Inmigrante Indocumentado: Transnational communities of thriving in the midst of racial structural inequalities

Yolanda Valencia

A dissertation

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Washington

2019

Reading Committee:

Victoria Lawson, Chair

Lucy Jarosz

Jose Antonio Lucero

Program Authorized to Offer Degree:

Geography

©Copyright 2019
Yolanda Valencia

University of Washington

Abstract

Inmigrante Indocumentado: Transnational communities of thriving in the midst of racial structural inequalities

Yolanda Valencia

Chair of the Supervisory Committee:

Victoria Lawson

Sarah Elwood

Department of Geography

My work reveals a transnational politics of thriving that foregrounds the importance of affective community relations for oppressed and marginalized communities in the reproduction of LIFE - of social life - and thriving communities in places set for their failure in the US, such as Pasco WA where about 70% of the population identifies as "Hispanic," mostly Mexicans. Drawing from qualitative methods consisting of: archival research; ethnography; interviews of eight city leaders including the mayor of Pasco Matt Watkins; and the chief of the Police Bob Metzger; and from over 40 testimonios from mixed status immigrants, my research analyzes *the ways in which undocumented Mexican immigrants construct thriving communities in places where they are not supposed to survive.* To answer this question, I employ a transnational/trans-border approach

because as I analyze how processes of imperialism, bordering, and immigration law have impacted agrarian communities in Mexico and Mexican immigrants in US cities, and in turn how immigrants themselves resist by adopting and readapting knowledge from the 'South' in order to produce communities of thriving in their everyday lives in the US. My community in Pasco and El Rancho reveal how acts of mourning (at funerals), celebrations (at weddings, quinceañeras, birthdays, etc), and kinship (co-parenting, *compadrazgo*) make each other strong, whole, and happy enabling a politics of thriving. It is exactly as Shawn Wilson says, we are our relations. In addition, I theorize that many of these rituals celebrate life (even at funerals) and as such, they serve as an antidote to *social death* – described as the permanent condition that the undocumented is forced to inhabit due to criminalization and denial of personhood through the law (Cacho 2012). However, based on my research, I refine this concept from all-encompassing social death to mean *legal death* – which means legal discrimination against access to what the state protects through the law including national borders, employment, housing, education, property, vote, and citizenship status. However far from permanent, legal death is a fluid condition in relation to the law. The law does not dictate all our relations and so does not have the power to fully take away social life, personhood and humanity; our multiple relations with people and place do.

Con cariño for my daughters, our ancestors and future generations…

Acknowledgements

From the bottom of my heart, my gratitude goes to everyone who supported me in this project. Outmost thanks to my immigrant community who shared so much knowledge and their valuable time with me. Also, I want to thank the city leaders for sharing their knowledge and giving their perspective – all with good intentions. My analysis and critique are to the structures and systems of power, not to individual persons. My deepest gratitude to my reading committee members Victoria Lawson (chair), Tony Lucero, and Lucy Jarosz for their ongoing support, constructive feedback, thoughtful guidance, for pushing my thinking and for believing in me – I can say with great confidence that I have the best committee and especially, the best chair who is also my mentor and friend. Special thanks to Katherine Gillespie for editing my work, giving constructive feedback, and for her ongoing support, kindness and friendship. Enormous gratitude to the funders of this project: Sherman-Gerlach Doctoral Fellowship, GO-MAP (Graduate Opportunities and Minority Achievement Program) Dissertation Writing Grant, and Howard Martin Award for Fieldwork. Especial thanks my husband Jose Armando Valencia, my daughters Anelsy and Arisbeth, and my dog Bombón for giving me support, love, and patience as they walk with me in this journey and beyond. My gratitude and admiration to my extended family and community for our ongoing inter-generational relations of trust, respect and solidarity. *This work is ours!*

INMIGRANTE INDOCUMENTADO: TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNITIES OF THRIVING IN THE MIDST OF RACIAL STRUCTURAL INEQUALITIES

Chapter 1

Ahorita, ahorita vivo felíz. Este país [Los Estados Unidos] es el mejor país que pude haber conocido yo. Yo me siento con una seguridad en este país que yo de por mi, no me iría

Currently, currently I live happily. This country [The US] is the best country I could have found. I feel so much security in this country that if it were for me, I would not leave

(Lucero[1], personal interview, 2013)

Lo que mas me gusta o lo que valoro mas de Pasco es la paz, la tranquilidad, la familia, la gente

What I like the most or what I value the most of Pasco is the peace, the tranquility, the family, the people

(Luna, personal interview, 2016)

INTRODUCTION

At 35 years of age, Antonio Zambrano Montes, a Mexican immigrant farm worker, was shot seventeen times by three police officers on February 10, 2015. Videos were taken with cell phones and uploaded to the internet capturing Zambrano Montes throwing rocks at the police before running across an intersection near downtown Pasco Washington where he was shot and killed[2]. In commenting on this crime, Mayor of Pasco Matt Watkins says: "this is the ultimate American … complicated story. Sometimes people want to make things really simple, but there is a case of a man who was in this country *illegally* with daughters who, *I believe* have gone to CBC [Community Basin College] or graduated CBC, *presumably* American citizens" (Watkins, personal interview, 2017).

---

[1] Pseudonym for anonymity – all of my immigrant participants have been assigned pseudonyms for anonymity

[2] According to the Washington Post's Fatal Force Project, 995 people were shot to death by the police in 2015. While 38% of the total the United States' population are people of color, over 50% of those who were killed by the police were people of color: mostly Blacks and Hispanic/Latinx.

Mayor Watkins' account of the "complexity" focuses on devaluing and even justifying the killing of Zambrano Montes. Pointing out that Zambrano Montes was in this country *illegally*, and even questioning his daughters' citizenship status – the one thing society values so much - serves to criminalize and frame as immoral his mere presence, and in this way, to justify his killing. Mayor Watkins is a person who has strong influence in biopolitical (the power to 'make life or let die') and biopower (the power to kill for the 'benefit' of the population) decision-making in this city. Racism, Foucault et al. (2003) say, is the deciding factor in whose life is worth protecting and whose life should be let die or eliminated for the benefit of the population. Indeed, soon after the killing of Zambrano Montez, the Franklin County Prosecuting Attorney Shawn Sant, determined that the three officers involved in the crime were deemed NOT guilty of the charge! (Helsel 2015). As such, criminalization of Mexican immigrants can influence the justification for their killing with impunity, for the 'benefit' of the population.

In addition, according to the city of Pasco's Chief of Police Bob Metzger, Pasco is not a sanctuary city. In fact, the Pasco police cooperates with Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers for arrests, or for whatever, and this "happens . . . maybe once a month." He says, "We are not a sanctuary city. ... If they [Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers - ICE] call us to assist as they do occasionally for when they are going up to houses or making arrests or whatever, if they ask us to help them, we will. [And this] happens… maybe once a month" (with a tone of rarely occurrence, not a big deal) (Metzger, personal interview, 2017). For Chief Metzger, one time per month doesn't seem like too often. That reflects his position of privilege and power because for the Latinx immigrant community, every time ICE shows up, it produces material consequences of family separations, pain, deep anxiety, and trauma. What this means is that about once a month, the undocumented (their family and community) are reminded of their

deportability status - described by De Genova (2002) as living in a state of constant treat of deportation. Indeed, frequent instances of persecution and deportation in the area of Pasco are often documented in local news (Probert 2018a).

Furthermore, over 50% of the Latinx population in Pasco do not speak English, and the city has been criticized for their low efforts to provide services in Spanish[3]. In response to that criticism, the Pasco Police Department has been taking Spanish lessons from Border Patrol Agents. This is a tactic to increase fear and intimidation for the community (Stang 2018). These are only a few examples to illustrate how intense racialization, criminalization, and intimidation takes place in US cities like Pasco. As such, I argue that Pasco is a city where Mexican immigrants are not supposed to thrive, or even survive.

However, given all the evidence I just provided, and given the many studies by immigrant scholars and other critical analysts that supports the fact that Mexicans are highly policed, racialized and criminalized in the United States (Cacho 2012; Ngai 2004; De Genova 2004; Escobar et al. 2003; L. Chavez 2013; Golash-boza 2013; Walters 2002; and others), I was surprised to find out during my interviews that some of my immigrant participants referred to the United States as a place that provides security, as the best country they have ever found. As Lucero indicates, "Este país [Los Estado Unidos] es el major país que pude haber encontrado. Yo me siento con una seguridad en este país, que yo de por mi, no me iría" (*This country [The United States] is the best country I could have found. I feel so much security in this country that if it were for me, I would not leave*) (Lucero, personal interview, 2013). Nearly all of my participants referred to Pasco as a place of tranquility, of family—as a peaceful place. For instance, when describing their life in Pasco, Luna said, "Lo que mas me gusta o lo que valoro

[3] It is assumed that those who do not speak English speak Spanish. This might the case for the majority, but not for everyone.

mas de Pasco es la paz, la tranquilidad, la familia, la gente" (*What I like the most or what I value the most of Pasco is the peace, the tranquility, the family, the people*) (Luna, personal interview, 2016).

It is this apparent contradiction that shaped and re-shaped my research question as follows: *how do undocumented Mexican immigrants construct thriving communities in places where they are not supposed to survive?* More specifically, my work explores*: how Mexican immigrants produce a place of tranquility and peace under hostile conditions in cities like Pasco WA? What of Pasco do they value the most and why? What events, activities, moments, encounters do they enjoy the most and why? How do they produce such events, activities, moments?*

In order to answer these questions, my work draws from a case study in Pasco Washington. Located in East Washington, Pasco is one of the Tri-Cities (the other two are Kennewick and Richland). Pasco was the first of the Tri-Cities to be built and its economy is primarily agricultural driven. Currently about 70% of the population identifies as Latinx, mostly Mexicans, and my work reveals that the city maintains the conditions for the ongoing exploitation of Mexican labor by enacting police violence, criminalization and constant intimidation of Mexican immigrants. And yet, Latinx immigrants have built a place of tranquility, of family, a peaceful place. Theories of migration are not focused on the paradoxical experience of thriving in a racially hostile context. Instead, Indigenous theories that reclaim an Indigenous civilization (Bonfil Batalla and Dennis 1996), practices of communality (Martínez Luna n.d), relationality (S. Wilson 2009), and constellations of resistance (Simpson 2017), as well as theories from Black feminist scholars on production and experiencing of place by the erased and marginalized (McKittrick and Woods 2007), on other ways of producing humanity

(McKittrick 2015; Alexander 2012) become key in helping analyze and make sense of why and how racialized Mexican immigrants produce and experience place. *My work reveals that politics of thriving - rooted in Indigenous core values of respect, reciprocity, relationality, and solidarity - that foreground the importance of affective relations are crucial for oppressed and marginalized communities in the reproduction of life (of social life) in the US, in places set for their failure like Pasco Washington*.

Some of such politics of thriving are reflected in the acts of mourning (at funerals) celebrations (at weddings, quinceañeras, birthdays, etc), kinship (through compadrasgo/co-parenting) because as Shawn Wilson says, we are our relations. In addition, politics of thriving are reflected when Mexican-American citizens take Mexican-American children whose parents are undocumented back to communities in Mexico in order for them to reconnect with their grandparents and the community there. This demonstrates how citizenships goes from being an individualized possession to a community tool; and how citizenship gets reterritorialized enabling the movement between Mexico and the US and this way, expanding affective relations and politics of thriving across colonizing borders and generations. It is such politics of thriving that enable Mexican immigrants in my study to produce a place of tranquility, of family, of peace, under conditions set for the failure.

My findings emerge from qualitative approach that includes interviews, ethnography and *testimonios.* Testimonio is a traditional feminist Latin American approach often used by women of color and Chicana feminists. Testimonios are different from biographies and detailed stories in that testimonios are given by people who have experienced and/or witnessed acts of injustice and violence affecting entire communities (Menchú and Burgos-Debray 1984). This method enables epistemic disobedience as it centers geo and body politics of knowledge that have been

marginalized and converts writing into performances of activism, writing as political (Delgado Bernal, Burciaga, and Flores Carmona 2016). I collected over 40 testimonios, the majority from undocumented Mexican immigrants. In order to obtain the perspective of those in positions of 'P'olitical power, I also interviewed eight city leaders including: The Mayor of Pasco Matt Watkins; Chief of Police Bob Metzger; President of the Tri-Cities Hispanic Chamber of Commerce - Nikki Torres; the founder of the Latino Civic Alliance in Washington - Gabriel Portugal; and some educators and teachers. As a lifelong ethnographer in the Mexican community, I also draw on ethnography and autoethnography as an Indigenous and Chicana feminist de-colonizing methodology (M. S. Chavez 2012; S. Wilson 2009).

Theoretically, I also am in conversation with critical race and feminist theorists, such as Lisa Mari Cacho and others, who have developed the concept of *social death*. According to Cacho, the law produces a permanent *criminal* status. Those who are targeted and criminalized by immigration law become ineligible for personhood and this is a form of what she calls *social death* (Cacho 2012). However, from my in-depth and relational research in my community, I am refining that concept to think not about social death because the communities I work with have created, social networks and relations of thriving, of solidarity, of community, personhood and humanity – of *social life.*

While Cacho indicates that the law produces permanent ineligibility for personhood, I argue that personhood and humanity are not determined by the law. And here, I am drawing on Indigenous scholars who argue that all knowledge and ways of being are relational. As Shawn Wilson indicates, we are our relations (S. Wilson 2009). I am also drawing on Black scholars who indicate that the oppressed – even as they are forgotten and erased – are producing (and experiencing) other kinds of humanity and space (McKittrick and Woods 2007; McKittrick

2015). As such, I am refining the concept of social death to mean *legal death,* because social death is insufficiently nuanced. I argue that legal death is a layer of status - a type of identity, a type of intersection - produced by the state through immigration law. As such, legal death is relevant *only* in relation with the state. People without documents are forced into legal death in spaces and moments when they encounter barriers, denial of rights, and risks produced (and protected) by the law. Some spaces and moments include the nation-state border, some federal buildings, airports, and during immigration rides, among other spaces and moments. However, far from being a permanent status, legal death (as many other layers of identities and status) is spatial, temporal and fluid. Again, this layer of identity and status occurs only in relation to the state. And yet, similar to formerly incarcerated African Americans (and Latinx), those heroes made *illegal* by the law and legally discriminated, find housing, employment and ways to get education (Alexander 2012). Yes, with lots of barriers and struggle, but they act with agency and dignity in large part, due to having social life.

To push the concept of social death to mean legal death, and to change its definition from permanent to a relational, spatial temporal and fluid status is important because it shows that while the law does produce tremendous barriers and material consequences on targeted populations, I argue that the law does not dictate all aspects of humanity and life. As such, the law cannot fully give or take away personhood, humanity, and thus social life. Humanity and social life are given and produced by our everyday multiple affective relations with people around us - with our communities, both near and at a distance.

Hence, I see the social and the legal (another type of social construct) as separable in a non-binary form. That is, the legal is only a portion of a more broad and complex social life. I argue - based on my research - that legal denial of rights can certainly result in legal death, but

not in full social death. It is, in part, in response to legal death that communities strengthen their relations of solidarity, reciprocity, and respect in the intimacy of their everyday life in United States' cities set for their failure, such as Pasco, where they experience criminalization, intimidation, segregation, erasure and killing with impunity; and yet where they are constructing a place of tranquility, peace, and family - a thriving community. As such, my work asks: *how do undocumented Mexican immigrants construct thriving communities in places where they are not supposed to survive? How Mexican immigrants produce a place of tranquility and peace under hostile conditions in cities like Pasco WA? What of Pasco do they value the most and why? What events, activities, moments, encounters do they enjoy the most and why? How do they produce such events, activities, moments?* In order to answer these questions, I also employ a transnational/trans-border approach.

When it comes to Mexican immigrants, I argue that we cannot understand how they are able to make thriving lives in the United States, without understanding their experiences of oppression and struggles in Mexico because methods surviving and thriving travel. The reason is that state violence affects the same population across national borders. And in turn, these populations adapt and re-adopt practices/politics of thriving across time and space to confront ongoing and new barriers. For instance, there is lack of investment in education and health services in agrarian communities in Mexico – including in El Rancho[4] from where the majority of my participants migrated and I resided though age of 17 – in turn, the people in el Rancho continue to practice what Zapotec Indigenous scholar refers to as communality; that is: the land, work and fiestas are by and for the community. Despite the Mexican government's effort to weaken the ejido system in the mid 1990s, the land continues to be communal/ejido. Also,

[4] Pseudonym for anonymity

community projects are built by and for the community – including the school and clinic of el Rancho; and fiestas (including intimate celebrations such as weddings and funerals) are organized by and for the community. In the US intimate celebration continue to be community centered Also, and some Mexican American citizens have made of their US citizenship community tool as they take US citizen children, who are not their kids, back to Mexico in order to re-connect with the community there. This strengthens kinship relations grounded on solidarity, conviviality, reciprocity and respect. As such, my work is trans-national and trans-border. It excavates how suffering is produced and what politics of thriving have emerged, both in Mexico and in the United States by following two lines of analyses: one that has to do with transnational politics of thriving informed by Indigenous core values of relationality, solidarity and respect; and the other is related to processes of exclusion, criminalization, and bordering resultant from colonialism and US imperial power over Mexico.

In order to accomplish this task, my work is organized as follows: Chapter 1, titled "*Inmigrante Indocumentado*: Transnational communities of thriving in the midst of racial structural inequalities," serves as this introduction. Chapter 2, titled "Methodology of an Immigrant," describes my immigrant of color methodology as trans-border, trans-national and trans-disciplinary. Here I unpack my positionality as someone whose life has been intimately shaped by global processes that produce displacement and force some to become providers of cheap lab. In this chapter, I layout my usage qualitative methods to include testimonios from mostly undocumented Mexican immigrants; interviews from city leaders; and my usage of ethnography, autoethnography as a life-ling ethnographer in the Mexican and Mexican immigrant community. My immigrant of color methodology uncovers the importance of transnational/trans-border approaches in order to understand immigrants in the US. With this, I

also highlight the need to bridge Indigenous theories, decolonizing methodologies and Black geography theory with migration studies in order to better understand, not only violent processes and consequences, but also how immigrants resist and thrive in a racialized, violent context.

Chapter 3, "Community Organizing in the Midst of De-Indianization and Displacement in Mexico," focuses on processes and experiences of oppression and struggles in Mexico in order to reveal the production and experience neo-colonial violence towards rural communities; and in turn, how these communities produce meaningful lives that do not rely on the protection of the state. I provide a transnational historical context by focusing the community of El Rancho located in Michoacán - the 2nd poorest state in Mexico. Here I follow two lines of analyses, *subject formation* and *political economy of displacement*. By looking at *subject formations,* I analyze how white supremacist ideologies began (and continue) since colonization and have created internalized racism by setting some to believe themselves as longer Indigenous but mestizos due to the Mexican state efforts to "modernize" Mexico by following a model of the west. However, my findings reveal that in practice, mestiza/o marginalized rural communities such as El Rancho, continue to adapt and re-adapt ways of being and knowing rooted in Indigenous values of relationality, communality, reciprocity and respect to produce ongoing humanizing and meaningful relations – that is, social life. This is in large part because these communities have not been enhanced nor protected by the Mexican nation state. The second line of analysis, *political economy of displacement,* looks at some ways in which forced migration is produced in rural places like El Rancho. More specifically, I focus on structural adjustment polices and war on drugs to argue that Indigenous and Indigenous descendants continue to be dispossessed from their lands and separated from their communities in large part due to historical and ongoing US-Mexico relations. Such processes of displacement force many to risk their lives

at the US-Mexico border. Surviving the border, grants them the status of "illegal aliens," settlers forced into the status of legal death, trapped in the US, and forced to provide cheap labor for the benefit of the elite.

In chapter 4, "Muerte Legal: There Was Definitely a - Racial and Classed - Dividing Line," I continue a similar argument to chapter 3 but in the context of the US in order to establish the deeply racialized context Mexican immigrants encounter. I do so by dividing the chapter into two sections. From the perspective of city leaders - mostly Whites - the first section titled *There Was Definitely a Dividing Line: Racial Political Economy of Pasco and the Tri-Cities* focuses on the history of racial political economy of Pasco in context of the Tri-Cities in order reveal how processes informed by racism and white supremacy have produced some US cities through this Pacific Northwest example. I argue that in a similar (but not equal) manner as Africans Americans, Mexicans' labor has been framed as temporal, seasonal, unskilled and disposable in places like Pasco WA. Further I demonstrate that in a similar manner than in Mexico, current modernizing and Development ideologies in Pasco expose some Mexican immigrants to further processes of de-Indianization - in this case, of de-Mexicanization. On that note, the second part of the chapter is titled *Subject Formation of Mexican populations in the US.* From the perspective of Mexican immigrants – mostly undocumented - I analyze how Mexican immigrants experience politics and geographies of legal death, which enables differential incorporation as processes of subject formation that enhances white power and supremacy. I look at some of the discursive and material ways in which un/documented Mexican immigrants experience police violence, criminalization and constant intimidation to demonstrate (and argue) how cities in the US are not made for the survival of Mexican immigrants.

Lastly, given all the evidence of displacement from Mexico, and structural violence that results in legal death in the US, Chapter 5, "Vida Social: Radical Transnational Politics of Thriving" focuses on the paradox of thriving under conditions of legal death – that is, under state-sponsored violence. Here, I reveal how Mexican immigrants produce a place of peace, tranquility and family in a city set for their failure. My work demonstrates the importance of affective relations that produce experiences/feelings of solidarity, community, and overall spaces of bellowing and other kinds of humanity (McKittrick 2015; McKittrick and Woods 2007; Johnston, and Longhurst 2013); indeed, we are our relations (Wilson 2012). Such relations emerge form practices that have been passed from generations through generations; are rooted in Indigenous core values of respect, solidarity, communality, and reciprocity; and have been adapted and re-adapted in order to confront ongoing and new barriers across borders and generations. Some of such practices include mourning (at funerals), celebrations (at weddings, quinceañeras, etc), and kinship (compadrasgo/co-parenting) which extends family relations. As well as practices of communality, including the making of citizenship as community tool when Mexican-American take US-citizen children back to Mexico to reconnect with the community there. As such, my work also reveals the importance of transnational/trans-border approaches to understand immigrant's experiences.

Overall, my work focuses on the entire immigration journey to uncover how structural violence in produced and experienced, but most importantly, how thriving in the diaspora must be both intimate and trans-border. I write about politics of thriving because it is crucial for future generations of immigrants see the strengths of their/our communities reflected in our writing. Also, there is so much that we (scholars and privileged students) can learn from ongoing thriving

practices and other kinds of humanity taking place outside - and in relation with - the power of the state.

METHODOLOGY OF AN IMMIGRANT
Chapter 2

Being in between the margins and academia is a site of grief; it is a space where theory and empirics meet. Academia and my immigrant world are both my communities and my fields, and I grieve in both. Although I now have access to the privileged world of academia, I continue to consider myself a Mexican immigrant, who – along with my Mexican immigrant community – has been placed in the category of the "other," the criminal, the disposable, the ungrievable. My work responds by writing with and for my immigrant community, to write our own stories in ways that empower our community and help us build and strengthen our third consciousness and the consciousness of those who are willing to listen.

In this chapter I describe where my work takes place and why; then I discuss my research approach drawing on a combination of feminist and Indigenous methodologies; next I explain how my personal experiences across borders influence my approach to writing and research. My last section focuses on my fieldwork in my immigrant community where I provide details of process, challenges, and ethical dilemmas I encounter.

Field work: My immigrant community - Pasco WA with a trans-border context

My work looks at historical processes that produce structural vulnerability across borders and its material consequences for Latino/a immigrants; but also at *how the undocumented thrive in a society where they are not supposed to survive – in racialized, segregated spaces in the US.* Migration scholars highlight some injustices Mexican immigrants experience in the US (Chavez 2013; Escobar et al. 2003; Golash-boza 2013; De Genova, 2002; Ngai 2003; Walters 2002). Cacho (2012) and Nguyen (2012) draw attention to the role of immigration law - which targets populations who do not have the legal tools to question the law - in producing permanent rights-

less populations with 'no right to have rights.' In addition, terrorism has been successfully tied to illegality since some of the 9/11 hijackers allegedly overstayed their visa and thus were 'illegals.' In this way, the frame of 'suspected terrorist' is added to the 'illegal alien' label; thus, Mexican-looking people end up carrying 'la frontera portatil' (the portable border) (Dear and Lucero 2005, 317). In effect, Mexican immigrants become criminal by presence, not by doing and Cacho (2012) states, 'Although they are excluded from law's protection, they are not excluded from law's discipline, punishment, and regulation' (5; see also Walia 2014). This converts Mexican immigrants into exploitable laborers in constant fear of deportation (Calavita 1992; Coleman 2012; Golash-boza 2013; Martin 2012; Walters 2002). *However, there is a lack of understanding of how Mexican immigrants' experiences of such violence in the three spaces (Mexico, the border and the US) produce immobility and influence the way in which they organize in the US in order to not only survive, but to thrive in places where they are not supposed to survive.* In order to answer this question, my work is heavily influenced by Indigenous theories, Black Geography scholarship, as well as by Chicana and Latinx geography scholars; bringing these much-needed debates into migration studies. Empirically, my work focuses in Pasco Washington where I arrived over 20 years ago along with my parents and one sister when we migrated from Mexico to reunite with our extensive Mexican network there.

In Pasco, racialized populations have been produced and recruited through history to do arduous temporary labor including Chinese, Filipino, African Americans and currently, Mexicans. Indeed, over 70% of the population currently identifies at Hispanic/Latinx in Pasco – compared to 17% nationwide – and this community continues to grow in the city. Pasco forms part of the Tri-cities – the other two being Richland and Kennewick - located in Eastern Washington. The foundation of the Tri-cities is rooted in racism, discrimination and segregation.

Richland was built in the early 1940s to provide federal housing for *permanent* workers – whites, mostly recruited from the south to fulfill white collar-positions at Hanford: a plant dedicated to making plutonium for the autonomic bomb for WWII (Brown 2013). At the same time, Kennewick was a sundown town that did not permit black people after 7:00pm (Bauman 2005). Thus, black people - who were recruited to do labor-intensive *temporary* construction work required to actually build Hanford in the early 1940s - had no choice but to reside in Pasco. But even within Pasco, they faced further segregation and were forced, with city covenants, to live in the East Side of the city, in a place that lacked basic public services, unlike the reset of the area.

This side of the town has been colloquially known as "El Barrio de los Negros" (the Black's Neighborhood) and while it continues to be underserved with basic services including city lighting, sidewalks, street maintenance, etc., it is over-policed and highly criminalized. However, this barrio is no longer inhabited by mostly Blacks. They are now the minority as currently over 90% of the people living el barrio de los negros are Mexican immigrants, and/or of Mexican descent. And within Pasco, over 70% of the populations identifies as Hispanic[5]/Mexicans. The majority of whom were (and continue to be) recruited to do seasonal farm labor soon after WWII when the irrigation system was built in Pasco. This population continues to grow and Pasco depends on their labor for its vitality.[6] It is important to keep in mind that many of these same populations face state sponsored violence and dispossession - from colonization to neoliberalism/neocolonization - in places of origin, the border and in the US.

[5] I use Hispanic as this term is widely accepted by the population there, including by Mexican Immigrants. At times I refer to them as Latinx as I prefer this term after building consciousness of the connotation that Hispanic has with the Spanish colonizers; the "x" in Laitnx makes it inclusive of different genders.

[6] See Chapter 4 "Pasco: From Black & White, To Brown!" for more details about Pasco's history, Mexican migration, and current practices of racism and erasure.

Therefore, focusing on a transnational and historical context, my work looks at *how the undocumented thrive in a society where they are not supposed to survive.* More specifically I ask*, how undocumented immigrants reclaim humanity, dignity and space through intimate community-based resistance in racialized, segregated spaces in the US?* In the following section, I describe my approach in answering this question drawing on feminist and Indigenous methodologies.

Multi-Scale/Angle Approach

My research builds on transnational feminism, Chicana feminist theory, and feminist geopolitics in order to analyze i) embodied experiences across borders and what processes produce these experiences ii) how prior experiences influence perceptions of safety and insecurity in the US, iii) community building and organizing in the midst of erasure through history and space. Drawing on feminist theory I argue for the significance of making the personal political (Massey 1994) 2) for the importance of analyzing the intimate in the global and the global in the intimate (Mountz and Hyndman 2006), and that there is no such thing as objective universal knowledge or truth because all knowledge is partial and contextual to specific geo-histories and experiences of both participants and the researcher (Haraway 1988; S. Wilson 2009). We, researchers, have feelings (hunger, love, sadness, happiness, etc.), life-long experiences and knowledges/relations (ontologies and epistemologies) that influence our research design, approach and analysis. We cannot leave our experiences, feelings and knowledges behind in order to conduct research (S. Wilson 2009). Indeed, my research is influenced by my experiences and ongoing relations and changing identities across space, borders, and time (Hall 1999). Furthermore, I draw inspiration from Chicana feminist theories who uncover the struggles of inhabiting a space in between cultures, languages, identities (G.

Anzaldúa 1987) as well as those who re-claim an Indigenous descent and a de-colonial future (G. E. Anzaldúa et al. 2003).

In addition, I draw on Indigenous scholars who deconstruct western-centric research and argue that research - by and for the West - produce the dehumanized Indigenous "other" which has enabled colonialism, imperialism, and neoliberalism (L. T. Smith 1999; Said 1979; W. D. Mignolo 2005; Martínez 2008; Galeano 2010). Research thus, has justified the killing and segregation of Indigenous people as well as the dispossession of their lands and humanity. Such analysis in helpful to my own work as I also look into how this same practice – research - was used throughout this continent, more specifically in what is currently known as Mexico and in the lands what were stolen by the US (see chapter three for more details). Indeed, many suffered double colonization: first by Spain 500 years ago when Hernán Cortez arrived at Tenochtitlan bringing its guns, germs and steel (Diamond 1999). Then by the US when the border crossed us with the culmination of the US-Mexico war in 1848 where Mexico lost about half of its territory (Castillo 1992). Ironically now we have become framed as the "illegal aliens" in the land we have inhabited for thousands of years; in the land our ancestors have gotten back to; where we have been able to freely move for hundreds of generations back. Now we are the aliens while white Europeans have been constructed as legitimate citizens (Walia 2014). This way Mexican immigrants have become the exploitative disposable labor that fulfills the ongoing demand for cheap labor. Indeed, racial capitalist practices have produced the racialized "other" out of different groups of people thought history including the white poor, Africans, and Asians. Research analyzed and interpreted through the western eye has made this possible (Gilmore 2002; B. M. Wilson 2000; McKittrick and Woods 2007; Said 1979; W. D. Mignolo 2005).

Nevertheless, Mexican immigrants continue to practice Indigenous ways of being, in the mist of erasure and denial. Despite the Mexican government's effort to modernize Mexico by devaluing/erasing/eliminating all that is Indigenous in us, Mexico continues to be a place that has the highest number of Indigenous peoples and languages in this continent (Matinez Luna, n.d). While the state has succeeded in making some believe themselves as no longer Indigenous, but as Mestizos (Bonfil Batalla and Dennis 1996) as well as through the western project of alienage in the US (converting us into the aliens in the US), our practices of celebrations, mourning, sharing, and kinship continue to be informed by Indigenous core values of relationality, respect, solidarity and reciprocity. Yes, these practices evolve with time and space, but underlying values persist (Semali 2002). As Wilson (2012) states, "Even though many Indigenous people may be removed from the practices of their traditional lifestyles, their underlying beliefs are nevertheless carried on" (94). I agree that identity is never static - it evolves with time and space - as per Hall (1990). However, given our community practices of relational accountability, reciprocity, respect, and ongoing teaching through participation and oral histories, I am claiming our stolen history, embracing our Indigenous roots (Alarcón 1990; G. E. Anzaldúa et al. 2003), and reclaiming our Indigenous civilization, not only in Mexico as per Bonfil Batalla and Dennis 1(996) but as we move through space[7]. Especially when we move into as space where have been framed as the "other", the unfit, the abnormal, the undeserving criminal through mainstream research and discourse.

Thus I am thankful to Indigenous scholars who urge for the need of decolonized research by using decolonized approaches and methodologies by i) acknowledging that there is no such

[7] Where, I have been told, I am now a settler in the US too – looks like colonizing projects, such as bordering for the production of nation-states and thus exclusion, do indeed work.

thing as "objective" research and universal knowledge as per feminist scholars (Haraway 1988) - this idea has justified domination, dispossession and imperialism (L. T. Smith 2013); ii) centering marginalized communities' voices, knowledges, practices, and embodied experiences; iii) prioritizing their needs when designing the research question(s) and methodologies; iv) conducting research that is accountable to relations, and respectful to the community's culture, practices and traditions; and v) producing research for the benefit of that community (L. T. Smith 1999; S. Wilson 2009). These approaches are further expanded by Wilson (2009) who describes an Indigenous paradigm as relational and deeply accountable to those relations. Ontology (theory of what is real), epistemology (theory of knowing what is real), methodology (approach to producing knowledge about what is real) and axiology (ethics, morals, and relational accountability) are all relational, flow in a circle, dependent on each other, and one influences/produces the other in both directions. Relations produce knowledge (ontology and epistemology). Knowledge is not extracted from one thing; it is about the relations of that thing to another thing. Relations are cultural knowledge. Therefore, knowledge is relational, cultural and specific to place and community. Thus, knowledge cannot be owned; it belongs to the cosmos. Wilson (2009) describes research as ceremony because what makes us feel connected (in relation) is spiritual. A ceremony brings people together in one place; the distance gets smaller and relations stronger. In our research, we build strong relationship with our topic/idea. Our research is ceremonial when all connections to the topic come together. Lifelong ongoing practices of Indigenous culture, multiple contextual relations and thus knowledge, contribute in making Indigenous research by Indigenous people accountable, respectful and reciprocal to those relations; thus Indigenous (and non- Indigenous) people should conduct Indigenous research for the benefits of those relations (S. Wilson 2009). As Smith (2012) says, Western

research..."told us things already known, suggested things that would not work, and made careers for people who already had jobs (3)."

