

Copyright  
by  
Mariana Morante Aguirre  
2015

**The Thesis Committee for Mariana Morante Aguirre  
Certifies that this is the approved version of the following thesis:**

**Borderlands without borders: Migrants in transit in the Metropolitan  
Area of Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico**

**APPROVED BY  
SUPERVISING COMMITTEE:**

**Supervisor:**

---

Lorraine Leu

---

Victoria E. Rodriguez

**Borderlands without borders: Migrants in transit in the Metropolitan  
Area of Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico**

**by**

**Mariana Morante Aguirre, B.A.**

**Thesis**

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degrees of

**Master of Arts**

**and**

**Master of Global Policy Studies**

**The University of Texas at Austin**

**May 2015**

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this thesis to the memory of my father, Gustavo Morante Elizondo (1954-2014). Even in the very last days, my father taught me to never take the easy way out, and to choose love above all. The courage and integrity with which he lived by will always be an inspiration and an example to which I hope to live up to.

This work is also dedicated to the thousands of migrants crossing through Mexico, and to all of those who fight to defend their human rights. Buen camino a todxs.

Esta tesis está dedicada a la memoria de mi papá, Gustavo Morante Elizondo (1954-2014). Aún en los últimos días, él me enseñó a nunca tomar el camino fácil, y a elegir el amor sobre todas las cosas. La valentía, la honestidad, y el amor con los que vivió van a ser siempre una inspiración y un ejemplo que espero poder honrar.

Este trabajo está dedicado a lxs miles de migrantes que cruzan México, y a todxs aquellxs que luchan por defender los derechos humanos de lxs migrantes. Buen camino a todxs.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my family for their unconditional support. To Guille, my mother, best friend and most admired woman, your kindness, compassion and intelligence are my greatest strength. I love you. To my sisters and brothers: Karla, Alex, Guille, Alberto, Tavo, Pili y Ale, thank you for always being there, you've encouraged me to be a better person, and have given me my greatest treasures, and *la luz de mi vida*: Luca, Mikaela, Paula, Alex, and the ones on their way.

Thanks to Rosa María Morante, for being the strong, amazing aunt she is. My gratitude also to my aunt Lidia and uncle Allen who opened the doors of their house and hearts when I first came to Austin, and whose lives and conversations are always an inspiration. Thanks to Marcos, for your friendship, love, patience, and for sharing these years with me.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to my adviser Lorraine Leu who always believed in this project, and whose incredible advice, mentorship, and guidance made this research possible. I would also like to thank Victoria Rodriguez, for her always-on-point advice, support and words of encouragement; and Jenny Knowles for her amazing and unwavering guidance and support, this work would not have been possible without these amazing women.

I would also want to thank the many faculty members from which I had the opportunity to learn: Magdalena Villareal, Andres Villareal, Kamran Asdar Ali, Alfonso Gonzales; and a very special thanks to Sarah Lopez, whose passion for migratory urbanisms, and interest in this project gave me the opportunity to think about space in new and exciting ways.

Thanks to my great Graduate Coordinators at LLILAS, Steve Alvarez and Perla Miranda, your hard work, and sincere interest in all of the students is what makes LLILAS more than an academic institute, a second home.

I cannot express with words my gratitude to all the members of FM4-Paso Libre, who opened me the doors of the organization. Alonso Hernández, María Zuñiga, Santiago Aguilar, Quike González, and all the members and volunteers at FM4-Paso Libre, whose integrity and dedication to protect migrants' human rights make this world a better place. To all them, I wish them *buen camino*, and that we encounter each other once again.

Thanks to Cinthya Paredes and Héctor Vielma for your friendship, unconditional support, and for being part of this dream. I love you both. Thanks to all my friends, far and near. To Esmeralda, Miguel, Carlos, Claudia, Dayanna, Vanessa, Roque, Beto, Juan Pedro, Paty, Karla, Pili, Perla, Cintia, Yoalli, Frank, Manny, Belén, Helen, Gabriel and Molly. Thank you for your support in the hardest times, for the laughs, the discussions, and the dreams of a better world we share: *Otros mundos son todavía posibles*.

Thanks to the Fulbright-García Robles Commission, the LBJ School of Public Affairs, and the Teresa Lozano Long Institute for Latin American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin for their funding and support throughout my graduate program.

## **Abstract**

### **Borderlands without borders: Migrants in transit in the Metropolitan Area of Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico**

Mariana Morante Aguirre, MA and MGlobalPolStds

The University of Texas at Austin, 2015

Supervisor: Lorraine Leu

Each year, thousands of undocumented migrants in transit travelling on “La Bestia” through the Western route cross the Metropolitan Area of Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico—the second largest metropolitan area in the country. This thesis focuses on how the intersection between the “illegality” of Central American migrants and Mexican “nationals” creates a contested space of undefined border(s) through State’s processes, everyday practices, political discourses, and landscapes. The research provides a spatial analysis of migrants in transit’s trajectories, as well as of their experiences and relations with both the built environment and with the “locals” in a specific urban context.

The analysis sheds light into the distinct ways through which migrants’ trajectories are qualified by legal status, and by specific political, social and cultural imaginations and discourses of space. Furthermore, in an effort to “bring the humans back” to migratory

narratives, this thesis brings to the fore the multiplicity and diversity of migrants' stories and trajectories while uncovering how the mobilization of the State and civil society creates racial and class borders that further marginalizes migrants in transit through the Metropolitan Area of Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico.



## Table of Contents

List of Tables .....	xii
List of Figures .....	xiii
List of Illustrations .....	xiv
Introduction.....	1
Migrants in transit through Mexico .....	2
Literature Review.....	4
The Metropolitan Area of Guadalajara .....	7
Research.....	11
Methods.....	13
Limitations and Ethical Dilemmas.....	15
Chapters' Organization .....	17
Chapter 1: The Politics of Space.....	18
The Mobilization of the State .....	19
The global scale: Spatial re-bordering(s).....	20
The National scale: State reterritorialization and the “double geographical imagination” .....	23
The Federal Police .....	23
The National Institute of Migration .....	25
The Local scale: The (in)governmentality of migrants.....	27
The Mobilization of “Citizenship”.....	32
The organized neighbors.....	35
Local Authorities' response to “civil society” .....	39
Conclusion .....	42
Chapter 2: Experiences of Spaces.....	43
The Railroad Tracks: Method and Landscapes.....	44
The Methods: Approaching spaces and experiences .....	44
The Railroad Tracks: Migratory Landscapes.....	46

The gated communities and Las Juntas' market: The disappearing railroad tracks .....	49
Vallarta's and Lopez Mateos' bridges: fragmentations and connections.....	51
Landscapes and migrants' trajectories .....	53
"Othering" Spatial Practices .....	54
Diverse trajectories and subjectivities .....	57
Informal Shelters.....	60
The built environment and migrants: facing and overcoming obstacles.....	61
The race against time .....	64
Material Culture: Stories yet to be told.....	66
Conclusion .....	69
Chapter 3: Encounters and "Desencuentros" .....	71
FERROMEX's exiting yards .....	74
Reactions to Informal Urbanism and Migrants in transit.....	76
Subaltern urbanisms.....	79
"El Eje Inglaterra".....	82
Migrants in Transit, the linear park and the purification of public space.....	86
The shelter and "moral/racial anxieties" .....	91
"Villas de Asís".....	94
Constructing walls and enclosed realities .....	95
Deurbanizing forces and urban capabilities .....	101
Conclusion .....	104
Conclusion .....	106
Policy Implications .....	109
Learning is always a work in progress.....	110
Appendix.....	112
Situationist Mapping: the walks across the railroad tracks.....	112

Bibliography .....128

## **List of Tables**

Table 1: Neighbors' complaints received by Zapopan's Ministry of Security/Dirección de Seguridad de Pública de Zapopan. Information provided by FM4-Paso Libre. ....	37
--	----

## List of Figures

Figure 1: Migrants Routes .....	3
Figure 2: “La Bestia” through middle and high income neighborhoods of the Metropolitan Area of Guadalajara.. ..	9
Figure 3: Passage of “La Bestia” through an industrial zone in the Metropolitan Area of Guadalajara. ....	9
Figure 4: The Railroad tracks through the MAG.....	47
Figure 5: Map of the walks along the railroad tracks. ....	48
Figure 6: Map of the three chosen sites in the MAG.....	74
Figure 7: Map of the exiting yards.....	76
Figure 8: Map provided by the Municipal Government of Zapopan during the summer 2014. ....	95
Figure 9: The Railroad tracks through the MAG.....	112
Figure 10: Map of the walks along the railroad tracks. ....	114

## List of Illustrations

Illustration 1: The railroad tracks and the gated communities.....	50
Illustration 2: “Las Juntas”.....	51
Illustration 3: The railroad tracks through the bridge. ....	52
Illustration 4: “López Mateos”.....	53
Illustration 5: “The curve” .....	63
Illustration 6: Migrants in transit waiting to take the train. ....	63
Illustration 7: A young migrant from Honduras. ....	66
Illustration 8: Objects found inside the railroad tracks. ....	68
Illustration 9: Objects found inside the railroad tracks. ....	69
Illustration 10: Photo taken outside the exiting yards .....	78
Illustration 11: “Plaza Washington” 2014 .....	78
Illustration 12: Subaltern urbanisms. ....	80
Illustration 13: “Multiple symbolic and religious spaces”.....	82
Illustration 14: “Jardines del Bosque” .....	84
Illustration 15: The valorization of “elite’s informalities” .....	87
Illustration 16: Map of the shelter on a “tiendita/store” .....	89
Illustration 17: The construction of Guadalajara’s shelter.....	92
Illustration 18: “Villas de Asís” .....	98
Illustration 19: Inside the railroad tracks. ....	102
Illustration 20: “Villas de Asís” fences.....	103
Illustration 21: The train passing through the MAG.....	115
Illustration 22: Migrants in transit waiting to take the train. ....	117
Illustration 23: The railroad tracks and the “Parque Hundido” .....	118

Illustration 24: The tianguis of “La Vidriera” .....	119
Illustration 25: The railroad tracks through the bridge .....	121
Illustration 26: A young migrant from Honduras .....	122
Illustration 27: The middle-class neighborhoods.....	123
Illustration 28: “López Mateos” .....	124
Illustration 29: “Private gardens” .....	125
Illustration 30: “On the train” .....	127
Illustration 31: “Las Juntas” .....	127

## **Introduction**

Mexico is the route of thousands of Central Americans who travel on the cargo train “La Bestia/The Beast” more than 3,000km to arrive to the United States (Jacome 2008). Historically, “La Bestia/The Beast” has had three main routes crossing Mexican territory: the Gulf, the Central and the Western routes (Figure 1). Recently, Mexico’s increasing violence has left the Gulf and Central routes largely inaccessible for migrants, forcing them to take the Western route, considered to be the least violent yet the longest route (Escalona, Paola et al 2008). This railroad route also traverses one of the most important urban centers in the country: the Metropolitan Area of Guadalajara (MAG) in the state of Jalisco. It is here where the intersection between the “illegality” of Central American migrants and Mexican “nationals” creates a contested space of undefined border(s) through the State’s processes, everyday practices, political discourses, and landscapes.

Having been raised in the MAG, most of the time I barely noticed the railroad tracks, or migrants in transit for that matter. I was not even aware that people traveled on the cargo train. The first people I saw trying to get on that train were my high-school friends, who having the railroad tracks passing just a few miles from our private school, used to play a game to get on the train: they ran besides it, and then grabbed it trying to pull their bodies on the train. I never saw one of them being successful, though they claimed they were. It was not until a few years later, during college, that I learned that Mexican internal migrants used the cargo train to travel through the country, and that some of them went through Guadalajara. Yes, getting on the train was a lot more than a game.



However, I never saw a migrant on the train, nor in the mainstream media. It was not until 2010 that I started to see migrants in the city. Furthermore, news in mainstream media about the increase of migrants in transit through the city, about neighbors complaining of their presence, and of migrants choosing this route due to the violence in the Gulf route, were not written until the 2011 (FM4-Paso Libre, 2013). This is not to say that migrants in transit coming from other Mexican states and Central American countries did not travel through the city before that. On the contrary, from my perspective, both the invisibility of previous years, as well as the way their presence and passing through the city have been constructed by the media, the policy-makers, and public opinion reflect what the title of this thesis suggests: borders are much more complex and multifaceted than purely political boundaries.

Consequently, the title of this thesis, “Borderlands without borders” reflects the effort to shed light into the multiple and dynamic borders: material, institutional, discursive and symbolic, that are constructed and maintained to keep specific bodies and “ways of moving” on the “outside.” Borders are constantly changing, constantly moving, and constantly being reproduced not only through surveillance and enforcement instruments, but also through invisibility and “moral” concerns. Yet, as this work aims to demonstrate, these borders are always porous, and thus consequently challenged, transgressed and negotiated.

#### **MIGRANTS IN TRANSIT THROUGH MEXICO**

Migrants in transit in Mexico are currently one of the most vulnerable populations in the country (Amnesty International 2010). Yet, because the crossings are irregular and thus

abuses are widely unreported, there is not accurate data on the numbers of abuses committed against them, nor on the exact number of migrants crossing through Mexico. However, according to International Organization for Migration, it is estimated that more than 150,000 migrants enter irregularly through the Southern border. Furthermore NGOs working with migrants in transit in the country estimate that the number of undocumented migrants crossing annually through Mexico to the United States could reach 400,000 (IOM 2014).



Figure 1: The Western route is identified with the red line. The other two main routes (Central and Gulf) are identified with a green line. Source: Casillas, Rodolfo. *Una Vida Discreta, Fugaz y Anónima: Los Centroamericanos Transmigrantes en México*. México, D.F: Flacso, 2006.

Migration in transit from Central America did not represent a problem for Mexico until the late 80s and early 90s when it became “a national security” concern due to a change in migration policy in the United States. The results were rounds of deportations from the United States to Latin American countries, and a demand for more control of the migratory flows in Mexico (Casillas 2008). Since then, a wide array of treaties and policies

have consolidated Mexican migration policy as a matter of national security. Among these policies are the creation of the National Institute of Migration (1993); the framing of the National Institute of Migration as a national security entity; and the Merida Initiative (Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs 2012). These, in addition to the new Mexican Migration Law approved in 2011, have increased the complexity of Mexican migration policy: on the one hand, global and national strategies have increased undocumented migrants' marginalization; on the other hand, pressures from human rights NGOs promoting the defense of migrants in the U.S. and in Mexico have prompted a rhetoric that advocates for the protection of migrant human rights regardless of their status. The result has been the creation of an institutional frame with two contradictory forces: respect for migrants' human rights, and the securitization of the national migration policy.

#### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Migration in transit through Mexico's literature is scant; most sources come from journalism and NGOs publications, and academic works on the issue are just emerging. Mobility and spatial analyses have dealt with the post-modern world's increasing mobility and with the impact of immigrants in the production of space in host countries. Nevertheless, studies focused on the spaces through which undocumented migrants in transit cross Mexico continue to be very rare.

The vast majority of reports regarding undocumented migration in transit in Mexico come from local and international NGOs. These organizations have published a myriad of reports documenting the situation of migrants in transit in Mexico. In 2010, Amnesty International published the work "Víctimas Invisibles: Migrantes en Movimiento en

Mexico.” The document reports on five aspects of undocumented migrants’ transit: the dangers of the travelling; the abuses suffered by migrants in transit on the migration checkpoints; repatriation, reparations and protection; international and national laws; and recommendations. More recently, the Network for the Documentation of the Migrants’ Defense Organizations presented the report “Narrativas de la Transmigración centroamericana en su paso por México” (2013); and “FM4-Paso Libre,” the only local NGO working with migrants in transit in Guadalajara presented their first report on the situation of migration in the Metropolitan Area of Guadalajara (2013). These reports recount the conditions in which migrants in transit travel through Mexico, and the violations to their human rights by criminal groups, individual citizens and the State. Probably the only academic work on migration in transit through Mexico is Casillas’ (2008) *Una Vida Discreta, Fugaz y Anónima: Los Centroamericanos Transmigrantes en México*, which examines migration policies and migratory flows in Mexico. Casillas (2008) develops the concept of Mexico as a “vertical border” between Central America and the United States. This study is particularly useful to understand migratory flows through Mexico, for it uses new maps showing the different routes, the location of the migratory stations<sup>1</sup> and the level of human rights’ violations in each route. Nevertheless, due to the informative and advocacy nature of these works, they lack a more nuanced approach to the undocumented migration in transit dynamics in the distinct spaces which they crossed.

---

<sup>1</sup> In Mexico’s Migration Law, a migratory station is defined as the “place that the Institute of Migration establishes to temporarily put foreigners who do not prove their regular migratory status, while their migratory situation is resolved” (Sin Fronteras I.A.P 2012, 16, own translation).

Spatial analyses of “unauthorized” immigrants in host communities have been carried out in other geographical locations. Zhang’s *Strangers in the City: Reconfigurations of Space, Power, and Social Networks within China’s Floating Population* (2001) illustrates the politics of space and experiences of immigrant populations from China’s province of Whenzhou in Beijing. In the United States, Duncan and Duncan’s *Landscapes of Privilege: Aesthetics and Affluence in an American Suburb* (2004) describes Mount Kisko’s reactions to the presence of Latino immigrants in their community, and narrate how both public and private spaces become racialized and prevent the “sight” of Latino immigrants in the city. These two insightful works provide useful analytical tools for this study; however, they focus on immigrants who have a more stable and prolonged presence in the host cities, and not with migrants in transit.

Mobility studies’ importance has grown over the past decades due the transformations in the ways and intensity with which some people move due to different globalization processes. In *Mobilizing Place, Placing Mobility* Verstraete and Cresswell (2002) work with the concepts of place; mobility and practice; and the interconnections that exist among them. Verstraete and Cresswell identify these nomadic metaphysics as the origin of a permeable place, and of the theories of practice. Furthermore, their work, which ascertains the distinct ways in which movement is affected by race, gender and class, influenced this work’s understanding of undocumented migrants’ position in today’s globalized world. Similarly, Nigel Thrift’s work *Spatial Formations* (1996) argues (through different case studies) that subjects and places cannot be analyzed separately. His deep analysis on how space is socially constructed, transformed and deconstructed has

informed this work better understand the interconnectedness among spatial practices and forms, subjects and landscapes.

Following a similar engagement with spatial analysis, the present research aims to contribute to what Massey has called “a relational politics of a relational space,” (2005, 61) in which space is addressed as practiced, as engaged with the material environment, and a relational construction. This space is fundamentally concerned with multiplicity, interaction, and thus, with distinct power relations and conflicting interests. This research provides a spatial analysis of migrants in transit’s trajectories through Mexico, and their experiences and relations with both the built environment and with the “locals” in a specific urban context. This study sheds light into the distinct ways through which migrants’ trajectories are qualified by legal status, and by specific political, social and cultural imaginations and discourses of space.

#### **THE METROPOLITAN AREA OF GUADALAJARA**

The reasons for focusing this research on an urban center such as the MAG are twofold: theoretical and empirical. Theoretically, a wide array of authors (Holtson and Appadurai 1996; Amin 2013; Comaroff and Comaroff 1999; Sassen 1996; and Sassen 2013) have advocated for the city as a crucial unit for social science analyses. The authors reject the dichotomy between the “global” and “national” as useful analytical scales, and argue that, by re-scaling to the city, one can go beyond “citizenship” as mere membership, and look at it as a practice. It is through these “lived spaces” of the city that one can unveil the exclusionary and conservative aspects of widely celebrated constructions, such as citizenship. Furthermore, Sassen (1996, 2013), Holston and Appadurai (1996), Comaroff

and Comaroff (1999), and Amin (2013) identify a set of effects/consequences/forces that “transnationalization” has brought into the cities: an increasing inequality that reduces the possibilities for encounters and allegiances among different groups; an increased deregulation in national legal structures so that global capital and business can flow freely, while at the same time generating the conditions for “concentration of the others” such as “the marginals” and “the immigrants” (Sassen 1996, 210); the privatization of security (Holston and Appadurai; Sassen 2013; Amín 2012); and the extra-legalization of justice (Holston and Appadurai 1996; Comaroff and Comaroff 1999). Ultimately, as argued by these authors, re-scaling our analyses to the city allows for the recognition of cities as complex, heterogeneous, incomplete and ambiguous systems.

Empirically, the MAG represents an important case for migration in transit through Mexico for geographic, political and humanitarian reasons. Geographically, the railroads have a unique location within the city: railroad tracks crossing through Mexico usually surround cities; however, in the case of the Metropolitan Area of Guadalajara, the train passes through the middle of the city. Furthermore, the railroads tracks go through the most important municipalities of the Metropolitan Area: Zapopan and Guadalajara. As shown in the map, the railroads tracks cross through middle to high income residential areas (Figure 2) and industrialized zones (Figure 3).

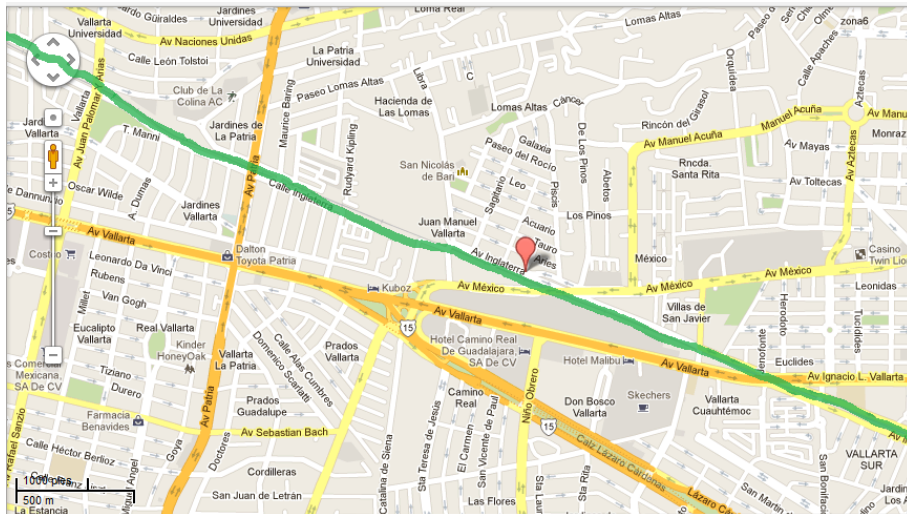


Figure 2: The green line indicates the passage of “La Bestia” through middle and high income neighborhoods of the Metropolitan Area of Guadalajara. **Source:** Google Maps.

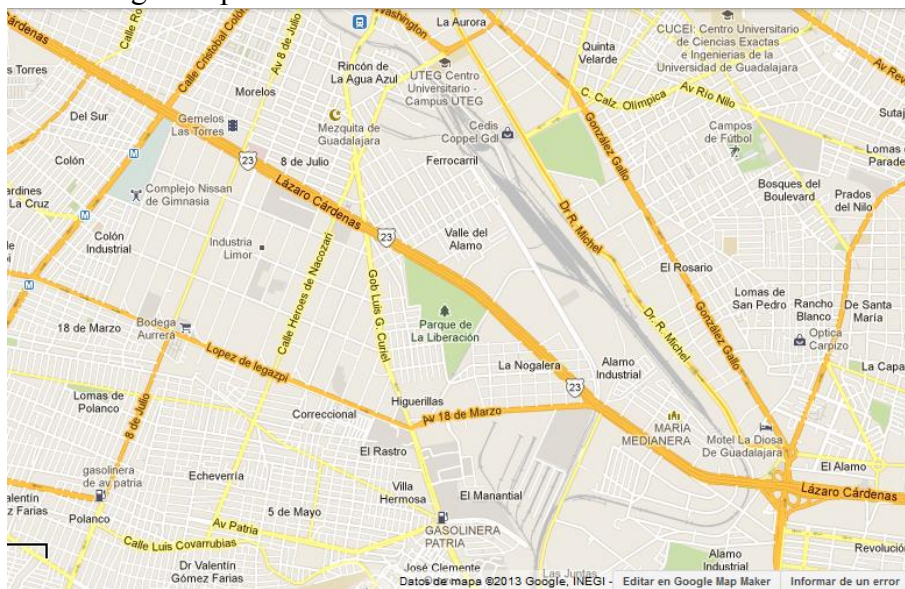


Figure 3: The red line indicates the passage of “La Bestia” through an industrial zone in the Metropolitan Area of Guadalajara. **Source:** Google Maps.

