

The Ethical Representations of Intergenerational Migration Traumas

Elena González, BA, International Relations and Spanish Faculty Mentor: Amanda Petersen, PhD, Languages, Cultures and Literatures



Migration, Agency, and Representation

Migration, as something that naturally occurs, contains so many different lived experiences. Every lived experience of migration is unique. For some, the process of uprooting and leaving home is effortless and for others migration is daunting, dangerous and deadly. Those who live to share their story exercise agency, but how do those who disappear or who die on the journey exercise that same agency? Migration and the traumas it produces not only effect the one making the journey but also those who follow. Many times, the pain and trauma are hidden or ignored in order for life to continue.

How does one process what is unspoken, what is ignored, what is silenced? How does one represent these traumas in a way that respects agency while also creating awareness? In the following texts: *Antígona González* by Sara Uribe, *Are you bringing something from Mexico?* by Daimary Sanches Moreno, and *Migrante 72* by a collective of authors, and *Crux* by Jean Guerrero, there are multiple representations of trauma that respect and promote the agency of those impacted by migration trauma in the present and trans-generationally.

Migration Trauma

- Trauma that is triggered by the process or the effects of migration. These traumas can be triggered by violence on the journey, at the border, or in the new country of origin. Death and disappearance are also common experiences linked with migration. Finally, traumas such as a cultural loss or a nostalgic desire to return to one's country are also common struggles.
- Individual traumas and collective traumas are produced and are also navigated in these various texts.

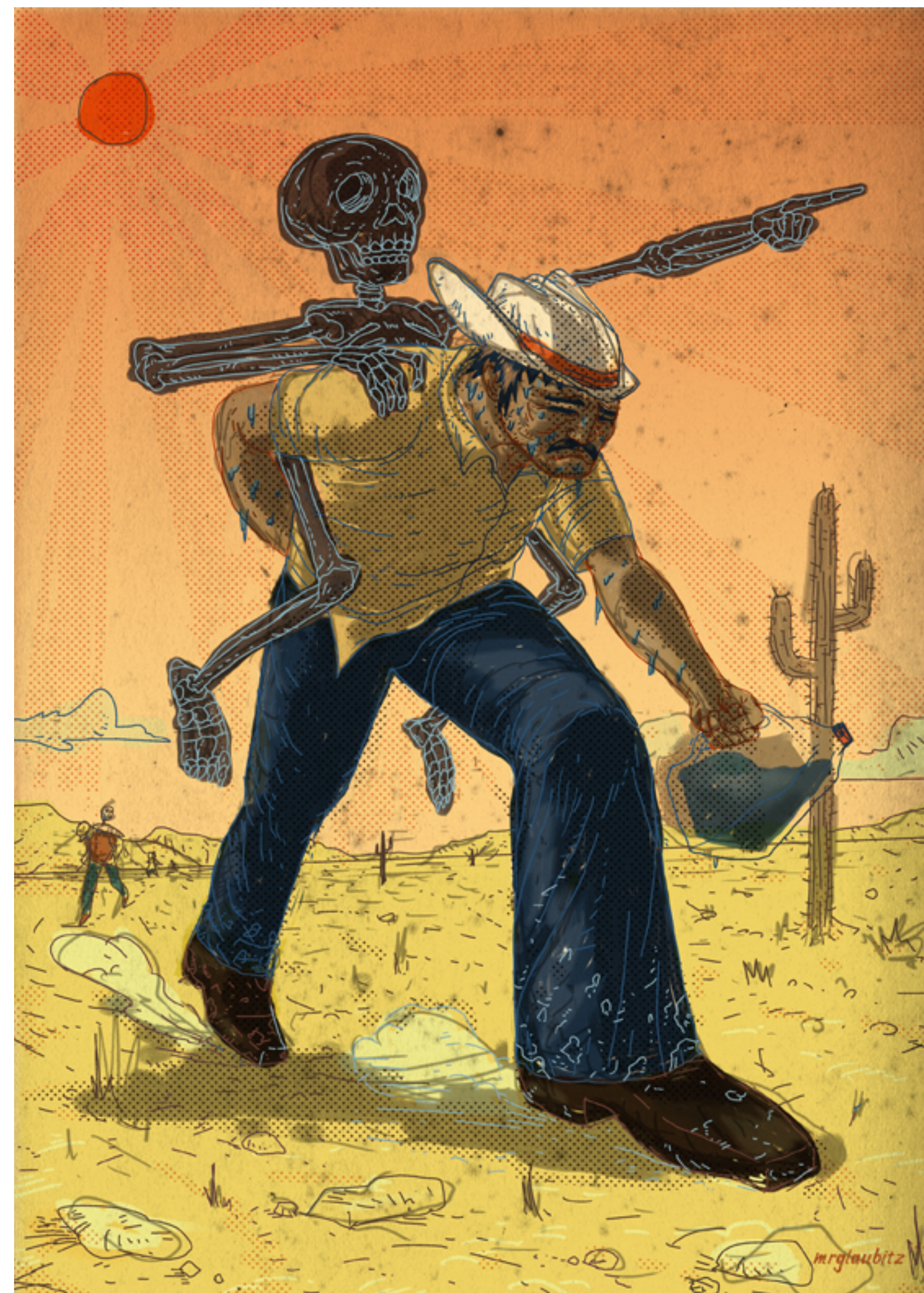
Migrante 72

- The collection of stories representing each of the 72 migrants that were victims of narcoviolence in Mexico represent this individual loss and need for healing but also the collective loss and fear that is generated for those that live in the impacted areas but also for those who aspire to make the dangerous journey to the United States.
- The unidentified migrants have fictional stories about who they could have been represented and although the agency of that individual is not exercised, the stories become a source of condolence for those in search of the disappeared
- Reflects a narrative of the US- Mex border whose victims are not only Mexican

Antígona González

Collective Traumas and the Representation of the Disappeared

- Use of fiction as a tool to share the lived experiences of the collective, anyone is and can be Antígona
- Antígona as a figure representing the collective's struggle to find closure or their loved ones; If someone is looking for someone, they themselves become lost as well
- Collective silence as something that further promotes these traumas and a way of protection against the state
- Loss manifesting as a personal loss and absence but also a collective loss of confidence in the state
- Can be seen as a collective and individual response
- A call to action and a way to remember the dead and give space for healing for those impacted by loss and the unknown



Charles Glaubitz- *Are you bringing something from Mexico?* Final Art

Crux

Metaphorical Borders, the Impact of Loss and Absence Represented in Three Generations

- "Most lie lost forever, hidden beneath shrubs where they sought shade."
- "I think you know that lying, keeping secrets and refusing to acknowledge the past are what poison us as human beings. It's hiding that closes the soul...What gives liberty is transparency, owning what you have experienced, letting light reach your interior, seeking to be illuminated."
- The importance of dialogue and understanding and questioning the limits of how to unravel the trauma of the generations before you. How to unravel inherited trauma while respecting those who were first impacted.

Are you bringing something from Mexico?

- This play allows for the characters to exercise their agency. These characters, similar to Antígona, reflect certain lived experiences while crossing the border from Mexico into the United States but also life after crossing and the metaphorical borders that one encounters.
- The trauma of sacrifice represented in gender roles but also in the reasons for migration.
- The image of the ghosts symbolizing the persistence of these traumas and figures within borders, physical and intangible.

Temas Centrales

- Nostalgia to return to one's home
- Questions of gender and the role of women in these dynamics
- Unknown absence
- Intersectionality
- Hauntings
- Collective Traumas
- Death
- Loss
- Violence