Further, Wilson (2009) indicates that sadly, research conducted through western methodologies, tends to focus on negative issues in the community. This strengthens negative stereotypes and does not produce material benefits for the community. Thus, it is crucial that we also write positive aspects about our community. I draw from Indigenous research in that it is my goal to write with and for my immigrant community with an ultimate objective of achieving material change for that community. Following Wilson's explanation of relations as both ontology and epistemology that is complex, cultural, contextual and community based, I analyze multiple relations of my immigrant community and how those relations/knowledge - rooted in Indigenous cultural practices learned in Mexico – contribute to surviving/thriving in the US. Thus I engage with epistemologies of the south, in the US (de Sousa Santos 2015). While our relations with the state and the law deeply affect our lives, we have many other relations and cultural practices, both locally and across borders. Such relations are trans-generational, define who we are and give us humanity, dignity and a sense of bellowing both in Mexico and - at a different level - in the US. In my writing, I interweave glimpses of my experience as an insider, active participant, and lifelong ethnographer in the Mexican and immigrant community, because Chicanas and - I would add, immigrants of color and the colonized in general - have no choice but to draw on autoethnography in our analysis and writing (M. S. Chavez 2012). Indeed, autoethnography is a research method for the marginalized. My own marginalized, othered, identity - Mexican immigrant and women of color - has been formed in relation to particular ideological constructs. Thus, as Chávez (2012) says,

"Producing autoethnographic research acknowledges and validates my Chicana [and Mexican immigrant] presence as well as draws attention to my marginal position inside dominant structures of [power]" (335). Thus, just as Chávez, when I write, I am unwilling and unable to create the traditional "academic distance." Also, autoethnography facilitates relational and reciprocal writing where I do not just write knowledge extracted from my immigrant community but, I am also in conversation with and contributing to my participants – with whom I relate – and readers who identify with and/or might be able to form a relationship with the immigrant community. This allows me to play my role as a community member, a story teller, and analyzer - rather than a researcher/author -producing a more relational, respectful and ethical writing (S. Wilson 2009)

Further, following women of color and Chicana feminism, my work takes my participants' experiences/knowledges as on the ground theory and puts them in conversation with academic theory. Thus, I draw on short testimonios from undocumented immigrants who bear witness of displacement in Mexico, crossing a deadly border, and experiencing state sponsored institutional violence/racism and immobility in the US. Testimonio as an approach has been widely used in understanding migrants' experiences, including self-perception and the formation of identity and cultural interpretation (Silvey and Lawson 1999; Torres and Wicks-Asbun 2013). Testimonios are different from personal histories and autobiographies in that testimonios are given by people who have experienced and/or bear witness to multiple injustices produced by structural regimes of power, and such injustices affect entire communities or groups(Mohanty, Russo, and Torres 1991). Giving and obtaining testimonios is a feminist Latin American approach in which the subaltern speaks from her or his personal/intimate experiences of structural violence (Burgos-Debray 1984). Scholars become mediators who listen, write, and

bring to light their experiences. Testimonio is inherently political and acts as a bridge through which knowledge from the margins reaches academia (Sánchez 1995). The goal is to create alliance between the person giving testimonio and the reader, with the ultimate purpose of eliminating/decreasing injustice and thus achieving material change.

In addition, my work analyzes charras[8]: humorous storytelling; enacted by members of the community. I look at the role that charras play in community building as part of moments of *convivencia* (sharing moments together) and building stronger relationships and networks. Further, I argue that charras is an approach used by some members of rural communities to tell, teach and heal. There are hidden rules to telling charras. Age is an important factor, only adults can tell charras – ages 18 or 21 and up – because most are based on true accounts of what happen to the storyteller as a kid; and so telling them as an adult, saves the person from getting in trouble and instead, it makes for funny and healing narratives. It is common that exaggeration is added in charras; in other words it is common to *ponerle crema a los tacos*. The charra tellers tend to be mostly men (not always). The content of some charras have so much to teach us about structural inequalities, power relations, culture, identity and trauma because stories contextual geo-history of place and processes (Bell 2003). I describe charras as storytelling practices rooted community memory of Indigenous ways of teaching because stories are teaching tools practiced by

[8] Charras have two main meanings in Mexico. The most commonly known is the female form of charro. In this case charra/os is used when referring to people who dress up similar to fancy/traditional mariachi members and often ride horses, or is assumed that they know and do. In fact, the majority of mariachi members are often identified as charra/os when performing. Dressing up as charra/os is mainly practiced by some people for special occasions including to participate in parades, shows, some tele-novelas (soap operas), special celebrations, and some signers - such as the famous Vicente Fernandez or Lucero when performing with mariachi music, who themselves often dress up as such. Charra/os are commonly associated with the state (or region) of Jalisco, Mexico.
The other meaning of charra – the female sound only in this case – are humorous stories, which I have only heard from my agrarian community members in Michoacán; then in my immigrant community in the US.

Indigenous peoples around the world (S. Wilson 2009). Bonfil Batalla and Dennis (1996) explain that, in the context of erasure, Mexican agrarian communities continue to practice Indigenous ways of being and knowing. All of my participants migrated from agrarian communities in Mexico and brought such practices with them, and while not everyone have the skills to tell charras – indeed, it is mostly some men who do – often we all (women, children, and other men) participate as active audience and as part of the circle in the conversation.

In order to contextualize my participants' experiences in Pasco, I interviewed eight city leaders including the Mayor of Pasco and the chief of the Police. These interviews provide a perspective from people who are in position of power on influencing decision-making and policies that produce material consequences on peoples' everyday life.

Lastly, I look at archival historical material, specifically at historical newspapers and expositions at the Franking County Historical Museum which, in combination with the city leaders' interviews, help to better understand the history of Mexican migration to Pasco Washington, as well historical and current racial dynamics against Black and Brown populations.

In sum, my work produces a multi-scale/angle approach to research by intertwining ethnography, auto-ethnography, testimonios, collecting and examining charras, and conducting archival analysis; in addition I practice an innovative approach to writing in a relational form where I, as a life-long participant in my immigrant community, also contribute to the conversation. As Wilson (2009) states, "Relationality requires that you [the reader] know a lot more about me before you can begin to understand my work" (12). Thus, in the following section, I begin with auto-ethnography to narrate in detail my story of experiences and struggles across borders including: displacement in places of origin, border effects on my family (and community); and experiences of work exploitation and erasure in the US including the US

academia. It is this insightful experience that makes me feel both anger and love and gives me strength to uncover the 'unseen'.

Experiences Across Borders

Intimate entanglement with the global - migration

My mother raised five children essentially on her own (as single mom) as my father would always migrate to the United states without documentations. As a result, my mother worked in the informal economy – selling food in the market and the streets – my siblings and I would help from a very young age. My father's trips to the United States would last about two years; then after a couple of months in Mexico, he would make rushed plans to migrate again as the economic satiation kept worsening. The price of corn – a crop my family and extended community grows to consume and sell - kept decreasing in relation to the cost of other goods; while cost of living continued to increase . Also, there is basically lack of stable employment in rural towns, such as el Rancho, where we used to reside. In my book chapter, "An Immigrant in Academia: Navigating Risk and Privilege" for a book titled *Vulnerable Witness: The Politics of Grief in the Field* by Gillespie and Lopez (Gillespie and Lopez 2019), I go in detail in regard to my immigration journey all the way to academia. I look at with global processes of migration and also accessing the privileged space of education and academia, where I also noticed erasures, silences, privileges, and structures of power at work.

Experiences across borders and displacement from communities such as El Rancho at the heart of my work. Back in El Rancho, we had a large and inclusive community and multiple relations in our little town of about 900 people. Apart from having a large network of close family members and relatives, somehow, my mother would always relate us to everyone else pulling connections form multiple generations back making all adults my aunts and uncles and younger kids my cousins; even if not by blood, but by respect to our ancestors who knew each other and

were good friends or compadres; so we were always surrounded by people with whom we, somehow, related; and this made it easier for my mom to care for us in this little town as it was not only her, it was the entire village who did. Meeting people and asking where they are from and if they are related to so and so to contextualize them in multiple relations and how they may relate to us, as my family has always done – especially back in our Mexican community - are ongoing Indigenous practices around the world as per Wilson (2012). [See chapters 3 and 5 where I describe in detail my communities' cultural practices rooted in Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies]. In this section, I focus more on experiences of grief and erasure across borders as this provides the context and fuel for the rest of my writing.

My family's experience reflects the vitality of community relations but also level of intimacy in which big-P politics and global processes interact with people's lives and produce traumatizing experiences for people of all ages and their families. These global processes include: 1) transitional unfair trade policies that makes it difficult to compete with highly subsidized US crops, 2) immigration laws that produce the 'illegal,' and 3) militarization of the US-Mexico border that force people to risk their lives while crossing it. While my father obtained residency as a result of the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986, it wasn't until I was seventeen years old that he was able to *arreglarnos papeles* (*get us documents*) and bring us to the US in the mid-1990s. However, only the two youngest children qualified while my older siblings had to stay behind. It is required for those who have residency status to live in the US for at least six months each year; else, the residency status is revoked. However, it was too expensive to pay for our US apartment year-round and go back to Mexico for six months. The plan was to stay in the US for one year; but back one year did not end. We ended up staying in the permanently; with the hope that one day, we will go back. For my

siblings to re-unite with us here, they would have had to risk their lives at the highly militarized border. Surviving, would transform their identities from citizens into "illegal aliens" here in the US. This will produce the conditions to force them into becoming part of exploitative labor force in food industry – just as my father was for many years and as eleven million undocumented people continue to be. As such, I am immigrant whose family transcends – but is also divided by – national borders; an immigrant who has been (all of her life) intimately affected by historical and contemporary national and transactional policies both in Mexico and in the US.

Yet, mine is hardly the only case. Over fifty percent of the population in Mexico have at least one relative who has/have migrated to the US in search of safety (Paley 2014), to reunite with their family (Boehm 2011), and/or to find their lost job (Sparke 2013; Nevins 2007) – mostly lost as a result of unfair trade policies (Clapp 2012). Entering the United States with documents is almost impossible for most people displaced by violence or economic pressure because one of the requirements is proof of wealth. Seeking refugee status is a long and risky process; it entails long periods of waiting for a decision to be made, and worse, frequently such requests are simply denied. As result, similar to my father and many members of my community, every year thousands taste death at the highly militarized US-Mexico border where hundreds die and no one is held responsible for such deaths (Nevins 2007; Urrea 2004; Martinez and Goldman 2014). On the contrary, our participation – as US citizens and (in)direct supporters of unfair policies – in making other places unlivable, and in sponsoring a militarized border, tends to be blurred and distorted via neoliberal individualistic discourses of self-responsibility, choice, and un/deservingness (Innes 2013). Indeed, their lives (our lives) as they cross the militarized border are devalued to the point of not deserving protection or justice on either side of the border (Agamben and Heller-Roazen 1998). On average, 38,106 people were detained *daily* during

physical year ending on September 30th 2017 – a slight increase year before reported at 34,376 daily(Goodman 2018). Sadly, this phenomenon is worsening, as militarization and closure of the border increases – especially after the 9/11 attacks – with the excuse of protecting 'us' (US citizens) from 'them' (immigrants of color, potential 'terrorists'); and then after Trump took office as he, allegedly, is fulfilling his campaign promises to deport all 'illegal' immigrants – framing "the Mexicans" as such (Valencia 2017). Indeed, the Department of Home Land Security (DHS) is requesting an increase in the nation's detention capacity to 51,379 per day (Goodman 2018). Such phenomena increase fear among my immigrant community.

My origins and experiences across borders - Mexico, the US, my immigrant community, and academia - determine a large part of who I am: what, how, and from where I see, question, write, think, process, etc. I join Indigenous scholars who contend that our life-long experiences shape our research – not just our time in the field – because we cannot remove ourselves from the world in order to analyze it. This is why my research always considers places of origin and experiences across national and local boundaries and seeks to uncover material consequences of historical processes across space. Most importantly, it seeks to politicize inequality, suffering, and unequal distribution of life chances. These injustices inspire my work. They demonstrate the need and importance of work that fills these enormous gaps with the voices of immigrants themselves. My work fills the need for a theoretical analysis of white supremacy in relation to immigration. However, I also recognize my outsider positions and privilege as a researcher and the challenges that such positionality produce. As I discuss below, these realizations of my relative privilege deeply shaped the conduct of my research, which I now describe.

Fieldwork in My Immigrant Community:

Interviews-Immigrants

In the last 18 months, I have conducted 45 interviews of Mexican Immigrants and interviewed eight community leaders. After obtaining approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at UW in the summer of 2016, I created a list of 35 potential participants from my extensive community network in Pasco. Participants were 18 years of age and included both documented and undocumented first-generation migrants. That summer, I managed to conduct 25 interviews of which over half of my participants were undocumented. Given their migration status, I use pseudonyms rather than their names to protect their identity. The following summer and Fall 2017, I completed 20 additional interviews with undocumented immigrants only because there was more urgency in understanding undocumented immigrants' experiences of risk and insecurity and strategies to produce safe spaces given the augmentation of racist rhetoric and anti-immigrants political actions from the newly elected president and administration as well as from some members of the general population at the local level (Pierce and Capps 2016; Ross n.d.; Said-Moorhouse n.d.; Valencia 2017). Some of my interviewees were recruited through a snowball approach, via referrals from my previous participants.

Central questions of my work include: what attracts(ed) Mexican immigrants to Pasco and what keeps them there? How are Mexican immigrants affected by politics across borders? And how (un)documented immigrants survive in racist spaces and under conditions that guarantee their failure? I approached this research by focusing on questions about experiences of risk and security via semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions and some that are more specific. I carefully listened, read between the lines as I nodded and encouraged conversation, and took field notes of unspoken bodily expressions. The goal was to understand how safe and risky spaces are created, and what this means for undocumented immigrants - see appendix A for the interview instrument. Early findings indicate that experiences of risk and

safety are relational, fluid, and often experienced simultaneously; and that intimate ongoing community-based practices of reciprocity within the local community and across borders are, not only significant for decreasing fear, but also in reclaiming humanity, dignity and space in the midst of erasure and segregation. For instance, the home, the church and essentially wherever family friends and the community were, were described/experienced as relatively more secured places. Also having community networks and a place – a piece of land, a home – back in Mexico, provided a sense of security in the US. Ironically, while workplace was not described as the safest place for undocumented immigrants, it is work where the majority of my community members spend long hours, as described below.

Challenges: Scheduling, Reciprocity and Ethics

Scheduling interviews was a big challenge because most of my participants work in apple and/or cherry orchards where demand for their labor intensifies in the summer. This results in long shifts, often seven days a week. However, given our practices of reciprocal relations, all of my participants accepted being interviewed after I spoke with them over the phone. However, they could not tell me at what time they could be available because they get notified of the time their work begins, but not when they would be released. In essence, they are expected to be available and flexible to work for as many or as little hours and days, in order to meet flexible demands for their labor. For many, missing a day of work – even if excused – gives them one bad strike. In some places, they only get four strikes before they get fired! Thus, scheduling was quite challenging.

I conducted all of the interviews in their home at this was more convenient for them. Most of them took place during week-evenings or Sundays. However, this always resulted in reflection and guilty for taking time out of their limited, precious time away from work, which

they – mostly women – dedicate to making dinner, cleaning, catching up with their kids, and getting everything ready for the next day before going to bed early, given that their work starts as early as 4:00am during the summer. Indeed, one of my participants said that getting up at two or three in the morning for over half of the year – which she has done for more than 18 years - was the most tiring part of her work; that at times, she just wants to give up. And there I was, in some cases, I ended up interviewing the women as they cooked and I helped – this too is part of reciprocal relations; we call this being *acomedida* - offering to help when someone is doing something, especially cooking. As such, this is mainly expected from women to women; to help each other at the kitchen. Then I was expected to stay for dinner and join a family conversation.

While reciprocal relations made my interviews possible, it was also this that make me feel guilty. Part of being reciprocal, and accountable as per Indigenous scholars (S. Wilson 2009) is to care for each other. Thus, even if my participants were willing to make time for me, given that I know their working conditions, it would have been more ethical/appropriate for me to wait for the end of the heavy work season. However, being tied to the academic year for work and family responsibilities in Seattle, made it hard for me to conduct research at other times. I did end up conducting some interviews in the evenings and I constantly apologized for taking their time and acknowledged that I was aware of their long work hours and how tired they must be. I did go back several weekends in the fall to conduct some additional interviews.

When I asked for an interview, I noticed my participant were a bit intimidated. Perhaps this is because a lot of mainstream interviews are with famous and/or politicians – those who are framed as important; and possibly due to the migration status. I tried to avoid repeating this word as much as possible and instead I used the word conversation more often. Thus, over the phone I asked if and when I could I visit to talk (visitar para platicar). Then, when I was at their home, I

asked if I could interview them and explained that this was mainly like having *conversations* where they would share their knowledge based on their experiences, and that I would be writing a book based on that. I offered to share, and or explain what I end up writing if they would like that. I also explained that the interviews were anonymous and that I would use pseudonyms to protect their identity. Explaining in person was important and all agreed to be interviewed and agreed to the recorder after I reiterated that I would be the only one listening to the recordings and that I would protect their identity and would eventually erase these records.

Refusal in the field: Esto es solo para nosotros (This is only for us)

As for Charras, my plan was to first ask my potential participants if they remember the stories that our elder used to tell in our community. Indeed, in my agrarian community in Mexico, elder people would tell us stories with a teaching component because as (Bonfil Batalla and Dennis 1996) says, we have been mentally de-Indianized through the idea of mestizage, but in practice/in doing, we continue to be Indigenous. Sadly, I only remember parts of the stories, and thus wish I had written them down to now share with my daughters, nephews and younger members of my immigrant community and even with my students. Keeping them as audio archives for future generations would be better than only the written version because there is a tone of voice, expression and suspense that would be missed in the textual material. On the other hand, voice recording is not perfect because facial and corporal expressions would, undeniably, be lost. However, as I explained above, recording tends to be a challenge, but I am still hoping to get approval from my participants for that.

Grappling with this idea while in the kitchen of his home along with other women, I proposed to one of the most talented persons I know if he would allow me to record a few of his charras to write them, and if possible, to have them as recorded archives – with his identity

anonymous - to conserve and make available for current and future generations. I was surprised when he hesitantly said…. "Hmmm… NO." Then I reminded him that our elders used to tell us charras/stories back in "El Rancho"[9] and most of us do not remember them complete; that I wish I had written then down to pass them to our children. He agreed about that and we started remembering a few incomplete stories. There were three other families visiting him that day. All of the women were in the kitchen and the men in the living room and in the porch. The children were in all places. While still at the kitchen, he said "bueno, deja te cuento una charra" (ok, let me tell you a charra). When I asked if I could record it. He said, "No, no las vayas a grabar. Esto es solo para nosotros…." (No, do not record them. This is only for us…). Then he shared a few charras. At that moment, I realized that he was enacting his autonomy over his own life-stories and talent to tell them in a humorous way and with his whole body. He was deciding with whom and how he shared. The people, the setting, having active participants with whom we all relate as part of the circle in the intimacy of the home, the experience, the joy, the healing fillings all played a role in this special moment, which cannot be taken out of that context and simply put in textual and/or audio materials. It would not be the same.

As I left his home, he said, "*bueno talvez podríamos grabar cuando estemos mas personas, en circulo, y otros también estén contando charras, y nos estemos turnando y recordando de mas historias*" (well perhaps we could record when there is more people in circle, and others are also telling charras, and we are taking turns and reminding each other of more stories). That was the agreement. But as I drove back home, I also realized that all of the adults in that home, with three additional families visiting (which would make 4 families) were

[9] To keep it anonymous, this is how I will refer to an agrarian community from where most of my immigrant community migrated.

undocumented! I was the only adult that was not. Thus, I realized that asking to record and even to keep them recorded come from my own position of privilege, as a documented person who does not fear deportation. I was not going to ask for immigration status, nor mention their names. However, one of the purposes of charras is to build and strengthen relations through covivencias and reciprocity at the moment. Thus, it would be difficult to build relations with an anonymous storyteller. Sadly, all of them face further vulnerability due to the law's role in making them criminals by presence, not by doing, and so keeping a less public identity, even their voice, is of outmost importance for their survival. Thus, I will not record them yet – unless they approach me and ask for that. Instead, I will talk about charras as an approach to storytelling and the role that they play in building community, relations of alliance, and healing; I will analyze some content based on the ones I have heard; but will not be able to share them word by word; or to duplicate the experiences of being there; as this is an insider and unique experience, which I must respect and protect.

Challenges as an insider

While being an insider to the immigrant community indeed provides me with huge advantages – resulting from having strong relations with a large Mexican community both in Mexico and in the US; being a life-long participant in that community and thus having built trust; as well as possessing culture-specific knowledge of practices, meanings and languages - one big challenge to being an insider in my case, is assumed common knowledge. Sometimes my participant would say things like, "you know how it is" and not explain details. In which case, it is awkward to say "no, I do not," or to say "yes but still tell me," especially if the theme is sensitive, such as the increased violence due to the wars on drugs in Mexico or augmentation of risk due to undocumented status in the US, and I have the recorder is on. In a few cases, I turned

off the recorder, when (and if) I noticed the need, but still, I am expected to know many of the answers and interpret clues as a member of this community. Further, it is challenging to find the specific questions that would lead to answer my bigger inquiry. Often, certain knowledge and ways of being are normalized such that seeing them as politics, as survival skills and powerful practices, can be challenging. Thus listening, analytical and reflection skills are crucial in this case; and for all interviews, including the city leaders as I describe bellow.

Interviews: community leaders

Last summer, I sent formal invitation letters for interviews to the Mayor of Pasco, the chief of the Pasco police, the Pasco High School (PHS) Principal, and the President of the Tri-Cities Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Everyone accepted the interview, except for the PHS principal who never responded to my letter of follow up emails. The Mayor, the first one who responded within a week from sending my letter, referred me to two additional participants - both former k-12 educators. The president of the Chamber of Commerce also invited the former president who at one point was Chicana/o studies professor at the local community college. The archivist at the local museum – referred me to an 80-year-old woman who worked in k-12 Pasco schools and has lived all her life in Pasco. Lastly, I was also able to interview a current PHS history teacher.

While interviewing the city leaders, being an outsider to many in that group became more evident due to my looks and accent. At times, they told me what they thought I wanted to hear but at others, they just spoke their mind as they responded to my specific and to my open-ended questions. This resulted in several contradictions in their responses. Some common questions included: what are the concerns of the Latina/o residents? Which of the tri-cities is the safest and why? What changes do you anticipate in the future? In addition, I included more specific

questions depending who whom I was interviewing – see appendix B for more details. With all of the questions, my goal was to get a perspective about the Latina/o community in Pasco and the tri-cities of those who have more power/means to influence decision-making that affects people's intimate life. All of the interviews were in person, except for the chief of the Pasco police, Robert Metzger, who preferred to have a phone interview even though I made myself available to go to his office any day. In fact, I was in my car just across from his office building at the time of his phone interview. I learned through a couple of my other leaders' interviews that Mr. Metzger "took a lot of heat" due to the killing of Zambrano-Montez and thus was not out in the community as much. This could explain, in part, why he avoided a face-to-face interview.

Lastly, I visited the Franklin County Museum and met with the archivist who gave me access to local newspaper of the 1950s. The reason why I wanted to see that period was that it was soon after the irrigation system was created in the area – which increased agriculture and thus demand for seasonal labor. I also analyzed and took note of the Museum's exposure and the lack of representation and (even mention) of the Latina/o community.

Ethical Issues and Conclusion:

Besides being conscious and reflecting on the time I take from my busy immigrant participants, I am faced with the dilemma of how much to reveal. As an insider and life-long ethnographer and active participant in my Mexican/immigrant community, I am trusted with delicate information, and also share some common practices. Being mindful of who this research is serving and being true to my purpose of writing - by and for my community - is of outmost importance and a reason for constant reflection. As such, I must point out that, besides carefully protecting my participant's identities, there are unspeakable and multilayered practices and

knowledge – such as charras as stated above – that I would not fully share (or not disclose at all) in the empirical sections of my chapters.

My intimate experiences across borders inform my approach to research and writing. Indigenous scholars explain the importance of critical analysis and de-construction of colonial and imperial process and the critical role that western research about the Indigenous "other" played in making this possible. In essence, research - by and for the West - produced the dehumanized Indigenous "other" enabling colonialism, imperialism, and neoliberalism (L. T. Smith 1999; Said 1979; W. D. Mignolo 2005; Martínez 2008; Galeano 2010). I connect historical processes with detrimental situations in places of origin and in the US in order to de-normalize white supremacy and politicize policies enacted against immigrants of color, to politicize inequality, and to challenge negative discourses and the laws that are justified by them. While this analysis in not enough in producing material change, it helps to create consciousness and decolonization language (S. Wilson 2009). Thus centering my marginalized Mexican community, the first part of my research, focuses on providing a transnational historical context to include places of origins and the border, and also destination. In applying decolonizing methodologies that argue for the importance of prioritizing community and culture in the research design and approach as per Smith (2013) and Wilson (2009), the second part is of my work focuses my immigrant community's culture, values, practices, and way of relating to highlight how such ways of being in community, relating to each other are strong political surviving (and thriving) tools and strategies in highly racialized and segregated spaces in the US. I join feminist scholars who write from the margin (hooks 1984; M. S. Chavez 2012), who write seeking for material change for oppressed communities (Wilson 2009), who take the testimonios of the oppressed as theoretical knowledge (Beverley 1989; Acevedo 2001; Delgado Bernal,

Burciaga, and Flores Carmona 2012; Silvey and Lawson 1999), who not only look at the negative aspects in our community – which can reinforce stereotypes – but who also uncover the good/positive/valuable and lessons that we, scholars, can learn from that (Wilson 2009), those who wish to take the slash in *nos/otras* - where *nos* means *us* and *otras* means *others*, but without the slash it simply means "us"(G. Anzaldúa 2015; Villenas 2015). No, we are not criminals or terrorists, we do not steal jobs, we do not take advantage of the system. We are your neighbors, your friends, your co-workers, your classmates, your peers.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING IN THE MIDST OF DE-INDIANIZATION AND DISPLACEMENT IN MEXICO

Chapter 3

One of the few original civilizations that humanity has created throughout all history arose and developed in what is today Mexico. This is Mesoamerican[10] civilization, from which derives all that is "Indian" in Mexico [and in Mexicans]

(Bonfil Batalla and Dennis 1996, pg. 1)

A key aspect of my work is to uncover how our current ways of organizing as Mexican immigrants in the US reflect – in large part - continuity with our past, with our Indigenous roots, culture, and knowledges. Such practices arise from our adopted and re-adapted indigenous values, traditions and interconnections that have (and continue to) help us survive in the midst of erasure in our agrarian comminutes in Mexico given the governments' ongoing de-Indianizing project - ever since colonization and our supposed independence (Bonfil Batalla and Dennis 1996; Martínez 2008). As Bonfil Batalla and Dennis (1996) says, we "*mestizos*" - and specifically those in traditional rural communities - are Indios de-Indianizados whose ways of being, relating and organizing are more Indigenous than what we "mestizos" think. As such, most mestizos(as) are Indigenous descendants whose ways of life is partially informed by Indigenous ways of being. Through testimomios of displacement from Indigenous descendants, I argue that ongoing devastating economic and violent conditions worsened by neoliberal polices, NAFTA and the war on drugs in Mexico continue to produce displacement and a second wave of land dispossession (the first one being through colonialism and foreign investment) affecting mostly Indigenous and de-Indianized agrarian communities. Such conditions, in combination

[10] A region extended from the north of Mexico City through the northern countries of Central America. Such name – Mesoamerica - was constructed after the "discovery" (or the invention) of America. Because the name of America was given by the colonizers (W. D. Mignolo 2005).

with the production of a deadly physical border, trap displaced communities in the US resulting in a permanent supply of exploitative and deportable labor – as the "illegal aliens" in the US (De Genova 2002). But at the same time, such bordering conditions force displaced migrants to readapt their practices of intimate community organizing in the United States as a way to reclaim space, humanity, and dignifying lives in the midst of racialization, criminalization and erasure.

In this chapter I provide a brief historical context of: i) ***De-Indianization: Subject Formation and Colonization of Subjects and Selves*** to reveal and argue that Mexicans (and Mexican immigrants) have been exposed to white supremacy's ideologies and power since colonization from Spain over 500 year ago. Eve after our supposed independence in 1810, Spanish descendants elites stayed in power and implemented modernizing economic projects based on western ideologies and ongoing attempts to de-Indianize Mexico - to kill the "backward" Indian in us. This has resulted in internalized racism and disconnection from our own history and selves. As such, I start this chapter with some accounts of our powerful indigenous history with the goal to create some connections with our native roots. This is important because part of de-Indianizing projects is to obscure and negate our powerful history. Nevertheless, these communities have maintained and re-adopted some Indigenous practices of community building and multiple relations in order to create meaningful life, and even to lead successful public fights including the Mexican revolution in 1910, and most recently the auto defensas and Los Comunitarios in Michoacán in 2013. The majority of my participants migrated from the same agrarian community in Michoacán, México where I resided through age of 17, before migrating to the US. Thus here, I center this community - to which I refer as "El Rancho" - to describe how people in those communities form affective relations of community and family trough acts of connections, networks, respect, reciprocity, and care. These enable the creation

meaningful life outside the reach of the state. Displaced Indigenous and Indigenous descendants immigrants readapt such practices in order to survive and thrive under racist and violet conditions in the US – in a place where they are not supposed to survive, nor occupy.

ii) ***Neoliberal Reforms: Violence, Poverty and Displacement***. Focused on contemporary modernizing projects, neoliberal policies, and the war on drugs, I provide an analysis of most recent political-economic processes that have contributed to the augmentation of violence, instability and displacement of agrarian populations. National and translational political and economic policies such as NAFTA and the War on Drugs –rooted in modernizing projects - have had detrimental consequences in communities like el Rancho and so here I present testimonios from people in this community to demonstrate how agrarian communities have been devastated by neoliberal economic conditions as well as the wave of violence due to the war on drugs. The goal is to politicize violence, displacement and ongoing land dispossession indigenous and "de-Indianized" communities continue to face.

De-Indianization: Subject Formation and Colonization of Subjects and Selves

> Many of the significant cultural achievements identified with ancient Mexico stem from Olmec [our mother culture] innovations, such as the development the calendar, the invention of the zero concept, and the creation of a system of writing…stone temples and pyramids…commercial networks… and sea travel.
>
> (Vigil 1998) pg. 20

The Olmec was the oldest and major civilization that inhabited the Mesoamerican region in about 16,000 B.C. They laid many of the foundations and greatly influenced civilizations that followed. As such, the Olmec is considered our mother civilization. All pre-Hispanic civilizations, starting from the Olmec, expressed their cosmology and all that existed in a relational, dualistic, non-binary form (Vigil 1998). Everything in life was constructed with parts that were both opposite and complementary – they made and complemented each other and so

one could not exist without the other. We could not comprehend one without analyzing and understanding the other: earth/sky, moon/sun, female/male, hot/cold, south/north, east/west, superior/inferior, raining season/dry season. Gods were often presented in duality – mother and father - with the same level of power because this constitutes the original foundation of the world. Gods were also frequently symbolized in stone figures of dual figures and/or faces/masks that had both in one. Other dual symbols such as in grecas – which represent navigation a space in between: life and death, material and spiritual (G. Anzaldúa 2015) – formed an important part of the overall architecture and design of special places such as tombs, palaces, and ceremonial cites (Vigil 1998; Museum of Anthropology; Santo Domingo Museum) [11]

Further just as the Olmecs, the civilizations that followed were polytheists. Gods were assigned to some of the most important sources of life including the sun (Huitzilopochtli), the rain (Tlaloc), the moon (Coyolxauhqui), agriculture (Xipe Totec), corn (Centeotl) [12]. Indeed, corn has been an essential crop that made possible and defines the Mesoamerican region from the pre-Olmec era (~25 thousand B.C.) to the present (Taube 1996). Jade (a green stone) was given greater value than gold because jade represented the corn, the green of the corn plant, life, and agriculture. In addition, many more cultures and civilizations that followed the Olmec inherited and readopted some of the greatest innovations of humanity from our mother culture including: the zero concept, the calendar, writing system, design and construction of temples, jewelries, arts, commercial networks, sea travel, etc (Vigil 1998). During the pre-Colonizing period people created their own ways to relate to the land, to divide and allocate labor, and organize recourses

[11] In 2015 and 2017 I visited museums and archeological cite in Mexico city and Oaxaca including: the Museum of Anthropology and the city of Teotihuacan (in Mexico city) as well as the Santo Domingo Museum, the cities of Monte Albán and Mitla (in Oaxaca, Mexico). The field notes I took are helping in my writing of this section.

[12] The gods listed here are Aztecs as they were the last great civilization and greatly influenced other co-existing (and dominated) civilizations.

in ways that would benefit most or all of the participants (Vigil 1998). Much of that influence defined the last great empire – the Aztec - and beyond. Indeed, Indigenous communities and "mestizo" agrarian communities in Mexico and those who migrate to the US continue to organize their communities through readapted trans-generational knowledges and core values rooted in indigenous ontologies of multiple relations of respect, accountability, care, reciprocity, and spirituality.

