 13 February 2013)
 - 6 Ibid.
 - 7 There are longstanding U.S. precedents for policies and practices similar to Arizona's SB1070. While popular discussions sometimes treat recent anti-immigration laws as new trends in immigration policy that are exceptional both for their explicit reliance on racial profiling as a policing mechanism and for their devolution of immigration policing roles to state police, they are not, in fact, anomalous. Rather, practices instituted by law including racial profiling, the devolution of immigration policing responsibilities to ordinary police officers and the criminalisation of immigration and of migrants, are deeply ingrained in immigration practice and law in the United States. In particular, Arizona's law follows on from the immigration initiatives of the late 1980s and the 1990s which instituted practices of low intensity warfare at the border. These policies increasingly criminalised immigration while devolving immigration policing to the local level and extending internal policing practices.
 - 8 I say "ostensibly" because these practices also have other effects. They may, for example, move people around inside the country, make workers more compliant, etc.
 - 9 Mark Krikorian (2005), 'Downsizing Illegal Immigration: A Strategy of Attrition Through Enforcement,' Center for Immigration Studies, <<http://www.cis.org/ReducingIllegalImmigration-Attrition-Enforcement>>
 - 10 Ibid, p.1.
 - 11 These reasons include the resources that would be needed to enforce immigration laws, the obstacles and nuisance posed by rights protection, the negative effect on U.S. businesses of rapidly removing those without official status (an observation which requires Krikorian to acknowledge the economic dependence of U.S. businesses on undocumented workers) and the public outcry which, he says, would accompany mass deportation efforts. Attrition through enforcement works instead as a back-door, "quieter" version of these measures that arouses less protest.
 - 12 Krikorian (2005), p.5.
 - 13 Ibid.
 - 14 Kris Kobach (2008), 'Attrition through Enforcement: A Rational Approach to Illegal Immigration,' *Tulsa Journal of Comparative and International Law* 15 (2), p.156.

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- 15 Ibid, p.156.
- 16 Ibid, p.157.
- 17 *Oxford English Dictionary*.
- 18 In demonstrations across Arizona and elsewhere in the United States, people have physically attached this question to their bodies. It has, for example, been printed on t-shirts and written on placards to be carried at protests.
- 19 In early April 2010, immigration raids were carried out on shuttle vans providing transport to the north of the us-Mexico border. Escobar's allusion to public transport as a potential site of racial profiling may refer to these raids.
- 20 Hasian Masouf and F. Delgado (1998), 'The Trials and Tribulations of Racialized Critical Rhetorical Theory: Understanding the Rhetorical Ambiguities of Proposition 187,' *Communication Theory* 8(3), pp.245-270.
- 21 Lawsuit of Martin Escobar, filed on 29 April 2010 to the United States District Court for the State of Arizona, available at: <<http://archive.azcentral.com/ic/pdf/0429immigration-lawsuit-tucson.pdf>>.
- 22 The court dismissed Escobar's lawsuit on the grounds that he did not have standing to make the complaint, his claims were too speculative and he could not show that he had already been directly harmed by the law. Upon appeal, this decision was affirmed by the Ninth Circuit court. Nevertheless, the court did not find that Escobar was substantively wrong in his arguments about the uses and deployments of reasonable suspicion. In fact, the court did not comment on his claims, but only ruled that he was not in a position to bring the complaint.
- 23 Leo Chavez (2001), *Covering Immigration: Popular Images and the Politics of the Nation*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- 24 De Genova (2005), p.91.
- 25 Ibid.
- 26 See, for example, Rutvica Andrijasevic (2010), 'From Exception to Excess: Detention and Deportations across the Mediterranean Space' in N. De Genova and N. Peutz (eds.), *The Deportation Regime: Sovereignty, Space, and the Freedom of Movement*, Durham: Duke University Press, pp.147-165; Etienne Balibar (2002), 'What is a Border?' in Etienne Balibar (2002), *Politics and the Other Scene*, London: Verso; S. Karakayali and E. Rigo (2010), 'Mapping the European Space of Circulation' in N. De Genova and N. Peutz (eds.), *The Deportation Regime: Sovereignty, Space, and the Freedom of Movement*, Durham: Duke University Press, pp.123-146; E. Rigo (2005), 'Citizenship at Europe's Borders: Some Reflections on the Post-colonial Condition of Europe in the Context of EU Enlargement,' *Citizenship Studies* 9(1), pp.3-22; William Walters (2002), 'Mapping Schengenland: Denaturalizing the Border,' *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 20, pp.561-580.
- 27 Walters (2002), p.573.
- 28 Karakayali and Rigo (2010).
- 29 Andrijasevic (2010), p.153; Karakayali and Rigo (2010), p.124; Walters (2002), p.563.
- 30 M Anderson (2000), 'The Transformation of Border Controls: A Euro-

- pean Precedent?’ in P. Andreas and T. Snyder (eds.), *The Wall around the West: State Borders and Immigration Controls in North America and Europe*, Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, pp.15-29; Andrijasevic (2010); Rigo (2005); Walters (2002).
- 31 Anderson (2000); Andrijasevic (2010).
- 32 Andrijasevic (2010), p.155. Andrijasevic argues that it is problematic to speak of detention and processing centres in safe third countries as sites external to the EU space. Such statements, she notes, presume a neat separation between EU territory and the external borders of the space. They reproduce an inside/outside dichotomy which, she says, can be challenged productively by discussing de-localised borders.
- 33 Andrijasevic (2010); N. Parker, N. Vaughan-Williams et al (2009), ‘Lines in the Sand? Towards an Agenda for Critical Border Studies,’ *Geopolitics* 14, pp.582-587; Chris Rumford (2006), ‘Introduction: Theorizing Borders,’ *European Journal of Social Theory* 9(2), pp.155-169; Nicholas Vaughan-Williams (2007), ‘The Shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes: New Border Politics?’ *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 32(2), pp.177-195; Walters (2002); William Walters (2006), ‘Border/Control,’ *European Journal of Social Theory* 9(2), pp.187-203.
- 34 Parker and Vaughan-Williams (2009); Mark Salter (2012) ‘Theory of the /: The Suture and Critical Border Studies,’ *Geopolitics* 17(4), pp.734-755.
- 35 Parler and Vaughan-Williams (2009), p.586. Emphasis is in the original.
- 36 Henk Van Houtum (2005), ‘The Geopolitics of Borders and Boundaries,’ *Geopolitics* 10, p.672.
- 37 Walter Mignolo and Tlostanova (2006) ‘Theorizing from the Borders: Shifting to Geo- and Body-Politics of Knowledge,’ *European Journal of Social Theory* 9(2), pp.205-221; Parker and Vaughan-Williams (2009).
- 38 Balibar (2002).
- 39 *Ibid*, p.76.
- 40 *Ibid*, p.84. Emphasis is in the original.
- 41 Etienne Balibar (2004) *We, the People of Europe?: Reflections on Transnational Citizenship, Translation/Transnation.*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, p.203.
- 42 Judith Butler (2003) ‘Violence, Mourning, Politics,’ *Studies in Gender and Sexuality* 4(1), pp.9-37.

Rethinking the Borders in Latin America and the Clash of Social Imaginaries

The Impact of Intercultural Universities on Indigenous Autonomy

Zuzana Erdösová

In order to speak about “borders” in Latin America, it is necessary to take an approach that reflects the specific interethnic realities of this region where autonomy is a key emerging issue. The concept of autonomy is often mistakenly linked to forced political and administrative changes that could potentially dismantle existing states. In contrast, indigenous movements in Mexico and Ecuador use this idea to call for a more egalitarian society in which their cultures may exist freely and yet still operate in the framework of the given states. In this study, I argue that educational models of the intercultural university have recently become important tools in the negotiations between native movements and national governments in Mexico and Ecuador. Despite their common designation as “intercultural universities,” these models vary and represent quite distinct political visions belonging to two different social imaginaries. In the case of Mexico, the model is occidental while for Ecuador, it is a native Andean one. To illustrate the difference, I describe Amawtay Wasi Intercultural University in Ecuador, which has been used by the CONAIE indigenous movement to support its plurinational goals. I then turn to the intercultural university network created by the Mexican Ministry of Public Education, which clearly represents an educational vision imposed by the government on native peoples.



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Keywords: Borders, Latin America, Mexico, Ecuador, indigenous movements, autonomy, education, intercultural university

Introduction

*Zuzana
Erdösová*

To accurately discuss borders in Latin America, it is essential to address the specific interethnic realities and multicultural relations of the region.¹ The anthropological concept of a frontier is actually polysemic and can be understood in either a factual or a metaphorical sense. Outside the common notion of the border as a line that divides one country from another, it has other (cultural, spatial, time-oriented and ideological) dimensions which may serve as a marker of alterity or otherness among humans. Bartolomé suggests two understandings of the “border” or “frontier” that are extremely useful when describing the complex Latin American reality: the ethnic frontier and the interior frontier.² In regards to the first term, he notes that ethnic frontiers and political borders do not usually function on the same social and political basis (for instance, middle-class citizens of a Latin American country will probably feel far closer to their middle-class counterparts in another Latin American country than to the indigenous people of their own state). Bartolomé links the second concept to the interethnic situation within these countries, which is one of conflict and internal colonialism. In the context of this study, this is illustrated in the refusal of the nations concerned to provide indigenous peoples with rights over their ancestral territories, which are instead viewed as “empty spaces” that may be controlled efficiently via the political and economic hegemony of the state. The state dispossession of indigenous peoples currently appears to be coming full circle; what began with direct military colonisation and continued through the staking of a claim to surface and subterranean resources is now culminating in the piracy of biodiversity, cultural patrimony and indigenous intellectual property in general.³ The two concepts proposed by Bartolomé, thus, clearly show how the idea of the “frontier” can be linked to the topics of indigenous autonomy and interculturality (including the intercultural university as a specific institution).

Redefining relations between different cultural groups in Latin American societies is being more widely prioritised at present. This is

linked to the call for a different concept of the state that would establish new systems of social and administrative organisation based on respect for autonomy in particular countries. Although autonomy brings about administrative changes that may be figured as “new borders” within a country, these should not be understood as modes of separatism. Rather, they are ways to officially recognise that post-colonial Latin American societies are far from being culturally homogeneous and that the topic of cultural diversity management is an essential element of human right issues.

At present, indigenous demands are no longer limited to strictly indigenous themes, as can be seen from the interest in “plurinationality” that I explore below. Since the 1980s, native movements have been transforming themselves into autonomous entities with corresponding demands,⁴ and to that extent, the 1990s may fairly be dubbed ‘the decade of indigenous people’ in Latin America.⁵ While the native movements and uprisings of the late 20th century were frequently considered to be consequences of poverty, under-development and the negative effects of neoliberal policies, these analyses have broadened owing to the emergence of the right to autonomy.⁶ What had been called “indigenous resistance” since the age of colonisation in the 16th century is coming to be understood as a series of emancipatory processes with clearly political dimensions: native people are not only resisting the social forces that create unbearable living conditions for them but starting to negotiate with the nation state in which they dwell and to raise a set of specific demands.

In this context, this work aims to describe and explain how particular applications of the educational model of the intercultural university fit into the ideological framework of cultural diversity management. Such management may concentrate on two very different goals: a) including cultural “Others” in the global market and preserving current power relations that prioritise globalised segments of society or b) redefining social relations by introducing a concept of autonomy which enables native people to employ their creative potential from within their own cultural systems.

Autonomy in the Indigenous Movements of Mexico and Ecuador

The indigenous movements of Ecuador and Mexico are very important in the Latin American context. Both these movements pursue the right

to self-determination and autonomy. In talking here about autonomy, we must be very clear about our meaning since the term generally evokes scenes of secession and separatism. In fact, indigenous autonomy, as defined by Convention No. 169 of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in connection with the term *pueblo* (people), is a special kind of social pact that would convert native peoples into the social subjects of a new federalism.⁷ Such autonomy does not refer to the reorganisation of a country on an ethnic basis. On the contrary, the current aim of indigenous movements in many Latin American countries is to remain inside the framework of the nation, which is invited to redefine its essence and move towards a concept of the plurinational state. Using ideas of plurinationality, autonomy and interculturality, among others, these indigenous movements propose new solutions to achieve peaceful coexistence among different cultural groups. These terms are, however, generally misunderstood by the majority of society and, at the same time, tend to be interpreted in many different, even mutually incompatible ways and taken up in rhetoric that serves various ideological positions. “Interculturality,” for instance, lacks a clearly defined and generally shared definition. Furthermore, its deployment in official state rhetoric fails to provide indigenous movements with the right to autonomy and self-government.

Here, then, at the very outset, we witness a clash between two social imaginaries, that is, two different ways in which human societies explain the world around them and make it an epistemologically comprehensible place to live in. Latin American indigenous imaginaries (such as the *Buen Vivir* or “Good Living” proposal of native people) generally lack the imposing tendency that is typical for the Western or Anglo-Saxon way of thinking that endeavours to include “Others” (culturally speaking) in the Western lifestyle and values. Furthermore, indigenous social imaginaries are based on a vision of a balanced relationship between human beings and the environment (the idea of sustainability) and opposed to the modern concepts of linear development and material growth accompanied by environmental destruction. Let us turn to the question of how these issues materialise in the countries that are our focus here.

At the beginning of the 21st century, Mexico was already the site of an important history of clashes between native peoples and the state. In 1992, the same year that indigenous people held massive protests across the continent against the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America, two key events happened in Mexico.

First of all, a new national identity was introduced into the Constitution, which subsequently stated that Mexico was a 'pluriethnic' country. From today's perspective, it is obvious that this rather descriptive term was chosen to avoid language with more political connotations such as "plurinational," which is used by the Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador (CONAIE) indigenous movement and refers to the coexistence of native peoples and non-indigenous society in symmetrical power relations that can only be achieved by "interculturalising," and thus, decolonising the state.⁸ This shift in the Mexican constitution aimed to divert attention away from the fact that though native peoples had been given the civil personhood of legal subjects (that is, provided with autonomy), they continued to be treated as mere objects of public concern. In the Constitution, autonomy is mentioned in the context of self-determination and the preservation of national unity. Nevertheless, there are no definitions of either the domains where native people may exercise autonomy or the practicalities of its everyday operation.⁹

The second, simultaneous, development was that of Article 27 which was adjusted to allow for negotiations over the *ejido* (common land) in Mexico. Though it was stipulated that the integrity of the 'land of indigenous groups' would be protected, this reform represented a clear threat to the existence of "indigenous territories," a term without a legally binding definition in the *Carta Magna*.¹⁰ Autonomy cannot, however, exist without territorial dimensions since territory is not only physical property, but rather represents a group of cultural and symbolic factors¹¹ and a domain of decision-making where resources are managed and identities created.¹²

While Mexican governments have remained unsupportive despite the signing of Convention No.169 in 1990, indigenous peoples have acted on their own initiative. Unlike Ecuador, Mexico does not have any entity that could be called "the" state indigenous movement because none of the existing groups include all of Mexico's native nations. The most significant movements for the defence of indigenous rights are Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN), known as the Zapatistas, and Asamblea Nacional Indígena Plural por la Autonomía (ANIPA). Both were created in the '90s and each has specific ideas about the type of autonomy it seeks. Constitutional reform has begun to be the central element of these indigenous demands.

The Zapatistas were not originally a movement created by native peoples, but they very quickly became one. In 1994, they launched an armed conflict in the state of Chiapas which targeted the federal government and forced it into a debate on the key themes of democracy for the whole country, self-determination and autonomy. This led to the formulation of the San Andrés Accords. In time, the Zapatistas grew weary of legal procedures and decided to construct their own system of autonomy unilaterally—since 2003 this has consisted of the Caracoles, Good Government Boards for the entire region and the *Municipios Autónomos Rebeldes Zapatistas* in particular districts. Different governments responded by stirring up conflicts and causing socioeconomic, political and military isolation of Zapatista territory in the expectation that the Good Government Boards would eventually dissolve on their own.¹³

ANIPA, which consists of intellectuals and leaders from various Mexican native nations, was established in response to the rebel activity in Chiapas. Its aim was to expand the autonomous regions into Chiapas to the rest of the country. In other words, ANIPA acted in defence of a regional concept of autonomy (based on proposed pluriethnic autonomous regions known as *Regiones Autónomas Pluriétnicas* or RAPS), which was complicated by the dispersal of the indigenous population. Over time, ANIPA grew close to the Party of National Action government (2000-2006) and eventually disappeared from the scene. In contrast, the EZLN's activity has stayed vigorous and it continues to be seen today exercising autonomy at both regional and district levels.

One obvious first point to be raised here concerns the nature of the autonomy that has been demanded by native movements. Should it be exercised at the community, district or regional levels? To date, native people's experiences of autonomy in different regions and districts – including EZLN's area of influence and community policing in the state of Guerrero – show that solutions must be flexible and contextual.¹⁴

Without a shift in power resulting in the establishment of a fourth level of government (after the federal, state and district levels), autonomy cannot exist, and thus, the question remains how far the Mexican government is willing to go to decentralise the country politically in favour of native peoples. At present, a false idea is being promoted that autonomy is possible without appropriate political and legal changes. There is, therefore, a split in the approach to autonomy in Mexico. On

the one hand, we find the autonomy produced by the legal reforms of 2001, which has adjusted but not changed the status quo, reducing autonomy to a group of specific rights and the practice of selected cultural customs at a strictly community level. On the other, there is the “de facto autonomy” constructed outside the national legal framework with Zapatista support. These new types of collective organisation are based on traditional indigenous forms of government but also have many innovative features and can materialise at regional, district or community levels.¹⁵

Let us turn, then, to the situation in Ecuador. The process of indigenous emancipation in Ecuador began between 1980 and 1986 when the CONAIE was founded based on steps by two ethnic groups that had been active since the 1970s: the Kichwa from mountainous areas and a group in the Amazonian forest. In 1990, the CONAIE organised the first indigenous uprising in modern Ecuadorean history, bringing a new approach to the “old” topics of democracy and political representation by invoking interculturality and the plurinational state. The group demanded matching constitutional reforms.¹⁶ Until then, the 40% of Ecuadorean society who were of indigenous origin and generally illiterate, had not been considered citizens and not been allowed to vote. In other words, the indigenous population had no political rights, and political representatives acted as if it did not exist.¹⁷ After the 1990 revolt, the country’s establishment began to consider the possibility of incorporating “Indians” into modern Ecuadorean civilisation, an idea whose equivalent had existed in Mexico since the beginning of the 20th century within the *indigenismo* framework and one that was unacceptable to the indigenous people in question who were already discussing indigenous nationalities. Through the political party called Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik (Plurinational Unity Pachakutik), the CONAIE was successful in the 1996, 1999, 2001 and 2002 elections. The organisation has, however, since faced problems with its political agenda, which, on the one hand, must retain its cultural specificity, and on the other, requires a broader programme in order to bring it closer to other sectors of Ecuadorean society and safeguard its presence in the power structure. This issue has led to a debate about the interconnection of classism and ethnicism in the Ecuadorean indigenous movement.¹⁸ Moreover, while there has been considerable discussion and social mobilisation, the contents of the CONAIE’s plurinational project are not completely clear.¹⁹

In 2007, the CONAIE introduced the *Buen Vivir* orientation as the basis for its proposed constitutional reforms, which were then implemented in the 2008 constitution, the first in Latin American history to integrate non-Western ideas about how to live.²⁰ While in the previous (1998) constitution, Ecuador had been defined as a pluricultural and multiethnic country, in 2008, it officially became an intercultural and plurinational one.²¹ However, the failure to word some of these 2008 constitutional provisions adequately and the fact that some parts are contradictory and their conversion into laws and regulations is still pending,²² have cast some doubt upon the achievement of the indigenous movement. In addition, Article 257 of the current Ecuadorean constitution establishes indigenous territorial units based on interculturality, plurinationality and collective rights. However, various researchers have pointed out that the indigenous autonomy in the Constitution is overshadowed by other forms of territorial self-government and so the practical application of this concept would be exceedingly complicated.²³

The Intercultural University Phenomenon and Different Approaches to Autonomy

How then does the intercultural university phenomenon fit into the aforementioned discussion? In both Mexico and Ecuador, educational models called intercultural universities have been functioning up until recent times. This intercultural university may seem to be a single educational concept but it actually encompasses very heterogeneous models of the university. This fact makes particular intercultural universities in the Latin American region quite incomparable and deserving of separate and detailed studies. If we consider the situation in Ecuador and Mexico, then at one end of the spectrum, we find Amawtay Wasi, the Intercultural and Community University of the Indigenous Nations and Peoples, which is an established symbol of the CONAIE; at the other, there is the network of intercultural universities established by the Mexican government. These education initiatives differ significantly in terms of both their ideological background and the goals pursued.

In the case of Ecuador, the CONAIE has significant representation on the national political scene and the party's leaders were in a prime position to pressure Ecuadorean political power circles to push through

their educational project. Amawtay Wasi was conceived from inside the country's Congress, taking up the threads of an idea which had existed in the CONAIE since 1989 when an intercultural bilingual education programme began in Ecuador.²⁴ The intercultural university project has followed the political trajectory of the indigenous movement that began in 1996 when its political party, Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik (Plurinational Unity Pachakutik) succeeded in the election, achieving a 10% stake in parliament.²⁵ In this way, the CONAIE was able to prevent native people's participation in the mainstream educational system and instead defend an autonomous and epistemologically alternative university project for both their own youth and non-indigenous members of society. However, back in 1996, that new project did not differ essentially from the conventional university model that would hardly have benefited the indigenous movement, and the proposal had to be debated among both native and *mestizo* Ecuadorean and foreign representatives until an alternative educational model could be developed.²⁶ This *minga de pensamiento* (collective intellectual process) was initiated in 1997, and a year later, the project proposal was presented to Congress.²⁷ At first, it was rejected, having been sent back for revisions four times by the National Council of Higher Education (CONESUP), which did not understand the indigenous educational concept and could not make it conform to the patterns of conventional education. Some changes were made but the representatives of the indigenous movement were determined to preserve the alternative character of their project. As an intercultural university, Amawtay Wasi had to be endorsed and approved based upon its essential difference: this was not a space for vocational education but a political space where knowledge would be discussed.²⁸ In 2003, hundreds of native people gathered at a CONESUP meeting to urge the approval of the intercultural university. After this successful intervention, Congress approved the Amawtay Wasi project in 2004, making it part of the national university system.²⁹ In March 2005, the intercultural university opened during the *Pawkar Raymi* celebrations in Pichincha province near Quito.³⁰

It was, then, a striking turnaround that after almost a decade in operation, Amawtay Wasi was closed down on 04 November 2013. The CONAIE considers this act to be a violation of the rights of indigenous people established under Convention No.169, which was signed by Ecuador in 1998 and should have guided the process of evaluating the university. The CONAIE, together with the Ecuador's Kichwa move-

ment Ecuarunari, responded by calling for a national mobilisation in Quito and asserting their right to their own form of education without mediators, interculturalism technocrats or “experts” on Indians. Representatives of Amawtay Wasi appealed to the Constitutional Court of Ecuador, which upheld their case, ruling that CONESUP must operate according to Convention No. 169 and the Ecuadorean constitution and that Amawtay Wasi ‘can and should develop its own model of higher education based upon its own learning principles grounded in indigenous knowledge, which can serve as an innovative influence in the national system of education.’³¹ Despite this verdict, little has been done to reassess the evaluation process, and some still argue that it was carried out from an intercultural standpoint.³² The indigenous movement of Ecuador has condemned the government’s action and is endeavouring to achieve the re-opening of Amawtay Wasi, including by making an appeal to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.³³

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The situation in Mexico had different underpinnings. Proposals from native people for indigenous universities had existed in the country since the 1970s when Mexico’s Mazahua and Otomi people had called for an ethnic university project. The topic of self-determined education was also emphasised by the Zapatista movement in the 1990s, but it was not until the beginning of the new millennium that Vicente Fox’s government and the PAN party introduced an official plan for an intercultural university. Implementing the new university model into the Mexican higher education subsystem was the task of Sylvia Schmelkes, the first director of the General Coordinating Group for Intercultural Bilingual Education (CGEIB) and Julio Rubio Oca, the higher education undersecretary in Fox’s government. The CGEIB ran diagnostics by consulting 267 high school students from rural communities in eight states (of whom only 8.7% were actually of indigenous origin) to determine their educational expectations. Mexico’s first university based on this new model was opened in 2003. From the very start, the project aimed to provide a new way to integrate native youth into the tertiary education system; it emphasised the development of regional native communities and the preservation and salvaging of native cultures and languages in the curriculum.³⁴ According to Llanes, the government at first seemed sympathetic to indigenous demands, including those of the Zapatistas, but negotiations with native movements reverted eventually to an asymmetrical relationship based on

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a vertical and paternalist approach.³⁵ The rhetoric of interculturalism, evident in the name of the new university model, played an important part in this process since the role of indigenous consultants was, in fact, marginal; the concept of autonomy was omitted from the project and replaced with an emphasis on the entrepreneurial mentality, economic development and the elimination of poverty in native communities.

Educational Philosophies Of Intercultural Universities In Mexico And Ecuador	
<i>Mexico (SEP/CGEIB)</i>	<i>Ecuador (CONAIE)</i>
The “university”	The “pluriversity”
Native people are “attendees” and their participation in the creation and management of the intercultural university is limited.	The education model is designed and managed by the indigenous movement.
The education process relies on modern Western pedagogical structures.	The education process takes the form of a “reinvented education,” which is an alternative to existing modern education.
The ultimate goal is development from a Western economic standpoint.	The ultimate goal is Good Living.
A synthetic vision of human knowledge assumes that modern Western science is a filter for indigenous traditional knowledge.	A complex vision of human knowledge understands different cultural traditions as mutually complementary.
The cultures that constitute the university are fragmented and the universalism of the Western intellectual paradigm is favoured.	Universalism is rejected in favour of “multiversalism” in the knowledge that some social imaginaries tend to present certain cultural intellectual products as natural and indisputable.
Interculturality does not lead to a new attitude to cultural difference.	Interculturality is understood as a “polylogue” with “Others.”
Interculturality serves to reinforce the current social status quo.	Interculturality is employed to design social alternatives.

Table 1: Educational Philosophies behind intercultural universities in Mexico and Ecuador based on Universidad Intercultural (2004) and Casillas and Santini (2006)

As can be seen, the opening of Amawtay Wasi was negotiated in a more balanced environment than the formulation of the intercultural university model in Mexico, which happened without the significant participation of native people. The philosophies behind these two projects reflect their different ideological platforms and approaches to cultural diversity.³⁶

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Conclusions

From this study of the history of negotiations between indigenous movements and nation states, the surrounding political context and the educational philosophies of two intercultural universities, we may conclude that there are significant differences in the ways that indigenous autonomy is treated in these educational models. While the concept is the very *raison d'être* for Amawtay Wasi University in Ecuador, it is something that is necessarily excluded from the official Mexican intercultural model. Though the Mexican federal government has – and continues to – promoted policies of “inclusion” and “integration” that are clearly embodied in its educational model of the intercultural university, indigenous movements have asserted their right to self-determination and built their own autonomous structures without governmental consent. Through the state’s intercultural universities, it is imposing a vision of development and growth in outlying regions where a high percentage of the population tends to be indigenous. As such, it rejects the autonomy proposed by native peoples in Mexico and dispenses a university education based simply on a positive approach to cultural diversity and the supposed rescue of native cultures. In this way, the government is avoiding dealing with the problem of asymmetrical power relations in Mexican society and ultimately includes “Others” under Western patterns of social organisation.

In contrast, Amawtay Wasi is based on an educational theory that is independent of the Western one. This helps explain why the university was recently closed by the Ecuadorean government: its attributes were evaluated through an ideological prism of “academic excellence” based on modern Western criteria which have almost nothing in common with the indigenous concept of education.

It may be concluded that different models of multicultural coexistence are being designed by diverse agents who are acting from a range

of cultural and political positions that can be tracked through matching educational systems. These models may serve either to strengthen or weaken existing interior frontiers. This conclusion is relevant in the context of Latin American discourses on interculturalism and autonomy, which frequently obscure their own ideology and can easily skew our interpretation of the interethnic realities of these societies and the complex negotiations happening within.



ZUZANA ERDÖSOVÁ is affiliated to the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México (UAEM). She may be reached at:
zuzana.erdosova@gmail.com

Notes

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A Place without Frontiers?

Changes and Continuities in Interethnic and Power Relations in the Southwest Amazon in the 19th Century

Louise de Mello

This study presents a range of research into interethnic and power relations in the upper Madeira area in the southwest Amazon over the course of the 19th century. After providing a preliminary evaluation of the impact of both international treaties and internal political changes at the end of the 18th century, I proceed with my main purpose: to point out changes and continuities in the dynamics of interethnic relations and highlight their subjection to shifts in the power balance between private and public “agencies.” At the same time, I propose a deeper analysis of the role of intermediaries, who emerged as key actors in the development of these relations and were often prescribed by socio-political alliances and also undoubtedly by economic ones. My ultimate objective is to provide not only voice but agency to these intermediaries, who expressed the relationships between external and (multiple) internal frontiers.

Keywords: borders, multiple frontiers, upper Madeira, interethnic relations, power relations, intermediaries.



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Introduction

The history of the upper Madeira region has been written and told as if it solely consisted of *hitos* and *hiatos* (milestones and hiatuses). In other words, it has been expressed in a way which reflects not only the lack of primary sources available but also a general historiographical negligence in this area. However, revisiting existing ethno-historical doc-

uments reveals another complementary feature of the upper Madeira: the region is a stronghold of sorts, a word that refers not to its pristine nature, but to the subsistence of the space and its inhabitants despite various governmental efforts. Crossed by major rivers – the Madeira, the Beni, the Guaporé and the Mamoré – and boxed in by its rough orography, the upper Madeira is configured as a distinct cultural and historical geographic area. It is an integrated space which undoubtedly overlaps with both sides of emerging national borders.

As Werner and Zimmermann observe, Barth has already drawn our attention to the importance of human interactions within borders.¹ Based on the work of authors such as Robert David Sack, we may begin with the concept of territoriality, which is defined as an interrelationship between space and society, that is to say, as a primary geographic expression of social power as well as a geographic strategy of power and control.² In considering this definition, I would, however, propose an inversion since in the region under study, this strategy relies on the geographic control of manpower rather than of land *per se*. Keeping this in mind and drawing on the work of the Portuguese historian and anthropologist Ângela Domingues,³ I intend to shed light on the underlying role of various intermediaries. Thus, I ask how they positioned themselves as key communicators of both the external borders of two explicitly identified nations and – more particularly – of their multiple internal nation-subdivision.

As far as methodology is concerned, this study adopts a transdisciplinary approach based on postulates from the areas of cultural history, ethnohistory, anthropology and geography. The aim here is to achieve a more comprehensive viewpoint and – by confronting instead of contrasting these fields of study – to search for new and emerging data. As such, this work begins with a preliminary attempt to analyse the history of the upper Madeira during the 18th century from the viewpoint of the region's interethnic relations. This analysis is mostly based on my review of primary sources. In the second (and ongoing) stage of this research, I deal increasingly with secondary and ethnographic sources.

The purpose of this study is to explore the extent to which relationships in the upper Madeira region were affected by territorial agreements and by internal political changes that had failed to achieve their goals by the turn of the 19th century. To this end, I aim first to demonstrate that there was, in fact, continuity in the dynamics of interethnic relations over the course of the 18th century; those dynamics were,

however, subject to shifting power relations between private and public “agencies” and the reassignment of roles. Intermediaries played a key part in developing these relationships and were often controlled by social and political alliances and also – undeniably – by economic ones.

This work presents a possible explanation for these developments—based on the premise that the region established itself as a ‘complex frontier’⁴ (not to mention a “peripheral” space) as opposed to a central area of colonisation. As a result, the strategies, negotiations and asymmetries in this area were developed with regard to ethnocultural borders and not political-administrative ones. According to Boccara, a “complex frontier” transcends the concept of a border *strictu sensu* and takes in a broader notion of multiple frontiers and their respective hinterlands.⁵ However, the existence of these internal borders did not necessarily create barriers; on the contrary, the relationships along these multiple frontiers were fluid and recurring.