Politically, the Metropolitan Area of Guadalajara is the second most populated metropolitan area in Mexico. It is composed by 6 continuous municipalities: Guadalajara,



Zapopan, Tlajomulco de Zuñiga, El Salto, San Pedro Tlaquepaque and Tonalá; and 2 other external municipalities: Juanacatlán and Ixtlahuacán de los Membrillos. It has an estimated 4,434,378 million inhabitants (INEGI 2009). Furthermore, during recent years, the MAG, a historically commercial center, has received an incredible amount of public and private funds to develop what has been called “the Mexican Silicon Valley” (Carlos Morales 2013). This reflects what David Harvey (1989) identified as “entrepreneurialism”- the main driver of urban action. According to Harvey, the “rise of the “entrepreneurial city” meant increased inter-urban competition.

Thus, the MAG’s urban landscape, being embedded in such national and global dynamics, has been constantly re-defined, negotiated, and challenged by different distinct social groups. Migrants in transit through the MAG are a key component in such dynamics because its marginalizing tools are imposed upon them. According to the only local NGO working with migrants in transit in the MAG, “FM4-Paso Libre”, migration in transit in the MAG is a relatively recent phenomenon, which during the past five years has passed from total invisibility to moderate levels of visibility. However, indifference, criminalization and fear towards migrants in transit persist due to the lack of policies and actions that address the vulnerability and dangers of migrants in transit in the city (FM4-Paso Libre 2013).

Humanitarianly, the heterogeneity and diversity that characterizes urban centers such as the MAG also become key sites for the development not only of humanitarian strategies to protect migrants in transit, but for the provision of survival tools for migrants on their way to the United States.

## **RESEARCH**

During the summer of 2013 I did a 3 month internship with Dignidad y Justicia en el Camino, A.C. (“FM4-Paso Libre”), the only local NGO that works with migrants in transit in the MAG. During the internship I worked in all 4 areas of the organization. I attended the Centro de Atención al Migrante (CAM), administered by “FM4-Paso Libre,” where I conducted semi-structured interviews with migrants for the organization’s database. I also collaborated on the elaboration of the organization’s first activities report in which I conducted (along with the research team) surveys among neighbors and migrants in transit along the railroad tracks. I also worked on the Network and Outreach area of the organization giving workshops to college students, MAG’s residents, religious groups, and local authorities. This experience allowed me to gain access, to build rapport with the organization, and to have a deeper understanding of the complex social dynamics taking place in the city. During the following summer of 2014, I returned to the MAG for three months to do fieldwork. During that time, I continued to work as a volunteer with FM4-Paso Libre. Furthermore, the organization allowed me to use their database to contact neighbors, and other relevant actors. Working with FM4-Paso Libre became one critical aspect not only of my research, but also of my understanding of migrants in transit through the city, and of my role as a graduate student and a researcher.

This research is framed within critical geography studies (García-Ramón 2004, Massey 1984, Mitchell 2000, Harvey 2009), which look into social and cultural processes to challenge different imaginations of “space and place, of landscapes and environment, and of public and private space, to link ideas and spatial imaginations to the material world”

(Atkinson 2005, vii) (Atkinson 2005, vii), and most importantly to the implications that specific imagination of space have on political processes. This field is appropriate for this study because critical geography studies call for a “practical engagement of the world through ideas and practices” (Katz 1998, 257). Consequently, they aim to recognize and unveil the power relations embedded in spatial practices, imaginations and arrangements.

The framework for my analysis largely draws on works on space developed by Lefebvre (1991), Massey (2005), and Bourdieu (1990). Lefebvre proposes the concept of the third or lived space, as that which can be lived and practiced. It is through these practices that Bourdieu’s work explains how embodied practices allow for resistance and “otherness” (Verstraete and Cresswell 2002 22). Massey presents an approach to space that considers it as the product of interactions and social relations; as the sphere from which the possibility of multiplicity and plurality arises; and as open, always-under-construction. With this approach I aim to overcome dichotomies that characterize spatial descriptions, such as objective/subjective, material/mental, and real/imagined (Cresswell 2002), and most importantly, these approaches allude to the political implications within the production of space. In this work, I articulate the relationship between politics, space, and social relations in order to discuss the dynamics, complexities and discourses of space and spatial practices that migrants encounter in the MAG, and how such interactions impact their transit through the MAG while at the same time challenging and transforming social relations and landscapes in the MAG.

## **METHODS**

Research for this thesis includes a wide variety of qualitative methods that seek to engage space from a critical perspective. Because space is always open, multiple and under-construction (Massey 2005), distinct techniques were employed to have a grasp of the Metropolitan Area of Guadalajara landscapes, institutional and political arrangements, socio-cultural context, and social relations. During my fieldwork I used cultural landscapes, semi-structured interviews, situationist mappings and material culture analysis.

Cultural landscape studies describe the built environment and its history, but also its specific socio-economic, cultural and political positions. For the purpose of this research, the sample consisted of three neighborhoods located along the railroad tracks in the MAG: the exiting yards (Municipality of Guadalajara); El Eje Inglaterra (Municipality of Guadalajara); and Villas de Asís (Municipality of Zapopan). The three chosen neighborhoods have very distinct spatial arrangements vis a vis the railroad tracks and ways of negotiating space in the city. These three sites allow for the construction of sub-groups and for useful comparisons (Creswell 1998, 119) among distinct socio-economic and cultural landscapes across the railroad tracks in the MAG.

Semi-structured interviews were used because their design allows obtaining specific yet deep accounts and stories (Rubin and Rubin 1995) regarding the space in which people live, how they understand it, and how they see migrants in transit position in such spaces. Three different sets of interviews were conducted with public officials, neighbors and migrants in transit respectively.

The sample for the public officials consisted of 3 to 6 public officials in the Municipalities of Guadalajara and Zapopan. The names of the public officials are not disclosed; however, they are identified throughout the chapters by their positions at the time of the interview. Additionally, 3 to 9 adult neighbors of the same municipalities were

interviewed in the neighborhoods of the exiting yards, El Eje Inglaterra and Villas de Asís. In this case, names are disclosed and pseudonyms are used to identify them throughout the study. The participants in these two groups signed informed consents forms, and the interviews were audio-recorded. The views and perspectives these two groups have of undocumented migration in transit through the city is crucial for the understanding of the construction of “authorized” and “unauthorized” bodies in the city. The discourses outlined by public officials in the interviews reveal the ways through which migrants in transit are excluded from certain public and private spaces. This is important because as stated by Hayden “one of the consistent ways to limit the economic and political rights of groups has been (...) limiting access to space” (1995, 22).

The third set of interviews were conducted with to 2 to 3 undocumented migrants in transit through the MAG. The purpose of these interviews was to have a better understanding of the city from the migrants’ perspectives: how do they challenge and navigate through the different public and private spaces of the MAG? Because revealing their identity could pose a threat to migrants, only verbal informed consent was obtained, and migrants are not identified by their names so that their identities cannot be associated with the study.

Finally, in the chapter “Experiences of Spaces: Landscapes, Othering Practices, and the Material Culture,” I draw from two traditions to engage migrants’ experience across the MAG: situationist mappings, and archeology of the everyday. Situationist mappings, as opposed to maps, seek to de-stabilize the alleged coherence of time and space to expose the “fragmentation of the spatial” (Massey 2005, 107). Of these techniques, Dèbord’s *dérives* have been widely recognized for the effectiveness to engage with space, specifically cities, to involve a psychological awareness of landscapes (Dèbord 2013 [1958], 3).

The second one, the archeology of the everyday, based on Jason de Leon's work with migrants' material culture in the Arizona's desert, examines objects commonly considered "trash," and look at them as markers and traces of migratory experiences. While in the chapter I discuss some of the problems I see with these methods or the approach the authors take, overall these techniques influenced my work for their call to disrupt the alleged coherence of space, and to bring to the fore migratory experiences.

#### **LIMITATIONS AND ETHICAL DILEMMAS**

Methodological limitations of the study arise from the amount of time that I spent on the field. While I grew up in the MAG, and did an internship for a local NGO working with migrants in transit in the MAG during the summer of 2013 (3 months), I only spent 13 weeks carrying out fieldwork, which posed an obstacle for the building of trust with some of the participants in the research.

Another issue that arose frequently at all stages of the research, and one that still remains is that of the power relations involved in entering a space where I embodied and represented asymmetries, exclusions, and inequalities. At every stage of this research my own privilege (an international student from the middle-class who can move relatively freely across Mexico and the United States), became more and more evident. I'm a "citizen" from a middle-class family that grew up in Guadalajara, and consequently, is "entitled" to walk through every space in city. This asymmetry in the comfort with which I moved along the city was more evident when taking photos. Who was I and why was I allowed to enter this space and take photographs not only of migrants in transit, but of other people walking through it? This ethical dilemma bothered me along the walks along the

railroad tracks, so I always asked for permission to take the photos, and took them from a distance where I felt I was not being “too invasive”. Nevertheless, according to Hale (2008), when confronted with such positions of privilege, the researcher’s move is “is one of active alignment, avoiding the righteous fervor of a convert/traitor while rejecting the privilege-laden option to remain outside the fray” (3). Rather than walk away from it, one must engage with the contradictions, and be aware of the privileged position one has.

Additionally, working as a volunteer with “FM4-Paso Libre” to ensure some reciprocity, and prevent this exercise from being completely extractive, also had other effects: my own understanding of migration in the city, and throughout Mexico, became highly permeated by the vision of the organization, with which I developed a personal relationship.

Finally, the conceptual framework of this study sees the MAG as a complex and unique geographical context in a specific period of time. Consequently, this work is not “generalizable” in the traditional way. Nevertheless, as a critical cultural geographical study, it strives to shed light on the crucial processes of the production of public and private spaces, of the constructions of categories of “others” and “foreigners,” and by the discourses and practices that legitimize certain bodies as an authorized presence in specific social and cultural spaces. By doing so, this study hopes to bring important insight to the experiences of undocumented migrants in transit, as well as of MAG urban and socio-spatial dynamics.

## **CHAPTERS' ORGANIZATION**

The organization of this thesis consists on this introduction, three chapters, and a conclusion. The first chapter, “The Politics of Space,” examines the MAG as a space where migration in transit in the city is embedded within an already complex urban center where the State’s presence is not coherent, and where sociocultural and political understandings of security and citizenship are contested. The second chapter, “Experiences of Spaces,” looks at the landscapes along railroad tracks to examine the experiences and spatial practices of migrants in transit to unsettle the accounts that tend to describe migrants as an “impoverished mass,” and recognize “the complex histories and geographies of migration” and “(...) the diverse array of individuals who have assumed this subject position.” (Shaw 2012, 10). Finally, the third chapter, “Encounters and Desencuentros,” explores, through three cultural landscapes in three distinct areas of the MAG, how social and racial borders are maintained and reinforced between “proper citizens,” and the “subaltern” (both migrants in transit and “homeless people”) through particular spatial imaginations.

This thesis aims to uncover specific understandings and politics of the “space” in the MAG that produce policies and categorizations that hinder the diversity of social relations taking place in the city while increasing the vulnerability and marginalization against undocumented migrants in transit. Looking at the production of space and the wide array of spatial practices along the railroad tracks in the city is crucial to provide a deeper understanding of the experience of migrants in transit through Mexico, and more specifically through a large urban space such as the MAG.



## **Chapter 1: The Politics of Space**

The increasing securitization and militarization of Mexican policies towards undocumented migration has been widely recognized (Fassin 2011, Heyman and Ackleson 2009, Casillas 2008). The so-called “war on drugs” and the “Plan Mérida” have increased the policing of Mexico’s southern border, and exposed migrants in transit to greater violence and exclusion. It is with this understanding that I initiated my research in the Metropolitan Area of Guadalajara. I expected to find these national policies and mechanisms reflected in the attitudes and actions of both local, state and federal authorities in the area. However, what I encountered was a much messier space where migration in transit in the city is embedded within an already complex urban center where the State’s presence is not fixed or coherent, and where sociocultural and political understandings of security and citizenship are always being contested and negotiated.

Federal, state and local authorities’ actions in the MAG are shaped and contested by societal, cultural, political and economic imaginations operating at both global and local scales. In this sense, looking at urban centers not traditionally considered “borderlands” is critical not only for understanding “the spatial character of power” and of State processes, but also to uncover the mechanisms that transform subjects into “authorized” and “unauthorized” bodies. This chapter is an effort to provide an interpretation of how “the politics of space,” understood as a series of geographical, political and socio-cultural imaginations and practices, operates in the area surrounding the train tracks in the MAG creating physical, racial and class borders between migrants and citizens. What follows is

a look into an always contradictory, unfinished, complex reality where specific economic logics and administrative structures, as well as “civil society” and government authorities’ agendas are intertwined to racialize, invisibilize, and/or marginalize migrants in transit through the MAG.

The chapter is divided in two sections: the mobilization of the State, and the mobilization of citizenship. Each of these sections examine how both the State (at the global, national and local scale), and the so-called “civil society” in the Metropolitan Area of Guadalajara deploy distinct strategies to create borders (both symbolic and physical) between “them,” and migrants in transit in the city through particular geo-political imaginations and institutions.

#### **THE MOBILIZATION OF THE STATE**

In *State/ Space*, Brenner et al. (2008) argues that the study of the Westphalian State has been marked by its naturalization, whose analyses had been caught in what Agnew (1994) called a “territorial trap.” Such a trap considers the State to be a “static, timeless territorial “container” that encloses economic and political processes” (Brenner et al 2008, 2). However, since the 80’s, a theoretical turn in the study of the State has questioned the accuracy of analytical frameworks of the State as a fixed, enclosed entity. Instead, there has been an “increasing critical attention to the changing spatialities of state power and political life and to the development of new methodologies for their study” (3).

Similarly, in his work, *New State Spaces: Urban Governance and the Rescaling of Statehood*, Brenner (2004) argues that it is fundamental to recognize that “insofar as terms such as local, urban, regional and so forth are used to demarcate purportedly separate

territorial “islands” of social relations, they mask the profound mutual imbrication of all scales” (Brenner 2004, 7). Brenner states that European nation states are going through a process of spatial restructuring. While focused on a very different geographical location, his analysis remains relevant for the Mexican case. For Brenner, the state should be approached as an “ongoing process emphasizing polymorphous geographies at a multiplicity of spatial scales” (Brenner 2004, 74). Brenner (2004) identifies three intertwined spatial restructuring processes of the State: state reterritorialization, state re-bordering, and state rescaling. These frameworks of analyses carried out from critical social science seek to “counter neoliberal globalization narratives,” and to describe the “new landscapes of statehood” (70-71). From this perspective, the State can be analyzed through ongoing political, institutional and economic processes at different scales: global, national, regional, or/and local.

In this context, looking at specific cities such as the MAG, serves to analyze larger processes of globalization and neoliberalism, and what they have brought to everyday practices. Furthermore, Rieker and Ali (2008) argue that it is necessary to bring more social histories to the fore to better understand how global, national and local processes are put into practice in particular spaces, and how they impact people’s lives, in this case the ones of undocumented migrants in transit.

**The global scale: Spatial re-bordering(s)**

It is well known that since the 9/11 attacks, the United States has increased the policing and militarization of its border with Mexico. Furthermore, the “Merida Initiative,” signed in 2008 as a program for cooperation between the United States and Mexico to support the

fight against drug trafficking, has served, in practice, as a comprehensive security strategy. More recently, its third pillar, “Creating a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Border” has incorporated Mexico’s southern border as an “area of concern.” Within this program, the United States

has provided \$6.6 million of mobile Non-Intrusive Inspection Equipment (NIIE); \$3.5 million in mobile kiosks, operated by Mexico’s National Migration Institute, that capture the biometric and biographic data of individuals living and transiting southern Mexico; and US training to troops patrolling the border, communications equipment, and support for the development of Mexico’s air mobility and surveillance capabilities (Ribando Seelke and Finklea 2014, 19-22).

The deployment of these technologies and strategies by the State for the policing, control and enforcement of the borders in Mexico, have led academics to characterize them as “necropolitics” (Mmembe 2003). According to Achille Mmembe, necropolitics “(...) account for the various ways in which, in our contemporary world, weapons are deployed in the interest of maximum destruction of persons, (...) new and unique forms of social existence in which vast populations are subjected to conditions of life conferring upon them the status of living dead” (40). Migratory policies and practices reinforce migrants’ marginalization and victimization by forcing them to cross the country through dangerous roads and means of transportation that ultimately mark them as bodies that can be annihilated.

Furthermore, the sharing and gathering of information, as well as United States’ surveillance activities, have not been constrained to Mexico’s northern and southern borders. In the MAG, an urban center far from the southern or northern borders, the U.S. ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) is also present, and they have an office in the United States’ consulate in Guadalajara. While doing my fieldwork and working as a

volunteer with “FM4-Paso Libre” in the summer of 2014, and in the midst of the widely reported “migrant children refugee crisis in the United States,” I came to know, through a member of the organization, that an ICE representative from the Homeland and Security Department with the title of Assistant attaché in Guadalajara, visited the organization. According to the member of the organization, the ICE “assistant attaché in Guadalajara” said they were just doing preventive work to alert migrants of the dangers of the journey, and inform them of the risks they run while trying to cross the border. I tried to contact ICE representatives in the MAG directly, but they did not answer my requests.

While I was not able to confirm or gather more information on ICE’s activities and purposes in the city, it is clear that their presence reflects the United States’ increasing and broadening surveillance across Mexican territory, a surveillance of the border that is no longer geographically constrained to the northern border through the building of walls, or through economic and military “cooperation” agreements with Mexico, but also through the actual presence of their migratory agents throughout Mexican territory. This speaks to the spatial restructuring of the State through what Brenner (2004) calls “the state re-bordering,” a process in which borders are “no longer viewed as exclusively national demarcators of state sovereignty but are now understood as multifaceted semiotic, symbolic, and political economical practices through which state power is articulated and contested” (71).

### **The National scale: State reterritorialization and the “double geographical imagination”**

The two main national institutions whose tasks and responsibilities relate directly to migrants in transit are the federal police and the National Institute of Migration. The first one is in charge of the space surrounding the railroad tracks, which under Mexican law is considered federal property. The second one is in charge of the foreigners in the country. In practice both of these institutions work as a surveillance, security and control apparatus of the national State. But the geographical and political assumptions under which they currently operate serve to police migrants in transit, and protect the goods travelling through the railroad tracks.

#### ***The Federal Police***

By law, the federal police cannot detain or deport undocumented migrants in transit unless they commit a crime (under the Mexican Migratory Law 2011, entering the country without documents is not considered a crime, but a “falta administrativa”). The only authority with the legal capacity to deport undocumented migrants in the country, is the National Institute of Migration. Consequently, the federal police’s role in the MAG with to regards migrants in transit has been to “protect” the free transit of goods travelling through the railroad tracks, and to a lesser extent, the surveillance of migrants in transit.

While doing fieldwork in the MAG, I was able to get on the train, with the permission of the train’s driver (“el mayordomo”), and travel for about 20 minutes on it from El Verde in the municipality of El Salto, to Las Juntas in the municipality of Tlaquepaque. While on the train, almost on arriving at Las Juntas, we saw two federal police patrols stationed along the railroad tracks. The train did not stop and continued its

way. I asked the train's driver if it was common for the federal police to stop the train, or if the federal police usually took migrants off the train. He answered: "No. Bueno... casi no los bajan. Sólo los bajan cuando la carga del tren es algo valioso/No. Well... they almost never get them off. They only do so when the train is transporting valuable goods." I asked him why. He responded with the most natural voice: "Bueno porque a ellos no les importan los migrantes, excepto cuando les pueden sacar algo. Ellos lo que cuidan es la mercancía. Los bajan para proteger la mercancía/ Well because they don't care about migrants, except if they can get something out of them. They care about the goods. They get migrants off the train to protect the goods."

This is also the logic by which "Ferromex" the largest railroad network in Mexico, and the one operating the route that traverses Guadalajara, has contracted private security to patrol the railroad tracks along the city. According to Alejandro Alarcón, Ferromex's subdirector of governmental relations, migrants in transit represent a threat to the trains, which are "to transport goods and not people": "Esta misma gente se vuelve muy experta en vandalizar los ferrocarriles y ese es un problema muy serio de México/ These people become experts on vandalizing the trains, and this is a serious problem for Mexico." (Transportemx, n.d.) While I was doing fieldwork in the MAG I interviewed Don C., a neighbor of the community of El Verde in the municipality of El Salto, and a local leader. His house is just beside the railroad tracks. He told me that he gives food and water to migrants when they are passing through, but that his most important task has been to defend them from Ferromex's private security groups:

Los del grupo Eulen<sup>2</sup> pasan seguido por aquí. El otro día, tres migrantes estaban afuera de mi casa esperando a que les trajera agua, y cuando salí ya los estaban molestando, pero como les dije que venían a mi casa se tuvieron que ir/ People from Eulen frequently pass through here. The other day three migrants were outside my house waiting for me to bring them water, and when I went outside they were already asking them questions, but I told them they were with me, so they had to go.

It is through the operation of these two institutions, public and private, that migrants in transit are seen as a threat to the goods' security. Under the capitalist system, goods are borderless, transported to other parts of Mexico or to the United States as bearers of progress and economic growth. Migrants' movement; however, is seen as a threat to security. Doreen Massey (2005) has called this apparently contradictory logic a “double geographical imagination” where one is marked by mobility and borderlessness while the other is marked by border discipline” (p.86). Massey argues that this double spatial imaginary works in favor of the already powerful. In this case, it seems to be true: goods travel freely through the country in the cargo train, protected by the federal police, and by Ferromex's private security. The capitalist logic supports the industrial companies, backed by federal institutions, “right” and power to securely move goods from one place to another relatively easy. However, undocumented migrants' journey on the cargo train has to be clandestine, and framed as a security threat... a threat to the goods being transported.

### ***The National Institute of Migration***

The National Institute of Migration has representation in every State. While the migratory stations have grown exponentially in the country (32 migratory stations with 27 provisional

---

<sup>2</sup> Eulen is a private company that offers a wide array of services, from cleaning to security. The company announces in its' website that they are “experts” on railroads security services, which include the “patrolling” of the railroad tracks (Seguridad - GRUPO EULEN México).



stations), in Jalisco there are no permanent migratory stations, and until very recently, deportations or migratory operatives did not take place in the city. In Mexico's Migration Law, a migratory station is defined as the "place that the Institute of Migration establishes to temporarily put foreigners who do not prove their regular migratory status, while their migratory situation is resolved"; on the other hand, the migration code defines provisional stations as "the physical place where the Institute establishes or facilitates to provisionally put foreigners that cannot prove their migratory status while they are taken to a migratory station or their migratory status is resolved (...)" (Sin Fronteras I.A.P 2012, 16, own translation). The institutional importance of this delegation in the state regarding the specific issue of migration in transit is not significant, and as discussed later in this chapter is it mainly driven by local governments' requests to remove migrants from residential neighborhoods.