The conquests

When the Spanish arrived to Mexico, they entered through what is currently the state of Veracruz. In the towns where they arrived on their way to Tenochtitlan, the people from this land *welcomed,* fed and offered all sort of gifts and guidance to the newly arrived strangers (at first out of respect, and later out of fear). However, the Spanish attacked and killed them instead – except for the Taxcaltecans who the conquerors accepted as "allies." Welcoming and offering food is a strong ongoing practice among Mexicans – Indigenous and "mestizo" agrarian communities such as that from El Rancho - both in Mexico and in the US. By the time the Spanish Colonizers arrived to Mexico in 1519, the Mexicas (Also known as Nahuas due to shared Nahuatl language) had constructed Tenochtitlán - a city that represented one of the greatest empires and civilizations in the world with about 200,000 inhabitants at the time of the Spanish arrival. The conquerors themselves were marvelous and spoke about such wonderful place:

> The expression of the art and culture in the great centers of the Nahuatl renaissance, Texcoco and Tenochtitlan, dazzle even the Spanish conquers, who were, for the most part, rough lot not usually impressed by aesthetic endeavor. The accounts of Hernán Cortés and Bernald Díaz testify to the amazement and admiration evoked by the marvelous stone buildings and great plaza of the city of Mexico. [They] were [also] astonished by the rigorous religious, social, and military organization of the Nahuas. (León-Portilla 1990)xxi

Nevertheless, the conqueror's hunger for power - which they perceived in accumulation of gold, silver and other natural resources – infused violent dispossession on land, resources and life. The Spaniards had depleted most natural resources in Spain and were searching for more. It was indeed this conquest and domination that made possible the European industrial revolution and capitalism as we know it. "Every year from 800 to 1,000 ships unloaded in Spain the products of other countries' industries. They reloaded with Latin American silver and Spanish wool that went to foreign looms" (Galeano 2010, 26). The "discovery" and massive extraction of silver and gold in the "Americas," and the profit from slave labor (from Natives and Africans peoples) made possible the industrial revolution of Europe making international concentration possible; a process reflected in our current multi-scalar inequalities (Galeano 2010; De Genova 2017). However, now Latin America has to catch up with industrialization and development.

The people from this continent were not waiting to be "discovered." "Before 1942, the Americas were not on anybody's map not even on the map of the people inhabiting Anáhuac (the territory of the Aztecs) and Tawantinsuyu (the territory of the Incas)" (Mignolo 2005 p. 2). Thus, the Aztecs and Incas did not live in America. The Americas is an invention of the conquerors who - with their guns, germs and steal - managed to defeat the great empires of this land, including Tenochtitlan (Diamond 1999). Their last emperor – Montezuma - was made a prisoner in his own land and eventually killed.

In addition to their weapons, diseases also contributed to massive death. Germs brought by the Spanish spread before the conqueror even reached some of the places. Given that Indigenous people had a clean city and overall environment, they were susceptible to such germs. It estimated that over 60% of the populations died – the exact percentage is unknown. Most Indigenous survivors were subjected to slavery and to pay tribute for inhabiting the lands they

were dispossessed from. To justify mass killing dispossessions slavery and torture, far from emphasizing the Nahuas' intelligence advancement and amazements, the Spaniards framed the Indigenous people as barbarians with impure blood, as in-dios - meaning sin-dios (*without god*) - who needed salvation via religious intervention. Supposedly, they needed redemption. Such descriptions were mostly crafted by those with religions positions who were also the writers, data collectors, "knowledge" producers and keepers. It was indeed knowledge by and for the West (Said 1979). They reported back to the colony how savage and childlike the people of this land supposedly were, as well as the vast amounts of gold, silver, "pristine" lands and other natural resources - ready to be claimed and extracted - this continent had.

Presently, the palace of Cortez stands on top of Moctezuma's pyramid by the Zocalo in Mexico City. I had the privilege of visiting this place – currently known as El Palacio Nacional" (the National Palace) - for the first time in the summer of 2015. I have no words to describe the amusement and mixed feelings of being able to witness history in its material form. Being at the palace's patio and seeing the pyramid of Moctezuma buried right below, revealed the past in present. I was sad to witness the origin of so much violence, suffering, grief, inequality, injustice, social fragmentation, dispossession, extraction and ongoing colonization. But it was also empowering to see the depth of our Indigenous roots and struggles on what used to be Tenochtitlán, then named La Nueva España during the formal conquest which lasted 300 long years. During that time abundant knowledge was destroyed and lost to humanity. Césaire (2001) argues in his book titled "Discourse on Colonialism" that barbarians and de-humans are not the colonized peoples but rather are those who kill, torture, destroy and dispossess in their process of colonizing. As such barbarians and de-humans are the colonizers themselves. He says:

> I am talking about societies drained of their essence, cultures, trampled underfoot, institutions undermined, lands confiscated, religions smashed, magnificent artistic

> creations destroyed, extraordinary *possibilities* wiped out… I am talking about millions of [people]… torn from their gods, their land, their habits, their life – from life, from the dance from wisdom.
> I am talking about millions of [people]… in whom fear has been cunningly instilled, who have been taught to have an inferiority complex, to tremble, kneel, despair and to behave like flunkies.
> I am talking about natural *economies* that have been destroyed – harmonious and viable economies – adapted to the indigenous populations – about food crops destroyed, malnutrition permanently introduced, agricultural development oriented solely towards the benefit of the metropolitan countries; about the looting of products, the looting of raw material. (Césaire 2001 p. 43)

Indigenous people were converted into slaves and because, given the mass killings, there was not enough labor to exploit the land in order to accumulate at the high rate the Spanish desired, free labor was created, imported from Africa and incorporated in the new Spain and the continent. This process too required tremendous violence and abuse towards another group of people. While Indigenous were framed as not human enough and as "stained" of blood; Africans were constructed as not human at all, with blood so impure it would be impossible to ever purify (Martínez 2008). Thousands of Africans died in the Atlantic journey; some of starvation, others of diseases and sadness, or a combination of all, and others jumped to the ocean. All were barely fed just to be kept alive, and as soon as they arrived, they were cleaned and oiled in order to be sold at the highest possible value in the market (Smallwood 2008). At one point (and for many years) there were many more Africans than Spanish in Mexico. But nevertheless, it is whiteness what so many Mexicans continue to strive for - to identify with, to become. This is important because ideas of inferiority and not bellowing rooted witness as superior, do affect many Mexican immigrants in the US.

White Supremacy Emerges

White supremacy and striving to be white has been an ongoing normalized practice, at different levels, since the Spanish colonization when whiteness was made supreme by both

religion and law. This worked hand in hand because religious leaders had political power. George Lipsitz argues that white supremacy is far more than mere identity politics - attitudes, behaviors - but rather that whiteness affords material power and resources. It is a question of securing property and indeed whiteness is a valuable form of property in white supremacist societies. In these societies, laws are created to protect private property – including land, labor and whiteness – producing uneven distributions of social benefits and life chances for the benefits of whites (Lipsitz 2011) (See also Harris 1993; Nguyen 2012; Spade 2011). In Mexico, the conquerors created "legal" castas and hierarchies based on a combination of skin color and religion - rather than only on religion (as used to be in Spain, and Europe more broadly) or nobility (as used to be in Mexico). Whites positioned themselves on top of the pyramid enforcing European ideologies of superiority attributed to Christian descendants who could claim "purity of blood." Only Europeans could make the claim of Christian genealogies and thus of being "pure blood." Mestizos (mixing of Indigenous with Europeans) were assigned to middle spectrum of the hierarchy. They were framed as sub-humans with *possibilities* of gaining purity of blood - and thus of being "rescued" from their stained Indigenous blood - eventually, after several generations of mixing with whites. However, at one point, such mixings were prohibited by law (Humboldt 1966) (Martínez 2008). *Imposing the idea that after several generations of mixing with whites, some Indigenous could be "saved" from their supposed stained blood,* served to validate and normalize purity of blood through religion and whiteness. Thus, indeed Indigenous were made "the other" in their own land and then where differentially incorporated. According to Lawson and Elwood (2018), "Consent to the existing order is ensured through distributing limited gains, while the underlying structures (e.g., capitalist labor exploitation, racialized bordering, privatization of care) remain in place." (4-5) (Lawson et al.

2018). Blacks and castas were also framed as different and inferior. Their "difference" served to sustain, validate and normalized the idea of witness as a superior race; a status the non-white should strive for. This was indeed a way to manage relations (and thus knowledge) in ways that resulted in fragmentation of the populations and hierarchies that afforded some the power to destroy, dispossess, exploit and accumulate resources in larger part, through creating ideas we know as the law.

Laws were drafted by the Spanish crown to grant access to higher education, positions of power and best jobs only to those who could prove "purity of blood." In addition, private property was legally afforded to the Spanish colonizers (Martínez 2008). While only ten percent of the population were Spaniards by the late seventeen hundreds, they possessed almost all the property and wealth. The Indians and the castas cultivated the land and were sources of manual labor who live by the work of their hand in the benefit of the whites both in the New Spain (Mexico) and in Europe. However indigenous and castas themselves were blamed for their disadvantageous positions, not the systems (religion and the law) constructed to benefit whites. Although Fry Antonio de San Miguel recognized that the law was unfair and the cause of inequality. He framed Indigenous as naturally backward and poor. He says, "In fact, the Indians and the races of mixed blood (catas) are in a stage of extreme humiliation. The colour peculiar to the Indians, their ignorance and specially their poverty, remove them to an infinitive distance from the whites, who occupy the first rack of the population in the New Spain" (Humboldt 1966, p.144). Further, whites were legally granted the benefits of treating Indigenous like minors and to invalidate/nullify "any act signed by a native of the copper-coloured race…" (Humboldt 1966, p. 142).

The Indians were forced to live in small villages where they cultivated on small communal land (plots for the community) that constituted the republic of the Indians. Thus community organizing and collaboration became a vital tool of survival. Descendants of African slaves were charged with infamy by the law and forced to pay tribute. Given the material benefits legally afforded to the whites, the "non-white" strived to gain and claim (or even purchase) purity of blood and thus whiteness (Ann Twinam 2015). According to Martínez (2008), this model of social arrangement succeeded because while there were no racial hierarchies based on skin color or religion before the Spanish arrival to Mexico, there was stratification of the society based on genealogies of nobility (see aslo Vigil 1998). Later, with secularization of the state in 1833, religion reasons were muted and so only color prevailed as visible divider of human and its other (not so humans) that continues to benefit whites and whiteness through this day. In addition to the color of the skin, accumulation of wealth also became a determinant of humanity. Colonization of the self also included global imposition (and adoption) of one "correct" way of living - of "developing" – that of the West (Borges 2018).

Mexican Independence? No really

Ironically, while Criollos (Spanish descendants born in Mexico) could claim purity of blood and in this way acquire education and positions of power, they could not own land. That was only granted to those born in Spain. Therefore, although they were not at the battlefront, Criollos were the most influential in the movement for independence from the Spanish crown as they were eager to appropriate land. Such war began in 1810 with the cry for independence by Priest Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla. By 1824, Mexico officially gained such status. However, after this "victory," structures of power stayed in place. The elite Spanish descendants continued to rule. They could now create laws in their favor that would allow them property ownership.

Ideologies of "progress" continued to be based on western economic models. And so political leaders started the race towards modernization and development as per European models, which required the de-Indianizing of Mexico (Bonfil Batalla & Dennis 1996).

Soon after independence, in order to "protect" its northern states and to de-Indianize the nation, the Mexican government encouraged whites from the US to come and live in those Mexican states. Europeans were afforded free land with the condition of obtaining Mexican citizenship, becoming Catholics and renouncing slavery. However, paradoxically this produced opposite results. The new Europeans inhabiting Texas did not agree with the 1829 abolition of slavery and thus demanded independence from Mexico in the early 1930s. At that time, the US openly considered colonizing the entire Mexican territory and place the Mexican population in native reservations. However, they decided to take as much land with as fewer inhabitants (De Genova 2002). This provoked the fight for Texas' independence followed by the US-Mexico war where Mexico lost about half of it territory in 1848 (Beezley 2011; González 2000).

This wasn't a final lesson and the desire to de-Indianize Mexico continued. During the 30 years of the Porfiriato (when Porfirio Díaz governed Mexico) starting in 1877, inequalities in Mexico further intensified (Beezley 2011). During that period, access to education, economic and political power were placed in the hands of a select few, mostly elite white Spanish descendants. French (and other white Europeans) were encouraged to invest in Mexico's infrastructure and western-like development projects and to reside in Mexico in order to fulfill Diaz' desire to whiten, industrialize, and modernize the country. Millions of acres were sold to foreign investors – one of every five acres were owned by foreigners - and the rest of the land was controlled by a small group of hacendados composed of European descendants and some mixed races. As such, the majority were landless - mostly Indigenous and castas - framed now as

campesinos (peasants). However, as part of the modernizing project, the history of Mexico was silenced and most were made to believe themselves as no longer Indigenous, but as "mestizos" (mixed with Indigenous and Spaniards) campesinos, and the landless Indigenous and de-Indianized "mestizos" agrarian communities were further segregated and mistreated (Bonfil Batalla and Dennis 1996).

Such extreme inequality contributed to the eruption of the Mexican revolution against Porfirio Diaz, who after 30 years in authoritarian power re-elected himself once again in 1910. Landless agrarian classes - leaded by key Indigenous leaders such as Emiliano Zapata - headed the revolution. This fight culminated with the approval of the new constitution in 1917 – one of its kind that served as model in other countries. This constitution transformed Mexico's social and political organization given some of its key articles granting social benefits including free, mandatory, and secular education (article 3), land reform that would enable re-appropriation and de-commodification of the land (article 27), and empowerment of the labor sector (article 123). Such reforms and success reflect, in large part, the ontology/knowledges of Indigenous populations.

Soon after the defeat of Díaz, in order to unify the nation, Mexican leaders adopted the idea of mestizaje as a common identity that incorporated anyone that had any type of race "mixing" and/or assimilation to the Spanish culture, especially Spanish language. Mestizaje became a nationalistic project that erased all other races - including those mixed with African peoples. This resulted in mainly two races: the majority *mestizos* who are supposedly equal and have the same "opportunities," and minority unassimilated "backward" *Indigenous* who could become mestizos if they "choose" to by assimilating or mixing. Depoliticizing, this way, historical process of inequality and dispossession. According to (Bonfil Batalla and Dennis 1996) mestizaje was (and

continues to be) part of a modernity and de-Indianizing project. For instance, even during the presidency of Lazaro Cárdenas (1934-1940) when most radical reforms were implemented, such as land re-appropriation and repartition to agrarian communities in the form of ejidos, Cardenas prioritized giving political asylum to Spanish refugees over "repatriated" Mexicans from the US. Cardenas indicated that Spaniards are resembling of us (Mexicans) and would easily adapt and assimilate (Alanís Enciso 2017). Which means that Cardenas too embraced (and preferred) his supposed Spanish heritage in his mestizo identity, and sustained the modernizing project of making Mexico whiter. Thus, independence from the Spanish crown did not free Mexico from the already imposed ideas of western-like modernity, progress and racial hierarchies.

Sadly, such nationalistic project has been successful through public education. La Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP) (The Public Education Establishment) created in 1921 controls teaching materials in public schools. In addition, education in most agrarian communities tends to be very limited as the state does not invest there. As a result, most people in Mexico know very little about ourselves, about our Indigenous roots. Many have learned a limited history told through the European eye: a history written by and for the west, where the west frames itself as the expert and hero who saves the "backward" other - the non-white (Said 1979; W. Mignolo 2011). I was born in Mexico where I attended K-10 education. There, we learned that our Indigenous languages are dialects, not languages; that our Indigenous knowledges were myth - unreal, unscientific, subjective – because Indigenous had a different cosmology and ways to see the world. Different from whom? As if we are no longer influenced by such cosmology – it is "them" (Indigenous) in the past vs. "us" (mestizos) in the present. Or wait, it is "us" vs. "us," past and present! This is - I further learned when I visited Oaxaca - how our history continues to be taught in many places, including in some higher education schools in

Mexico. However, while we are set to believe that our Indigenous practices/identities are of the past, according to the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, there are 17 million Indigenous people (over 15% of the population) and 68 Indigenous languages with 364 spoken variations in Mexico ("IWGIA in Mexico" n.d.). This is in addition to those of us who have been made de-Indianized "mestizos" but who nevertheless, continue to practice and continually readapt organizing ontologies rooted in Indigenous core values of respect and reciprocity both in agrarian communities in Mexico and – as further racialized Mexican immigrants - in the US.

In my K-10 education, I was also taught that Christopher Columbus is a hero who "discovered" us when he sailed in the three boats: La Niña, La Pinta, y La Santa María and discovered America by accident. Little did I know that we did not live in America, we lived by Tzintzuntzan (Purépechas), beside the Anáhuac or Tenochtitlán (Aztecs empire). America did not exist; it was invented by the colonizers who gave it that name (W. D. Mignolo 2005). So, I learned that our Indigenous ancestors are all gone/dead and now we are all mestizos thanks to Columbus who "rescued" us and now we supposedly have Spanish blood and are more civilized. Indeed, we learned to celebrate our buried past and to detach ourselves from "them," from us: "Indigenous backward." Thus the majority of Mexicans, including my own agrarian (or peasant) community, have adopted the mestizo (de-Indialized) identity and buried our "past" (Bonfil Batalla and Dennis 1996).

This has not only produced the idea of the homogeneous modern Mexican society under one Mexican nation by erasing Afro-Mexican populations and obscuring elite Spanish descendants who continue to be in power, but also serves to de-politicize and de-historicize processes of inequality and ongoing colonization practices and has reinforced internalized racism and embrace westernized development projects to "cure" poverty. Thus, in a way, the Indigenous

population continue to be differentially included. The "backwardness" our "copper color" and our traditions serve to highlight and affirm the "modernity, beauty, and intellect" in our supposed European whiteness. The peak of Spanish populations in Mexico during formal colonial times reached only 10%. Paradoxically, while many agrarian populations have adopted the mestizo modern identity, such populations and their rural ways of living continue to be framed as backward and they have not received the state's promise of modernity, prosperity and development. On the contrary, at the end of the Porfiriato, the majority were landless populations. As such, de-Indianized agrarian communities and Indigenous peoples ongoingly adopt and readapt survival mechanism in the form of community collaboration and organizing to the point of successfully leading the Mexican revolution! Several communities like El Rancho benefited from such accomplishment. They received ejido lands with the implementation of land reform constitution under President Cardenas (1934 -1940) - when Cardenas re-appropriated thousands of acres of land (and some public services) and nationalize it, then gave some to agrarian communities in the form of ejido or communal land: Meaning that people could work the land and pass the rights to work it to their family, but they did not legally own it (Centeno 2018). However, such communities – and their ways of living and knowing - continued to be marginalized as these where not perceived as techniques to advance the nation; instead, pursuing development projects after western ideologies were prioritized as methods of gaining industrialized first world status (Bonfil Batalla and Dennis 1996). Thus, marginalized and Indigenous descendant agrarian communities continue to practice relational community organizing. Here I present the case of El Rancho to demonstrate in more detail some of the way in which agrarian communities organize, but at the same time have been mentally colonized.

El Rancho: My de-Indianized Mestizo Mexican Community

El Rancho is a mestizo (de-Indianized) agrarian community in Michoacán Mexico where I lived until 1995. We had a large and inclusive community and multiple relations in this little town of about 800 people. We also had networks with other smaller surrounding places, as well as with some people who had migrated to the US – most of whom practiced circular migration. Whenever there was a celebration, we were all invited. One could just go visit anyone anytime and we were welcome to sit and even to eat. In fact, we cleaned our home thoroughly everyday just in case someone would come and visit us. In the evenings, we sat outside, by the sidewalk and talked with whoever was passing by. They would often sit and join the conversation.

Further, apart from having a large network of close family members, somehow, my mother would always relate us to everyone, pulling connections form multiple generations back making all adults my aunts and uncles, and younger kids my cousins. I remember one day I told her "ok, I guess I will never be able to date anyone as everyone is my cousin!" That made my mom happy. Whenever we met someone new, my mom or family would ask: "where are you from?" "What is your last name?" "Are you from this or that family?" And then, "boom!" They would find our connections, either through blood or though having lived in the same place at one time, or through knowing the same families, or through compadrasgo. Finding our connections and putting people in context to place and multiple relations are ongoing Indigenous practices around the world as per Wilson (2012).

In addition, similar to Indigenous towns I recently visited in Oaxaca, El Rancho has a casa de la comunidad (house of the community) where the leaders of the community – elder and adults – would meet most Sundays after church. We do not have a formal cargo system as many Indigenous communities do. Under this system mainly men are expected to provide free

community service in civic, religious and legal positions. The most demanding positions are often reserved for married men because is understood that men would not be able to provide the free service without the care and support from the wife. As such, the wife is also accredited for the service that the husband provides to the community. While such a system is not perfect because in some cases, it could reinforce patriarchy because young men are expected to serve older men and women are expected to serve all men (Caulfield, Chambers, and Putnam 2005), it is also true that this system helps to produce another kind of society, one that is based on community relations mostly independent from the state, challenging liberal ideas of the individual as an independent rights-bearing subject. Similar to the cargo system but not as formal, in El Rancho it is expected that people would take turns to give community service and take leadership roles. Community wide projects are divided by neighborhoods. For instance, people take turns to volunteer for weekly garbage pickup, repairing/maintaining water systems, cleaning the church, etc.

State funding for some projects, such as fixing streets, is limited and so the community ships in hours of labor and/or food for the workers; this is knows as tequio system among most Indigenous communities; in El Rancho these are simply called *projectos*. In addition, in El Rancho we were allowed to borrow the casa de la comunidad for events for free. In this house, many events – such as graduations, fundraising festivals, weddings, quinceañeras, and other celebrations took place. Having a community house, elders as leaders, and organizing towns events – not only las fiestas, but also posadas navideñas (Christmas), events during the holly week, and others - by dividing the labor by barrios facilitates the construction of meaningful life centered in both interpersonal relations and relations with the land in the midst of extremely limited social funding and often denial from the liberal state.

We all participated and contributed in organizing las fiestas del pueblo (the town celebrations) in honor of San Miguel Arcangel, *el santo patrono del pueblo* (the leading saint of the town) introduced by the Catholic church. This saint (as are the majority) is a blond, European looking angel defeating the devil – represented in a figure of a dark, animalistic, person with horns and tail. Paradoxically, while the organizing and celebrations serve to reinforce communities, collaboration, belonging and meaningful life, the image of the divine and evil functions to normalize ideas of whiteness as pure, kind, and superior; and blackness as evil, impure and who must be killed/eradiated.

When the Norteños (retuning migrants) arrived in time for Las Fiestas de Pueblo during the last week of November, they were perceived as more prestigious, with better quality clothes, shoes and with dollars to spend and share. As one member of my community tells a charra (stories told in a humorous manner) about his encounters with norteños as a young kid and what the expectations where. I am paraphrasing in first person in English, as I was not allowed to record, but here are his words as close as I remember: you know, it was expected for norteños to invite a soda (or juice) and a bread to all the children in the town. So there was this norteño who had just arrived. I saw him sitting in a bench outside a grocery store[13]. He was drinking a Jumex juice. I respectfully greeted him and conveyed how happy I was to see him back in town. So I was expecting for him to invite me a juice. I did not ask for it of course – that would have been disrespectful. However, he just looked at me, mixed his juice and took a sip and put it down. Then again, he mixed the juice looking at me from the corner of his eye and had another sip, but

[13] Almost all of the grocery stores are very small and part of the owner's home. Lots of people build a home and include a space for the store. That space is a room with a big window facing the street. That window gets open and people order through there. The storeowner often adds a small roof covering the outside the window of the store as well as some benches for people – including the owner - to sit and talk. Or some provide chairs there.

would not say anything. I was standing next to him. As I saw that, I also passed saliva. I knew exactly how much juice he had left in the can, even though I could not see the liquid. I was hopeful that he would at least leave me the last half of his juice. Then again, he would mix the juice and have another sip. Silently, I would look at his moving hand as he moved the juice up to his mouth then put it down. Then again and again until a realized he had the last bit left - enough for a last sip – and he was not going to invite me any. This time, he took the sip and even revolved the juice in between his teeth and to his cheeks. I could not believe he did not even share the last bit. I realized how selfish and rude he was and so I slapped him on his face with my closed hands and ran to my home as he chased but did not catch me.

This story reveals profound scarcity. The boy was willing to take at least the last sip of the juice. Indeed, in this town – and many more. Most people eat beans and tortillas almost everyday. Thus, having a juice and/or sweat bread is a big luxury. This story also shows some of the expectations of sharing that people have from the norteños who gain "prestige" of having some money (dollars) by migrating – but also and most importantly, that prestige is gained by sharing, not only with kids but also towards expenses for "las fiestas del pueblo." In addition, when the norteños arrived, the families would throw a party, make chicharrones, and invite the people of the town. Other children saw this and so they aspire to do the same – to become norteños, closer to modernity, one day. However, little did we know about the sacrifices they had to endure in the US. Most know how dangerous it is to cross por el cerro (through the mountains). But some people do not realize how real the migrants' identity changes as they crossed the US-Mexico border: from citizen to an "illegal immigrant" and the terrible material consequences of that. Often, people who have never been in the US do not know how hard immigrants have to work for extremely low wages; how much sacrifice it takes for them to pay

the coyote, pay for their living expenses, and save some money to buy some good clothes to bring back home, and still have some money left to spend and share.

Further, offering our home for anyone to stay as visitors is also a great honor. We used to have some family visiting from other ranchos and towns or from the US, and it was a time of joy. In the last three summers, when we visited Indigenous communities in Oaxaca, alongside a local community member, people would offer us food and a place to stay. That reminded me of my own community in Michoacán. One Indigenous couple whose three sons we (my family and I) met here in Seattle, and who cannot visit Mexico due to lack of documents, not only offered us food when we visited them in Oaxaca, but they were expecting that we would stay we them. Thus, we ended up cancelling our hotel reservation and staying with them for four days. We enjoyed cooking, eating and sharing together; talked and met some other family members who also invited us to their home for dinner. The hardest part was to hear the mother talking about how much she missed her sons who have not returned since they migrated over ten years ago because they do not have legal documentation to cross the border back to the US. Their Indigenous community, just like El Rancho, has suffered increased poverty and violence due in, large part to the Mexican state race toward western-like modernization, which has resulted in increased inequality (Rubin 2014), and ongoing marginalization of Indigenous agrarian communities (Maldonado Aranda 2012). While marginalization has been an important reason why these communities continue to practice relational meaningful life, these same people also face tremendous suffering, displacement, violence and increased militarization of their lives.

Political Economy Of Violence, Poverty And Displacement.

Nos venimos por lo de mi papá. Cuando lo acecinaron, pues ya nos tuvimos que venir todos porque corríamos peligro… Es una herida que tengo; pero si le empiezas a buscar, se va abrir otra vez.

(We came because of my dad's. When he was murdered, we all had to come because we all were in danger… Is a wound that I have; but if your start to mess with it, it will open again)

(Chico, Personal interview, 2017)

From the Treaty of Hidalgo to the War on Drugs, the US has built and maintains political and economic power over Mexico (Meráz-Garcia 2012; González 2000; Mercille 2011; Wright 2011). Over centuries, imperial territorial expansion, trade relations, ongoing privatization and dispossession of lands and livelihood, austerity policies, and the War on Drugs reflect US imperial control over Latin America. In 1971, President Nixon declared the 'War on Drugs,' criminalizing unemployed racial minorities in both the US ('the consumers') and Latin America ('the producers') (Wright 2014). Further, the 9/11 attacks served as an excuse for the US to strengthen the 'War on Drugs' via the 'War on Terror' through enacting tougher immigration policies against Latin American populations (Amoore 2006; Corva 2008).

On the other hand, even after its supposed independence of Mexico, most socio-political and economic structures stayed in place. White Spanish descendants stayed in power, and economic ideologies continued to be influenced by western economic models of development and industrialization. As stated above, during colonization, the Spanish owned most of the land, and the Mexican independence afforded Criollos the ability to legally obtain land. The government also granted land to foreign investors and white immigrants. Thus by the early 1900 hundreds, the majority of the population was landless. This resulted in a successful revolution leaded by agrarian Indigenous communities under the call for "Tierra y libertad" in 1910. This revolution greatly transformed politics and ideas of property and wellbeing of the society.

However, by the mid nineteen hundreds, the Indigenous roots, agricultural strengths and autonomy were completely negated and Mexico was determined to pursue industrialization and

western modernization project (Bonfil Batalla & Dennis 1996). As (McKittrick 2015) explains, after our political independence - especially since the 1950s - we fell into the trap of development following a western model. We 'fell into the mimetic trap ... because the West is now going to *reincorporate* us neocolonialist, and thereby mimetically, by telling us that the problem with us *wasn't* that we'd been imperially subordinated, *wasn't* that we'd been both socioculturally dominated and economically exploited, but that we were *underdeveloped*. The West said: "Oh, well, no longer be a native but come and be Man like us! Become homo economicus!" While the only way we could, they further told us, become *un-undeveloped*, was by following the plans of both their and our economists. The catch was that our economists, like the distinguished Caribbean economist Sr. Arthur Lewis, had been educated in British imperial universities, like many of us' (McKittrick 2015, 20-21). Mexico (as most Latin American Countries) was determined become *un-undeveloped* and eradicate its Primary Export Dependency (PED) status set by colonialism – when Mexico and all Latin America were forced to extract natural resource to feed the European colonies' industrialization (Galeano 2010). However, in her analysis of Wynter's letters, McKittrick (2015) explains that this way of living – of developing - is unsustainable, is dangerous as now both the colonizers and the politically independent colonies are seeking such materialistic life – exploit and accumulate. We, "humans" have crafted the ideas that nature was created (by god) for us at our service (Human1). Then the secular idea of natural selection, and accumulation of natural resources as defining human, (and development) took over (Human 2).

Such is the desire to develop that, the Mexican government supported exportation of agrarian people under the bracero program of 1942. The idea was that these Indianized communities would learn some modernizing production techniques (Bonfil Batalla and Dennis

1996). The goal was to become a modern, de-Indianized, industrialized country that could produce its own industrialized goods (this is Import Substitute Industrialization - ISI) rather than importing them in exchange of its primary goods. Mexico concentrated its resources in supporting infant industries and controlling the price of basic crops (produced by agrarian communities) keeping them low so these would serve as a type of subsidy (and pacification) to low-waged industrial workers and the unemployed who migrated to the city in search for the promised industrial jobs – which were few (Sheppard 2009).

Given its industrial, economic and political disadvantage rooted in colonialism, the drive to industrialization failed. Mexico could not produce quality, competitive goods. It acquired increased debt resulting in debt crisis in the early 1980s, which then facilitated the successful implementation of austerity policies in the 1980s and 1990s and consequence expansion of the neoliberal economy and current neo-colonialism. In this case, Mexico is to decrease social spending and keep inflation high in order to serve its external debt. Mexico became an export lead economy who provides cheap feminized arduous labor in foreign-owned factories mostly located in its northern states (Bonfil Batalla and Dennis 1996) (Camacho Schmidt 2008). To this, (Rubin 2014) refers as the silent revolution of the neoliberal economy. Thus while the Mexican revolution of 1910 - headed by Indigenous communities - resulted in recuperation (in de-commodification) of land and of basic services from foreigners and the rich, the silent revolution of neoliberalism feed to Latin America as development projects - headed by US based intuitions - produced further land dispossession, privatization of basic services, and greater inequality violence and displacement.

Austerity programs and priorities of the Mexican state in supporting industrial development projects (Rubin 2014; Bonfil Batalla and Dennis 1996) are reflected in lack of

educational investment in El Rancho. The highest education level is *Tele-secundaria* (middle school via televised lectures) with one teacher for three classrooms/grades. Further, the most common employment in El Rancho is temporary *moso* (male agrarian helper) currently paying $200 PMX ($10.30 USD) per day, barely enough to buy a kilo of beef at $150 - $180 pesos. Soon after the implementation of NAFTA in 1994, the Mexican market got inundated with highly subsidized products including massive amounts of corn. Thus agrarian communities – like el Rancho - who rely on this crop to sell and consume, could no longer compete with the artificially low prices from the products of the US and Canada (Clapp 2012; Bacon 2008; Meráz Garcia 2012). It became cheaper to buy than to produce corn - and even beans, chicken, eggs and other basic food. The price of agrarian products kept decreasing in relation to the price of gas, clothes, shoes, soap and other essential products. However, in these communities no one has formal jobs. Everyone survives out of what they grow to consume and sell. The moso jobs are on as-needed basis and even these were affected as people produced less. Thus three years after the implementation of NAFTA, the Mexican state created pacifying social programs for these marginalized communities. Such programs are conditional cash transfer (CCT) under Social Inclusion Programs which have had various names through time - "Progresa" in 1997, "Oportunidades" in 2002, and currently "Prospera" since 2014. The supposed goal of (and the conditions embedded in) such programs is to 'improve education, health and nutrition conditions for poor families in highly marginalized contexts in Mexico' (Dagavila Larraga 2016, 7).