Much as 16th-century Europeans experienced the overthrowing of their cultural codes and understandings of frontiers and space once they acknowledged that Amerindians inhabited an undefined, incomprehensible and floating space,⁶ readers are invited to shake off their preconceived notions.

The Upper Madeira at the Turn of the 19th Century

Reflecting on the 18th century, the Brazilian historian Maria Almeida makes reference to the ‘fallacy of the existence of rigid borders within spaces and peoples either inside or outside the Spanish and Portuguese administration in the Americas.’⁷ At the turn of the 19th century, the political borders in force between Iberian-monarchs in the southwest Amazon were those prescribed in the Treaty of San Ildefonso, which was signed in 1777. This treaty, whose borders are largely the same as those observed today, represented a second attempt after the short-lived Treaty of Madrid (1750), which, in turn, overwrote demarcations under the almost 300 year old Treaty of Tordesillas on this region. The map below (Map 1) roughly depicts the evolution of this bordering process in the upper Madeira.

Nevertheless, for a critical understanding, it is important to draw attention to the huge gap between the theoretical and practical frameworks of these treaties. In fact, there were many obstacles that would hinder governmental intentions and efforts in this area, and the big-

gest of these was the lack of knowledge and actual control of demarcated areas.



Map 1:
The Evolution
of the Bordering
Process in
the Upper Ma-
deira Region

To begin with, the postulates of the treaties were based on geographical landmarks such as rivers and their sources, whose precise locations and courses were often unknown. As an example, the Javari River headwaters – located on the opposite side of the East-West borderline that stemmed from the Madeira River – were not determined until the end of the 19th century. The course of the Beni River and its connection with the Madeira were also disputed points among geographers until the 1860s, and their neglect in the Treaty of San Ildefonso met with strong criticisms from others.⁸ By 1795, the parties in charge of demarcation were reportedly encountering obstacles to begin, let alone conclude their task.⁹ Less than a decade later, their work was suspended.¹⁰

At the same time, the limited colonial presence and sovereignty of either Iberian Empire in this area made it difficult both to ascertain and to secure borders. Portugal's construction of the Príncipe de Beira Fortress on the Guapore's right bank was a frustrated effort to pursue these goals. The cornerstone of the fortress is said to have been laid in 1776, conveniently prior to the signature of the treaty that sought to prohibit such belligerent demonstrations. The Treaty of San Ildefonso did not represent a deep reform, however, since it maintained many of the shortcomings and inaccuracies of the Treaty of Madrid. Moreover, it did not resolve the border issue. Rather, as Beerman points out, it brought an end to political hostilities, replacing armed peace with agreement on the *status quo*.¹¹

The final quarter of the 18th century was also marked by political events, including the end of the 27-year mandate of the Portuguese secretary of state, the Marquis of Pombal. The Pombaline reforms responded to a wider political agenda of control and/or suppression of state competition, referring here to missionary orders along with private initiatives represented by *sertanistas* (hinterland dwellers¹²) and *regatões* (private fluvial traders) among others. These reforms are regarded as an effort to overturn the balance of power relations – a step which did not endure due to the creativity of adaptive responses.

At the end of the 17th century and during the first half of the 18th the *sertanistas* assumed an important role due to their exploration and penetration of the Amazon basin and because they established relations with indigenous groups and maintained a supply of slave workers to colonial society.¹³ These interethnic relations arose through com-

mercial and militant alliances, which were often reinforced by (multiple) marital bonds. The *sertanistas* were present, and their services often required, on both sides of Iberian borders.¹⁴ Portuguese primary sources tell us about their livelihoods:

They enter through the neighbouring *sertões* [hinterlands] where they identify

signs of there being indigenous groups, and then [...] they take them as prisoners [...] reserving the best for their own use, sell off the surplus to the villages through *passadores* [intermediaries] living in the swamplands [...].¹⁵

These practices imply the existence of a much broader and more complex commercial network in which the buyer and goods stood at either end of the chain with at least two intermediaries between them: the *sertanistas* and the “passers,” who were often *mestizos* or indigenous people themselves. Among the latter groups, we find the *cunhamenas* (a Tupi word for male in-laws).¹⁶ The more powerful of these *mestizos* were able to assemble private armies of up to 700 men.¹⁷ From the mid-18th century, the central powers sought to reverse the course of transformations in the interethnic relations of indigenous and non-indigenous people that were developing at the margins of state control. This occurred just as intermediaries were becoming increasingly powerful as voices of these changes in the trading of both goods and Amerindians.

Historian Manuel Dias argued that Pombal’s fall was the worst thing that could have happened to the Amazon.¹⁸ This view is probably understandable taking into account that this descent culminated in the destruction of the monopolist Grão Pará and the Maranhão General Trading Company.¹⁹ However, these entities’ deterioration was already evident given many shortcomings and excesses, including navigation difficulties, the lack of an indigenous workforce and the absence of competition.²⁰ An alternative theory would, thus, suggest that the end of this monopoly reopened the way – or rather, the causeway – to the activities of independent fluvial traders (i.e. the *regatões*) whom I will discuss below.

The importance of the indigenous workforce for maintaining the local and regional economies of the Amazon was highlighted by Domingues.²¹ This asymmetrical relationship was almost one of dependence, a dynamic that was especially clear during mapping expe-

ditions and in cases of increasingly tense international relations, state failure to secure the private sector its due share or even community work.²²

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It becomes easier to understand why one of the underlying goals of the Trading Company was to introduce an African slave workforce to the Amazon. Ruiz-Peinado notes that the company aimed to introduce 100,000 African slaves to the Amazon over a period of 20 years.²³ We now know that even after its 23-year monopoly, this goal was not achieved. Of the 25,365 slaves brought over by the company, one-third, that is to say, 8,455 were redirected to Mato Grosso.²⁴ According to Domingues, this can be explained by the poverty that they encountered locally, however, we should also consider the fact that the Mato Grosso captaincy was a point of attraction for African slaves.²⁵ By 1775, at least three-quarters of the area's population consisted of black people, mulattos and *mestizos*,²⁶ as may be observed from the chart below (Chart 1):

75% Black people, mulattos and mestizos	Girls	385
	Boys	564
	Women	998
	Men	3117
25% Other		

Table 1,
Demographics of the Mato Grosso Captaincy, 1775

The arrival of this workforce in the Amazon produced important social and economic transformations. Nevertheless, when considering the Mato Grosso region, it is also important to emphasise that the introduction of black slaves can be traced back to the 1730s when a southern route was explored for the development of mining in the

monsoon-affected south. In fact, we may infer that the disproportionate women/men ratio shown in the chart above (Table 1) reflected not only a slavery-oriented population but also one linked to mining activities although these too were in decline by this time.

Concurrent with these developments, and intrinsically related to them, was the formation of *mocambos* (multiethnic and multicultural communities started by runaway slaves) situated mainly in the hinterlands of the Mato Grosso captaincy in the lower and middle sections of the Guaporé River. The historical records tell us of a *mocambo* named Quariterê,²⁷ which was located in the Piolho River, a tributary on the right side of the Guaporé.²⁸ After a first attempt to disassemble this community in 1770, 54 of its members appear to have been imprisoned in 1795, of whom

six very old black people acted as the patriarchs of this remote village, eight indigenous men and nineteen women, 27 individuals in total, 10 of whom had been born in that *quilombo* [...]. These black men and others since deceased fathered twenty-one robust *Caborés* after marrying indigenous women [...].²⁹

As a result of the establishment of these communities of runaways, new internal ethnocultural frontiers took hold and people subsisted on the fringes of governmental intervention. Eventually, governor João Albuquerque de Mello Pereira emancipated these prisoners on condition that they set up a village and the ex-prisoners were baptised.³⁰ They were also given seeds, tools and animals and the site of Carlota was founded.³¹ This shift in the government's strategy clearly reflected a concern with ensuring the populating of the region. Furthermore, the dismantling of the *mocambos* would have disrupted the economic circuitry of the region, including production, commerce and – undoubtedly – social relations. It was in this context, that black slaves and *mestizos* emerged as intermediaries between Amerindians and colonial society, shifting from interpreters to agents of commercial networks and marital alliances.³²

The termination of the Trading Company's activities in the late 1770s was caused by the declining flow of goods and people in upper Madeira. Scarcities, combined with the rising costs and dangers of the company's transport, led to the emptying of the region and a period of decline.³³ Ethnohistoric sources also suggest that intensifying hostilities from indigenous groups contributed to the reduced exploration of both the Madeira River and its settlements.³⁴ Menéndez cautions,

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however, that this increased violence must be analysed in the context of a change in interethnic dynamics caused by the movement of the Mundurukú Indians from the Tapajós River towards the west and southwest Amazon.³⁵

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This so-called expansion of the Mundurukú may be understood in conjunction with the movement of the Mura. From the 1770s onwards, there is evidence of intensifying hostilities between the Mundurukú Indians and their indigenous neighbours in the area of the Tapajós River, which provoked not only the movement and migration of other groups, but also the re-establishing of intertribal alliances.³⁶ These conflicts with the Mundurukú gradually drove some Mura groups to migrate west in what the colonial discourse called their *redução voluntária* (voluntary retreat) between 1784 and 1786 in the area of the Japurá River, a tributary to the left of the Madeira.

However, the increasing conflicts with the Mura can also be traced back to the 1750s via colonial records. The cause relates, I believe, to the inclusion of not only the Amazon but more specifically the Madeira region in the government's colonisation agenda. To begin with, state efforts to expunge competition by expelling groups like the Jesuits and *cunhamenas* disrupted the alliances between colonial and Amerindian societies. In addition, the previously feared Mura – whom the government had conveniently used in its strategies for interdiction of the route to the Mato Grosso mines and against the Spanish advance – became another obstacle in the already tough journey up the Madeira River.³⁷

In the case of the Mundurukú, a peaceful alliance was established around 1795 between some groups of the tribe and the colonial government.³⁸ Nevertheless, despite the legal freedom decreed for indigenous people under the Law on the Directory of Indians – and, in fact, coinciding with this law's abolition in 1798 – the Mura and the Mundurukú were given a status of *exceção de liberdade* (“excluded from liberty”) that justified their confinement and slavery.³⁹ Primary sources also mention the existence of a various ethnic groups apart from the Mura and Mundurukú – among them the Karipuna, Pama, Arara, Sanabó, Jacaria and Parintintin – who were seen in the upper Madeira region over the course of the 19th century.⁴⁰

Although it was officially withdrawn, the Directory of Indians would still be used as a parameter in many spheres of interethnic relations between Amerindians and colonial society.⁴¹ Key factors behind its

abolition were the poor administration of village directors and the abuses committed by parish priests. In fact, both Spanish and Portuguese legal sources point to accusations by Amerindians and *mestizos* of physical and sexual abuse, smuggling, excessive work, late or withheld work compensation and lack of respect for community members of high social rank, etc.⁴²

On both sides of Iberian borders, such disputes were often heard through institutionalised methods of legal representation. This was the case, for example, among the Cayuvava Indians in the village of Santa Ana in the Llanos de Moxos⁴³ as well as among the inhabitants of Borba in the lower Madeira, who were organised into associations of both indigenous and non-indigenous individuals.⁴⁴ This also highlights the awareness of Amerindians of the advantages of accessing the legal system and appropriating it in terms of rights.⁴⁵

However, in many of the conflicts mentioned, the solution found was rebellion and/or desertion. The early years of the 19th century were marked by indigenous rebellions in the Llanos de Moxos. In 1811, for instance, the Canichana from the village of San Pedro avenged the murder of their leader by killing the governor of Trinidad and burning down his palace.⁴⁶ In 1830, the Cayuvava rebelled again against their *corregidor*. Keller relates how indigenous groups from Exaltación and Trinidad revolted against their own tribal chiefs, who had failed to pay indigenous rowers.⁴⁷ According to Keller, these chiefs were indebted to other contracting parties, who may have included explorers, traders or government expeditions, thus implying their own role as intermediaries in these labour relations.⁴⁸ Such rebellions accompanied a succession of all sorts of abuses in the context of interethnic relations. In 1855, the San Ignacio de Moxos *corregidor* was executed, and in the last quarter of the century, a messianic movement took over the village of San Lorenzo.⁴⁹

As for desertions, much like trafficking, they are a phenomenon intrinsically linked to borders. Evidence of desertions dates back to the first primary sources from the region and covers a variety of actors from missionaries⁵⁰ to indigenous people, *mestizos*, black slaves and soldiers on the run from military recruitment and/or compulsory work in villages or expeditions.⁵¹ From the mid-18th century sources record an increase in desertions related to an institutionalised competition between Iberian rulers, who each sought to motivate and attract deserters – often under false promises – in order to populate

and strengthen their new territory on either side of the border with a workforce and armed contingent. In this quasi-battle of propaganda, first missions and later villages, *mocambos* and even core multiethnic groups such as the Mura served to attract the said deserters. The Príncipe de Beira Fortress also played an important role given its strategic position in the Guaporé River and the scarcity of settlements in the upper Madeira region by the end of the 19th century.⁵²

There is both ethnohistoric and ethnographic evidence that this transmigration between the areas of Moxos, Chiquitos and Mato Grosso continued during the 19th century.⁵³ During the wars of independence in what was to become Bolivia in the late 1810s and early 1820s, the governor of Chiquitos province even made a brief and unsuccessful attempt to incorporate the ex-missions into the new Empire of Brazil.⁵⁴ During those long years in Hispanic America, the promise of emancipation was strategically extended to induce slaves to join liberation armies; this promise was not always honoured however.⁵⁵ While some historians claim that the abolition of slavery took place in Bolivia's early years as a nation when it established itself as "free soil," others argue that such effective eradication did not happen until as late as 1851.⁵⁶ One way or another, Senna reminds us that even while slavery existed in Bolivia, the relevance of the slave workforce did not compare with that of diverse forms of indigenous labour.⁵⁷

Considering that Brazil was one of the last slavery-supporting states in the Americas, Bolivia used abolitionism partly to construct a national identity opposed to the Otherness of its pro-slavery neighbour. However, the policy was also a political tool for boosting the population and attracting deserters. This caused some friction in the relations between the two national governments, especially since, in theory, Bolivia would not repatriate or deport runaway slaves who entered its jurisdiction.⁵⁸ The historical record, however, suggests a different picture, as can be seen from a diplomatic communication which reports that 'refugee slaves in Santa Cruz have been returned to the commissioner Mariano Apinajé, apart from others that have been handed over to the Empire through Moxos, passing through the Príncipe de Beira Fortress.'⁵⁹

For almost the entire 19th century, the navigation of the Amazon River and its tributaries was forbidden to vessels with foreign flags, yet

the Madeira River was navigated mainly by Bolivians, according to the upper Madeira region historians Teixeira and Fonseca. These Bolivians were engaged in both the import and export of goods related to extraction in the northeast region.⁶⁰ The commercial transport of products took place by rowboat up to the mouth of the Madeira in the Amazon, with vapour vessels operating from that point.⁶¹

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During the first half of the 19th century, commercial activity in the upper Madeira was mostly mediated by *regatões*, who were also referred to in the government discourse as ‘kings of the *igarapés* [small steams],’ a name that contrasts interestingly with the one given to *sertanistas* in the historiographic literature: ‘kings of the *sertão* [hinterlands].’⁶² These *regatões* were not only Brazilians; they were Bolivians, Peruvians, Europeans (etc).⁶³ This was largely because the *regatões* developed their activities and influence in a far broader and more complex commercial network that communicated with *mocambos*, indigenous groups, small producers and local traders at the margins of the government’s authority. This network often operated clandestinely, but nevertheless represented an alternative method of provision for many populations.⁶⁴

These fluid interethnic relations based on commercial alliances can be seen in primary sources which report that ‘it is probably the *regatões* from Bolivia who provide these beads to the indigenous of the tributaries of the Beni River, who, in turn, negotiate with the Mateney indians.’⁶⁵ The *regatões* were the intermediaries in a commercial chain in which local traders, rubber storehouse owners and even other *regatões* stood at one end and creditors in the province’s capital remained at the other. Those creditors were sometimes large *casas aviadoras* (credit companies) which had negotiated their way out of government control in order to protect their own activities and profits.⁶⁶ These circumstances were an early reflection of those in the timber, mining and energy industries in the Amazon today.

By mid-century, when the government again felt threatened by the *regatões*, their activities were banned, and they were blamed for having failed to civilise indigenous groups in the Amazon.⁶⁷ The government then issued a decree declaring a monopoly over the Amazon basin that would last until 1872, when it was finally opened to international navigation.⁶⁸

Upper Madeira during the Rubber Boom (1850s-1910)

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The Madeira and the newly “discovered” Acre region not only boasted tremendous rubber reserves but were also the sites where the highest quality rubber that could be found in the region.⁶⁹ Due to predatory extraction and the resulting exhaustion of *hevea* trees, whole populations were driven up the Madeira River and inland in search of new sources of the product.⁷⁰ By the 1860s, rubber plantation owners occupied the whole length of the Madeira River, and this remained the case until the last decade of the 19th century. In the treacherous upper section of the Madeira settlements and rubber plantations belonged to Bolivians exclusively.⁷¹ Their rubber plantations extended as far as the lower Madeira, where they ran side by side with Brazilian ones. Villages in this area such as Borba and Itacoatiara grew into the expansive ports of the Amazonas province, overtaking its capital, Manaus.⁷²

The Bolivians had, however, been exploiting rubber plantations in the upper Madeira for a long time and this was all the more true of the extraction of other goods such as cocoa, which indigenous people from the Moxos villages had gathered since at least the early 18th century.⁷³ The rubber boom period was, thus, marked by the expansion of the Bolivian presence in the region, and by a growing Brazilian occupation and takeover of the area especially in the late 1870s. That takeover was helped by a large influx of migrants, who came from northeast Brazil (mainly Ceará and Maranhão), having been driven west by what was considered the most severe drought of the century.⁷⁴

The vast majority of rubber production was carried out by rubber plantation owners and credit companies using an *aviamento* (credit and financing) system. This was based on a system of worker dependence on the rubber plantation owner in which the workers went into debt to the owner so as to secure the necessary equipment to gather rubber as well as subsistence from the owner’s storehouse (*barracão*). The gatherer was not only the owner’s employer but also his client, and it was no accident that the Portuguese term for this person was *freguê*.⁷⁵ The rubber gatherer provided payment for this credit – or rather debt – in goods. The owner manipulated the prices of both the rubber and acquired provisions in a very unfavourable way for the workers.

Credit companies were usually based in province capitals such as Belém and Manaus, and they were financed externally, mainly by British and North Americans. These companies were also paid in return in rubber, whose export was monopolised and whose prices were manip-

ulated.⁷⁶ The bulk of the profits remained in the hands of international and national credit groups.⁷⁷ Nevertheless, the main credit company in the Madeira region during this period was a Bolivian firm called Suárez & Hermanos. With branches in Belém, Manaus and even London, it managed to navigate around the European and North American exporters.⁷⁸ The origins of the village of Cachuela Esperanza lay in a move by this firm to a site closer to the Madeira River in 1881; it brought with it workers and administrators controlling up to 16 million acres.⁷⁹ In fact, the most thriving Madeira settlement where neither Spanish nor Portuguese was spoken was the village of Jumas near Humaitá. It is likely, however, that a Moxean language was used there.⁸⁰

The workforce, and its recruitment had great importance for the development of rubber extraction. The developers here were mostly Amerindians, *mestizos* and – from the end of the 1870s – migrants from northeast Brazil. In keeping with past practices, the Amerindian workforce was often regulated by the tribal chiefs themselves. As for recruitment, there were various models: indigenous people were bought then sold, or captured then sold, from one side of the border to the other; the main traffic, however, was from Bolivia to the plantations in the upper Madeira region.⁸¹ This continued to the point that in 1882, the Bolivian government grew deeply worried about the depopulation of the Beni region and prohibited both the trafficking of indigenous people and their recruitment to work on Brazilian rubber plantations.⁸² On the other hand, another law adopted a year later favoured the conclusion of recruitment contracts with indigenous rowers who were meant to navigate the Madeira River.⁸³ This measure, which reduced the government's already practically non-existent control over labour practices, reflected the importance of accessing and navigating the Madeira River for the northeast Bolivian economy.

Physical coercion was very common during the recruitment of the indigenous workforce. In fact, the confinement of indigenous people in the upper Madeira region not only continued during the early 17th century (re: the Llanos de Moxos) and the one that followed, but it increased.⁸⁴ The dependent relationships established among indigenous people and rubber plantation owners and gatherers led to a crisis of self-sufficiency in the Amazon, and indigenous communities were forced to abandon their own farming activities as they became more tied to storehouses.⁸⁵ Faced with the difficulty of finding indigenous rowers for his Amazonian expedition from 1848 to 1852, the British

naturalist Bates claimed that ‘it is impossible to find an indigenous or mestizo who is not indebted of money or work with a local trader or authority.’⁸⁶ These client-like relationships were expressed through fidelity bonds under which the client was protected in the event of hazards or sickness and received symbolic gifts – as Mauss describes them⁸⁷ – such as non-indigenous names and fictitious kinship bonds.⁸⁸

Under the 1867 Treaty of Ayacucho, a straight diagonal line was drawn from the Guaporé and Beni rivers to the headwaters of the Javari, turning the left bank of the Madeira River and the hinterland into Brazilian territory, albeit mainly inhabited by Bolivians. In exchange, Bolivia was entitled to carry out navigation and commerce free of charge on the border-crossing rivers leading to the Atlantic Ocean.⁸⁹ However, 40 years would need to elapse before the precise location of the headwaters of the Javari River was confirmed, alerting the governments that the territory of Acre belonged to Bolivia. The issue was finally settled in 1903 in the Treaty of Petrópolis, the most recent border agreement on this region; the Acre area, which unlike the upper Madeira was mainly occupied by Brazilians, was granted to Brazil. In return, a railroad was to be built over the long stretch of waterfalls at the upper end of the Madeira River in order to facilitate the trade of products with Bolivia and its access to the Atlantic Ocean.⁹⁰ This Madeira-Mamoré Railroad (EFMM) is, however, a subject for another study.

In the early 1910s, rubber prices dropped dramatically because of Asian competition, leading to the decline of activity and, most importantly, of the upper Madeira region itself. The latter continued to be disregarded by the republican government up to the middle of the last century as indigenous populations found new strategies to reinvent their livelihoods. Nevertheless, based on oral ethnographic sources, the violence perpetrated during the rubber booms remains lodged in the memories of many indigenous groups in the upper Madeira, and these periods are recalled as a time of slavery.⁹¹

Conclusions

This work evaluated the main political and territorial reforms that were meant to take effect in the upper Madeira and that region’s failure to achieve its goals at the turn of the 19th century. We have been able to observe three points: first, interethnic relations were affected by an almost cyclical shift in the balance of power relations. Second, those

power relations were expressed in the management and control of the workforce in the region. And third, the underlying dynamics of these interethnic and power relations were perpetuated by intermediaries, who were taken over by different actors over the course of history.

Finally, I believe that this work has argued successfully that the notion of an effective government presence in the region was as fictitious as that of external national borders. In this way, I hope that it has brought to light a far more complex and diverse scene involving multiple ethnocultural groups, relations and frontiers.

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LOUISE DE MELLO is affiliated to the University of Cambridge and the Department of Geography, History and Philosophy at Universidad Pablo de Olavide. She may be reached at: ld481@cam.ac.uk.

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- 88 Henrique and Morais (2014).
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- 90 An unsuccessful initial attempt had been made to construct this railroad in the late 1870s.
- 91 After the first crisis, another (albeit brief) increase occurred in rubber-related economic activity during World War II.

*Louise
de Mello*

Operation MANUEL

When Prague Was a Key Transit Hub for International Terrorism

Michal Zourek

This work examines several aspects of the cooperation between the Cuban and Czechoslovak secret services in the 1960s. The Cuban Revolution caused a fundamental redefinition of ideological boundaries, which, among other things, brought geographically remote areas closer to each other. The island in the Caribbean became dependent on the assistance of Eastern Europe, with which it had formerly had no political, economic or cultural ties. Due to the suspension of air links with countries on the American continent, the connection with distant Prague became completely indispensable for Cuba. From 1962 to 1969, as part of Operation MANUEL, more than 1,000 people were transported from Cuba to various Latin American countries via Prague. After the withdrawal of missiles from Cuba, this logistical assistance was one of many concessions made by the Soviet bloc in order to keep the island in its sphere of influence. With the aid of declassified documents, this study reveals the reasons for Czechoslovakia's participation and the forms that it took. Attention is also paid to the negative consequences that this involvement had for Czechoslovakia, including a threat to security and harm to the country's reputation. In order to better understand both the nature and importance of this operation, the last part of the study addresses some of the main individuals dispatched through Prague.



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Keywords: Czechoslovakia, Cuba, armed struggle, terrorism, totalitarian regimes

Introduction

One of the most important events of the Cold War was the 1959 Cuban Revolution, which brought substantial changes to ideological boundaries. The installation of the Castro regime seriously disrupted the U.S.'s sphere of influence in the Western hemisphere and created a major security threat for Washington over the next decade. Despite facing an economic blockade, the Cuban regime demonstrated remarkable vitality in the years that followed. The survival of its "socialist" model would not have been possible without the help of Soviet bloc countries, which subsidised the island economically, intervened in military matters and exported distinct pedagogical and cultural models to Cuba. The success of the *Barbudos* from Sierra Maestra aroused the interest of Eastern Europe in hitherto neglected Latin America, and this was accompanied by reflections on forming stronger connections with the continent. On the other hand, today's Cuba retains many aspects of this Soviet era and is very far from shedding those cultural features as relics of the Cold War.¹ The ideological affinity of the period, thus, managed to overcome both geographical and cultural boundaries.

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At the time of the Cold War, Czechoslovakia was not only one of the most economically developed countries in the Soviet bloc, but unlike other countries in Eastern Europe, it had maintained close relations, including a wide network of embassies and trade with Latin America in the interwar period. Therefore, in the 1950s and the early 1960s, Prague helped open the way for other Communist states whose positions in Latin America were not so strong. In the early years of the Cuban Revolution, Czechoslovakia became a major mediator of the Soviet influence on the island. One pillar of this assistance was the supply of investment units and weapons. Of equal importance was the intense cooperation between the Czechoslovak and Cuban secret services.²

This study examines the cooperation of these two secret services in returning Latin American nationals from Cuba to their home countries. In October 1962, Cuba faced a blockade as a result of the Caribbean crisis, and air links with the island were suspended. One of the few ways to leave was the air route between Havana and Prague. With the consent of Czechoslovakia, from 1962 to 1969, more than 1,000 per-

sons were transported via Prague, including dozens of radical left-wing terrorists. These transfers were carried out under the name Operation MANUEL.

The first part of this study deals with the launch of that operation and the form of the Czechoslovak involvement. The second part considers Operation MANUEL as a security threat for Czechoslovakia and analyses the extent to which Prague's participation affected its international status. The greatest attention, however, is paid to the third part of this work, which deals with some of the transferred persons. Identifying these individuals enables us to better understand the nature and importance of Czechoslovak assistance.

The first person to inform the wider public about the existence of Operation MANUEL was Czech historian Prokop Tomek, who, on the basis of declassified archival documents, published a pioneering study in 2002.³ This publication has since been cited in several Czech and foreign works but only a very limited number have occupied themselves with critically analysing the actual documents. An exception is the book *Fue Cuba* by Argentinian historian Juan Bautista Yofre.⁴

This study seeks to show that recently declassified documents from secret police archives in Eastern Europe are excellent sources for analysing the issues of the global Cold War. I draw on documents from the Security Service Archives (*Archiv bezpečnostních složek*), which is part of the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes (Ústav pro studium totalitních režimů) in Prague.⁵ This includes thousands of pages of documents from the volumes of the First Directorate of the Ministry of the Interior (Intelligence Department).

Launching Operation MANUEL and the Form of Czechoslovak Assistance

The close cooperation that existed between Czechoslovakia and Castro's Cuba resulted, among other things, in the establishing of an air link between Prague and Havana. In April 1961, weekly flights began along a route that went through Bermuda and Santa Maria (Azores). These flights later increased to twice weekly. This was the first air route between Latin America and the socialist camp. The British magazine *Flight International* wrote of the launch of this connection: 'The new political alignment between Cuba and Czechoslovakia is emphasized

not only by the new CSA service but by the reduction in frequency of Cuban traditional Atlantic service between Havana and Madrid from once-weekly to once-fortnightly. From Gander to Havana the new CSA route will pass over Bermuda, thus avoiding US territory and airspace; CSA is using a Britannia because neither its Tu-104As nor its Il-18s are regarded as suitable for transatlantic services.⁶ An Aeroflot connection between Havana and Moscow was officially set up a year later.

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The link to Prague proved to be indispensable for implementing Cuba's plan to promote its revolutionary model abroad. Cuba's goal was to support the revolutionary struggle in various parts of the world with a view to fragmenting the forces of capitalist states. The attitude of Eastern European states towards the so-called armed struggle was not strictly negative. On the contrary, this was an extraordinarily complex issue. After Krushchev's decision to remove Soviet missiles from Cuba, the island's inhabitants were furious. Logistical assistance with transporting people from Cuba was one of many concessions offered by the Soviet bloc in order to keep Cuba in its sphere of influence.⁷ Involving Czechoslovakia, which maintained regular air links with Havana, was seen as ideal since this would allow Moscow to pass on the security risks.

On 17 December 1962, Carlos Chaín Soler ("Justo"), the deputy chief of Cuban Intelligence, contacted Zdeněk Vrána ("Velebil"), the head of the Czechoslovak delegation in Havana to seek his help in getting home seven Venezuelans who had undergone guerrilla training in Cuba. Vrána accepted the mission, and the Venezuelans left the island the following day. In Prague, they turned over false passports and, using their real documents, continued their journey through several transit countries without ever receiving a stamp that might reveal a stay in a Communist country.⁸

That was the inconspicuous beginning to the operation which was soon given the name Operation MANUEL.⁹ However, this first transfer was also not without complications. A telegraph from the Havana mission about the group's arrival in Prague came one day after they flew in. In the meantime, the Venezuelans had found accommodation at Hotel Internacional; from there, they contacted the Cuban embassy, which finally relayed the message through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of the Interior of Czechoslovakia. The threat of the operation's disclosure was, thus, present from the very outset. The

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Czechoslovak side responded with a strong recommendation that the Cubans send an intelligence worker to Prague as a contact person who would help them ensure the smooth running of the operation.¹⁰

We should keep in mind that Operation MANUEL was initially seen as a way to help the Cuban intelligence service rather than a way to support revolutionary movements. The precise aims of the Cubans were not clear to the Czechoslovaks for a long time. It may also be presumed that Moscow itself did not have detailed information available to it on the subject. It was only via interviews conducted with those passing through Prague that the Czechoslovaks were able to generate a picture of the tasks being undertaken by revolutionary organisations. Accessing this information was the main benefit of the operation for Czechoslovakia.

The Czechoslovak role was based on the simple fact that Latin American nationals who had completed their stay in Cuba would not have been able to return to their homelands without this assistance. Czechoslovak secret services were only responsible for the leg from Cuba to these Latin American states. The journey to Havana was not in their remit and, according to the documents available, the Czechoslovak intelligence service does not appear to have had information about these transfers. During the first stage of Operation MANUEL, the Czechoslovak approach may be described as mechanical. The aim was to follow instructions and simultaneously push the Cubans to improve their operations.

The assistance was, then, of a purely technical nature. It consisted mainly of passport check-in services at the airport. The Latin American nationals journeyed from Cuba to Czechoslovakia using false passports. This effectively meant they had travelled to Cuba as Cubans. They continued onwards from Prague using their official documents without receiving any stamp that might have disclosed their stay in Czechoslovakia.¹¹ Another form of Czechoslovak assistance was the arranging of accommodation.¹² The First Directorate of the Ministry of the Interior arranged stays in Prague hotels such as Internacional, Splendid, Centrál and Centrum. In some exceptional cases, persons of special interest were not allowed to come into contact with Czechoslovaks. Clandestine apartments were used for these individuals, especially Valentina in Prague-Holešovice and Venkov in the municipality of Ládví south of Prague. The Czechoslovak side never gave any instructions about these activities and nor did it provide any funding.¹³ The

Cubans financed the entire operation from their own resources, and this included the accommodation at Prague hotels.