What is significant is the change of profile of the head of the delegation. The National Institute of Migration's director, and its respective representative in the State of Jalisco were changed in 2013, just a few months after the newly elected President Enrique Peña Nieto took office. The new appointed authorities, Ardelio Vargas Fosado and Ricardo Ariel Vera Lira, Director of the National Institute of Migration, and the representative in the State of Jalisco, respectively, come from the intelligence and "security" community in the state of Hidalgo, as both served in the police corps of that state. Furthermore, the mayor of Zapopan stated that Ricardo Ariel Vera, delegate of the NIM in Jalisco, regularly attends national security meetings with the governor, mayors of the MAG, and members of the army. What this institutional change of policy reflects is the consolidation of the National

Institute of Migration as a national security entity, whose activities in states such as Jalisco are focused on “intelligence,” and security activities. However, this strategy institutionalizes and reinforces the relation of migratory policy with national security policies, which will tend to focus on migrants in transit as a “security threat,” and not from a human rights perspective.

**The Local scale: The (in)governmentality of migrants**

In *Society must be defended: lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76*, Foucault argues that during the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a new regulatory technology of power emerged directed not at the body, but at the human race. In this sense, “biopolitics deals with the population, with the population as a political problem” for which “regulatory mechanisms” must be put in place to establish an equilibrium” (Foucault [1976] 2003). In *The Politics of the Governed: Reflections of Popular Politics in Most of the World*, Chatterjee (2006), drawing on Foucault’s concept, distinguishes between population to civil society. Population as articulated in the realm of policy, is entirely descriptive and empirical, not normative, and is measured through rational instruments such as statistics.

The direct consequence of this process has been the “governmentalization of the State” in which the relation established between governments and populations is that of providing well-being, and not that of participation. Consequently, “this regime secures legitimacy not by the participation of citizens in matters of state but by claiming to provide well-being to the population. Its mode of reasoning is not deliberative openness but rather an instrumental notion of costs and benefits” (34). Furthermore, according to Foucault, this state is intrinsically racist. In this racist state, threats, either internal or external, “to the

population and for the population are created and justified,” and “the imperative to kill is acceptable only if it results not in victory over political adversaries, but in the elimination of the biological threat” (Foucault [1976] 2003, 256). Such elimination, Foucault clarifies, does not mean only “murder as such, but increasing the risk of death for some people, or, quite simply, political death, expulsion, rejection and so on.” This is the power of the State that can “make live, or let die.” (Foucault [1976] 2003).

As a result, the type of “political relationship” that the State establishes with “populations” is of a very different nature to that which it establishes with citizens. As analyzed by Chatterjee (2006), in India many of its inhabitants are “only (...) ambiguously and contextually right bearing citizens in the sense imagined by the constitution. They are not therefore, proper members of civil society” (38). But, Chatterjee continues, as populations within the State, they have to be managed and controlled by governmental agencies. The relationship that the State establishes with these particular populations, which Chatterjee characterizes as political society, is always contextual and temporary.

Foucault ([1976] 2003) and Chatterjee’s (2006) arguments raise interesting points regarding migrants in transit in the MAG. First, local authorities, faced with the presence of migrants in transit in the city, struggle to recognize the character of these humans crossing through the city. Migrants in transit travelling on the cargo train, undocumented or documented, travel on “the margins” on clandestine means of transportation and with uncertain trajectories, and thus resist and escape the efforts of the government to count them, categorize them, and stabilize them in specific spaces. Furthermore, their almost always temporary presence in the city makes their classification harder for the authorities.

Second, local authorities deny any responsibility regarding migrants' in transit, and the type of relationship they establish with them, while still framed only on the provision of specific "welfare," is even more fragile than that established with the political society. Third, through the racist logic outlined by Foucault, local authorities have framed migrants in transit as a "health" threat to the citizens.

During the summer of 2014, I was able to interview several local authorities in the MAG. Two of them were the majors of Zapopan and Guadalajara. In both interviews, the problem of migrants in transit was characterized as a problem of not being able to know who they are, where they are, where are they coming from, where are they going, and so on. When asked if he believed that the municipality had any responsibilities towards migrants in transit in the city, the major of Zapopan responded:

Focalizar la atención al migrante se hace muy difícil, en primer lugar porque no sabes quiénes son. Pues sí, son caras pero no son nombres ni son apellidos... ni los tienes ubicados físicamente en algún espacio/Focalizing attention on the migrants in transit is very difficult, in the first place because we don't know who they are. Well, yes... they are faces, but they are not names or last names, we don't have them identified in a specific place.

In this sense, from the local authorities' perspective, control and categorization are indispensable to be able to provide any services. Under the rationality of this governmentalization of the State, being a "face," a human, is not enough to have access to services or welfare, one also needs to have a "name"; furthermore, the government "needs" to know that name.

In the same interview, I asked the major of Zapopan his opinion on giving migrants from Central America a transmigrant visa, so that they could cross Mexico. He responded:

Eso ayudaría mucho, a contar con un padrón, a tener una visión más clara de dónde están y qué haciendo y a poderlos sumar, o poderlos subir al marco jurídico, al marco legal... además de alguna manera ya cuentas con registro de quiénes son, a dónde van, de cuáles son sus proyectos/ That would help a lot, in the first place, to have a register, to have a clearer vision of where they are, what are they doing and be able to add them, and pull them in to a juridical framework (...) in a way, we would have a way of knowing who they are, where they are going, and what their projects are.

Migrants in transit generate anxiety among local authorities because they fail to be recognized by their statistical and measuring instruments, so vital for the provision of welfare and services, which requires, above all, fixing them in specific categories and spaces. Furthermore, there is a need to “pull them into the legal framework.” It is this perceived “illegality” that makes their status in the city more vulnerable, and the access to basic services more difficult to access. For the mayor of Guadalajara, the legal status of migrants was a primary concern: “Porque (...) el generar una serie de programas oficiales es tanto como aceptar o alentar el fenómeno de la migración/Because (...) generating official programs is just like accepting or promoting migration.” In the mayor’s statement, migration is seen as a problem, but what is not said, is that not all migration is a “problem,” it is the specific migration of migrants from Central America or southern states in Mexico that represents a problem. It is here where the racist character of the State, as characterized by Foucault is most evident.

The character of the racist State is also evident in the authorities’ portrayal of migrants in transit, not only as a security threat, but also as a health threat. In March 2013, a council member of the municipality of Zapopan presented an initiative to establish a shelter for migrants in the city. According to the initiative, the purpose of the shelter would

be to provide humanitarian assistance: a place to rest, eat and take a bath for migrants in transit. But in the course of the initiative another concern was raised. According to this councilmember, when she was designing the initiative, Jalisco's minister of health warned her that migrants in transit coming from Central America represented a "foco de infección/source of infection" as carriers of diseases already eradicated in Zapopan that were still present in Central America. Migrants in transit then became a threat to the health of the citizens.

During the summer of 2014, when I interviewed the council member she said that: "Necesitamos una casa en la cual sepamos cuáles están entrando, cuáles están saliendo, cuáles ya vacunamos, cuáles no. Y nosotros vemos el fondo de por la gente que está alrededor/ We need a house where we know who is coming in or going out... who has been vaccinated and who has not (...) Above all, we are thinking on the people that lives in the surrounding area." Thus, state racism operated delineating an imagined illness border between those who belong, and those who do not. Furthermore, the lives of the "citizens," the population "living in the surrounding area, have to be protected against migrants in transit, the external threat. And so, state racism separates the "migrant population" (about which, as they have stated, they know little) from the citizens.

Initiatives such as the one above for the construction of shelters for migrants in transit are not uncommon in Guadalajara and in Zapopan. Actually, shelters are the only "proposals" that municipal governments have presented regarding migration in transit. In this sense, local authorities need to first "control" and "stabilize" migrants' bodies in a specific space in order to provide services. The mayor of Guadalajara states that: "La

participación de la autoridad municipal podría ser solo de carácter humanitario, y tienen que ver con el establecimiento de algunas medidas de apoyo a quienes están en esta situación, pero solo podrían ser asistencialistas/ The participation of the municipal authority could only be of a humanitarian nature, and would have to do with measures of support for them, but only be as “hand-outs.” Guadalajara’s mayor’s statement signals that any action established by the local authorities would be fragile and temporary because it will not be institutionalized.

In addition to this, local authorities in the MAG do not have the institutional resources to assist migrants in transit. There are no federal or state programs that have been established in the metropolitan area. Furthermore, according to the mayor of Zapopan, “pero por otro lado, además del incremento de este tránsito, una realidad completamente nueva para los municipios, una...pues no quisiera una llamarlo una desatención, pero sí una indiferencia tal vez del INM. Nunca la Federación ha bajado los programas a los municipios. Besides the increase of migrants in transit, there has been a... I would not want to call it a lack of attention, but rather an indifference from the National Institute of Migration. The federal government has never implemented the programs in the municipalities.” It is precisely through this political and institutional indifference that authorities at all levels exercise their sovereign power, distributing welfare to populations they can control as well as to “proper citizens”, while migrants in transit are “left to die.”

#### **THE MOBILIZATION OF “CITIZENSHIP”**

On August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013, just a few weeks after I came back from my summer internship with “FM4-Paso Libre”, Proyecto Diez, the local news site I follow, reported on the recent and

first declaration of Jalisco's Governor, Jorge Aristóteles Sandoval, regarding migrants in transit in the state. Apparently, the governor made the statement right after a "national security" meeting with the MAG mayors and state and federal authorities:

Estamos revisando que personal o gente, hondureños o gente sobre todo de Centroamérica, que está en las esquinas. Necesitamos que se denuncie para inmediatamente, con todas las condiciones y con todos sus derechos, regresarlos a su país. Esto en atención a que en algunas zonas, hemos detectado por ejemplo, que quienes asaltan a casas, son de otra nacionalidad, sobre todo centroamericanos o sudamericanos/ We are detecting personal or people, Hondurans, or people, mostly from Central America that are on the Street corners. We need them to be reported so that, immediately, with all the proper conditions and with rights intact, we can return them to their country. All this because we have detected that in certain areas of the city, those who rob houses are from other nationalities, mostly Central or South Americans. ("Llama gobernador de Jalisco a denunciar migrantes para que sean deportados," n.d.)

The following day "FM4-Paso Libre" issued a statement condemning the governor's declaration, and asking him to stop criminalizing migrants in transit in the city. The governor "apologized" in his twitter account, and scheduled a meeting between "FM4-Paso Libre" and the Secretary of State in Jalisco, and the governor has not publicly talked about migration in transit ever since. However, the statement of the governor echoed a recurring theme that emerged during my conversations and interviews with neighbors and local authorities: a clear distinction between "citizens" and "others" and the racialization of the second group.

Chatterjee's *The Politics of the Governed* (2006) establishes the normative burden of citizenship, and assumes citizens' "political participation in the sovereignty of the State" it assumes (34). In this section, I argue that civil society, in the form of organized neighbors, use this normative character to claim the city for themselves, and demand the "control" and



the right to “expel” migrants in transit from their neighborhoods. In other words, civil society “as an actually existing form” remains, as stated by Chatterjee, “demographically limited” (39), for it reaches only those in the elite. Furthermore, it is this demographic limitation that marks migrants in transit as a certain kind of “people”. In this sense, Giorgio Agamben (1993, 30) argues that “in the concept of people we can easily recognize the conceptual pair identified earlier as the defining category of the original political structure: bare life (people) and political existence (People), exclusion and inclusion (...)”. It is in this sense that civil society and local authorities in the MAG have reinforced the othering of migrants in transit as “people,” and with it, migrants deportability and expendability.

During my fieldwork in the MAG, the mobilization of the concept of citizenship, though never addressed directly by neighbors and public officials, was present in every interview I held with neighbors and the mayors of Zapopan and Guadalajara. While conversations did not address this issue directly, when asked the interviewees said that the issue of migrants in transit legal status had nothing to do with their concerns about migration, but it was clear that citizenship did. Citizenship as a racializing and marginalizing tool was not exercised through the questioning of migrants’ legal status, but through the way citizenship could be practiced and enacted by organized neighbors, by the “legitimate” claims they made to space. Organized neighbors, commonly in the form of “mesas directivas/neighbors’ committees” articulated their demands and pressured local authorities to take action to prevent migrants’ presence in their neighborhoods.

### **The organized neighbors**

“Don Guillermo” is a man in his seventies that forms part of an NGO established to protect the interests of the neighbors of Jardines del Bosque, one of the oldest middle-class neighborhoods in the municipality of Guadalajara. He is one of the most vocal opposers of the construction of a shelter for migrants in the neighborhood.<sup>3</sup> He agreed to talk to me, and we met three days after in his offices. One of the first questions I asked him is how does he recognize a migrant in transit. He answered with his always firm voice: “Nosotros sabemos los que somos de raza mexicana... Ellos son generalmente negros. Los mexicanos somos morenos, morenos claros... o hasta blancos/We know who are we, of the Mexican race.... They are black. Mexicans are Brown, light brown... or even white.”

This racialization through phenotypic characteristics is not an isolated issue. During the summer of 2013, when I was doing my internship with “FM4-Paso Libre”, I worked with them in the elaboration of their first report of activities, 2010-2014. One of the sections in the report involved surveying neighbors surrounding the railroad tracks about their attitudes towards migrants. We asked the same question: How do you recognize a migrant in transit? 5% answered that they recognized a migrant due to their “skin color.” The percentage might seem small, but given that many migrants travelling on the train are also Mexican, it is significant.

During my interview with Don Guillermo, he told me about the reasons why he does not want migrants in transit “vagando/wandering” through his neighborhood: “Hay

---

<sup>3</sup> The shelter’s project and the neighbors’ reactions are addressed in the chapter “Encounters and “Desencuentros”.

migrantes durmiendo a un lado del parque (...) excremento en la calle, se orinan en las banquetas, ha habido asaltos... los fundamentos son reales/ There are migrants sleeping on the streets, by the park (...) excrement on the streets, they urinate on the sidewalks, there have been robberies... these are real concerns.” Furthermore, through a report provided by one of Zapopan’s police authorities, I had access to the “migrants’ reports” that neighborhood associations had made to the municipality during 2012 and 2013. I constructed the following table omitting the names of the neighborhood associations, but all of the neighborhoods, mainly gated communities, making reports in Zapopan are located along the railroad tracks.

<b>CAUSE FOR THE POLICE REPORT</b>	<b>NEIGHBOR’S COMMITTEE REQUEST</b>
Generan clima de inseguridad/ They generate an atmosphere of insecurity	
Robos, asaltos, clima de inseguridad, necesidades fisiológicas. / Robberies, atmosphere of insecurity, they do their physiological needs in the street.	Control de migrantes/ Control migrants.
Robos autopartes, asaltos, clima de inseguridad/ Vehicles being robbed, atmosphere of insecurity.	Mayores rondines en la colonia / More patrols in the área.
Drogas y perturbaciones de la paz y la tranquilidad. / Drugs and disturbances to tranquility.	Erradicar un mal/ finish with an evil
Dan mal aspecto a la zona y dañan negocios/ The gibe a bad aspect to the área, and hurt bussinesses.	Control de migrantes/ migrants’ control.
Pleitos y necesidad fisiológicas/ There are fights, and they do their physiological needs on the steets.	Control de migrantes/migrants’ control.
Presencia en sus colonias durante el día y la noche / Presence in neighborhoods day and night.	Retirarlos, avisar a Migración y canalizarlos a campamentos "ya existentes" / take them away and take them to shelters.

Table 1. Continue next page

Hacen sus necesidades fisiológicas en la vía pública, "utilizan un lenguaje vulgar", pleitos/ They do their physiological needs on the street and use a vulgar language.	
"detienen vehículos", seguridad y bienestar /Stop vehicles, threat to security and well-being.	Realizar rondines / increase patrols.
"piden ayuda económica y hacen sus necesidad fisiológicas" "no es un ambiente propicio para las familias en este punto"/ they ask for money and do their physiological needs, it is not an appropriate atmosphere for families.	
Robos, basura, asaltos/ robberies and trash.	Desterrar, "alejar"/ exile them, move them away.
inseguridad, pleitos, piden dinero/ insecurity, fights, and ask for money.	
defecan en el piso, dejan mucha basura, se ponen borrachos y se drogan. / physiological needs, they are drunk, and high.	"desaprobación total de que rondan en la zona", "que la policía haga algo" / total disapproval of them being in the area, police should do something.

Table 1: Neighbors’ complaints received by Zapopan’s Ministry of Security/Dirección de Seguridad de Pública de Zapopan. Information provided by FM4-Paso Libre.

Along the lines of the governor’s statement, as well as the interview with Don Guillermo, these reports evidence that migrants in transit are criminalized through class and racialization processes. And in both processes citizenship is crucial. In the case of race, citizenship acts as a way to legitimize neighbors’ claims to the city. Not all migrants in transit travelling on the cargo train are “non-Mexican.” FM4-Paso Libre’s report shows that 30% of the migrants in transit are Mexicans from other Mexican states (FM4-Paso Libre 2013, 30). However, in the neighbors’ reports to the local police, “they” are always “foreigners.” By not recognizing the “citizenship” of many of the migrants in transit travelling through the city, they can claim space for themselves. It is through these claims

that borders are brought to the city, borders which are, as argued by Heyman (2011) traversed by deep unequal and racialized logics.

The reports also show some of the strategies through which class operates. First, these reports are all signed by neighbors' organizations, so it is not individual "citizens," but a neighborhood's representatives of organized citizens making the police reports. Neighborhood organizations have a closer relationship with local authorities, they are generally elected by the people living in them, and act as representatives before local authorities.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, the presence of migrants in transit is embedded in larger administrative and electoral politics: when campaigning, local candidates look for the neighborhood organization's support...and votes. These groups are part of what is commonly recognized as the "civil society" of the MAG, whose demands are articulated and legitimized by the ethical and political burden of "civil society" which, as argued by Charterjee (1996) serve only a particular socio-economic class.

Second, the accusations made about migrants in transit are related to issues of security and urban image. The reports concerning security are invariably vague: "generan un clima de inseguridad/they generate an atmosphere of insecurity," or "ha habido robos y asaltos/ there have been robberies and thefts." However, no one particular event is described in neither the reports nor the interviews with neighbors. And third, it seems that the concern with "security" is driven by "aesthetic" and moral concerns: "no es un lugar propicio para las familias en este punto/right here is not an appropriate place for families"

---

<sup>4</sup> While neighborhood organizations might be legally constituted as either neighborhood associations, or civil associations with a different legal character, both modalities imply a legal representation to the municipality. More of this in Chapter 3: Encounters and "Desencuentros"

or “utilizan un lenguaje vulgar/ they use a vulgar language” or “dan mal aspecto a la zona.../ they make the area look bad” or “perturbaciones a la paz y a la tranquilidad/disturbances to peace and tranquility.” The accusations, as well as the neighbors’ requests to expel, remove, and place migrants in transit in camps reveal the “spatiality of power.” In other words, in the reports the “citizens”, structure what Cresswell (1996) has called a normative landscape, that is, “the way in which ideas about what is right, just and appropriate are transmitted through space and place” (8).

### **Local Authorities’ response to “civil society”**

The mayor of Zapopan says that they first knew about migrants in transit through the municipality through the “reportes ciudadanos/ citizens’ reports.” I asked him how they have reacted to such reports. He paused, and then answers that there have been three key moments since he took office in October 2012: the first one, the increase of migrants in the city, and a “complete inaction” of the municipal authority who would receive the reports, and send out some patrols to circulate around areas through which the reports were coming. However, they could not do anything because migrants were not committing a crime, so the police would only patrol the area.

The second one was when the neighbors’ reports started to be discussed in the bimonthly “national security” meetings held by local, state and federal authorities (including the National Institute of Migration, the Federal Police, the military, the intelligence agency, Jalisco’s governor and mayors of the MAF). According to the mayor, it was in these meetings that the authorities agreed that the National Institute of Migration would provide migratory operatives in the city to deport migrants in the city. According to

the mayor, these were two or three months of “very intense activity.” The mayor paused again and added “Desconocemos si los ubicaron en albergues (...) o los regresaron a sus países de origen pero se inhibió durante alguna temporada/ We do not know whether they were relocated in shelters or if they were returned to their countries of origins but “it” was hampered for a while. It was precisely just after one these meetings that the governor made the call to “report” migrants so that they could be deported.

Then, in a third moment, which according to Zapopan’s mayor began after “FM4-Paso Libre” and other NGOs denounced the governor’s statement, the regular operatives stopped. Migratory operatives through the city in which migrants are detained in the streets and taken for deportation remain, though only when the municipalities ask for them. The mayor continues:

Sigue habiendo operativos cuando los pedimos nosotros. ¿Y por qué los pedimos nosotros? Bueno, pues los pedimos porque los vecinos, es una solicitud que nos hacen permanente/ There are still migratory operatives when we ask for them. And why do we ask for them? Well, we do it because of the neighbors... that is a request that is repeatedly made.

When I interviewed the mayor of Guadalajara he had a similar response. For him, the demands of the citizens regarding migrants’ presence were legitimate, and had to be addressed by increasing surveillance over migrants: “(...) Entonces nosotros lo que nos hemos comprometido es que habrá una atención y una presencia en materia policiaca que elimine cualquier riesgo de esa naturaleza/ Neighbors consider that migrants will cause damage and insecurity in the area. So we have promised them that there would be police attention and presence that eliminates any risk of that nature.” On the one hand, “citizens”

claims that migrants represent a threat is not questioned. On the other, from the authorities' perspective, migrants in transit are an inherent risk.

Citizenship, though never recognized as an issue by authorities and neighbors, acts as the mechanism through which migrants are marginalized through class and race. Furthermore, as stated by the mayor of Zapopan, citizens have the "right" to claim the city and to demand security from authorities, and authorities "have" to address these concerns:

"Yo no tengo una visión negativa de eso (migrantes en tránsito). ¿Qué sí estoy obligado a atender? El nerviosismo de los vecinos (...) y al Ayuntamiento le exigen que estas personas sean retiradas. Entonces nosotros, simplemente por derecho de petición o por una respuesta al ciudadano, tenemos que contestar y tomar alguna acción conducente/I personally do not have a negative view of that (migrants in the city). But what am I obligated to address? Neighbors' concerns (...) and they demand that the municipality to get rid of these people. Then we, simply because of their right to petition, have to answer and take action."

While serving as an empowering tool for organized citizens that participate in political processes (namely elections), civil society and local authorities have, through an othering process, deprived migrants of a "political existence" (Agamben 1993, 31) by labelling migrants "these people" or "them," thus drawing a border between "proper citizens" and migrants in transit. Consequently, authorities and citizens do not share any responsibility towards the lives of migrants in transit, work to invisibilize their presence and their stories in the city, and frame any effort to "help" migrants in transit as a concession.



## **CONCLUSION**

State re-bordering processes, institutional and administrative State agencies acting under the capitalist economy, and socio-cultural understandings, build physical, socio-economic and racial borders that mark migrants in transit in the Metropolitan Area of Guadalajara as “unauthorized bodies.” The mobilization of the State’s agencies and institutions, as well as the mobilization of the “civil society” work in often contradictory ways to create a contested space of undefined border(s) through every day practices, political discourses and State institutions.

What this chapter demonstrates is that it is through economic, institutional, political and sociocultural processes that migrants in transit in the MAG are invisibilized, racialized, and excluded from discourses and mechanisms that would recognize their rights as human beings.

## Chapter 2: Experiences of Spaces

Migrants in transit through Mexico are commonly portrayed as an impoverished, powerless “mass” moving across the country. While it is true that undocumented migrants in transit, especially the ones travelling in “La Bestia”, are victims of exclusion, violence and discrimination (Amnesty International 2010), it is also true that such “powerlessness” is not always “(...) an absolute status that can be flattened into the absence of power,” and that “under certain conditions, powerlessness can become complex, (...) it contains the possibility of making the political, the civic, a history (...)” (Sassen 2013, 213). As reflected in this work, and in a myriad of human rights’ reports and academic articles (Amnesty 2010, Casillas 2008, Aquino et al 2012 ), migrants crossing the MAG are victims of the State, organized crime, and individuals; however, they are still “making a history and a politics” (213).