Indeed, El Rancho is a highly marginalized community: poor as per hegemonic ideas of normality/development/human, but rich in intercommunity relations and freedom. As one of my participants describes the freedom – but lack of security - in Mexico (in El Rancho), in comparison to un-freedom (which creates stress) in the US:

'Allá [en México] tienes la libertad pero la seguridad, no la tienes. Por lo contrario, aquí tienes seguridad pero no libertad. Allá en México tienes la libertad de comprar una casa, las terminas de pagar, y nomas pagas pura luz y ya es todo. No tienes obligación de levantarte y trabajar para alguien porque tu trabajas para ti mismo: siembras y vendes… y pues allá no tienes tanta obligación o algo así. Puedes hacer lo que gustes, irte a pasear en caballo a las calles. Lo que gustes. Aquí no. Aquí para sacar un caballo, necesitas tener una aseguranza, permiso; para manejar: licencia, seguranza. Entonces como que eso te estraza. Te obliga a sentir que uno no sienta libertad porque te tienen como obligado. Porque si no pagas eso, no puedes hacer nada. Entonces uno siempre vive como estresado. Y es como que se siente [los EU] como un lugar mas restringido y apretado'

'There [in Mexico] you have freedom but the security, you do not have it. On the other hand, here you have security but not freedom. There in Mexico you have the freedom to buy a house, you end up paying it, and you only pay electricity and that's it. You have no obligation to get up and work for someone because you work for yourself: you cultivate and sell ... and so there you do not have much obligation or something like that. You can do whatever you like, go for a horse ride to the streets. Whatever you like. Not here. Here to get a horse, you need to have an insurance, permit; to drive: license, insurance. Ans so, this kind of stressed you. It forces you to feel that you are not free because you feel forced/obligated. Because if you do not pay for that, you cannot do anything. And so, one always lives stressed. And it's this way that [the US] feels like a place more restricted and tight'(Chico, Personal Interview, 2017)

Nevertheless, most families in el Rancho have qualified to receive CCT. In part because while some people can grow and sell, free trade and lack of funds for subsidies have made it difficult to compete with artificially low prices of grains from the US and Canada. Though the state brags that CCT is a successful program that has served as a model for many other countries, the benefits afforded keep families at extreme poverty. Yes, it is better than nothing but for instance, a poor family with one baby currently would qualify for a maximum of $595 PMX per month. That is about $30 USD per month at the current exchange rate of $19.40 pesos per dollar (Dagavila Larraga 2016,). Yes, that is ONE dollar per day! And a member of the qualifying family is expected to go in person to the main town to pick up the benefits/money every two months. In the case of El Rancho, arriving to such town involves a three-hour trip on a dirt road. However, as a result of the wave of violence, there is no public transportation between El

Rancho and the town. As such, similar to the women in Peru who - in order to meet the criteria and to claim their benefits - have to navigate in undeveloped places that force them into arduous unpaid labor, including long hours of walking and waiting (Cookson 2018), there are many barriers these populations face as result of lack of investment in these communities - to even obtain these benefits. This forces people to organize; those have trucks to go, offer rides to take more people there. They take turns or chip-in for the cost of gas, which is as costly (and in some case more expensive) as in the US. Therefore, I argue that these CCT are just pacifying programs to keep the poor from organizing and protesting. But it also provides the context for people to organize as communities of support. Sadly, given the material poverty and lack of opportunities, some men in the community welcomed cartel members who offered better-paid jobs. Such cartel members are part of criminal organizations – like Los Zetas, La Familia, and Los Caballeros Templarios.[14]

In 2006, with pressure and support from the US, President Calderon declared the 'War on Drugs' on his own Mexican population. Through the 2007 Merida Initiative the US is providing military equipment and training, reinforcing of the rule of law, encouraging privatization and foreign direct investment, and militarizing local police and the border (Paley 2014). Calderon's augmentation of military intervention to fight drug cartels by eliminating the main leaders perpetuates further violence in communities like El Rancho because, once a drug-lord is eliminated, other drug cartels fight to gain control over the newly vacant disputed territory and drug route(s), resulting in further armed confrontations between the drug cartels and the military (Maldonado 2012). However, according to Gallaher, "An approach centered on destroying the

[14] Each one of these criminal organizations has been present in El Rancho with Caballero Templarios being the most recent (as of 2013).

cartels . . . entails an escalation of violence and potentially more danger for civilians" (2015, 8). Further, Paley (2014) indicates that this is not a war to end drugs; it is a war on people – specifically on the poor, Indigenous agrarian communities – that increases inequality and protects capitalism. Although currently (as people have migrated for thousands of years seeking a better life), there are many – often combined - reasons why people migrate including flying poverty, for family reunification, for projects (make money to do a project: remodel a home or buy a property), etc. increased violence, as a result war on drugs in the early 2000s, has been a relatively new outmigration force in many rural communities. Violence produced the war on drugs waged by the US in order to criminalize activities of the poor has produced land dispossession and uprooting of extended families and networks.

Soon after this war, El Rancho was becoming one of several disputed agrarian communities and thus, a place of conflict and great danger for its residents, including most of my participants who have been displaced from El Rancho as a result. Next I present some testimonios of displacement from people in marginalized communities in order show the role of national and international law – more specifically, the war on drugs, declared by the US against the "Global South" and by Mexico against its own populations for the "security" of the US and of neoliberal capitalism - in producing unlivable, dangerous places via criminalization and militarization of the people who have inhabited their homelands for thousands of years. They were framed as natives by the conquerors, then as campesinos (agrarian/peasants) during the Porfiriato, and de-Indianized mestizos by current elite Mexican leaders/government influenced by European ideas of development and modernity. They are often forced to leave in search for safety and - in the process - are permanently displaced from their lands/homes/communities in Mexico. Negation of legal mobility across borders force them to confront a

closed/militarized/deadly border that coverts them into the "illegal aliens" in the US. As such, they are forced to create/maintain/re-enforce communities of collaboration, care, and human dignity in the US.

Testimonios of outmigration as a result of increased violence

Although many of my participants were affected in unique and complex ways, I concentrate here on Lucero and on Chico's testimonios. I recount their story because these capture many insights from across my interviews and because they were more forthright and explicit about painful issues than other respondents. The reason that others were not so explicit is because they recognized that, as an insider, I understood what they meant when my participants referred to clues about origin violence. Further, keeping our mouths shut or talking in clues is a common insider strategy to avoid getting in trouble with cartel members. As several people in my community say, "no matter what you see or hear, pretend you didn't." As such, I realized that I should not ask for details that would then be recorded, thus putting them at risk of being identified. While this could be a disadvantage of being an insider, my priorities are my participants and their safety. By contrast, Lucero and Chico were extremely open and provided complex and detailed testimonios. I will honor their trust and valor.

Lucero:

In my article 2017 titled *Risk and Security on the Mexico-to-US Migrant Journey: Women's Testimonios of Violence*, which draws from the testimonio of ten Mexican immigrant women who crossed the border without documents, guided by Lucero's detailed story of the immigration journey, I wave in accounts from my other participants to build depth to the analysis of displacement and violence on the Mexico to United States migration journey. Here, I demonstrate that the wave of violence has affected agrarian communities such as El Rancho,

especially women, to the point of forcing some to migrate in search for safety; and has trapped many the United States (Valencia 2017).

A few years ago, some community members started referring to El Rancho and nearby agrarian communities as 'ghost towns.'[15] Between 2000 and 2010, El Rancho's population decreased by more than 60 percent, from over 800 to 286 (Foros de MICHOACAN).[16] Several people were killed and/or disappeared, and many more have been displaced resulting in forced internal and/or transnational migration (Maldonado 2012; Paley 2014). This has produced land dispossession as displaced populations were - and some continue to be – ejidatarios (or children from ejidatarios) but the majority have not been able to return. As it is the case of Lucero and Chico, the same displaced populations are forced to confront a highly militarized border where they taste the flavors of death. Families and communities are torn apart and separated by violence rooted in dispossession and criminalization of the dispossessed. When displaced populations come to the US, they are traumatized by violence and obliged to create new community bonds for safety, connection and for surviving well. This history helps to explain why migrants in Pasco, WA (where all my participants migrated to) do not turn to police and state actors for protection.

Chico

Chico is the youngest of eight siblings. At age of 13, his dad was assassinated while on his way back to el Rancho from a work meeting in the main town. His dad had just been appointed the Regidor (Alderman) of el Rancho in 2007. Soon after his appointment, Chico says,

[15] In 2013, El Rancho and surrounding communities organized, creating *Grupos Comunitarios* (community self-defense) formed by local armed community members. Although the presence of cartels has decreased, the community continues to be cautious and fears that criminal organization can re-appear at any time. Thus, silence continues to be a survival strategy.

[16] To maintain anonymity, I cannot provide more specific source details.

'A mi papá lo recogieron una vez en la noche y lo golpearon. Lo trajeron una vez golpeado a la casa; los mismos del narco[17]. La razón es que ellos querían que mi pá trabajara con ellos. Querían... la casa de mi abuelo; la quieran usar para hacer drogas. Ahí en frente de donde vivíamos nosotros, y mi papá dijo que NO. Y ya fue donde ellos, creo que estaban conectados con la policía, y amigos de mi papá. Y amigos de mi papá le dieron la espalda'

'My dad was picked up once in the night and was beaten. They brought him once beaten to the house; the same ones of the narco. The reason is that they wanted my father to work with them. They wanted ... my grandfather's house; They wanted to use it to make drugs. There across from where we lived, and my dad said NO. And it was then that they, I think they were connected with the police and friends of my dad. And my dad's friends turned their backs' (Chico, personal interview, 2017)

Indeed, his dad refused to work for the narcos. Thus, the narcos requested resignation from his position so that someone, who was willing to work for them, would take it. He declined their demand and told them that he would not mess with them (the narcos); but they also should leave him alone. However, given the increase of violence the narcos brought to el Rancho, as the Regidor, he felt pressured to report them. Indeed, according to Chico there were so many assassinations, "En ese tiempo, mataron como a veinte personas en un mes. Estaba todo muy feo…" that even when his dad was still alive, he felt very insecure and was afraid of losing one or both of his parents:

'Me sentía inseguro cuando mi papá estaba vivo en el pueblo. Yo miraba que... como a la vez presientes esa gente. Y... y yo presentía ahí como si, no se como que, te llega ese escalofrío. A mí, yo cuando estaba ahí, yo sentía como un presentimiento, y yo me preguntaba, 'Oh! y si mi mamá falleciera, que haría?' Como hubo muchas muertes, yo... llegue a pensar que… 'que tal y si mi pá muere? si lo matan?' Y mientras yo pensaba, me ponía a llorar, pero el estaba vivo, todavía!'

'I felt insecure when my dad was alive in the town [El Rancho]. I would see that... as if at the same time you sense those people. And ... and I sensed there as if, I do not know how, those chills come to you. For me, I when I was there, I felt like a feeling, and I would wonder, 'Oh! If my mom would die, what would I do?' Because there were many deaths, I ... I came to think that ...'What if my father dies? if they kill him?' And while I was thinking, I would cry, but he was still alive!'' (Chico, personal interview, 2017)

[17] Cartel members

Between 2006 and 2012, this war has produced more than 120,000 deaths and 27,000 disappearances through Mexico (Paley 2014). Thus most civilians feel insecure in their highly militarized towns (Wright 2014).

> *'A las 10:00pm o a las 9:00pm ya no puede andar nadie en la calle [por que] se hace, a plena luz del día, la matazón y a plena luz del día a levantar a alguien y llevárselo'*
>
> *'Era bonita la vida en México; pero también era tranquila, no era como ahorita. Ahorita ya hay mucha balacera, mucho...peligro.' 'En las tardes te podías salir a sentarte afuera, o te ibas al jardín y salías a las 10 de la noche sin ningún pendiente. Saludabas a toda la gente y todo. Y ahorita ya no!'*
>
> 'At 10:00 p.m. or at 9:00 p.m. no one can be on the streets [because] even during daylight, the killings take place and during daylight anyone can be taken away and then kidnapped' [implying that it's worse at night time] (Andrea, personal interview, 2013)
>
> 'Life in Mexico was beautiful and serene. It wasn't like now. Nowadays, there are a lot of shootings, a lot of . . . danger. [Before] in the afternoons, one could get out to sit outside, or one could go to the plaza and go out at 10:00 p.m. without worrying; one could greet everybody and all. Nowadays, not anymore!' (Andrea, personal interview, 2013)

This is the level of risk and insecurity people of all ages have faced in many agrarian communities. This is not disconnected from the high danger that poor women who are forced to work in foreign-owned factories, in big cities such as in Ciudad Juarez face as well (Segato et al. 2005; M. W. Wright 2014). The war on drug was supposedly launched to protect people by targeting and eliminating the "mean" narcos but it has produced more violence in the everyday lives of ordinary citizens in agrarian communities (and even is some cities such as Ciudad Juarez) as ordinary people fear both, the narcos and but also the police! Chico explains,

> *'El gobierno de allá es todo vendido. El dinero gana, el dinero compra las cosas. Como allá, si un policía... si te fijas en las noticias, es cierto que muchos policías amanecían muertos, muertos, muertos. Si te pones a pensar, por que asesinan a los policías municipales - que es el como aquí police de la ciudad - por que? Porque los narcos los compran y les pagan para que ellos vallan y hagan asesinatos. Vestidos casuales. Por eso duran mucho para llegar a donde hubo un crimen, porque ellos mismos lo hacen. Como ese ejemplo en mi pá. lo de mi pá paso a las 6 de la tarde, lo recogieron a las 4 de la mañana. Toda la noche. Que por que no iban? Que por miedo, que por miedo. No es*

miedo! Es que ellos mismos saben como fue. Entonces como el cartel tiene mucho poder y mas dinero que el gobierno, entonces de ésa manera mandan al gobierno'

'The government there is all sold out. Money wins, money buys things. For instance there, if a policeman ... if you look at the news, it is true that many policemen would appear dead, dead, dead. If you think about it, why do you kill the municipal police – which is like the policeman here in the city - why? Because the drug dealers buy them and pay them for them to go and kill other people. Casually dresses. That's why they last a long time to get to where there was a crime, because they do it themselves. Like that example in my father happened at 6 o'clock in the afternoon, they picked him up at 4 o'clock in the morning. All night. Why did not they go? That out of fear, that out of fear. It's not fear! Is that they themselves know how it was. And so because the cartel has a lot of power and more money than the government, is then in that way that they control the government' (Chico, personal interview, 2017)

Indeed, many people in Mexico are aware that they cannot count on the government for protection because the cartel dominates the government and as such the Mexican government works for – and often are - the cartel; similar to the way in which large corporations (capitalism) control – and often are - the US government. Therefore, other ways of organizing, at community levels, emerged. In the case of El Rancho, given the wave of violence and the fact that people realized that the government often works alongside the narcos, several surrounding communities allied and organized to create the autodefensas – currently known as the Comunitarios - where local people from several communities took arms and organized as one self-defense group to protect their communities and land (Diaz and Perez 2015). This form of organizing has worked in some communities like el Rancho, and reestablishes the importance of inter-relations of community and profound roots and relations to the land. As Wilson (2009) explains, relations (and culture) are knowledges and ontologies. Our epistemologies are informed by our relations to each other and to the universe (S. Wilson 2009). Although currently, in El Rancho things seem to be better, the wounds and traumas will always be present, not only in El Rancho, but in Mexico in general. As Chico says,

> *'Es una herida que tengo; pero si le empiezas a buscar, se va abrir otra vez. Yo me acuerdo de eso, es lo mas impactante en tu vida que te puede pasar. Si él [mi papá] hubiera muerto de por una enfermedad, pues uno no sintiera tanto dolor. Pero en verdad, al momento de llegar, y aparte que llegan tus hermanos, primos, hermanas. Y uno pues mira sangre y mocho de eso, al verlo… No se te sale de la mente, no se te sale de la mente. Y luego en vivo, estarlo mirando. Que puedes hacer? Es un trauma enorme. Y muchos dicen 'Oh muchos pasan por eso en México.' Si! Por qué? Por qué pasa eso? Pero a cada persona que le pasa, es imposible olvidar'*
>
> 'It is a wound that I have; but if you start provoking it, it will open again. I remember that, it's the most impactful thing in your life that can happen to you. If he [my dad] would have died of an illness, one would not feel so much pain. But in reality, when you arrive, and also that your brothers, cousins, sisters arrive. And one can see blood and lots of that, as you see it ... It does not go out of your mind, it does not go out of your mind. And then alive, been watching him. What can you do? It is a huge trauma. And many say 'Oh many go through that in Mexico.' Yes! Why? Why does that happen? But to each person who passes through this, it is impossible to forget' (Chico, personal interview, 2017)

In addition, most people live with the fear that at any time *los malos* (the dangerous people) could arrive and bring violence again. Besides, there are ongoing rumors that in some towns, las cosas están feas ("things are ugly") that is the clue to say that there is violence. While in Mexico many Indigenous and de-Indianized communities live in fear that at any time violence may erupt in their communities, members of these same communities – who fled to the US - live in fear of deportation. However, the majority of my participants prefer to stay in the US as they recognize that violence and poverty in Mexico is worse. As I have argued before (Valencia 2017), immigrants' perceptions of risk and insecurity are relational to lived (and ongoing) experiences in places of origin, and the risks of crossing the buffer zone that defines the US-Mexico border. As such, these migrants have constructed communities of resistance (both public and intimate) in the US. In Chapter 5, and overall, I focus on the intimate and everyday acts of re-making relations of support, alliance, care and humanity!

Concluding Thoughts

This militarized War on Drugs both pushes some people to migrate and serves to obscure violence against civilians because most deaths are justified by claims that they are involved in drug-related activities. These claims, often false, devalue their lives and give impunity regarding their deaths (Fregoso and Bejarano 2010; Salinas 2015). Furthermore, their deaths are framed as evidence of the 'effectiveness' of the War on Drugs because the more people who are killed, the more successful this war is said to be since, supposedly, narcos are killing other narcos (Wright 2011). In addition, I argue, this war serves to further dispossess Indigenous (and Indigenous descendants) form their communities and lands. They are criminalized, devalued and persecuted by the Mexican state with support and encouragement from the US. Thus in effect both the US and the Mexican government, under biopower mode, decide whose lives are worth protecting (the modern, foreign investors, tourists) and whose lives are killable/displaceable (those marked as Indigenous -- those experiencing poverty, rural populations, etc.) for the benefits of the modern society and the neoliberal economy (Foucault et al. 2003). Then those who are displaced and forced to migrate to the US face further criminalization and persecution here where they are forced to become disposable labor in fear of deportation. This is the current work of neoliberal capitalism, in conjuncture with the law and governments. They manage (fragment) relations between populations and nature; protect the rich (those framed as man/human in terms of accumulation); and produce displacement through the making of poverty, criminalization, violence and militarization of Indigenous communities. Displaced populations are forced to taste the flavors of death in the highly militarized Mexico- US border (De Genova 2004); which transform them into the "illegal aliens." They are framed as poor and thus de-human because the logic of capitalism is that to be human, extraction (and exploitation) for wealth accumulation is needed - the human/the norm is the middle class, the modern, developed (McKittrick 2015).

Nevertheless, being placed in the condition of the poor and thus dehumanized, abandoned, erased, provides conditions to reinvent humanity away from (and because of) these logics (McKittrick 2016).

MUERTE LEGAL: THERE WAS DEFINITELY A - RACIAL AND CLASSED - DIVIDING LINE

Chapter 4

INTRODUCTION :

"Me gusto taco de la troca and that is about the only Spanish I keep on going: taco, truck, Spanish" (laugh)

(Watkins, personal interview 2017).

According to the mayor of Pasco, Washington, Matt Watkins, being able to order tacos and barely say that he likes tacos is all the Spanish he knows and needs because saying this phrase gets him closer to the 'Hispanic' community and culture in Pasco – a city with over 70% Latinx - mostly Mexicans - the majority of whom do not speak English. This is a person who has strong influence in **biopolitical** and **biopower** decision-making in this city and yet, his connecting with the majority of the residents of Pasco is extremely limited. Foucault et al. (2003) describe biopolitics and biopower as the current mode of state power to manage the population. Biopolitics is the power to "make life or let die;" that is, the power to protect some and let others die. Biopower is described as power over life, the power to kill some for the "benefits" of others; that is "to take life or let live." Racism, Foucault et al. (2003) say, is the deciding factor in whose life is worth protecting and whose life should be let die or eliminated for the benefit of the population. I argue that in Pasco, such power has been constructed by and for the benefit of Whites since the making of the city. For instance, not only has there never been a Latinx mayor in Pasco, but Latinx representation in leadership positions in general, has been almost nonexistent. In fact, it was until re-arrangements on the voting system were made in response to an ACLU's (American Civil Liberty Union) voting rights lawsuit against the City of Pasco - due

to ongoing dilution of the Latinx vote - that two Latinx people were elected council members for the first time in 2017; that is two out of seven members (Flatt 2016; Pasco-wa.gov). As such, historical and ongoing practices of white supremacy -- such as creation, interpretation and implementation of policies and laws -- have resulted in Pasco's current racialized and unequal distributions of life chances. Indeed, such legal practices result in politics and geographies of what I am calling *legal death* for Mexican immigrants in most places of the US.

I describe *politics of legal death* as the development and implementation of socially constructed laws that legally deny (and dispossess) some from having access to life chances that are created, protected and managed by the state such as those described by Cacho: rights, property and freedom. Legal death includes what (Alexander 2012) refers to a *civic death* which formerly incarcerated (mostly African American males, and I would say also Latinx and poor white males) face; described as the legal discrimination against the right to vote, housing, education and formal employment. Legal death is different from civic death in this condition also include legal discrimination against freedom to move across national borders, ability to access air-plane transportation, obtain a driver's license in many states, enter most federal buildings, and legal discrimination against obtaining social benefits (but are not excepted from paying taxes), as well as legally being under constant threat of deportation. The spaces (and moments) where such life chances exist or take place become geographies susceptible to legal death – including national borders, roads when driving, public spaces and jobs sites during active migration rides, etc. - for those who are denied by the law and forced into legal death. Under bipolitical mode of power, the state selects who will be forced into legal death and whose life is worth enhancing and protecting by the law at the cost of the legally denied. In essence, biopolitics serves to make life for some while not only killing or letting others die as per

(Foucault et al. 2003), but also while producing the conditions of death for some. Given that racism is what determines the selection, such politics enhance racial hierarchies by othering, erasing and criminalizing some (and the spaces they are forced to inhabit), while protecting and enhancing those made rich via dispossession and genocide enacted by the state and protected by the law (and the spaces made for by and for them). These process results in politics and geographies of legal death for some in the US.

In this chapter, I analyze some of the ways in which Mexican people have been forced into legal death in the US and some experiences of that. Currently and for the last 100 years, Mexican immigrants experience another layer of criminality in the US. They have been incorporated as non-citizens, "illegal aliens" who legally have no rights to have rights (Cacho 2012). This produces moments and spaces of legal death for Mexicans as they cross the buffer zone we call the US-Mexico border and in some spaces (and moments) in the US. Mexicans have not just been framed as outsiders in the US but their mere presence is criminalized by the law (Cacho 2012). Illegality is being carved on the Mexican body (N. De Genova 2004; Dear and Lucero 2005; Amoore 2006). Mexicans are deemed criminals by presence, not by doing. Legally, they have no rights to have rights. In order for them to be decriminalized, their presence in the US would have to end; they would have to return to Mexico. While Cacho refers to such denial of rights, freedom and property as denial of personhood - which results in social death, a status and space that Mexicans are forced to occupy - I refer to such practice as politics of legal death that produce geographies and moments of legal death as described above.

In this chapter I focus in Pasco, as a case in the US northwest, in order to reveal some of the politics and geographies of legal death, embedded in racism, that displaced Mexican populations have been forced to endure in cities of the US. In order to do so, I provide a

historical context of Pasco along with a brief historical analysis of its sister cities: Kennewick and Richland - together the three form the "Tri-Cities." It is to this city that my Mexican immigrant participants migrated between the earliest 1990s and early 2000s; a few arrived in the late 1970s; and the majority migrated from El Rancho[18]. As I discuss in chapter three, millions of Indigenous and Mexican mestizos/as have been displaced (and further dispossessed from their lands) due to Mexico's search for western modernity such as industrialized economies, and most recently, due to detrimental conditions produced by national and trans-national neoliberal structural policies and wars, rooted in colonial and neocolonial practices. Fleeing poverty and violence, Mexican people[19] are forced to migrate north; to what used to be a borderless continent where our ancestors could freely move (and often did) in search for survival. However, due to US imperial expansion and bordering of these lands, these same populations have been forced into legal death in the US as they have been successfully made the outsiders, the "illegal aliens," by the racialized state operating under biopolitical mode of power.

Simultaneously white Europeans have made themselves the legitimate and normalized US citizens (Walia 2014). In effect, Mexicans have been differentially included as they are made the "others" by the immigration law and are integrated as non-citizens, "illegal aliens," and made permanently deportable and exploitable labor (Cacho 2012; N. De Genova 2004; Spade 2011). Such white supremacy practices serve to legitimize and normalize ideas and hierarchies of

[18] Pseudonym to refer to an agrarian community in Michaocán Mexico (see chapter 3 for more details)

[19] And other people from Latin America, such as Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador who have to confront a wider border as Mexico serves as a southern border for the US. For the purpose of my analysis, I focus on Mexican immigrants because Mexicans still represent the highest number of undocumented immigrants in the US – and in Pasco - and because I am an insider to this community, both in Mexico and in the US.

difference, superiority and citizenship because the "other" would strive to become the "us" – the white citizen. Cacho (2012) and Lawson et al. (2018) describe such process as *differential incorporation*: people being included precisely through the ways in which they are constructed as different, and such differentiation is needed to legitimize and normalize the "us" - the white middleclass citizen. Thus, in this chapter, I draw from the concept of differential incorporation as applied to African Americans and most recently, to Mexicans in the Tri-Cities.

Further, The Tri-Cities were founded on the basis of racism and white supremacist laws and covenants, by and for the benefits of Whites. In this chapter (as in chapter 3) I engage with the concept of *white supremacy* described as more than mere ideologies of whiteness as superior, but as also affording legal material benefits to those deemed human enough to qualify as White (Anderson 1988; Lipsitz 2011). White Europeans categorized other minorities as the outsiders even though the Europeans were/are also outsiders (Anderson 1988). This is a process well illustrated in the building and ongoing spatial arrangements of Pasco, and the Tri-Cities in general. This categorization and process grants white Europeans economic, political, and social power and superiority (Anderson 1988; Lipsitz 2011). As such, in this chapter I also draw on the concept of *racial capitalism***.** Capitalism is described as always racial because its very construction and expansion followed racial directions rooted in internal organization of European societies since feudal times. And these logics of racial capitalism permeate everyday social ideologies. As Cedric J. Robinson (2000) indicates, "Racism… has its genesis in the "internal" relations of European peoples" (2). The first European proletarians were *racialized* groups including Irish, Roman, Jews, and others within Europe. European societies through capitalism did not seek to homogenize but rather to differentiate based on culture, language and religion, and to construct these differences into 'racial' heretical differences (Cedric J. Robinson 2000).

While the racialized groups have changed through time, practices of racial capitalism continue at various scales. In the tri-cities, different populations, including Asians, African Americans, and Latinx (mostly Mexicans), have been made the poor working class, the "Other" - racialized, criminalized, segregated, and incorporated based on that difference not only to legitimize white, middleclass citizenship status, but also to produce cheap temporary and disposable labor. Such logics of racial capitalism permeate social racist ideologies in the Tri-Cities, and across the US. As I elaborate in Chapter 5, being in the space of legal death and segregation forces Mexican immigrants to maintain, adopt and readopt previously learned (even devalued) social life practices, which have helped them in producing/reclaiming dignified lives despite being segregated communities in Mexico since colonization. Such practices help to create and maintain ways of producing a meaningful and dignified life at the community, intimate, everyday level, within and beyond borders.

While in Chapter 3 I provide a transnational context by focusing on Mexico's political economy and subject formation by uncovering the role of white supremacy, in this chapter I continue a similar analysis but in the context of the US. I do so by dividing the chapter into two sections. From the perspective of city leaders - mostly Whites - the first section titled *There Was Definitely a Dividing Line: Racial Political Economy of Pasco and the Tri-Cities* focuses on the history of racial political economy of Pasco in context of the Tri-Cities in order reveal how biopolitical processes have produced some US cities through this Pacific Northwest example. Indeed, most analyses of white supremacist practices of differential incorporation and racial capitalism towards people of color in general, and Mexican immigrants specifically, tend to be focused on the US Southwest (Alanís Enciso 2017; Calavita 1992; Herrera 2016; Kohl-Arenas 2015; Munoz 2016; Vigil 1998; among others). However, these processes have also taken place

in the US Northwest. For instance, as Brown (2013) indicates although Jim Crow Laws were officially implemented in the south, such laws influenced (and informed) similar white supremacist practices of racism, segregation and othering of African Americans in the Northwest (Bauman 2005). My analysis reveals that such practices continue in Northwest cities but currently also target Mexican immigrants as one more racialized group integrated in the US racial economy. Biopolitical processes have been key to the foundation and ongoing racial division of space in Pasco (and the Tri-Cities more broadly) (Brown 2013). As African Americans – whose labor was recruited for construction of Hanford – were driven out of the region between the 1970s and 1990s, Mexicans became the newly targeted population for agricultural labor. I argue that in a similar (but not equal) manner as Africans Americans, Mexicans' labor has been framed as temporal, seasonal, unskilled and disposable. While African Americans were forced out of the region by intense segregation, policing and criminalization, Mexicans are managed/controlled by the law, forcing them into geographies and moments of legal death, of criminality and threat of deportation. Further, they have been forced to occupy historically racialized, segregated and criminalized spaces and conditions originally created for African Americans in Pasco. Although currently over 70% of the population identifies as Hispanic (Latinx) in this city, Whites continue to hold most positions of power - of bipolitical/biopower decision making – producing and enhancing ongoing white supremacist practices, differential incorporation, and racial capitalism in Pasco - and the broader region. As such, in a similar manner, but different than in Mexico, current modernizing and Development ideologies in Pasco expose some Mexican immigrants to further processes of de-Indianization -- in this case, de-Mexicanization -- *criminalization, intimidation, racialization, segregation, and erasure*.

On that note, the second part of the chapter is titled *Subject Formation of Mexican populations in the US.* From the perspective of Mexican immigrants – mostly undocumented - I analyze how Mexican immigrants experience politics and geographies of legal death, which enables differential incorporation as processes of subject formation that enhances white power and supremacy. I look at some of the *discursive and material* ways in which un/documented Mexican immigrants experience and navigate legal death to include bordering, criminalization, erasure, and pacification by the law in their everyday life. I begin this section by examining Mexican immigrants' experiences of the physical US-Mexico Border and immigration raids. Then I look into internal bordering, policing, and criminalization in their everyday life – and spaces - as enacted by the state and some US citizens in cities like Pasco; a city constructed on the basis of racial division and segregation of people of color since its foundation.

There Was Definitely a - Racial and Classed - Dividing Line.

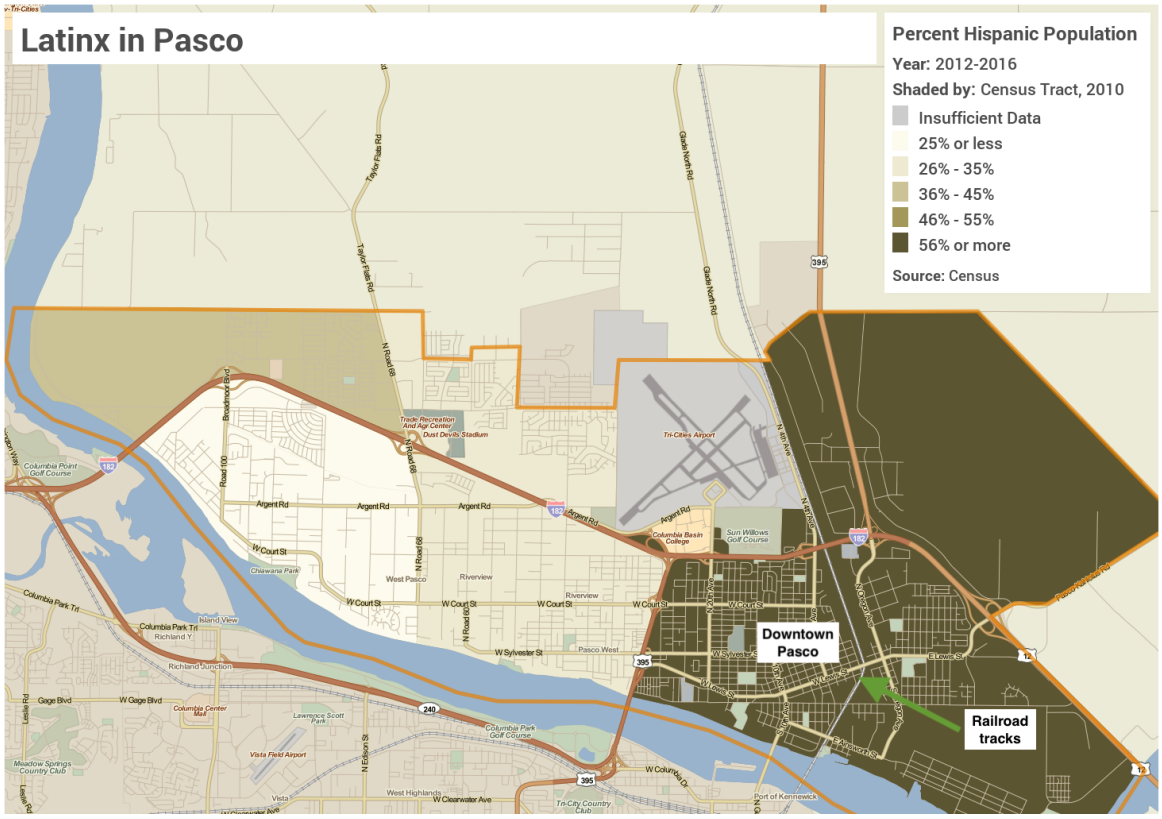
Political Economy of Pasco and the Tri-Cities.

"Living in Pasco. Living in east Pasco [since 1946], there was a line and it was the railroad tracks. I mean, it was like you had a ruler and to the east of the railroad tracks was east Pasco; to the west was west Pasco. And I lived in the east side. And it was there; there was definitely a dividing line. I do not know if it was part racial, or if it was economic. People that did not have money lived on the poor side of town [the east]. People that had money lived on the west side of town…and at that point in time, the east… is where African Americans lived."