Consequences for Czechoslovakia

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From the very beginning, Operation MANUEL was accompanied by tensions between the Cubans and the Czechoslovaks and by serious shortcomings that threatened its secrecy and therefore that of the participants themselves. In addition to ongoing problems with the adjustment of passports, unannounced arrivals of groups or individuals – for whom the denotation *paracaidista* (paratrooper) became usual – were typical in the early months. Another major weakness was the frequent lack of preparedness of the people passing through the country. In the winter, few participants in the operation were equipped with warm clothing. Instead, they brought correspondence, promotional materials or spirits and cigars from Cuba.¹⁴

As the number of people coming through Czechoslovakia grew, the scope of the difficulties and disclosures increased and so too did the plans of Western states to eliminate the entire operation.¹⁵ According to information from the Czechoslovak mission in Buenos Aires, the Argentinian authorities had already obtained information about the travels of Latin American nationals to Cuba soon after the very first transfers.¹⁶ At the time, they had been paying increased attention to Czechoslovakia's activities in the country. In April, an espionage scandal culminated in Czechoslovak's plenipotentiary being labelled *persona non grata* while several Czechoslovak workers were expelled.¹⁷

In addition, several agents from enemy intelligence services attended training in Cuba. The defection of these Cuban intelligence agents was another great safety concern for those passing through Prague. In the spring of 1964, an officer named Vladimir Rodríguez Lahera ("Victor"), who had been briefed in detail about Operation MANUEL, emigrated from Cuba to the U.S. Once there, he began working for the CIA and provided them with much information. The Cubans tried to conceal the affair from Prague, however Czechoslovak intelligence services learned about the desertion by accident a year later from Salvadorean national Roque Dalton, who had been sent by his party to the Prague editorial office of *World Marxist Review* magazine.¹⁸ As a result, the Cubans must have lost substantial credibility in the eyes of the Czechoslovak state. The Czechoslovaks later found out that in

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April 1965, a Dominican national who passed through Prague in April 1964 had given the Americans a list of his compatriots participating in Operation MANUEL.

The second half of the 1960s was characterised by the marked dissatisfaction of the Soviet bloc and Latin American Communist parties with Cuban policies. Among the ways that this manifested was their ever-declining involvement in selecting recruits for training. Of the people dispatched within Operation MANUEL, the share of Communist Party members dropped gradually while the number belonging to radical far left groups rose. The Czechoslovak leadership took note of increasing disclosures, which raised doubts about the usefulness of further participation in the operation. In April 1967, for example, Jerónimo Carrera, a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Venezuela, revealed that six members of his party had been murdered in the previous four months; moreover, four of them had been part of Operation MANUEL.¹⁹

However, the Czechoslovaks chose to maintain some degree of benevolence towards these Cuban policies. A statement issued in January 1967 expressed the view that ‘the Czechoslovak intelligence service has no right or means to assess Communist parties’ objections to the operation.’²⁰ At the time, there was no way to escape the trap of “brotherly” aid. Since the Prague and Moscow connection alone could be used for the operation,²¹ it was decided in January 1967 that terminating this assistance would have serious security implications:

If we stop our participation in the operation, the participants will then fly through Prague as normal passengers and receive instructions from Cuba’s mission in Prague, which cannot ensure the dispatches, as well as from the Czechoslovak intelligence service with its expert and technical capabilities. The fact that the dispatches will be carried out by the Cubans will not diminish Czechoslovakia’s responsibility and vulnerability as a hub for the transport of Operation MANUEL participants to Latin America. The lack of expertise will, in fact, substantially increase our vulnerability.²²

Besides the practical issues, the political stakes were also taken into consideration:

Completely stopping the operation is not feasible because this could only be achieved by cutting off all direct air links from Czechoslovakia to Cuba while banning Cuban intelligence

agents from working at the local embassy. This would be seen as a hostile action towards the Republic of Cuba. Even simply refusing to provide further assistance to Operation MANUEL would lead to an abrupt cooling of relations with Cuba, and not only in terms of the Ministry of the Interior, but overall, since it would be interpreted as a refusal to assist the national liberation movement in Latin America.²³

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Just a few months later, the Czechoslovak leadership was again forced to deal with the possible termination of the operation. In the summer of 1967, Cuban's subversive activities in Latin America became a topic of discussion at a meeting of foreign affairs ministers of the member states of the Organization of American States (OAS). The session was observed by all countries across the continent due to the intensification of guerrilla activities in Bolivia, Guatemala and Nicaragua. The Venezuelan government led the complaint against Castro's policy, claiming that troops trained in Cuba had been involved in the murder that March of Julio Iribarren Borges, the brother of the foreign affairs minister and guerrilla troops had landed at Machurucuto in May with the aim of deposing President Raúl Leoni. That landing of the revolutionaries had been suppressed with much bloodshed. The guerrilla troops came armed with AK 47 weapons that were later found to have been provided to Cuba by Czechoslovakia.²⁴ Venezuela subsequently tightened its visa regime for citizens of Czechoslovakia and applications had to be approved by the Ministry of the Interior on an individual basis.²⁵

Criticisms of the Cuban line of armed struggle grew louder in Prague in connection to the possible deterioration of relations with Brazil. Good relations with that country were fundamental for Czechoslovakia because Brazil was its most important Latin American business partner. The first official complaint concerning Czechoslovak authorities' aid to subversive Brazilian elements was communicated to the ambassador in Rio de Janeiro on 17 October 1967. The involvement had come to light during the interrogation of guerrillas captured in clashes in the Caparaó mountain range back in April.²⁶

In addition, it had been discovered that some prominent representatives of the military opposition such as Admiral Cândido da Costa Aragão had reached Cuba via Prague. The Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs called on the Czechoslovak embassy to deliver written documents to refute these claims, adding that the continuation of such

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practices would have a negative impact on inter-relations. The Czechoslovak side replied that Prague was an international transport hub that could be freely used by any passenger. In fact, the statements of captured persons do not prove the involvement of the Czechoslovak authorities in these transfers.²⁷

Between 1968 and 1969, there was a significant increase in the number of arrests of people who had passed through Prague. This was undoubtedly due to the already established familiarity of foreign intelligence services with the operation. In August 1969, an anti-Czechoslovak campaign took off in Brazil based on the testimony of an arrested member of the MR 26 guerrilla group of José Duarte dos Santos. According to his testimony, he had been returning from Cuba via Prague where a Czechoslovak citizen had given him counterfeit documents containing a false name.²⁸

In October 1969, the Czechoslovak government sent its first official protest to Havana about Prague being used as a transit hub for “elements” who were trained in Cuba and dispatched to Brazil to carry out subversive activities there. The reason for this unexpectedly sharp response was an incident in Minas Gerais where an attack on the national bank led to the arrest of several people who were found to be carrying false documents that had been issued by Czechoslovak authorities.²⁹

At the time, it was also obvious that for the ruined Cuban economy, existing financial support for subversive activities was no longer sustainable. The success of Latin American guerrillas had been minimal, and under the influence of the new pro-Soviet orientation, Havana began to direct its attention to establishing business and diplomatic relations with Latin American countries.³⁰ Cuba made a final decision to terminate Operation MANUEL on 06 March 1970. The official reason given was the reorganisation of the Ministry of the Interior and the burden on workers to harvest the sugar cane. The real reasons, however, were primarily related to the change in the orientation of Cuban policies.³¹

Throughout the entire period of Operation MANUEL from 1962 to 1969, a total of 1,179 people were transported. Most of them were from Venezuela (236), Argentina (177), the Dominican Republic (122), Guatemala (100), Colombia (79), Peru (76), Brazil (48), Ecuador (41), Paraguay (38), El Salvador (36), Honduras (35), Haiti (35) or Panama (28). These figures are only of an indicative nature. The total number of people

who journeyed from other countries in Latin America to Cuba and back via Prague cannot be calculated. Under Operation MANUEL, the Czechoslovak intelligence service was only responsible for the transit of some of the people who returned from Cuba. The number transported was therefore many times higher.

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Participants

In the Security Service Archives – and volumes 80723/101–109 of *I. správa StB* (the First Directorate of State Security) specifically – we can find the real names of the people who passed through Czechoslovakia in Operation MANUEL together with their nationalities, arrival and departure dates, places of accommodation and the routes these “Manuelistas” took to return to their home countries. These documents also include the false names appearing in the passports which they used to travel from Cuba. In some cases, this information is supplemented with records of contact made between Czechoslovak intelligence workers and members of the group. It is therefore clear that the Czechoslovaks knew the real identities of the vast majority of the people who passed through Prague. However, the Cubans seldom made information about these persons’ past or possible future activities available to the Czechoslovak side.

The range of people who came through Prague was very diverse in both intellectual and political terms. The majority of participants in Operation MANUEL were young people. They were mostly students; those without a formal education formed only a small constituency. Approximately one-sixth had positions in parties or national liberation organisations. About half of one percent were Cuban agents engaged in verifying the options for travel to Cuba and back.³² Among those being transferred were also a large number of women, many of whom were travelling with their children.³³

During the seven years of Operation MANUEL, the Czechoslovak intelligence service transported a variety of notable people. Jesús Alberto Márquez Finol, known as “el Motilón,” was part of the first transfer of Venezuelans in December 1962. This high-ranking member of the Revolutionary Left Movement (MIR) went on to found the very active Nguyen Van Troi cell in 1964.³⁴ In the autumn of 1963, a group of Venezuelans passed through Prague after taking part in the hijacking of the ship *Anzoátegui* in February the same year. In December, they

were arrested. Articles published subsequently in Venezuela criticised the Czechoslovak support of these terrorist groups.³⁵ Another two hijackers of the vessel were dispatched through Prague in late February 1964.³⁶

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In January 1964, Carlos Nicolau Danielli, one of the founders of the Brazilian Communist Party, was also transported as part of Operation MANUEL.³⁷ That February, Fabio Vázquez Castaño, a Colombian travelled via Czechoslovakia on the same count; Castaño would establish the National Liberation Army (ELN) guerrilla group a few months after returning to his homeland. The Czechoslovak intelligence service expressed a number of reservations about his behaviour during his stay.³⁸ At the end of the month, Maxmiliano Gomez Horacio, the leader of the Maoist Dominican Popular Movement (MPD), was also flown out through Prague.³⁹

Between 28 April and 02 May, John William Cooke, the main theorist of the Peronism revolutionary movement and his wife, Alicia Eguren stayed in Czechoslovakia. According to the contact records, “Mendoza” (the name Cooke used when travelling from Cuba) had very ‘bourgeois manners.’ At the same time, Eguren was ‘very lively; she liked to assert her own opinions and didn’t like to let MENDOZA speak even though she was probably his subordinate; MENDOZA was forced to reproach her on several occasions for not letting him finish what he was saying. [...] She showed great interest in Czechoslovakia and bought several books about the country as well as a Czech language textbook and a Czech-Spanish dictionary. Both of them expressed the wish to visit at least one Czechoslovak castle and they were therefore taken to see nearby Kokořín.’⁴⁰

In mid-July 1964, the Czechoslovak intelligence service transported Wismar Medina Rojas, a member of the Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN) who had led the hijacking of the *Anzoátegui* in February 1963. Rojas had stayed in Cuba for 19 months, and Havana delayed his departure. The reason for the delay was, he believed, precautionary following the publication of information in the Venezuelan press about his planned arrival. According to those reports, Rojas was heading to Venezuela in order to assassinate the country’s president. He remained in Czechoslovakia for three weeks, spending all of that time reading and studying documents in a secret apartment. According to the contact records, he was very modest, disciplined and independent. He bought a Spanish textbook and used it to learn Czech.⁴¹

The transfer in August of Baldemiro Castro, a revolutionary from the Dominican Popular Movement is also worth noting. Castro would be shot during fighting in July 1965. The contact records about him note: ‘The level of politics and abilities did not in any way befit the founder and leader of the MPD. He had minimal orientation skills, and even after a week’s stay, he wasn’t able to walk or travel around Prague independently. He was extremely talkative, however.’⁴²

Between April and October 1964, Tamara “Tania” Bunke, a famous Cuban agent of German origin stayed in Czechoslovakia intermittently.⁴³ Czechoslovak intelligence service representatives accommodated her in a house in Ládví close to the city centre. The archival materials reveal that the Cubans paid special attention to Operation TANIA.⁴⁴ The details of her stay, preparation of documents and creation of a cover story for her future South American mission were taken care of in Prague by the agent Juan Gómez Abad (“Diospado”) and also, after June, by Ricardo Benítez. Since the Cubans were preparing her transfer with Czechoslovak assistance (in the form of extensive documentary work), Prague was informed in great detail about “Tania,” which was not the case for many other persons.

January 1965 saw the arrival in Prague of Herbert José de Souza, an important Brazilian sociologist and member of the national liberation organisation’s Popular Action (Ação Popular) group.⁴⁵ As part of Operation MANUEL, de Souza would be dispatched again in November 1967.⁴⁶ In mid-January, the Czechoslovak intelligence service transferred Jacob Rosen, an American of Jewish origin and the leader of the pro-Chinese Progressive Labour Party.⁴⁷ He was followed later in the month by Carlos Rodríguez Paredes, an important representative of Ecuador’s labour movement who was also headed from Cuba to his homeland.⁴⁸

Alípio Cristiano de Freitas, a priest and member of the Brazilian Peasant Leagues, arrived in Czechoslovakia in March 1965.⁴⁹ His appeared in Prague again at the end of April.⁵⁰ Among the Manuelistas who came in June, we find the name of Jaime Bateman Cayón, a Colombian guerrilla leader who would create the 19th of April Movement (M-19) in 1970.⁵¹ In early October 1965, Diógenes José de Carvalho Oliveira from Brazil stayed in Prague. After returning home, he went on to co-found the Popular Revolutionary Vanguard (Vanguarda Popular Revolucionária) through which he participated in a series of terrorist attacks. In October 1968, he was involved in the murder of the American soldier Charles Chandler. According to the contact report, Oliveira

was very discreet and his demeanour was serious.⁵² As part of Operation MANUEL, he travelled through Prague again in May the following year.⁵³ In mid-December, the Argentinian Alicia Eguren was dispatched again.⁵⁴ Her son, Catella Pedro, travelled through Prague in mid-March 1966.⁵⁵

Although his stay was not part of this operation, it is worth mentioning that Ernesto Che Guevara, the icon of the armed struggle, resided in Czechoslovakia between March and July 1966 after returning from an unsuccessful mission to Africa.⁵⁶ Guevara lived in Ládvi,⁵⁷ staying in the same house where Tamara “Tania” Bunke had been accommodated.⁵⁸ For him, this was, above all, a period of impatient waiting for a suitable moment in which to launch another South American mission. It is likely that it was during this stay in Czechoslovakia that the site of Bolivia was chosen. Che Guevara devoted much of this time to writing economic and philosophical papers. His entire stay was organised by the Cuban station. Czechoslovak intelligence services had no idea who he was.

This view is borne out by events in 1970 when, during the visit of the then Czech foreign minister Ján Marko to Cuba, Fidel Castro expressed an interest in locating the house where Che Guevara had lived for several months. Prague headquarters responded that it would need information about the name under which Che Guevara travelled, the date when he came to Czechoslovakia and who had arranged his stay in Prague: ‘The First Directorate of the Ministry of the Interior was not informed about Guevara’s stay in Prague and therefore Guevara could not have been accommodated under his own identity in any buildings of the Ministry of the Interior.’⁵⁹ The Czechoslovak intelligence service also recommended that any information about a possible stay by Guevara remain strictly confidential: ‘The publication of this fact could be the basis for a wide anti-Czechoslovak campaign in Latin America, and in some states, it might contribute to the deterioration of relations and our embassies’ activities in these countries.’⁶⁰

In early July 1966, the poet Otto René Castillo was dispatched from Cuba. After returning to his native Guatemala, he went on to join the guerrilla struggle of the Rebel Armed Forces (FAR) where he was chief of propaganda and education. A few months later, he was captured by government troops and tortured to death.⁶¹ In mid-September, two Brazilians, Alfredo Nery Paiva and Hermes Machado Neto, also travelled from Cuba; both would enter the guerrilla war in the Caparaó

mountain range on their return home.⁶² Among the Manuelistas who flew out in October 1966, we may also find the name of Lorgio Vaca Marchett, a Bolivian. Once back in his homeland, he joined the guerrilla group led by Ernesto Che Guevara. He died in March of the following year.⁶³

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While all this was transpiring, the First Directorate of the Ministry of the Interior became aware of the expanded efforts of Cuban intelligence to influence revolutionary movements elsewhere in the world. Operation MANUEL now no longer restricted itself to Latin American nationals. During the first quarter of 1967, three groups of a total of 12 Iranians flew to their homeland through Prague; they were returning after completing eight months of guerrilla training in Cuba. The Cubans arranged their travel under the code name Operation RAMADAN.⁶⁴

In response to the increasing complaints from Latin American governments that Czechoslovakia was involved in transporting guerrillas, a Czechoslovak intelligence report from 1967 expressed sharp criticisms about the “quality” of the people travelling through the country: ‘While in the early years, people of good quality and ability who were devoted to the revolutionary movement predominated, it is now becoming more and more evident that people of lower intelligence are passing through, and to a large extent, they are also those for whom a paid journey to Cuba via Europe is probably a significantly stronger motive than interest in the revolutionary struggle. Further arrests of participants can therefore be expected.’⁶⁵ In the last years of Operation MANUEL, it was almost exclusively left-wing radicals who travelled through Prague. Many of them would die in the armed struggle or be murdered in captivity.

In the second half of January 1967, the Czechoslovak intelligence service transported Mario Gutiérrez Ardaya, a Bolivian who joined the Ñancahuazú guerrilla group. He died in the conflict in September the same year. The list of Manuelistas that January also featured a Dominican, Altagracia del Orbe, who was an important figure in the fight against the government of Trujillo.⁶⁶ The month of March saw the transit of Heliodoro Portugal, a Panamanian who would be assassinated in 1970 by the Torrijos regime.⁶⁷ Midway through the month, two members of Revolutionary Peronist Youth, Pedro Fabian Sandoval and Juan Carlos Arroyo, also appeared in the Czechoslovak capital. In 1977, the first would be imprisoned and murdered after the military dictatorship took hold; the second has been missing since 1976.⁶⁸ In late

March, the Guatemalan anthropologist and FAR member Aura Marina Arriola Pinagel also departed from Cuba.⁶⁹

Not long after, in April, the main representatives of the Argentinian Revolutionary Armed Forces, Miguel Alejo Levenson, Marcelo Kurlat⁷⁰ and Carlos Osatinsky,⁷¹ were seen in Prague. Later that month, a Guatemalan named Julio Ruben Landa Castañeda was also dispatched; he would assassinate the U.S. ambassador the following year. Another arrival from Havana was Carlos Porfirio Miranda García, a Peruvian who subsequently served in the ELN in Bolivia.⁷² In the middle of July, Alicia Eguren and Gregorio Levenson, the chief voices of revolutionary Peronism, arrived in Czechoslovakia.⁷³ August saw the dispatch of Diego Montaña Cuellar, a major Colombian politician.⁷⁴ The following month, the poet Roque Dalton once again featured among the Manuelistas. Dalton died in 1975 during the guerrilla war in El Salvador under circumstances that remain unclear.⁷⁵

In January 1968, Jaime Sotelo Ojeda, a member of the Chilean Socialist Party member, was transferred from Cuba. Ojeda was to become part of the Group of Personal Friends (GAP), the private presidential guard of Salvador Allende. He was murdered shortly after the coup in 1973.⁷⁶ In February, his compatriot Raul Zamora also flew through Prague – an ELN member, Zamora was killed during the conflict in Bolivia's Teoponte region in the summer of the following year. Other arrivals in Czechoslovakia that February included Ricardo Lets Colmenares, the Peruvian general secretary of the Revolutionary Vanguard, and his wife, María Luisa Raigada. They were followed in March by Felix Marmaduke Vargas Grove, also a Chilean Socialist Party member who would later be part of the GAP. In 1974, he too fell victim to the military regime.⁷⁷ Oscar Terán, who later ranked as an important Argentinian thinker, was another key name on the list.⁷⁸ The end of the month saw the arrival in Prague of Italla Nandi, a Brazilian who would become a famous actress.⁷⁹

The Manuelistas who came next in April included Emilio Mariano Jáuregui from Argentina. Jáuregui would be murdered by police during a protest against Nelson Rockefeller's visit in June the following year. That murder spurred the so-called *Cordobazo*, a massive wave of protests that ultimately led to the downfall of the government of Onganía.⁸⁰ Within the groups of Argentinians arriving in May was Eduardo Streger, who became a member of the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP). Streger went on to organise an unsuccessful assassination

attempt against then president Jorge Rafael Videla in 1977.⁸¹ Late May also brought the arrival of Norma Arrastito and Fernando Abal Medina, a married couple with Christian leanings who were hard-line left-wing Peronist militants. Soon after their return home, they founded the guerrilla organisation Montoneros.⁸² In late June, Teodoro Palacio Hurtado was also dispatched. Hurtado was a militant in the Panamanian group Vanguard of National Action (VAN), which after the coup that October, fought against the dictatorship of Omar Torrijos. In December 1970, Hurtado was arrested and murdered.⁸³ Manuel Toledo, a member of the Socialist Party of Uruguay, was another Manuelista who came in mid-July. In 1972, he was imprisoned, and six years later, died in a military hospital.⁸⁴

In early October, Francisco Ramón Peguero, one of the founders of the Dominican Popular Movement, came to Prague.⁸⁵ In mid-November, a member of the Brazilian urban guerrilla organisation National Liberation Action (ALN), Ísis Días de Oliveira, also passed through the city. The Brazilian would be captured and killed in 1972.⁸⁶ Her transfer was followed by that of two Sandinistas, Oscar Benavides Lanuza and Henry Ruiz. Ruiz became a member of the National Directorate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN).⁸⁷ The group of early December arrivals included Marcelo Aburneo Verd and Sara Eugenia Palacio, a husband and wife from Argentina and their two children. After their return, they were active in the Revolutionary Armed Forces. They were arrested in 1971 and have since been missing.⁸⁸

In the scheme of things, the transfer of ten Eritreans appears to be a curiosity. This group flew from Damascus to Prague on 05 December 1968 using Syrian passports; they were bound for Cuba where they would be trained. After completing the guerrilla training and returning to Ethiopian Eritrea, these guerrillas went on to provoke armed conflict in the region. The Czechoslovak intelligence service learned accidentally about their transfer, which was not part of Operation MANUEL and therefore secured entirely by the Cuban mission. One member of the group tried to divulge the operation at the Swiss embassy in Prague and then travel on to Western Europe. After disclosing his intentions, however, he was arrested and the Cubans deported him back to Damascus via Moscow.⁸⁹

The group dispatched in January 1969 included Adilson Ferreira da Silva, a member of the Brazilian terrorist group Palmares Armed Revolutionary Vanguard (VAR-Palmares); in July that year, he would take

part in a bank robbery in Rio de Janeiro.⁹⁰ A few days after his transfer, his compatriot, the famous scriptwriter Augusto Pinto Boal, flew out as part of this operation.⁹¹ Humberto Ortega, who later became a long-serving defence minister in Nicaragua (and is Daniel Ortega's brother), was a Manuelista that February.⁹² Among the notable Argentinians transported that month was Miguel Alejandro "Julián" Levenson, whose role as the co-founder of the Revolutionary Armed Forces has been alluded to.⁹³ In March, Otto César Vargas, the general secretary of the Revolutionary Communist Party (PCR) of Argentina⁹⁴ and Alicia Eguren (also described above) were dispatched.⁹⁵

Conclusion

Operation MANUEL tells us a great deal about the ties between Latin America and Eastern Europe at a time when these regions stood on opposite sides of a boundary based on spheres of influence. This area of study still requires extensive research. Besides being an attempt to understand the global links between various leftist groups, the present work has aimed mainly to highlight the consequences of participating in this operation for Czechoslovakia. That country's support and benevolence towards Cuban policies were born out of the Soviet desire to maintain strong political and economic ties with Cuba.

Outside of receiving information from the individuals who passed through the state, Czechoslovakia did not profit directly from its involvement in Operation MANUEL. Instead, the Czechoslovak participation had a significant influence on perceptions of the country in non-socialist nations. The fact that this small Central European country became established as a relatively well-known "brand" in Latin America during the Cold War was not only due to its status as the Soviet bloc's most economically developed state or its ability to build on positions acquired in the region during the interwar period. An equally important factor was the negative attention given to countries that stood at the opposite end of the ideological spectrum to most Latin American governments. Czechoslovakia was viewed as a centre for Communist organisations, a supplier of arms to subversive groups and a hub for the transport of guerrillas.

In total, 1,179 people were dispatched as part of the operation that took place between 1962 and 1969. These people included Venezuelans (20%), Argentinians (15%), Dominicans (10%), Guatemalans (8.5%),

Colombians (6.7%) and Peruvians (6.5%). Those who passed through Czechoslovakia were a diverse mix of individuals ranging from illiterate peasants and hill people to young leftist students and intellectuals to professional Communist officials and agitators. An important contingent consisted of experienced guerrilla commanders and organisers. In this context, it is not an exaggeration to claim that in the 1960s Prague became a key transit hub for international terrorism.



MICHAL ZOUREK is affiliated to the Department of Central and Ibero-American Studies at Charles University Prague and may be reached at: zourek@centrum.cz

Notes

- 1 See Jacqueline Loss (2013), *Dreaming in Russian: The Cuban Soviet Imaginary*, Austin: University of Texas Press.
- 2 See Hana Bortlová (2011), *Československo a Kuba v letech 1959–1962*, Praha: Univerzita Karlova v Praze, Filozofická fakulta.
- 3 Prokop Tomek (2002), 'Akce Manuel,' *Securitas Imperii: sborník k problematice bezpečnostních služeb* 9, pp. 326–333.
- 4 Juan Bautista Yofre (2014), *Fue Cuba. La infiltración cubano-soviética que dio origen a la violencia subversiva en América Latina*, Buenos Aires: Sudamericana. Yofre's work relies on an impressive number of documents, including those drawn from Czech archives. The quality of this study is, however, compromised by the fact that he does not always proceed as an impartial investigator in his interpretations. In this regard, certain conclusions of the former chief of the SIDE secret service, closely linked with the government of Carlos Menem, are not only controversial, but also misleading and inaccurate.
- 5 This institute was established by the Czech government in 2007 with the aim of analysing documents from the Nazi and Communist totalitarian regimes and making them accessible. The archives also contain documents from the former state secret police and intelligence service. In recent years, the vast work of digitalising the archives has been taking place. These rich archives concerning Latin America have yet to be a focus for scholarship.
- 6 'New CSA Service to Havana' (1962), *FLIGHT International* 81 (2753), 11 January, p.73.
- 7 See James G. Blight and Philip Brenner (2002), *Sad and Luminous Days: Cuba's Struggle with the Superpowers after the Missile Crisis*, Lanham and Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield.
- 8 Archiv bezpečnostních složek (ABS) (1963), 80723/011, 'Zpráva z Havany č. 262 ze dne 20. prosince 1962,' 03 January.

- 9 The phrase “Operation MANUEL” appeared in documents of the First Directorate of the Ministry of the Interior for the first time on 25 January 1963; it was the code name for the arrangement of visa-free travel for Latin American nationals arriving in Prague from Havana.
- 10 ABS (1962), 80723/100, ‘K vysílání skupin z Havany přes Prahu do LA,’ 27 December.
- 11 ABS (1963), 80723/019, ‘Schůzka s Vilou dne 31. května 1963,’ 07 June.
- 12 ABS (1964), 80723/100, ‘Rozbor a návrhy pro další obsahové a organizační řízení akce Manuel,’ (circa May); ABS (1964), 80723/019, ‘José Luis Ojalbo – záznam ze schůzky dne 26. 8. 1964,’ 28 August.
- 13 ABS (1967), 80723/100, ‘Stížnost Brazílie na čs. vměšování při dopravě partyzánů z Kuby do LA,’ 07 November.
- 14 ABS (1963), 80723/100, ‘Výpis ze zprávy do Havany č. 135 ze dne 29. 5. 1963,’ 03 Jun 1963.
- 15 Irregularities were typical of Operation MANUEL. The numbers of guerrillas passing through Prague increased from 92 in the first six months of the operation to 155 in the first six months of 1964. From the start date of 18 December 1962 to 04 June 1963, 92 people were transported via Prague. A further 106 people had been dispatched by the end of that same year. In the first half of 1964, there was a large increase in transfers. By 11 June, 155 people had been flown out. During the first year-and-a-half of the operation, a total of 353 persons were transferred.
- 16 ABS (1963), 80723/011, ‘Justo,’ 09 January.
- 17 Michal Zourek (2014), *Checoslovaquia y el Cono Sur 1945–1989. Relaciones políticas, económicas y culturales durante la Guerra Fría*, Praha: Karolinum, pp.60–64.
- 18 ABS (1965), 80723/100, ‘Záznam,’ 12 May. Dalton worked in the editorial office from 1965 until April 1967. During his stay, he wrote his most famous work, *Taberna y otros lugares* (The Tavern and Other Places). It is partly set in the Prague restaurant U Fleků. In 1969, the work won the prestigious Casa de las Américas literary award
- 19 ABS (1967), 80723/100, ‘Záznam,’ 12 April.
- 20 ABS (1967), 80723/100, ‘Spolupráce československé a kubánské rozvědky,’ 11 January.
- 21 Connections provided by the airlines Mexicana de Aviación and Iberia were not suitable from a safety standpoint.
- 22 ABS (1967), 80723/100, ‘Spolupráce československé a kubánské rozvědky,’ 11 January.
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 ABS (1967), 80723/100, ‘Stížnost Brazílie na čs. vměšování při dopravě partyzánů z Kuby do LA,’ 07 November.
- 25 Ibid.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Ibid.
- 28 ABS (1969), 80723/113, ‘Využití případu José Duarte dos Santos k protičeskoslovenské kampani v Brazílii,’ 28 August.
- 29 ABS (1969), 80723/113, ‘Praha,’ 08 October.

- 30 ABS (1969), 80723/100, 'Informace o akci Manuel,' 14 July.
- 31 See Tanya Harmer (2013), 'Two, Three, Many Revolutions: Cuba and the Prospects for Revolutionary Change in Latin America, 1967–1975,' *Journal of Latin American Studies* 45 (1), pp.61–89.
- 32 ABS (1964), 80723/100, 'Rozbor a návrhy pro další obsahové a organizační řízení akce Manuel,' (circa May).
- 33 For example, one Venezuelan national who was flown out in January 1969 travelled with her four children. ABS (1969), 80723/109, 'Havana,' 22 January.
- 34 ABS (1963), 80723/011, 'Zpráva z Havany č. 262 ze dne 20. prosince 1962,' 03 January.
- 35 ABS (1964), 80723/102, 'Výpis ze zprávy č. 95 z Caracasu,' 09 January.
- 36 ABS (1964), 80723/102, 'Záznam o kontaktu s venezuelskou skupinou,' 10 March.
- 37 ABS (1963), 80723/102, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 23 January.
- 38 ABS (1964), 80723/102, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 15 February.
- 39 ABS (1964), 80723/102, 'Záznam o navázání kontaktu se skupinou Dominikánců vedenou Martinezem Perezem,' 05 March.
- 40 ABS (1964), 80723/103, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 21 May .
- 41 ABS (1964), 80723/104, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 17 August .
- 42 ABS (1964), 80723/104, 'Záznam o navázání kontaktu s dominikánským příslušníkem,' 29 August.
- 43 Several works are devoted to Tamara Bunke's stay. Yofre (2014) makes use of Czech archival documents. One publication that draws especially on personal testimony is Ulises Estrada (2005), *Tania la guerrillera y la epopeya sudamericana del Che*, Melbourne, Nueva York, La Habana: Ocean Sur.
- 44 The information about Tamara Bunke's time in Prague is contained in volume 80723/300.
- 45 ABS (1965), 80723/105, 'Záznam o kontaktu s dominikánskou skupinou,' 18 January.
- 46 ABS (1968), 80723/108, 'Havana,' 27 November.
- 47 ABS (1965), 80723/105, 'Záznam o kontaktu s příslušníkem USA,' 20 January.
- 48 ABS (1965), 80723/105, 'Záznam o kontaktu s Manuelem Martinezem Rodriguezem,' 24 February.
- 49 ABS (1965), 80723/105, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 03 March.
- 50 ABS (1965), 80723/105, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 15 June.
- 51 ABS (1965), 80723/105, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 23 June.
- 52 ABS (1965), 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 12 October.
- 53 ABS (1966), 80723/106, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 04 May.
- 54 ABS (1965), 80723/105, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 16 December.
- 55 ABS (1966), 80723/106, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 16 March.
- 56 For details about this stay, see Michal Zourek (2012), 'Kde se nachází Che? Tajný pobyt Che Guevary v Československu,' *Dvacáté století/The Twentieth Century* 1, pp.61–80.
- 57 The house was an inconspicuous double-storey villa surrounded by a large estate in the Ládví municipality about 10 kilometres south of Prague. From the end of the World War II, the villa was owned by the Ministry of the Interior, which used it from the 1960s to meet the needs of the intelligence

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service.