The objective of this chapter is to disrupt the sense of coherence, homogeneity, and totality that has characterized discourses about undocumented migrants in transit, and to provide instead an account that recognizes their distinct trajectories and on-going stories as subjects of history. It is divided into three sections: the first one draws from situationist mappings across the railroad tracks to analyze how the built environment shapes and is shaped by migrants in transit; the second describes particular everyday practices that help migrants navigate and/or contest different spaces and obstacles in the MAG; and the third examines objects/markers of their journey through the city that constitute a specific material culture of migration in transit.

## **THE RAILROAD TRACKS: METHOD AND LANDSCAPES**

### **The Methods: Approaching spaces and experiences**

To illustrate migrants' practices and trajectories I needed a method that would allow me to attain two main objectives: first, as researcher, to navigate the spaces through which the railroad tracks cross the city, and second, to trace some of the practices and landscapes that migrants in the city encounter when crossing through the city.

Regarding the first objective, Grady Clay (2003) describes the cross-section as a method that "must traverse the complete metropolitan area as a continuous experience going in one side, continuing through the mid-section and emerging out of the other side of the entire urban region" (119). Clay argues that when looking at the city, the cross section "forces us to confront change and differences that we might not see in the everyday life" and that they "(...) gain their explanatory strength by revealing adjacencies and contrasts in the city; set up juxtapositions that spark our awareness and suggest analyses" of the city (110). One strategy contained in Grady's guidelines for effectively carrying out a cross-section, and that proved to be useful in the field was his advice to cross different "zones" of the city, including some commercial residential, and historic centers (120-122).

While advantageous as a first approach to the city, cross-section pose methodological, philosophical and theoretical limitations to gain a deeper understanding of the city. Cross-sections are based on the empiricism of Versalius (medicine, anatomy) and Geddes (region planning) which assume that "experimentation" has an ultimate "revelatory power" (110), and consequently believes in the existence of a "real place" outside the observer. Consequently, the cross-section might present a "view" but not an understanding of the distinct city spaces, which are intrinsically fluid and multi-layered. The cross-section then became a tool through which I could have a first approximation to

the railroad tracks and their crossing of the MAG; however, they became less useful for recognizing its contradictions, layers, diverse subjects, and temporal-spatial rhythms.

Maps provide the opportunity to present a structured “representation” of spaces; however, they also organize and help “to pacify, and to take the life out of how most of us commonly think about space” (Massey 2005, 106). The issue then is that maps, taken as the absolute “truth” of space, portray it as horizontal, as a surface, and do not open the possibility to see its “openness”, the heterogeneity of on-going stories, trajectories, and processes that are always taking place, always under construction (Massey 2005, 107). The “political cosmology” (107) lying behind this, is that of “erasing” the stories and practices of the “others”, and of taming space (109).

Nevertheless, there are “mappings” that work to “disrupt the sense of coherence and totality” (Massey 2005) of these mappings. One of the most important ones are the situationist cartographies which seek to “expose the incoherence and fragmentations of the spatial itself” (Massey 2005, 109). The situationist movement emerged during the 50’s as a critique of modern, postwar urban planning in which writers, artists and intellectuals converged (Rubin 2012, 177) throughout Europe but mainly in Paris, France. The Situationist International, and its major theorist, Guy Debord, rejected the “commercial and institutional practices of art production and consumption” and “viewed the city itself as its field of operations” (177).

According to Debord’s own description, the *dérive* “means drifting”, it is a “(...) technique of rapid passage through varied ambiances. *Dérives* involve playful-constructive behavior and awareness of psycho-geographical effects, and are quite different from classic notions of journeys and stroll” (Debord 2013 [1956], 3). Debord and other situationists used *dérives* as a strategy to “disarm the spatial mastery implied by conventional maps (...)

and to produce a new, contingent urban geography where emotional or atmospheric units took precedence over physical proximities” (Rubin 2012, 177).

Today, scholars as Rubin (2012) view *dérives* as useful tools for urban research and as an “act of citizenship,” a way of claiming space. Yet, it is critical to recognize that *dérives* (and even my account of the walks along the railroad tracks) cannot resemble the spatial and social violence of migrants’ walks. Their movement is one that is related to enforced mobility, to spatial violence and alienation. For migrants in transit the crossing of the railroad tracks has been marked by a “forced” movement, and an introduction into spaces they do not know, and that very frequently alienate and exclude them. Furthermore, as opposed to my experience, and that of people willingly doing *dérives* for research purposes, who look for the “feeling of disorientation” (Rubin 2012, 188), migrants in transit have no other option but to rely on an “intuitive way-finding” to navigate the city, and to “solicit local knowledge for strangers.” The feeling of disorientation is not one that they can “shake away” after a day of “drifting”, it is a feeling that, in many cases, does not go away, and that comes with the anguish and uncertainty that unknown and unrecognizable spaces bring. Furthermore, the act of walking of “claiming citizenship” is something migrants in transit cannot do, for the ability to make such claims are constrained by the space itself, and by its intersection with exclusionary practices and imaginations depending on gender, sexuality, class and race.

### **The Railroad Tracks: Migratory Landscapes**

The railroad tracks cross the MAG almost diagonally, going through a wide array of socio and political spaces: from semi-rural landscapes on the boundaries of the MAG, to the heart of the city’s industrialized sector, to middle-class neighborhoods, and to high-income gated communities. During the summer of 2013, I worked with “FM4-Paso Libre” on their first

report of activities. One of the main tools for gathering information for the report was to do a cross-section through the railroad tracks. We did it mainly in a vehicle and with a group of 7 people. The cross-section was divided in two days, we first went from San José El Castillo in the municipality of El Salto to Las Juntas in the municipality of Tlaquepaque, and then from La Venta del Astillero in the municipality of Zapopan to Vallarta Poniente, also in the municipality of Zapopan (Figure 4 shows these two cross-sections).

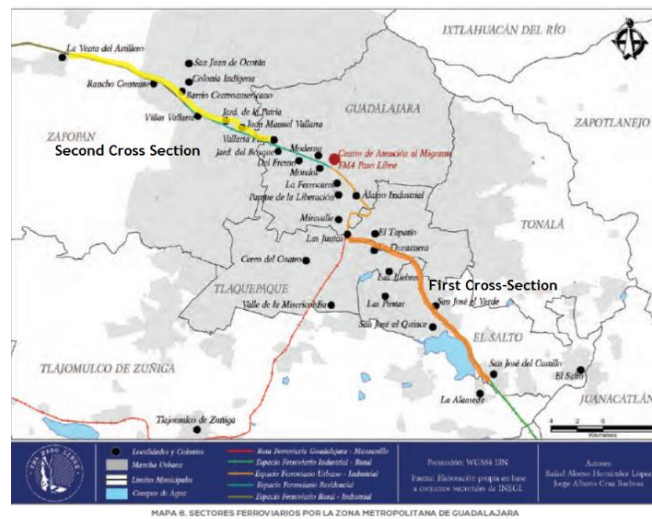


Figure 4: The Railroad tracks through the MAG. Map elaborated by FM4-Paso Libre (FM4-Paso Libre, 2013). Modified with yellow and orange lines indicating cross-sections done during the summer of 2013.

During the following summer, I carried out 3 dérives along the railroad tracks with María<sup>5</sup>: one from Av. Inglaterra and Periférico to Av. Inglaterra and Av. México; the following from Av. Inglaterra and Av. México to Av. Inglaterra and Niños Héroes; and the last one from San José El Verde to Las Juntas, again with María and Don C<sup>6</sup>. The average

<sup>5</sup> María is a close friend, and the head of “FM4-Paso Libre’s” Community Engagement” branch.

<sup>6</sup> Don C. is a community leader from El Salto that I met through María. He lives along the railroad tracks in El Salto.

duration of each walk was of three to five hours (Figure 5 shows the path and directions we followed in each walk).

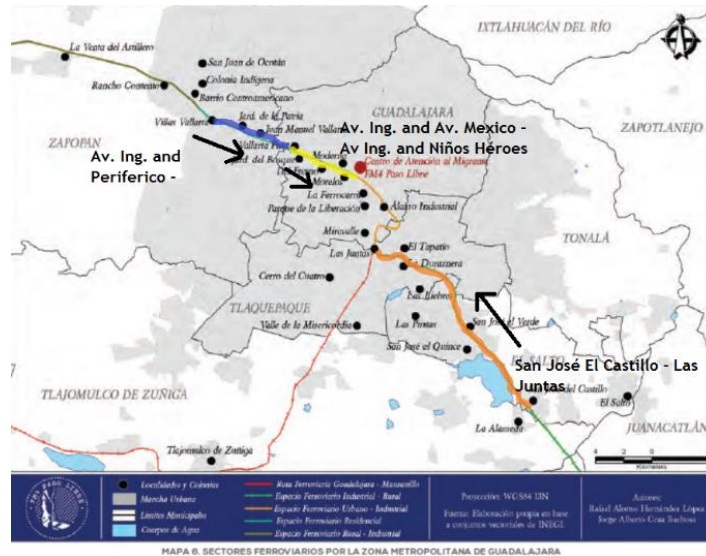


Figure 5: Map of the walks along the railroad tracks. Map taken from FM4-Paso libre (FM4-Paso Libre, 2013).

Railroad tracks' landscapes across the city reveal the multiple relationships and points of view that shape and are shaped by the built environment, the MAG's inhabitants, and migrants in transit's trajectories, all of which exist in imbricated relations with larger socio-cultural, political and economic processes at multiple scales. The walks across the railroad tracks uncovered a myriad of spaces and landscapes that speak to the different ways through which the city is lived, imagined, and traversed.

Railroad tracks' role throughout the city change constantly with the rhythms and pace of the city and its inhabitants. Consequently, when walking along the railroad tracks one can also experience such changing rhythms and landscapes. On the one hand, in some spaces, one feels completely exposed to the city, to the people crossing, running, walking, and working along the railroad tracks. On the other hand, in other spaces one feels as if the

city, along with all the noise, the people, and the running was erased, or most accurately, as if the railroad tracks had been erased, hidden from the city or rather, trapped by it in frequently contradictory ways.

### **The gated communities and Las Juntas' market: The disappearing railroad tracks**

Starting at Periférico and Juan Palomar, the first thing that stands out is that the wire mesh (“malla”) that surrounds the railroad track. According to the neighbors it was set by *Ferromex*<sup>7</sup> years before. From the side outside the railroad tracks one can barely see the inside of railroad tracks, for the wire mesh has been covered by the gated communities with plants, flowers and “*enredaderas*.” There is a marked difference between the street and the inside of the railroad tracks. For instance, the streets were clean and there were no signs of “trash.” It was 9:00am, and there were barely any people walking on the sidewalks. On the other hand, expensive cars passed rushing through the street, forced to slow down by the “bumps” that are set on the street. The landscape on the inside of the railroad tracks is quite the opposite, it is full with plants, trash, shoes, pieces of clothes and places that migrants have accommodated as semi-shelters. As María and I walked through the railroad tracks, cars kept on passing as fast as the bumps allowed them. While walking in the inside, one gets the feeling that what separates these two worlds is more than a wire mesh. Inside the railroad tracks one discovers a completely different space.

---

<sup>7</sup> See *Ferromex* on Chapter 1: “The Politics of Space”



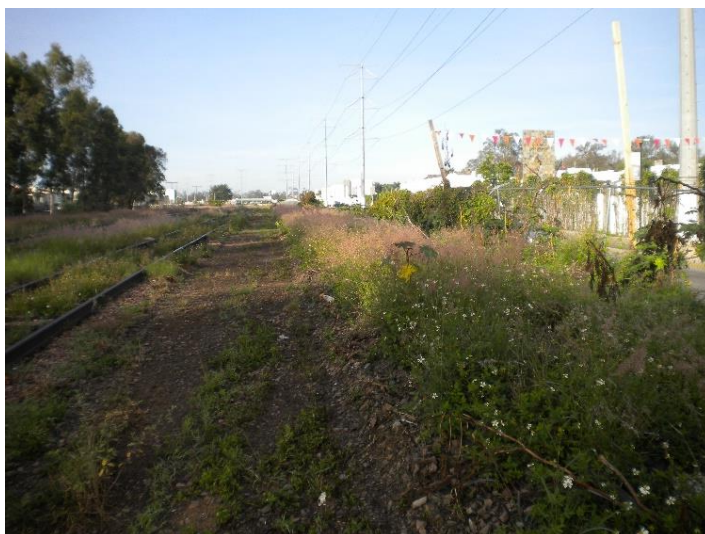


Illustration 1: The railroad tracks and the gated communities. Photo taken during the summer of 2014.

During the third walk, María, Don C. and I arrived to a market in Las Juntas, a locality within the municipality of Tlaquepaque. Contrary to the section along the gated communities, there was no wire mesh on this section of the railroad tracks. Furthermore, there was an intense, fluid and dynamic movement along and across the railroad tracks, which seemed to disappear among all the movement: people buying and selling things, cars and motorcycles passing by, and people eating at little businesses (“changarritos”). Taxis, small businesses, buses, people fixing things, and migrants asking for food or money at the intersections make up this space to which the railroad tracks are an integral part.



Illustration 2: “Las Juntas.” Photo taken during the summer of 2014.

In both cases, railroad tracks “disappeared” from the landscapes, but through very distinct processes. On the first one, the built environment separates and invisibilizes the railroad tracks through fences and plants, and a distinction between one and the other is clearly drawn: entering the railroad tracks means leaving the “clean” and “ordered” space outside them and vice-versa. On the second one, railroad tracks are barely seen but due to the array of people, vehicles and rhythms that converge at the market. In this second space the railroad tracks are incorporated as another element of the city’s routines.

### **Vallarta’s and Lopez Mateos’ bridges: fragmentations and connections.**

Vallarta’s Avenue, one of the main streets in the city, passes above the railroad tracks through a bridge. Near Vallarta María and I continued walking towards it. Just before and after the bridge one can see a row of gated communities whose walls are elegantly furnished with flowers and plants. We walked under the bridge where we could see traces of people in-habiting the bridge. The pillars of the bridge have graffiti art on them, and used syringes lying on the ground. Under the bridge, two men were sitting down. They

seemed to be using drugs and drinking alcohol. We said hello to them, stop to take some photos and continue walking. We felt like intruders. It was like entering someone else's domestic space.



Illustration 3: The railroad tracks through the bridge. Photo taken during the summer of 2014.

A few kilometers ahead Vallarta's bridge, we found another bridge at the intersection of Av. Inglaterra with López Mateos.<sup>8</sup> We walked through the bridge going above López Mateos, and the noise and honking of vehicles passing below it got louder, almost unbearable (see Illustration 9). Yet, as soon as we crossed to the other side the noise dissipated, and we entered a residential area. We could see murals and signs advocating for a more "bike friendly" city. The railroad tracks' surroundings were green, and full of big trees.

---

<sup>8</sup> López Mateos crosses the Metropolitan Area from north to south.

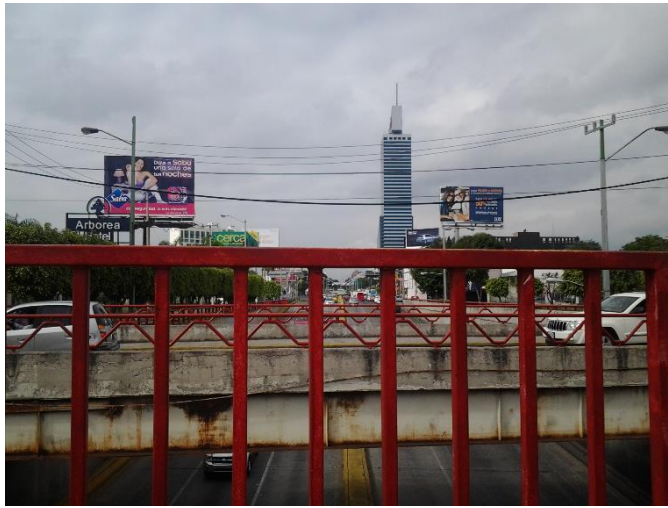


Illustration 4: “López Mateos” Photo taken during the summer of 2014.

The descriptions of the walks across these two bridges illustrate the multiple functions that the structures can have on spaces along the city. On the one hand, the space beneath the bridge on Av. Vallarta serves as a hiding place for distinct actors in the city. Hidden from plain sight, the bridge provides a shelter for homeless people. In this case, the bridge acts as a disruption, a fragmentation, separated from the two spaces beside it. On the other hand, López Mateos bridge serves as a connection between two middle-class residential areas that share common characteristics, and that would be otherwise interrupted by López Mateos. The bridge allows, albeit the noise and cars passing through, continuity between these two residential areas.

### **Landscapes and migrants’ trajectories**

Landscapes along the railroad tracks in the MAG are not coherent, and exemplify the complexities of the city where unequal power relationships are reflected not only on the landscapes, but also through the distinct rhythms of the neighborhoods and streets. Yet, there are not simple, straight forward analysis. For instance, the fact that the fences along

the gated communities divide the railroad tracks from the street, does not necessarily mean that migrants are more safe in Las Juntas, where railroad tracks are full of people, and movement. Similarly, space under the bridges or above them, can either represent a place to hide from migratory authorities and to rest, and at the same time a place where they can be assaulted. Consequently, what might have served a migrant as a shelter at one point, might serve as a trap at a different time. Landscapes along the railroad tracks reaffirm space as much more than pure “distance,” and reiterates it as a practice, as an interaction, as relational, and ever-changing (Massey 2005).

#### **“OTHERING” SPATIAL PRACTICES**

Migrants’ trajectories and stories are those of bodies “on the move”. Certainly, today our lives are, more than never, marked by mobility. Consequently, mobility studies’ importance has grown over the past decades. Furthermore, Verstraete and Cresswell (2002) have identified the emergence of a “mobility turn” in that has challenged the dichotomy between “sedenterist” and “nomadic” production of knowledge. As recognized by Blunt (2007), these new mobilities’ paradigm “interrogates the politics of mobility and immobility” (1), through “studies of embodied, material and politicized mobilities” (2). However, such studies are focused either on immigration, that is to say, when migrants have already moved (Duffy 2005, Jazeel 2005 Leonard 2005 in Blunt 2007); on legal frameworks restricting migrants’ movement (Blunt 2005 and McDowell 2005 in Blunt 2007); or on “spaces of mobilities and immobilities” such as the border (Walters 2004, Wood 2004 and Winders 2005 in Blunt 2007).

However, these works fail to address the trajectories of undocumented migrants in transit, as well as the spatial transformations and socio-cultural relations that take place

throughout their transit to their destiny. Furthermore, as argued by Castagone (2011): “There is a lack of insight into geographical mobility systems and logics and into the complex interrelations between different stages of the migratory trajectories” (p. 1). So, in a world that claims that increasing mobility and technological devices have allow us (some) to “travel”, to “move” across borders easily, analyzing the movement of those who these technologies and spatial rules of movement do not favor becomes critical. Such an approach looks at how distinct bodies move and why, and highlights the fact that mobility has increased and marked our world, but not in the same ways across race, class, geographical locations, gender, sexual orientation, etc. While in transit, “not authorized” bodies, either socially or/and legally, face a wide array of borders and constraints, and yet enact practices that allow them to move and navigate across these spaces.

This section of the chapter aims to recognize these “mobilities” by presenting some of the migrants’ practices (yet, not all, and only irremediably, seen from my point of view) in an urban center such as the MAG. This section sheds light into migrants’ use of the built environment, and how they shape, negotiate and challenge it through their journey across the city. In these accounts, the tree becomes a shelter, and a shade a place to rest, a park, a place to spent the night, and a street full of people, of strangers, becomes either an opportunity to get directions or help, or a threat. However, this is by no means an intent to represent a “universal migrant experience” or even to suggest that there is such thing as one, unique migrant in transit experience or practice through Mexico.

This section also draws upon Lefebvre’s (1991) concept of the lived space, that which is practiced and experienced: “(...) all subjects are situated in a space in which they

must either recognize themselves or lose themselves, a space which they can both enjoy or modify (35). In the analysis of such “lived space”, Bourdieu’s concept of “habitus” has been widely used. Bourdieu (1990) develops the notion of “habitus” as the “conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce habitus, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures” (53). Furthermore, “through the systematic choices it makes among the places, events, and people that might be frequented, the habitus tend to protect itself from critical challenges by providing itself with a milieu to which it is as pre-adapted as possible, that is, a relatively constant universe of situations tending to reinforce its dispositions (...)” (53).

In his analysis of the material culture of undocumented migrants crossing the desert, Jason de León (2012) argues that there is a “migrant habitus” when crossing the border. I argue that the existence of an undocumented migrant habitus must be questioned. For migrants in transit travelling through Mexico, there are specific conditions that mark their journey, but it is not a homogenous experience. Their “habitus”, in that sense is marked by a “unauthorized” movement, but a movement that is different from that of what are considered “authorized bodies” and “approved” to move across borders (i.e. myself, who being Mexican came to study to the US with a student visa). The difference is that migrants’ movement along the city is not “pre-adapted”. Pre-adaption has a privileged connotation that assumes conditions of stability that migrants in transit do not experience. Furthermore, contrary to Bourdieu’s definition, their “habitus” is constantly facing “critical challenges”:

from migratory authorities, from the police (at different levels: federal, state, municipal), from organized crime, from the “locals”, and from both the natural and built environments.

Migrants in transit do not only traverse the MAG within the railroad tracks, but they walked into the city depending on the particular needs at the time their crossing the MAG. Nevertheless, for most migrants in transit, the railroad tracks do act as path through the city. From the conversations and the participant observations it became clear that there is not a single migrant experience in the city. The way migrants see, feel and experience the city varies widely depending on their backgrounds, on their reasons of their departure, and their country of destiny, it depends on how long have they been travelling, and if they have been travelling alone, or with family, or with someone that they met in the train; on their age, gender and sexual orientation; and on whether this was their first trip or not, on whether they had been deported, on the time of the year, direction of their journey, on the time they have spent in the MAG, on whether they have a sense of where they are, or if they had been in the MAG before. Each experience is unique. Furthermore, what I was able to see, feel, hear and experience during the fieldwork is also constrained to the specific time, temporalities and places where I carried it out.

### **Diverse trajectories and subjectivities**

While recent studies and reports have pointed to an increasing “feminization” of the migration processes from Central America through Mexico to U.S. (Toney 2009, Acharya 2010, De Leon 2013), the Western route remains a predominantly a male one, as evidenced by “FM4-Paso Libre” report on their fourth-year data base. According to this data, only 6% of the migrants who received attention at the center were women. While the data does



not capture the totality of migrants traversing through the city, the organization estimates that approximately 70% of the migrants crossing through the city, pass through the CAM (Center for the Attention of the Migrant). According to the same reports, migrants crossing the MAG come mainly from Honduras (43%), Guatemala (14.9%) El Salvador (9.6%), Nicaragua (1.5%) and from other Mexican states (30.2%) (FM4 Paso Libre 2013, 30). But these statistics only serve us to contextualize migration in transit through the MAG, and does not look into how differences in gender, age or sexual orientation marks their journey.

Migrant women do cross through the MAG, and I noticed a significant increase in the number of women that went through the CAM, from the summer of 2013 to the summer 2014. Their journey is marked by an increasing vulnerability which makes them an easier target for violence. While I was working at FM4-Paso Libre, I learned of a case where a woman was assaulted by a group of men in the city. However, women have also found strategies and tactics to try protect themselves from violence and survive the journey. Most of the women I met were travelling in a group with other men, women, and their children. Such groups were usually formed of other women with their children, or family members. Yet, I also met a woman travelling in the train with her two children, ages 3 and 6. She was not in a group, but other men travelling in the train were helping her with the children.