(Dr. Baker, personal interview, 2017)

Although, Marilyn Baker -- a PhD, white, 71 year old woman who has worked as superintendent at various school districts in the state of Washington -- wonders if this segregation was more related to class because there were some poor Whites living there too, she

also recognizes that the majority of residents in the east side were not only poor, but also all of the African American population in the Tri-Cities area lived there. This division resulted from city covenants and regulations that forced African Americans to live in the east side of the city. My work reveals that such racialized arrangement of the space persists. However, the targeted population has changed: from African Americans to Hispanic - mostly Mexicans - and the racialized space has expanded to now include both east (with over 90% Latinx) and downtown Pasco (over 75% Latinx) - see map below.



(Valencia 2018; source: www.policymap.com; Census Tract, 2010)

Pasco is a city with over 76,000 inhabitants. It is estimated that, between 2012 and 2016, about 60% of its population identified as Hispanic (Latinx) compared to 17% nationwide and

only 12% in the state of Washington (US Census tract 2010). As such, Pasco is a place highly attractive to Latinx populations. In fact, all of the city leaders I interviewed – including the city mayor, the chief of the police, and the president of the Tri-Cities Hispanic Chamber of Commerce – estimate that, currently, about 70% of the population in Pasco identify as Hispanic/Latinx. However, Latinx were not the first "minority" group to be recruited, pushed, and attracted to work and live in this city. Pasco and the Tri-Cities were founded on the basis of settler colonialism, white supremacy, and racialization of different groups of people by exaggerating differences between these populations and Europeans and by framing their labor as temporary and unskilled. And yet, Pasco and the tri-cities have heavily depended on such labor which enables accumulation of wealth and sustaining of white supremacy via dispossession and appropriation of life - land, resources, and labor.

Located on the east side of Washington State, at the intersection of three rivers - Columbia, Yakima, and Snake - what is currently known as Pasco used to be a Sahaptian Village in Qosispah territory. It was also a fishing and gathering place for Native populations including Palouse, Walla Walla, Wanapun, Yakama, and Umatilla for hundreds (or even thousands) of years. Lewis and Clark were part of a gathering in this village - where they also camped - during their westward expedition in 1805 (vistitri-cities.com). Nevertheless, they claimed to have *discovered* such place in order to facilitate and justify the westward imperial expansion of the US via genocide and land dispossession (A. Smith and Kauanui 2008). In 1884, Virgil G. Bogue - a Northern Pacific Engineer- named this area "Pasco" after an Andean mining town of Cerro de Pasco in Perú.

Pasco was the first of the three cities to be built and the whole area currently depends, in large part, on the exploitation of Mexican people through a politics of legal death. However, the

construction of the tri-cities (to include Kennewick and Richland) involved segregation and abusing of various groups, which paved the way for ongoing discrimination and legal denial of Mexican immigrants whose labor is been recruited to fulfill the current agrarian economy of the area. Scholars have analyzed some of the ways in which the Northern Pacific Company took advantage of Chinese and some African Americans and Mexicans' labor for the construction a bridge across the Snake River and the extension of the railroad into the Pasco area in the late 1870s (Brown 2015; Gregory 1991; Walter A. Oberst 1978). Such long-term projects attracted pioneers, settlers, and workers to this place. Engineers, managers, administrators, and other white-collar positions were mostly offered to (and held by) Whites, while mainly Chinese, and some African Americans and Mexicans, were actively recruited for arduous, low-paid, physical labor as "temporary" railroad workers (Gregory 1991). Framing such labor as temporary set the expectation that those deemed different, racialized others, were supposed to leave after completing projects of accumulation that required high physical labor.

The building of Hanford – a nuclear site - in 1943 about 20 miles northwest of Pasco required (and attracted) more workers (and settlers) for the production of plutonium-based nuclear weapons used at the end of WWII and during the Cold War. Whites continued to be recruited for white-collar permanent jobs, and African Americans were hired for the actual construction of the facility and were given backbreaking jobs framed, once again, as *temporary* (Brown 2013). Running away from the Jim Crow laws of segregation in the South, thousands of African Americans migrated north to fulfill the demand of their labor for the construction of the Hanford plant. However, according to Bauman (2005), whites were also recruited from the South, and they arrived to the area with well-developed Jim Crow's segregation ideologies that influenced stratification of the society and organization of space in the Tri-Cities. Mirroring

practices inaugurated with Jim Crow laws in the South, Whites and African Americans were transported from Pasco in separate buses and had different eating and camping areas by the nuclear plant (Bauman 2005).

Soon after, Richland emerged with the construction of federal housing, schools, and hospitals offered as benefits for *permanent* Hanford workers, who were also afforded higher wages. Mainly – through white supremacy policies and practices - only whites qualified for such benefits because African Americans (and other people of color) were hired primarily as *temporary* constructions workers while whites were recruited for permanent employment. Such white supremacist rules not only served to normalize the white as the moral, deserving, citizen, as something everyone should aspire to become, but also produced material benefits for whites and negated life chances for African Americans (and other racialized communities). In essence, Richland was framed as a utopian place for white workers and their families in support of the ongoing production of plutonium. As such, Brown (2013) refers to Richland as a Plutopian city. Whiteness, white utopia, middle class, Richland were (and are) defined in relations to what is not – racialized as non-white, Latinx, Chinese, African American, Pasco. As Cacho (2012) indicates, the violence of value is that it needs to construct the "other" to define itself. Whiteness needs the differentiable, radicalized "other." In essence, Richland needs Pasco as a racialized city to define its witness and utopian dream. As LaDonna Madison - an 80-year-old white woman who has lived in Pasco all her life and worked as secretary in the Pasco school district for many years - recalls, "With the construction of Hanford, Whites got new homes in Richland and higher wages and so automatically, they thought they were above all" (Madison, personal interview, 2017).

On the other hand, Kennewick was created as a commercial, exclusionary place in the early 1900s. Up until the late 1970s, African American people were prohibited from being in that

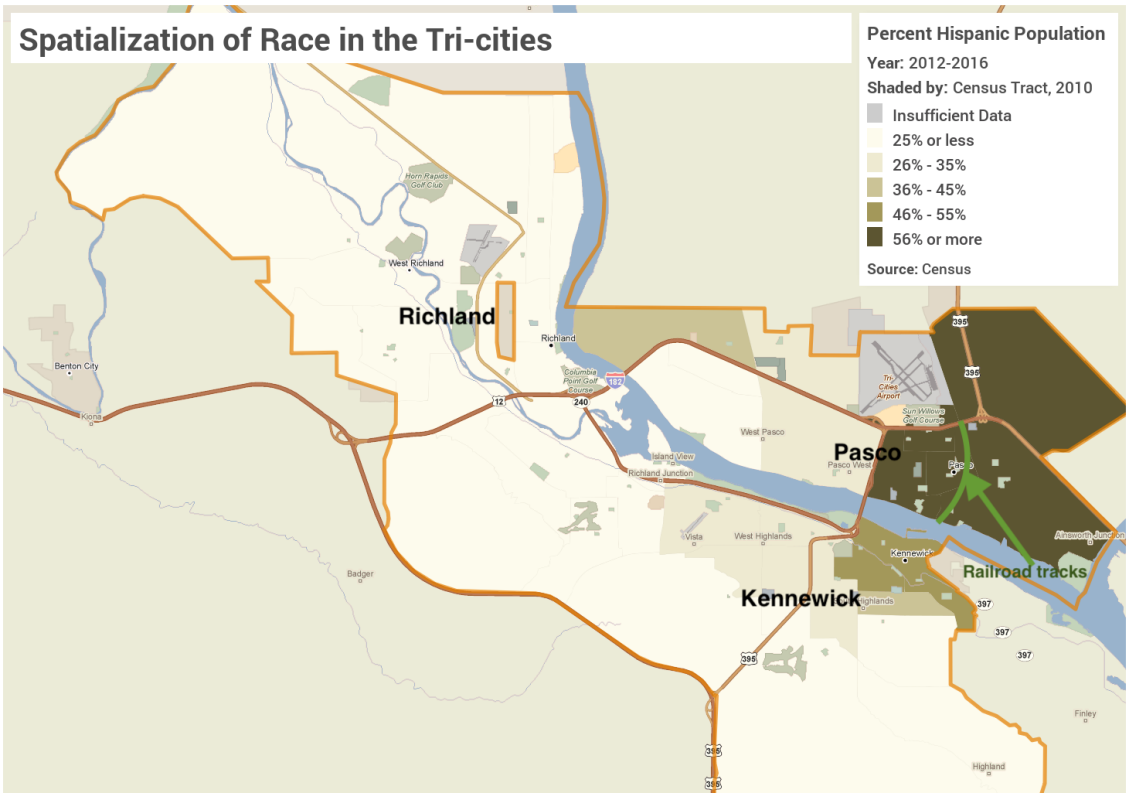
city after sunset. According to Baker, "There was an unwritten rule that said, 'once it turns dark, if you are in Kennewick, if you are Black, you got to go, you are not allowed'" (Baker, personal interview, 2017). Martin Valdez – a Mexican descendant, husband of someone who is half African American, former community college professor in Chicano Studies, and past president of the Tri-Cities Hispanic Chamber of Commerce – further confirms this practice, "Kennewick was what was called sundown town. If you were Black, you couldn't be in Kennewick after sundown…people say that there were signs on one of the two bridges that said basically, 'if you are African-American, you cannot be in Kennewick after sundown'" (Valdez, personal interview, 2017).

Indeed, Kennewick is one of hundreds of cities -- mostly in the mid-west and northwest -- where there wasn't legal segregation and instead other white supremacist approaches were used to keep African Americans out of the town. Some of these approaches included restriction signs, city covenants, harassment, policing, and violence to prevent African Americans from purchasing homes or even from being in the city after sundown. These so-called sundown towns continue to remain predominantly white (Loewen 2006). According to the 2010 census tract, about 2% of the population in Kennewick currently identify as African American. Loewen (2006) refers to sundown town practices as proof of racism and white supremacy. In addition, given that as "temporary" workers African Americans did not qualify for housing benefits located in Richland and offered to permanent – mainly white – workers, they were forced to live in temporary homes under poor conditions in Pasco because African Americans were expected to leave soon after the construction of the Hanford plant.

The Tri-cities

I argue that racial division of space in the Tri-Cities continues but the racialized populations and tactics have changed in response to the demand for current cheap labor. In this case, Mexicans -- as were African Americans and Chinese -- have been constructed as racialized, non-whites and ideal for contemporary agricultural labor. Making Mexicans the illegal alien and criminal by the law is an essential legal tool (and layer) that forces this population into spaces and moments of legal death. This condition justifies paying them low wages and forces many to live in Pasco because it is considered cheaper, and also due increasing community of Mexicans there given the importance of community networks to survive under legal death. As such, the space of the Tri-Cities continues to be segregated by race and class. As indicated above, it is estimated that about 60% of the population in Pasco identify as Hispanic (Latinx mostly Mexicans) between 2012 and 2016, the percentage of Hispanics is only 25% in Kennewick and less than 11% in Richland. Simultaneously, the African American population has been driven out of Pasco and the tri-cities area. They currently account for about 2.5% in Pasco; and only 2% in

Kennewick and 1.4% in Richland (Census tract, 2010).



(By Valencia, Source: www.policymap.com; Census Tract, 2010)

Valdez explains such division of space by race and class as follows,

> 'So I see Richland as sort of the wealthy white, white one, white sort of city. So Richland we have a lot of PhDs, a lot of college education, professionals. I think Kennewick is sort of the commercial city, but Kennewick is diverse in terms of like there is really, there are bad neighborhoods. There is you know really wealthy neighborhoods… but then you have really poor [and thus bad] areas as well … and then Pasco is -- you know -- the younger more Latino' (Valdez, personal interview, 2017)

Indeed, through racialized logics of capitalism - which permeates social ideologies – othering is not only based on exaggerating differences of culture and language, but it is also based on class. Those made poor, racialized and othered, are framed as supposedly producing bad neighborhoods that need to be policed and managed by force. This way space is also

racialized and criminalized. This is needed so that those made wealthy – through uneven distributions of life chances – can be framed as generating good neighborhoods.

Kelsey Gilman, a History teacher at Pasco High School - explains the role of race and class in the current arrangement of the Tri-Cities as follows,

> 'Richland is definitely where like upper to middle class, mostly white folks... In Kennewick a working class tends to still be predominantly white, although it's a little bit more kind of mixed race. And then Pasco is predominantly Latinos, mostly from Mexicans - a lot of first and second-generation students and quite a few from Honduras and El Salvador as well. But mostly, I said probably like 75 percent from Mexico or their parents were from Mexico' (Gilman, personal interview, 2017)

Thus, the three cities are distinctly divided according to the race and class of people living in each city. Richland is framed through whiteness and class as an educated, good and wealthy city. However, the political historical processes that made Richland a white and wealthy city are not mentioned at all. Kennewick is framed as an ok city, not as "great" as Richland because not only it has a working-class community but there is a mixed race – meaning there are some Latinx there – who produce "bad" neighborhoods. Then there is Pasco with predominantly Latinx, Mexicans. Thus race and class are attached to the way in which space is perceived. But the human made processes that produce race and material inequalities – the rich and the poor -- are blurred. Instead the groups are individually acknowledged or judged. The white and wealthy are perceived as generating good spaces, while racialized and poor are perceived as bad and dangerous who affect place in that way. Then, within Pasco, there is further division and racialization of people and space that contributes to how resources are allocated and what spaces are deem criminal and heavily policed to produce geographies and moments of legal death.

Pasco

In Pasco, there has been historical segregation reflected in the way the city is organized today (see the "Latinx in Pasco" map above). Via biopolitical practices, the city produced

covenants forcing African Americans to live on the east side of the railroad tracks where basic services such as sewage, electricity, or running water were poor or non-existent (Adams 2006). Further, apart from receiving limited resources and thus life chances, the jobs for which African Americans were recruited got framed as seasonal, unskilled and thus were poorly compensated, making this population structurally poor; race became a determinant of class. At the same time, the spaces they inhabited and their highlighted racialized difference was devalued in relation to whiteness, their low- waged and temporary labor was incorporated as very important -- integral -- to the accumulation of wealth, capital and white power. Thus, this kind of labor in some ways was recognized as valuable and then simultaneously rendered perpetually poorly paid and temporary to maintain its value for capital accumulation. Baker grew up on the east side of the railroad tracks, where her parents resided even before her birth because her dad loved horses, and there he was able to buy a three-acre property and have horses. Baker says that although if you live on the east side, people perceived you as poor, she did not feel as such. While her neighbors were poor - had outdoors bathrooms and no green grass, for instance - that was not the case for her family. She says,

> 'On the one hand, I felt that we were rich because we had food, we had a car, we had grass. But then you would go over. Under the underpass[20] to the other side of town and people would go, "Oh! You live on the east side? Oh… it smells! How can you?"'(whispering) (Baker, personal interview, 2017)

While in relation to her neighbors, Baker's family was rich -- her dad was white and so was able to have a stable and well paid job -- her white friends on the west side of the tracks did not expect her, as a white woman, to live on the east side and felt sorry for her. Living on the east

[20] A name for the railroad that people cross under because the railroad goes over the street

side was a sign of being poor, and poverty was associated with race -- with being African - American in Pasco in this case. Further, class and race were also attached to a specific space, a space that is devalued – precisely because it is racialized - and even disturbed other senses such as the "smell." While similar (but not identical) racializing practices continue in Pasco, the targeted group has changed from Black to Brown; and the racializing tactics now include, not only white supremacy local policies, but also white supremacy federal law.

East Pasco: From Black to Brown – Politics of Legal Death.

Given that, essentially, all the African Americans in the area were forced to live in east Pasco, this area has been colloquially known as "El Barrio de los Negros" (*The Blacks' Neighborhood*). However currently, the majority of the residents in El Barrio de los Negros are Hispanic/Latinx (90%) while only .16% of the population identify as African Americans. Indeed, Mexicans are the contemporary racialized people in Pasco (and in the US, more broadly). While some Mexicans and Chicanos did participate as braceros – temporary workers brought under the bracero program between 1942 and 1964 to fulfill shortage of labor in the US resultant from mass deportations of Mexicans in the 1930s and US's involvement in WWII - in the construction of the railroad in the northwest (E. Gamboa 1987), they have been more heavily recruited as "seasonal" workers for agriculture in the last half century (De La Torre 2016). Soon after the construction of Hanford and the conclusion of WWII, the Columbia Basin irrigation system was built. This system made possible the expansion of the agriculture sector, which eventually produced a high demand for agricultural workers in Franklin County. Given the Chinese exclusion act in 1882, this population was no longer targeted for cheap agricultural labor, but rather, Mexicans were made the contemporary group ideal for this arduous job (Hahamovitch 1997). The logic of capitalism is profit generation and accumulation by reducing

cost. Thus the tradition to target different groups of people as ideal for the racialized profit-generating labor continues. The spatial location of Mexicans made their recruitment for profitable labor ideal. The construction of the immigration law in 1924, guided by biopolitical decision of who was to be allowed into the country and who was to be denied, included Mexicans in the list of nations with limited immigration quotas. Such politics of legal death made it so Mexicans became iconic of the Illegal alien because their immigration patterns were already higher than the limits imposed (Ngai 2004); and so Mexicans were made into flexible/disposable labor, ideal for agricultural seasonal work - easily recruitable and deportable by the law. This way, they were forced to inhabit geographies and moments of legal death for the ongoing accumulation of wealth and enhancement of white supremacy.

On the other hand, as (Ramírez, 2015) explains, agricultural work represents painful intergenerational traumas of slavery experiences for African Americans and so most have no desire to do this type of work. Indeed, my participants who work (or have worked) in the agricultural sector point out that they have not seen a single African American person working in the fields where they toil. Some of my city leader participants presume that, given the fact that agriculture has become the highest industry in the region in the last 40 years and these jobs are not attractive to African Americans, and due to historical and ongoing racialized practices of segregation and tension in Pasco (and the Tri-Cities), it seems that most African Americans left for other cities, like Portland and Seattle, in search of college careers, better jobs, and community.

Valdez explains,

> ‘There used to be an African-American community in East Pasco, but it is not there anymore. I think they left. I don’t think they feel welcomed. And some of them went to college and they went to, you know, some went back to the south, some moved to Portland or to the Westside [of the state] - to places where they have larger African-

> American communities, Portland, Seattle, Spokane even' (Valdez, personal interview, 2017)

In effect, racialized people do not feel welcome and thus seek their community and network support to produce meaningful and dignifying lives.

According to Gabriel Portugal, a Mexican national and k-9 US teacher who migrated in the 1970s to the US running away from the Mexican state's attacks on students (and education) revealed in the massacre of Tlatelolco in 1968 in Mexico,

> 'In the 40s the Hanford was built. And to build those massive structures like the nuclear plants, you are talking about mega-size as far as concrete, so it's a lot of hard, hard labor and so Blacks and others were recruited to come and do the hard work. Then those buildings were completed. And it is like, 'you are not needed anymore.' And so Blacks, back in those days, were the majority and they all lived in Pasco… and so an attack on Pasco and kind of like push Pasco to kind of like become a different city within the Tri-Cities, where people [living in other parts of the Tri Cities] always thought that there was more crime, more prostitution, more bad things happening' (Portugal, personal interview, 2017)

This criminalization of people of color and the space they inhabit justify uneven distribution of life chances and a greater presence of police force. Some are protected while others are criminalized, managed by force, and pushed to leave the area especially when their labor is not needed anymore. They are disposable. Again, the racial logics of capitalism penetrate social ideologies and thus how people interact. Baker recalls that there were ongoing violent racial tensions between African Americans and Whites in the 1970s and 1980s, which further supports the fact that African Americans were forced out of the area through criminalization and violence,

> 'There was racial tension. I do not know if it was much Hispanic. I think it was more 70s and 80s was … Black and White conflict. I would, if I put myself in the shoes of African Americans in the 70s and 80s, it might be that I did not feel important - as important as those white people' (Baker, personal interview, 2018)

White supremacy ideologies of superiority justify allocating more power to some while criminalizing others to validate policing by force and dispossession of their labor and life chances. This way, people of color became framed as the "problem," the supposed reason for high crime rates and gang activity - something that was "successfully" dealt with by the Pasco police. As the police chief says,

> 'Back in the 80s, we [in Pasco] were at a very high crime rate. We dropped significantly the crime rate. We did a lot to get rid of the gang problem we had in town and get rid of some other issues… Kennewick and Richland didn't have too much of it, we did!' (Metzger, personal interview, 2017)

High policing and criminalization, in combination with the new job market that was not attractive for African Americans and did not target them for their labor are some key factors as to why most of the African American community left Pasco. As Valdez explains,

> 'Another part [of] why we don't have that large of an African-American community is because the Latinos came here because of agriculture work. And you don't really see African-American in the agricultural work. You see majorities are heavily populated Latinos' (Valdez, personal interview, 2017)

Essentially, I argue, as African Americans' labor was no longer desired, they got harassed, policed, and forced out of the city, while Mexicans were recruited for agricultural labor and pushed to live in racialized spaces of Pasco. The presence of our Indigenous ancestors in parts of what is currently the US dates back to pre-colonial times when people would move freely across space in search of survival and/or to trade goods. Then, at the conclusion of the Mexico-US War, the US drew its border, claiming sovereignty and ownership of over half of Mexico's territory with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (TGH) of 1848 (González 2000)/ These lands were not empty and the treaty indicates that Spanish descendants (Mestizos and Criollos) should be granted US citizenship, and suggests that the Indians should be eradicated (Castillo 1992). Recalling arguments from chapter three, this represents the depth of the modernizing/de-Indianizing project of the colonized Mexican state. Then, the Mexican Revolution of 1910

organized and led by Indigenous peoples in Mexico with the slogan Tierra y Libertad (*Land and Freedom*) served as an excuse for the US to frame Mexico as dangerous, inflicting fear that violence due to their revolution could spill over to the US (Nevins 2002). Limiting their entrance below the already established immigration patters is what set up Mexicans to become the iconic "illegal" immigrant (Ngai 2004). After that, when the US was in economic trouble, Mexicans were blamed and even citizens of Mexican descent got deported as was the case during the Great Depression in the 1930s (Alanís Enciso 2017) and in 1954 with the operation wetback (Nevins 2002), and more recently, soon after the 2008 housing market crush under Obama who earned the title of "Deporter in Chief" (Valencia 2017).

However, when the US was in need of workers for the agricultural industry, Mexicans were (and continue to be) constructed as ideal for this seasonal arduous physical labor (Nevins 2002) (Hahamovitch 1997) Such was the desire for modernity that in 1942, the Mexican government facilitated the recruitment of agrarian communities to come and work in the US as braceros. It was believed that working in the US would provide Mexicans with skills to cultivate in a modern, de-Indianized, industrialized, and efficient manner (Bonfil Batalla and Dennis 1996). This program, contributed to the increased presence of agrarian Mexican communities in the US (Calavita 1992) (E. Gamboa 1987). The simultaneous recruitment of their labor and the legal illegality of their presence constitute the production of the status of geographies and moments of legal death.

In the case of Pasco, the irrigation system attracted more settlers into the area. White citizens could acquire stolen farming lands almost for free; then they hired Mexicans to do the strenuous seasonal farm labor. As Mayor Watkins himself recalls, his parents bought a 160-acre

farm north of Pasco in 1966 where they cultivated asparagus, a very labor-intensive crop which requires consistent/reliable temporary labor, and so they recruited Mexican workers,

> 'Most of the folks that picked for him [my dad] were Texas residents, from the green carded. He liked citizens. It was less drama to worry about things…. He actually had a *hire guy* – his second in command – was a guy, primo Gallardo, and he had connections with the [Mexican] people that he would recruit, and so he was about consistency. From year to year invite the family back' (Mayor Watkins, personal interview, 2017)

While Mayor Watkins emphasizes that his parents did not hire "illegals," that they hired Texas residents – Mexicans who held green cards – the holders of green cards were/are immigrants, no citizens. Furthermore, Mayor Watkins explained that his parents were probably the exception in not hiring "illegals." Meaning the recruitment for the Mexican labor overpassed the authorized limited migration quotas and so Mexican immigrants, have been forced into legal death as they are recruited and hired with or without documents. He says,

> 'We have so many folks who were in the country because of jobs, I mean asparagus pickers. And my dad maybe was, I like to think, an *idealistic case* where he preferred not to have illegals, but I think there are a lot of farmers, who probable know and [hired undocumented people], but it is also a case where a lot of Americans won't do the job. It is backbreaking work and all that' (Mayor Watkins, personal interview, 2017)

A "hire guy" (someone who would hire for his dad) as the mayor indicates above, was an effective strategy in bringing Mexicans from the South to the Northwest in order for them to perform the backbreaking, low paid and racialized jobs for which they were hired regardless on whether they were documented. Once some Mexicans were recruited into the area in the 60s and 70s, they would invite their family and community to join, as was the case for some of my participants. This shows the role of networks and community – essential for social life practices - in pulling immigrants into the US northwest.

> '*Me vine para acá con mis hermanos... Dos de mis hermanos se avían venido con unas personas que contrataban trabajadores. Y ellos me dijeron que me viniera. Que acá había mucho trabajo*'

> ‘I came here with my brothers ... Two of my brothers came with some people who hired workers. And they told me to come. That there was a lot of work here’ (Juan, personal interview, 2017)

Besides networks and jobs, intense migration raids in the South also contributed to migrating north to join previously recruited family members,

> ‘*Nos venimos para acá [de California] porque la migra estaba bien dura allá. Me acuerdo que el patrón nos escondía entre los Filipinos cuando la migra iba a los files donde estábamos trabajando. Y de ese modo, no nos llevaban; pensaban que éramos Filipinos (risas). Y luego, los hermanos de mi esposo – que se habían venido porque los invitó una persona que ocupaba trabajadores acá – ellos nos dijeron que acá estaba mejor; que acá no había migra. Y pues sí, acá estuvo mejor. Como casi no había Mexicanos, pues no venía la migra’*

> ‘We came here [from California] because the immigration was very hard there. I remember that the boss would hide us among the Filipinos when the immigration agents arrived to the files where we were working. And in that way, they did not take us; they thought we were Filipinos (laughs). And then, my husband’s brothers - who had come because they were invited by a person who occupied workers here - they told us that it was better here; that there was no migration here. And so yes, it was better here. As there were almost no Mexicans, the immigration agents did not come’ (Rita, personal interview, 2017)

Thus, in essence, many migrated to the northwest where the geographies and moments of legal death were not as intense; and at the same time, networks were increasing to allow for practices of social life. In the case of Gabriel Portugal -- a Mexican national who has worked in the education system of Pasco for many years -- state violence in Mexico pushed him to the US. Then looking for best jobs in agriculture pushed him to the area of the Tri-cities. He says,

> ‘I was born in Nayarit, most [of my] life I lived in Sonora [Mexico]. Even in Sonora the violence and closing of the schools pushed me a bit to come to try to get an education over here. And I came in the 70s. I was in Arizona, then I moved to Washington. I worked in the migrant camps and labor camps in Phoenix, AZ in Limones, toronjas – all the citrus. Then we wanted to find jobs as far as apples and trying to figure out what was best and so that is how I came to this area’ (Portugal, personal interview, 2017).

Thus, while some of the first Mexicans immigrants recruited for railroad and farms of the US Northwest were Chicanos (US born of Mexican descent) from Texas as per (E. C. Gamboa

and Leonard 2000), I argue that many were Mexican immigrants – some with green cards and some without documents – who were living in the south. "Hire guys" (recruiters) to fulfill demands for newly created seasonal farm labor, intense immigration raids, violence in Mexico, newly created networks, and search for better farm jobs are some of the contributing factors as for why Mexican people migrated to the US northwest. Currently, the Mexican community and strong networks in Pasco continue to be a crucial factor as to why Mexicans migrate to this city – both from the south and from Mexico directly. As such, the Mexican/Latinx community is exponentially growing in cities like Pasco; but similar to African Americans, they are also spatially segregated in this city, in large part through class, race and legal criminality leading to geographies of legal death.

Made poor and criminal by legal death:

"The east is seen as poor, which, you know, downtown and east is probably seen as dangerous."

(Valdez, personal interview, 2017)

Just as the Hanford construction jobs designated for African Americans were framed as temporary positions, contemporary agricultural jobs designated for Mexicans are also framed as temporary/seasonal, unskilled, and are poorly paid. Through the logics of racialized capitalism, similarly (but equally) to African Americans before them, Mexicans have been constructed as seasonal and temporary workers but with a new layer of criminality by the law making them illegals and deportable. This way, their presence can also be made temporal and flexible. As indicated above, they can be (and have been) deported any time their labor is no longer deemed necessary. Such legal practices are powerful in sustaining capital accumulation via dispossession of some people's freedom, rights and life. Through the law, Mexicans are forced to take low-waged agricultural jobs that produce accumulation of wealth for the rich, the city and country in

general. Simultaneously, the so-called undocumented Mexican immigrant is made poor – their condition is indeed political as it results from deliberate legal acts (Cacho 2012; Lawson et al. 2018). The east side of Pasco continues to be where mostly poor people of color are forced to live, and its devaluation and abandonment persists.

As Mayor Watkins himself indicates,

> 'To this day, if you drive to east Pasco, you will find the houses have less curbs and gutters, and less street lights' (Watkins, personal interview, 2017)

In addition, according to Portugal, also downtown Pasco, which currently is often considered part of the east side (or part of the "old" Pasco) is being neglected/abandoned in comparison to the west side of Pasco where about 66% identify as white, 21% as Hispanic/Latinx, and 2.8% as African Americans (2010 census data). He says,

> 'The biggest challenge [in Pasco] is coming together for projects where it's not just.... the west side. Because if you travel in Pasco, you have the west side, then you have downtown, and you have the east side. The west is booming with businesses, and nice, clean. A couple years ago here in downtown we were asking how come the sweeper - *la barredora,* you know, is supposed to go every Thursday, anyway, so it's being kind of like neglected. But we are pushing for that. So, our challenge would be getting city council folks that can look at a global city, not just one area, or favor one group' (Portugal, personal interview, 2017)

Indeed, there is favoritism and racism by those who wield biopolitical power to determine whose lives are worth protecting/enhancing and who should be let die – abandoned, disinvested. Resources -- and thus life chances -- are unevenly distributed.

The east area, where fewer resources are allocated, is more affordable for racialized Mexicans whose labor serves to sustain the area and enhance the life of the white middle class in the tri-cities. Similar to African Americans but with an additional layer of illegality – and thus of legal death - Mexican immigrants are made poor and forced to live in east Pasco. Being poor is framed as dangerous; and the poor are seen as producing dangerous, devalued spaces; these perceptions of danger, in turn, serve to justify disinvestment, policing and controlling them.

As Nikky Torres, daughter of Mexican immigrants and current president of the Tri-Cities Hispanic Chamber of Commerce indicate,

> 'East Pasco is where most of the poor neighborhoods and Latino communities live... And it was predominantly African American but now it is Latinos. And you look at the housing prices. That is a great depiction of the poor to not so poor neighborhoods, is by the housing prices. And you will notice the housing cost over there a lot more cost effective – price wise -- because like the poorest families going, living there. And then in the west is… the more educated. But still the housing prices in Pasco, I think, are less than Richland because you are looking at Richland and the newer development and Kennewick, that is a lot more' (Torres, personal interview, 2017)

Currently not only is the east side heavily populated by Latinx (over 90%), but also downtown (over 75%). As such, downtown Pasco is framed as the dangerous area and such danger is supposedly supported by statistics; as Metzger explains, "… around downtown - which really isn't east or west and is sort of in the middle part - if you look at statistics that are highest crime area, if you will, from the rest of the city…" (Metzger, personal interview, 2017).

While division and criminalization of space and people within Pasco goes hand in hand with race and class, overall the whole city is framed as the most dangerous and poor of the three cities, after all Pasco is where most Latinxs live overall -- about 70% -- and where African Americas were forced to live. According to chief Metzger, although statistically, Pasco is probably the safest of the three, its bad reputation is still attached to the gangs and crimes of the 1980s. In a Tri-Cities news article dated September 25, 2017, Dorsey confirms that Pasco is relatively safer that Kennewick as revealed by an FBI report of 2016 crime statistics showing that Kennewick maintained higher property crimes in a comparison of the Tri-Cities, and its violent crimes are slightly higher than Pasco's – with 183 in Kennewick, and 148 in Pasco (Dorsey 2017). Nevertheless, Pasco is perceived as most risky, violent, criminal. There are racialized "jokes" constructed about Pasco among Whites. As the mayor himself recalls,

> ‘Um... this is gonna be, this is gonna be, this is gonna be racial. But there, the joke slash not joke. So I am sitting at work[21] one day and a guy goes ‘so you live in Pasco?’ [I said] ‘yea’ [he asked] ‘Is it safe there?’ and I go ‘yeah, is safe there’ [he said] ‘hum, I heard that you can actually drive down the street and your wheels can be stolen from your moving vehicle’ (Watkins, personal interview, 2018)

Such racialized jokes reflect the penetration of the logics of racial capitalism and racialized discourses in everyday social relations in the tri-cities. Jokes about Mexicans as skilled stealers serve to further criminalize them in order to justify denial/dispossession of life chances – freedom, mobility, fair wages, social benefits – as well as practices of policing the spaces they are forced to inhabit. Further, their mere presence and important role in the economy is also obscured. This erasure is political and allows the state to hide the magnitude of injustices practiced through the power of the law by and for whites.

When I asked Mayor Watkins: ‘Given that agriculture is the most important industry for Pasco, who does the agricultural labor here in Pasco?’

He said,

> ‘They are the kinds who graduated Pasco High School [PHS] five years ago. They are the Kennewick kids who graduated high school. The locals! But there are more folks from California coming up as well’ (Watkins, personal interview, 2017).