58 The two did not live in the villa at the same time, as has been stated erroneously by certain sources.

59 ABS (1970), 80723/112, 'K informacím naší rezidentury z Havany č. 74 a 75 doporučují zaujmout toto stanovisko,' 09 November.

60 Ibid.

61 ABS (1966), 80723/106, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 18 July.

62 ABS (1966), 80723/106, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 21 September.

63 ABS (1966), 80723/106, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 14 October.

64 ABS (1967), 80723/100, 'Návrh na zařazení do svodky,' 23 February.

65 ABS (n.d.), 80723/100, 'Spolupráce československé a kubánské rozvědky - aktualizace zprávy ke dni 1 November 1967,' .

66 ABS (1967), 80723/107, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 25 January.

67 ABS, 80723/107, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 13 March.

68 ABS (1967), 80723/107, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 20 March.

69 ABS (1967), 80723/107, 'Havana,' 29 March.

70 ABS (1967), 80723/107, 'Havana,' 07 April.

71 ABS (1967), 80723/107, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 19 April.

72 ABS (1967), 80723/107, 'Havana,' 24 April.

73 ABS (1967), 80723/107, 'Havana,' 09 June.

74 He was accompanied by his wife, Carlota Cuellar. They were accommodated at the university residence hall where their daughter, a student in Prague, was living. ABS (1967), 80723/107, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 24 August.

75 ABS (1967), 80723/107, 'Havana,' 08 September.

76 ABS (1968), 80723/108, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 05 February.

77 ABS (1968), 80723/108, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 18 March.

78 ABS (1968), 80723/108, 'Havana,' 16 March.

79 ABS (1968), 80723/108, 'Havana,' 23 March.

80 Jáuregui was returning from Cuba with his wife who was seriously ill and had to be treated in Prague. ABS (1968), 80723/108, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 16 April.

81 ABS (1968), 80723/108, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 21 May.

82 ABS (1968), 80723/108, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 01 June.

83 Ibid.

84 ABS (1968), 80723/108, 'Havana,' 16 July.

85 ABS (1968), 80723/108, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 09 October.

86 ABS (1968), 80723/108, 'Havana,' 12 November.

87 ABS (1968), 80723/108, 'Havana,' 20 November.

88 ABS (1969), 80723/108, 'Havana,' 04 December.

89 ABS (1968), 80723/112, 'Zaškolování Eritrejců na Kubě,' 06 December; 'Žádost o pomoc při zajištění rezervace u letecké společnosti Aeroflot v Praze,' (1968), 16 December .

90 ABS (1969), 80723/109, 'Havana,' 08 January.

91 ABS (1969), 80723/109, 'Záznamy o kontaktu,' 13 January.

92 ABS (1969), 80723/109, 'Havana,' 05 February.

93 ABS (1969), 80723/109, 'Havana,' 12 February .

94 ABS (1969), 80723/109, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 12 March.

95 ABS (1969), 80723/109, 'Záznam o kontaktu,' 20 March.

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So Far from God, So Close to the US

Current Dynamics of Mexican Migration to the United States

Lucia Argüellová

This work examines the development of us immigration policy with a focus on border enforcement, migrant removals and the effects on human security at the us-Mexican border. My research considers three stages in the journey of the unauthorised migrant: clandestine crossing, detention in the us and deportation to Mexico. Since the border wall was constructed, dynamics at the border have changed as Mexican and other Latin American migrants have started risking their lives by crossing in remote areas like deserts and mountains in order to avoid us Border Patrol and new surveillance technology. At the same time, criminal organisations have taken advantage of the rising interest in human trafficking and begun profiting from the smuggling, robbery and extortion of migrants, only worsening human security concerns in the area. Clandestine border crossings are, however, just one of the stages of the ordeal described by many of the migrants whom I interviewed. The militarisation of the border and increasing protectionism of us immigration policies have been accompanied by the detention of growing numbers of undocumented migrants, giving rise to a complex detention system that profits private prisons and detention facilities. During their detention, migrants' security may be further affected; physical mistreatment and legal difficulties have both been reported. After spending days, weeks or even months in detention centres, detainees are commonly deported, which is the most stressful part of their journey. Deported ex-migrants amass in Mexican border cities and soon become socio-economically marginalised and depressed. I highlight the alarming case of El Bordo, the river canal area where



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most Mexican deportees to Tijuana settle after failing to integrate into the local job market. This analysis of these three stages suggests that us policies have a great human cost, and thus, lack sustainability.

Keywords: migration, us, border, Mexico, clandestine networks

*Mexican
Migration to
the United
States*

Introduction

Late in the 19th century, the pre-revolutionary Mexican president, Porfirio Diaz coined a phrase about his country that would become famous: 'Poor Mexico: so far from God and so close to the United States.' Since then, these words have been used to express both the uncomfortable asymmetry between these neighbouring countries and their interdependence, which extends deeper today than it did back then. One factor that has significantly influenced this Mexican-US political and economic interdependence is Mexican migration northwards, which has been encouraged by the existing disparities. It has recently been estimated that nearly 30% of the us's foreign-born population is Mexican; this is the equivalent of 11 million people, representing about 10% of all Mexicans.¹ It is interesting to put this figure in a global context; according to the United Nations, almost 214 million people were international immigrants in 2010,² i.e. 3.1% of the world's population did not reside in their country of origin.

While migration is a complex phenomenon and has been present throughout human history, in recent decades it has attracted growing attention and become central to many debates in developed countries. These debates have been relevant for the formulation of domestic and increasingly also foreign policies, which then contribute to defining relations between countries of emigration and immigration. As a consequence of the large numbers of unauthorised migrants from Mexico and other Latin American countries who have been crossing the us-Mexican border, the us has formulated protectionist policies, which, in turn, have profound and negative human security effects at the border. Unauthorised migrants face a number of security risks during their journeys due to this us protectionism, which also ignores the importance of these migrants for the us labour market and economy.

As well as examining us immigration policies, this study considers other issues that have recently affected the dynamics of Mexican migration to the us. In order to approach these dynamics, it is essential

to understand the historical development of us migration policies and the nature of migration flows. In this context, it must be emphasised that my focus is predominantly on unauthorised migration.³ To that end, I identify the diverse factors and actors which endanger migrant security in the course of clandestine crossings, detention in the us and deportation to Mexico. The construction of the border wall, privatisation of the detention system, role of lobbying and presence of organised crime are all analysed as key factors affecting human security at the border. Among the actors who play a major role in this framework, I discuss federal authorities, private companies, white supremacy groups and human smugglers along with the us and Mexican governments more broadly.

In order to fully portray unauthorised migrants' journeys and identify the factors and actors that determine their experiences, four types of data were collected. First, academic publications (available at Colegio de la Frontera Norte in Mexico and the University of California, San Diego in the us) and policy and legal documents (from the us government and NGOs, for example) were studied. Second, field interviews were conducted with deported migrants in Tijuana as well as immigrants to the us who were or still are undocumented or their relatives. Third, mass media reports, including recent news items and YouTube clips, helped to round out the picture. Fourth, I collected observations based on notes, photographs and recordings taken in July 2013.

This work seeks to approach the migration process from a human perspective. It is important not to perceive migrants in purely statistical terms; they must be understood as actual individuals. Approaching the issue (*problematique*) in this way allows us to merge the human dimension with the political, economic and social aspects of migration processes. My analysis suggests that us anti-immigration policies have been erroneous and are unsustainable.

Characteristics of the US-Mexico Border

The us-Mexico border extends over nearly 3,200 kilometres. Although it is only the ninth longest border in the world, close to one million legal border crossings occur daily, making it the busiest international border globally.⁴

The line dividing the neighbouring countries was established in 1848 following the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo that concluded the peace

negotiations towards the end of the Mexican-American War. In that war, Mexico lost much of its territory, including its northern states that today lie in the southern part of the US. This loss is still remembered as unfortunate, and the new border lacks moral and legal value for many Mexicans, who perceive it principally as a physical barrier.⁵ Mexicans tend to cite the loss of this territory when justifying their migration to southern states of the US – historically part of Mexico – such as California, whose population is one-third Mexican.

*Lucia
Argüellová*

Historically, the main flow of migrants crossed to the US from close to the urban zones of Tijuana-San Diego and Ciudad Juárez-El Paso. In the 1990s, US protectionist policies of border enforcement prompted the construction of a border wall in the places where clandestine crossings had occurred most frequently. As a consequence, kilometres of robust metal fencing were erected and increasingly sophisticated surveillance and apprehension technologies – including remote video surveillance systems, infrared monitors and seismic sensors – installed. The sum invested in immigration and border security control rose five times between 1993 and 2004.⁶ In addition, in the mid-2000s, there were more US Border Patrol agents than soldiers in Afghanistan.⁷ The border is seen as a symbol of violence, not only because of the deaths of many migrants in deserts and mountainous areas, but because it was built by military forces from the corrugated steel once used as landing pads in the Vietnam War.⁸

In order to avoid overprotected areas, migrants cross over deserts and mountains that are assumed to pose fewer barriers. The risks taken by those crossing clandestinely through these areas are extremely high; the loss of life has not been exceptional since the 1990s. Since the construction of the border wall, the number of deaths has grown substantially; on average, at least one migrant dies daily when crossing the border. While the causes of deaths are diverse, most of the migrants are killed by hyperthermia and dehydration. At the same time, fatigue, cold, hunger and blisters create substantial threats.⁹ Climatic changes, lack of water and the sheer long distances further complicate these clandestine journeys. Moreover, those who intend to cross the Rio Grande River face the risk of drowning. Mexican news agencies have reported a case of migrants drowning in the currents of the river while US Border Patrol made no attempt to save them.¹⁰ Even if they reach the US side of the border, these individuals continue to meet with challenges to their security. After entering US territory, they must move quickly to avoid being caught by

Border Patrol. For that reason, they make hurried crossings of highways where they may be run over by cars and killed accidentally.

Along with the prospect of an unfortunate death in the desert or mountains, migrants run the risk of becoming the victims of violent crime. They may, for instance, be robbed by gangs or even forced to collaborate with the criminal organisations that operate widely in the border zone and control smuggling activities. Two key groups whose presence in the border regions has been extensive are Los Zetas, situated to the east and the Cartel of the Pacific, which controls the western part of the border. The presence of these powerful cartels profoundly affects migrant security, as was demonstrated by the events of August 2010 when the corpses of 72 migrants, originating mostly from Central and South America, were found in the Mexican border state of Tamaulipas. According to news reports, these migrants had been blackmailed and subsequently executed by Los Zetas when they were unable to pay the extortion money.¹¹

In the 1990s, many human smugglers, known as *coyotes* or *polleros*, began to form ties with criminal organisations. Illegal smuggling activities soon proliferated as a consequence of border enforcement and the stricter immigration policy. Due to the extensive barriers constructed by the US government, the need to develop a network of smugglers with in-depth knowledge of the complicated border crossing grew. A sophisticated smuggling business, controlled increasingly by criminal organisations, thus, expanded thanks to the rising call for people, drug and arms traffickers. Furthermore, the new barriers meant that coyotes' prices rose steeply, making business more profitable each time. Perceived solely as a source of money, migrants began to be treated as products and processed in an impersonal, inhuman way, an attitude that had not existed before the 1990s. Today's migrants may easily fall prey to deceit and violence. Historically, they trusted the coyotes, but in present-day Mexico, many are afraid to hire a human smuggler; as my interviews showed, they fear being robbed, abandoned during a crossing, kidnapped or blackmailed.

As soon as an unauthorised migrant manages to enter US territory, their main challenge is to avoid the diverse actors whose job or interest lies in stopping the inflow of unauthorised immigrants. The actors in this area include the US Border Patrol, the US National Guard and other national but private forces as well as activists from organisations such as the Minutemen. The common objective of these actors is to patrol the border and prevent clandestine crossings. Migrants captured by

them are generally detained for a short time and then deported to their country of origin.

Although the likelihood of experiencing violence at the hands of state actors is low, there have been several cases of abuse and even murder: a teenager was gunned down by Border Patrol in 2010; another man caught climbing over the border wall was shot and killed by a Border Patrol agent in 2011; one year later, the Patrol shot at a group of people who were throwing stones, killing one young Mexican man; and there have been more cases. According to the Southern Border Communities Coalition, at least 39 individuals – most of them Mexican migrants, but also several US citizens – died between 2010 and 2014 as a result of an encounter with Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials.¹² The use of lethal force by Border Patrol has met with indignation from the Mexican government, which itself condemned the shootings and identified these types of deaths as a serious bilateral problem.¹³ It is little wonder that at the start of 2015, the CBP began installing body cameras on Border Patrol agents in a bid to increase transparency in cases where agents are accused of abuse or using excessive force.¹⁴ At the time of writing, the impact of this technology on human security at the border is not yet known.

Another entity affecting migrant security at the border is the group known as the Minutemen. Its vigilantes oppose illegal immigration and organise private patrolling activities along the US-Mexican border. The Minuteman Project was established in 2004 in response to the changing situation in Cochise County in Arizona, which had been the site of more unauthorised migrant detentions than anywhere else in the 21st century.¹⁵ Since then, the Minutemen have vandalised many of the drinking water stations installed in the desert by the Border Angels organisation that seeks to help the migrants. Furthermore, the Minutemen have been accused of robbing, physically harming and even killing migrants; nevertheless, it has been extremely difficult to collect evidence against these activists. Not surprisingly, they are suspected of having ties to white supremacist movements, which not only act locally, but also aim to influence legislative processes in the US southern states. For instance, the white supremacist groups White Aryan Resistance and Light Up the Border have led protests backing proposals for greater border militarisation. These two groups have gained further support from the employees of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, thus helping to foment anti-immigration sentiments.

Development and Impact of US Immigration Policy

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In the late 19th century, the main objective of US anti-immigration campaigns was to limit the intake of individuals who came not from Mexico but from China. Chinese people were seen as unfair work competition because of their low salaries, which were below even those paid to Mexicans. Labelled “Chinese wetbacks” by the media, these immigrants entered the US through the US-Mexico border. As a result, the first predecessors of Border Patrol agents, known as “Chinese inspectors,” were appointed in 1891.

Among the first restrictive immigration laws were the Immigration Act of 1917 and its amendment of 1924, whose main purpose was to limit European immigration. In 1925, a new statute established the Border Patrol, which for the first time related (if only partially) to Mexican migrants. The Great Depression, which began in 1929, gave rise to more legislative changes; crossing the border without authorisation, in particular, became a crime. Nonetheless, at the end of the Second World War, the relationship between Mexico and the US was favourable concerning migration matters. Thanks to the high demand for manpower in the US, the Bracero Program – an agreement which guaranteed seasonal jobs in the US for a certain number of Mexicans – was successfully put into effect in 1942.

The US Mexican population grew gradually due to the influx of authorised as well as unauthorised Mexican migrants. In response, US authorities’ efforts to return unauthorised migrants began with deportations from California and Texas in 1947. They culminated in Operation Wetback, which launched in 1954 and ended with the military expulsion of more than one million undocumented Mexican workers from the US.¹⁶

Ten years after Operation Wetback, the Bracero Program was suspended and a system of quotas established which allowed 120,000 migrants from the western hemisphere to enter US territory every year. However, after a 1976 statutory amendment, the quota for Latin-American migrants was cut to 20,000 individuals. In this period, migration policies became stricter: in addition to the limitations brought by the quota system, the number of deportations was increased. In 1965, just over 100,000 people were deported. This figure grew gradually to reach almost half a million in 1971; by the mid-1980s, there were more than

one million deportations per year.¹⁷ While these statistics included all deported foreigners, Mexico was most affected by these policies since the majority of deportees were Mexican. In order to analyse these increasingly protectionist US policies, it is therefore vital to understand the wider historic context, and especially Mexico's economic development after 1973.

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In the 1970s – a decade that transformed the migration dynamics between these neighbouring countries – Mexico underwent an economic and political crisis. This came as a shock after three relatively successful presidential terms of “stabilising development” (*desarrollo estabilizador*) during which low inflation, a fixed exchange rate and a stable economy were maintained. When, in 1973, the oil crisis disrupted the country's economic stability, Luis Echeverría, then president of Mexico, began to support state intervention in the economy as a solution to deteriorating living conditions. Nevertheless, the macroeconomic results were negative: the fiscal deficit, public debt and inflation all increased. In addition, for the first time in 22 years, the Mexican peso was allowed to float in the foreign exchange market, resulting in its devaluation against the US dollar by 40%. This recession was followed by rising poverty, deteriorating education and health standards, problems with malnutrition and infant mortality and water shortages (approximately 50% of households lacked running water in 1980).¹⁸ In the early 1980s, the Mexican economy remained unstable with little prospect of improvement; Mexicans were therefore made to face growing challenges such as rising unemployment and falling real wages. In many cases, migration was the immediate response to these difficulties. Widespread poverty in rural areas forced many Mexicans to move to local cities, resulting in a major urbanisation wave inside the country. Others, however, decided to head north instead of to the cities. As a consequence, the US experienced a swift increase in its unauthorised immigrant population in the 1970s and 1980s, and this, in turn, intensified the tightening of US immigration laws.

During the administration of former president Ronald Reagan (1981–89), border control began to be seen as a matter of national security and migrants were increasingly treated as scapegoats for US domestic problems.¹⁹ The Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986 concentrated on border surveillance, opening the way for a new era

of US policies known as “border militarisation.” After the adoption of the IRCA, the number of agents at the border increased and new sanctions were introduced against employers who hired undocumented migrants. At the same time, under an amnesty embedded in this law, approximately 50% of immigrants were legalised, a move which benefited plenty of Mexican migrants since six out of every ten immigrants in the US were Mexican citizens.²⁰

The extensive border patrolling and enforcement regime was augmented in 1993 when Bill Clinton became US president. That year, his administration carried out its first operation, Hold the Line in the border region of El Paso–Ciudad Juárez. The stationing of growing numbers of Border Patrol agents at regular distances along the Rio Grande River led to the rerouting of migration flows from monitored areas to those that were more remote. Coyotes, thus, increasingly benefited from rising demand and prices for their services.

In 1994, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) came into effect and forced many Mexicans to emigrate. When the free trade zone was established between Mexico, the US and Canada, cheap imported agricultural products from the US flooded the Mexican market, pushing down prices and wages in Mexico and making it increasingly hard for Mexican agricultural producers to earn a living.²¹ In particular, the import of corn from the US state of Iowa, subsidised by the US government and sent to Mexico, brought bankruptcy to about 1.5 million farmers.²² As a result, unemployment in Mexico rose, generating a new migration wave from Mexico’s rural areas to its cities and to the north. Soon after, the US government responded to the rise in clandestine entries by implementing Operation Gatekeeper at the San Diego–Tijuana border. In 1995, Border Patrol conducted Operation Safeguard, which focused on Arizona’s borders and was followed by Operation Río Grande in Texas in 1998.

In terms of human security at the border, the consequences of Operation Gatekeeper were crucial. This operation’s objective had been to divert immigrants away from urban zones: according to the underlying presumptions, unauthorised immigrants would be discouraged from crossing the border in urban areas due to extensive border fortifications; at the same time, they would be deterred from crossing clandestinely in remote zones due to the physical and natural barriers as

well as the life-threatening dangers. These premises, however, proved incorrect: migrants were not deterred from crossing the border in the desert or mountainous areas despite the high risk of death. The number of migrant deaths consequently increased fourfold during the operation.²³ Furthermore, the increasingly lucrative business of human smuggling began to lure coyotes without much experience; it also captured the attention of cartels and other criminal organisations that discovered the opportunity to use migrants as *mulas* and smuggle drugs on their bodies. Thus, instead of securing the border, these US policies transformed it into a more dangerous space that profoundly affected migrants' security.

US immigration policy and border controls became even stricter at the beginning of the 21st century. Less than two months after 9/11, then president George Bush signed the USA-PATRIOT Act into law. This controversial law authorised the government to conduct secret searches, monitor phone calls and Internet usage, obtain personal data and exchange information between its different agencies. It also gave rise to the detention of foreigners, irrespective of whether the person in question had been proven to pose a threat. During the Bush administration, different anti-immigration laws entered into force, making it possible for authorities to monitor residents who were not citizens and verify the migration status of those seeking government benefits. At the same time, these laws portrayed immigration across the US-Mexican border and unauthorised migrants themselves as presenting a security issue or even a national threat.²⁴

Despite these strict immigration policies and the militarisation of the border, Mexican migrants along with migrants from Central and South America continued to make clandestine crossings of the US southern border. According to polls conducted in 2004-2005 in the Mexican states of Zacatecas and Jalisco, 72% of the ex-migrants and potential migrants interviewed were aware of strict border controls and the risks associated with making an illegal crossing; nevertheless, for most of these potential migrants, this information did not diminish their inclination to head northwards.²⁵ Rather, border militarisation had the opposite effect: it extended unauthorised migrants' stays in the US. In the past, the majority of Mexican migrants had crossed the border in order to find a temporary job after which they returned

to Mexico where they remained until deciding to migrate for a limited time once again. Today, Mexican migrants stay for longer in the US instead of returning home and risking another clandestine crossing.²⁶

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Detention, Deportation and the Post-deportation Experience

Each time that more arrests and deportations of undocumented immigrants occur, this represents a new challenge to migrants' security. Due to the growing number of individuals detained by US authorities, detention centres and prisons have become crowded and expensive to operate, which has led, in turn, to more deportations. Between 1996 and 2003, the daily detention population increased from about 9,000 to 21,000 individuals.²⁷ In 2011, the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) reported that a record 429,000 immigrants had been detained in more than 250 facilities across the country.²⁸ In February 2013, the average daily number of detainees was more than 35,000.²⁹ Because of this rising volume of detainees, detention centres have become an important business with links to some US politicians, and hence, to policy-making.

Growing numbers of deportees have caused alarming situations in Mexico and El Salvador, the two nations whose citizens are most affected by removal practices. Although the debate has focused on unauthorised migrants, immigration legislation also applies to those living legally in the US, especially permanent residents who are seen as inadmissible or deportable aliens based on their past convictions. Indeed, each round of deportations involves more individuals including legal residents, who form an essential part of US labour market.

Currently, the detention and deportation of undocumented immigrants is in the hands of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), DHS's principal investigative body. Since its creation in 2003, ICE, the successor of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), has aimed to promote public and national security through the criminal and civil enforcement of federal laws that regulate border control, customs, trade and immigration. Soon after ICE's establishment, plans for Operation Endgame began with the goal of detaining and deporting all deportable aliens and suspected terrorists living in the US within a time span of 10 years. In order to fulfil this objective, ICE received an

annual budget of more than US\$5 billion and employed about 17,000 people.³⁰ Today, ICE relies on a larger budget of US\$6 billion and has 20,000 employees.³¹

Even before ICE was created, the federal authorities had been cooperating with local actors (for example, local police departments, state and federal prison agencies, local lawyers, etc.). Since that time, states have been requesting reimbursement of their incarceration costs. In this way, a stratification of power has taken place within the US detention system; power has been delegated downwards to states and outwards to private actors.

Arizona's controversial legislation SB1070 undoubtedly illustrates the decentralising application of immigration policies. This Act, which requires all immigrants to carry adequate identification and allows authorities to check the identification documents of any person at any time, has caught the attention of the media, which has pointed out the connections between private detention centres and Arizonan politicians. It has been alleged that the then governor of Arizona, Jan Brewer, had ulterior motives for signing it into law since some of her advisers had links to the Corrections Corporation of America (CCA), the largest private prison business in the US. Furthermore, CCA had a federal contract to house detainees in Arizona. As such, all immigrants detained by Arizona police would be sent to CCA facilities, which would occasion great revenues for the corporation.³²

Due to the privatisation of the detention system, detentions have become more frequent, which has resulted, in turn, in a growing demand for the services of detention centres. Correspondingly, private prisons have increased the price charged per detainee. While several years ago, ICE paid an average US\$80 per detainee per night in New Jersey, in some cases, private prison lobbyists have since managed to obtain a contract for more than US\$200 per person per night even in this same geographic area. This development has also contributed to worsening conditions in these facilities and the mixing of the private prison industry with the immigrant detention system, transforming detained migrants from human beings into products defined by their price.³³

The interconnection of detention, the criminalisation of unauthorised migrants, the privatisation of the detention system, policy-making driven by private interests and anti-immigration rhetoric is what

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ultimately constitutes the Immigration Industrial Complex. This is a direct product of US politics which, following the 9/11 attacks, has turned in the direction of a “war on terror.” In combination, these tendencies have led to ineffective immigration policies despite the entry of billions of dollars into the cycle of advancing protectionist anti-immigration efforts. Besides being ineffective, these policies have been harmful on a human level.

The security of migrants is not only threatened during their clandestine crossings northwards, but also while they are in detention in the US. According to a report by Detention Watch Network, a national network that calls US detention and deportation policies into question, ICE should close its 10 worst detention centres due to the mistreatment of the immigrants detained there. The most reported problems in these centres include sexual abuse and the lack of medical attention, hygiene or open-air activities. While emphasising these objectionable conditions, the investigators also concluded that none of the 250 facilities used by ICE thoroughly maintain basic standards.³⁴ In particular, many immigrants who are accused solely of immigration offences spend long periods – of several years in extreme cases – in detention without any right to bail, until their case is resolved or until they sign a “voluntary departure” declaration. According to a study conducted at Casa del Migrante (a migrant shelter) in Tijuana in 2010, some migrants are forced or deceived into signing a Stipulated Removal Order, which hastens their release from the detention centre and also renounces other entitlements such as the right to a hearing before an immigration judge.³⁵

While numerous NGO reports as well as academic publications address the issues related to migrants’ stays in detention centres, only one of the ex-migrants whom I interviewed in Tijuana had experienced an extremely prolonged period of detention. He had been detained for one year and eight months. Based on the experiences of the other migrants I interviewed there, it seems that the authorities continue to hold immigrants in detention centres if they refuse to sign forms declaring their “voluntary departure” from the US to their countries of origin. In addition, these immigrants commonly lack judicial assistance, which extends their detention to the point when they have no choice but to sign the document. According to some ex-migrants, they were not always sure what they were signing as their knowledge

of English was not sufficient despite having lived for several years in the us The interviewees also mentioned that in some cases they were asked to sign other types of documents, which concerned their property or personal belongings, for example. Other problems arose from deportees' confusion of the document confirming their "voluntary departure" with a Stipulated Order of Removal, as attested by their testimonies, as well as from the rising numbers of these Orders signed by Mexican migrants since 2004.³⁶ These two documents are in fact very different: while a Stipulated Order of Removal limits the deportee's rights and may prohibit any attempt to return to the us, "voluntary departure" leaves open the possibility for reassessment of the migrant's case.

Detention frequently leads to deportation, which is probably the most harrowing part of an unauthorised migrant's journey. The focus on deportation intensified in 2002 due to the new application of section 287(g) of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act (IIRIRA, 1996) corresponding with changes in us policies after 9/11.

The second wave of deportations came after Barack Obama became us president. His administration has managed to deport more migrants than the Bush government. In 2010, Janet Napolitano, then DHS secretary, announced a historic record: more than 392,000 deportations had been achieved in the relevant fiscal year. This number continued to rise, reaching nearly 397,000 deportations in the 2011 fiscal year and 410,000 deportations one year later.³⁷ The increasing volume of deportations has caused a disturbing situation in the Mexican border cities where deported migrants amass. Deportations represent a significant challenge especially for Tijuana, which is a key recipient of Mexican deportees: in 2010, an average 366 daily repatriations were recorded in the border city.³⁸

While only some migrants experience violence in the course of clandestine crossings, detention in the us and deportation, all of them endure psychological trauma as a consequence of being detained and deported: they suffer because they are separated from their families and lose their jobs or businesses as well as their property in the us Most of ex-migrants whom I interviewed had lived in the us between one and 20 years, and thus, when they spoke about their home, they did not mean home in Mexico, but the place in the us which they had had

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to leave behind. Due to the long period they had spent abroad, it was difficult for them to return to Mexico; often they felt alienated from their country of origin.

Insufficient financial resources, a lack of identification documents and poor knowledge about their country of origin are among the most common problems of deported migrants. Those who are poor, cannot rely on friends or acquaintances in Tijuana and lack strong financial support from their family in the us tend to seek refuge, food and clean clothing in local migrant shelters. Migrants may eat, rest and sleep overnight in these shelters, however during the day, they must leave the building in order to search for a job. That search is an incredibly hard task, especially for those without Mexican documents.

When Mexican deportees from the us reach the border office of Mexico's National Migration Institute, they receive a document confirming their deportation certificate, including their personal details, from the Mexican authorities. However, this document is only a simple A4 sheet of paper, which does not replace official identification documents (Instituto Federal Electoral credentials) and is easily destroyed. Paradoxically, the Mexicans who once lived without documents in the us become undocumented in their own country. This lack of proper identification leads to two additional problems: ex-migrants find it extremely hard to secure a job, and they are commonly abused by the Tijuana municipal police, who usually do not accept the documentary proof of deportation and instead imprison deportees for a limited time or even demand a bribe in exchange for leaving them alone. In this way, deported migrants easily enter into a vicious cycle: following their deportation, they fall into poverty due to a lack of income; their appearance then deteriorates since they continue to wear the same clothes, and this both complicates the ensuing job search and increases the risk of police abuse.

Last but not least, deported migrants experience feelings of shame and despair and are vulnerable to depression, which can lead to a range of addictions. It is difficult for many to lose the status of national hero, a figure admired by former Mexican president Vicente Fox, who praised Mexican migrants for contributing significantly to the national economy through their remittances. Indeed, the remittances sent by Mexican workers from outside the country constitute its most important source of income after oil revenue. Around 10 years ago, the total amount of annual remittances from Mexican migrants was estimat-

ed at \$US20 billion, surpassing foreign direct investment and income from tourism.³⁹

The social exclusion of many migrants leads them to consider risking a clandestine crossing and returning illegally to the US in order to be with their families again and continue living a productive life. However, some experienced crossing more than 10 years ago and are not ready to face the new border regime or the dangers accompanying the sealing of the border. For many, clandestine crossing continues to be the only option while others have managed finally to find employment in Tijuana and establish themselves in the city. Another option – promoted frequently by civil society organisations that work with ex-migrants – is to request a bus ticket from these organisations allowing them to return to their place of origin irrespective of how far it is from the border. Others still remain dependent on money they have saved or received from their families in the US since they cannot or do not want to find a job. Those in this group spend their resources on accommodation or drugs. Due to the poor psychosocial conditions in which deported migrants find themselves, it is all too easy for them to fall into depression and drug use. In some areas of Tijuana, drugs are omnipresent and represent a cheap temptation for many desperate individuals. Crystal methamphetamine and heroin, for example, are sold publicly at established places that are “overlooked” by local police. The part of Tijuana which is most severely affected by drug addiction is called El Bordo.

El Bordo is situated in the dry, sandy, concrete area of the Tijuana River canal that runs between the US border, represented by a yellow line, and the city centre. It is about two kilometres long. El Bordo’s population is divided by the drainage that flows through the canal’s centre: heroin addicts live on one side while marijuana, crystal meth and alcohol addicts stay on the other side of the drain. According to an investigation conducted by Colegio de la Frontera Norte, between August and September 2013, there were between 700 and 1000 individuals residing in El Bordo; of this population, 91.5% had been deported by US authorities, 72.6% had no identification documents to rely on and 96% were male, of whom 67.3% had children. This signals that the deportations from the US to Mexico result in the separation of families and, more specifically, the isolation of fathers from the domestic sphere, which causes the breakdown of individual and family plans.⁴⁰ Since the existence of the population in El Bordo is entwined with the

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large volume of deportees, it may be concluded that the safety of migrants is affected by the US's protectionist immigration policies even after they are deported. In this context, it is also important to emphasise that the Mexican government is another actor that plays a role in ex-migrants' situation since it has not created any aid programmes or other mechanisms for deported Mexicans.