The question of the specific causes of migrants movement is out of the scope of this research, but throughout the work I am assuming that there is a forced migration in which due to the structure and specific practices of the current neo-liberal State and reforms, people have to leave their countries whether it is due to violence, lack of employment, or to be reunited with their families. However, the particular reason for their departure also

marks their transit throughout Mexico. While volunteering in “FM4-Paso Libre”, Juan, a young man from Guatemala had to leave his city due to his sexual orientation. When he arrived to Guadalajara, he was trying to get to the U.S. However, as the team of FM4-Paso Libre, informed him that due to the conditions and reasons for which he left his country, he could apply for a humanitarian VISA. This changed Juan’s plans radically, and he decided to apply for it. He stayed in Guadalajara to process his VISA. He no longer stayed in the railroad tracks, but attended one of the shelters in the city. When I left Guadalajara, he was still waiting for an answer.

Another aspect that became clear as I walked through the railroad tracks, and worked at the CAM, was that the so-called “flow” of migrants in transit in “La Bestia” is by no means unidirectional nor linear. Migrants in transit are travelling to the US, but they are also coming back, or changing routes, or meeting someone in Guadalajara. When María and I found the train along the railroad tracks in Zapopan, it was not going north, but entering the city on the other side. Still, a migrant was on the train.

Furthermore, at the CAM, I interviewed migrants that were coming back because they had been deported and left in Tijuana when they were from Honduras, or because they tried to cross and failed, because there was a lot of violence in the northern states of Mexico, or even because they needed to wait for the temperature to cool down (I was there for the summer and the temperatures during the day were really high even in Guadalajara, a situation that increases in the desert). Manuel, a migrant coming from El Salvador, explained why he was going back to his country after a failed attempt to cross: “Intenté cruzar, pero está muy difícil, hace mucho calor y orita está difícil... muy peligroso. Voy a

esperar a que la cosa se ponga mejor arriba / I tried to cross, but is very difficult right now, it is very hot and its' hard right now... its very risky. I'm going to wait for things to get better". These stories speak to the complex nature of migratory processes, but also to the increasing violence of the global forces and states' apparatus against undocumented migration which is reflected on the high numbers of deported migrants, and the conditions of their journey.

### **Informal Shelters**

Through my research I was able to identify resources that migrants use to navigate the city. FM4-Paso Libre's Cenetr for the Attention of the Migrant (CAM, described in Chapter 3) serves as a site for rest and comfort along with other 2 shelters found in the city. But beyond these formal shelters, particular elements of the built environment serve as informal shelters where migrants can rest, and continue their journey.

While walking through the railroad tracks, it was evident that places that were full of trees have more evidence of migrants' presence. The shades of the tress and the parks along the railroad tracks provide migrants with relatively safe places where they can spent the night or rest for a couple of hours while waiting for the train. It is in these places where one can see most migrants resting or sleeping; where more clothes, boxes arranged in the form of shelters, and empty bottles of water are found. The case of the park of the "Parque Hundido" is of special importance because it is located near the curve where the train has to slow down, and thus provides the perfect location to rest and even spent the night. However, this has brought problems with the neighbors and members of the Club de la Colina, whom as noted in the walks, occasionally call migratory authorities to take the

migrants because neighbors and members feel threaten by the presence of the migrants. This reflects the fragility and vulnerability to which migrants are exposed in so-called public spaces. While informal shelters are key survival resources for migrants in transit, they are also contextual and more fragile than formal shelters, where they are protected from other actors, including the authorities and the neighbors.

### **The built environment and migrants: facing and overcoming obstacles**

When travelling in “La Bestia” migrants in transit have to get off the train in Las Juntas, where the train has to enter the rail yards for loading and unloading of the trains. This is the main reason why migrants have to walk into the city, and get back on the train when it leaves the yards. This causes an incredible amount of confusion to migrants who do not know the city, for there are different routes leaving the city and not all of them are going to the north. Consequently, frequently migrants in transit take the wrong train and end up having to return to the MAG, and get on the right train.

One of the biggest challenges for migrants in transit is to get on the train. Many migrants fail to do so, and lose their limbs or die in their attempt to do so. Getting on the train is difficult when it is not on motion: the space surrounding the railroad tracks is frequently full of gravel, and on an uneven surface (i.e. the railroad tracks are usually on the top of small mountain cover with gravel) that makes it hard to walk. Additionally, to get on the train, migrants have to hold themselves to the train’s irons and pull themselves up. Getting on the train while it is moving increases the physical hardship and the risk of losing their limbs or their lives. According to my conversations with migrants in transit in Guadalajara, it requires a specific technique and a lot of strength. Migrants getting on the

train while it is moving have to first run fast enough to along with it (through the gravel and uneven surface); then they have to hold themselves to the irons, and pull themselves up, pushing their bodies outwards so that in case they fall, the train does not pulls them into the railroad tracks.

Before 2012, migrants were able to catch the train in the MAG when it was just leaving the yard, but since FERROMEX constructed a metal fence and established permanent private security guard through the exit of the yard getting on the train has been far more difficult. By the time the train passes through the place where migrants can get on it, its speed is already high enough to prevent migrants to get on the train. Yet, sometimes the train passes at a slower pace, but the speed at which the train passes depends entirely on the good will of the driver.

However, migrants in transit discovered that a few kilometers ahead in the municipality of Zapopan, there is a pronounced curve on the railroad tracks. As described by Octavio: “Por ahí el tren pasa más despacio, tiene que bajar la velocidad para no salirse de las vías/Through there, the train goes slower, it has to decrease the speed to avoid getting of the railroad tracks”. During the walks though the railroad tracks María and I could see that migrants were more visible in where the curve is, migrants are more visible in curve’s

section of the railroad tracks: a group of migrants rested beneath the shade that big trees provide, and were waiting for the train to pass.



Illustration 5: “The curve.” Photo taken during the summer of 2014.



Illustration 6: Migrants in transit waiting to take the train. Photo taken during the summer of 2014.

### **The race against time**

Spaces have a crucial role on migrants' journeys, but space-time also plays a critical role on migrants' trajectories, and it largely defines the success of their journey. Time can exhaust migrants before they arrive to their destination. Most importantly, the built environment of the city, as well as migratory, local, federal and even foreign authorities determine the rhythms, and time migrants spend in specific places. Yet, at the same time, migrants' engagement with these time-related borders is not passive, and they often use the built environment to win the "race against time." Upon their arrival to the MAG, migrants in transit have been travelling for at least two weeks, and still have another two weeks to go. Consequently, migrants are constantly running against and negotiating time: either struggling with the emotional and physical impacts of its passing, or by negotiating their journey's agenda and duration.

In most of the interviews, migrants in transit said that upon their arrival to the city, they thought Guadalajara was a very nice city (*una ciudad muy bonita*), and as Octavio, a 30 year old migrant coming from Honduras to the MAG for the first time: "Llegué hoy mismo en la mañana (...) Al principio pensé que es un ciudad muy bonita y muy grande... no había visto una ciudad así antes. Muy fresca, no está tan caliente/ I arrived just today in the morning (...) At the beginning I thought that this was a very beautiful city and very big... I hadn't seen this city like this before. Very fresh, it is not as hot". The city provides an opportunity to rest, yet the amount of time they spent in the city determines their experiences, and impacts the rest of their journey.

Some migrants in transit cross the city in the same day: they arrive to the MAG during the early morning, and leave in the afternoon. A clear example of this was a group of migrants María and I encountered near the curve: they had arrived in the morning and were trying to leave the city that same day without much resting or even looking for “help” in the city. However, this experience varies widely depending on their knowledge of the city and the railroad tracks, the physical, economical and emotional conditions in which they arrive, and on the pace at which they are travelling. Consequently, many migrants in transit spent some days in the MAG to rest, recover from any injuries, and to earn some money.

However, time does not always works in favor of migrants in transit, and it is frequently a cause for exhaustion. After Vallarta’s bridge, María and I saw a young man who was sitting among the grass and below a tree giving shade. Apparently he slept there because all his things lied on a blanket next to him. We tried to talk to him but he barely responds at the beginning. Then he said he was from Honduras, and that he was going to the US, but he got tired, and decided to stay in the MAG. He looks in bad health condition, so María and I asked him if he wanted to go to the doctor or get some help at the city shelters, but he refuses. After talking to him for a little while, and trying to convince him to go to a shelter, I ask him if I could take a photo of him. I immediately regretted asking



such a question, but he agreed. I prepared the camera, but instinctively, distanced myself, and walked back some meters to take the photo behind the railroad tracks.



Illustration 7: A young migrant from Honduras. Photo taken during the summer of 2014.

Migrants in transit's journeys through the MAG are also influenced by northern border environmental, social and political conditions. For instance, during the summer, the temperatures are very high, so during that time of the year "La Bestia/The Beast" is better known as "El Tren del Diablo/ The Devil's Train," some migrants choose to wait in Guadalajara for the temperature to decrease on the northern Mexican states to be able to continue their journey to the United States.

#### **MATERIAL CULTURE: STORIES YET TO BE TOLD**

While walking across the railroad tracks, and also during the conversation I had with migrants in transit, it became clearer that the objects they carry, or choose not to, constitute a great part of their journey. In that sense, in his work "Better be Hot than Caught: Excavating the Conflicting Roles of Migrant Material Culture", De León (2012) argues

that “material culture is not just a reflection of the social process of border crossing, it actively constitutes and continuously shapes it (478).

Furthermore, De León developed an analytical framework that examines migrants’ objects, the technique logic and the somatic experience. De León examines water bottles, shoes, and clothes as the main components of the migrant material culture along the desert, to argue that “Those who characterize the artifacts left behind by migrants as mere “trash” fail to recognize the historical, political, and global economic forces that have shaped border crossing into a well-structured social process with distinct archaeological fingerprint” (478) but also to establish that migrants’ objects do not “ (...) necessarily mean that these tools and techniques are effective or even safe”(478) . While I agree with Leon’s argument to recognize migrants archeological fingerprint as part of the political, social and cultural forces that shape their journey, I argue that his framework does not allows to recognize the flexibility and fluidity with which migrants use objects. Most importantly, it is critical to recognize that is not the objects themselves or their use which increases migrants’ vulnerability, but institutional and structural framework that force them to first leave their country, and then to cross through Mexico through dangerous means of transportation and roads.

When migrants arrive to “FM4-Paso Libre”’s CAM they usually ask for shoes, shirts, socks, pants, and backpacks. Many of their things have been stolen or are in a bad state due to conditions on the train. In this sense, material objects become critical to this project, in that they allowed me to trace some of the ways in which migrants prioritize what they bring, but most importantly, what they lost.

Throughout the walks along the railroad tracks, the most recurring materials María and I found were pieces of clothes (pants or shirts), rests of food or cans of soda, and water bottles. Clothes and shoes were basically along the railroad tracks, sometimes between

them, and always dirty and used, rarely complete, and one can see they have been used. These are the traces of migrants “on the move” who decide to leave behind those items that once were useful, and now due to their condition, are not anymore, but they might as well be the rests of that that was taken away from them, ripped out. Many migrants in transit are assaulted along their walks through the railroad tracks. In either case, pieces of shirts, shoes, pants and backpacks lie on their ground as a constant reminder of their presence in the city.



Illustration 8: Objects found inside the railroad tracks. Photos taken during the summer of 2013 and 2014.

On the other hand, bottles of water, rests of food or of fires tell the stories of people in-habiting the railroad tracks, using them as a path, but also a shelter and a place to rest. In that sense, the use of the artifacts becomes obvious: they need water and food to survive, but these objects also speak by their location, by where are the places along the railroad tracks where one can see them. Remains of food are frequently organized found beneath the shade of big trees, and in “hidden” places along the railroad tracks. Improvised shelters

made out of old boxes, and remains of fireplaces are found along the railroad tracks in places where they are least visible, and where the environment offers shade and accessibility to the train.



Illustration 9: Objects found inside the railroad tracks. Photos taken during the summer of 2013 and 2014.

## CONCLUSION

My research in the MAG with migrants in transit revealed a multiplicity of strategies, levels of knowledge about the city and the migratory process, and of on-going stories and trajectories. Contrary to the way they are commonly portrayed in the media and official

discourses, migrants do not constitute a “powerless mass,” but subjectivities that, while facing terrible violence and exclusion, find ways to keep struggling for a future and a present they know they deserve.

Migrants’ experiences and practices through the MAG are also shaped by the landscapes and the built environment in the city. Consequently, migrants in transit, adapt and challenge socio-spatial arrangements, while at the same time making a presence in the city. Traces of their passing and stories remain in the objects they use, adapt, discard, or left behind in the city. These speak of a myriad of stories that have not been erased from the landscape, and that need not only to be told, but recognized as a history and politics. The experiences of migration through the landscapes of the MAG reveal distinct realities to that which celebrate the successes of the globalization and the neo-liberal State. Furthermore, the critical issue is to recognize that migrants need to deploy all these survival strategies due to exclusionary and alienating mechanism that force them to cross under conditions of marginality and supposed “invisibility”.

### **Chapter 3: Encounters and “Desencuentros”**

Crossing the MAG by the middle, approximately 31 miles (50 kilometers) of railroad tracks form part of a complex set of socio-spatial arrangements (FM4-Paso Libre 2013, 67) in the city. But the railroad tracks do not only cross the city, but shape, and are shaped by it, and by its different landscapes, dynamics and rhythms. The MAG’s case is an especially salient case for railroads tracks’ landscapes because instead of the railroad tracks passing besides the city, they go exactly through the middle of it. This phenomenon facilitates the entry and visibility of migrants in the Metropolitan Area (Martinez, 2013), and the intensity (in some cases) and frequency of the encounters between the “foreigners” and the locals. The railroad tracks cross through urban middle to high income residential areas, industrialized zones, and rural areas in the MAG, and the interactions and dynamics that surround them are markedly different at each point. Consequently, this chapter’s objective is to uncover, through the analysis of three residential areas along the railroad tracks, the distinct power relations, spatial imaginations, and borders that traverse the encounters and “desencuentros” between locals and migrants in transit in the MAG.

I argue that such interactions and dynamics are anchored in particular spatial imaginations that reflect specific spatial power relations that place migrants and other marginalized groups as “unauthorized bodies” in specific places. Dell Upton’s definition of spatial imagination as “(...) a way of thinking about the city that surpasses the simple instrumentality” (2008, 122) is particular useful to understand how spatial imaginations are “grounded in widespread beliefs in essentially spatial qualities of social, political and economic order” (122). On the other hand, John Allen’s approach to the particularities of

power as spatially experienced through relationships and rhythms (2003) serves the purposes of this chapter to look at the distinct ways through which spatial imaginations are imbued in unequal power relations.

Theoretically, two intertwined understandings of space guide this chapter. The first one is Doreen Massey's (2005) call to recognize society as both "spatial and temporal" (27). Such an engagement with space, allows for spatial heterogeneity, and rejects space as a structure, or as a "depthless instantaneity." Furthermore, it rejects space as already territorialized, and sees it as always under construction (61). In other words, as fluid and dynamic as opposed as fixed and closed. The second one is David Harvey's recognition of the "class content of spatial practices in urban settings," which establishes that spatial practices are not innocent with respect capital accumulation, and class relations under capitalism. Consequently, those with the capital to guard and produce spaces work to maintain, reinforce and enhance their power (1989, 262). While Harvey's analysis is key for this chapter, it is also important to recognize that, as pointed out by Doreen Massey, Harvey's work presents a "universal subject" which remains un-gendered, unsexed, and unraced; and that his analysis is reduced to labor and production power relations (only one enemy: capitalism), neglecting the importance of other power-relations such as race, sexual orientation, and gender (1991).

Methodologically, the chapter presents three sites along the railroad tracks using cultural landscapes, defined as the "fusion of the physical with the imaginative structures that all inhabitants of the landscape use in constructing and construing it" (Dutton and Mann 1996, 99). Furthermore, cultural landscapes' analyses approach landscapes as more

than just a way to “mirror” social relationships, but as part of the processes through which such social relations, and the social space are constantly challenged and negotiated (Seymour 2000 cited in Robertson and Richards 2003, 8). Consequently, this chapter draws heavily on descriptions of the built environment, photos and maps of the three sites, interviews with neighbors inhabiting them, and participant observations carried out during the summers of 2013 and 2014.

This chapter is divided in three parts, each of them representing one section of the railroad tracks, and portraying distinct spatial imaginations, and ways through which migrants, “citizens,” and other marginalized social actors in the city are “placed by power.” The first section describes the area surrounding the exiting yards of the trains in the middle of the city, and where FM4-Paso Libre’s “Centro de Atención al Migrante/Center for the Attention of the Migrant” is located. The second section, presents the so-called “Eje Inglaterra,” an area of middle-income residential and small businesses in Guadalajara. The third section, looks at the gated community of “Villas de Asís,” in the municipality of Zapopan. These sections and neighborhoods, though apparently distanced from each other, do not present a clear cut social dynamics, rather, they portray intertwined imaginaries, and blurred, porous boundaries.



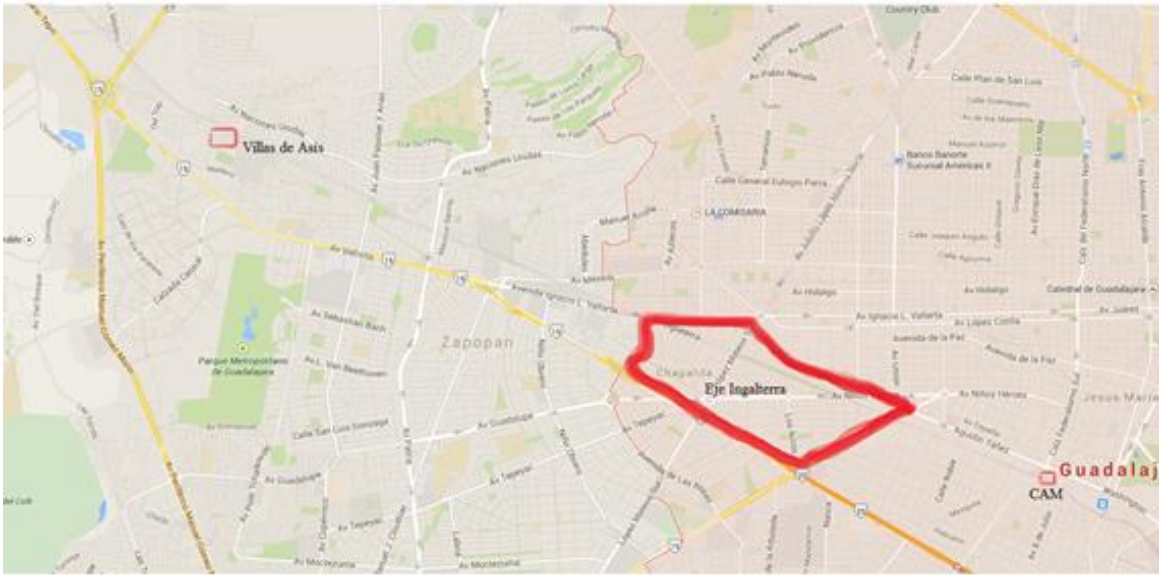


Figure 6: Map of the three chosen sites in the MAG, Google Earth and own elaboration.

#### **FERROMEX'S EXITING YARDS**

Located in the middle of the city, and surrounded by industries and factories, FERROMEX's<sup>9</sup> existing yards are the point from which many migrants have to get back on "La Bestia" to continue their journey towards the United States. It is also at this point where FM4-Paso Libre's Centro de Atención al Migrante/Center for the Attention of the Migrant (CAM) is located. At the beginning I did not think of this point as a potential site of investigation because it is also the space where I volunteered with the organization. However, as time passed, the critical importance of this point became clear to me. In this

---

<sup>9</sup> FERROMEX is the private company in charge of operating great part of the railroad tracks in México. The company's coverage includes more than 7, 108kms of principal railroads, and other secondary railroads of 1,001.9 kms. It also operates the biggest fleet of the country with more than 580 trains and 12, 410 cars of different type some of which are owned by Ferromex, and other rented to third parties ("Introducción: Ferromex," *Grupo México*, accessed April 21, 2014, <http://www.gmexico.com.mx/companias/ferromex.php>). The railroad tracks are property of the Federal Government, but in 1995 President Zedillo change the legal status of the railroad tracks and made a concession for the railroad tracks' use to private companies (Medina Ramírez Salvador, "El Transporte Ferroviario En México," *Comercio Exterior*, August 2013.).

section, I will not address the internal dynamics and role of the CAM, but I will focus on the space and dynamics on the outside. This is critical because the exiting yards portray distinct spatial imaginations and power relations: the past and on-going built environment interventions that FERROMEX and local authorities are carrying out; and the sociocultural, political, and economic life that is generated “in the margins,” along the exiting yards.

The exiting yards are located in the municipality of Guadalajara, near its center district, and are surrounded on one side by factories, and on the other by small businesses facing Av. Washington (which is the same as Av. Inglaterra). Of these factories, the most well-known among migrants is Productos de Trigo S.A. de C.V., also known as “La Galletera.” Such a reference serves migrants as an orientation point to both the exiting yards, and the CAM, which opened its operations in this building in May 2010 (FM4-Paso Libre 2013, 25). While the exiting yards and Av. Washington are parallel to a very busy street in the city, and near an equally busy area such as “Federalismo,” the traffic that actually goes through this section is not much, and consists mainly on the CAM’s volunteers, cargo vehicles such as water pipes, local traffic from the other small business near the area, and a few police patrols (Figure 7).

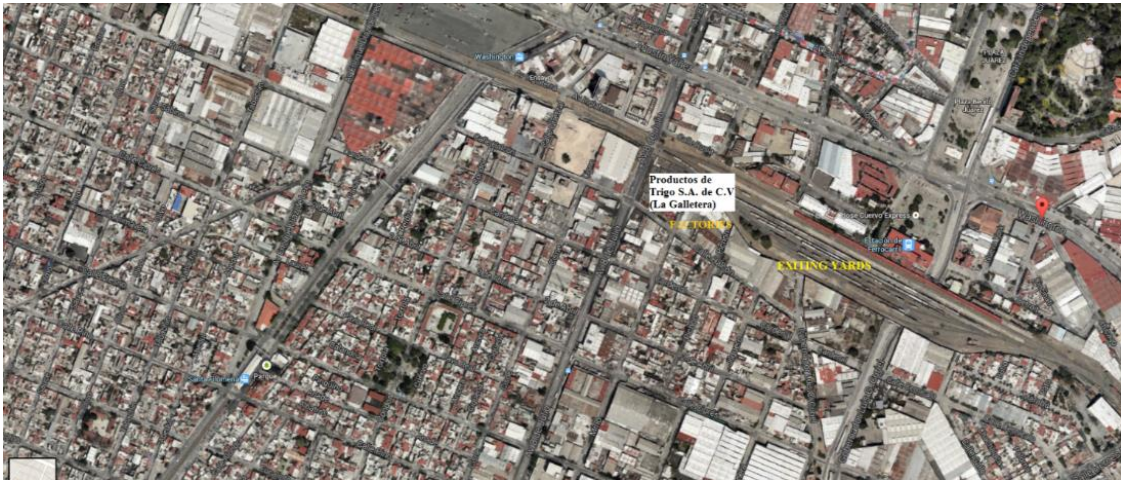


Figure 7: Map of the exiting yards. Source: Google Maps.