While perhaps some former PHS students, probably Latinx descendent dropouts, do work in the fields and agriculture industry in general, there was no mention of the important role of Mexican immigrants and contracted Mexican workers in farm work. Nevertheless, his own parents hired Mexican workers for it; but he continues to emphasize that the workers are “locals.” When I asked if growers might be bringing Latino/a workers under the H2A visa program to fulfill agricultural labor shortages, Mayor Watkins indicated that he did not know

[21] Watkins works 75% as a computer engineer/technician in Hanford. His Mayor position is 25%. This happened in Hanford.

about that. Nevertheless, the number of contracted workers brought under the H2A visa program has been greatly increasing in the last few years. According to (Weath 2018) in the state of Washington there was an increase of 35% in 2017, 15% in 2016 and 30% in 2015. However, Mexicans are not only erased from their important role in Pasco's economy and thriving of the city, they are also erased from historical public records and facilities. Again, such erasure is and produces material consequences; it justifies denial of life chances through the law and the ongoing production of legal death.

This is not their museum - erasure of the newly racialized populations:

I visited the Franklin County Museum, located in the middle of downtown Pasco, during the summer of 2017 to better understand (and learn about) the history of Pasco and of the Latinx/Mexican community there. Sadly, there was (or is) not a single mention of the Latinx community at all! The African American community is basically absent, too. There is mention of one Chinese business owner and his brief biography of success. Overall, the historical exhibition features white males, and downstairs (in the basement) was a new exhibition showing the important role of women in WWII. The history of Pasco is chronologically displayed: starting with the Lewis and Clark's "expedition" to the West passing through what is now Pasco – that is the only time that Natives are briefly mentioned - and ending with WWII and the irrigation system. This system, in combination with relatively newly stolen lands westward and the desire for accumulation of wealth, produced the need for more exploitative labor and thus the increased presence of the Mexican people as one racialized, exploitative workers in the US.

During my visit, the new archivist - a white male - in the museum mentioned that the people from the Mexican bakery "Vieras" just one block down the road told him that they have not been to the museum and that, in fact, most of the people who visit the museum are white.

When I asked the archivist, why do you think that is the case? Why Latinos do not visit the museum? He said,

'Well, this is not their museum!' There is no representation of them or of any other culture of Pasco, he explained. Indeed, my extensive family and Mexican immigrant community started arriving to Pasco over 40 years ago and none of them have ever been inside the museum. I arrived to Pasco 22 years ago, and 2017 was my very first visit to this place. It was strange to be in a historical, educational building, located right in the heart of downtown Pasco. In this part of town, not only do more than 75% of the population identify as Hispanic, but the majority of businesses are owned and/or run by Mexicans. The Vieras Bakery is only one of dozens of Mexican businesses around the area. In all these businesses and even in the hospital, clinics, doctors' offices, and schools nearby, most people speak Spanish and yet, in the museum, no one was speaking Spanish; there were mainly only Whites visiting and working there. It felt like an exceptional island where I did not belong, especially when I got "the look," Torres mentions in the second part of this chapter. I was seen as a stranger by some white visitors, as if they were surprised and bothered to see me there and were suspicious of my presence. And I just wanted to leave. I wondered, what am I doing here? Why there was nothing representing us - Mexicans, Latinx, or other people of color – in this place? I did not belong in - nor did I connect to – this specific place. Then I realized that in the Museum – as in most institutions - all of the board members are white (FranklinCountyHisotricalSociety.org). As such, the history of Pasco – as in many other places in the US and other parts of this continent – has been constructed by and for the White community; erasing the mere presence, contributions, and lives of people of color from historical records in the museum and in local newspapers. I analyzed the Columbia Basin News for the 1950s as that was the time when the agricultural sector was growing in the tri-cities

and when Mexicans began to be intensely recruited for this labor. However, there was not a single reference to this population. Such erasure serves to deny and prevent some from making and feeling deeper connection (and belonging) to the place and to the historical making of the city. As such, the erased are deprived from claiming belonging and from making interconnections to the common history of the multiple groups whose labor has been exploited for the benefit of some. In addition, erasure helps to construct (and validate) racialized discourses to justify laws and policies as economically deemed necessary, either: for the recruitment of temporary labor, and/or to criminalize the same populations in order control and pacify or to get rid of their presence. Currently, Mexicans continue to be erased from some spaces and historical archives in places like Pasco – where they account for over 70% of the population. At the same time, they are framed as the undeserving and criminals in order to justify laws that produce illegality, deportability and flexible disposable labor through geographies and moment of legal death.

Although the most common job Mexican immigrants perform is agriculture and food processing jobs in this area – they also work in the service sector, in places like cleaning companies, hotels, restaurants and stores generally located in Kennewick and Richland - in areas where most cannot afford to live given the poorly compensation for their arduous labor. This way, their labor enables the rich to get richer and benefits the customers who pay a low price for much of their food; while their labor and presence is blurred and disconnected from the privileged consumer and investor. In essence, Mexican immigrants serve the rich in their wealthy, "developed," areas while they are coarse to live in the most neglected, policed, and criminalized areas of Pasco.

Furthermore, as indicated above, most businesses located in downtown Pasco are Latinx/Mexican businesses. And precisely, these businesses are blamed for the lack of city (and private) investment in the area. Torres and Valdez – who represent and support the Hispanic businesses - mention that too many Mexican businesses do not make it attractive for investors and other type of consumers. They agree that the city needs to attract investors in order to modernize downtown by having other types of business and other clients. Rather than blaming the logics of racial capitalism supported by the law, the presence of Mexican businesses – especially those that serve Mexican costumers - are seeing as barriers to "development" and as the reason why the area is poor. They say,

> 'So Pasco, in particular, I mean we are.... probably the poorest - right? Of the cities in terms of income. And we get less investment, so I think that's one of the things that -- you know? -- the city is trying to revitalize downtown Pasco' (Valdez, personal interview, 2017)

> 'We have trouble attracting some investments… The city has issues with infrastructure too because they had a hard time investing, getting monies, and attracting businesses. So that's one of their [the city's] big pushes' (Torres, personal interview, 2017)

Basically, it is believed that private businesses, private investment will "develop" and thus "save" downtown Pasco. But it is not just any type of business. Actually, too many Latino businesses is framed as part of the problem,

> 'For downtown, the other thing too is that if you go down there, it's mainly all Latino businesses. So they [the city] are trying to diversify that as well. They want to attract different businesses down there. They don't just want to have aaall of these taco shops. I don't mind that (laughs) but you know' (Torres, personal interview, 2017)

Providing an example of the kind of Latino businesses they were talking about, which are more than just taco trucks, Valdez mentioned, "Or other, quinceañera stores… dresses."

And Torres agreed,

> 'Or quinceanera stores también (*also),* you know. Yea, that's mainly what is down there. You're correct. So, they want to make it so that it's inviting to other people that are…

> [white, wealthy and] want to come from Richland or wherever' (Torres, personal interview, 2017)

It seems that *de-Mexicanizing* -- which I argue is a new version of de-Indianizing in the context of the US -- of downtown Pasco is perceived as a way to modernity, renewal, and progress. De-Mexicanizing by attracting other business and people from Richland – the whitest and wealthiest of the three – supports capitalist urban development and investment which usually results in displacement of impoverished people of color. This way, it maintains white supremacy through the exercise of bipower. While having a wide variety of tacos is supposedly what Mayor Watkins finds so valuable about the culture of Pasco, they do not want too many of them. While Mexican food is framed as exotic and tasty for the white consumer, not too many taco trucks are required to fulfill this desire. After all the majority of the clientele for tacos in Pasco, continue to be Mexicans. Further quinceañera shops, are not desirable because the consumers are *only* Mexicans; such stores enable Mexicans to practice their traditions of celebrations that combine spiritual, social and cultural, but these are of no value for the white middle-class society.

For Valdez, eliminating some Mexican businesses is not a big deal. He says,

> 'I think they [the city] just want to diversify. I mean you know, like there isn't.... there's a few Mexican restaurants and they would like different kinds of restaurants. There's not like a coffee shop, like a nice coffee place where people can sit down and drink coffee and work' (Valdez, personal interview, 2017)

And who sits and works in a coffee shop? Obviously, these coffee shops and diversity of restaurants and business will not be for the current community of mostly Mexican immigrants in Pasco, but rather to serve the modern white middle class; thus some businesses (namely, food) can survive and be seen as valuable in gentrifying areas because they're "exotic" and/or palatable to a white consumer base, while others (e.g, quinceañera stores) that are tied to an explicitly Mexican or Latinx clientele have to be excised (along with Latinx people themselves) to make

the likely future gentrification process complete. This way, colonization, displacement and de-indianization (de-Mexicanization in the US context) of Mexicans continue in the US.

Subject Formation of Mexican populations in the US

As indicated in chapter 3 - in Mexico the strive for modernity and de-Indianization of agrarian/campesina(o) communities continues since colonization. Indigenous ways of being and knowing continue to be devalued. These same communities are marginalized and many are displaced as result of ongoing modernity projects leading to structural polices, drug wars, displacement and dispossession. Simultaneously, entrance to the US is denied coercing many to taste death at the colonizing and deadly US-Mexico border. Those who survive face further marginalization, oppression and vulnerability in the US due, in large part, to US the immigration law, forcing them into geographies and moments of legal death in some cities of the US. While in Chapter three I analyzed subject formation through processes of oppression in Mexico, in this second part of chapter four, I provide an analysis of subject formations through practices that control, devalue and produce vulnerability and geographies of legal death as experienced by Mexican immigrants in the US.

State criminalization and intimidation

On June 27th 2018 at 4 a.m., Mirna Gomez - a 49-year-old woman - was detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Agents while on her way to work in a Cherry orchard north of Pasco. Mrs. Gomez was then used as hostage to capture her son, Leo Gomez, who was brought to this country at age of one in year 1991 and had been convicted of DUI in 2011 soon after he turned 21. Rather than just opening the case – which an immigration judge had closed deciding not to pursue deportation, according to Leo Gomez' attorney - ICE used his mother as bait. Leo Gomez surrender after receiving a phone call by ICE from his mother's

phone indicating that he had until 3 p.m. to turn himself in or his mother would be sent to the Tacoma detention center (Probert 2018b). Driving under alcoholic influence is framed as enough reason to hunt undocumented immigrants all their life and be removed at any time even if it requires getting into the most intimate arenas of the family. A DUI placed Gomez in the list exceptional criminals that must be removed for the good of the population even if such act produces deep wound in the most sacred relations – that between mothers and children.

Inside the US women have been used as hostages to remove their own children by framing the children as criminals, while at the US-Mexico border children are also being removed from their parents by criminalizing the parents (mainly mothers) for seeking a safer place for their own children. Almost 2,000 children were removed from their parents at the US-Mexico border between April 19 and May 31st 2018 (Gonzales 2018). Separating children from parents is one of several bordering enactments and the worst and most punishing practice being used both at the border and across space in the US. Often, it is fear of losing their children that propels parents to find a safer and better place for their kids, and yet, at the border and in the US that is precisely what is happening. This represents geographies and moments of legal death: permanent at the border and momentarily within some cities of the US. The state is giving a "lesson" so others would learn and not to attempt to come. To further punish women and children, the Trump administration has modified the qualification for refugee status. As of June 11 2018, Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced that claiming domestic abuse and fear of gang violence did not qualify people for refugee status (Benner and Dickerson 2018). Nevertheless, domestic abuse and gang violence mostly affect women and children from the so-called "undeveloped" countries. At the same time, white supremacy rules are modified to deny them asylum status and keep them out of this country, intensifying - this way - the border as a

space of permanent legal death. Those who stay without permit in the US become deportable, vulnerable workers that help sustain capital accumulation as they face geographies and moments of legal death.

The arrest of the Gomez in Franklin County is one of many cases. With support from the Franklin county police and through various tactics that produce moments and geographies of legal death - including traffic stops, knocking on homes' doors, raids at agricultural workplaces and at local grocery stores - ICE has taken dozens of people from Pasco and surrounding agrarian towns, into custody including some with clean records. Such operations convert certain spaces such as roads, workplaces, stores, and homes into momentary spaces of legal death.

Apart from serving as a spectacle to remind undocumented immigrants of their vulnerable status (De Genova 2013), such practices inflict great panic and sadness, and affect the everyday life of the Latinx communities in the US. It is also a reason to organize, support and protect each other. In Pasco, News and updates about the aggressive raids circulated through different media and phone texts. Phone calls took place among the community and family members to advice each other to be cautions, have a backup plan and offer each other's support. Some of my community members stop working for a few days to avoid encounters with ICE on their way to work or in their workplace.

Several growers were concerned about losing their employees during the peak of the harvesting season. According to some of my participants, at the end of the working day on June 11, 2018 and for the rest of the week, a few supervisors drove to the nearest road intersections to verify that there weren't ICE agents on the roads waiting to trap workers driving back form work. As such road intersections to and from agricultural, seasonal, exploitative work places can become geographies of legal death; where those denied the right to have rights have higher

possibility of encountering implementers of the law. It is then that their status is highlighted, and legal death embodied, experienced, felt. Often, those who need their labor use their legal privilege and act as temporary allies in order to protect their own business. Another one of my participants – undocumented Mexican immigrant herself -- who works in the office of a big growing company near Pasco, told me that her boss asked that they (the office staff) should keep the office door closed during waves of immigration rides. They were instructed not to open the door or share any information or files from the workers to ICE officers. Instead, if ICE officers show up, the office staff is supposed to call the owner so he would talk to ICE and fly in, if needed. As (Calavita 1992) indicates, the state often makes exceptions in the immigration law to benefits powerful rich growers. Rather than criminalizing the employers or blaming the immigration law, the law works to protect the rich privileged employers. The workers are blamed and punished for being legally "illegal." This way, experiencing geographies and moments of legal death becomes framed as the immigrant's responsibility; and the immigrant worker is to thank the "allied" grower.

Indeed often, Mexican immigrants themselves internalized their status as undocumented. (Gleeson 2010) calls this internalization, legal consciousness. While we (Mexicans) know that we are not criminals, often the idea that we are in the "wrong" place becomes engrained in our consciousness, that we are not supposed to be here -- not because we are uninvited guests in the land of a diverse group of Native Americans -- but because it is believed that this is the land of the white, US normalized citizen, who did not authorize our entrance. This works as a form of governmentality as per (Foucault et al. 2003) and pacification as Mexican immigrants must control their behavior, especially in spaces and moments of legal death. Rather than seeing the strong role of the US in producing our displacement to begin with, most tend to blame only

Mexico's corruption (as it is the dominating discourse) for why we have been (and continue to be) displaced and forced to come to a place where we are not welcomed by the dominant, colonizing group; or better said, were we are welcomed and incorporated but as cheap, deportable labor to sustain capitalist accumulation. Indeed, as De Genova (2013) indicates, the majority does not get deported because our labor is needed and desired to sustain ongoing accumulation. While deportability serves as intimidating spectacles reminding immigrants of their vulnerable removable status (De Genova 2013) and normalizing the idea of legal citizenship (Walia 2014; Rygiel 2010). I argue that deportability also serves to produce temporary geographies of legal death because being undocumented is only one of multiple identities. Such identity is highlighted only in certain spaces; some of which are permanent and others are not. Permanent geographies of legal death include national borders, most government offices and airports. In this case, most immigrants try to avoid such spaces.

Other geographies of legal death are produced on specific periods of time mainly during deportation rides and political discourses that target Mexican immigrants. In this case Mexican immigrants are forced to make arrangements in their intimate everyday life activities when deportation raids are active. One of my participants indicated that soccer practices for her 11 year old were cancelled to prevent exposing the parents to possible encounters with ICE during the most resent high wave of deportation raids. People avoided going to local grocery stores where they were told that ICE was roaming in civilian clothes and driving SUVs. Basically, many try to stay home and avoid the street as much as possible. Home was the safest place in this case. One of my dreamer participants told me over the phone, "This is scary and very sad. Families are being separated"

Besides ICE's active deportation raids, the constant threat resultant from Donald Trump's racist rhetoric towards Mexicans also represents moments of legal death. When Donald Trump was elected and took the presidency, many were extra cautious and even children were afraid that their parents would be deported. An elementary teacher told me that children could not concentrate on learning and would constantly ask her if their parents were going to be deported. She would tell the kids that she would not allow for that to happen. Most of my participants took immediate caution by having plans on what to do in case of deportation. While, ironically, Obama is the president that deported more people (mostly Mexicans) than any other president, it is Trump who has inflicted more fear because of his racialized rhetoric against Mexicans and other groups of people including from mostly Muslims countries, Central-America and Haitians.

Fleeing US's sponsored poverty and high violence in Mexico (and Latin America), thousands of Mexican (and Latin Americans) risk their life trying to cross a deadly buffer zone dividing Mexico and the US we call the US-Mexico Border -- again, a zone of permanent legal death. Every year, hundreds die trying to cross and yet no one is deemed guilty for such deaths (Nevins 2007). As (De Genova 2004) indicates, crossing this border is a form of thug apprenticeship program that prepares those who survive -- mainly the young and strong -- for permanent servitude in benefits of the rich in the US. Indeed, the original people central and south of this continent were made first a homogeneous group of Indians by the colonizers (Aldama 2001), then de-Indianized mestizos by the ruling Spanish descendant class in Mexico (Bonfil Batalla and Dennis 1996), and when crossing the border, they are made the deportable, illegal alien (De Genova 2013), incorporated in order for them to provide cheap labor even as their movement and freedom is denied and controlled by the law (Cacho 2012) in geographies and moments of legal death – permanent and temporary.

Furthermore, the status of illegality also places Mexican immigrants in state of permanent exception. Not only their deaths in the US-Mexico border – a space of permanent legal death - happen with impunity as no-one is deemed guilty for it, but also their killing in the US is often justified by their supposed free and reckless decision to be in this country "illegally" as was the case of a Mexican immigrant who was killed for committing the "crime" of allegedly throwing rocks at the police, or better said, the crime of being in a brown body – another space of legal death. At 35 years of age, Antonio Zambrano Montes, a Mexican immigrant farm worker, was shot 17 times by three police officers on February 10, 2015. Videos taken with cell phones and uploaded to the internet captured Zambrano Montes throwing rocks at the police before running across an intersection near downtown Pasco where he was shot and killed [22]. The following weekend, over 500 people marched in protest of this atrocity connecting this event to the killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson a year before (Victor 2018).

Although I did not directly ask about this case in my interviews, most of my city leader participants brought this issue when talking about some of the biggest concerns of the Pasco residents. They refer to this case as having generated distrust from the Latinx community towards the police. Similar to mayor Watkins' interpretation of this issue, most of the leaders tried to justify this murder by highlighting how complex the issue is/was. According to Mayor Watkins,

> "I think it is the ultimate American… complicated story. Sometimes people want to make things really simple, but there is a case of a man who was in this country *illegally* with daughters who, I believe have gone to CBC or graduated CBC, *presumably* American citizens (the emphasis is his and mine). He… was estranged from his wife, had mental and physical issues, maybe diabetic. Also he was doing meth. He is on meth and throwing rocks at cars passing by. He had been in a frequent flyer for a mental health problem. Ah… so the early video looks like they shoot him on the back, but that was not

[22] According to the Washington Post's Fatal Force Project, 995 people were shot death by the police in 2015. While 38% of the total the US population are people of color, over 50% of those who were killed by the police were people of color: mostly Blacks and Hispanic/Latinx.

> the case, it was he turned and threw a rock and then they shoot him. There is that, that thing." (Watkins, personal interview, 2017)

Although probably well intended, Mayor Watkins' account of the "complexity" focuses on devaluing (and even justifying) the killing of Zambrano Montes. Pointing out that Zambrano Montes was "in this country illegally" serves to criminalize and frame as immoral his mere presence (Cacho 2012). Yes the "American" is complicated. When Whites commit crimes, the circumstances are framed as complicated and unique, but when a person of color is the perpetrator, the situation gets generalized and oversimplified, framing us all as criminals by nature. You don't have to look far for evidence of these dynamics. As President Trump himself is famous for doing, including during his first address to the nation on April 14, 2018, when he presented a few specific cases of murder and rape by gangs at the border and then quickly framed all immigrants as dangerous gang members in order to plead for the building of his famous border-wall; which by the way has been partially constructed in the last 30 years (Nevins 2002; Rosière and Jones 2012). As Cacho (2012) indicates, the phenotype - the physical appearance - of whomever committed an action determines whether that action is deemed a crime (Cacho 2012). The legal status of "illegality" is framed as their individual responsibility (Innes 2013); rather recognizing "illegality" has been made by the immigration law and colonizing borders which have, throughout history, targeted certain populations as ideal for cheap labor (Calavita 1992; Ngai 2004). The mayor did not even mention the fact that Zambrano Montes was a farmworker - immigration law made him undocumented and thus ideal for seasonal/temporary farm labor. While targeted groups have changed, the law itself has remained unchallenged and normalized (Cacho 2012; Spade 2011). Further, illegality places Mexicans into a state of exception where state actors can kill them, and yet the victim of that violence would be deemed guilty (Agamben 2005).

Adding to the fact that Zambrano Montes was disabled, sick, and mentally ill, not only further devalues his life, but it is a way to justify his killing, as he was not only "illegal" but also "unproductive" and thus not a good neoliberal capitalist subject. Mentioning that he was a stranger to his wife shows how deep the state gets into the "private" sphere in order for the state to justify – under biopower mode of power – the killing of Zambrano Montes (Foucault et al. 2003). When talking about what is actually constructed as valuable for the US society - education and citizenship - Mayor Watkins hesitates about the credibility of such status: he *believes* the daughters have gone to CBC (Columbia Basin College) and *perhaps* they graduated. Also saying that *presumably* the daughters are citizens implies that the citizenship of the daughters is still in question given the status of the father as "illegal alien." These discourses about Mexican immigrants are of such power that they indeed get reflected in critical legal decisions on matters of life and death.

The Franklin County Prosecuting Attorney Shawn San determined that the three officers involved in the murder - Adam Wright, Ryan Flanagan, and Adrian Alaniz – were deemed NOT guilty of the charge! How could they? Three US male citizens killed an "illegal," already criminal by presence, and thus a threatening body. As such, this was not interpreted as crime but rather as an act of self-defense. As Cacho (2012) states, the phenotype and legal status, not the actions themselves, dictate who is the criminal and who is the hero. The officers felt "threatened" by a brown, Mexican, criminalized, "illegal alien" whose life has no value at all. This person -- who wasn't human enough to be allowed entree into this country (Mignolo and Escobar 2013) -- was threatening the officer's highly valuable human life precisely in relation Zambrano Montez's devaluation of life (McKittrick 2015). This person was supposedly throwing rocks at them (although the videos actually show that he turned and put his hands up) and it took three officers

and 17 bullets to take him down. According to the prosecuting attorney, the officers were acting in self-defense because the rocks represented a deadly threat (Helsel 2015). The makers, interpreters, and implementers of the law are mostly Whites and US citizens. The laws are made, interpreted, and applied in their favor while those made poor through the law are heavily policed, criminalized, and unprotected by the law. This indeed constitutes embodied legal death and mistrust in the state for protection.

Far from feeling protected by the police, the majority of my participants feel threatened. A couple of my participants - who live in the same household - were mistaken and treated as criminals by the police. The police supposedly had the address of a home located near downtown that my participants had just moved into. My participants are a Mexican family and so that was enough evidence for the police to "mistaken" this family for the supposed criminals they were looking for. As Chino indicates,

> '*Ya casi faltaban como dos horas para irnos a trabajar,*[23] *y mi papá se levantó al baño. En eso, mi papá miró muchas luces y que estaban las sirenas prendidas; se asomó por la ventana y vio que venían varios policías en hilerita; que abrieron la puerta del cancel, y pues ya iban a tocar. Y mi papa dijo [pensó] "bueno, pues a lo mejor vienen a dar una noticia de que tengamos cuidado, o algo." Pues no debía nada. Y de repente, cuando empezaron a tocar la puerta bien recio, "Tan, tan, tan!" "¡Abran la puerta, estamos en SWAT*[24]*!" Y que tenían la orden de cateo. Pero esa [orden] nunca la presentaron. Y yo pues escuché. Y mi papá, como el ya se había levantado, pues él me ganó. Y en cuanto el iba abriendo la puerta, yo llegué atrás de él. Y al abrirla, el chota le agarró la mano a mi papá y lo tiraron a la yarda [risas]. Lo tiraron a la yarda, y la yarda estaba mojada - apenas se acababan de apagar los sprinklers. Y mi papá nomas traía puro short y sin camisa, ¡y yo igual! Lo jalaron y lo acostaron ahí. Y luego, uno gordito le dejó caer la rodilla aquí [en la espalda] para ponerle las esposas. Y a mí también me jalaron, y me acostaron igual para el otro lado en la yarda que estaba bien mojada; y pues nos mojamos. Dije, ¿bueno, pues que está pasando?" Y mi mamá pues estaba dormida. Ahí estaba en el cuarto. Y a nosotros nos tenían ahí en el suelo. Mi papa dijo, "Chino, no te asustes, esto es una equivocación." Pero aquellos [policías] ¡con unos riflonones [big rifles] apuntándonos! Mi papá dijo, "Chino, no te preocupes, ¡ha de ser una equivocación!" y mi papá les decía a los chotas "es una equivocación." Y ya finalmente nos levantaron, revisaron la casa y dijeron, "¿alguien mas está en la casa?" Y mi papá*

[23] It was during summer time and they left to work in the apple orchards at about 4 a.m.
[24] Special Weapons And Tactics

dijo "si, está mi esposa, esta dormida, no la vayan a asustar." Y lo más chistoso es que mi mamá, se avía puesto una mascarilla de fresa. Y pues cuando la sacaron del cuarto, mi mamá estaba en la sala así [cubriéndose la cara], y la estaban investigando. Y a nosotros [nos tenían] ¡esposados! Mientras mas se movía uno, ¡mas se te apretaban! Y pues, bien apretadas la teníamos. Nunca me habían puesto esposas antes, hasta esa vez. Y ya, nos pasaron a la sala, y finalmente nos las quitaron las esposas. Y mi mamá estaba ahí, con la mascarilla, no se la avía quitado [risas], y estaba tapada así [con la mano en la frente, viendo para abajo]. Y en eso, mi papá miró a mi mamá y le dijo, "Hoye mija! ¿Te pegaron? ¿Te pegaron? Estas bien?" Y ella dijo, "no es nada, es la mascarilla." Y pues ya se tranquilizo. Y nos empezaron a investigar. "hoye, no conocen a estos?" Y nosotros, "no pues, nosotros que?" Y a la vez, lo que nos ayudó fue que en ese tiempo, todavía teníamos el ID con la dirección de allá de Olympia. Miraron que la dirección pues era de allá. Y ya dijimos, "no pues nosotros apenas llegamos aquí; no conocemos a nadie." Y ya fue donde se calmaron. Y se fueron. A nosotros nos quedaron marcadas las esposas en las manos." Y pues ya, ¿quien iba a dormir? Nos preparamos para irnos a piscar manzana al field'

'It was almost two hours before it was time to go to work, and my dad got up to go to the bathroom. In that instance, my dad saw many lights and that the sirens were on; he leaned out the window and saw that several police officers were coming in line in the sidewalk; they opened the door of the gate, and then they were going to knock. And my dad said [he thought] 'well, maybe they are coming to tell us that we need to be careful, or something.' Well, he owed nothing. And suddenly, when they started to knock on the door very loud, "tan, tan, tan!" "Open the door, we're in SWAT!" And they had the search warrant, but that [order] was never shown to us. I heard, and my dad, because he was already up, he beat me. And as soon as he opened the door, I got behind him. And when he opened it, the cop grabbed my dad's hand and threw him to the lawn[laugh]. They threw him into the yard, and the yard was wet - the sprinklers had just been turned off, and my dad was wearing short, only shorts and no shirt, and so did I! They pulled him in and laid him there. Then, a big police dropped his knee here [on his back] to put the handcuffs on my dad. And they pulled me, and laid me the same on the other side in the yard that was very wet, and so we got wet. I told to myself "Well, what's going on?" And my mom was asleep. She was in the room. And they had us there on the floor. And my dad said, "Chino, do not be scared, this is a mistake" But those [cops] with rifles [big rifles] pointing at us! My dad said, "Chino, do not worry, it must be a mistake!" And my dad would tell the cops "it's a mistake." And they finally got us up, they checked the house and they said, "someone else is in the house?" And my dad said, "Yes, my wife is here, she's asleep, do not scare her. "And the funniest thing is that my mom, had put on a strawberry mask. And when they took her out of the room, my mom I was in the living room like that [covering her face], and they were investigating her. And us [they had us] handcuffed! The more one moved, the more they squeezed you! and so, very tight we had them. I had never been handcuffed until that day. And then, they moved us to the living room, and finally the handcuffs were removed. And my mom was there, wearing her mask, she was not taken off [laughter], and she was covered like that [with her hand the forehead, looking down]. And suddenly, my dad saw my mom and said, "Hoye mija! Did they hit you? Did they hit you? Are you okay? "And she said, it's nothing, it's the mask, and then he calmed down. And they started investigating us "hoye, do not you know

> these people? "And we, "no, how can we?" At the time, what helped us was that at that time, we still had the ID, with the address from Olympia. They saw that the address was from there. And we said, "we just got here; we do not know nobody." And that's when they calmed down. And they left. The handcuffs were marked on our hands." And so then, who was going to sleep? We got ready to go pick apples to the field' (Chino, personal interview, 2018)

As I heard this sad and terrifying story, I could not believe that they still went to work after such traumatizing event of being thrown to the floor, handcuffed and most importantly, being targeted by an automated weapon for several minutes! Then, I realized that they could not complain much to the police. The police were not there to protect them. They were there to incarcerate criminalized Mexicans. As undocumented, they are not protected by the law but they were subsumed to the law (Cacho 2012). In addition, given their extremely low wages, it would be a big economic loss to skip work. Also, it would have mean risking losing their jobs because it was harvesting season and there are more restrictions in regards to missing work during this period.

But also, I wondered: would this have occurred to a white family if they were living in this house? Or would this have happened to this family if they were living in another area - say in a wealthy neighbourhood in Richland? Perhaps the answer is it depends. The reason is that while the white family would have been in a criminalized space, the phenotype of their bodies would be unconnected from the label of criminals; in this case, most likely the police would have had knocked in their door to actually tell them to be careful, as Chino's dad assumed the police was there for. On the other hand, if Chino's family would be living in a wealthy neighbourhood, while the area isn't racialized and criminalized, their appearance is! Their brown body is also a space of legal death. We -- Mexicans -- carry the border in our bodies as various scholars have said (Amoore 2006; Dear and Lucero 2005). The strawberry mask part is comic, but it shows

how untied families are. The husband would probably had believed that the wife had been hurt by the police as the police persecutes poor racialized populations that look like them. In effect, the police were in that area to arrest multiple people, including their neighbours. According to Chino,

> '*Nomas se fueron, y le cayeron al otro vecino al de a lado, y a ése si se lo llevaron -- a él y a una mujer -- si se los llevaron a ellos'*
>
> 'As soon as they left, they went to the neighbor next door, and they took him - him and a woman – they did take to them' (Chino, personal interview, 2017)

Thus, all of my participants emphasize that they try to avoid at all cost being detained by a police officer or getting into any kind of trouble. For instance, they take extra precautions when driving. While on the road if there is a police by them, far from feeling protected, they feel in danger of getting deported if the police stop them. Especially in counties like Franklin where Pasco is located because it is well known that the local police cooperate with ICE. Mole describes her encounters with the police on the road as follows,

> 'Mejor te detienes y manejas con mas precaución porque te detienes de ir a cortes y eso. Ahorita la gente tiene mas miedo de ir a las cortes porque dicen que según pues te pueden hasta [deportar], ir la migración ahí'
>
> 'You drive with more caution in order to avoid going to court and that. Right now people are more afraid to go to court because it is well know that that they can even deport you, that the migration [officers] can there' (Mole, personal interview, 2017)

Yasi also expresses her fear when driving,

> '*Y cuando estoy manejado también tienes temor, porque dices "y si me para un policía?" Vez que en mucho lugares dijeron… que los policías tenían autoridad de pedir los documentos. Y pues si ellos te dicen, "tus documentos?" Pues, que vas a hacer? y siempre tienes un temor cuando estas manejando'*

> ‘And when I'm driving, you're [I am] afraid too, because you say “¿And if a policeman stops me?” You see, in many places they said ... that the police had the authority to ask for documents. And so if they say, "¿your documents?" Well, ¿What are you going to do? And so you always have a fear when you're driving’ (Yasi, personal interview, 2017)

Such fear is well founded, because it is well known that the local police have cooperated with ICE in the past (Peterson 2012). And in the most resent ICE ride in June of 2018, the Washington Network Solidarity Network revealed that local sheriff Jim Raymond was cooperating with ice in conducting arrests in Pasco and surrounding areas. Indeed, as Torres indicates, while the police says they are not reporting people to ICE, people continue to be deported after going to court,

> ‘The police want people to know that when they get pulled over, to not be scared that they're not going to ask them about their citizenship or their status. They just want their driver's license and their registration. I was like “I hope so!” Because I've also heard from another business owner, who is a client of mine, that her husband was deported at earlier this year in the spring. He had gotten pulled over. He had to go to jail because his license had expired or something. They kept him over the weekend and he went to court. And then, the judge let him go - said, “OK here you go. You're free to go.” And as he's walking out, two gentlemen approached him and asked him if he was so and so and they happened to be ice! And I'm like so ICE got free reign to this...’ (Torres, personal interview, 2017)

Thus, just having an expired license can be a reason to take people to court – and government agency where the undocumented often faces legal death - and then be deported. This is a way to have immigrants well controlled. In effect, Pasco is not a sanctuary city as the chief Metzger explains,

> ‘We are not a sanctuary city. But we do not call immigration. If they call us to assist as they do occasionally for when they are going up to houses or making arrests or whatever, if they ask us to help them, we will. But we do not initiate that, [and this] happens… maybe once a month’ [with a tone indicating that this is rare] (Metzger, personal interview, 2017).