Conclusion

The growing security risks being faced by Mexican and as other Latin American unauthorised migrants during clandestine border crossings, in detention centres and even after their deportation from the US reflect US policies that for more than two decades have been defined by a strong anti-immigration focus. The Clinton administration instigated the construction of the border wall, which for many has become a symbol of military violence and the many deaths of migrants who have sought to cross the overprotected border clandestinely. During the Bush administration, the men and women whose poverty and hardship had forced them to leave their homes and migrate northwards came to be seen as a national security issue or even a threat to US security. Soon after Obama became president, the US authorities managed to exceed historical records through deportations that separated many parents from their families and left them in psychosocial difficulties.

Besides transforming migrants' journeys into a nightmare, US immigration policies and costly protectionism have failed to meet their own objectives: the militarisation of the border has not deterred migrants from crossing in remote areas, and nor has it established greater security in the border area. Rather, the opposite has transpired. The border enforcement regime has become an invitation to criminal organisations whose smuggling businesses have flourished, and it has led many migrants to risk their lives. In the long term, these policies may cause more extensive damage on a human level and harm the relations between countries. On this basis, they are not sustainable.



LUCIA ARGÜELLOVÁ is affiliated to the Iberoamerican Centre at Metropolitan University Prague and may be reached at info@cejiss.org

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Argüellová*

Understanding the Borders of Authentic Healing from Gambling Addiction among the Western Apache

Daniela A. Pěničková

This study examines the process of identity formation in a present-day Western Apache reservation community. It explores how member identities have been shaped by various postcolonial social and political boundaries and how these translate into concepts of mental health—specifically in the area of gambling addiction and its culturally relevant treatment. By examining Apache experiences of the realities of contemporary reservation life, which is characterised by an uneasy mixture of traditional and postcolonial values and practices, this work illustrates how modern Native Americans position themselves within overreaching and conflicting discourses about what it means to be Apache in the 21st century. We find that cultural and political boundaries are well-established among community members and reflected in their perceptions and evaluations of the recently introduced casino gaming enterprise and its economic, social and medical consequences, including the search for locally meaningful programmes for compulsive gamblers. These boundaries divide community understandings of tribal wellness and mental health care according to traditional/Christian religious beliefs, political affiliation, language (use of English and Apache language) and degree of participation in global discourses of science and Western education and medicine. These findings highlight the need for reservation-based mental health care clinics that recognise internal cultural boundaries in their current practices and for the development of therapeutic programmes that offer more efficient and sustainable treatment and prevention strategies for gambling and other addictions.



Scan this article onto your mobile device

Keywords: mental health, casino gaming, addiction, political and cultural boundaries, health, cultural authenticity, postcolonial history

Introduction

*Daniela A.
Pěničková*

Throughout the history of the US (and since before its foundation), the Southwest has been notorious as a region of geographical, political and cultural borders. Its topography is hemmed in by the Pacific Ocean, several orogenic mountain belts and volcanic mountain formations. All this is connected by vast desert areas that are interrupted by gorges, valleys and land depressions, dotted with countless mesas and red cliffs and dissected by the largest ravine on Earth—the Grand Canyon. Based originally in Asia, prehistoric people emigrated to the naturally shaped borderlands of the Southwest somewhere around 9000 B.C.¹ While prehistoric migration continued in both directions between North and Central America over the millennia, and many politically and economically independent groups of hunters and gatherers as well as horticulturalists and desert farmers settled in the region, it was not until the 16th century that it was politically divided in the modern sense.² Most of the area became a Spanish colony after the Spanish conquest of the Aztec Empire in 1521, and it was administered as a viceroyalty of New Spain until Mexico won its independence in 1821. Although serious attempts to dominate indigenous groups were made during both the Spanish and Mexican colonisation periods, true political subjugation, marked by the isolating, relocating and confinement of Native peoples within the newly created boundaries of reservations, came only with the arrival of Anglo-Americans in the area. This historical period was inaugurated on 02 February 1848 with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo followed by the cession of all North American Mexican territories to the newly emerged American nation state. This was also the historical moment when the seeds of the ethnic and social class divisions that characterise the contemporary Southwest were planted. American Indian reservations came to be seen over time as a paradoxical model: initially established as a way of separating the “civilised” from the “primitive,” they were eventually transformed into territorial symbols of tribal sovereignty and pride. To this day, they are associated with crippling poverty and social

disadvantage, issues that clearly stem from the differences constructed through the drawing up of reservation boundaries.³

The colonial practice of isolating people on reservations served to impoverish Native tribes by separating them from their traditional environments and destroying their traditional economies and subsistence practices. For the Western Apache people, who are the focus of this study, this meant the abandonment of elk, deer, rabbit and other animal hunting practices as well as their disconnection from traditions of subsisting on wild berries, agave and acorns, cooking mescal and using local plants and herbs for diet and healing.⁴ The result was a serious rupture in the culture's life-sustaining rites and rituals that were connected with the cycle of the seasons and associated with certain supernatural powers and the maintaining of balance in the cycle of human life. More specifically, there was a ban on Apache songs, dances, games and coming-of-age rituals for young women. Children were forced to speak English, especially in boarding schools where they were socialised into thinking, behaving and even looking like Anglo-American Christians. The forced assimilation and abrupt discontinuation of traditional pre-Contact ways of life translated into the chronic social and medical pathologies which are associated with contemporary life on Apache and other Native American reservations.⁵ The situation was also complicated by the introduction of a second and more recent set of boundaries. These stemmed from the new discourses on tribal emancipation that were launched with the 1934 Indian Reorganisation Act, which was adopted by the us federal government in a bid to reverse the atrocious consequences of previous policies of assimilation. Although well-intended, this Act remained focused on economic improvements, relegating the promotion of tribal health and spiritual and cultural values to a secondary position.⁶

It was precisely in the name of tribal economic self-sufficiency that the 1988 Indian Gaming Regulatory Act was adopted, paving the way for tribes to open casino gaming enterprises on reservation (or purchased tribal) land. While this road has since proven rocky and difficult due to the move by individual us states to block these efforts, overall it has represented a major political victory. Still, this success has come to Native communities at a time when their rates of unemployment, poverty and alcohol and substance abuse are high, creating real potential for a deepening crisis around tribal health, wellness and communal vi-

tality. It has also come at a point when communities are divided by the legacy of colonial practices of assimilation that have left the Apache and other tribes in a grey zone between the communal life of a tribal society and the individualising system of neoliberal capitalism.

Against this backdrop, the current study seeks to deconstruct the definition and diagnosis of compulsive/pathological gambling within the context of a West Apache tribal community. To this end, it offers a detailed analysis of the emergence of competing and overlapping social discourses which contribute greatly to an identity crisis among tribe members and complicate the development of culturally appropriate healthcare services. The borders around these often conflicting discourses have been established by various historical paradigms in the Southwest, including the pre-Contact, colonial and postcolonial approaches of local indigenous people.

Current health science literature illustrates that despite on-going efforts to find ways to improve the health status of Native Americans, mental health care services in tribal communities remains largely ineffective. One commonly stated cause is the inability to provide culturally relevant diagnoses and treatments that would reflect “traditional ways of life” and lie within the “authentic identity” of Native patients. In exploring culturally sound treatments of gambling addiction within a Western Apache tribe, I argue that to integrate “traditional” or “authentic” components into healthcare in a meaningful way, it is necessary to grapple with the complex process of mapping out and discerning the many concepts of local native identities. If tribal clinicians do otherwise, they risk grounding their programmes in simplistic and essentialised understandings of Native culture.⁷ These multiple identities can point to distinct borderlands and overreaching discourses about what an Apache understanding of mental health and illness would mean. This account focuses specifically on issues that are highly culturally, socially and politically charged in modern Native American society: casino gaming and the behavioural problems potentially associated with it that have been labelled medically as “compulsive” or “problem” or “pathological.” Understanding these conditions from an Apache perspective reflects their many historical layers as well as the everyday socio-economic constraints of current existence on a Native American reservation. As Thomas Csordas argues, Native people are constantly positioning and repositioning themselves within the

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changing borders of a social order in which their lives are driven by the permeating mainstream American lifestyle and idealised through the image of the traditional Indian lifestyle.⁸

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Background

The data presented here come from ethnographic fieldwork that took place during an 18-month stay at one of the Western Apache reservations in central-eastern Arizona and over four month-long follow-up visits. The reservation consists of seven districts and three concentrated communities and is home to approximately 10,000 people who are predominantly enrolled Apache members, but also include Apaches from other tribes, Navajos, Pima, Hopi, Mexican Americans and a handful of Anglo-Americans. The Apache language continues to be spoken by the older generations and is used frequently at public events, however middle-aged people and the younger generation speak English almost exclusively. Young people attend both on- and off-reservation elementary and high schools where the vast majority of classes are taught in English. Widespread poverty means there are limited economic and natural resources on the reservation. Only about one-third of adults of working age have a regular job. Local jobs are primarily available in federally funded education, healthcare and social services. The largest non-federal employer is the local casino enterprise. During the course of my stay, I lived with two different Apache families and collected 45 life history interviews and over 50 semi-structured short interviews that focused on local understandings of social gambling and problem gambling. The interviews were evenly balanced from the standpoints of gender, age and political and religious views.

“Pathological gambling” is a condition which is classified by the American Psychiatric Association’s *Diagnostic & Statistical Manual IV-TR* as an impulse control disorder⁹ and conventionally treated with medication and individual behavioural psychotherapy. In the reservation community which I explored, the Western medical model was represented by a behavioural health clinic whose name had recently changed from the Behavioral Health Center to the Wellness Center. At the time of the study, this clinic employed four to eight non-Apache

clinicians and two to four Apache counsellors.¹⁰ In the last decade, it has had six directors of whom only one was a tribe member. That person only served as an interim chair for one year.

The Wellness Center has been making non-negligible attempts to integrate what it perceives as authentic traditional elements into its programme. These steps include constructing a therapy room in the circular shape of a traditional sweat lodge, bringing traditional prayers into clinical practice and encouraging some clients to complement their clinical therapy with healing sessions run by local medicine men/women. Despite these efforts, the institution is largely avoided by tribe members even when they are locally recognised as in need of intervention due to drug, alcohol or gambling abuse. Practically all of the Center's clients have been court-ordered to attend and/or institutionally mandated to do so via their schools, employers, etc. The accounts of tribe members collected in this study suggest that the Center is strongly associated with colonial federal practices of control and cultural proselytising.¹¹ At the same time, most Apache staff members believe the institution is playing an essential role in developing the modern tribal nation and creating "professional" and efficient therapy programmes for the community. This voice of the Center's staff is, however, only one perspective amidst many narratives suggesting what it means to be a modern-day Apache, and thus, how to approach addiction treatment.

*Daniela A.
Pěničková*

Exploring Apache Perspectives on Gambling through the Doors of the Desert Treasure Casino

To capture the main and often contradictory perspectives on gambling issues in the community, I want to approach the four entrances to the tribe's casino, the Desert Treasure, as metaphoric gates.¹² These gates lead to the four discourses I uncovered through which various Apache identities and self-perceptions emerge. Inside the cultural and political boundaries of each discourse, we find nested a distinct set of ideas about problem gambling and how it should be handled.

The Desert Treasure is itself an impressive structure with a large dome at its centre connecting four large wings (the separate entrance-

ways). Based on traditional cosmology and the position of these entranceways, we may understand them as an allegory for the four cardinal directions that together constitute Apache life.

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The Northern Entrance

The northern entranceway may best represent the traditional – pre-Contact – Apache world. It is decorated with artefacts such as handmade burden baskets, beaded moccasins and cradleboards that evoke a sense of pride in Apache culture. The hallway walls display a series of large-framed portraits of famous warriors and medicine men such as Victorio, Cochise, Mangas Coloradas and Geronimo. Within pre-Contact traditional culture, gambling was an integral part of Western Apache life.

Present-day primary locations of Apachean peoples



When people gambled, important processes took place that shaped individual characters and positive social relations were established. The pivotal role of these experiences was reiterated through the telling of creation stories. One of these narratives which is integral to the Apache cosmology that has survived the onslaught of Euro-American Protestant teachings tells the story of Slim Coyote and how light began:

The story takes place in the time when animals talked and acted like people.¹³ These creatures were divided into two bands. One band wanted the Earth to stay dark all the time as it had done until then. In this group were all the animals that stung or were poisonous or slithered or were otherwise considered “mean.” Bear was the leader of this group. The second band consisted of the “good” animals, and it was led by Slim Coyote. The good animals challenged the mean animals to a game of hidden ball to determine which side would have its way about the distribution of dark and light. If Bear’s team won, it would stay dark and the mean animals would get to kill Slim Coyote and his group. If Slim Coyote’s animals won, daylight would arrive with the sun, and Coyote’s side would also have the right to kill the mean animals. In a tie, the moon and stars would shine their light during the night. The game began. When it was Slim Coyote’s team’s turn, they sang, ‘Dawn, dawn, let it break,’ and the light began to glow in the east. And when it was Bear’s team’s turn, his animals chanted, ‘No dawn! No dawn!’ and it fell dark again. Thus, depending on the amount of light in the east, one could tell which group was in the lead.

As the game wore on, the good animals appeared to be losing and so they turned to Gopher for help. Gopher went underground and tied his rope to the ball. When a member of Bear’s team tried to guess where the ball was hidden, Gopher pulled the ball away. The opponent grabbed at the dirt but could not find anything. Bear’s group soon realised their defeat was imminent. They began making different excuses to leave and so avoid being killed. After Bear himself managed to run away, Slim Coyote’s band began killing his people. They slaughtered most of the mean animals, but some managed to escape. The fact that these creatures had escaped and the ways they did so came to explain their particular characteristics: ‘The red ants, for example, got on the bushes and weren’t all killed and that is why there are stinging bugs today. The snakes hid in between rock cracks and weren’t all killed and

that is why there are poisonous creatures in the Apache land. The Bear was in such a hurry when running away that when he tried to pull on his moccasins, he got them on the wrong feet and that is why his tracks look like his left paw should be on the right side and vice versa.¹⁴ The game ended in a tie, and as a result, the Apache see sunshine during the day and the moon and stars at night.

As this story suggests, traditional gaming not only recreated and reproduced a life-sustaining balance and harmony between people and the natural elements, but it was an important social outlet. It helped strengthen intergenerational and inter-tribal relations, sharpen survival skills and improve the exchange of goods (and later cash flow) within the community through bets, losses and wins. One of the lessons of gambling, especially addressed to young players, was that opponents should be given the chance to retrieve what they had lost so long as they asked for this in a humble and polite manner. The traditional Apache ways of life also laid out sets of rules and time frames that defined gaming's place in life. Large gaming sessions like the ones for typical hoop-and-pole and dirt ball hiding games only happened in the winter time to avoid interrupting hunting and harvesting season. Strictly observed taboos were also in place to protect vulnerable community members from the perceived harmful effects of gambling. Some of the elderly men I interviewed remembered, for example, that as children they had participated in a dirt ball hiding game but been discouraged from placing any kind of wager. Similarly, women took part in gaming sessions as singers and team supporters but were not encouraged to bet (and in some cases, their betting was forbidden).¹⁵

In the traditional discourse, concepts of mental illness or behavioural issues (like problem gambling) can only be understood vis-à-vis the semantics of the Apache language. Here the most significant attribute is that there is no expression directly comparable to a label like "pathological behaviour" or "addiction." In addition, labelling another person as "having a problem" is a highly sensitive and morally charged act, and this is even more the case if the problem relates to the person's mind or soul. Unless the speaker is a respected maternal relative, medicine man or recognised communal elder, this practice is considered highly disrespectful. While this is not the only reason why tribe members do not want to associate with the Wellness Center, understanding this issue is essential to grasping their preferences. For example, Western psychiatric diagnostic practices like comprehensive personality assessments on

client admission are often carried out by a practitioner of the opposite gender or one who is younger than the tribe member. Being labelled by such persons as “addicted,” “compulsive” or “chemically dependent” is highly stigmatising and dehumanising.

In the Apache language, the only occasion when people comment on someone’s condition is when that person is injured or visibly (physically) sick. Phrases such as *na dezgai* (he got sick) or *kaa sitii* (he is lying down) might then be exchanged. The questions that immediately follow, whether verbalised or not, are “What did he do wrong?” and “What taboos did he break?” In other words, in Apache epistemology, the cause of illness is identified with the infringement of a social rule or a taboo; this might consist, for example, of the inappropriate handling of ceremonial clothes, disturbance of burial grounds or ignorant interaction with a potent force of nature such as a mountain lion or a bear (whose significance is reflected in the above creation story). Stepping on bear tracks or walking across the trails of other powerful animals might indeed affect one’s health negatively. Similarly, treating another human being in a harmful or disrespectful way could bring on illness, especially if that person is one’s senior, a tribal elder or a maternal uncle, etc.

Rather than speaking of “being addicted to” something, the Apache choose descriptive language like *bil tsod*, which best translates as “becoming attracted” or “attached” or “drawn to” something, whether this describes eating chocolate, dancing, drinking alcohol or gambling. In the case of gambling specifically, the expression *idika’ bil tsood* (drawn to gambling) is used. It must be stressed that these are semantically neutral statements used to indicate that someone is engaging in the activity a lot or more than usual. Unlike the English terms “addiction” and “pathological gambling,” they are not *a priori* judgements or endowed with negative and stigmatising associations. Since the younger Apache generations operate primarily and often exclusively in English, these cultural idioms are gradually being replaced by English terminology through which the Western medical labels are becoming more common.

*Daniela A.
Pěničková*

The Western Entrance

The western wing of the casino consists of hotel premises and lecture halls and it is often used for religious gatherings. It may best repre-

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sent a type of post-Contact discourse that has been shaped by the predominantly Protestant values brought to the reservation around the 1890s by the German forefathers of today's Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church. Over the course of the 20th century, the Lutherans and their Apache disciples expanded their sphere of influence remarkably and today they enjoy one of the largest followings of the 15 or so Protestant denominations on the reservation. They have several hundred church members, maintain a Religious Center Facebook page and run three private schools for about 300 Apache students. Their mission is best summarised in a hand-out often distributed at the Sunrise Ceremony, a traditional Apache coming-of-age ritual. This hand-out has the title *A United Statement*, and its goal is to discourage Apache people from participating in traditional cultural rituals. This tool is used to educate tribal people about the "fact" that 'Apaches were one of the peoples that lost the full story about God, and made up their own creation stories wrongly believing the Sun, the Water, and the Changing Woman were gods worshipping them in the Sunrise Ceremony.'¹⁶ The Lutheran leaders reason that 'it is the devil's work [when a] ceremony gives honours to gods who are not gods.'¹⁷ Instead, their hand-out invites fellow tribe members to 'enjoy the freedom and peace that only Jesus Christ can give.'¹⁸

Within the cultural boundaries of Protestant ethics and Puritan asceticism, traditional games were gradually stripped of their positive social functions and they came to be perceived as irrational, instinct-based hedonism. They were understood as detrimental to the practical conduct of a life that should be lived to please God. The fundamental Christian belief that "tradition" is disruptive to the "true spiritual life" runs equally strongly through other fundamentalist churches on the reservation, many of which are run by Apache pastors. The following quote from a middle-aged Apache pastor from one of the Assembly of God churches captures both the principles of his church's teachings and its standpoint on casino gaming. What is noticeable in this narrative is how the pastor's position switches from being that of an outsider and recipient of Christian principles to being their source:

[T]he church is basically a fundamental Pentecostal church. Alright? It's like the Assembly of God. Similar. Or they call it Full Gospel. So it's Bible based, anti-smoking, drinking, cursing and stuff like that, you know. And they don't believe in

gambling [either]. No, we don't. And we don't believe in tradition, you know. So, the church is against, our church is... supposedly against all of that.

In line with these ideas, many of the Apache Christians define “problem gambling” as an “illness” and even talk about it as a “mental illness” though they understand that concept in non-medical terms. In their view, behavioural disorders are inflicted upon people exclusively by the devil. Consequently, while some Apache Christians remain open to the idea that Western institutions like the Wellness Center may help to prevent and treat addiction, most of them emphasise the church and the word of God as the ultimate authentic sources of therapy and cure. Traditional healing practices of local medicine men and women, including sweatlodge cleansing, sage smoking and prayer, are not acceptable as forms of therapy according to the Apache Christians. They interpret these approaches according to Lutheran teachings – that is, as tools used by the devil to tempt people and lead them astray.

Understanding the Borders

The Southern Entrance

The southern entranceway to the casino – located behind a bronze statue of a traditionally dressed, proud-looking Apache player of hoop-and-pool games – represents yet another area of the borderlands of Apache authentic identity. Here we find accounts of the tribe's economic and cultural revival, the promotion of ethnic identity and self-governance. Building on the legacy of the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act, Titles 11-vii of the Civil Rights Act (1968) removed states' powers to assume unilateral jurisdiction within Indian country; among other things, this brought an end to the prohibition of gambling on Native American territories (established in 1924 by the Code of Federal Courts). In an effort to compensate Native Americans for their long history of social and economic losses, the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988 allowed commercial gaming to become a gradual source of development and income for tribal governments. Since the 1990s, casino gaming operations have come to symbolise tribal political sovereignty, self-determination and economic self-sufficiency (at least prospectively). As such, they have pointed to a new mode of cultural representation and authentic tribal identity.

Ironically, this powerful discourse of political pride and economic self-reliance has also fuelled the conflicts of many tribe members

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over their values and transformed identities. An elderly Apache man, known in the community for his outgoing personality, humour, fluency in the Apache language and knowledge of traditional practices, revealed an internal conflict over his membership of the local Gethsemane Church and his past passion for gambling:

They got all that joy, fun, whatever over there [in the casino], you know... Unless like me, you're religious, you accept Christ over here, you are on this side. Like, I have something else above, you see, [different] from what I used to do over there. When I was on that side, I enjoyed myself, if I have a way, transportation, or money, I'll go over there, I enjoy myself over there. But over here is something... like you almost pray every day, you see, this way you are a different person. You are not yourself any more. So, I think it's better for people to start going to church.

Besides contributing to conflicts over social values and practices, the new tribal sovereignty narrative has the potential to shape into a health-related issue for some people on the reservation. A group of male tribal elders that I interviewed, some of whom had actually been described by their family as 'addicted to the local casino,' stated in their testimonies that for them – Apaches – 'gambling cannot be a problem.' They emphasised that 'the Apache people had always bet and played a variety of gambling games until the white man came and told [them] it was bad.' For them, the identification of people as "having a gambling problem" and creation of clinical programmes "for compulsive gamblers" on the reservation were two means of perpetuating colonial hegemony. As politically correct as this may sound, it is a view that clashes loudly with the Protestant discourse presented above and the social ailments discourse that I describe below.

The Eastern Entrance

The eastern wing of the tribal casino best symbolises the borders that mark out the final Apache discourse on problem gambling. This part of the gaming facility has a conveniently situated side entrance which is set back from the main incoming road and a central parking lot. It is often used by those who do not want to be seen entering the casino by fellow tribe members. Sneaking in through the side door is interpreted by many as a sign one's poor self-control in entering the casino house.

This tribal narrative fully recognises that for some people, gambling could potentially develop into a behavioural problem of a medical kind. This recognition points to a sharp divergence from the pre-Contact cultural idioms around illness (represented in the first/northern entranceway) in which Apache speakers find it demeaning and ethically unacceptable to identify others as “suffering from an addiction,” let alone as “mentally ill.”

*Daniela A.
Pěničková*

Within the borders of the fourth discourse, people interpret the casino as “a white man’s enterprise,” emphasising that casinos are founded on considerably different principles than those behind pre-Contact form of gaming. Unlike hoop-and-pole or the moccasin hiding games, casino games are set up to maximise the house’s profits. The casino is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and thus, there are no time or seasonal restrictions. Players do not have to answer to their immediate family or other relatives when placing a high bet and nor do they play against other tribal members. They play against programmed slot machines, which do not provide the benefits of social contact or give the loser the opportunity to humbly ask his opponent for possessions lost in the game. In addition, considering the difficult socio-historical context in which casino enterprises entered Native communities, many feel that Apache community members are in a vulnerable position that may encourage the onset of addiction. One tribal leader captured this idea as follows:

Our people are dealing with broken homes, poverty, domestic violence and alcoholism. The unemployment on the reservation is close to 76 percent. Lacking adequate housing and health care, they deal with [a] legacy of dependence on the handouts from federal and tribal government. There is a void somewhere. Something is missing, something that they are not, but wish to be. There is depression, low self-esteem. Definitely low self-esteem. They have illusions of power by violence and instant riches. Those are the standards set up by tv against which they measure themselves and come out depressed. Going to the casino, drinking, or abusing drugs then fill that void.

This quote vividly illustrates that problem gambling is perceived as a social ill rather than a discrete biologically-based disease, as the medical model defines it. While tribe members who share this view believe that the Wellness Center can play a positive role in alleviating

illnesses such as gambling addiction, their narrative stresses that clinical programmes cannot make significant and sustainable changes until the public rhetoric of tribal sovereignty and economic self-reliance translates into better housing and employment opportunities, culturally sensitive education and social programmes that promote positive ethnic self-images and confidence.

Conclusion

Understanding that interpretations of the causes and treatments of addiction are culturally mediated and politically negotiated is essential for increasing the cultural relevance of mental health care. The Apache discourses on tribal gaming and addiction which have been presented in this study show that modern Apaches live in a complex and uncertain social order shaped by historically and politically formed discursive boundaries that reflect traditional pre-Contact ways of life, colonial hegemony and religious assimilation, recent historical emancipation, and finally, recognition of the potential health risks which the casino venture may present. In line with the recent criticisms of some ethnographers that universal calls for the inclusion of “tradition” and “authenticity” within therapies may ignore their efficacy,¹⁹ this study has highlighted the need for a painstaking examination of the borders and boundaries within which many often contradicting explanatory models for health and illness arise. If institutions such as the Wellness Center are to provide effective prevention and therapeutic programmes for gambling (or any) addiction, they will have to move beyond Western/traditional dichotomies and incorporate values and tenets emerging from across the diverse borderlands of socio-historical discourses and practices.



DANIELA A. PĚNIČKOVÁ is affiliated to the Anglo-American University, Prague and may be reached at: daniela.penickova4@aauni.edu

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Emigration and Displacement in Ciudad Juárez, México

Rodolfo Cruz-Piñeiro and María Inés Barrios de la O

This work presents the emigration phenomenon of Ciudad Juárez which rose sharply between 2007 to 2012 because of an increase in public insecurity and unemployment in the city. The work discusses the emigration flows to El Paso Texas, and some municipalities of Veracruz, México. Analysis focuses on migratory flows, unemployment and crime rates and includes the results of 18 semi-structured interviews (5 in Ciudad Juárez, 5 in El Paso, Texas and 8 in three municipalities of the state of Veracruz), which registered the personal experiences of the emigrants and helped us understand this emigration process. We found that there was an association of emigration with unemployment and public insecurity in Ciudad Juárez and were able to identify a difference between those who moved to El Paso from those who went back to Veracruz.

Keywords: Mexican border, emigration, unemployment, public insecurity, Ciudad Juárez

Introduction

From the 1970's until the early 2000's, Ciudad Juárez distinguished itself as a multifaceted city in social, economic and demographic terms. Since it is a city located along the Northern Mexican border and proximate to the us, Ciudad Juárez stands out as a city immersed in the process of capitalism and globalisation. Like other border towns, in Juárez migration played an important role in its population dynamics and growth. During the 1980's and 1990's it emerged as a key magnet for an assortment of people and migrants arrived from the center and south of Mexico, for work or attempts to cross to the us. This migra-



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tory flow caused the rapid growth of the city's population—its official growth rates were above 4%, well above the national average.

Immigration to Ciudad Juárez was caused by the city's economic dynamism, which was based on the establishment of the maquiladora export industry; an industry that maintained a constant demand of labour, which was supplied by new-migrants. The economic and population dynamism lasted for several decades until it began to decrease during the 2000's. The demand of labour from the maquiladora industry started to slowdown as well as the flow of immigrants; these processes were accelerated by two events: first the us's 2008 economic crisis deeply impacted Ciudad Juárez's economy and, second, the implementation of a federal Mexican government strategy against organised crime produced an unprecedented wave of criminal activities, which led many to describe Ciudad Juárez as one of the most dangerous cities in the world.

This article is organised into six parts. First an analysis of the social and economic context of Ciudad Juárez – which for more than three decades was characterized by full employment and a city that attracted immigrants – is conducted. The second and third parts describe economic and social decline, where high levels of public insecurity prevailed. The fourth section shows the impact of demography, specifically of the migratory phenomenon in Ciudad Juárez within a context of economic crisis and unemployment. In the fifth part, we present what we call a “human approach” to Ciudad Juárez immigration phenomenon with testimonials of some of the 18 interviews that we conducted in the municipalities of the state of Veracruz – Xalapa, Minatitlán and Coatzacoalcos – and in El Paso, Texas. Through these testimonials we were able to get to document the experiences of the immigrants who found themselves in a very insecure city and with no work of real prospects. The final section provides some conclusions of the emigration process and displacement that took place.

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and Dis-
placement
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The Maquiladora Industry, Employment and Immigration

Over the past three decades, Ciudad Juárez was characterised as a magnet for migrants along Mexico's northern border. Its importance was based on the sheer number of migrants absorbed into the city because it was considered as *the* place for enhancing living conditions and comfort.

During the 1960's the implementation of programmes aimed at strengthening and helping the city's economic development propelled Ciudad Juárez's economy. The National Border Programme (Programa Nacional Fronterizo, PRONAF) was created in 1961, with the purpose of restoring the urban services of the Mexican border cities and improving their infrastructure and image, and specially, of providing a solution to the problems that those cities were then facing and the ones that were to come.

Also in 1965, the Border Industrialisation Programme (Programa de Industrialización Fronteriza, PIF) whose purpose was to develop the bases for the establishment of the Maquiladora Export Industry (Industria Maquiladora de Exportación, IME). Ciudad Juárez was considered an ideal place to establish and develop this industry due to its geographical location, economic incentives to investors and the infrastructure provided to install industrial parks.¹ From its beginning, the maquiladora industry – re: its production processes – started to specialise on the assembly of electrical auto parts, spawning a secondary sector as the main source of the city's employment. During the 1980's and early 1990's, more than 45% of the economically active population of Ciudad Juárez was involved in this industry.

The expansion of the maquiladora industry and the specialisation of its production processes contributed to the attraction and establishment of a number of transnational maquiladora plants, fostering the growth of the manufacturing economic activity of the region. Ciudad Juárez was considered as a strategic industrial municipality, with high rates of economic growth – the highest in the state of Chihuahua – and the most urbanised city with the highest concentration of population.²

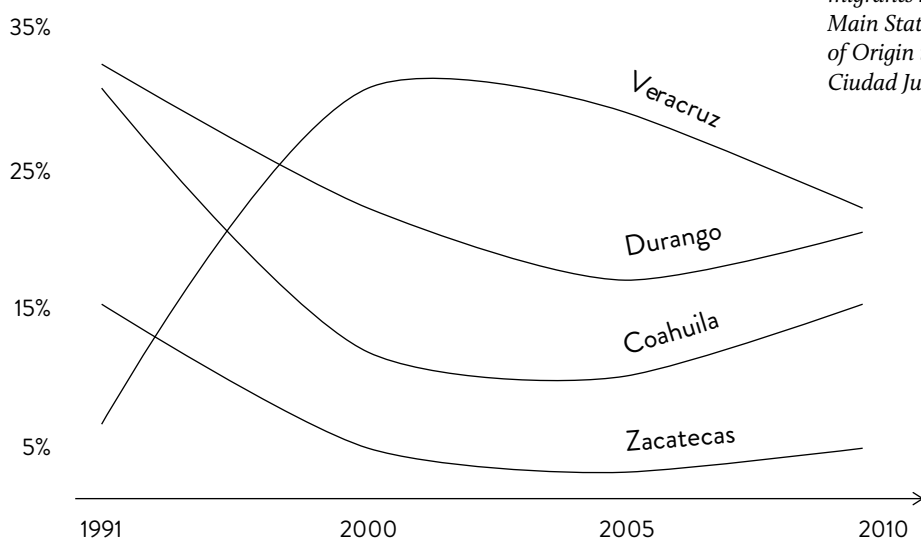
During the 1990's, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was signed and, together with the fact that 51.3% of the economic active population was in the economic secondary sector – of which the 84.21% came from the manufacturing industry – contributed to the further productive integration of the maquiladora industry. This boosted connections to their corporate headquarters around the world, resulting in a fragmentation of the production processes and a relocation of industrial plants in Ciudad Juárez.