### **Reactions to Informal Urbanism and Migrants in transit**

Changes in the urban environment in this area happen rapidly. In the exiting yards, the space along the railroad tracks, considered by law federal property, was open until 2012, when FERROMEX and several factories along the railroad tracks, set up metal railings that prevent anyone (namely migrants and people living in the street) to inhabit the inside of the railroad tracks. This action came one year after the “Juegos Panamericanos” took place in the Metropolitan Area of Guadalajara. It was during this time when, in a government effort to “clean,” and make the city “beautiful,” “homeless” people were expelled from the tourist areas, and according to some members of FM4-Paso Libre, were brought or came to this section of the railroad tracks. Not surprisingly, FERROMEX, and the surrounding factories argued “security” reasons for their action; and consequently, did not just set up the metallic railing, but also a security cabin with a 24/7 guard surveilling the space, and preventing anyone (not just migrants in transit or people living in the streets) to wander around.

More recently, in 2014, the local government of Guadalajara initiated the construction of the “Plaza Washington,” in the area where the CAM, and the people living in the street are. According to the project description, the plaza is being constructed for the adjacent neighborhoods, “envisioning, in the future, the re-generation of the urban and social tissue through the better use of spaces in disuse” (“Plaza Washington” 2014, own translation). According to FM4-Paso Libre’s members, local authorities told them that the project contemplated a space for the organization, restrooms, and a police cabin. However, members of FM4-Paso Libre expressed their concerns about a police cabin scaring migrants; and other issues that do not consider the population living outside the CAM. Furthermore, there is a clear contrast of the satellite images the developers present, and the actual view and life in the ground. None of the other images of the project even contextualize the “plaza” being constructed: the people living outside the CAM (which as stated before are more than 50) are completely erased from it, both in the description of the project, and in its’ graphic representations. The images below contrast the project representations, with some of the photos of the same place I was able to take during the summer of 2014, when the “plaza’s” construction had already started.





Illustration 10: Photo taken outside the exiting yards during the summer of 2014.



Illustration 11: Images taken from the developer's digital portfolio (Acuarte.com, see "Plaza Washington" 2014).

Two distinct, yet interrelated spatial imaginations are at play with both of these built environment interventions. In the first case, FERROMEX's reaction to the "invasion" of people inside the "federal property," of the railroad tracks in this case is very different to that described later in this chapter when "proper citizens" also "invaded" the same space, a few kilometers ahead: in the exiting yards, migrants and other "bodies" are expelled and surveilled; a few kilometers ahead the space is almost "formalized." In the second case, the informal space is "reclaimed through urban renovation" (Roy 2011, 233). This speaks to what Roy has described as the criminalization of the subaltern informalities, which are faced with either expulsion or urban renovation (233).

### **Subaltern urbanisms**

The heterogeneity and plurality that urban spaces present call for the development of a wide array of methodologies and analytical tools that are flexible enough to embrace the uncertainty, plurality and openness of the "urban" and its' subjects. Probably the best way, as suggested by Scott (1999), Roy (2011) and Gandy (2005) is one that recognizes the political force of strategies and "urbanisms" of the subaltern without failing to acknowledge structural and institutional processes that exclude, marginalize, criminalize and invisibilize their bodies and practices.

The exiting yards exemplified this contradictory, uncertain, and plural space and "subaltern" subjects. The railroad tracks are separated from the street with a big wall. On the other side, there is a sidewalk, a two way (though not wide) street, and on the other side of the sidewalk the CAM is located. Besides it, there is a small carpentry workshop, and a union's office (though almost always empty).

People living outside the CAM are then marginalized by a larger economic and political structures that have pushed them to the streets. However, as shown by their economic, cultural and social dynamics, they are by no means “powerless.” Furthermore, this can be seen as what Roy (2011) has called subaltern urbanism, marked by two characteristics: economies of entrepreneurialism, and political agency (227).



Illustration 12: Subaltern urbanisms. Photos taken outside the exiting yards during the summer of 2014.

People pushed out by the “Juegos Panamericanos” urban renovations, or by the metallic railing in the railroad tracks occupy the sidewalk across FM4-Paso Libre. With time, they have brought sofas, camping tents, plants and tables. During the summer of 2013, they were mostly there in the afternoon, but when I came back the next summer, they were permanently there. They take care of their plants, and pets, and have their own “economy” selling buying things between and among themselves, exchanging cigarettes, shoes and other goods. Some of them have learned the stories, countries of origin, and other journeys of migrants attending the shelter, and then pretend to be a migrant in transit to either be let in into the CAM, or to ask for money from people. Alfonso, a twenty something

man living in the railroad tracks confessed to me that he always said he was coming from Honduras, that he had even learned the *departamento*, and what food people commonly eat there to ask for money. He laughs and tells me “pero hay gente que sí sabe y hacen preguntas... la bandera, el Presidente... pero yo les saco la vuelta y les digo que a mí ese carbón que me importa/ but there are people that do know, and they make questions... the flag, the President, but I just goof around, and tell them that to me that jackass does not matter”.

Dynamics outside the CAM are very complex: sometimes migrants told us that they charge them 20 pesos (1.50 dollars) to let them stay there, waiting for the CAM to open at 4pm. The relationship with FM4-Paso Libre’s volunteers and workers is also complicated because the organization focuses only on migrants in transit. Consequently, FM4 tries to give them information on other shelters to which they can attend. Still, at times people in the street get angry and yell at the volunteers “racistas/racists.” Even at a symbolic and religious level, this space sends apparently contradictory messages, and distinct geographies of cultural spaces. For instance, just in front of the CAM one can observe an altar to Zapopan’s Virgin, and just 10 meters ahead, one can also see another altar to the “Santa Muerte/Holy Death.” Consequently, this is a space where different actors with different agendas and purposes meet, and as expected relations are always being contested and negotiated. These dynamics reflect Solomon Benjamin’s concept of occupancy urbanism, which Roy’s (2011) cites to refer to a ‘political consciousness that refuses to be disciplined by NGOs and well-meaning progressive activists’ (228). The exiting yards’



dynamics escape simple categorizations and analysis, and exemplify the diverse and complex power relations and spaces in which migrants in transit are embedded.



Illustration 13: “Multiple symbolic and religious spaces.” On the left, the altar to the “Santa Muerte/Holy Death”; on the right, just a few meters ahead, the Virgin of Zapopan’s altar.

#### **“EL EJE INGLATERRA”**

The area of El Eje Inglaterra, starting just a few meters from the CAM, is located at the heart of the city, in the Municipality of Guadalajara. It is not a single neighborhood, but rather contains various residential neighborhoods such as Vallarta Sur, Vallarta Poniente, Jardines del Bosque, Jardines del Bosque Centro and Vallarta Sur. These residential areas are one of the oldest in the Metropolitan Area of the city. It is here, where “traditional” middle-class families have lived for decades. Consequently, they share a sense of “belonging”, and at least some organized members, a sense of responsibility to preserve and maintain their places “clean” and secure.

One of the oldest neighborhoods in this association is Jardines del Bosque. During the summer of 2014, I met with Don Guillermo, who kindly provided me with documents

he has gathered recording the neighborhood's history. The documents state that before becoming a residential area, during the 50s, Jardines del Bosque, was the private "Bosque de Santa Edwiges," which belonged to one of the wealthiest families in Guadalajara (Sauza's family). The widow, Enriqueta Zuber de Sauza sold the 1 million hectares to Bernardo Quintana Arrijoja owner of ICA (today, one of the biggest construction and engineering companies in Mexico), and "Don" G. Aguilar. During the same decade a trust was funded for its' urbanization and commercialization. The objective of the project was to construct a "modern and functional" place for neighbors and families to be in constant contact with nature without having to leave the city. The architect in charge of designing the neighborhood was Luis Barragán, and it was designed to be full of trees, fountains, and water that would give the place a "exquisite romantic, nostalgic and modern touch" (own translation). Furthermore, houses were designed for large nuclear and extended families, with 3, 4 or even 5 rooms.

Consequently, since its' construction, Jardines del Bosque has been a middle-class neighborhood where family, religion and las "buenas costumbres/good manners" have been central to its' dynamics, and spatial imaginations. It is probably such imaginations, confronted by today's social and economic realities, which cause so much distress to their inhabitants (at least to the ones inhabiting the neighborhood for decades). Don Guillermo regrets that the physical characteristics of the original houses designed by Barragan cannot be adapted to "modern families," which are a lot smaller. According to Don Guillermo, Jardines del Bosque was created for families: mom, dad and children. Today, families have shrunk, so the houses are too big. And, what is happening? The houses are being leased for

offices, and for commercial uses who end up “invading” places to park. Furthermore, during the night, they close, and the buildings are left empty.



Illustration 14: “Jardines del Bosque.” Photo taken during the summer of 2014.

The other neighborhoods of “El Eje Inglaterra,” share some of the characteristic of “Jardines del Bosque”: buildings along the railroad tracks are for the most part residential, one can also find small “tienditas”, little shops selling auto-parts, some fancy restaurants, a private university, and a private kinder-garden. The houses along the railroad tracks tend to be of a medium size, with light colors, and with two stories with windows facing the street and the railroad tracks. They do not have big fences. Houses along this section of the railroad tracks have one or two spaces in the front reserved for cars, and a separate individual entry to people. Many of these houses have plants and trees in their front yards,

and in the sidewalks, which they take care of. During the mornings you can see women carefully sweeping the street.

These neighborhoods are commonly organized throughout “neighborhoods associations,” with elected “mesas directivas/ chair committees,” and registered at the municipal Dirección de Participación Ciudadana/ Office of Citizenship Participation. This municipal entity is in charge of organizing periodical elections in the neighborhoods, and of attending neighborhoods’ representatives concerns and requests. The different neighborhood committees first organized into one single group in 2010, when the state government announced the construction of a paid elevated “rapid viaducto”, the so-called “*Vía Express*” along Inglaterra Avenue, the street running along the railroad tracks in the area. According to the authorities, the objective of the “*Vía Express*” was to alleviate the vehicular traffic conditions in the city. However, the residents of this area strongly opposed the project because they saw it as a threat to their quality and way of life. Their capacity to organize as well as to partner with other interest groups such as “Ciudad para todos”<sup>10</sup> was able to exert enough pressure so that the project was cancelled.<sup>11</sup> This event brought two important consequences for these neighborhoods: firstly, they became aware of their capacity for organization, and for the articulation of their demands to local authorities; and

---

<sup>10</sup> “Ciudad para Todos” is a local NGO working in the MAG with mobility issues. Their advocacy is mainly focused on de-incentivizing the use of personal vehicles, and promoting the betterment of public transport, the increase use of bikes and the creation of safe bike- lanes in the city. Their website is: <http://www.ciudadparatodos.org/>

<sup>11</sup> Meeting with the members of the Committees of the neighborhoods of El Eje Inglaterra on June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

secondly, they turned their attention to a space they had long considered as strange and empty: the railroad tracks.

### **Migrants in Transit, the linear park and the purification of public space**

Since 2010, the neighbors, now grouped into the association known as El Eje Inglaterra, have met with different public officials, including the former major, Francisco Ayón, to pose their demands and propose different projects to the city.<sup>12</sup> One of the most important projects of this organization has been the transformation of the space surrounding the railroad tracks into a linear park (a project first developed by the local NGO “Ciudad para Todos”), so that it could be a public space with benches, trees and flowers “for the community”. Neighbors see in this project an opportunity to transform an otherwise “empty” space into one in which they could spend leisure time, and which could make their neighborhoods more beautiful and secure.

Furthermore, neighbors started, without federal government’s authorization to plant trees, clean some of the trash and rocks, and set up benches. Because the areas surrounding the railroad tracks are federal property operated by FERROMEX, this corporation took out most of the grass neighbors had planted.<sup>13</sup> However, along this section of the railroad tracks, big and notoriously “private gardens” flourish in the “federal property” without authorities doing anything else but setting up signs with the statement: “Propiedad Federal, por su seguridad no invada esta zona/ Federal property, for your safety, please do not

---

<sup>12</sup> Meeting with the members of the Committees of the neighborhoods of El Eje Inglaterra on June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2013

<sup>13</sup> Meeting with the members of the Committees of the neighborhoods of El Eje Inglaterra on June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2013

invade this zone.” Furthermore, neighbors set up their own signs with the statement “Parque lineal Eje Inglaterra.” This sign has not been retired by any authorities, thus “formalizing” what is a de facto “invasion” into federal property. It is important to recognize how class produces uneven geographies of spatial values: while in the previous site, “homeless people’s” presence in the federal property was seen as threat, and were expelled from it; “proper middle-class citizens” intervention on federal property is left untouched. This example speaks to Roy’s explanation on “the valorization of elite informalities and the criminalization of subaltern informalities.” (Roy 2011, 233): people’s occupation of the space in the exiting yards, are confronted with 24/7 guards and walls while, proper citizens’ invasion (i.e. private gardens) remain untouched.



Illustration 15: The valorization of “elite’s informalities.” Photos taken during the summer of 2014.

While working on the linear park project, one of the neighbors' pressing concerns was the increasing presence of migrants in transit along the railroad tracks. In 2012, they contacted the members of "FM4-Paso Libre." Neighbors showed an honest interest on the issue, and asked the organization about ways to help. They also had their own initiatives. For instance, they took small printed maps of FM4-Paso Libre's *Centro de Atención al Migrante*/Center for the Attention of the Migrant, and converted them into big mantas that they hung on the fences facing the railroad tracks, so that migrants could go there, have food, take a shower and rest for a couple of hours.

During the summer of 2013, when I was working with "FM4-Paso Libre," I went with some of the members to one of the meetings of the organization to explain more deeply the work and position of the organization regarding undocumented migration in the city. For "FM4-Paso Libre", the dialogue with the residents along the railroad tracks is crucial to prevent discrimination, and to build networks of solidarity to improve migrants' passing conditions.





Illustration 16: Map of the shelter on a “tiendita/store.”

Despite our (or at least my own) previous understanding that neighbors were supportive of providing humanitarian assistance to migrants in the area, when talking to the neighbors we discovered a much more complex and diverse set of attitudes towards undocumented migrants in their neighborhoods.

For instance, the President of the committee of Jardines del Bosque, told us that so many people (referring to the migrants, but also to the “homeless”) asking for money in the streets give a bad image to the city because [they] are usually dirty. Another President of a neighborhood on the area stated that: “no hay que dejar que entren a la ciudad/we should not allow them to enter the city.” The 8 Presidents of the different neighborhood committees argued that other neighbors complain to them about the presence of migrants



in “their” streets, and that, as representatives of their neighbors, they felt pressured to act and “solve the problem.”

Residents of El Eje Inglaterra’s push for the construction of a “public space” along the railroad tracks is based on the belief that it will help them to strengthen a sense of community, and increase their organizational capacity. Furthermore, this view is reinforced by other groups of the “organized civil society.” Local NGOs working with mobility and urban design issues in the MAG have portrayed the Eje Inglaterra as an example of the capacities, and political impact that organized neighborhood associations can have on government authorities’ decision-making processes, especially at the municipal and state levels. NGOs such as “Ciudad para Todos” have argued that the creation of “public spaces,” mainly through the construction of linear parks, and other green spaces are key for the construction of “communitarian spaces,” and a less polluted city. It is in this same logic that neighbors in El Eje Inglaterra see the linear park: as a space for the community. However, this specific notion of community excludes everything that is “other,” or that does not correspond with the specific aesthetic and “moral” characteristics that such space requires. In that sense, from the perspective of the residents, migrants in transit do not belong there, they belong to a shelter, outside the city.

Consequently, this specific notion of “public space’s” meaning and nature continue to marginalize, and exclude migrants in transit, and anyone who does not “belong” to the community. Firstly, this specific mobilization of the concept of “public space” reflects what Massey (2005) argues has been a “tendency to romanticize public space, and an emptiness which enables free and equal speech, but does not take on board the need to

theorize space and place as the product of social relations which are most likely conflicting and unequal” (2005, 153). Secondly, there is a spatial and social imagination that de-historizes and dehumanizes (Zhang 2001) migrants in transit, and associates them with being “morally inferior” to the civilized city dweller, a view reflected in phrases such as “dan mal aspecto a la ciudad/ they give a bad image to the city.”

### **The shelter and “moral/racial anxieties”**

In 2012, in a meeting with Guadalajara’s Mayor, Francisco Ayón, the association of El Eje Inglaterra convinced the local government of the “need” to establish a comedor/dinning center at the city’s entrance so that migrants could stay there, have some food, and stop wandering through “their streets”. According to the neighbors, the dining center’s purpose was to provide services to migrants in transit, but most importantly, to prevent migrants to “spread” through their neighborhoods. It was meant to be a safe place for them to stay without disturbing the image or the dynamics of their neighborhoods. However, at that time, the project failed to materialize due to the opposition of the President of the neighborhood of Jardines del Bosque Centro. The property owned by the Municipality, and where the dinning center was supposed to be established was on her neighborhood. The President of Jardines del Bosque Centro told us she felt it was unfair for her *colonia* (neighborhood) to be the one having to support the presence of migrants when they exit the dining center: “En el comedor van a estar dos o tres horas, pero no van a quedarse a dormir...¿Entonces dónde van a estar el resto del tiempo? Se van a meter a mi colonia/In the dinning center migrants would rest for two or three hours, but they will not stay there to sleep, then... Where are they going to be the rest of the time? They will be in my

neighborhood. None of the other neighborhood committees was willing to host the migrants in transit's dining center, and neighbors turned their attention back to the linear park.

In September 2012, after I left the city, the municipal governments changed. The new administration in Guadalajara took up again the project of the shelter for migrants in transit, and started its' construction in Jardines del Bosque. As shown in the previous chapter, for the municipal government, establishing shelters for migrants is important to be able to "control," and police migrants "on the move." The location of the shelter sparked the opposition of the neighbors.



Illustration 17: The construction of Guadalajara's shelter. Photo taken during the summer of 2014.

According to Don Guillermo, they oppose the construction of the shelter for three main reasons: first, because it would be located in a residential area, thus, posing a threat

to the neighbors' security. He specifically mentioned how girls from the school across the street would run the risk of being sexually assaulted by male migrants. Second, because authorities did not survey the project, and did not ask the "community" whether they approved or not the construction of the shelter. And third, because the neighborhood, designed by the famous architect Luis Barragán, is considered "patrimony of the city."

These concerns expressed by Don Guillermo serve to construct racial, and class-based boundaries between "proper citizens," and the "others." First, and related to what Thomas Blom Hansen (2008) describes in his chapter regarding the post-apartheid city in the South Africa's township of Durban, the migrant (in Hansen's case is the young African man) emerges as the "embodiment of the dangerous criminal." As in the South African case, these middle-class, mostly "white" neighborhoods, "had been seen as relatively safe and within a real of cultural intimacy (...)" (102). Consequently, migrants' bodies in their neighborhood generate deep racial anxieties which are focused on the physical and chastity of "local" girls, and more largely, to "a sense of pollution from the outside" (114). And second, once again the mobilization of citizenship, and citizens' right are brought to the fore in order to claim "space for themselves" while marginalizing the "others." Regarding this issue, in "Cities and Citizenship," Holston and Appadurai (1996) argue that recent disjunctions between the form and substance of citizenship, have generated two responses: one that tries to make citizenship more exclusive, and the opposite one, which tries to make it more inclusionary. The case of construction of the shelter in Jardines del Bosque represents the former case in which the aim is "to deny social services to various categories of noncitizens or to legislate the exclusive use of one language or another" (191).

### **“VILLAS DE ASÍS”**

Villas de Asís is a gated community located in the municipality of Zapopan. Of the municipalities in the MAG, Zapopan is the one with the most number of private universities, and has launched several programs spurring innovation and startup entrepreneurialism. For instance, in 2012, the local government launched “RETO Zapopan,” a contest to fund the most “innovative” business initiatives; and in 2014, Zapopan hosted the Hackthon-Open Data; and a plan to consolidate a special “innovation” district in the city. In other words, the municipality of Zapopan is experiencing what Harvey (1989) called “entrepreneurialism.” Some of the effects of the “entrepreneurial city” have been an increasing concern for “business culture,” and the active promotion of accumulation through consumer-based innovation, cultural products and urban innovations in style.

However, and related to Saskia Sassen’s description of “global cities,” these kind of cities also present dramatic inequalities (1996), and landscapes’ of great privilege alongside landscapes of marginalization and invisibility. Zapopan is not the exception. According to the information provided by SEDESOL (Secretaría de Desarrollo Social/Ministry of Social Development), Zapopan’s overall index of marginality is low. However, when looking at the disaggregated data, one can see that along with 21 low and 33 very low localities’ marginalization indexes, Zapopan also has 34 localities with high and very high marginalities indexes (that without counting the 79 localities marked as not available in the webpage) (SEDESOL 2010).

### **Constructing walls and enclosed realities**

When *La Bestia* passes the zone of El Eje Inglaterra, the landscape radically changes, and a series of gated communities appear on both sides of the railroad tracks which are fenced with metallic railing. This fence was set by FERROMEX because that section used to be a station for the cargo train. These series of gated communities are in between the so-called Eje Inglaterra and the *Periférico*, the belt that once surrounded the city, but that now, as the limits of the city have expanded seems to cross it. As observed in the figure below, gated communities surround, both sides of the railroad tracks.

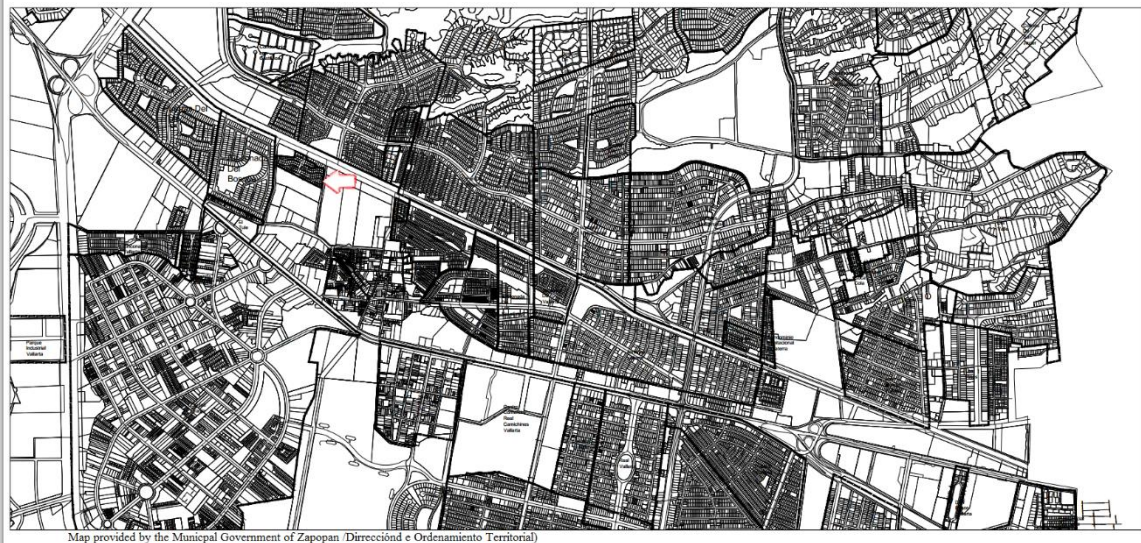


Figure 8: Map provided by the Municipal Government of Zapopan during the summer 2014.

Similar to the other gated communities in this area of Zapopan, Villas de Asís is recently new: according to the information provided by Zapopan's Dirección de Ordenamiento Territorial/Direction of Territorial Order (2010), the first habitability permits (licencias de habitabilidad) issued by the municipality were in 2009. Furthermore, Villas de Asís is part of an increasing trend to construct gated and hyper-secure

communities in the MAG, especially on the “peripheries” of the metropolitan areas. Consequently, just a few meters from “Villas de Asís” and the other gated communities, one can see “poor” and/or “rural” neighborhoods such as San Juan de Ocotán (crossing Periférico) or Jocotán (behind the gated community). This trends speaks to Teresa Caldeira’s definition of a “city of walls” where “the physical distances that used to separate different social groups may have shrunk, but the walls around properties are higher and the systems of surveillance more obvious (...)” (2000, 254).