Essentially, while the police supposedly do not initiate deportations, they do cooperate whenever ICE needs their assistance. And this happens about once per month. For chief Metzger,

one time per month doesn't feel like too often. That reflects white privilege as for the Latinx community, every time ICE shows up, it produces material consequences and deep pain. Given the unity of the Latinx community, when this happens, stories are shared and people take extra precaution and are afraid to even ask for the police's services,

When I asked my participants, 'have you called the police department for services? Say, what if someone breaks the window of your car?'

Lilo said,

'!No! si quiebraran mi ventana, simplemente compraría una nueva' (risas)

> "No! If my window gets broken, then I would just go buy a new one." (laugh) (Lilo, personal interview, 2017).

When I asked, if you are in trouble, who would you call first? Most (both documented and undocumented) indicated they would call their family – no one mentioned calling the police.

Even Chief Metzger recognizes this fear. He says,

> 'There's a lot of fear because we have a lot of undocumented people that live in our town and they are afraid that they may not get police services because they're undocumented. Even though we don't ask them for documentation' (Metzger, personal interview, 2017).

Nevertheless, chief Metzger himself indicates above that they assist ICE whenever they are asked to. And it is evident that after someone gets released from the court, it is very likely that ICE will be waiting for them.

In addition, over 50% of the Latinx community do not speak English (it is assumed that most speak Spanish) and so the city has been criticized for their low efforts to provide services in Spanish, in response to that criticism, the local police have been taking Spanish lessons from border patrol agents (Stang 2018). This is a tactic to increase fear and intimidation in the community.

Sadly, not only do the police takes lessons from the border patrol and assist ICE, but also some members of the community, who are guided by racist ideologies, produce moments of intimidation (and threat) against the Latinx community.

Internal bordering: conservative/racist space and people

While most of my participants would not call the police, white neighbours have called the police on some. A Mexican family, who lives on the west side of Pasco, mentioned that lately, a white neighbour frequently calls the police on them with a series of trivial complaints: a barking dog (when the white neighbours have three barking dogs themselves), noise from the Mexican teenager practicing guitar five minutes pass 10:00 pm (a neighbourhood restriction), or even use of their fire pit, which the fire department verified complied with appropriate safety measures. They had just moved out of that neighbourhood in order to avoid further issues with these neighbours. Sadly, this is a form/practice of gentrification, but for this family, having good neighbours crucial. They have had other white neighbours and said that not everyone is racist, that there are some good ones. They hope that the new residents of their previous home, who are mixed with Mexicans and whites, are not experiencing similar problems neighbours.

In effect, one of the first challenges that both mayor Watkins and chief Metzger mentioned during the interview, was budget constraint to fund the high demand for police services in Pasco:

> '…budgets [are the challenge], trying to keep up with high demand for services. We have a lot of people calling us with complains about speeders, for example, traffic issues, some crime issues that they are concerned about…' (Metzger, personal interview, 2017)

As for language, Metzger says,

> '… it tends to be, probably less than 10 % [of the calls] come from somebody that is only Spanish speaking" (Metzger, personal interview, 2017). Nevertheless, about 70% of the residents in Pasco are Hispanic/Latinos and over 50% of them do not speak English, and as Metzger indicates above, the Pasco Latinx community is afraid to request their services. This demonstrates that it is likely that mostly Whites request policing services,

> enacting surveillance and enforcing the internal border and geographies of legal death in Pasco' (Metzger, personal interview, 2017)

As such, Torres refers to the whole tri-cities as a conservative and racist area. She says,

> 'The tri-cities is a very conservative area, very redneck area… [At one point] it was predominantly white and if, you know, if you [as Mexican] were to go anywhere, people would just look at you like, "whoa! where did this person came from? This must be an outsider" (risas). So they [whites] make you feel like an outsider. And it still happens because you still have a lot of those – the old school mentality from some of those people because they are still here in the community - mainly in Richland, and they are older' (Torres, personal interview, 2017)

While Torres perceived the tri-cities as a conservative area, she clarifies that racism takes place mostly in the wealthy city and by whites; when those framed and perceived as "other" are made to feel like outsiders. Further, the more Indigenous one looks the more racism they feel. Torres' daughter experiences that,

> 'My daughter is…more Indigenous looking. She got the darker features and she's a little heavier too. And so if we were to go somewhere – like a store, or a winery, your mercantile place that is... where we are still the minority - she gets the looks' (Torres, personal interview, 2017)

Nevertheless Torres, who has hair highlights and lighter skin, often is not discriminated while her daughter is when they are together even if Torres is not well dressed and her daughter is. Her daughter is the one who gets the looks. This may explain why so many women in my immigrant community have highlights in their hair. While being white and de-Indianized continues to be a goal for many in my community both in Mexico and in the US, having highlights and light skin is a form of de-Mexicanization in the US and sometimes serves as a layer of protection. As a way of passing as white (Harris 1993), which can afford some material benefits.

Passing Harris (1993), or disidentifying (Muñoz 1999), where people can manage their own identity and do not have to identify as either: citizen or undocumented in their everyday life is another practice in my community. Some of my participants mentioned that because their

forehead does not say that they are undocumented. They do not have to tell anyone. As long as he is extra careful when driving, and do not get in any trouble, they feel safe in most places. This was especially true in the case of my dreamer participants who speak the language well and are young. They express that they can "pass." In effect, in our own mixed immigration status communities, we do not see people bases on their legal status, but as so many other identity layers: as friends, comadres, mothers, daughters, paisanas, as one more member of our community, as equal. It is only when immigration raids are taking place that this layer of identity surfaces and worries us all. This is why the spectacle of deportation is effective at those moments. But in the everyday life, other strategies are used because racism is not only felt by non-citizens but also by Mexican citizens since whether someone is a citizen is not in our foreheads either. What is evident is that we look Mexicans and thus illegals and criminals. As such some avoid going to places where they do not feel welcome. Including in gas stations. One of my participants who lives in what is considered "the old Pasco" west of downtown where over 75% are Latinx indicates,

> '*Aquí hay un gasolín que a mi no me gusta ir. El que esta aquí derecho. Porque ahí siempre que voy, llegan a echar gasolina, y traen sus pistolas por fuera, mucha gente, normal así que se ven; otros se ven como muy abismados*'
>
> 'Here there is a gas station that I do not like to go. The one that is right here straight. Because there whenever I go, they stop to get gasoline, and they carry their guns outside, many people, they look like normal; others look like very abysmal' (Yasi, personal interview, 2017)

Nevertheless, while internal bordering, segregation and racism has existed in the tri-cities since its founding, the election of Trump has produced a new wave of racist intensification and thus augmentation of moments and geographies of legal death. This has had a strong effect on children and the overall community. When I asked an undocumented middle-age woman what she thought about the new administration she said,

> '*Este señor echa muchas mentiras acerca de nosotros los Mexicanos, pero lo que duele es que la gente lo cree'*
>
> 'This man lies a lot about us Mexicans, but what hurts is that people believe it'

This woman has a ten-year-old boy who plays soccer in a team formed mostly of children of Mexican descent. Her son has played soccer for four years and she explained that soon after Trump's election, she was sad to hear white boys from opposing teams make racist comments such as, "What are you doing here? Go back to Mexico beaners!" These comments really hurt children; her son gets very sad and now refuses to play sports, but she is trying to convince him by reminding him that he also belongs here; that he should not listen or believe those racist comments.

Further, two of my second-generation immigrant participants who had just graduated from high school in Pasco explained that after the election of Trump, they were very worried for their family and could not concentrate in school. Only one teacher brought up the topic the next day after the election but other than that, no teacher or counselor talked about it as supposedly, these are politics where the school is not allowed to intervene. However, these are politics that deeply and materially affect many and some kids still expressed their politics. They say,

> 'There was this one white kid at my school. The day after Trump won. He wore a T shirt [supporting him] and... it is a school full of Mexicans' (Teresita, personal interview, 2017).

In effect, one of my dreamer participant who attended the same high school told me that some of her white class mates refer the hall by the ESL (English as a Second Language) classrooms where most of the newly arrived Mexican kids hangout as "the beaner hall," and that they make fun of the clothes the newly arrived kids wear. Such acts do produce intimidation not only in school, but also in other places as Teresita explains,

> ‘Everywhere I would go, and I would see a white person, and they had their Trump hats or whatever. I felt kind of like, there are being racist towards me, or towards non- white people because... I do not know, maybe it was all in my head because, but they would give you that look; kid of saying “yea I voted from Trump” and it would kind of make me feel like kind of scared in a way. And then, knowing that I have immigrant parents and all that stuff that was going on about him sending them back. It just made me more worried for them, for my parents, I did not want to be separated from them’ (Teresita, personal interview, 2017).

Thus, the Latinx community, including second generation immigrants feel the burden of the logic of racial capitalism as permeating racist ideologies that influence social relations in everyday life encounters. It is not that Trump produced racism, but he helped bring it more to light in our current era once again. This is important as such racist logics help to justify policies and laws that further enforce geographies and moments of legal death for some.

A second grade teacher in the Pasco Washington School District, where the majority of children are of Mexican/Latinx descent (“Washington State Report Card” n.d.), mentioned that soon after Trump’s election, her young students constantly asked her if Trump was going to deport their parents. In order to decrease their anxieties, the teacher began telling the children that she will not allow the deportation of their parents. Still, she says that the children cannot concentrate; they’re worried about losing their parents.

This fear is well founded. Beginning in 2012, under the Obama administration, there has been increased cooperation between local jails and the federal government to identify undocumented immigrants for deportations in several Washington counties, including Franklin, where Pasco is located (Peterson 2012). Thus, in practice, there has been intense deportation before Trump. However, fear at the intimate level has intensified after Trump. This shows the power of Trump’s racist rhetoric in supporting further biopolitical exclusionary immigration laws, racist encounters, as well as engendering fear and vulnerability in immigrant populations

and expanding geographies and experiences of legal death into schools and onto children of Mexican descent.

Through a biopolitical mode of power, Mexican immigrants have been constructed as the other, the backward, criminal, deportable, and killable in places like Pasco -- a place built via logics of racial capitalism which permeates social ideologies and sustains white supremacy. They have been made illegals by law and incorporated into the US society based on that otherness. As such, Mexicans experience geographies and moments of legal death through everyday encounters, intense policing and violent persecution. These practices instil fear of authorities and are often internalized by the community who in turn modify their daily activities and life. In addition, as explained in Chapter 5, displaced Mexican immigrants bring with them ways of being, living and relating that are rooted in community organizing. They often re-adopt such skills in order to survive and thrive in places made for our failure.

Conclusion:

The tri-cities had been built on the basis of racial capitalism where some groups of people have been made the "other" and incorporated to provide the much needed cheap, temporary, flexible labor for capital accumulation. In this area, space is racialized and race has been spatialized. Such racial practices are supported by white supremacist laws and policies that permeate social organization. Displaced Mexicans are the current radicalized populations and occupy racialized spaces and jobs. In this chapter, I provided a context for Pasco. i) Its historical and current racial political economy from the perspective of some community leaders to demonstrate some of the ways in which white supremacy has been implemented (and continues to be) in some places of the US North West; and to show that Mexicans are the current

'wretched' in these places. Then I discuss subject formation of the Mexican immigrant populations through the perspective of Mexican immigrants – mostly undocumented, but also some second generation young kids – to demonstrate some of the ways in which Mexican immigrants experience racism, othering and geographies and moments of legal death in so many ways including: being killed without impunity, arrested by "mistake" for looking like a criminal, deportations for traffic violations, getting "the looks" that make them feel as outsiders, white neighbors calling the police on them, racism, fear at schools, and intense immigration raids.

Mexicans currently occupy (and reinforce) areas that have been made poor, and constructed as historically dangerous and in need of intense policing. They have been forced to live in specific areas due to being constrained to work in jobs framed as unskilled and seasonal – not only in the fields but also in food processing plants, where fruits and vegetables are sorted processed and packaged - Mexican immigrants also work in the service sector: restaurants, landscape, stores, in hotels, cleaning companies, etc. which provide services, not only in Pasco but mostly in Kennewick and Richland. Thus, Mexican immigrants are essential for the functioning of the tri-cities, the state and the country at large. Nevertheless, they have been made the "other," the "dangerous," "illegal alien," the "possible terrorist," but also have been constructed as ideal for these jobs. In other words, they have been differentially included in the economy as cheap, disposable labor; labor that is pacified via policing, profiling, and constant threat of deportability which forces them into geographies and moments of legal death, but strategies of family support, passing, avoiding places, moving out of certain areas, etc. are only a few that my community practice.

VIDA SOCIAL: TRANSNATIONAL POLITICS OF THRIVING

Chapter 5

Este país es el major país que pude haber encontrado. Yo me siento con una seguridad en este país que yo de por mi, no me iría.

This country [The US] is the best country I could have found**.** I feel so much security in this country that if it were for me, I would not leave.

(Lucero, personal interview, 2013)

Lo que mas me gusta, o mas valora uno es la paz, la tranquilidad, la familia, la gente.

What I like the most of Pasco is the peace, the tranquility, the family, the people.

(Luna, personal interview, 2017)

In this chapter I argue for the significance of radical *transnational politics of thriving* that foreground the importance of affective relations for survival and thriving of marginalized immigrant communities in the US. I draw on feminist scholars who argue for the power emotional geographies in understating how relations between and among people and environments produce embodied emotions (Davidson, Smith, and Bondi 2012) (Thien 2011). (Ahmed 2014) in her analysis of "what emotions do" theorizes the cultural politics of emotions in shaping "… the surface of individual and collective bodies" because emotions make subjects become invested in particular structures. And so, analyzing emotions can help to uncover how unequal power relations are produced and sustained; but also, how the forgotten is producing and experiencing other kinds of space and humanity (McKittrick and Woods 2007; McKittrick 2015). In addition, (Hooks 2008) explains how embodied relations and experiences of care, commitment and love, as well as connection to the land, define where family, community and thus home is. Because as (Thien and Smith 2011) indicate emotions are not internalized, isolated, private feelings; rather, emotions are events that take place-in and through both, real world and real people. While my immigrant community expresses many kinds of emotions which result in relation to immigration law – including: fear of deportation, exhausted for the arduous and

demanding work they have to do in agriculture, sadness for the inability to visit family in Mexico, but also hopeful that one day the will be able to go back to Mexico, etc. -, my work focuses on affective emotions of peace, tranquility, support, connections, and belonging that my community also expresses.

My work reveals that such emotions emerge in what I refer to as *transnational politics of thriving*, described practices that arise from knowledge that have been passed from generation through generations, have been brought by displaced agrarian communities across national borders, have been adapted and readapted to confront new barriers and are rooted in Indigenous core values of relationality, respect, solidarity and reciprocity. Such practices - enacted by racialized Mexican immigrant communities - enable the construction of meaningful life, other kinds of humanity, and thus, of a thriving community in places set for their failure though white supremacist practices which often use emotions themselves (Ahmed 2014) to strengthen fragmentation of the populations, propel normalized discrimination in everyday encounters, support racial capitalism, and enable legal discrimination which forces them into a temporal, spatial and fluid condition of *legal death* (as per chapter 4). Nevertheless, while the state works hard to criminalize, intimidate and persecute the Mexican immigrant populations, these populations are making a place of peace, of tranquility, of family (of relations and connections) in cities set for failure such as Pasco WA in my study.

In this chapter I excavate some of the ways in which such racialized, criminalized and legally discriminated Mexican immigrants enact practices that, not only enable their survival, but also allow them to thrive, to produce and experience place in a meaningful and humane way (McKittrick and Woods 2007). I further explore how this population enacts other kinds of humanity that does not draw on western ideologies about what a human is - consumer,

materialistic, private property owner (McKittrick 2015), but a humanity that draws on meaningful relations of affect, on conviviality, solidarity and respect. I argue that practices that foreground the importance of affective relations and kinship and on celebrations of LIFE are essential for marginalized communities in the production social life and the creation of thriving communities in places set for their failure. Such practices are indeed radical politics and take place at a national, transnational and inter-generational scale. Similar to formally incarcerated people, mostly African American males (and Latinx populations) (Alexander 2012), these radical politics not only enable criminalized Mexican immigrants to overcome conditions of civic death as they find ways to get housing, jobs, education, but also to produce meaningful life. They draw on knowledge that has been passed from generation through generation and has been adopted and readopted in order to confront ongoing and new barriers across time and space. Such knowledge and practices center the community, not the individual because these are informed by core Indigenous values which they counter the values and politics of capitalism and neoliberalism (Luna 2015). This is a form of radical traditions enacted by those denied (and criminalized) by the state both in Mexico and in the US. These radical traditions help them to reject racial capitalist's conditions similar (but not equal) to enslaved African Americans who also drew on knowledge passed on from one generation to the next as they rejected the violent, de-humanizing conditions produced by capitalism (Cedric J. Robinson 2000). Indeed, my participants too – who are mostly undocumented and thus legally discriminated and forced into legal death – have created thriving communities and humanizing relations, in places where they are not supposed to survive, under de-humanizing conditions, and against all odds.

Nevertheless, when it comes to Mexican immigrants, one of my arguments is that we cannot understand migrant's politics and everyday struggles in the US without understanding

their struggles and politics in places of origin. This is important in order to uncover how epistemologies and methods of surviving and thriving travel across time (from generation through generation) and across space (including across national borders). As such, in this chapter, I demonstrate that displaced (un)documented Mexican Immigrants' ongoing practices of communality across national colonizing borders has been essential to reject de-humanizing conditions of racial capitalism and to survive and thrive under conditions set for the failure US cities, such as Pasco. Such intimate, community practices are a radical and transnational politics of thriving. I borrow the term communality from Martínez Luna who describes communality as Indigenous' autonomous organizing of land, work, and fiestas in Mexico. This practice dates back to pre-nation state formation because the state has never served Indigenous communities (Luna 2015). As (Dahl-bredine and Hicken 2008) indicate Indigenous communities continue to practice different ways to relate to each other, to work, time, wealth, technology, the land. They have been playing another game all along by adopting such relations to make them work for them; to fulfill their desire of a meaningful and respectful life. While Martinez Luna (2015), Dahl-bredine and Hicken (2008) focus on Indigenous communities in Oaxaca, I see similar versions of communality and the playing of "another game" -- a game that continues to be "played" by Indigenous communities in Oaxaca and which counters neoliberal values and practices focused on materialism, individualism and abstraction (see Dahl-bredine and Hicken for more details) -- occurring in some mestiza/o (de-Indianized) segregated rural communities in other parts of Mexico. Such practices have been adopted and re-adopted by segregated agrarian communities to create meaningful life in Mexico - in communities such as El Rancho from which majority of my immigrant participants in Eastern Washington migrated (see chapter three).

In turn, such ways of knowing and being, are brought to the US. Mignolo (2012) refers to this as border thinking described as the way in which knowledge crosses borders and expands ways to see and conceptualize the world. With Spanish conquest, Indigenous peoples were forced to learn a new culture, values and language, but to some extend they did not forget their own culture, values and languages (although sadly, some communities have lost their Indigenous languages due to structural processes that force people to only learn the dominant one, Spanish in the case of Mexico). This mixing enabled the broadening of their world views. Further, crossing national colonizing borders, such as the Mexico-US border, forces people into another culture; adding another layer of border thinking. Indeed, according to de Sousa Santos (2012), epistemologies of the south, are also in the north.

As stated in Chapter three, the majority of my participants migrated from the same agrarian community located in Michoacán – the second poorest state in Mexico - which I refer to as El Rancho. Although people in El Rancho have come to believe that they are no longer Indigenous but rather are mestizos due to the de-Indianizing modernizing and nation-state project by those in power in Mexico, my participants continue to center core indigenous values of communality, relationality, respect and accountability in their everyday practices. One reason is that the state is not working to benefit most agrarian communities – including Indigenous and de-Indianized mestiza/o communities such as El Rancho. As a result, these communities continue to govern themselves and build relations, community, solidarity and meaningful life based on knowledge that has been passed from generation to generation and has been adapted and re-adapted to confront new challenges. As Bonfil Batalla and Dennis (1996) indicate, we Mestizos, are more Indigenous than we think – our everyday practices continue to center core Indigenous epistemologies and values (Bonfil Batalla and Dennis 1996). Dahl-bredine and Hicken (2008)

refer to the ways people live as playing a game and indicated that Indigenous communities in Mexico (in Oaxaca) have been playing a different game (from the West) all along; that there is so much to learn from such non-materialistic and non-individualistic way of life. To this I add that mestiza segregated agrarian communities continue to play another game as well - one that is informed by similar core values - both in Mexico and in the US as it is reflected by my immigrant community in the US.

Forced to migrate from El Rancho due - in large part - to austerity programs and the increased violence resultant from the war on drugs, my participants have immigrated to Pasco, WA – a city set for their failure (see chapter four), but also a city where my participants joined other community members. Together they have adapted and re-adapted what I call *transnational epistemologies of thriving* in order to confront new barriers encountered in the US and to create thriving communities in Pasco. Transnational because methods/knowledge/politics of thriving travels and also because ongoing transnational connections, with origin places, inform such politics. Next, I provide some examples on how *transnational connections inform politics of thriving in Pasco***.** Such politics foreground affective relations, celebrations of life, practices of solidarity, conviviality and community.

Transnational Politics of Thriving

Reterritorialization of Citizenship – a communal tool

A lot of the people in my community of Pasco have parents and even grandparents back in El Rancho. However, given the layer of *legal death* produced by the US immigration law in combination with the increased militarization in of the US-Mexico border justified by the war on drugs and terror, many have been trapped in the US. Nevertheless, some community members

who hold US citizenship take citizen children of undocumented community members back to the El Rancho in order for them to connect with their grandparents and the community there. The children get delivered to their grandparents who welcome and care for them, introduce and integrate them to the community, bring them to nearby rivers and ocean, take them horseback riding, feed them with more authentic and traditional food, bring them to church and town celebrations etc. They stay there for a few days or weeks; then the same person, or other community members with citizenship who are returning from El Rancho, bring the children back to the US. The parents send their children to Mexico because they feel it is important for the children to connect, get to know – and spend time with- their grandparents, the place, and the community there. Also, they say it is important for the children to see, experience, and learn how is life in in Mexico – the way in which they (the parents) lived in El Rancho – as a way to pass-on forms of being and knowing from generation through generation.

This practice of citizen members of the community bringing the citizen children of undocumented parent is an important practice of communality, solidarity and reciprocity among community members in the US and in El Rancho. Citizenship goes from being an individual possession to a shared, collective good. Most important, citizenship gets re-territorialized. It becomes a trans-border tool to move between Pasco and Michoacán, the US and Mexico. It becomes a tool to connect children with their grandparents left behind in order to strengthen relations (and community) across generations and colonizing borders enabling also the reinforcement of transnational identities.

Siempre hay algo que celebrar: our affective relations humanize us!

In addition, as explained in Chapter three, everyone was expected to attend fiestas in El Rancho - even the most intimate celebrations such as weddings and quinceñeras (15th b-day celebration) - because these celebrations are inclusive and community centered. These practices have been brought and adapted in places like Pasco. Here any relative and friend can attend a wedding, quinceañera, baptism, birthday celebration etc., and bring extra guests. As one of my participants said when reflecting on the difference between the way in which her Latinx community organizes fiestas, specifically who is invited she said,

> '*A nosotros nos gusta la música fuerte, en español, y como que somos menos delicados; y el convivio, también es como diferente - ¿no? Será la cultura y el costumbre. Como a Juanito [mi hijo] lo invitaron a un cumpleaños unos güeritos. Ellos solo invitan al invitado y dicen que a tal hora empieza y termina. Y uno invita al niño y a los padres y provee comida para todos, y no importa la hora que lleguen y a la hora que se vayan. Y la cultura de ellos es diferente. He mirado que dicen cierta hora y nomas van a proveer algo, y es el invitado nada más específicamente el que va. Y pues así esta uno como desconfiado. [Se pregunta uno]: ¿no quieren hacer Amistad?, ¿No quieren convivir con los papás de los niños y con los niños? Trata uno de conocer con quienes están involucrados tus hijos. Se envuelve uno mas. No nada más dejas a tu niño ahí nomas. Nosotros incluimos a toda la familia. Y la invitación dice para el niño y familia. Igual participan [los papás] y se les plantica, y no nada mas a el niño. Entonces así somos los Hispanos. Por eso tenemos el ritmo de música igual - ¿verdad?'*
>
> 'We like loud music, in Spanish, and seems that we are less difficult; and in the convivio (conviviality), it is also different – no? Perhaps is the culture and the customs. Like Juanito [my son] got invited to a birthday by some güeritos. They invite only the guest and state the time it [the party] starts and ends. One invites the kid and the parents and provides food for everyone, and it does not matter the time they arrive or the time they leave. And their culture is different. I have seen that they say a specific item and that they will only provide something, and it is only the guest superficially who goes. And so in that case one is like untrusting. [One ask oneself]: Do they not want to make friendship? Do they not want to convivir with the parents of the children and with the children? We try to get to know with whom your kids hang out. One participates more. You not just leave your kids there just like that. We include the whole family. And the invitation says for the child and family. The parents also participate in the conversation, and not just the kid. And so that is how we the Hispanics are. This is why we have the same rhythm of music – right?' (Elvira, personal interview, 2016)

Elvira makes a very good point in regards to time. There is not a specific time when a person must arrive or leave the party. As Jaime Martínez Luna indicates, linear time is a construction of the West. Often, a clock does not rule our lives; not in agrarian communities in Mexico; nor in the case of celebrations either. In agrarian communities, what determines our lives' schedules are the cyclical seasons, the rain, sun, moon, and weather; the rooster is our alarm clock. Being tied to a clock is often a lament of disadvantage when living here, in the United States. It is time to celebrate when we are all together, it is time for the celebration to end when all people are gone from the party. Elvira also highlights the importance of inter-generational and inter-family convivencia. *Convivir* is a hard word to translate – the act of convivir includes conviviality, co-existence, being together and enjoing that time as family, as community, as friends who connect; acknowledging each-other, sharing food, and celebrating. Part of convivir is the practice and feeling being included. For the Latinx community, when one family member receives an invitation, it is assumed that the extended family is invited. When a kid is invited, the entire family is invited. As Elvira says, the invitation says that it is for the kid and the whole family. As one of my participants points out,

> '*Nosotros los Hispanos/Mexicanos, estamos viendo haber que evento esta pasando para juntarnos y pasar un buen tiempo'*
>
> 'We, the Hispanic/the Mexicans, are looking to see what event is happening to get together and have a good time' (Nena, personal interview, 2016)

Indeed, this demonstrates that our events continue to be community centered. After all, we, Latinx, have the same rhythm of music, as Elvira says. Parties well attended, are seen as successful celebrations. These show the wealth of friendship and community of that family. Similar to in El Rancho, these practices make all feel included and part of a reciprocal, supportive and extensive community. Indeed, in order to finance large celebrations, people

continue to offer their support and help. When invited to an event, or when a person mentions that they are preparing a big celebration, often people convey that they are there to help; to let them know how they can support/contribute in making this event happen. As Juanita and Nina say, family (and family means extensive networks) would contribute to help make the event happen. The fact of being family, you never say no when they ask for help. While feeling the need to help might seem like a burden, no one mentioned that. Rather, my participants reiterated that people contribute with whatever they can, including with food, or whatever.

> '*Uno de Hispano/Mexicano**,** siempre tratas de cooperar, o si esa familia te pide ayuda, nunca lo niegas. [Tu] cooperas con mucho o poco, con lo que tu tengas. Es como una tradición de buscar padrinos. Es una forma de ayudar a la familia que tiene un evento'
>
> 'One as Hispanic/Mexican, always tries to contribute, or if that family ask for help, you never refuse. You contribute with a lot or a little, with what you have. It is like a tradition of looking for padrinos. It is a way to help the family that has the event' (Antonia, personal interview, 2016)
>
> *'Es muy común que en eventos grandes de familia se coopere uno. Quizá no siempre con dinero, pero llevar algo para compartir. Y me gusta porque se convive y compartimos todos. Yo siento que esto crea algo… mas, como mas confianza, o te sientes como mas en familia. Te sientes bien porque comparte uno. Aprendimos por necesidad o familiaridad. El echo de ser familias, pues ni te piensas. Yo pienso que esta practica a sido muy común*'
>
> 'It is very common that in big family events, one contributes. Perhaps no always with money, but something to share. And I like it because we all share and spend time together. I feel that this creates something… more, like more trust, or our feel like more in family. You feel good because your share. We learned out of necessity or kinship. The fact or being families, you do not think about it. I believe that this practice has been very common' (Nina, personal interview, 2016).

According to Chave, people would not only provide support by making food, but also by mowing the lawn, or renting the portable bathroom, etc. and this makes them the padrinos and madrinas. When explaining how people finance large celebrations Chave and Elvira say,

> '*Pues nos apoyamos, cooperamos, ayudamos. Si uno puede ayudar con comida, pues ya te hago lo que sea, hago sopa, que frijoles, ensalada. Por ejemplo, el sábado pasado, unos fueron padrinos hasta de cortar la yarda. Beto fue padrino del baño portátil, es apoyo. Yo les dije, Beto tráete un baño y me dices cuanto va a costar. Y el dijo, 'oh no,*

pues como no me ocupaste para padrino, quiero se padrino de baño.' Y otro que le pedimos que cortara la yarda, nos dijo que como la novia no le pidió ayuda, quería ser padrino de yarda. Es como no apoyamos. Y como quiera convive uno, se disfruta. A mi se me hace bonito, muy bonito ver esto en todas las fiestas'

'Well we support each other, contribute, help. If one can help with food, well I could make you whatever, I make rice soup, beans, salad. For example, last Saturday, some were padrinos (godparents) eve of mowing the lawn. Beto was padrino of the portable bathroom, in support. I asked him, Beto bring a bathroom and tell me how much it will be. And he said, 'Oh no, given that you did not need me for padrino, I want to be the padrino of the bathroom. And we ask someone else if he could mow the lawn, he told us that because the bride did not ask for help, he wanted to be padrino of the lawn. This is how we support each other. And either way we spend time together in conviviality, is enjoyable. For me, it is beautiful, very beautiful to see this in all the parties' (Chave, personal interview, 2016)

'*En fiestas grandes, pues nos ayudamos unos a otros. Que entre dos o tres ponen la comida, otros ponen el salón, y otros el vestido (si es quinceañera). Ya al último a los padres no se les hace tan pesado el gasto. Así todos disfrutamos de la fiesta y nos sentimos parte de ella. Y ya nos sentimos agusto y contentos. Y eso no une más. En que todos cooperamos y en que estamos asociados. Eso nos une y nos sentimos asociados - hoy por ti y mañana por mi'*

'In big parties, we help/support each other. About two or three people might contribute the food, others the party hall, and others the dress (if is a quinceañera). At the end it does not feel like a big expense for the parents. This is how we all enjoy of the party and we feel as if we are part of that. And thus we feel happy and content. And this unite us more; in that we all contribute/support and in that we are all allied. This untie us and we feel allied – today for you and tomorrow for me' (Elvira, personal interview 2016)

By supporting each-other, affective relations, reciprocal networks and unity grow stronger. Those who provide support – by, for example, contributing towards music, food, etc; and those selected to present one of the many offerings at church - because many of celebrations have a spiritual component - become the madrina/padrino (*godparents)* in relation to the celebrated person. And they become the *compadres/commadres* (co-parents) in relation to the parents of the celebrated person; making them part of each-other's families. This extends family connection, kinship, community, and networks of affect, support and reciprocity because when it is the turn of someone else, a broader community & network offers their support. This makes of Pasco a place with large networks and a place of family - family is made in part through affective

relations of love, solidarity, care as much as blood. As Nina indicates when describing her life in Pasco,

> '*Pasco me ha parecido muy divertido porque tenemos muchos eventos familiares. Como tenemos aquí la mayoría de la familia, mucha familia. Así es que cada fin de semana hay algo que celebrar. Me encanta compartir con la familia. Todos los eventos de la familia se disfrutan, al estar en familia y convivir'*
>
> 'Pasco has seemed very fun because we have many family events. As we have here the majority of the family, a lot of family. Thus. every weekend there is something to celebrate. I love to share with the family. All family events are enjoyable, being in family and convivir' (Nina)

Indeed, just like Nina, most of my participants mentioned that the events and spaces they enjoy the most are those they share with family, together, in conviviality. This also reflected in Antonia's indication of the event she enjoys the most and why,

> *'Cumpleaños, bodas, navidades, años nuevos. Es bonito que toda la familia se jute, pasamos momentos muy agradables. Yo pienso que todos los eventos en familia se disfrutan mucho porque nos juntamos. Ves a los muchachos creciendo. Y yo espero que todo eso dure, dure, muchos años*'
>
> 'Birthdays, weddings, Christmas, new years. It is nice that the whole family gets together, we have very pleasant moments. I think that all family events are very enjoyable because we get together. You see the boys growing up. And I hope that all that lasts, lasts, many years' (Antonia, 2016)

As such, celebrations, conviviality and being together in family is a common practice because what people most enjoy is sitting at the table with people they know, with relatives. As Juan states,

> *'Y a veces repentinamente, sabiendo que estamos varios familiares cerca de la casa, pues de repente hacemos una carne azada y llamamos a todos para reunirnos. A veces se hacen celebraciones en el parque donde con tiempo todos allá no reunimos con las hieleras y asadores. Y cuando un familiar que cumple 15, toda la familia esta preparándose. Y no es tanto (o ¿será?) grande la fiesta con la 15, o con los que se casan, pero lo que mas se disfruta es sentarse en la meza con los conocidos, y familiares'*
>
> 'And sometimes suddenly, knowing that we are several relatives near the house, suddenly we make a carne azada (barbecue) and call everybody to get together. Sometimes

> celebrations are held in the park where, ahead of time, all of us do not get together with the coolers and grills. And when a family member turns 15, the whole family is preparing. And it is not so much (or is it?) big the party with the birthday girl, or with those who get married, but what is most enjoyable is to sit at the table with the acquaintances, and family members' *(*Juan, personal interview, 2016)

Indeed, this shows the power of the people in producing humanity and social lives; in enabling the survival and thriving of racialized and legally discriminated communities by the state. While the state works hard to de-humanize Mexican immigrants through its biopower and creation of laws that uphold and defend white supremacy (laws by and for the benefit of whites); these populations construct relational communities and networks that humanize them and enable the production of meaningful lives and meaningful deaths across borders.