Most maquiladoras needed intensive labour and a high number of employees so they attracted workers from the state of Chihuahua as well as from Southern Mexico and so since the 1970s the immigration flows to Ciudad Juárez maintained a positive trend. Over time these

flows created a regular migratory pattern that significantly influenced the social growth of Ciudad Juárez.

The first (1955) Population and Housing Census Enumeration helped estimate the behaviour of migratory flows to Ciudad Juárez and identified some patterns. Over the years some 80% of immigrants have come from the states of Coahuila, Durango and Zacatecas; most were in their productive and reproductive age and were employed by the manufacturing industry. However, by the beginning of the 2000's a new wave of immigrants arrived from Veracruz causing an overload in the manufacturing sector's labour force.

*Graph 1,
Share of
Recent Im-
migrants by
Main States
of Origin in
Ciudad Juárez*



*Source:
The Combined 2000 and 2010 Mexican Population Censuses and the 1995 and 2005
Housing and Population Census Enumeration (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y
Geografía, INEGI)*

As Graph 1 indicates, more than 70% of recent migrants to Ciudad Juárez came from Coahuila, Durango and Zacatecas and there is an atypical flow from Veracruz. This new flow increased from 6% in 1995 to 30% in 2000 and became the main flow; this increase was of a 500% in only five years.

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Immigration to Ciudad Juárez plays an important role in its demographic dynamics. Of the total of 67 Chihuahua municipalities, Ciudad Juárez retains the largest population of immigrants. Table 1 shows that from 1990 to 1995 of the total number of immigrants arriving to Chihuahua, 68.83% headed to Ciudad Juárez. From 1995 to 2000 the largest migratory flow to Chihuahua took place and 77.10% of that flow arrived to Juárez, in other words 106,922 people arrived at this city.

Immigrants in Juárez by prior Residence (1995-2010)		
<i>Period</i>	<i>Number of immigrants</i>	<i>% of internal state immigration</i>
1990-1995	80,016	68.83%
1995-2000	106,922	77.10%
2000-2005	46,275	68.40%
2005-2010	31,721	54.40%

*Table 1,
Source: Made
from the 2000
and 2010
Mexican Pop-
ulation Census,
and 1995 and
2005 Housing
and Popula-
tion Census
Enumeration
(INEGI).*

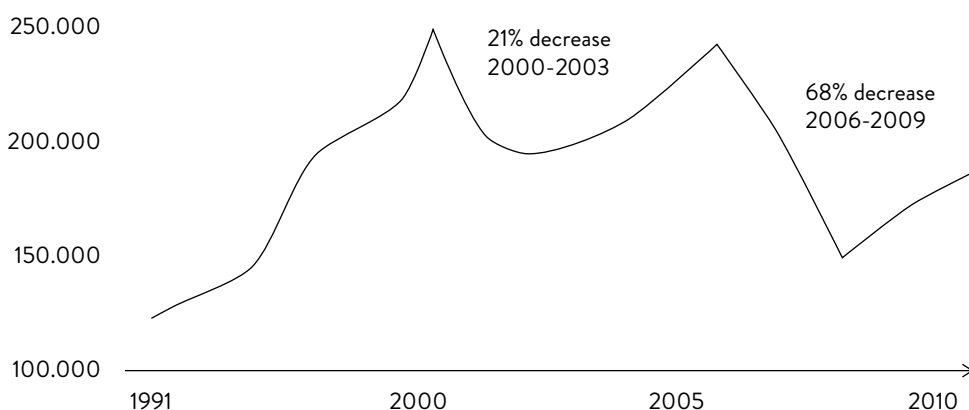
The oversupply of labour and the dizzying social growth of the population of Ciudad Juárez were characteristics that defined the city for many decades. Ciudad Juárez was known as a city of full employment and one of the most important immigration attraction poles along Mexico's northern border. This scenario helps measure the impacts of the 2000's economic crisis and the wave of violence and public insecurity experienced in Ciudad Juárez, which, in fact, exploded the emigration phenomenon.

Economic Decline and Unemployment

The growth of the maquiladora plants from 1990 to 2000 resulted in an increase of 204% in the creation of direct jobs (127,149). However after 2000, structural and short-term factors caused the decline of the manufacturing activity in the context of an international economic crisis. The main factor that contributed to this decline was the that most of the plants were foreign capital, mostly US, and their dynamism depended on the US economy. Ciudad Juárez experienced two major economic crises, of US origin, in 2003 and 2009.

In 2000, a speculative boom in the real estate sector prevailed in the US, causing an enormous monetary liquidity, which along with poor government's supervision of mortgage credits resulted in a negative impact on US consumption and a decrease in interest rates. The US economic crisis rapidly and quickly impacted Ciudad Juárez—particularly its employment sector. There was sharp decrease and, in some cases, the total withdrawal of foreign investment from the manufacturing industry. Employment is one of the most sensitive indicators to economic fluctuations, and Ciudad Juárez was no exception. Graph 2 shows the impact of the 2001 crisis, when employment fell 21.94%.

*Graph 2,
Number of
Workers in the
Manufacturing
Industry
(1990-2012)*



In 2008 another economic crisis hit the international markets, stemming from the US housing crunch. The so-called subprime crisis made an impact in the financial markets and the global economic activity and it affected the developed countries and especially the underdeveloped ones.³The 2008 crisis quickly struck Mexico's economy, and even more sharply and faster the local economy of Ciudad Juárez. The impact could be observed in the behaviour of predominant economic variables, such as the declining exports due to the decrease in aggregate consumption, falling foreign direct investment as well as the reduction of possibility of international credits.⁴

*Source:
Made from
data of the
Manufacturing
industry,
maquiladora
and export
services (IM-
MEX-INEGI).*

As a result the direct employment generated by the manufacturing industry in Ciudad Juárez was drastically destabilised. From 2006 to

2009 the number of jobs fell 68.82% from 239,165 to 164,612 and the number of workers with social security declined 18.12 % from 2006 to 2009.

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Public Insecurity: A failed National Goal

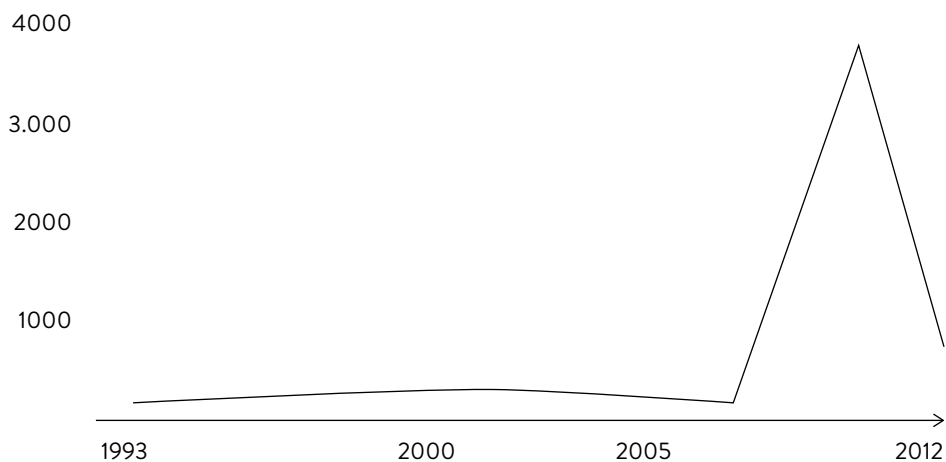
Violence, public insecurity, social crises and drug trafficking are the result of cyclical processes. Ciudad Juárez is a strategic point for drug and gun trafficking between Mexico and the US. During 2000, violence prevailed in this city as a result from public insecurity characterised by an unprecedented increase of the criminal indices, a situation that got even worse because of the lack of effective justice. Although this situation also happened in other Mexican cities, Payan mentions that it is necessary to consider Ciudad Juárez as a unique and revealing case.⁵

In 2007, the Mexican federal government presented the National Development Plan, which among other goals included the National Security Strategy to subdue drug trafficking and organised crime.⁶ By the end of the year the Mexican federal government started implementing the National Security Strategy by deploying the army and police to the Southern state of Michoacán and also to some Northern states. On 28 March 2008 *Operativo Conjunto Chihuahua* was carried out involving 8,000 military personnel and federal policemen sent to ten logistic camps and 46 checkpoints in Chihuahua, most of which were located in Ciudad Juárez.⁷

Despite this military operation, violence in Ciudad Juárez continued to rise during the following two years. The presence of the military and policemen resulted in a declared war against organised crime. Not only were there civilian casualties, there was also police abuse and the violation of human rights.⁸ The wave of public insecurity was expressed in social violence, which is measured by its impact on citizenship as well as by the number of homicides, assaults and rapes, which directly affected public trust and spaces.⁹ During 2008, crime rates increased both in the state of Chihuahua and in Ciudad Juárez. Public insecurity produced a stigma of contempt towards public spaces and the citizens' apathy. Behind crime statistics the need of justice prevailed.¹⁰

During the 1990's and into the 2000's, homicide rates steadily rose. However, since 2008 there was a substantial increase, exactly when the national strategy against crime was implemented. Graph 3 shows

the number of homicides in Ciudad Juárez from 1990 to 2012, with its peak in 2010. During the five-year period, 2005-2010 homicides increased 1,700% from 223 homicides annually to 3,794. Ciudad Juárez was the Mexican city with the highest homicide rate and its people had to cope with a culture of violence.



Graph 3, Number of Homicides in Ciudad Juárez (1990-2012), Source: Vital Statistics (INEGI).

Homicide Rate for every 100,000 People in Ciudad Juárez (2007-2012)			
Year	Population by mid-year	Homicides	Rate per 100,000
2007	1,321,475	192	15
2008	1,325,562	1580	119
2009	1,329,662	2385	179
2010	1,332,333	3794	285
2011	1,336,454	2279	171
2012	1,340,588	750	56

Table 2, Source: Vital Statistics and the 2010 Population Census (INEGI).

In Mexico, the average homicide rate over the past two decades was between 16 and 19 homicides per 100,000 people; Ciudad Juárez was no exception until 2008, when the rate jumped. Table 2 shows the homicide rates in Ciudad Juárez from 2007 until 2012. From 2007 to 2008 the rate increased nearly 800% from 15 homicides per 100,000 people to 119. The peak was during 2010, where the rate was 285 homicides per 100,000 people. In other words, during 2010, 10.4 homicides were committed daily. This indicator presented Ciudad Juárez as the most violent city in the world, according to the Mexican Citizen Council for public security and criminal justice. Valenzuela points out that Ciudad Juárez was the leader of horror and death, a result of the so-called war against organised crime.¹¹

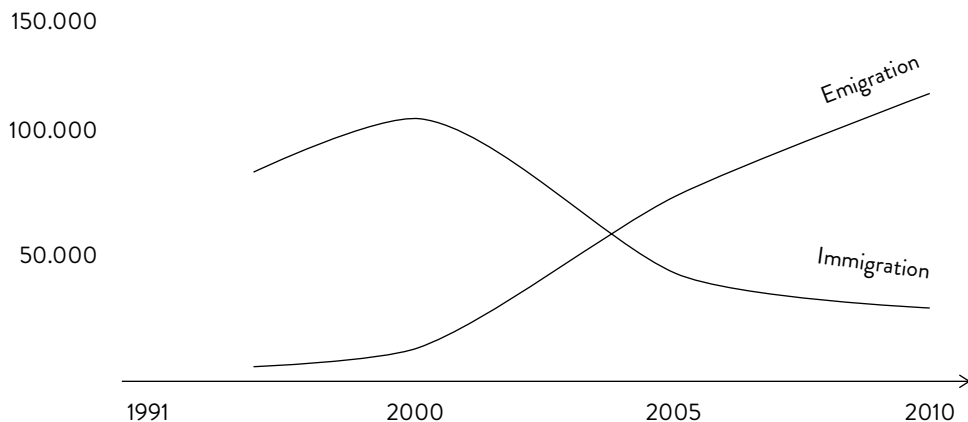
Emigration of Ciudad Juárez

Emigration and internal displacement in Mexico are phenomena caused by a variety of factors at various levels, related to family, labour and health, among others. However, in recent years one of the most relevant causes of displacement is violence; a result of the drug cartel wars and the way the Mexican government has managed them.¹² Violence and public insecurity are factors that encourage and accelerate emigration. Rubio notes that people who live in cities with high criminal rates tend to move 4.5 times more than people who live in cities with average rates.¹³ For many years, the economy, demographic changes, urbanisation and natural phenomena motivated the emigration in Mexico. Recently however, emigration is largely due to violence because, as it is the case in Colombia, this violence affects the social security context as well as the personal physical security of people, forcing them to leave their communities in fear of their lives.¹⁴

In Ciudad Juárez, the 2008 economic crisis and the scenario of public insecurity affected many of its dynamics including demographics. Even though, in the past decades, Ciudad Juárez experienced a positive and sustainable social growth, it saw a decline in population growth as violence rose, a decrease in immigration and an exponential increase in emigration, and certainly a significant rise in mortality.

Few studies have been conducted about the phenomenon of emigration in Ciudad Juárez; most have focused on immigration instead. Graph 4 shows the immigration and emigration flows of Ciudad Juárez

during the past 15 years. Beginning the 2000's there is a noticeable decline in immigration and a rapid increase in emigration.



Graph 4, Immigration and Emigration in Ciudad Juárez (1995-2010), Source: The 2000 and 2010 Mexican Population Censuses, and the 1995 and 2005 Housing and Population Census Enumeration (INEGI).

Between 2005 and 2010 Ciudad Juárez, a city that once attracted people, became one of high levels of emigration. Based on the net migratory rate we see the increase of emigration. In Ciudad Juárez this rate stayed positive; but from 2000-2005 it showed negative numbers as shown in Table 3.

Net Migration Rate in Ciudad Juárez (1995-2010)			
<i>Period</i>	<i>Immigration</i>	<i>Emigration</i>	<i>NMR</i>
1995	80016	3457	76559
2000	106922	14159	92763
2005	46272	70421	-24149
2010	31721	114324	-82603

Table 3, Source: The 2000 and 2010 Mexican Population Censuses, and the 1995 and 2005 Housing and Population Census Enumeration (INEGI).

During this period (2000-2005) emigration was higher than immigration, resulting in a negative net migration rate of 24,149 people. During those years, the emigration was so intense that more than 100,000 people left the city, and as a result, the net migration rate was of 82,603 people.

The Human Approach to Displacement

To understand the nature of the displacement and emigration of people from Ciudad Juárez, we interviewed 18 migrants; the interviews were conducted in El Paso, Texas and in some municipalities of the state of Veracruz. These cities were chosen because of their relation and connection from a geographic and population level, to Ciudad Juárez. Despite the political and administrative boundaries that exist between El Paso, Texas and Ciudad Juárez, there are ties that bind these two border cities together and there are established dynamics in economic, cultural and human activities—people on both sides of the border are in constant contact.

Yet, people from Veracruz who live in Ciudad Juárez, or “juarochos” as they are popularly known, have retained their presence. Since 1995 they were the main immigrant group, since Veracruz was going through an economic crisis and were specifically recruited by the manufacturing industry. The recruiters identified Veracruz as a potential supply of labour, which was urgently needed by the maquiladoras. The socio-demographic profile of the 18 people we interviewed is presented in Table 4.

Table 4,
Socio-demographic
Profile of the
interviewed
People

Source: Data
Collected from
Field Work
(November
2014 – February
2015).

	Number of Interviews			
	18	5	5	8
	Ciudad Juárez	El Paso Texas	Veracruz	
Gender				
Male	4	2	2	
Female	1	3	6	
Age				
25-39- year-old	3	2	5	
40-54 year-old	2	1	3	
55 and more	-	2	-	

Continues

Marital status			
Married/ <i>de facto</i> union	5	3	3
Single	-	1	1
Divorced	-	1	4
Educational attainment			
Primary	2	2	2
Junior high school	2	-	2
High school	1	1	3
Bachelors	-	2	1
Head of household <i>Head of household</i>	4	4	6
Spouse	1	-	1
Son/Daughter	-	1	1
Migration legal status			
Resident	N/A	1	N/A
Citizen	N/A	1	N/A
Tourist	N/A	1	N/A
Political Asylum	N/A	2	N/A

Rodolfo
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María
Inés Barrios
de la O

Of the 18 respondents, 8 were male and 10 female. Respondents were in a range of 25 to 58 years old, although the majority were between 25 to 39 year old; 6 people were in the range of 40 to 54 and only 2 were older than 55. 14 interviewees were heads of households and 55% of the total respondents had completed primary and secondary school. Because of the complexity of the border, the interviews conducted to people in El Paso, Texas, included asking their legal status. Five respondents of El Paso, Texas were residents, one was a US citizen, one had a tourist visa and two were political asylum seekers. Here we present some testimonials of the respondents that indicate the level of public insecurity and economic vulnerability which led them to leave Ciudad Juárez.

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'I wasn't going to risk that anything could happen to my family.'

Esteban, a 58 year-old surgeon, married and with two children. He was born in Ciudad Juárez, and remembered when it was a quiet town. He used to enjoy living in Juárez with his family. Esteban had a private practice for more than 25 years and lived a cross-border life between Ciudad Juárez and El Paso. When his children were born, in 2010, in El Paso, and because he was a US citizen, his family dynamics changed. In August of 2010, Esteban was kidnapped; when he was leaving his office a group of organised criminals approached him and at gunpoint he was abducted. Two days later the kidnappers contacted his family and asked for ransom, which was paid and he was released. At that moment he and his family moved to El Paso. When we interviewed him he said they did not intend to go back until things change in Juárez; they felt safe in El Paso.

'Violence ended my life in Juárez.'

42 year-old Carla was divorced and had two sons; they had lived in El Paso, Texas since 2009. Carla arrived to Juárez when she was a teenager; she started working in maquiladora industry, as a production operator. After marrying and becoming a mother, she started to get interested in helping solve some of Juárez social problems and fought for the protection of human rights. In 2008 when violence and criminal rates increased, Carla began to receive calls from criminals, threatening to kill her if she kept publicly demanding protection for vulnerable groups. In 2009 Carla was kidnapped and, after her release, she and her children asked the US government for political asylum. After a lengthy procedure asylum was granted (2011). Carla remained hopeful that the social environment in Juárez will change so she could return.

'We only came here searching for life.'

Samuel was 39, married and with three children, who was living in Valle de Juárez when he applied to the US for political asylum. When the Mexican army was posted in his town, public insecurity and violation of human rights rose and he considered his life was in danger. Samuel owned a small business and organised criminal groups began

to harass him; several members of his family were killed and his business was set on fire. In 2011, Samuel and his children asked for asylum, which was later granted. Samuel mentioned his only option to stay alive was moving to El Paso, Texas.

As these examples highlight, a key factor that caused the displacement to El Paso was the perception of insecurity in Juárez. Despite the proximity of these two cities, the differences in terms of security context are enormous. While in Ciudad Juárez, 3794 homicides were registered in 2010; El Paso, Texas was considered the second safest city in the US – according to CQ Press – with only 3 malicious killings that same year.¹⁵

The cases of Esteban, Carla and Samuel could be considered forced displacements because the reasons of their displacements are included in the 1984 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees prepared by the UN High Commissioner.¹⁶ This document includes people who have fled from home because their lives, safety and or freedom have been threatened by generalised violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violence of human rights or other circumstances that seriously disturb public order.

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*‘There is no doubt the economic situation was
what most affected us.’*

Miguel, 24 years old and single. He moved from Juárez in 2010 and was living in Minatitlán, Veracruz when we interviewed him. Miguel came to Ciudad Juárez in 2001 along with his parents; some of his relatives already lived there. When he got to Juárez, Miguel began high school and his parents were hired by one of the maquilas. When he turned 18 he also worked at the maquilas. However, in 2009 when the economic crisis started affecting the maquiladora industry, his contract was changed to part time with no food or transportation benefits. He quit as his parents went through the same situation. This drove them to go back to Minatitlan. In this case, despite the fact that this family was aware of the city’s violence, Miguel mentioned that it was not the reason they moved. He added ‘violence is something you get used to and it becomes part of your everyday life, however, being unemployed is something that takes out your hopes and confidence to keep on living.’

'Veracruz without borders the only opportunity to return.'

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Luis Flores, 43, former businessman, married with two children. He and his family lived in Juárez for 11 years; in 2010 they went back to Xalapa, Veracruz. Luis had landed a job three days after he arrived to Juárez. After gaining some experience he opened an import company, which provided him enough income to enjoy a better life than if he had stayed in Xalapa. However, in 2007 the economy faltered and he was forced to close his business and sell his possessions to pay debts. Despite being unemployed, Luis did not want to leave Juárez, he hoped things might get better. As time went by and the situation did not improve, he got to know a programme run by the government of Veracruz – Veracruz without Borders – with the purpose of “rescuing” people from Veracruz from the narco-violence that was unfolding. The programme offered those who wanted to go back charter plane tickets and support to reintegrate to Veracruz. It was then that Luis and his family decided to return. They were not direct victims of organised crime and did not feel at risk and still they chose to go back and try their luck again.

'If we are going to die of hunger, we better go back to our land.'

Elisa, 28, lived in Coatzacoalcos, Veracruz. She and her husband decided to go back to Veracruz in 2010 after having spent 11 years in Juárez. Elisa moved to Ciudad Juárez in 1999; her cousins encouraged her to move to Northern Mexico. As soon as she arrived, she began working in a maquiladora plant, where she met her (former) husband, got married and had a child. She mentioned that public insecurity made them change their lifestyle—they stopped going out at night; changed the routes they took to go to work, and even had to reinforce the security of their house by installing more fences. However, this was never the reason for them to leave Ciudad Juárez. What most affected them was the economic crisis. Elisa and her husband lost their jobs, sold their property and returned to Veracruz, where they have faced challenges to assimilate to the social environment and finding employment.

Based on these testimonials, we identify reasons why some people decided to leave Ciudad Juárez. Those who moved to El Paso cited security reasons, since some of were victims of organised crime and their choice was move to survive. In these cases, we may be talking of forced displacement, the UN High Commission on Refugees defines a displaced person as one who has abandoned his home because his

life is in danger, either because of situations of violence, religious or natural disasters, and cannot return while the cause of the departure has not disappeared.¹⁷ Alternatively, those respondents who decided to return to Veracruz did so, mostly, for economic reasons. As they lost their jobs and the economy did not seem to be improving, they found themselves in an uncertain situation and decided to return to their place of origin—a city they knew.

*Rodolfo
Cruz-Piñero*

*María
Inés Barrios
de la O*

Conclusions

Ciudad Juárez has gone through a series of recent events that have negatively impacted its social and economic context. Over the past 15 years, emigration grew exponentially. From 1995 to 2010, the displacement of people went from 3,475 to 114,324, representing an increase of more than 3,000%. We found that unemployment and public insecurity were the main factors that changed the dynamics of the migratory process, generating new trends, meaning a decrease of immigration and an increase of emigration. Unemployment has explained most of the increase in emigration, but public insecurity, measured by the number of homicides, was also a cause.

Based on the results of the interviews that we conducted we could identify new trends of the migration flows in Ciudad Juárez, such as forced displacements, which were not part of the traditional migratory dynamics of the city. In this context, it is important to emphasize the factors that are contributing to the displacement of people. One of the new factors driving the movement of people in Mexico is the increase in violence and public insecurity. In this sense, the Mexican government has an obligation to recognise that there is a problem of violence and recognise people affected as forced displaced. Finally, in the context of Ciudad Juarez, creating a security policy to ensure the life of the people it is necessary, but a policy of economic and social development that prevents people fleeing the city for fear too, is necessary to livelihoods and also by economic factors such as the lack of employment.



RODOLFO CRUZ-PIÑERO is Professor-Researcher at El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, Mexico, and can be reached at rcruz@colef.mx

MARÍA INÉS BARRIOS DE LA O can be reached at info@cejiss.org

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On Border and On Murder

The Juárez Femi(ni)cides

Tereza Jiroutová Kynčlová

Using the critical methods of postcolonial studies and various feminist theories, this study investigates the Juárez femi(ni)cides and argues that they are not only heinous crimes but the result of a socio-economic system of structural inequalities around cultural and social constructions of class, race, gender and citizenship in the us-Mexico border. The Juárez events are an example of large-scale, brutal violence against women; at the same time, they point to the globalising processes that amplify the androcentric instrumentalisation of women's bodies under capitalism and (post)colonialism. My analysis of these intersecting categories is framed by Gloria Anzaldúa's conceptualisation of the us-Mexico border.

Keywords: us-Mexico border, femicides/feminicides, gender, androcentrism, maquiladoras, Ciudad Juárez

Introduction: Approaching the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands

As many cultural critics have shown, American identity relies heavily on the idea of an expanding Western frontier which marks the progress of American society and its civilising mission, a view that corresponds with Western notions of colonialism and capitalism.¹ American national myths such as the one of Western expansion, as (re)interpreted in both Frederick Turner's Turner Thesis and the 'regeneration through violence' construed by Richard Slotkin, show that American thought and identity historically rely on the concept of the border.² Thus, the U.S.-Mexico border is understood as a margin that geographically and symbolically outlines the United States. At the same time, this border has long posed a security issue for the U.S. government since it is 'both



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barrier and bridge to many transnational flows, including trade, migrants, and narcotics.³ According to Corona and Domínguez-Ruvalcaba, there is a correlation between economic transformation or crisis in the borderland region and the increased incidence of recorded violent acts.⁴ U.S.-Mexico borderland violence, then, is linked to forces such as swelling cross-border migration and measures that target undocumented workers including extensive militarisation and wall-building as well as the booming *maquiladora* factory system that is managed by multinational corporations using cheap Mexican and migrant labour. Moreover, the current radicalisation of drug cartels and organised crime also contributes to an image of the border, widely circulating in the media, as a violent and dangerous place and its function as a topographic metaphor for various kinds of illegality, lawlessness and impunity.⁵

*On Border
and
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Anzaldúa's La Frontera

In her now canonical yet paradigm-subverting masterpiece, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, Gloria Anzaldúa, a leading figure in Chicana literature and feminist activism describes the U.S.-Mexico border as a '1,950 mile long open wound,' a 'thin edge of barbed wire' and even more figuratively as '*una herida abierta* where the Third World grates against the first and bleeds.'⁶ A native of the U.S.-Mexico borderlands in south Texas, Anzaldúa reconceptualises the border beyond the role attributed to the dividing line in traditional geographical and geopolitical assumptions.⁷ Instead, the border, she claims, is an agent that informs the re/deconstruction of one's self and has to do with the historical and cultural legacies of colonialism and various types of oppression based on class membership, racial background, gender identity and other ascribed social categorisations. Thus, the border in Anzaldúan thought operates as a metaphor for a process of differentiation which is inherent to Western thought and typified by hierarchical binary oppositions that may – as feminist and postcolonial inquiries have successfully demonstrated – provide grounds for oppressive and discriminatory practices.

The frequent citation of the quotes from Anzaldúa listed above – along with increasingly common references to her work in disciplines such as political science, migration studies, political geography, sociol-

ogy, psychology and criminology, which lie outside its original scope⁸ – testify to the enduring challenge that the U.S.-Mexico border poses to both American and Mexican societies and cultures and the countries' interrelations. Anzaldúa's contribution does not consist solely, however, of her literary portrayal of the hybrid identities that are negotiated along the Rio Grande/Río Bravo border⁹; it can also be found in the oppositional terminology and methodology she developed in *Borderlands/La Frontera*, a work which has proven instrumental for intersectional research into the complexities and ambivalences of the U.S.-Mexico border region.

In the Western conception, the border serves as an instrument for controlling geographical or spatial territories at a material level. At the same time, it informs epistemic categories at a social and/or ideological level.¹⁰ The concept, thus, embodies the Western desire for constancy, fixed boundaries (of, for example, states or empires and the established social order) and uncontaminated categories (of personal identity) while also pointing to the symbolic violence that permeates such fixity and stability.¹¹ In contrast, Anzaldúa offers a radical deconstruction of these rigid views of the border, remaking it as a concept which is used not to divide but to create. As much as the border is believed to manage the inside and the volume or contents of the entity it should maintain, it simultaneously suggests its own productive potential; it creates that entity's Other, and thus, shows us that the idea that control is exerted over – or by – a boundary is essentially a myth. Therefore, the border region is, according to Anzaldúa, 'in a constant state of transition' and 'a vague and undetermined place' inhabited by borderland subjects who defy the desired neat and clear-cut confines of the normal.¹² Further, borders, whose productive qualities result in heterogeneity, hybridity, fluidity and ambiguity, are heavily laden with the emotional investments made by these subjects. Such borders are never a natural occurrence but a construct that is permanently under negotiation and often violently disputed.

Anzaldúa's references to physical pain and bleeding wounds can be read as a literary rendering of the mourning performed by the *mestiza*, i.e. the woman of multiracial identity and bicultural background who now straddles Mexican and American cultures and reflects on the arbitrarily drawn interstate borderline. Such a woman is a symbol of Mexico's ceding of its northern territories and their then inhabitants to the United States following the U.S.-Mexico War in 1848. In the Chicanos/as, the offspring of these annexed Mexicans, these experi-

ences trigger a sense of uprootedness and a lost home and the onset of cultural, racial and linguistic discrimination.¹³ Anzaldúa's view of the U.S.-Mexico border as a source of the injurious Othering practices faced by Chicanos/as also powerfully subverts one of the cultural fundamentals of American national identity, namely the myth of the shifting Western frontier as the limit of the country's successful settlement of the continent.¹⁴ In other words, unlike the dominant and privileged white American society that may subscribe to a national narrative of expansion as a completed civilising mission, indigenous and mestizo/a communities resist and problematise similar discourses as not only traumatising and dehumanising but most critically Western and/or Eurocentric.¹⁵ Furthermore, as I have suggested, since borders not only define the self but mark that self's Other, the shift in the U.S.-Mexico border in 1848 can be seen as presenting a challenge to the 19th-century notion of American-ness since Mexico had long served as America's opposite. Now, paradoxically, part of Mexico was integrated within the United States. These examples of subversive reinterpretations of the U.S.-Mexico border attest to the complex, multifaceted and distinctively heterogeneous character of the region.