In Villas de Asís, neighbors are also organized in *fraccionamientos*/gated communities, but in a quite different fashion than those on El Eje Inglaterra. The individual neighborhood associations of El Eje Inglaterra are registered in the Municipality, and hold official recognition from the department of Participación Ciudadana (Citizenship Participation). The members and Presidents of the Committees are elected by the neighbors, and the elections are endorsed by the municipal government. Furthermore, the contacts of these neighbors are then often public. On the other hand, the legal status of the many of the gated communities, and certainly of Villas de Asis, is that of a “*condominio*”. This legal regime gives associations more autonomy from the municipal authority which does not have a say in their internal processes.

While members of the committee in neighborhood associations take care of their own administrative processes, in the case of the *condominios*, members of the committee usually hire and full-time administrator in charge of doing the administrative processes. Furthermore, contact information to these neighbors is not public, and all the communication is channeled through the administrator, who most of the time does not live

in the gated community. As a consequence, approaching to these neighbors is more difficult due to the security checks and “gate keepers” one has to go through. The distance and borders these gated communities built is thus not marked only by the actual construction of walls, but also through the “administrative” and institutional distance established by their legal regime. Through the demarcation of both a physical boundary, and a legal distance to the city’s local government, *condominios* such as Villas de Asís, tend to result in what Rodríguez Chumillas Rodríguez (2005) identified as contemporaneous societies creating “closed and isolated environments that facilitates the creation of a different world, with new rules, and separating the street, its’ spaces and its’ norms” (p.134, own translation).

At simple sight Villas de Asís looks just like another hyper-secure and gated community in the MAG. Big tall walls do not allow visibility to the inside. There is a security cabin (with polarized windows through which one cannot see who is inside) with private guards guard the entrance. There are automatic barriers that can only be opened by residents by remote control. In addition to this, to entry one has to have permission of one of the residents, and leave an official identification with the private guard.





Illustration 18: “Villas de Asís.” Photo taken during the summer of 2014.

When, during the summer of 2013, I managed to approach one of the guards to ask him if I could talk with someone of the association or to the administrator, the guard hesitated but he finally agreed to talk the administrator, who, I was told, had just been hired. The administrator came out to the fence 5 minutes later, and said that she was not allowed to talk to me, but that she would ask the members of the *Mesa Directiva* (Committee) if one of them could give me an interview. I gave her my number and took hers but she never called me back, or answered my calls.

A few weeks later, I decided that I needed to get information in another way, so I took one of the numbers in the *mantas* advertising the houses and called. A man answered the phone with a kind voice, I told him I was thinking of buying a house, and that I wanted to know what were the main characteristics of the houses. He immediately started narrating all the security measures that the houses in the *fraccionamiento* shared. He said that this was one of the most secure spaces in the city, and that it was so secure, that even some of the measures made residents uncomfortable. For instance, during our phone conversation

I learned that the *fraccionamiento* had private security 24/7, and cameras (*circuito cerrado*) facing both the inside and the outside of the gated community, so according to him, “some privacy had to be sacrificed in exchange for security.” The fences at the top of the wall were electrified so that no one could jump above them (despite the fact that they were already high enough so that it was impossible for anyone to jump them). As for the materials of the houses, he emphasized that the houses were made up of a special material (he did not recall the specific name) which prevented the noise of the train to be heard inside the houses; furthermore, the houses, he said, are constructed in the form of a “v” so that residents cannot feel the houses vibrate with the passing of the train. The *bugambilias*, growing along the railroad tracks’ fence, were set up by the gated community so that the view could be “more beautiful.” In other words, aside with the hyper-surveillance, and enclosed space, Villas de Asís’ developers have constructed a gated community, where, despite being literally along the railroad tracks one can hardly, see, hear or feel the train and the railroad tracks. Again, developments such as Villas de Asís intend not only to simulate a reality, but they also portray what the “class content” that Harvey describes as the spatial practices of the “affluent people” who “can command space through spatial mobility and ownership of basic means reproduction (...) and where “use values relate to matters of accessibility, taste, tone, aesthetic appreciation, and the symbolic and cultural capital that goes with possession of a certain kind of “valued” built environment” (Harvey 1989, 266).

Contrary to the residents of El Eje Inglaterra, residents from the gated communities in this area, and specifically, those inhabiting Villas de Asís, do not seem to “care” about

migrants in transit. They do not show an interest, at least not organized one, on having information of migrants in transit's situation, or on how and why they are in the city. The condomínios' reports to the municipal police to which I had access frame migrants' presence as a problem based on both aesthetic and security moral considerations.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, during the summer of 2014, I was finally able to have an interview with Villas de Asis' administrator on how the residents view migrants near the gated community. Clara told me that: "para las personas que viven aquí, pues es regularmente gente con...de recursos altos... les molesta el aspecto de que estén ahí pidiendo dinero, o que estén ahí descansando, en las esquinas, en los topes/For people living here, well they are regularly affluent, they are annoyed by the image of them asking for money, or resting in the corners, in the speed bumps."

While, just as the neighbors in El Eje Inglaterra, Villas de Asis' residents see migrants in transit as a "problem", they do not think they should be involved in whatever the solution should be. Their requests to the authority aim to invisibilize migrants' presence in the same way they have done with the railroad tracks. There is a moral compulsion to erase everything that is not "clean". According to Bauman, all the characteristics attributed to the marginalized signify ambivalence. The "dirt" is something "out of place", that should be kept at a distance because it could erase the order of the things (2005, 184).

---

<sup>14</sup> See table with neighbors' reports in "The Politics of Space"

### **Deurbanizing forces and urban capabilities**

In her recent article “Does city have speech?” Saskia Sassen (2013) reflects on the capacity that cities have to “talk back” (211). Critical to her analytical framework is the distinction between deurbanized forces and “urban capabilities.” Deurbanized forces, mostly portrayed in the previous section, reflect the way through which “power, whether in the form of elites, government policies, or innovations in built environments, can override the speech of the city,” and are characterized by the sharp increase in inequalities, the building of “whole new cities,” and by large-scale surveillance systems (219-220). On the other hand, Sassen identifies specific urban capabilities that give the city speech, a way in which complex, unequal and dynamic realities and actors “coexist”<sup>15</sup> through the intersection of time/space/people/routinized practices (214). According to Sassen, the urban capabilities are: systemic indifference, repetition, presence and terrain vague. However, in this work I will only address presence.

When one walks inside the railroad tracks, the landscape tells a very different story to that of the other side of the fence: a very different reality appears: the railroad tracks are filled by clothes, shoes, and rests of food. These are things that migrants in transit left behind, and traces of their stories that have not been erased from the landscape. Yet, they are invisible to the luxury cars passing by, to the people walking along the sidewalk, and to Villas de Asís’ residents. The clandestine stories occurring in this hidden landscape are

---

<sup>15</sup> Sassen argues that coexistence does not mean “equality and mutual respect (...) my concern here is with built- in features and constraints in cities that produce such a capacity for interdependence even if there are major differences in religion, politics, class, and more” (216).

migratory stories of transgression, and of resilience: they shatter the alleged “emptiness” of these spaces, and reveal a place with social relations and ever-going stories.



Illustration 19: Inside the railroad tracks. Photos taken during the summer of 2013.

There are striking contrasts between what happens on one side of the fence, and what happens inside the railroad tracks. The physical characteristics and spatial uses show two worlds that seem to be about to collide... if it was not for the climbing plants preventing the sight from one side to the other. The gated community of Villas de Asís portrays the intent of most gated communities’ to “purify the space”, a space securely guarded by private officials, but most importantly, the attempt to “escape one of the most productive/disruptive elements [of space]: one’s different neighbor (Massey 2005, 95). The gated community is constructed as a fortress, a “safe haven” where one is protected from the “others”.

However, the stories and the realities of the city cannot disappear entirely. Migrants in transit frequently leave the inside of the railroad tracks to rest on the shades of the trees near the gated communities, or, if needed, to ask for food or money to the passing cars.

Furthermore, during the summer of 2014, when I went back to Villas de Asís, the climbing plant Villas de Asís had set up to cover the sight of the railroad tracks have broken the fence, leaving the sight of the railroad tracks' inside completely exposed. It is in through these events that the city talks back to the residents intend to guard themselves from reality. The capability of presence, as described by Sassen, appears in this case as “the possibility of making presence where there is silence and absence” (2013, 217). Through the making of presence, migrants in transit disrupt the space residents have created for themselves. They remind residents of the porosity of the boundaries and the walls (both social and spatial) that they have created. Their private space and their efforts to maintain a “clean”, “ordered”, “pure” and “moral” space fails as soon as the bodies of migrants in transit appear on their sight, as soon as the climbing plant brings down the fence.



Illustration 20: “Villas de Asís” fences.

## CONCLUSION

The cultural landscapes presented in this chapter portray distinct spatial imaginations and environmental realities that while certainly different, share the conception of place as something that is already “divided up”, as a closed system from which multiple trajectories are either seen as “out of place” (El Eje Inglaterra and the exiting yards) or invisibilized (Villas de Asís and the exiting yards). Furthermore, these cases uncovered that the apparent contradiction between private spaces and public spaces share a common logic of exclusion, of space purification, an a conscious effort to construct clean, ordered, coherent places for “us” and only “us”, the “clean ones”, the “moral” and authorized citizens. Therefore, the construction of a public space does not automatically guarantees a “democratic” space but rather another mechanism for the exclusion of the “marginalized”. In both cases, the neighbors, authorities and developers constructed social and physical borders through landscapes, discourses, and representations.

However, almost with the same force, these efforts are disrupted by the presence of migrants in transit, and other subaltern subjects for whom the residents seemed to be the representation of the “dirt” and “chaos”. The so-much desired stability and rootedness of their neighborhoods is confronted with the transit of these bodies, and with the instability and *rootedlessness* they embody. These dynamics raise the question of whether urban large places, such a city of the MAG, where wide range of social, economic and cultural landscapes are being constantly negotiated and challenged are prepared to be a place for a diverse and ever-increasing number of trajectories with distinct dynamics and rhythms. And most importantly, it raises the importance of looking at the distinct boundaries and

spatial imaginations that “create” socio-cultural, class and race boundaries which marginalizes specific bodies in “their place.”



## Conclusion

Migrants in transit through the Metropolitan Area of Guadalajara enter a complex, dynamic, contradictory space, where unequal power relationships, specific spatial imaginations, political discourses, and socio cultural understandings marked them as “unauthorized” bodies in the city. In a time where increasing mobility is celebrated, this work illustrates how mobility is curtailed with the creation not only of political borders, but also through highly racialized and class-based boundaries. Guided by cultural critical geographies, this research has unveiled how the neoliberal global system creates and reinforces the marginalization of specific bodies, while working in favor of the “already powerful,” who along with goods and capital are allowed to move freely across borders.

Four larger themes and conclusions can be drawn from this research. Firstly, there is a critical need for both academics and policy-makers to recognize through the practiced place, the distinct on-going stories and trajectories in-habiting and passing through cities. It is through this open and dynamic understanding of “others” that one can unsettle representations of migrants in transit as a “powerless, faceless mass,” and most importantly, bring to the fore a wide array of stories that have been erased and that undo neoliberal discourses. It is through their movement, bodies and on-going life stories and struggles, that undocumented migrants in transit trouble neoliberal and universal narratives that present the current economic system as a success, while neglecting the stories of exclusion and violence.

Secondly, this research sheds light on the distinct ways through which “citizenship” has been mobilized to benefit the already powerful not only by formalizing their

“informalities,” but also by depriving those considered non- “proper citizens” (the subaltern in-habiting or in transit through the city) from a political existence. In such a process, the construction and reinforcement of class and race borders have played a key role.

Thirdly, and equally important, this thesis suggests that deconstructing and denaturalizing the State to recognize it as an “ongoing process emphasizing polymorphous geographies at a multiplicity of spatial scales” (Brenner 2004, 74), leads to a better understanding of how it operates at heterogeneous times and heterogeneous spaces in a city impacted by global, national and local dynamics. Of these dynamics, the spatial re-bordering, the reterritorialization of the State, and “double geographical imaginations” have increasingly marginalized undocumented migrants in transit, marking their bodies as those than can be exterminated.

Fourthly, looking at “the city” as a rich unit of analysis both for policy-making and social sciences became crucial to recognizing the failure and inadequacy of the so-called “modern project” to address the political, social and economic realities that have emerged in the cities. Furthermore, a need to explore alternatives to approach these fluid, plural, complex, and ever-changing spaces and the “urban question” (Brenner 2013) became evident. For instance, Harvey (1989), Brenner (2013) and Rieker and Ali (2008) have largely discussed the significance of the urban within current economic, social, and political landscapes. The failure of the modernist project to fulfill its promise of “progress for all”, and of an organized, coherent and closed space, clearly differentiated from the rural, was disrupted by geographies of urbanization assuming new scale morphologies that

break with the urban/rural divide; as well as by policy initiatives creating “new matrixes” of transnational urban development (Brenner 2013). Furthermore, following Ali and Rieker’s “Urban Margins” (2008) advice of approaching the “urban,” this thesis focused on a specific city and realities to analyze larger processes of globalization and neoliberalism, what they have brought to everyday practices, and most importantly, to bring more social histories to the fore to better understand how global, national and local processes are put into practice in particular spaces, and how they impact people’s lives.

Underlying these imaginations of the State, citizenship, and migrants in transit lies a particular spatial imagination that sees spaces as closed, fixed entities. Consequently, unsettling these imaginations becomes critical for an alternative political project that aims to recognize the multiplicity of stories, trajectories and subjects in the world, and also to recognize how these perspectives continue to reinforce racial and class borders that work for the most powerful. Yet, as these chapters demonstrate, boundaries remain and will remain porous, and are unable to close their doors to “unauthorized” bodies who with their presence disrupt political and social discourses that imagine space as impermeable and fixed.

While outside the scope of this work, further research needs to be done on the reasons why the Western route remains a largely male route. In spite of all the months I conducted research in the MAG, this question remained unanswered. Having a better understanding of migratory routes through the country is crucial to develop more effective and appropriate strategies to provide humanitarian aid, especially for women and children, who are often the most vulnerable to structural violence.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

To-date, the MAG is still a city for the “few” social actors considered “honorable citizens,” and continues to work for the development of programs benefiting the “already powerful” (Massey 2005). What is probably needed is to first recognize that cities are power-filled geographies (Amin, Massey and Thrift 2000, 41) and then imagine and work towards the construction of cities that recognize the different actors dwelling, living, or passing through the city. This approach would advocate for more flexible, holistic, and pluralistic mechanisms to design, implement and evaluate policies.

At a more pragmatic level regarding the presence of migrants in the cities, policy-making must eliminate the “spatial fetishism,” that has characterized its decision-making processes. In *For Space*, Doreen Massey makes a strong argument regarding the defense of space and places: “there can be no a priori politics. The decision on whether or not one argues for openness, or for closure, must be an outcome, the result of an assessment of the specific power-relations and politics –specific power geometries- of the particular situation” (166, 2005). Consequently, when making assessments regarding the disputes over spaces, power relationships have to be examined, so that decisions do not harm, and continue to exclude the already marginalized.

At a global and national scale, past and contemporary state’s practices and ethos have developed to create murderous and regulating mechanisms through which humans’ lives are becoming increasingly ruled and controlled by them. For instance, Foucault (1976) identified bio-politics operating as emerging at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century from the notion of the “population” as a political problem that needed to be regulated, controlled

and measured. The emergence of “populations,” and with it the increasing governmentalization of the State, the development of more sophisticated statistical techniques and tools, have lead not only to the establishment of distinct political relations of the State with so-called “civil society,” than with “political society” (Chattarjee 2006), but also to the emergence of “a political project that endeavors to create a social reality that it suggests already exists” (Lemke 2002, 13) The consequence of such a political project “entail not just the simple reproduction of existing social asymmetries or their ideological obfuscation, but are the product of a re-coding of social mechanisms of exploitation and domination on the basis of a new topography of the social” (Lemke 2002, 13-14). As statistical and economic tools have widely spread into the policy making, implementation and evaluation worlds, it has become crucial to bring back the “humans” into the decision-making processes to de-stabilize the aforementioned social topography, and be able to eliminate exclusion, inequality and discrimination in policy making processes, and more broadly, in socio-cultural contexts.

#### **LEARNING IS ALWAYS A WORK IN PROGRESS**

At a more personal level, the work carried out through these years made me more aware of the privilege and inequalities that I embody as a middle-class Mexican with the ability to travel relatively easy, across borders. Furthermore, it helped me to rethink how I think about space and time, the world, and my place in it. Though this thesis is only part of a larger learning and de-colonizing project, through these years I’ve learned to be more open to imagination, creativity and different ways of being. The stories of migrants in transit, and the time I spent with both activists and migrants in transit in the CAM, along with the

courses at The University of Texas at Austin unveiled for me a more a nuanced, complex, ever-changing reality of my own city.

## Appendix

### SITUATIONIST MAPPING: THE WALKS ACROSS THE RAILROAD TRACKS

The railroad tracks cross the MAG almost diagonally and go through a wide array of socio and political spaces. During the summer of 2013, I worked with “FM4-Paso Libre” on their first report of activities. One of the main tools for gathering information for the report was to do a cross-section through the railroad tracks. We did it, mainly in a vehicle and with a group of 7 people. The cross-section was divided in two days, we first went from San José El Castillo in the municipality of El Salto to Las Juntas in the municipality of Tlaquepaque, and then from La Venta del Astillero in the municipality of Zapopan to Vallarta Poniente, also in the municipality of Zapopan. Such a plan meant that we missed a third cross-section from Las Juntas to a section that included the CAM (“FM4-Paso Libre” Centro de Atención al Migrante/ FM4-Paso Libre’s Attention Center for the Migrant). From this first cross-section I was able to grasp not only how different landscapes were along the railroad tracks, but also the wide array of ways in which people neighboring them used the space, and how subjects and subjects’ practices varied as well.



Figure 9: The Railroad tracks through the MAG. Map elaborated by FM4-Paso Libre (FM4-Paso Libre, 2013). Modified with yellow and orange lines indicating cross-sections.

During the summer of 2014, I carried out 3 *dérives* along the railroad tracks: One from Av. Inglaterra and Periférico to Av. Inglaterra and Av. México María, a close friend working as the head of “FM4-Paso Libre’s” Community Engagement” branch; the following from Av. Inglaterra and Av. México to Av. Inglaterra and Niños Héroes with María; and the last one from San José El Verde to Las Juntas, again with María and Don C. Don C is a community leader of El Salto I met through María, he works with youth in El Verde, but also has walked along the railroad tracks in El Salto. The average duration of each walk was of three to five hours, plus the time in which we stopped for breakfast or lunch. The division between the walk is arbitrary and depended on whether I had interviews to do after that, if María had other activities, as well as on the weather and other factors. Consequently, the “segments” are do not follow a specific pattern and are not meant to categorize or divide the space in certain categories since from the perspective of this project space cannot be “divided up”. Space is always fragmented, porous, and under-construction. Furthermore, the order in which the *dérives* were done did not follow a “path” from El Salto to Zapopan in one direction, but in some cases were done starting at the ending point. This in an effort to increase the sense of “disorientation” (Rubin 2012), and to recognize that because flows through the city are neither unidirectional nor linear, but fragmented. Figure 1.2 shows the path and directions we followed in each walk.



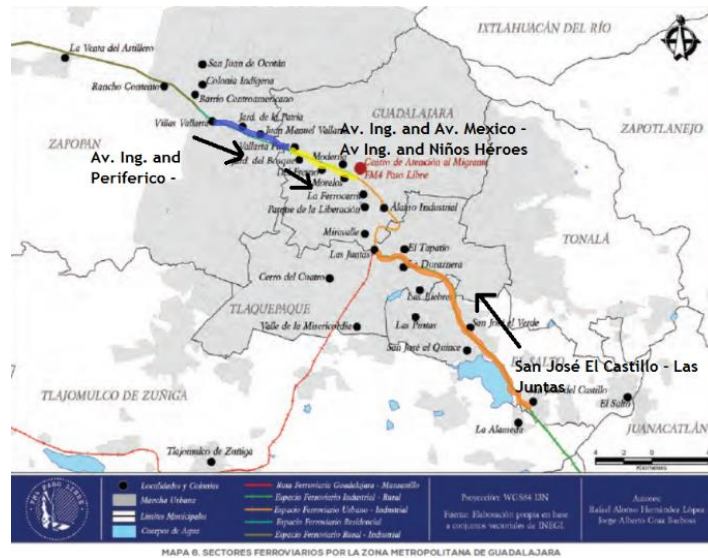


Figure 10: Map of the walks along the railroad tracks. Map taken from FM4-Paso libre (FM4-Paso Libre, 2013).

Starting at Periférico and Juan Palomar, the first thing that stands out is that the railroad track has a wire mesh (“malla”) on both sides which according to the neighbors was set by *Ferromex*<sup>16</sup> years ago. From the side outside the railroad tracks one can barely see the inside of railroad tracks, for the wire mesh has been covered by the gated communities on the side with plants, flowers and “*enredaderas*”. There is a marked difference between the street and the inside of the railroad tracks. For instance, the streets are clean, there are no signs of “trash”. It is 9:00am, and there are barely any people walking on the sidewalks. On the other hand, expensive cars pass rushing through the street, forced to slow down by the “bumps” that are set in the straight street. The landscape on the inside of the railroad tracks is quite the opposite: plants, trash, shoes, pieces of clothes and places that migrants have accommodated as semi-shelters (i.e. remains of fireplaces). From *Periférico* until probably 1 mile there are no access points to the inside of the railroad tracks,

<sup>16</sup> See *Ferromex* on Chapter 2: “The Politics of Space”

thus people inside the railroad tracks are forced to walk about half a mile inside them and do not have access to sidewalks until, a small metal door appears. As María and I walk through the railroad tracks, cars keep on passing as fast as the bumps allowed them. While walking in the inside, one has the feeling that what separates these two worlds is more than a wire mesh. Inside the railroad tracks one discovers a completely different space, one where time seems to slow down. It is still early and some people working in the gated communities as security or house cleaners cross through the railroad tracks' door. María and I walk through the sidewalk for a while because we saw someone getting near the cars as they slowed down in the bumps. We approach him. He is a middle aged man saying he comes from Nicaragua. He quickly show us the currency of his country, and tell us that he is carrying it with him so that people would believe that he is really a migrant in transit.

After the encounter, we return to the inside of the railroad tracks and see a train entering the city through *La Venta del Astillero*. Watching that big assemblage of metal that the train is, watching that most of them have graffiti on them that tell stories of the places they have been, and knowing that it is more than a cargo train always impresses me, makes me shiver.



Illustration 21: The train passing through the MAG. Photo taken during the summer of 2014.

Continuing through the inside of the railroad tracks, the wire mesh, along with more gated communities with electric wires on the walls, is still there. However, more and more trees and plants begin to show and more “markers” of the presence of migrants begin to appear: more clothes, remains of fireplaces, bottles of water and pieces of shoes. When passing along a row of big trees along the inside of the railroad tracks, we see some men sleeping under the trees’ shadows. Behind the railroad tracks, crossing the street one can see the Church of “Villas de Guadalupe”, and a middle-class neighborhood. There is an access door from the inside of the railroad tracks to the street just in front of the Church. During the summer of 2013, María and I visited that Church to see if they had any program supporting migrants. What the church has is not specifically a program, but they sometimes give food to migrants in transit that enter the Church asking for help. The receptionist of the office makes it clear though, that the same help is not provided for people who “just pretend to be migrants”.