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Annihilation in Juárez

While the previous sections have dealt with the analysis of metaphorical wounds and their representation in an exemplary Chicana narrative, in what follows I wish to turn to the raw reality of the contemporary U.S.-Mexico border and particularly the femi(ni)cidal violence faced by mestizas employed in *maquiladoras*, i.e. the large assembly facilities in the export-processing industries in the Ciudad Juárez area.¹⁶ As a matter of fact, Anzaldúa's imagery also speaks to the gross disparity in the economic and social conditions along the dividing line, a reality that triggers violence based on gender, class and race as well as migrant background or non-citizenship and contributes hugely to the physical and economic exploitation of Mexican and Latina women within the context of androcentric and postcolonial societies. Anzaldúa's figurative language demonstrates the author's awareness of the fact that on the south side of the U.S.-Mexico border, there is – literally – human blood being spilled.¹⁷

Towards the end of the millennium, Ciudad Juárez – the Mexican twin to the U.S. border city of El Paso, Texas – became infamous as the site of the 'longest epidemic of femicidal violence in modern history.'¹⁸

It is estimated that between 1993 and mid-2010, hundreds of women were brutally murdered in the area. The body count varies vastly depending on the source, however it is guessed that somewhere between 300 and as many as 800 women were found dead in Ciudad Juárez or the vicinity.¹⁹ Besides the enormous number of women slain, what made the murders unprecedented were the abhorrent ways in which the killings were carried out and the places where the victims' corpses were later discovered. No less significant is the context in which these femicides have continued to take place. Dynamic factors such as mass industrialisation, globalisation, the gendered stratification of the labour market, precarious work, lack of infrastructure, enormous inequalities between the areas to the north and south of the U.S.-Mexico border, an androcentric social system dictating strict gender roles and Mexican states' failure to promote safety on the streets and in production facilities contribute to neoliberal ideas about the worth of a human being.²⁰ Put more explicitly, the idea that female bodies are disposable under capitalism and androcentrism in Mexico sets women on what Wright calls 'the road to waste.'²¹ The U.S.-Mexico border can, thus, be seen as 'the space where the fluctuating booms and downturns of the global, regional, formal, and underground economies and markets have a direct impact on such fundamental issues as the preservation and reproduction of human life.'²²

The Question of (Un)Representability

Before I proceed further with the discussion of the Juárez murders, as these women's deaths came to be known, I wish to digress for a moment, or rather, to pause. This pause is meant to draw attention to the issue of the (un)representability of the deaths of the femicidal victims and of the horrors they endured. The danger of discussing violent deaths, elevated in the case of gruesome deaths by murder, lies in the potential for reproducing pain and anguish. The unspeakable violence directed at the dead Juárez women prior to their decease resists representation; this unspeakability relates to both the form and content of the violence and the failure of language to treat the women's agony fairly. In this regard, death is unrepresentable for, as Kenneth Burke observes, no one 'can write of death from an immediate experience of it, the imaging of death necessarily involves images not directly belonging to it...[It lies] beyond the realm of such images as

the living body knows.²³ In other words, every representation of death is always a misrepresentation.²⁴ And yet, the single item that actually *does represent* the murdered women is their demise. Paradoxically, as Gaspar de Alba notes, ‘the main signifier of [the dead women’s] lives is a corpse half-buried in a sand dune.’²⁵ Or, as Agosín puts it in a poem: ‘All we know about them / is their death.’²⁶ Thus, death in the case of the Juárez femicides is represented and simultaneously escapes representation. It poses a challenge to our systems of meaning-making, order, governance, culture and civilisation.²⁷ Goodwin and Bronfen eloquently explain the dilemma around death’s representation:

Representation presupposes an original presence, and in the case of death that is clearly paradoxical. In any representation of death, it is strikingly an absence that is at stake, so that the presentation is itself at a remove from what is figured. This is not just to claim that any representation of death in fact targets something else – the terms in which it chooses to make itself known – though no doubt some would argue just that. Any representational discourse implies the muteness, absence, nonbeing – in short, the death – of the object it seeks to designate. Death, as the real process of division, can perhaps best be expressed through figures of liminality, figures that expressly signify allegorically and thus speak the nonsignifiable ‘Other’ through negation or displacement. As Jacques Derrida argues, ‘All graphemes are of a testamentary essence. And the original absence of the subject of writing is also the absence of the thing or the referent.’ The text is substituted for the body, the material object of its reference: ‘The letter killeth.’²⁸

Attempts to represent someone’s death are inevitably linked to ethics. Since one cannot represent one’s own death, the task is always left to others and points at the very limit of (mis)representation. How does one duly and adequately represent a person’s death without replicating the violence symbolically? How does one avoid the pitfalls of misrepresentation when misrepresentation, as Goodwin and Bronfen argue, is the only option? Also, whose interests are being served through such an act of mis/representation? Should the unspeakability of Juárez murder victims’ torment prevent us from speaking?

Acceding to feminist epistemologies and methodologies that promote a self-reflexive research approach based on the critical assessment of one’s epistemic position and tacit assumptions, or what is re-

ferred to as the politics of location,²⁹ I understand that my work here may be deemed problematic in several respects. For one thing, I may face an attack similar to the one leveled at activists from both Mexico and the United States who are pressing for a thorough investigation of this crime wave: this is the potential accusation that I am making (part of) my (academic) career “off dead women’s bodies.” In fact, this is a risk run by all the authors on whose work I base this study although none of them reflects openly on this ethical ambiguity. I also note the specificity of my position in terms of racial, linguistic, cultural and topographical background and the fact that it does not match the backgrounds of either the U.S-Mexico borderlands-based academics/activists researching the Juárez murders or the women killed.

Subscribing to Spivak’s critique of an epistemic determinism and essentialism which frequently hinder a person’s ability to speak and represent, I have made all attempts to complete what this postcolonial, Indian-born thinker calls ‘homework,’³⁰ i.e. I have read and researched widely on the U.S. borderlands over the past decade, travelled repeatedly to the region, and finally, consulted all resources on the Juárez killings available to me. In other words, I believe, I have earned ‘the right to speak’³¹ since silence generated by the fear of unintentional misrepresentation not only censors one’s thoughts, but most importantly, avoids and erases histories of oppression that must be remembered and preserved as a critical forewarning of humanity’s failures.³² Thus, the current study authored by a European scholar functions to raise awareness of the Juárez murders beyond the “domestic” region of the United States, Mexico and Central America since there exist very few articles on the topic written by European academics.³³

Femi(ni)cides and the Borderlands

The poststructuralist approach teaches us that language produces reality and does not just reflect it. Yet, as I have already suggested, language also fails to represent liminal events such as violence, terror and death in their complexity and scope. In such cases, language misrepresents. And so does silence. The heinous crimes in Juárez most often target poor, dark-skinned and petite female workers, many of whom are migrants from southern Mexican states or other Central American countries.³⁴ The appearance of their bodies after death is rarely conveyed in explicit language in academic research. This may be for reli-

gious reasons or due to the fact that a sketchy portrayal may provoke even more horror than a detailed rendering. These considerations are not, however, discussed in the resources.

Notwithstanding the problems of mis/representing and reproducing violence, Rosa Linda Fregoso breaks the ice and proceeds to illustrate the unparalleled savagery of the femicides. The victims, she writes, were ‘tortured and sexually violated: raped, strangled or gagged, mutilated, with nipples and breasts cut off, buttocks lacerated like cattle, or penetrated with objects. Some bodies are beyond recognition, so disfigured and decomposed, no one can identify them nor claim them.’³⁵ Their defaced bodies were dumped in landfills or deserted lots around Ciudad Juárez; others were abandoned in cars, tanks of acid or trash dumpsters, left at major traffic intersections or dragged under shrubs and thistles in the desert.³⁶ Such explicit images may prompt conflicting reactions ranging from “Where has respect for the deceased women and their families gone?” to “This clearly shows the killings are more than just murders.’

Indeed, to this second point, I would add that these are examples of ‘gender extermination,’³⁷ a phenomenon that may seem random and accidental, but in reality is woven into a web of systematic and systemic patterns of abuse of and violence targeting women. The Juárez murders are an extreme example of the devaluation of femininity in a globalised capitalist society built on androcentric values and patriarchal institutions that normalise and perpetuate gender-based violence. The proximity of the U.S-Mexico border functions in this regard as a key (f)actor in the Juárez femicides; the border constitutes a ‘denationalized’³⁸ space that is meant to facilitate the integration of, and co-operation between, the Mexican and U.S. economies. With its vague rules and dwindling laws of conduct, the region is characterised by a unique combination of cross-border activities not found elsewhere: illicit trade, contraband smuggling, human trafficking, drug cartel operations, sex tourism; this is, in general, the clandestine economy that is engendered by the U.S. police and military presence.³⁹ As Chew Sánchez argues, the Mexican side of the border has been turned into an almost lawless zone in order to promote the smooth operation of the maquiladora industry; as such, it has produced a situation of ‘illegal and legal interdependence that has limited the Mexican state’s capacity to guarantee the rights of its citizens.’⁴⁰ The same can be said for the rights of non-nationals, migrants and – especially –women.

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Kynčlová*

Conditions of impunity and illegality at the U.S.-Mexico border, thus, create an environment in which poor, young, racialised women, many of whom are migrants stripped of family support and rights, can be disposed of easily.

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The severity of the torture preceding death in the Juárez femicides defies the idea that they were simply personal attacks. Rather, it points to misogyny and the dehumanisation of women on a symbolic level and the state's failure to warrant their safety on a practical level. In Monárrez Fragoso's words, femicide is deeply rooted in an androcentrism that 'predisposes, to a greater or lesser degree, that women be murdered. Be it for the simple act of being women, or for not being one "adequately."'41 According to Diana Russell, who helped establish "femicide" as an analytic category back in the 1970s, these are 'murder[s] of women and girls *because* they are female.'⁴² Traditional and persistent terms like "manslaughter," "homicide" and "murder" obscure the power structures within a society that shapes and constructs women's vulnerability to a kind of violence which is specifically based on their gender identity. The specificity does not lie in the violence as such – violence is common in crimes against both men and women – but rather in the fact that in an assault, women, unlike men, experience a *submission* to masculine violence. Fregoso and Bejarano elaborate on the intricacies here:

[U]nlike most cases of women's murders, men are not killed because they are men or as a result of their vulnerability as members of a subordinate gender; nor are men subjected to gender-specific forms of degradation and violation, such as rape, sexual torture, prior to their murder. Such gender differences in the experience of violence suggest the need for an alternative analytic concept, such as feminicide, for mapping the hierarchies embedded in gender-based violence.⁴³

These authors, thus, expand the form and content of "femicide" and introduce another term, "feminicide," which discursively reflects the Spanish-speaking milieu and is therefore more broadly applicable to local circumstances.⁴⁴ Feminicide, then, comes to signify a murder of women and girls based on a gendered power structure as well as an act of gender-based violence that is both 'public and private, implicating both the state (directly or indirectly) and individual perpetrators (private or state actors); it thus encompasses systematic, widespread, and everyday interpersonal violence.'⁴⁵ Ultimately, feminicide is also

viewed as a 'crime against humanity.'⁴⁶ Fregoso and Bejarano, thus, basically perceive femicide as a phenomenon with cultural roots which is at least partially institutionalised.

Unlike Monárrez Fragoso or Russell, who situate femicide mainly within the strictures of the patriarchy, Fregoso and Bejarano agree on a broader notion of femicide which allows for comprehensive assessment of the contextual factors that contribute to the incidence of women's killings while remaining cognizant of gendered power relations. In a similar spirit, Schmidt Camacho and Arriola warn against a simplistic perception of the Juárez feminicides as acts of regressive masculine aggression. Rather, they call for an examination of the connection between gender-motivated violence and changes in the social cohesion of Juárez due to heavy and rapid industrialisation, as well as for an analysis of the contradictions arising from codes of neoliberal governance and development, which also have a gendered dimension.⁴⁷ Globalisation contributes to the destabilising of nation states in general,⁴⁸ and in concrete terms, it has prompted the Mexican government to adopt neoliberal measures regarding the maquiladora boom. As I explain below, marginalised Mexican and migrant women have consequently become a massive class of disenfranchised non-citizens whose bodies are constantly under social as well as corporate control as they are commodified and literally consumed by the maquiladora assembly line.

*On Border
and
On Murder*

The Assembly Lines Disassembling Ciudad Juárez

Various forms of gendered violence are intrinsic to wars as well as to nation formation, social transformation, economic transition and capitalist development.⁴⁹ As many authors have contended, the effects of the 1993 ratification of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) gradually turned Ciudad Juárez into a major hub for transnational trade and a centre for U.S.-owned corporations.⁵⁰ These companies built maquiladoras, which eventually employed thousands of young women from poor and working class backgrounds. Currently, there are between 2,200 and 3,107 maquiladoras throughout Mexico, and they employ at least 550,000 and perhaps as many as 1.3 million workers. It is estimated that between 275 and 400 (and possibly even 500) of these assembly facilities are located in Juárez, giving jobs to between 173,000 and 250,000 workers.⁵¹ According to Wright, the ratio

of men and women currently employed by the maquiladoras is about 50:50. Nevertheless, women perform more than 70% of the low-wage, labour-intensive operations on assembly lines while men occupy salaried supervisory, managerial and technical positions.⁵²

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The concurrence of NAFTA's ratification and the discovery of the first murdered women suggests a link between the murders and an increase in women's vulnerability owing to the restructuring of the labour market and the state's lack of control over – or 'fatal indifference' to – transnational corporations' treatment of the labour force.⁵³ As Frego and Bejarano point out, between 1985 and 1992, 37 women were killed violently in Ciudad Juárez, while in the subsequent seven years between 1993 and 2001, local women's rights groups recorded a 700% increase in feminicides, i.e. as many as 269 of these killings.⁵⁴

NAFTA was not, however, the first significant business- and industrialisation-oriented development to vastly transform the economic and social landscape of the borderlands and simultaneously incite shifts in established gender norms. The year 1964 saw the end of the Bracero Program, which since the early 1940s had provided jobs to Mexican nationals – predominantly men – in the U.S. agricultural sector, thus safeguarding cheap labour for American farmers. The termination of the programme caused high unemployment and subsequent social problems along the border. Moreover, the United States tightened its immigration policies. The situation became particularly acute in Ciudad Juárez to which many now jobless Mexican workers migrated or returned. The problem also underscored a historical disregard for – and marginalisation of – the borderland region and *fronterizo* culture within the Mexican nation. Perceived as being too removed from the centre and normative Mexican traditions yet too close to the economic hegemony of the U.S. (despite being part of Mexican territory before 1848),⁵⁵ Juárez still finds itself in this uncomfortable liminal space: it is located on the border between two nations and simultaneously at the margins.

The solution to massive unemployment was thought to lie in the development-centred Border Industrialisation Programme which the Mexican government introduced in 1965 leading to the mushrooming of maquiladoras across the northern border region. As a result, the north of the country was soon looked to as a model of modernisation to be spread throughout Mexico. Ironically, however, unemployment rates did not lower significantly because the Program attracted not just ex-Bracero workers but also people from inland Mexico; the region's

population, thus, grew rapidly. Volk and Schlotterbeck note that the number of jobs in Juárez's assembly plants rose from 3,175 in 1970 to 249,509 in 2000 while the population of the city increased threefold to 1.2 million.⁵⁶ In addition, the employment strategies of the maquiladoras' foreign managers defied the tacit assumption of the Border Industrialisation Programme that men should be the newly employed labour force. Instead, the factories hired women en masse since they were seen as ideal workers for the assembly lines: besides being substantially cheaper than men, they were said to be docile, easily controlled, undemanding, nimble-fingered, lacking in union experience and disposable when production cuts became necessary since their primary role was that of a homemaker, wife and mother and not career-maker.⁵⁷

As men were left jobless and their primary patriarchal role of breadwinner was usurped through the gendered transformation of the labour market, women – though continuing to work “second shifts” at home to attend to their families – experienced their first moments of at least partial financial independence. At the same time, “women’s labour on the global assembly line” became a standard phrase in a nationalist rhetoric that charged them with responsibility for ushering Mexico into modernity. By 1982, the year of the Mexican debt crisis, women made up 80% of all maquiladora employees and the city, according to the president of Asociación de Maquiladoras de Ciudad Juárez, ‘had become a matriarchy.’⁵⁸ The situation, of course, critically challenged existing androcentric structures and generated resentment and anger in men, which conversely made women more vulnerable members of the socially and economically strained Juárez community. Put differently, as Volk and Schlotterbeck tell it, ‘maquiladora industrialization ultimately created a gendered and racialised political economy and shaped the city’s geography in ways that facilitated, absorbed, and, perhaps, promoted femicide.’⁵⁹ Radical economic changes after NAFTA, thus, picked up the threads of the industrialisation and modernisation processes that had long torn at Juárez’s social fabric; their results included gender, class and racial inequalities as well as growing economic disparities caused by the Mexican government’s inadequate regulation of tariffs on maquiladoras and the corporations’ failure to implement work safety measures and other regulations against labour rights violations.

If the maquiladoras’ employment of women in place of men strongly shook the pillars of patriarchal norms – and it must be repeated that women’s employment peaked in the early 1980s, as implied above, and

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not subsequent to NAFTA – then these maquiladora had a similarly profound impact on the urban layout. The extensive growth of assembly plants produced socially excluded areas, or shanty towns, where poor maquiladora employees continue to live with little basic infrastructure such as running water, electricity, health care, schools and available public transport.⁶⁰ Lengthy early- and late-hour bus commutes make these female workers especially vulnerable to attacks. The public sphere in the marginalised Juárez *colonías* is, thus, dangerous for women. And this is also true of the maquiladoras. Even putting aside the fact that some of the contracted drivers of maquila-provided commuter buses have previously been charged with sexual assaults and/or rape (and thus, are thought to be possible perpetrators of the Juárez femicides), in workplaces with limited safety precautions, women are regularly subjected to urine tests to screen out pregnant workers.⁶¹ Furthermore, within the labour hierarchy, women are, as I have suggested, relegated to inferior positions to male workers in terms of decision-making and management, and this enables widespread sexual harassment. Since female employees are well aware of their replaceability, their need for a job prevents them from protesting these advances or reporting this behaviour.⁶² In effect, women's working bodies and their functions are constantly threatened, monitored and observed and, thus, reduced symbolically to sexual(ised) objects. The most extreme case of this – outside of pregnancy checks – is seen in regular employer-sponsored beauty pageants. The industry perpetuates stereotypical versions of femininity and is responsible for the sexualisation of factory life, which inevitably has bearing on the sexualisation of life beyond the maquiladora walls and fences.⁶³

Discourses of Blame and Victimisation

These actions that sexualise and fetishise women's bodies need to be seen within the context of Juárez's historical notoriety as a city where inexpensive sex, drugs and leisure were easily available to U.S. soldiers, international tourists and working-class migrants.⁶⁴ Working and wage-earning women who have become vital consumers of the city's entertainment and nightlife and who socialise outside their homes while spending their own money subvert yet another patriarchal notion – that of a domesticated femininity which has no place in the public sphere. The streets, restaurants, bars, discos and cafés are seen

as off-limits to virtuous Mexican women since these spaces are associated with frivolity, promiscuity and risk. Nor, however, is the home a safe space for women because, as Fregoso notes, traditional cultural values support the idea of 'masculine authority and ownership' over the lives of women and therefore domestic violence may function as 'a mechanism of punishment or control.'⁶⁵ Still, the limits of this control must be negotiated once women secure their own financial income (no matter how low) and they venture into the public domain.

Against this backdrop, the initial androcentric backlash in Juárez established a unique image of female factory workers: their sexuality and maquiladora labour were merged together and used to explain (or worse, to justify) the femicides. This discourse noted the pre-NAFTA maquiladora developments' failure to alleviate men's unemployment and promote Mexico's modernisation, which had been contested by the 1982 debt crisis; it also cited the non-fulfilment of the post-NAFTA promise of economic prosperity for which the female labourers were blamed. The result was that women began to be seen as the cause of Juárez's problems rather than another exploited group under booming capitalism. Because of women, it was said, men were absent from the maquilas; because of them, the social and gender fabric had changed; and because of them, Mexico was struggling with its development projects.⁶⁶ The discourse of women-blaming was in place and gaining increasing momentum.

As both Fregoso and Wright observe, the Mexican government and Juárez's official representatives failed dismally to respond to the brutal femicides.⁶⁷ To explain this neglect and failure, the authorities employed a twofold rhetorical strategy: first, they denied the systematic nature of the murders. And then, when more and more mutilated corpses were uncovered and this approach had become untenable, they resorted to the discourse of *la doble vida* (the double life) drawn from an androcentric fusing of women's sexuality and their maquiladora labour as breaches of established gender norms. In other words, the state blamed the femicidal victims for 'manufacturing their own deaths'⁶⁸ by accusing them of having lived non-normative lives, transgressed gender norms and/or had double lives, i.e. having engaged in maquila work by day and sex work by night (as though these would ever be reasons justifying someone's murder).

This secondary victimisation clearly drew on a symbolic level on the cultural construct of the women dutifully wedded to her home and

family and not to the public domain, even for job reasons. By extension, it also blamed women who had entered the workforce for the disintegration of the Mexican family and the weakening of male authority. As Fregoso emphasises, the subject created through *la doble vida* discourse was an immoral one and the state's preoccupation with women's morality was actually a 'form of institutionalized violence, that makes women responsible for the violence directed against them. [...] What's more, shifting the blame toward the victims' moral character in effect naturalizes violence against women.'⁶⁹

The second rhetorical strategy followed the appalling discovery of the bodies of eight women in a lot adjacent to the Maquiladora Association's headquarters in 2001. Before this event, police and state investigations of femicide had come under question from numerous NGOs as well as the public⁷⁰ since only a handful of the putative perpetrators had been arrested and only one, the Egyptian chemist Abdel Latif Sharif Sharif, had been jailed.⁷¹ The new discourse of disaggregation, as Fregoso has called it, reformulated the femicides as discrete, unrelated cases and employed statistics and other scientific means to gain authority and divert attention away from the impunity. This strategy at once divorced the feminicides from the broader context of the city's social and economic issues and isolated them from the systemic phenomenon of violence against women based on unexamined local complexities. In effect, it emphasised the 'universal aspects of the crimes as a "common" occurrence in any major city,'⁷² and so insisted on the normality of the Juárez killings. Thus, the *la doble vida* and the disaggregation discourses not only naturalised and normalised violence against women, but reinforced the impunity and other factors that reproduce it. At the same time, they absolved state institutions of any responsibility.

Conclusion: Violence as a Norm and Female Worthlessness – the Juárez Holocaust

The systematic neglect, devaluation, sexualisation, objectification and dehumanisation of female workers within a patriarchal society and inside capitalist corporations go hand in hand with systemic resistance to addressing economic exploitation, safety breaches and all forms of inequality and discrimination. In Juárez, the consequence has been the fragmentation of a community and the destabilising of a society in the borderland region. Faced as we are with institutions which through

their (in)actions are *de facto* institutionalising and authorising certain forms of violence as the norm and so underlining the worthlessness of a social group which is *already* coded by a feature of its identity (e.g. disposability on the labour market, race or gender), we cannot help harkening back – and here let me make a bold comparison – to the mechanisms that have enabled human holocausts.

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Bauman makes the apt point that dehumanisation in its crudest form is now associated with photographs of concentration camp inmates whose very existence is reduced to the most basic level of survival; they have been denied all the symbols of human dignity and especially an identifiable human likeness. Further, he shows how the bureaucratic transformation of humans into objects or sets of quantitative measures deprives people of their distinctiveness and subjectivity.⁷³

The defacement of the femicidal victims' bodies has, as we have seen, a hellish or otherworldly quality and demonstrates that before their deaths, the assaulted women were deprived of dignity and disposed of like things, or as Wright puts it astutely, like waste.⁷⁴ Outside of their "killability," they were worthless just as previously – because of their replaceability – they had been disposable on the capitalist assembly line. This worthlessness is not radically different from the worthlessness ascribed to extermination camp prisoners. The androcentric Othering of women, especially of racialised women, and the victim-blaming discourses that normalise such violence have, as Wright again shows, the same myth-like quality:

[D]iscourses that have been commonly told by political and business elites in Ciudad Juárez to minimize the significance of [the] crime wave [...] repeat a story of how third world women are propelled by cultural and sexual forces toward a condition of waste. Therefore, when women workers are determined to be worthless or when women's corpses are dumped like trash in the desert, these discourses explain how, given these women's 'intrinsic worthlessness,' such events are both natural and unavoidable. [T]hese discourses work into each other to create a powerful mythic figure of a wasting third world woman whose essential properties are said to be found within real women who work in global factories and who experience all sorts of violence, for which they are held accountable.⁷⁵

It, thus, seems that the deaths of the Juárez femicide victims are not worth grieving – to draw a parallel with Judith Butler's argument in *Frames of War*⁷⁶ – and they merely serve as instruments of a social

control that is generated by fear. Their dehumanisation is, as I have highlighted, the result of multiple effects of androcentrism, globalisation and state failure. The Juárez murders are not just ghastly crimes on a massive scale. They are a result of a socio-economic system of structural inequalities related to cultural and social background, class, race, gender and citizenship which are all significantly affected by globalising processes and the androcentric – or misogynist – organisation of both American and Mexican societies. Due to the institutionalised character of gendered violence in Juárez, I view the femicides as a micro-level holocaust. As such, the femicides and their discursive and cultural framings should not only be perceived as threats to social cohesion on the U.S.-Mexico border, but as major threats to all of humanity.



TEREZA JIROUTOVÁ KYNČLOVÁ is affiliated to Charles University and Metropolitan University Prague and may be reached at: tereza.kynclova@mup.cz

Notes

- 1 See, for example, Frederick Turner [1893] (1921), *The Frontier in American History*, New York: Henry Holt; Richard Slotkin [1973] (2000), *Regeneration through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier 1600-1860*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press; Deborah Madsen (2010), 'The West and Manifest Destiny,' in John Carlos Rowe, (ed.) (2010), *A Concise Companion to American Studies*, Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, pp.369-386; Elizabeth Furniss (1998), 'Pioneers, Progress and the Myth of the Frontier: The Landscape of Public History in Rural British Columbia,' *BC Studies* 115-116, pp.7-44; Andrea Tinnemeyer (1999), 'Why Border Matters to American Studies,' *American Quarterly* 51 (2), pp.472-478.
- 2 Turner [1893] (1921); Slotkin [1973] (2000).
- 3 Jason Ackleson (2005), 'Constructing Security on the U.S.-Mexico Border,' *Political Geography* 24, p.166.
- 4 Hector Domínguez-Ruvalcaba and Ignacio Corona (eds.) (2011), *Gender Violence at the U.S.-Mexico Border: Media Representations and Public Response*, Tucson: University of Arizona Press, p.2.
- 5 Ibid, p.3.
- 6 Gloria Anzaldúa [1987] (1999), *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, pp.25-26.
- 7 Ackleson (2005), p.169.
- 8 Anzaldúa's work has its roots in American/Mexican/Chicana literature and

- women's studies. For examples of its application by scholars across other disciplines, see, for example, Melissa Wright (2006), *Disposable Women and Other Myths of Global Capitalism*, New York, London: Routledge; Gloria González-López (2005), *Erotic Journeys: Mexican Immigrants and Their Sex Lives*, Berkeley: University of California Press; Alicia Gaspar de Alba and Georgina Guzmán (eds.) (2010), *Making a Killing: Femicide, Free Trade, and La Frontera*, Austin: University of Texas Press; Aida Hurtado (2003), *Voicing Chicana Feminisms: Young Women Speak Out on Sexuality and Identity*, New York: New York University Press.
- 9 Homi Bhabha (1994), *The Location of Culture*, London: Routledge, pp.112-115.
 - 10 Martin Procházka and Aleida Assman (2003), 'Introduction: Boundaries and Contact Zones,' *Litteraria Pragensia* 13(26), p. 5.
 - 11 P. Bourdieu (2001), *Masculine Domination*, Cambridge: Polity, pp.41-42.
 - 12 Anzaldúa [1987] (1999), p.25.
 - 13 John R. Chávez, (1984), *The Lost Land: The Chicano Images of the Southwest*, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.
 - 14 Frederick Turner [1893] (1921). I have dealt elsewhere with the topic of Western expansion as a founding myth of American national identity and its reappraisal from both postcolonial and gender-sensitive perspectives. In that work, I situate Turner's Thesis against Chicano/a counter-discursive strategies that seek to expand the understanding of the border as a major concept shaping Chicano/a identity and borderland subjectivity. I also elaborate on Anzaldúa's portrayal of mestizo/a existence and the (gendered) violence connected with American expansionism. See Tereza Jiroutová Kynčlová (2014), 'Elastic, Yet Unyielding: The U.S.-Mexico Border and Anzaldúa's Oppositional Rearticulations of the Frontier,' *European Journal of American Studies* 9(3).
 - 15 Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999), *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, New York: Zed Books.
 - 16 Wright (2006), p.7.
 - 17 It is important to emphasise that when Anzaldúa wrote *Borderlands/La Frontera* in the mid-1980s, she could not have been referring to the type of violence that now permeates this border zone, i.e. the murders of women in Juárez and drug cartel conflicts. It is true that the values of societies based on androcentrism, capitalist exchange, colonialism, racist and homophobic prejudice and other modes of discrimination incite various forms of violence and oppression no matter what borders they share; nevertheless, this study puts the disparities between the United States and Mexico under scrutiny. I am also convinced that Anzaldúa's optics could – with a context-sensitive and epistemologically reflexively positioned approach – be applied to other parts of the world where cultures border on one another since she illuminates the workings of power based on arbitrary categorisations. The lived experience of the U.S.-Mexico border conveyed in her work testifies to the fact that various forms of violence are commonly experienced by almost all members of the Chicano/a community in the United States.
 - 18 Gaspar de Alba and Guzmán (2010), p.1.