As María and I keep walking through a pronounced curve, we notice that a group of 5 men are walking towards us. As they approached we greet them, and ask if they are travelling in the train. They say that they are. They are coming from Honduras and Guatemala, and got to Guadalajara the night before. They rested for a few hours in the “Parque Hundido” near that point and they are hoping they can catch the train going to the US nearby. They have been travelling for two weeks now, and hope to get to the US as soon as they can. Next to them, other migrants in transit rest while waiting for the train to pass through the curve. Maria and I talk with them for a while, and let them know that if for any reason they could not catch the train that day, they could go to the CAM that

afternoon. They seem to know where the CAM is located, but did not show any intention to go there.



Illustration 22: Migrants in transit waiting to take the train. Photo taken during the summer of 2014.

After the curve, María and I get to the *intersection of Av. Inglaterra and Juan Palomar*. This is still a residential middle-class area surrounded by parks. It gets more difficult to walk along the railroad tracks because the space is reduced. The railroad tracks are not surrounded by a wire mesh anymore. Just along the railroad tracks one can see a big park, where, from information gathered during the summer 2013, we knew some migrants in transit spend the time. Besides the park, one can also see the “*Club de la Colina*” a country club for “middle and high class” residents. Members of the club are used to run in the same park where migrants in transit and other subjects in the city sleep. While walking along that park and the “*Parque Hundido*” on the other side, María and I remember how last summer, the

administrator of the country club told us they had called the Institute of Migration to “pick up” migrants because members felt “threatened” by their presence and accused them of robbery of the houses near the park.



Illustration 23: The railroad tracks and the “Parque Hundido.” Photo taken during the summer of 2014.

Just a few meters after the club, we encounter Av. Patria. Av. Patria is one of the largest avenues in the city so the crossing through this street is quite busy with people walking or biking. There are also many cars driving by through a very busy traffic. We get stressed just by hearing all the noise and honking of the cars. Here, there is also no mesh wire along the railroad tracks but the crossing is difficult because the railroad tracks are on a hill, one has to walk inside the railroad tracks with little space for walking.



The landscape completely changes passing Av. Patria, it is no longer an exclusively a residential area: the residential area mixes with commercial buildings, mainly restaurants (i.e. Thai and Sea Food). The traffic continues to be intense with cars continuously crossing and passing along the railroad tracks. The street stops 500 meters after the intersection with Av. Patria, but the railroad tracks continue their path. María and I continue walking through them. The space completely changes again: the railroad tracks are now running alongside factories mixed with housing, and gated communities. There are more plants and trees covering the view of the railroad tracks but from the gated communities and not in the railroad tracks. Today is Tuesday, so at the next intersection, we find the “Vidriera” tianguis. The traffic, both of cars trying to pass by and/ or park is very busy. We enter the tianguis and decide that this is the end stop of our first walk.



Illustration 24: The tianguis of “La Vidriera.” Photo taken during the summer of 2014.

Our second walk begins just where the other ended, at the intersection between Av. Los Pinos and Av. Inglaterra. The railroad tracks’ surroundings are still occupied by factories. The first ones are, on one side, an oil factory (“Agydsa”) and on the other side a flour factory. On the other side of the road, and divided by a street, Av. México continues its’ way. María and I continue to walk and we see the back of “Telcel’s” customer center (with wires on the top of the wall), and on the other side of the railroad tracks a residential

area of middle-class houses. On the other side of “Telcel's” building, one can still hear Vallarta Avenue’s noise. Vallarta is one of the busiest streets in the MAG. Most of the factories along this part of the railroad tracks have their own patios where the train can charge and discharge its cargo. As María and I continue walking we get to San Jorge’s neighborhood. Palm trees and bushes surrounding one side of the railroad tracks. On one side the grass is "clean", on the other it grows without order. Next to the railroad tracks is The San Jorge Church. According to María de neighbors planted those trees. The neighborhood of San Jorge belonged to only one family, and, according to María, the houses were built as of "interés social" for workers in the city. This part was barely urbanized at the time (+/- 40 years). Today, it is a residential area for middle class residents, but some of the buildings are still used as offices. The sides of the railroad tracks are surrounded by grass set up by the neighbors, and palm trees that the Church of San Jorge planted in front of the Church.

María and I continue walking towards a bridge that passes above the railroad tracks. Just before and after the bridge one can see a row of gated communities. The gated communities’ walls are furnished with flowers and plants. We get to the space under the bridge: outside the railroad tracks and under the bridge (in which some people park their cars). There are also traces of people in-habiting the bridge. The pillars of the bridges have graffiti art on them. María and I also see some used syringes lying on the ground. Under the bridge, two men are sitting down. They seem to be using drugs and drinking alcohol, as soon as they see María and me, they stand up, but don’t move. We say hello to them, stop to take some photos and continue walking. When we passed them they started walking towards the other side, and then towards us... María and I were scared for a moment but then they stopped again and sat down back where they were before María and

I enter the space beneath the bridge. We felt like intruders. It was like entering someone else's domestic space.



Illustration 25: The railroad tracks through the bridge. Photo taken during the summer of 2014.

After the bridge, one can see more trees and tall grass, bottles of water and big space full of remains of food and clothes. There is a young man sitting among the grass and below a tree giving shade. Apparently he slept there because all his things lie on a blanket next to him. We talk to him but he barely responds at the beginning. Then he says he is from Honduras and was going to the US, but he got tired, and decided to stay in the MAG. He looks in bad health condition, so María and I asked him if he wanted to go to the doctor or get some help at the city shelters, but he refuses. After talking to him for a little while, and trying to convince him to go to a shelter, I ask him if I could take a photo of him. I immediately regret asking such a question, but he agrees. I prepare the camera, but instinctively, distance myself, and walk back some meters to take the photo behind the railroad tracks. I did not reflect upon this, until I saw the picture and see that I basically



took the most distance I could. Maria and I keep on walking towards the intersection of San Bonifacio and Av. Inglaterra, just a few meters ahead.



Illustration 26: A young migrant from Honduras. Photo taken during the summer of 2014.

It is here where the neighborhoods of “El Eje Inglaterra” start. One can see a noticeable change in the aesthetics of the railroad tracks’ surroundings. There is a private kinder garden on the right side and on the other, LAMAR University. Cars pass by slowly, through the intersection where some men, with backpacks in their shoulders are asking for money or food to the passing cars. This is clearly a residential and commercial area. This is the only part of the railroad tracks where we found signs of FERROMEX, warning people to avoid invading “federal territory”. We also saw a store with a map showing directions to the CAM. There are a lot of trees planted by the neighbors, and a few benches and even a swing under them. Next to them, on one of the wood pieces of the railroad track, María and I see hand-written sign: “Honduras.”



Illustration 27: The middle-class neighborhoods. Photos taken during the summer of 2014 (The photo on the right, showing the hand-written sign “Honduras,” was taken by María).

This is also the only point in the railroad tracks where there are actual crossing paths, and a lot of people crossing from one side of the railroad tracks to the other. We also see a police car stationed by the railroad tracks, and a man walking along the railroad tracks. He is the only one following the railroad tracks instead of crossing them. We keep on walking until we get to the intersection of *Av. Inglaterra* with *López Mateos*. This street crosses the city from north to south. We cross through the bridge going above *López Mateos*, and once again, the noise and honking of vehicles passing through gets louder and louder.



Illustration 28: “López Mateos” Photo taken during the summer of 2014.

However, just by crossing the bridge and walking some steps further, the noise dissipates, and we enter a residential area with the clear purpose of promoting the use of the bike. We can see a mural and signs claiming a more “bike friendly” city. The railroad tracks’ surroundings continue to be green, and full of big trees. It is at this point where we encounter a new phenomenon: private gardens along the railroad tracks. Despite the fact that the area along the railroad tracks is supposed to be “federal property” neighbors have re-designed this spaces as “gardens” for their houses and apartments. One can even see a sculpture of the Virgin Mary, and trees demarcating private garden from the rest of the railroad tracks. As we continue walking we see pieces of clothes, shoes and empty bottles of water. As we get to the intersection with

*Los Arcos*, we see again a lot of transit crossing through the railroad tracks and people asking for money/food. Some of them have back packs in their shoulders.



Illustration 29: “Private gardens.” Photos taken during the summer of 2014.

Crossing the intersection, the space seems much lonelier. We can see more pieces of clothes and shoes on the ground, and houses along the railroad tracks. We walk about 20 meters, along a “Soriana” (grocery store), and get to the corner where the construction of the shelter for migrants is taking place. Ahead of us we see the “durmientes” (these are the pieces of the railroad tracks that lay horizontally on them) nailed in the ground vertically. They are set just along Pueblo Quieto. Neighbors said they were set up like that to prevent people from Pueblo Quieto stealing from the train, and advise us not to enter there if we did not know someone living there. We decide to stop our walk at that point.

Our third derive began in El Verde, the neighborhood ahead of San José El Castillo. That day Don C., a community leader from El Salto, walks with us. The day before he asked María and me to bring weapons to defend ourselves. We take nothing with us. He is carrying a “machete”. We start at the main street crossing through El Verde and the railroad tracks. The passage seems lonely and full of high grass along the railroad tracks. There are few houses along the path, and most of them seem to be abandoned. After that, everything that lies around the railroad tracks are factories with their own train patios. We walk for an

hour without finding anything else but huge, high grass and factories. We hardly see any people, except for two men walking with a bottle of tequila in their hands. Then, we start hearing the train approaching in the distance, and a few minutes later we see it coming towards us. The train stops at one of the patios, and we approach it to ask for permission to get on it. After I explain to the operator that I'm studying at the University of Texas and that I'm doing research along the railroad tracks, he agrees to let us get on the train. He tells that we have to go inside one of the cabins. Everything looks different from the train, more when you are in the safety of the cabin. I take photos from the inside of the cabin, but then decide to go outside with María. The landscape continues to be the same for a while, until more and more houses appear on rows along the railroad tracks. They are simple, little houses which, contrary to other landscapes along the city, don't have fences or wire around them. Along the way we can see two federal patrols parked along the railroad tracks. The operator tells us they only care about migrants in transit when the "goods" transported by the cargo train are valuable. The train has to stop just 3 meters before arriving at Las Juntas, where the main patios are, because a car is lying across the railroad tracks. We thank the operator, and get off the train.





Illustration 30: “On the train.” Photo taken during the summer of 2014.

We walk along the railroad tracks and we find a market... It is as if the railroad tracks are not there. There is an intense, fluid and dynamic movement along and across it: people buying and selling things, and eating at little businesses. There is a wide array of commercial activity: taxis, little businesses, buses, people fixing things, and migrants asking for food or money at the intersections. We walk for several minutes within the crowds until we find a place to eat and rest. This was a walk that started as such, and ended up being a journey on the cargo train.



Illustration 31: “Las Juntas.” Photo taken during the summer of 2014.

## Bibliography

- Acharya , Arun Kumar. "Feminization of Migration and Trafficking of Women in Mexico." *Review of Research and Social Intervention* 30 (September 1, 2010): 19–38.
- Agamben, Giorgio. *Means Without End : Notes on Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000.
- Allen, John. *Lost Geographies of Power*. RGS-IBG Book Series. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub, 2003.
- Al-Mousawi, Nahrain. "Martina Rieker and Kamran Asdar Ali, Eds. Gendering Urban Space in the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa." *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 6, no. 1 (January 1, 2010): 140–44. doi:10.2979/MEW.2010.6.1.140.
- Amin, Ash. *Cities for the Many Not the Few*. Bristol: Policy Press, 2000.
- . *Cities for the Many Not the Few*. Bristol: Policy Press, 2000.
- . "The Urban Condition: A Challenge to Social Science." *Public Culture* 25, no. 2 70 (March 20, 2013): 201–8. doi:10.1215/08992363-2020548.
- Amnistía Internacional. *Víctimas Invisibles: Migrantes En Movimiento En México*. España: Amnesty International, 2010.
- Anderson, Ben, and Divya Tolia-Kelly. "Matter(s) in Social and Cultural Geography." *Geoforum*, Themed section on "Material Geographies", 35, no. 6 (November 2004): 669–74. doi:10.1016/j.geoforum.2004.04.001.
- "Auge, Marc - Los No Lugares [pdf]." *Scribd*. Accessed October 12, 2014. <https://es.scribd.com/doc/51458639/Auge-Marc-Los-No-Lugares-pdf>.
- Bauman, Zygmunt. *Ética posmoderna*. México: Siglo XXI, 2005.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. *The Logic of Practice*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1990.
- Brenner, Neil. *New State Spaces: Urban Governance and the Rescaling of Statehood*. Oxford New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- . "Theses on Urbanization." *Public Culture* 25, no. 1 (2013): 85–114. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1215/08992363-1890477.
- Brenner, Neil, Bob Jessop, Martin Jones, and Gordon Macleod. *State/Space : A Reader*. 1st ed. Hoboken: Wiley, 2008.
- Caldeira, Teresa Pires do Rio. *City of Walls: Crime, Segregation, and Citizenship in São Paulo*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.

- Carlos Morales. "El Silicon Valley Mexicano Se Gesta En Guadalajara." *Forbes México*. Accessed January 24, 2015. <http://www.forbes.com.mx/el-silicon-valley-mexicano-se-gesta-en-guadalajara/>.
- Chatterjee, Partha. *The Politics of the Governed: Reflections on Popular Politics*. New York; Chichester: Columbia University Press, 2006.
- . *The Politics of the Governed: Reflections on Popular Politics*. New York; Chichester: Columbia University Press, 2006.
- Clare Ribando Seelke, Kristin Finklea. "U.S.-Mexican Security Cooperation: The Mérida Initiative and Beyond." Congressional Research Service, April 8, 2014. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R41349.pdf>.
- Clifford, James. *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1997.
- Comaroff, Jean, and John L. Comaroff. "Occult Economies and the Violence of Abstraction: Notes from the South African Postcolony." *American Ethnologist* 26, no. 2 (May 1, 1999): 279–303.
- Cresswell, Tim. *In Place/out of Place: Geography, Ideology, and Transgression*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.
- De León, Jason. "'Better to Be Hot than Caught': Excavating the Conflicting Roles of Migrant Material Culture." *American Anthropologist* 114, no. 3 (September 1, 2012): 477–95. doi:10.1111/j.1548-1433.2012.01447.x.
- De Leon Siantz, Mary Lou. "Feminization of Migration: A Global Health Challenge." *Global Advances in Health and Medicine* 2, no. 5 (September 2013): 12–14. doi:10.7453/gahmj.2013.065.
- Dutton, Thomas A., and Lian Hurst Mann, eds. *Reconstructing Architecture: Critical Discourses and Social Practices*. Pedagogy and Cultural Practice, v. 5. Minneapolis, Minn: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.
- Fassin, Didier. "Policing Borders, Producing Boundaries. The Governmentality of Immigration in Dark Times." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 40, no. 1 (2011): 213–26. doi:10.1146/annurev-anthro-081309-145847.
- Felipe Jacome. "Trans-Mexican Migration: A Case of Structural Violence(Enlace)." Center for Latin American Studies, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, 2010.
- FM4 Paso Libre. *Migración en tránsito por la Zona Metropolitana de Guadalajara: actores, retors y perspectivas desde la experiencia de FM4 Paso Libre.*, 2013.
- . *Migración en tránsito por la Zona Metropolitana de Guadalajara: actores, retors y perspectivas desde la experiencia de FM4 Paso Libre.*, 2013.
- Foucault, Michel. "Of Other Spaces." *Diacritics* 16 (Spring 1986): 22–27.



- Foucault, Michel. *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76*. 1st ed. New York: Picador, 2003.
- Gandy, Matthew. "Learning from Lagos." *New Left Review* 33 (2005).  
<http://search.proquest.com/docview/1301913989?OpenUrlRefId=info:xri/sid:su:mmon&accountid=7118>.
- Garcia-Ramon, Maria-Dolors. "The Spaces of Critical Geography: An Introduction." *Geoforum*, Themed section on The Spaces of Critical Geography, 35, no. 5 (September 2004): 523–24. doi:10.1016/j.geoforum.2004.01.006.
- Hale, Charles R. *Engaging Contradictions : Theory, Politics, and Methods of Activist Scholarship*. 1st ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008.
- Harvey, David. *The Urban Experience*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989.
- Hayden, Dolores. *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*. First MIT Press paperback ed. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1997.
- Holston, James, and Arjun Appadurai. "Cities and Citizenship." *Public Culture* 8, no. 2 (1996): 187–204.
- Isabel Rodriguez Chumillas. "Privatopía" versus Ciudad Pública. Coloquio de Geografía Urbana. La Ciudad Y El Miedo." In *VII Coloquio de Geografía Urbana. La Ciudad Y El Miedo.*, 127–52. Barcelona: Ediciones Diversitas, 2005.
- James Holston and Arjun Appadurai. "Cities and Citizenship." *Public Culture* 8 (1996): 187–204.
- Josiah Heyman. "Cuatro Temas En Los Estudios de La Frontera Contemporánea," n.d.
- Lefebvre, Henri. *The production of space*. Oxford, OX, UK; Cambridge, Mass., USA: Blackwell, 1991.
- Lemke, Thomas. "Foucault, Governmentality, and Critique." *Rethinking Marxism* 14, no. 3 (September 1, 2002): 49–64. doi:10.1080/089356902101242288.
- . "Foucault, Governmentality, and Critique." *Rethinking Marxism* 14, no. 3 (September 1, 2002): 49–64. doi:10.1080/089356902101242288.
- "Llama Gobernador de Jalisco a Denunciar Migrantes Para Que Sean Deportados." Accessed November 11, 2014. <http://www.proyectodiez.mx/2013/08/30/llama-gobernador-de-jalisco-a-denunciar-migrantes-para-que-sean-deportados/34329>.
- "Lost and Found in the Posts: Addressing Critical Human Geography." Accessed January 28, 2015.  
[http://www.academia.edu/2044726/Lost\\_and\\_found\\_in\\_the\\_posts\\_Addressing\\_critical\\_human\\_geography](http://www.academia.edu/2044726/Lost_and_found_in_the_posts_Addressing_critical_human_geography).
- Massey, Doreen B. *For Space*. London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE, 2005.

- . *Spatial Divisions of Labor: Social Structures and the Geography of Production*. New York: Methuen, 1984.
- Mitchell, Don. *Cultural Geography: A Critical Introduction*. Oxford ; Malden, Mass: Blackwell Publishers, 2000.
- Newman, David. *Boundaries, Territory and Postmodernity*. Routledge, 2013.
- “OIM.” *OIM*. Accessed January 24, 2015. <http://oim.org.mx/>.
- “Plaza Washington.” *ACUARTA*. Accessed December 12, 2014. <http://www.acuarta.com/portfolio/plaza-washington/>.
- Rieker, Martina, and Kamran Asdar Ali, eds. *Gendering Urban Space in the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa*. 1st ed. New York, N.Y. ; Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.
- Robertson, Iain, and Penny Richards, eds. *Studying Cultural Landscapes*. London: Arnold, 2003.
- . , eds. *Studying Cultural Landscapes*. London: Arnold, 2003.
- Rodolfo, Casillas R., Rodolfo Casillas R, Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos (México), and Organización Internacional para las Migraciones. *Una vida discreta, fugaz y anónima: los centroamericanos transmigrantes en México*. Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos, 2007.
- Roy, Ananya. “Slumdog Cities: Rethinking Subaltern Urbanism.” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 35, no. 2 (2011): 223–38. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2427.2011.01051.x.
- Rubin, E. “Catch My Drift?: Situationist Derive and Urban Pedagogy.” *Radical History Review* 2012, no. 114 (October 1, 2012): 175–90. doi:10.1215/01636545-1598060.
- Rubin, Herbert J. *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE, 2012.
- Sartori, Andrew. *Liberalism in Empire: An Alternative History*. Berkeley Series in British Studies, volume 8. Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2014.
- Saskia Sassen. “Does the City Have a Speech?” *Public Culture*, Urban Challenges, 2, no. 25 (Spring 2013): 210–23.
- Sassen, Saskia. “Does the City Have Speech?” *Public Culture* 25, no. 2 (2013): 209–21. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1215/08992363-2020557>.
- . “Does the City Have Speech?” *Public Culture* 25, no. 2 70 (March 20, 2013): 209–21. doi:10.1215/08992363-2020557.
- . “WHOSE CITY IS IT?” *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review* 8, no. 1 (October 1, 1996): 11.

- . “WHOSE CITY IS IT?” *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review* 8, no. 1 (October 1, 1996): 11.
- Scott, David. *Refashioning Futures : Criticism After Postcoloniality*. Princeton Studies in Culture/power/history. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999.
- SEDESOL. “Resúmen Municipal. Municipio de Zapopan.” *Catálogo de Localidades*, 2010.  
<http://www.microrregiones.gob.mx/catloc/LocdeMun.aspx?tipo=clave&campo=loc&ent=14&mun=120>.
- “Seguridad - GRUPO EULEN México.” Accessed November 24, 2014.  
<http://200.94.73.190/seguridad.html>.
- Shaw, Jon. “Geographies of Mobilities: Practices, Spaces, Subjects – Edited by Tim Cresswell and Peter Merriman.” *Area* 44, no. 1 (2012): 128–29.  
 doi:10.1111/j.1475-4762.2011.01046.x.
- Sibley, David, David Atkinson, and Peter Jackson. *Cultural Geography : A Critical Dictionary of Key Ideas*. London: I.B.Tauris, 2005.
- Sin Fronteras I.A.P. “La Detención de Personas Extranjeras En Estaciones Migratorias Y La Privación de La Libertad,” 2012.  
[http://www.sinfronteras.org.mx/attachments/article/1403/Detencion\\_Extranjeros\\_Final\\_web.pdf](http://www.sinfronteras.org.mx/attachments/article/1403/Detencion_Extranjeros_Final_web.pdf).
- Thrift, N. J. *Spatial Formations*. Theory, Culture & Society. London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage, 1996.
- Toney, Joyce. “The Caribbean and the Feminization of Emigration: Effects and Repercussions.” *Wadabagei : A Journal of the Caribbean and Its Diaspora* 12, no. 1 (2009): 60–72.
- transportemx. “Migrantes ‘trampas’ En Trenes No Terminará Mientras No Se Impida Su Ingreso Al País: Ferromex.” *Transporte.mx | El Portal Del Transporte Mexicano*. Accessed November 20, 2014. <http://www.transporte.mx/migrantes-trampas-en-trenes-no-terminara-mientras-no-se-impida-su-ingreso-al-pais-ferromex/>.
- Upton, Dell. *Another City: Urban Life and Urban Spaces in the New American Republic*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008.
- Verstraete, Ginette, and Tim Cresswell, eds. *Mobilizing Place, Placing Mobility: The Politics of Representation in a Globalized World*. *Thamyris Intersecting*, no. 9. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002.
- Wilson, Chris, and Paul Erling Groth, eds. *Everyday America: Cultural Landscape Studies after J.B. Jackson*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.

Winterdyk, John, and Kelly W. Sundberg, eds. *Border Security in the Al-Qaeda Era*. Boca Raton [FL]: CRC Press, 2010.

Zhang, Li. *Strangers in the City : Reconfigurations of Space, Power, and Social Networks Within China's Floating Population*. Palo Alto, CA, USA: Stanford University Press, 2001.

<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/alltitles/docDetail.action?docID=10042872>.

———. *Strangers in the City : Reconfigurations of Space, Power, and Social Networks Within China's Floating Population*. Palo Alto, CA, USA: Stanford University Press, 2001.

<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/alltitles/docDetail.action?docID=10042872>.