- 19 Irene Mata (2010), 'Writing on the Walls: Deciphering Violence and Institutionalization in Alicia Gaspar de Alba's *Desert Blood*,' *MELUS* 35(3), pp. 15, 35-36. For example, the essays in the *Making a Killing* anthology give different estimates of the number of women murdered. As the editors put it: 'There has been no systematic accounting of the victims or accountability by the authorities, which results in only more confusion, more impunity for [the] perpetrators, and less chance of resolution,' Gaspar de Alba and Guzmán (2010), p.10. Even so, there is general agreement that the official count is far lower than the actual numbers of women killed. The essays in the volume suggest a range of 300 to 600 victims.
- 20 Alicia Gaspar de Alba (2010), 'Poor Brown Female: The Miller's Compensation for "Free" Trade,' in Alicia Gaspar de Alba and Guzmán (2010), p.65. Elvia Arriola (2010), 'Accountability for Murder in the Maquiladoras: Linking Corporate Indifference to Gender Violence at the U.S.-Mexico Border,' in Gaspar de Alba and Guzmán (2010), pp.25-61; Rosa Linda Fregoso (2003), *MeXicana Encounters: The Making of Social Identities in the Borderlands*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, pp.17-20; Martha Idalia Chew Sánchez (2014), 'Femicide: Theorizing Border Violence,' *Latin American Research Review* 49(3), p.267.
- 21 Wright (2006), pp.3-19, 71-89; Melissa W. Wright (2001), 'A Manifesto against Femicide,' *Antipode*, 33(3), pp.562-563.
- 22 Ibid, p.2.
- 23 Kenneth Burke quoted in Sarah Webster Goodwin and Elizabeth Bronfen (eds.) (1993), *Death and Representation*, Baltimore, London: John Hopkins University Press, p.4.
- 24 Goodwin and Bronfen (1993), p.20.
- 25 Gaspar de Alba and Guzmán (2010), p.4.
- 26 Marjorie Agosín (2006), *Secrets in the Sand: The Young Women of Juárez*, Buffalo, NY: White Pine Press, p.27.
- 27 Goodwin and Bronfen (1993), p.4.
- 28 Ibid, pp.7-8. The quote from Jacques Derrida appears in *Of Grammatology* (1974), Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, p. 69. The line 'The letter killeth' is taken from 2 Cor. 3:6.
- 29 See Adrienne Rich (2003), 'Notes Towards Politics of Location,' in Reina Lewis and Sara Mills (eds.) (2003), *Feminist Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*, New York, London: Routledge, pp.29-42.
- 30 Sneja Gunew and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1986), 'Questions Of Multi-Culturalism,' *Hecate*, 12 (1-2), pp.136-142.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Cf. Ania Loomba (2005), *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, London, New York: Routledge; Zygmunt Bauman, (1989), *Modernity and the Holocaust*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- 33 See, for example, Marietta Messmer (2012), 'Transfrontera Crimes: Representations of the Juárez Femicides in Recent Fictional and Non-Fictional Accounts,' *American Studies Journal* 57.
- 34 Gaspar de Alba and Guzmán (2010), pp. 3-5.
- 35 Rosa Linda Fregoso (2000), 'Voices Without Echo: The Global Gendered

- Apartheid,'*Emergences* 10(1), p. 137.
- 36 Gaspar de Alba and Guzmán (2010), p. 3.
- 37 Fregoso (2003), p.1.
- 38 Alicia Schmidt Camacho (2005), 'Ciudana X: Gender Violence and the Denationalization of Women's Rights in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico,' *CR: The New Centennial Review* 5(1), p. 255.
- 39 Ibid, p. 276.
- 40 Chew Sánchez (2014), p. 269.
- 41 Julia Monárrez Fragoso (2002), 'Serial Sexual Femicide in Ciudad Juárez: 1993-2001,' *Debate Femenista*, 25 (13), n. p.
- 42 Diana Russell and Roberta Harmes (eds), *Femicide in Global Perspective*, New York: Teachers College Press, p.15. For a detailed overview of the development of the definition of femicide, see Diana Russell (2009), 'Femicide: Politicizing the Killing of Females,' paper presented at the conference 'Strengthening the Understanding of Femicide: Using Research to Galvanize Action and Accountability,' PATH, InterCambios, MRC, WHO: Washington DC, accessible at: < www.igwg.org/igwg_media/femicide/russell.doc>.
- 43 Fregoso and Bejarano (2010), p. 7.
- 44 Rosa Linda Fregoso and Cynthia Bejarano, (eds.), (2010), *Terrorizing Women: Femicide in the Américas*. Durham, London: Duke University Press, pp. 4-6. Although I use "femicide" and "feminicide" interchangeably, the majority of sources employ the English term "femicide."
- 45 Ibid.
- 46 Ibid, p. 5.
- 47 Arriola (2010), p. 27; Camacho (2005), p. 278.
- 48 Yasemin Nuhoólu Soysal (1994), *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- 49 Camacho (2005), p.271; Domínguez-Ruvalcaba Corona (2011), p.4; Loomba (2005); Sylvanna Falcón (2001), 'Rape as a Weapon of War: Advancing Human Rights for Women at the U.S.-Mexico Border,' *Social Justice* 28(2); Nira Yuval-Davis (1997), *Gender and Nation*, London: Sage Publications.
- 50 See, e.g., June Nash (2005), 'Women in Between: Globalization and the New Enlightenment,' *Signs* 31(1), pp. 149, 153-156; Katherine Pantaleo (2010), 'Gendered Violence: An Analysis of the Maquiladora Murders,' *International Criminal Justice Review* 20(4), pp.350-351; Ronald L. Mize (2008), 'Interrogating Race, Class, Gender and Capitalism Along the U.S.-Mexico Border: Neoliberal Nativism and Maquila Modes of Production,' *Race, Gender & Class* 15(1-2), pp. 135, 143-149; Jessica Livingston (2004), 'Murder in Juárez: Gender, Sexual Violence, and the Global Assembly Line,' *Frontiers* 25(1), pp.67-70; Steven S. Volk and Marian E. Schlotterbeck (2010), 'Gender, Order, and Femicide: Reading the Popular Culture of Murder Ciudad Juárez,' in Gaspar de Alba and Guzmán (2010), pp.126-131; María Socorro Tabuenca Córdoba (2010), 'Ghost Dance in Ciudad Juárez at the End/Beginning of the Millennium,' in Gaspar de Alba and Guzmán (2010), pp.96-99; Melissa Wright (2011), 'Necropolitics, Narcopolitics, and Femicide: Gendered Violence on the Mexico-U.S. Border,' *Signs* 36(3), pp.720-722; Melinda Haley (2010), 'The Industrial Machine and the Exploitation of Women: The Case

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- 51 Haley (2010), p.4; Wright (2001), p.364.
- 52 Ibid.
- 53 Arriola (2010), p.33.
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- 55 Astrid Haas and María Herrera-Sobek (2012), 'Transfrontera. Transnational Perspectives on the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands: Introduction,' *American Studies Journal* 57.
- 56 Volk and Schlotterbeck (2010), pp.126-127.
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- 58 Volk and Schlotterbeck (2010), p.129.
- 59 Ibid, p.127.
- 60 Michelle Téllez (2008), 'Community of Struggle: Gender, Violence, and Resistance on the U.S./Mexico Border,' *Gender & Society* 22(5), p.545.
- 61 Gaspar de Alba, (2010), pp.64-65.
- 62 Mata (2010), pp.20-21.
- 63 Volk and Schlotterbeck (2010), p.127; Fregoso (2000), p.141.
- 64 Camacho (2005), p.265. See also Melissa Wright (2004), 'From Protests to Politics: Sex Work, Women's Worth, and Ciudad Juárez Modernity,' *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 94(2).
- 65 Fregoso (2003), p.17.
- 66 Volk and Schlotterbeck (2010), pp.127,130.
- 67 Fregoso (2000), pp.138-147; Fregoso (2003), pp.3-20; Wright (2011), pp.711-719. See also Melissa Wright, (2011), 'National Security versus Public Safety: Femicide, Drug Wars, and the Mexican State,' in Shelley Feldman, Charles Geisler and Gayatri Menon (eds.), *Geographies of Justice and Social Transformation: Accumulating Insecurity: Violence and Dispossession in the Making of Everyday Life*, Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, pp.285-297.
- 68 Gaspar de Alba and Guzmán (2010), p. 10.
- 69 Fregoso (2003), pp. 5-6.
- 70 For details of the activities of women's rights initiatives and local and international NGOs responding to the Juárez femicides, see Gaspar de Alba and Guzmán (2010) (parts 2 and 3) and Wright (2011).
- 71 Gaspar de Alba (2010), pp. 66-70.
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The Nature of Separatism and Its Weak Reverberations in the Americas

Jaume Castan Pinos

Secessionism opens up a myriad of interesting debates related to the very ontology of borders and states and the nature of the international system. The main aim of this study is to shed light on the under-scrutinised phenomenon of separatism by problematising and theorising on it. To this end, I attempt to explain the socio-economic and political conditions and environments that favour the development of separatism, elucidating the argument with historical and contemporary examples of secessionism. The relationships between secessionism and the principles of territorial integrity, self-determination and legitimacy are also explored. The third of these principles is of particular significance since it holds that not all cases of secession enjoy the same degree of legitimacy. I show that the debate on the legitimacy of secessions is rich, passionate and very often controversial, with contributors ranging from legal scholars, who adhere uncritically to the principle of territorial integrity, to those who recognise an entitlement to secede based on ascriptive and even associative rights. The final part of this work is dedicated to assessing the impact of separatism on the American continent. In theory, this region is the least affected by secessionist challenges. Nevertheless, I argue that despite their weak reverberations in quantitative terms, such phenomena still play a very significant role, and there is plenty of potential for the generating of conflicts of a secessionist nature in the foreseeable future.



Keywords: secession, self-determination, state, encompassing groups, legitimacy, the Americas

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Introduction

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Despite the catastrophes predicted by some scholars and visionary policy-makers over past decades, states have not disappeared. They have undoubtedly been transformed and their scope for political and particularly economic manoeuvring limited by numerous factors including systemic constraints and interactions with non-state actors. However, for all the constraints and competition, it must be acknowledged that, as O'Dowd claims, we continue to live in a world of states and, as a result, the so-called era of nation states is far from over.¹ This initial clarification is of vital importance for if we decide to pronounce the death of the nation state, we will not be able to understand the phenomenon of separatism and its complex relationship with not only the institution of the state but also fundamental principles of international relations such as self-determination and territorial integrity. The proliferation of separatism in different regions of the globe indicates that, like states and national borders, it has not disappeared with globalisation.

In theory, all nation states are vulnerable and susceptible to separatist challenges and consequently to the violation of their territorial integrity. However, the distribution of secessionist conflicts is geographically differentiated: some regions such as Asia and Europe are more affected than others. The Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research has concluded that secession was the main cause of 48 recorded conflicts worldwide in 2013; 19 took place in Asia, 13 in Europe and only one was identified in the Americas.² It is crucial to highlight that the potential for secession does not always lead to its eventuality.

The year 2014 produced numerous secessionist disputes and it is worth noting that even though all separatist movements share the goal of creating an independent political entity, their causes, nature and *modus operandi* may vary significantly. For instance, the conflict in south-eastern Ukraine is significantly different from the consensual referendum in Scotland and the institutional dispute (fuelled also by civil society organisations) in Catalonia between the Spanish central government and regional government. A European reader may be well-acquainted with those cases but perhaps not so familiar with the situation in Mizoram and Manipur in northern India, Bougainville in Papua New Guinea, Cabinda in Angola or Biafra in Nigeria.

As stated above, the Americas are a region where the presence of this challenge to states is more limited. The Heidelberg study lists the single case of Easter Island, which is under Chilean sovereignty. The last section of this study will concentrate on this region with the aim of understanding the extent of separatism in the Americas, its manifestations and the reasons for its weak reverberations across the “new continent.” Secessionism is a global, or at least a quasi-global, phenomenon whose real significance is perhaps not well-represented in terms of academic publications. This work attempts to fill this gap by illuminating the conditions and factors that trigger or indeed deter one of the greatest challenges for contemporary nation states.

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A Note on Territorial Integrity

The conflict between territorial integrity and self-determination is an unavoidable theme for those trying to analyse secessionism. It has been argued that rather than being polar opposites, the former principle accommodates the latter and consequently the two, if understood properly, work in tandem.³ However, these principles can be contradictory, leading to endless discussions where international law becomes a fertile arena for political quarrels with its doctrines being invoked by those keen to secede as well as those aiming to preserve the territorial *status quo*. This section attempts to problematise the principle of territorial integrity.

Territorial integrity is undeniably a fundamental pillar of international law and international relations. This principle relates to the safeguarding of inviolable state boundaries and has a double purpose: on the one hand, it protects national borders against other states, and on the other, it has an intra-state dimension according to which states have the right to protect the violability of their borders from within, that is, from separatism.⁴ It is important not to forget here that the aim of separatists is to redraw existing political boundaries.

It is often argued that 1945 represented a turning point for this principle in terms of its legal consolidation. This was the year when, for instance, it was stipulated in Article 2(4) of the UN Charter that “[a]ll Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state.”⁵ Nevertheless, we should keep in mind that a few

decades earlier, Article 10 of the Covenant of the League of Nations had already guaranteed the preservation and respect of the territorial integrity of states.⁶

It is common practice for state governments to ensure that the norm of territorial integrity is enshrined in their declarations and legal texts. As a result, it is unsurprising that intergovernmental Organisations such as the African Union, the Arab League, the European Union and the Organization of American States include this principle in their founding treaties and charters. Legal fortresses are, however, not the only strategy that may be deployed to protect this norm. Interestingly, as Weller points out, pragmatic *technical* solutions may also be used, with power-sharing or self-governing units being installed to appease secessionist impulses.⁷ The Dayton Agreement in Bosnia is a paradigmatic example of the (over-)generous recognition of a self-governing unit, particularly on the Bosnian-Serb side, with the aim of safeguarding the continuity of the border and, as such, the very survival of Bosnia as a state.

The main justification for territorial integrity stems from a statement issued by former US president Dwight D. Eisenhower in the context of the Suez Canal crisis: “There can be no peace – without law. And there can be no law – if we were to invoke one code of international conduct for those who oppose us – and another for our friends.”⁸ The territorial integrity concept indeed attempts to regulate one of the primary threats to peace in the international system: territorial disputes. Eisenhower’s assertion, while not directly connected to the norm, provides us with another important clue from which we can extrapolate the principle of territorial integrity: all states, whether friends or foes, have a right, at least *a priori*, to protect the inviolability of their external borders.

However, in order to understand the idiosyncrasies of territorial integrity and, more specifically, its relationship with self-determination, it is essential to consider United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2625, ‘Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States,’ adopted on 24 October 1970. A paragraph at the end of the declaration is particularly useful for our discussion:

Nothing in the foregoing paragraphs shall be construed as authorizing or encouraging any action which would dismember or impair, totally or in part, the territorial integrity or polit-

ical unity of sovereign and independent States conducting themselves in compliance with the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples as described above and thus possessed of a government representing the whole people belonging to the territory without distinction as to race, creed or colour.

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This text is of paramount importance since, to put it simply, it sets out the rules of the game. The first two lines establish that territorial integrity takes precedence over self-determination. At the same time, the second part of the paragraph states more or less implicitly that the right to territorial integrity ceases to be valid if a state does not respect the rights of its own citizens. This opens the door to vital questions: What happens if a state does not comply with the principle of equal rights? Does this necessarily legitimise a secessionist claim? In order to solve this conundrum, we should shed some light on the legitimacy of different secessionist claims.

One Phenomenon, Different Grades of Legitimacy

Before addressing any questions related to the legitimacy of secessionist claims, it is necessary to state the obvious: not all cases of secession are equally legitimate (or illegitimate). As such, some kind of hierarchy of legitimacy can be established concerning separatism. Drawing inspiration from Allen Buchanan, one of the most prominent scholars on the subject of self-determination and the legitimacy of secession,⁹ I divide these claims into three categories: legitimate cases, cases of remedial rights and cases of primary rights.

There are two specific cases when secession is considered overwhelmingly legitimate. Classic forms of de-colonisation where an overseas colony attempts to liberate itself from an occupying power are one such case. Currently, however, no state falls in this category. The second situation where secession is deemed fully legitimate is when it is not unilateral but the result of a consensual and negotiated process, in other words, when the encompassing state has allowed the secession of part of its territory. Several historical examples can be found of where this has occurred. Norway's independence from Sweden in 1905 is considered to be an exemplary case of negotiated secession. Nevertheless, this view ignores the fact that Norway had attempted to secede unilaterally in June 1905 when its parliament is-

sued a unilateral declaration of independence that was rejected by the Swedish government. The rejection was followed by a demand from Stockholm for a referendum as a *sine qua non* condition for secession. That plebiscite took place on 08 August and resulted in a landslide victory for proponents of breaking up the union, paving the way for a negotiated settlement a few weeks later.¹⁰ Similar cases include the negotiated dissolution of the Czechoslovak Federal Republic on 01 January 1993, the independence of Montenegro from the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro in 2006 and the independence of South Sudan in 2011. Had the Scottish referendum of September 2014 ultimately favoured independence, this would also have constituted a legitimate case because of the agreement of both parties involved. It must be noted that in the cases listed above, there is no question as to whether or not they are legitimate. Even the most irredentist advocates of territorial integrity accept the validity of such secessions.

However, such universal agreement about the legitimacy of secession ends here. The controversy begins with the issue of remedial rights. The backbone of a remedial right is its moral nature. Buchanan defines this as a 'right to a remedy of last resort against serious and persistent injustices.'¹¹ Seymour emphasises the restrictive nature of remedial theories in the sense that 'secession can only be justified if important harms have been caused to the seceding group by the encompassing state'¹²; even then, remedial rights should only be applied in very specific cases where there is no viable alternative. Remedial rights apply in a wide range of situations from the illegal annexation of a territory to massive violations of human rights and the violation of intra-state agreements, and finally, where there is discrimination by the encompassing state in terms of resource redistribution.

There are several problems associated with remedial rights and they are the subject of polemics. Perhaps the most significant issue concerns the double standards that these rights tend to attract. For instance, the violations of ethnic Albanians' human rights that were perpetrated by Yugoslavian forces are often considered to be the driving force behind Kosovan statehood. However, similar cases in Western Sahara or Kurdistan where states have violated the human rights of citizens from stateless nations have not resulted in a Kurdish state in south-eastern Turkey or a Saharan republic.¹³ In addition, we may ask what happens when, as in the case of the Kosovo Liberation Army, which targeted Serbian and Albanian civilians accused of collaboration, secessionist

groups are also responsible for human rights atrocities? Does this exclude them from the right to statehood based on moral grounds?

These questions highlight one of the chief problems with remedial rights: they entail a risk of simplifying complex conflicts and interpreting them in Manichean terms where one party is perceived as the aggressor and the other as the victim. The inescapable tragedy for analysts is that the dynamics of conflicts are on many occasions open to interpretation. Likewise, the violation of intra-state agreements cannot always be blamed on either the encompassing state or pro-autonomy groups; rather the problem lies in the conflict-related dynamics established between the different parties. The case of Kosovo once again provides us with a useful illustration. While the Independent International Commission on Kosovo concluded that Slobodan Milošević's administration had revoked Kosovo's autonomy in 1989 as part of an ulterior plan to create an apartheid state,¹⁴ others interpret the same revocation as the logical (and necessary) consequence of avoiding the creation of an ethnically pure (Albanian) independent Kosovo.¹⁵ The last cause for remedial rights, resource redistribution discrimination, is even more complicated to ascertain and, as a result, more vulnerable to clashing narratives.

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The final category, primary rights, is based on a view of secession as a right of certain collectives that fulfil a number of conditions. In other words, there is a belief that certain groups are entitled to secede without the consent of the state even in the absence of injustice or moral hazard. As may be guessed, this category is by far the least accepted among academics and also the most threatening to nation states. Primary rights can be sub-divided into two distinct groups: ascriptive and associative rights.

Simply put, proponents of ascriptive rights claim that a group is entitled to secede from an encompassing state if it constitutes what Margalit and Raz define as an 'encompassing group'.¹⁶ Such a group has a common culture, history, language and awareness of distinct non-political attributes. There are numerous difficulties linked to ascriptive rights. The category raises a number of questions. For example, which groups constitute an encompassing group? How different should their language or history be? All too often, national boundaries are not as clear-cut as some secessionist groups (or indeed nation states) would wish. Even if we could find a comprehensive answer to the above questions, we would still meet with plenty of loose ends. What about mi-

norities within minorities? And what if a minority group is connected to the encompassing state? Do they then have the right to secede from the newly formed state? It may be argued that if the right to secede were recognised for all stateless nations/encompassing groups, this would open the gates to a proliferation of secessions and so might jeopardise the order of the international system. Pavković and Radan's critique of ascriptive rights puts the nail in the coffin; why, they ask, do the 'non-political attributes of a group require the establishment of separate coercive and legal institutions [...] which this non-political group should exclusively control [?]'¹⁷ It appears, then, that ascriptive rights generate questions more than they clarify answers.

Finally, associative rights are connected to individual empowerment and an ontological distrust of coercive institutions that limit the rights and freedoms of individuals. The rationale behind this approach is the liberal idea that 'a state is justified only if the citizens have consented to it.'¹⁸ Associative rights advocates, unlike their ascriptive counterparts, hold that there is no need for the potentially seceding group to have any common connection, either historical or imagined, with the territory they aim to make into their own independent state. They need not constitute an encompassing group since all that is required is that they have the will to become an independent political entity and consent to doing so. According to Wellman 'any group may secede as long as it and its remainder state are large, wealthy, cohesive, and geographically contiguous enough to form a government that effectively performs the functions necessary to create a secure political environment.'¹⁹ This controversial assertion, deeply embedded in US libertarian theories, perfectly summarises the associative right to statehood.

Whether we feel appalled or attracted intellectually by these different justifications for secession, the fact of the matter is that separatism occurs. It is therefore imperative that we turn our attention to the roots of the phenomenon so that we can have a greater understanding of it.

Delving into the Conditions for Separatism

One of the first scholars to theorise secessionism was the Canadian political scientist John Wood. He defined the term as 'an instance of political disintegration wherein political actors in one or more sub-systems withdraw their loyalties, expectations, and political activities from a jurisdictional centre and focus them on a centre of their own.'²⁰

This definition closely resembles Ladis Kristof's claim that the territorial integrity of a state is under threat when the socio-political body is not able to generate loyalties or, put more simply, when the *centrifugal forces* have outweighed the *centripetal* ones.²¹

Separatism, therefore, can be understood as the existence within a state of a group that aims to establish a new independent political authority in part of the host state's territory. As suggested in the introduction to this study, and bearing in mind the above definitions, separatism has the potential to affect most, if not all, states. However, it is important to note that certain conditions will favour – or alternatively deter – its emergence and development.

Before the meeting of these conditions, there are also certain pre-conditions that are needed for secessionism to flourish. Perhaps the first and most essential precondition is the existence of cultural, ethnic and religious differences within the central power. The existence of these differences does not necessarily lead to secessionist claims but can be seen as a potential catalyst. The potential for secessionism grows exponentially if the encompassing group, to use Margalit and Raz's terminology, becomes alienated from the host state²² and begins to conceptualise its relationship with the central government in terms of binary oppositions. As Wood points out, ethnic identities are political artefacts, and as such, they are prone to manipulation by either secessionist groups or central governments.²³ At any rate, a decrease in the central government's legitimacy constitutes a political precondition for secession.

In this connection, economic grievances may contribute to the radicalising of a regionalist/cultural movement so that it withdraws its loyalties and becomes more alienated towards the host state. In the Catalan case, for instance, the claim that “our €16 billion” never returned from Madrid as a result of the Spanish system of tax revenue-sharing provided the pro-independence movement with a powerful narrative under which secession appeared to be the only way to avoid economic discrimination. It must be noted that the unwillingness of successive Spanish governments to negotiate the tax revenue system was fundamental to this narrative's success. Rather than this being an isolated case, we find economic grievances present in multiple secessionist narratives such as those in Slovenia and Croatia in the late 1980s and early 1990s respectively and indeed among British colonists in the 13 American colonies of the mid-18th century. Finally, Wood identifies

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certain psychological preconditions that stimulate all of the above preconditions in the form of emotional appeals for independence to protect threatened languages, honour martyrs, etc.

In addition to these preconditions, we can recognise a number of conditions related to the central government. An enduring economic crisis may trigger the consolidation of anti-centralist movements or radicalise regionalist movements leading to polarisation. Economic instability may be accompanied by political turmoil and a lack of legitimacy of the central government. This is, indeed, a central element that facilitates the consolidation of secessionists; it may be used to mount an argument in support of anti-centralist discourse along the lines of “we told you so; this country does not work at any level. There is no solution but to separate.” The responses of the central government are also fundamental and may be either coercive or accommodating. The tragedy is that there is no recipe for success here, and both these stances can be counterproductive. The British government has, for example, pursued an accommodating policy towards Scotland through devolution over the past few decades. Despite the results of the 2014 referendum, support for independence has been growing gradually and the Scottish National Party (SNP) has consolidated itself as the country’s major political force partly due to devolution. On the other hand, an iron fist approach may lead to the same results. In the early 1960s, the French government was able to defeat the Algerian National Liberation Front, but far from consolidating its sovereignty over Algeria, that victory and the brutality of the French repression paradoxically contributed to Algeria’s eventual independence. Perhaps, then, we may conclude that the final outcome is subject to another factor of paramount significance: the interaction between the different actors.

Needless to say, the fortunes of secessionists will also depend on their capacity to organise and galvanise support from the population they aim to liberate. It will therefore be essential for them to construct a powerful counter-hegemonic narrative that manages to channel people’s discontent. Wood refers to this work as political entrepreneurship in the sense that a secessionist group exploits existing cleavages ‘and fans the flames of discontent’ to advance its agenda.²⁴ He distinguishes this political entrepreneurship from ideology. However, this is not so clear-cut since the aims of secessionists are similar in many ways to those of ideologies. Malcolm Hamilton has defined ideology as ‘a

system of collectively held normative and reputedly factual ideas and beliefs and attitudes advocating a particular pattern of social relationships and arrangements, and/or aimed at justifying a particular pattern of conduct, which its proponents seek to promote, realise, pursue or maintain.²⁵ While we may acknowledge that a secessionist movement does not entirely amount to an ideology, if we bear in mind Hamilton's definition, then we can observe certain resemblances including the reliance on normative beliefs, advocating of particular arrangements and justifying of a particular pattern of conduct. Furthermore, in electoral contests, a secessionist project may be used to gather support and promise a better life to the citizens of a particular territory in a manner that resembles the way that classic ideologies are instrumentalised by political parties.

Finally, there are two factors that are often neglected by secession scholars and can be categorised as external. The regional context is of fundamental significance because it creates synergies or a domino effect that may provide an impulse for those advocating separation. The domino effect's importance is illustrated in multiple historical examples including the independence of the Spanish colonies in Latin America in the early 19th century, de-colonisation in Asia and Africa after the Second World War and events in the former Yugoslavia and former Soviet Union in more recent years. Simply put, once the genie is out of the bottle, the probability of achieving independence increases. The other external condition is the role played by external powers which support particular processes of independence. This is not exceptional but rather common, and there are numerous examples, both historical and contemporary, of foreign support. In the Americas, we find an exemplary case in the active role played by the US in supporting the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico from the Spanish Kingdom in 1898.

This section has scrutinised the different preconditions and conditions that may lead to the secession of a territory from an encompassing state. On this basis, we may tentatively assert that a single condition is generally not sufficient, but not all conditions are necessary for the occurrence of secession, and these conditions may not happen simultaneously in a single case. The combination of these conditions and preconditions is, moreover, likely to vary from case to case.

Separatism in the Americas

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Having approached the separatism phenomenon through a mostly theoretical lens, it is now time to add a more empirical dimension to our inquiry. I wish to concentrate on the Americas and so attempt to cast some light on the presence of secessionism on this continent. The grounds for this choice of region may not appear self-evident. When we think of conflicts of a separatist nature, then outside the examples of Quebec or Easter Island, we generally think not of the Americas but of other regions such as Europe, Africa and Asia. As was mentioned in the introduction, a study of global political conflicts conducted by the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research identified only one case of secessionism, that of Easter Island or Rapa Nui, in the Americas. It is therefore necessary to dig deeper and analyse the details that cold quantitative data tend to obscure. Indeed, an initial passing glance at the Americas would lead us to conclude that they are practically immune from the phenomenon that we have explored throughout this study. A closer look, however, shows that secessionist problems have a significant presence in the region.

It would be over-ambitious to attempt to provide a comprehensive explanation here for separatism's lower impact in the Americas compared with other continents. This would undoubtedly be a terrific niche for future research. The aim of this final section is instead to provide some food for thought along with issues for discussion and foundations for future research on the subject. In order to advance these goals, I concentrate on three different factors that we may see as potential sources of separatism: indigenism, Quebec and anarcho-capitalism.

Indigenism is an element that is practically irrelevant in Europe (with the exception of northern Scandinavia) but extremely important in the Americas. Indigenism has a close relationship with self-determination, albeit based on an understanding of this principle that is not necessarily associated with the right to secede. As Jackson and Warren have claimed, some radical groups speak in terms of separatism, but most indigenous organisations see self-determination as a way to achieve fairer political representation in the existing system.²⁶ This idea has, in fact, already been developed by secessionism theorists, who claim that if we take a broad understanding of self-determination, we may view it as connected not only with secession but with the right to political participation in the decision-making of the host state.²⁷ Se-

cessionism, therefore, represents one side of the coin of self-determination but it is not the only one.²⁸

A connection between local (ethnic) and national (state) identity is fundamental for the prevention of separatist tendencies among local groups. This is also the case for indigenous groups. If the indigenous group's culture is accommodated in the national discourse, the likelihood of secessionist trends will be drastically reduced. Such a bond seems to prevail, for instance, among Mexico's indigenous guerrillas, of whom the Zapatistas Army of National Liberation (EZLN) are one of the most significant instances. Cultural anthropologist Lynn Stephen has illustrated this bond through an example from 1996 when Comandante Ramona (EZLN) honoured the Mexican flag, declaring solemnly before several hundred indigenous leaders that 'this [flag] is so that they never forget that Mexico is our *patria* [native land] and so that everyone recognizes that there will never be a Mexico without us.'²⁹ This sentence has vital importance for many reasons. To begin with, it shows us that the (armed) indigenous group embraces Mexican symbols and pledges allegiance to the state. More importantly, it implies that the bond between the group and the nation state is so remarkable that Mexico cannot be conceived of without its indigenous peoples.

Similar conclusions can be drawn based on the declarations of EZLN leader Subcomandante insurgente Marcos,³⁰ who has often encouraged all Mexicans (whether indigenous or not) 'to participate in a new era of the national liberation struggle and for the construction of a new *patria*.'³¹ It must be noted that this 'new *patria*' refers to a Mexico-wide project based on democracy, freedoms and indigenous rights. There is an interesting lesson to be learned regarding separatism from the Zapatista example. It appears that the extent of the cultural or ethnic gaps between a particular group and the majority/dominant culture is less important than the degree to which non-hegemonic groups assume hegemonic symbols as their own. In other words, cultural differences *per se* are not the decisive factor that leads to separatism. The key element is the political production of these differences.

The second potential source of separatism in the Americas is Quebec. This predominantly French-speaking Canadian province has held two referenda on independence (in 1980 and 1995), both of which failed to gather enough popular support for that notion.³² These two successive rejections have had political consequences for the pro-secession movement in this Canadian province, particularly after the dramatic

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defeat of 1995. Different reasons may explain the failure of secessionists in the Quebec referenda. One potential explanation relates to the difficulty of winning secessionist referenda in well-established liberal democracies. As Dion points out, a pro-independence referendum has never been won in a consolidated democracy.³³ Another plausible cause is the party system in Quebec and Canada. As Lawrence Anderson notes, the presence of a strong federalist nationalist party (Parti Libéral du Québec) gives Quebec voters an option that satisfies their nationalist impulses and, at the same time, reduces the uncertainties that could potentially generate secession.³⁴ Finally, it would appear that the accommodating strategy of the Canadian government, like that of its British counterparts in relation to Scotland, has been detrimental to the interests of the secessionist movement.

The latest Quebec general elections, held in 2014, show that the two parties that favour independence enjoy the support of approximately one-third of voters in the province. The most important representative of the pro-independence movement, Parti Québécoise, has recently suffered some significant electoral defeats. In spite of these losses and the outcome of the two previous referenda, the party's primary objective continues to be creating a sovereign state through a popular referendum.³⁵ Quebec, therefore, remains a territory where secessionism exists without secession.

Lastly, the US continues to face its own internal secessionist challenges. The latest and perhaps most notorious of these surfaced in 2012 when the Texas Nationalist Movement organised the posting of 125,746 signatures of persons demanding secession on the White House website. It must be said that far from being a novelty, the right to secession is deeply rooted in US history. Christopher Wellman reminds us, for instance, that the so-called American Revolution cannot actually be considered a revolution since its goal was never to overthrow the British government, but to end their authority over the colonies.³⁶ This is, indeed, a textbook example of the objectives of a secessionist – and not a revolutionary – movement. Similarly, one of the most important chapters in US history, the civil war, was greatly influenced by secession since the unilateral declaration of independence of seven southern states lay at the core of the conflict. In more recent times, secessionism in the United States has been linked to a particular ideology: libertarianism or anarcho-capitalism. Anarcho-capitalists

believe in the free association of land-owning individuals in a minimal state whose role is reduced to settling internal disputes and providing security. According to this associative vision, state borders could change continuously and depend exclusively on their legitimacy and the consent of the citizens living in a particular territory. As Pavković argues, two principles create the rationale for any secession according to anarcho-capitalist postulates: liberty and property.³⁷ Thus, secession is derived from the liberal rights to free political association and private property. These ideas significantly influence the Texan and other prominent secessionist movements in the United States. To a certain extent, it may be said that the US case has unique elements since the fate of secessionism is not really associated with the presence of ethnic or cultural diversity; rather, it is linked to the success of an ideology.

Concluding Remarks

Separatism is not a new phenomenon, but one that is perhaps as old as states and territorial integrity themselves. It is a phenomenon with multi-faceted causes. As such, secessionism is a crucial concern not only for states but also for scholars. Moreover, while the field is expanding, there is plenty of room for growth as the importance outweighs the quantity of academic literature published thus far. Theorists agree that certain factors lead to separatism but disagree about which factors they are and whether or not we can predict future cases on this basis. This may well be connected to the old positivism vs. anti-positivism debate in the social sciences.

Disagreements also emerge when we turn to the legitimacy of secession. Outside cases of de-colonisation and agreed secession, the debate on the legitimacy of secessions remains open and is probably highly dependent on theoretical considerations, affiliations and personal preferences. The aim of this study has not been to engage in such debates about the legitimacy of different secessions but to highlight their existence as well as the importance of these discussions and of the principles of international law such as territorial integrity and self-determination which underpin them.

Conflicts of a secessionist nature are increasing in number and in importance. As a result, separatism should also be seen as a geopo-

litical phenomenon. This is one specific research direction for future studies. Separatism's significance as a global phenomenon derives from several factors. It is, as I have discussed, a challenge for nation states. But it also presents an opportunity for states and a subtle and powerful foreign policy instrument that can be used – through covert actions, for instance – to weaken fellow states.

Another research direction which I have introduced relates to the different types of secessionism in the Americas. The current study should be viewed as an invitation or trigger to encourage further exploration of the topic. As I have shown, the continent offers a wide range of under-researched secessionist (and quasi-secessionist) contexts that deserve further analysis and academic contributions. It seems clear that secessionism will continue to challenge states in the Americas and beyond, generating instability and, in some cases, redrawing state borders. Though the task may be daunting, academia should be prepared to live up to these challenges.



JAUME CASTAN PINOS is affiliated to the Department of Border Region Studies at the University of Southern Denmark and may be reached at: jaume@sam.sdu.dk

Notes

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