Dying across borders: Transnational dual spiritual practices

Lately, there has been death in my community in Pasco as well as in El Rancho. Given the layer of *legal death* that some are forced to inhabit, my community has engaged in *dual spiritual practices across borders*. In the case of one of my participants, his father - who had been deported along with his mother under the Obama administration - died in an accident in Mexico recently. As a consequence, my participant and his five siblings gathered to discuss what to do. Only one of the six siblings (and immediate family) had documents. And so, the other five families encourage this one family member to go to the funeral. They all provided support and stated that by this one relative going, they would feel as if they all were there. The family member with documents travelled for the funeral and stayed for the novenario. As explained in chapter three, to do a novenario, means to gather for the next nine days, after a person passes away, to pray the rosary. Each day represents a month of pregnancy and this way, death gets tied to the cycle of life. Now the person is back inside mother earth – a living being. The novenario is

also a way to intervene and help the soul of the person who passed away to be in a place of peace and joy. The last day of the noverario, there is a celebration that includes fasting, and then dining together after the last prayer. People would chip in to cover the cost of making the food and/or bring food to share. It is also common that the family of the person who passes away would provide the food and people bring ingredients too.

When the family member returned from Mexico, the rest of the siblings and families were waiting for them so they could re-enact the noverario in Pasco. They created an altar – with family photos, images of saints, flowers and candles - in one of the sibling's home. Then they prayed for nine days. Everyday people would bring additional candles and flowers for the altar, and bread to share at the end of each day with a cup of hot atole, chocolate, tea, and/or coffee. The last day they had the fasting celebration and also dedicated a mass at church.

In another case, a woman in my community was diagnosed with cancer a few years ago. She had a family with four young children here in the US. But she also had a very large and extended family and community nearby El Rancho. Recently, during her last days of life, the community in el Rancho was expecting, and encouraging, her to go as she had not seen her own parents, siblings and community there for about 20 years due to her status of legal death. However, her own husband also faces legal death and cannot go either. And so, this prevented her from returning to El Rancho in order to see her family and community for the last days of her life. When she passed away about one year ago, the extended family in el Rancho made arrangements to have a funeral and mass there, in el Rancho – this is something that is occasionally practiced: the person that passes away, gets sent back to their communities in Mexico for the funeral and burial as this is often their wish as well as the wish of the family. In the case of this brave loving and caring mother, wife, cousin, aunt, comadre, friend, etc., in the

last minute, she asked that she be buried here, in the United States, because she wanted for her children and husband to be able to visit her in the graveyard. She wanted to be nearby her children. Nevertheless, the extended family in Mexico, who were expecting her and had everything arranged for her arrival, re-enacted the funeral, *the velorio* - meaning that people stay awake all night with the person who passed away as they pray, sing, cry, talk, drink coffee, etc. They enacted the velorio, had an altar, candles, flowers, and prayed all night, etc. Then the next day, they had the mass. Then they enacted the novenario as well. They now also have a place to go visit her in the community's graveyard; and to include her in the celebration of day of the death every year as well.

To refuse to be denied a novenario and funeral is indeed political! Our deaths continue to be mournable and our lives celebrated in the midst of *legal death*. This politics of spirituality, communality, solidarity and relationality enables the construction of meaningful life and death across borders. Networks of affect become an antidote for legal death. Far from social death, it enables the production of social life for the entire community. In addition, the Latinx community in Pasco is transforming spiritual celebrations mirroring, to some extent, celebrations in Mexico, especially the one dedicated to la Virgen de Guadalupe.

Spiritual Celebrations Across Borders:

When the border was not as dangerous/deadly and expensive to cross – up until the late 90s - it was common for people in my community to go back to El Rancho during the time of las fiestas del pueblo (town celebrations) which were in the winter season when the agricultural job-season in the US is also quite slow. Las fiestas included celebration of the main Saint in November, then followed by the celebration of La Virgen de Guadalupe in December; which is celebrated all over Mexico. Going/participating/organizing these fiestas was something to look forward to the

entire year. In November it was a joy to welcome "los Norteños" back to town. In other towns they even dedicated a day for the welcoming of "los hijos ausentes" (the absent children).

Given the layer of legal death, the augmentation of militarization on the border, as well as the increased violence in both, in the border and in places like el Rancho and Pasco, each year more and more rituals are performed on the day of La Virgen de Guadalupe. This celebration includes a mass the evening before the main day of La Virgin. For this, some children come dressed as Juan Diegito(s): the Nahuatl Indigenous man to which the virgin appeared in the hill of the Tepeyac near Tenochtitlán - which had been re-named the New Spain and is currently Mexico City - in December of 1531, so the legend says. Also, some adults put on traditional Indigenous clothing this day. This is often a form of special ritual to fulfill a promise towards la Virgen in exchange for a special request, for a miracle. Then, after mass people move to the Church's hall - where they create an altar full of flowers with La Virgen on top - to perform *la velada*. Similar to in Mexico, people *stay awake all night* (similar, but not equal, to when someone dies, but in this case, as a happy celebration) to pray, sing, do rituals, perform Indigenous danzas (ritual dances), eat, share, etc. Then las mañanitas (birthday song) are played by mariachis (and other Mexican live bands) very early the morning after la velada - on the main day of La Virgen - at church, followed by mass. This is how la velada ends, with mañanitas and as mass as early as four of five in the morning. Although religion has served as a colonizing tool and has been rightfully criticized (Césaire 2001), Catholic religion is also in complex relation with Indigenous traditions. Mexican churchgoing, services, saints and practices ended up blending due to the resistance from the Indigenous people in giving up their spiritual practices (Vigil 1998). For instance, it was common that Indigenous people – whose labor was used to build churches - would bury sculptures representing spirits (of water, corn, sun, earth, etc.) some

have been recently found. They would also hide these images behind the new Spanish saints in their altars (Vigil 1998). In places like Pasco, religious celebrations, such as that of La Virgen de Guadalupe in December, help to create spaces of belonging, of relating and connecting with origin places and to each other in community and solidarity.

Indeed, Nina expresses how attending this celebration, makes her feel good; as if she was there – in Mexico. When I asked what events, she enjoy the most and why, she said,

> *'Festejos de Diciembre: En los últimos dos años, he ido a la iglesia cuando la velada de la virgen. Me gusta porque me recuerda de la festividad Mexicana; algo pues de nuestra religión. Es muy parecida la forma de celebrarla allá, con danzantes, cantos de alabanza - me sentí bien. Es un momento que te hace sentir como que estás allá [in México]*'
>
> 'Celebrations of December. In the last two years, I have gone to church when the velada of the virgin. I like it because it reminds me of the Mexican festivities; something from our religion. It is very similar to the way of celebrating it there, with danzantes [performers of Indigenous danzas], praise singings - I felt good. It is a moment that makes you feel as if you are there [in Mexico]' (Lili, personal interview, 2016)

Celebrating La Virgen de Guadalupe provides a good reason to be together in community, spirituality, and *social life*. It enables people to connect to our ancestors through rituals/celebrations that have been passed-on from generation through generation and these rituals are now passing to the next generations across colonizing borders. Bringing this practice to Pasco, is a powerful example of dual transnational intimate politics of thriving because this celebration is reproduced on the same day as in Mexico; and as Lili says, it is looking more and more similar to the way it is celebrated there. For a moment, this can make people feel as if they are there. To re-enact this important ritual on the same day is to refuse the denial to participate in such celebrations constructed by aggressive bordering – and this is indeed radical and political. It becomes a powerful method to thrive in the diaspora!

Another one of my respondents pointed out that religion gives them benefits because it provides a reason to celebrate, to be together and united in one place.

> *'Una cosa es que conservamos el valor de tener una religión por los beneficios que obtenemos en la religión o los eventos religiosos, son motivos de celebrar. Eso nos sigue ayudando mucho. Es un valor muy grande por que eso nos une al asistir juntos a la iglesia y celebrara lo que obtuvimos ahí'*
>
> 'One thing is that we conserve the value of having a religion for the benefits that we obtain in the religion of the religious events, they are a reason to celebrate. These continue to help us a lot. Is a big value because it united us when we assist church and celebrate together what we obtain there' (Luis, personal interview, 2016)

These politics enable not only the bare survival, but the making of meaningful and human lives. It enables those who are racialized and criminalized by the law to have the ability to be united and thrive in places where they are not supposed to survive. In places where (as explained in chapter four) the state is working to enable their exploitation, persecution, intimidation and killing with impunity. And yet, these targeted communities – these brave heroes - bring epistemologies from the south (Sousa de Santos, DATE). They bring methods of organizing, connecting and sharing across borders and generations, including practices of sharing, not only in celebrations but also in the intimacy of their home; in the every-day life.

Leche Caliente: Hot milk - another way to share and convivir

Back in El Rancho there is an old tradition, passed from generation to generation. Those who could afford to have cattle, would milk the cattle in the morning and invite relatives, friends, and anyone who was passing by for a glass of *leche caliente* (hot milk). My parents didn't have cattle in El Rancho, but we were always invited to go to my uncle's. It was a joy to hear my uncle shout in the morning as he passed by our home reminded us that is was time to go over for leche caliente. It was not so much about the milk, but about being together with relatives and

friends, talking and laughing and making plans for whatever events were coming. Then, we would often stay for breakfast. Well, this tradition is increasingly being practiced in Pasco! Some people in my community have been able to afford to buy a few cattle. Community members and friends, including entire families and children, are welcome to stop by the farm for a free glass of milk. Some people would bring, the ingredients (ground chocolate & sugar) to be added to the glass or cup before milking the cow directly into the glass or cup. People often also bring bread to share after, with a cup of coffee. Sometimes lunch or plans for comida/dinner follow. In Pasco, this is most common in the weekends give formal work schedule for many community members. Going for leche caliente is often something to look forward to in Pasco. A good reason to get together, to share, relate, connect, laugh, catch up, make plans; and so forth. However, leche caliente is a complement, a special treat – that only a few can afford - that reminds one of Mexico, of El Rancho, of their home. Lupe makes this very clear when she says, sharing hot milk,

> '*Es como un costumbre, de sus raíces de uno, como que estas acostumbrado del rancho que [gritas] 'vamos a la leche caliente!" Y yo pienso que son costumbres y raíces de uno. Aquí [en Pasco] lo haces y te sientes que estás allá. Haces muchas cosas que te hacen sentir que estas allá… tratas de no olvidar tus raíces, y mas uno que allá tienes a tu familia'*
>
> 'It is like a habit, from one's roots, like you are used to from el rancho that [one shouts] 'let's go for hot milk!' And I think these are one's customs and roots. Here [in Pasco] you do it and you feel as if you are there. You do many things that make you feel that you are there ... you try not to forget your roots, and those who your family there do it more' (Lupe, personal interview, 2016)

Maria also connects this tradition to Mexico, to El Rancho and how people invited everyone while on their way to milk the cows. She says,

> '*Desde en México compartimos la leche caliente; siempre vas a ordeñar e invitas a gente, ¡vamos a la leche!' Es una tradición*'

> ‘Ever since we were in Mexico we share hot milk; always one goes to milk the cows and invite people, 'let go for milk!' It's a tradition’ (Maria, personal interview, 2016)

Not only is this a practice/knowledge that has been brought from Mexico and in enacting it here, it recreates the place people connect with (Mexico, El Rancho) but also, it is a reason to share, get together, and to convivir; and this is knowledge that has been passed. As chino say, we share hot milk, “para convivir con las personas. Así lo enseñaron a uno, a compartir” (It is a way of sharing (compartiry); this is what we were taught) (chino, personal interview, 2016).

And for Ronaldo,

> ‘*Es una forma de reunirnos, de convivir. Como que me atrajo y me gustó. Compartimos porque queremos convivir con la familia. Es una forma de invitarlos para que vengan. Al compartir, nos hace sentir bien. Igual, con quien compartimos, lo hace sentir bien’*

> ‘It is a way to get together, convivir (to live together). It kind of appealed to me and I liked it. We share because we want to convivir with the family. It is a way of inviting them to come. By sharing, it makes us feel good. The same, with the person with whom we share, it makes the person feel good’ (Ronaldo, personal interview, 2016)

Rita says,

> ‘Es un gusto cuando das algo, te sientes contenta y que quieres compartir tu gusto con los demás; y mas si sabes que les gusta y no todos pueden’
>
> ‘*It's a pleasure when you give something, you feel happy and you want to share your happiness with others; and more if you know they like it and not everyone can’t [have cattle]*’ (Rita, personal interview, 2016)

As such sharing leche caliente is one more practice that enables sharing what one has. It is also an excuse for conviviality and contributes to the production of meaningful life in the everyday an in the intimacy of our homes, and party halls.

My home is your home: Respect, reciprocity, and conviviality

Sharing whatever one has (food, water, time) is a humanizing, respectful, and traditional practice in the everyday life. As a kid, I was taught to share my food with whomever. The rule was that whenever my parents could afford to buy me a package of something to eat, I needed to share first, before eating my own. This was practiced by all kids (and people) in my community. And so, whenever (and this was rarely) my mom would give me some money to buy a treat such as a small bag of chips or cookies, I would open the bag and before grabbing one, I passed around whomever was with me. Then I would repeat the rounds until, we finished the small package. This often meant that I would end up eating one of very few pieces of whatever. However, this was a way to practice respect and reciprocity. A kind of respect where we acknowledge each other's presence, and the basic need and desire to eat, to enjoy a treat. A type of reciprocity that is not about paying it back, but as ongoing exchange of respect and care. I knew, and it was normalized, that whenever someone else would open a package of a treat or whatever to eat, I would be acknowledged and offered some as well. This became such a custom, that it became abnormal to eat a whole package/bag of something without first offering to everyone around us.

Sharing also takes place at the household level. Ever since I remember whenever anyone visited our home or that of my grandparents or any relative in El Rancho, the visitors would be offered food, water, coffee, fruit – anything. Visitors would never need to give notice of their visit in advance, they could just go visit anytime. As such, people would always clean their home in preparation for possible visitors. It could be local visitors staying for a few hours or visitors from afar staying for a few days. Either way, people would be asked to sit, to come join us at the table if we were about to eat (or eating); and if not, they would be asked if they wanted a cup of water, or if they were hungry and wanted to eat. We would be treated the same when we were the visitors.

This is a practice that has been brought to places like Pasco! When I asked my participants, why do we offer something to drink and/or eat when we visit each other? They all say that it was out of education, which means having manners and being respectful; to make the person feel good, that is, make the person feel acknowledged and cared for; for custom, this is what our parents and grandparents taught us, to share, to be respectful. As Antonia indicates, she practices this because she has seen this all her life; that is how she grew up in Mexico (she migrated soon after getting married). She does this out of good manners (to give respect) to make the visitor feel good. She tries to treat/care/serve the other person as best as possible. She says we offer food, or water, or whatever we have,

> '*Por educación, para hacer sentir bien a la persona que te esta visitando. Tratas de invitarles lo que tu tengas; tratas de atenderlos lo mejor que tu puedas. Desde que yo puedo acordarme, toda la vida, he visto esto. He crecido viendo eso así*'
>
> 'Out of good manners, to make the person who is visiting feel good. You try to invite them whatever you have; you try to serve them to the best of your abilities. Ever since I remember, all my life I have seen this. I have grown seeing this' (Antonia, personal interview, 2016)

For Nina, it is also a custom; it is a way of been courteous/polite and offer something to whomever visits you. She clarifies that this is a practice, not only toward her family, but whomever visits her. She explains this as follows,

> '*Es una forma de ser amable, y ofrecer algo a quien te visita. Y tengo el costumbre de ofrecerle a quien sea, no nada más a mi familia, a quien me visita. Yo pienso que es como ser amable, y que la persona que vino se sienta bien'*
>
> 'It is a form of being friendly/welcoming and offer something to whomever visit you. I have the custom of offering whatever no only to my family, to whomever visits me. I think that is like being friendly/welcoming, and that the person that came feels good*'* (Nina, personal interview, 2016)

Chino also ties such practices with tradition from places of origin and explains that it is a way to give (and receive) respect and to teach others how to convivir. He says we share with whomever comes to our home because,

> *'Es una tradición de México. Nos acostumbraron a ofrecer a quien sea. Hay mas respeto con las personas. Ofrecer es para enseñar como convivir y respetar. Se siete bonito; sientes que hay mas apreciación*'
>
> 'It is tradition in Mexico. We got accustomed to offering/sharing with whomever. There is more respect with the people. To offer is a form of teaching how to convivir and respect. It feels good; you feel that there is more appreciation/esteem' (Chino, personal interview, 2016)

Luna and Pedro are both elders in my community whom I interviewed together. In response to this question, they also said that it was something that they learned from their grandparents and parents and so it is a tradition to offer whatever one has. This helps to convivir.

> '*Tradición de abuelos, de nuestros padres, una tradición que ya venenos trayendo. Que si alguien llega a la casa, tu ofreces lo que tienes. Si no tienes mas, un vaso de agua, un café, o lo que sea. Yo pienso mas que nada, es una tradición. Lo que toca a mí, es una tradición que nos enseñaron. Y se me hace bonito. Tu ofreces lo que tienes. Uno convive con lo que tiene. Y te sientes bien al mismo tiempo'*
>
> 'Tradition of grandparents, of our parents, a tradition that we have carried. That if someone comes to the house, you offer what you have. If you do not have more, a glass of water, a coffee, or whatever. I think more than anything, it's a tradition. On my part, it is a tradition that was taught to us. And it makes me feel good. You offer what you have. One *convive* (co-exist) with what one has. And you feel good at the same time' (Luna, personal interview, 2016)

Pedro also highlights how this was a form of reciprocal respect,

> '*Yo también en la casa lo mismo sucedía. Mi apá también tenia las mismas tradiciones, con la familia y los amigos. Y yo miraba que le tenia mucho respeto toda la gente. Se ganaba el respeto. Les daba respeto y le daban también para atrás'*
>
> Me too, in the house the same thing happened. My father also had the same traditions with family and friends. And I saw that all the people had great respect for him. He earned respect. He gave them respect and they also gave him back (Pedro, interview, 2016)

Indeed, Pedro and Luna humbly shared their experience of reciprocity and emphasize that they receive more than what they give. That it is a beautiful practice, to convivir and share,

> '*Y fíjate que y lo bonito que yo veo, es que si tu ofreces, bueno como decía mi mama "el que da recibe." Y yo pienso que nosotros [Pedro y Luna] recibimos mas de lo que damos. Y si hija, porque siquiera vieras. Hora en la semana, de un de repente, ni supimos quien nos trajo una caja llena con todas las frutas. Yo ni supe quien la trajo. Les pregunté a todos lo que vinieron ese día y [contestaban], 'yo no te la llevé', 'yo no te la llevé.' 'Pues quien la traería?' [me preguntaba] Pues hay que comérnosla, para eso nos la trajeron [dije]. Pan dulce nunca se me acaba. Meto al frízer para que no se eche a perder y voy sacando del mas viejito; del que ya tiene mas días. Tenemos tiempo que no compramos pan, ni galletas, ni nada; puro regalado; cuando no una cosa, otra – que leche, que tortillas, no falta; comida hecha, guisados. Yo pienso que recibimos mas de lo que damos. Yo pienso que se me hace bonito eso: convivir, compartir de lo que tu tienes*'
>
> 'And let me tell you that, and the beauty that I see is that that if you offer, well as my mom said "the one who gives receives." And I think that we [Pedro and Luna] receive more than we give. And yes daughter, because I wish you would you see. This week, suddenly, we did not even know who brought us a box full with all the fruits. I did not even know who brought it. I asked everyone what came that day and [they answered], 'I did not take it to you', 'I did not take it to you.' 'Well who would bring it?' [I asked myself] Well, we have to eat it, this is why they brought it [I said]. Sweet bread never runs out. I put some into the frizer so that it does not spoil, and I take out of the oldest one; which already has more days. We have time that we do not buy bread, or cookies, or anything; all is given to us; when not one thing, another – from milk, tortillas, anything; prepared food, stews. I think we receive more than we give. I think that is beautiful: convivir (co-exist, live together) share what you have' (Luna, personal interview, 2016)

The fact that Luna (and Pedro) could not find out who give them the box full of fruit – someone just dropped by their home – demonstrates that these acts are not about seeking any type of payment/favor in exchange. The type of reciprocity practiced, it not about paying it back, it is about an ongoing relation of care, respect and support that is not a two way transaction that null itself as one "pays it back", but it is a circular and spiral one; or as the Zapatistas explain, this reciprocity is in a form of a caracol (*snail*) there is not closure or ending to the circle of support and respect, it is an ongoing slow-growing circular relation that is never paid back (Forbis 2016). To share, to offer what one has, helps to: convivir, give and receive respect, to acknowledge and humanize each other, and to teach the new generations how to convivir, and

overall, to produce relations of community and networks of endless reciprocity. This knowledge is rooted in practices and knowledge that have been passed from generation through generation especially in rural communities in large part because the state has not worked for the benefit of rural communities such as El Rancho (see Chapter 3 for details). As Elvira says, "hacemos esto probablemente por necesidad o por tradición (we do this probably because of necessity or tradition)" (Elvira, personal interview)." Such practices have been brought and implemented in the US; across national colonizing borders because often poor people from rural communities are the ones displaced and forced to migrate. These practices help to produce, cultivate and strengthen relations of affect in places and conditions sent for their failure. The majority of my participants experience legal death and have been incorporated into the US economy under conditions that enable their exploitation and de-humanization, yet their ability to relate/connect/care and share with their communities near at distance helps them reject dehumanization and some of the racial capital's violence. Such ability to relate goes beyond our immediate communities, extensive families and friends to include people with whom they connect in terms of place of origin, and language in general.

Mexico Chiquito: The people, food, language, and nature

Some people have described being asked the question of "where are you from" directed to people of color in the US - more specifically, to Latinx brown populations - as micro-aggression. This question is framed as a form of discrimination and aggression because often the subconscious intention is to dis-connect, to dis-relate, to dis-associate a person who do not wear the image of a normalized "American" (white, European looking) from such "American" identity that implies belonging to this place (the United States) and society. This practice re-inscribes and

further normalizes the framing of who belongs and who does not and this in turn, contributes to greater fragmentation/divisions between people.

Nevertheless, this same question has been used to produce the opposite (to connect, to relate, to associate) in Mexico, especially in rural communities, and it has been brought and practiced in the US. As previously stated (also see chapter three), whenever someone in the community meets someone new, they would ask "where are you from?" (and follow up questions) in order to seek connections. Back in El Rancho, somehow, we were all related, we were family. In the US, in places like Pasco, being able connect with places of origin (Mexico) and/or with the same language, as well as being able to find ingredients to cook traditional food, makes people feel included, accepted, and with the ability to further relate/connect. When I asked Antonia, what do you most value about Pasco she said,

> *'Me gusta que hay mucha gente Mexicana. Casi la mayoría; como yo pienso que un 90% de gente es Mexicana. Entonces te sientes bien aceptado, no te sientes como fuera de la gente que tu conoces. Pienso que puedes hacer casi lo mismo que pudieras hacer en México. Como puedes ir al parque y relacionarte con la misma gente. ¡Hasta puedes conocer gente de donde tu vivías! Te sientes como que con tu misma gente; no sientes que haya tanta diferencia*'
>
> I like that there is a lot of Mexican people. Almost the majority; I think that 90% of the people are Mexican. And so, you feel well accepted, you do not feel out of the people that you know. I think that you can do almost the same thing that you could do in Mexico. Like you can go to the park and relate to the same people. You can even meet people from where you used to live! You feel like [you are] with your own people; you do not feel that there is much difference (Antonia, personal interview, 2016).

In effect, one can meet people from where you are from. Places like El Rancho have been tremendously affected by US-Mexico relations (which have led to austerity programs, the war on drugs, etc.) that entire families have been displaced (see chapter three). At one point, people refer to this (and other agrarian communities) as ghost towns. When displaced, rather than following the jobs as some would indicate (Ellis 2012), in the case of my community, we follow

our family, our people. It is assumed that there are jobs everywhere in the US and so our community becomes our decision making for where to migrate. This was the case for my own family and many more - as Luna indicates,

> '*Ya casi casi todos estamos aquí. Vas para allá (El Rancho) y está solo. Y en productos tenemos de todo aquí, igual; hay casi todo, lo mismo'*
>
> *'*Almost all of us are here. You go there (to El Rancho) and it is empty. And in products, we have everything here, the same; there is almost everything, the same (Luna, personal interview, 2016)

Food and language

The ability to find the food and ingredients they know in combination with the ability to speak with everyone around them in Spanish were highly valued in Pasco because that makes people feel more connected, included and familiar with the place. This is what some of my participants say,

> '*Se habla nuestro idioma. Abemos muchos mas Hispanos. Hay muchas tiendas donde conoces tus alimentos. Te sientes mas cómoda porque donde quiera que vas hablan español. Es como estas acostumbrada y los ingredientes que yo conozco. Te hace sentir bien, extrañar menos a tu país, pero también te ayuda a recordar; estas lejos y consigues tus productos. Te hace sentir bien. Hablar con gente que habla tu idioma. Ya no te sientes muy extraña en un lugar que no es tu país. Te sientes como mas familiarizada'*
>
> *'*Our language is spoken. There are many of us, Hispanic. There are many stores where you know your food. You feel more comfortable because Spanish is spoken wherever you go. It is how you are used to and the ingredients that I know. It makes you feel good, to miss less your country, but it also helps you remember; you are far, but you get your products. It makes you feel good. Speak with people that speaks your language. You no longer feel strange in a place that is not your country You feel like more familiarity' (Nina, personal interview, 2016)
>
> *'Los servicios de doctores en nuestro idioma. En las escuelas, los hospitales, en todos los lugares el personal es bilingüe. No te detienes [de ir] porque no te vayan a entender'*
>
> 'The medical services in our language. The personnel are bilingual in the schools, hospitals, and all the places. You do not have to stop yourself from going because they wouldn't understand you' (Antonia, 2016)

'*Me gusta que si quiero maíz, lo puedo encontrar. Seguimos nuestras tradiciones de comida. Y luego hablamos todos español, la mayoría. Ya ves que somos un México chiquito. La gente lo hacemos ser un México chiquito porque seguimos nuestras tradiciones. Hay tiendas Mexicanas que tienen todo lo de allá. Como si quiero pozole, yo no voy a comprar una lata, sino que compro maíz y pongo nixtamal, estilo México. Y trato de que tenga el mismo sabor para no extrañar tanto a México lindo y que rico. Aparte que miras las personas, muchas Hispanas y hablamos el mismo idioma. En todas las tiendas que vas, hay quien hablan español'*

'I liked that if I want maíz (dry matured corn), I can find it. We follow our traditions of food. And then we all speak Spanish, the majority. You see, we are little Mexico. We the people make it be a little Mexico because we follow our traditions. There are Mexican stores that have everything from there. For instance, if I want Mexican style pozole, I do not go and buy a can, but I buy the maíz to make Mexican style nixtamal (name of the 1st step when cooking the corn. It is in Naualth and is the only word we know in my community for this step). And I try for it to have the same flavor so that I would not miss as much beautiful and delicious Mexico. Also you see lots of people, many Hispanic and we speak the same language. In all the stores that you go, there is someone who speak Spanish' (Elvira, personal interview, 2016).

Also, the ability to connect to nature (to the plants, and animals) as it reminds them of El Rancho is a highlight for some of my participants who have been able to afford living in a small property where they can have animals and cultivate some plants including corn, chiles, and tomatoes.

'Lo que mas le atrae a uno de aquí es que, te recuerdas tu tierra. Como nosotros vivemos en el rancho. Tenemos gallinas; tenemos animales, tenemos animales de todos, perros; entonces agusto, agusto. Yo pienso que mas agusto que ni si estuviéramos en México porque, [hay] mas tranquilidad, mas paz, mas tranquilidad para todo. Nosotros hemos estado muy agusto. Me gusta el rancho, las gallinas, los animales, las vacas - a mi me gustan los animales. Si, todo eso'

'What is more attractive here is that, it reminds you of your land/territory. Like we live in a rancho (small farm). We have chickens; we have animals; we have animals of all kinds, dogs. And so good, very good. I think that better that if we were in Mexico because, more tranquility, more peace, more tranquility for everything. We have been very good. I like the farm, the chickens, the animals, the cattle - I like animals. Yes, all that' (Luna, personal interview, 2016)

'*A mi me atrae todo, la libertad que tiene uno. Sales de Pasco y vas viendo pura agricultura, pura verdura, de plantas, ganado, y todo eso pues le atrae a uno mucho. Se le hace a uno muy bonito'*

> 'I am attracted to everything, the freedom that one has. You go out of Pasco and you see agriculture, vegetables, plants, cattle, and all that is very attractive. It looks beautiful to us' (Pedro, 2016).

For all of my participants, the making and experiencing of a place is in the people -- in our senses of feelings, sight, sounds/language, memory and taste as follows: 1) Feelings of affect, care, love, humanity, respect, support, reciprocity, connection, belonging, etc; 2) Sight: to see people that look like us, and nature/animals around them remind them of El Rancho; give them a sense of freedom and beauty; 3) Sounds: music and specially language: ability to talk, to understand, communicate, etc. The same language as a point of connection/relating; 4) Memory/knowledge and practices, remembering and re-creating our home "little Mexico", el Rancho (agrarian spaces) so we do not miss it as much. People survive and thrive by being in the place and following some customs and traditions - through knowledge that has been passed from generation through generation; including good manners/respect, reciprocity, and making of traditional food 5) Taste: food, trying to recreate the same flavors by incorporating the same ingredients – which ironically, our capitalist economy is bringing to the people that are not supposed to be here; our race and ethnicity does not match the places we inhabit and yet, we are here and are not really assimilating: not before, not now and hopefully, not later. We did not fully assimilate in Mexico after colonization from the Spanish - as (Bonfil Batalla and Dennis 1996) state, our Indigenous practices continue - nor are we assimilating in the US: although not static, our practices continue to be rooted in Indigenous core values of resect, reciprocity, communality and relationality.

Overall, my work reveals that a politics of thriving that foregrounds the importance of affective community relations are crucial for oppressed and marginalized communities in the reproduction of LIFE (of *Social Life*). My community in Pasco and El Rancho reveal how acts

of mourning (at funerals), celebrations (at weddings, quinceañeras, b-days, etc), kinship (co-parenting, compadrazgo), solidarity (making citizenship a community good) and conviviality (in church and homes) make each other *strong, whole, and happy*. It is exactly as Shawn Wilson says, *we are our relations*. In addition, the fact that so many of these rituals celebrate life (even at funerals) that make them work as antidote to social death. In a city that often, racializes, criminalizes, and intimidates Mexican immigrants and yet where intimate politics of thriving, and the ability to connect and relate, are of such power that people have constructed a place of community, of family, of tranquility, of reciprocal and affective relations.

Indeed, one thing that my participants most value from Pasco in general, is the ability to relate, to connect with the people, place, and nature. It is this ability to connect, to relate – as relatives, as family, as friends, or even as identifying from the same place of origin/Mexico or by speaking the same language, etc. – the ability re-creates spaces by the people, language, food and nature that reminds them of home and gives them tranquility, peace, familiarity and a sense of belonging. To be together in community is of such power that this is precisely the what the majority of my participants most value in Pasco in general; this is what makes humanizing and meaningful lives in Pasco; converting this city into the best place to live. As Luna states when describing her life in Pasco,

> *'Yo pienso que fue la mejor decisión que hicimos - de venirnos de México aquí a Pasco. Y desde que caímos aquí, aquí hemos estado y muy agusto'*
>
> 'I think that it was the best decision we made – to come from Mexico here to Pasco. Ever since we arrived here, we have been very satisfied/content/happy' (Luna, personal interview, 2016)
>
> And Nena says,
>
> *'Pasco es como mas comunitario, como mas familiar… Entonces un buen lugar pare educar a la familia*'

> ‘Pasco is like more communitarian, like more family oriented... And so it is a good place to educate the family’ (Nena, personal interview, 2016)

Again, it is important to put in perspective, why many had to migrate (and cannot return) to places of origin to begin with (Valencia 2017). While my participants made of their home place a place of community, relations, inclusiveness, broad political processes rooted in colonialism, and United States imperial power over Mexico, and neo-colonial ideologies have negatively affected places like el Rancho – forcing some to migrate to the United States, to cities such as Pasco that are not made for their survival or thriving (see chapter four); but where these same people bring methods of thriving. They readapt their knowledge to overcome some of the racial capitalist violence enabled by the United States racial state, enacted through immigration laws that force community members into legal death in the case of most of my illegalized participants. While these heroes have created a home away from home through practices celebrations, conviviality, and respect; and while most stay connected (and are influenced by) to places of origin through technology and some are able to send their children to visit El Rancho, the majority would love an opportunity to visit Mexico. Indeed, the number one reason why many yearn United States documentation, is not to vote, or even to get jobs, or state/welfare benefits, but actually to go see/visit their loved ones in Mexico. As Juanita indicates,

> *‘Me gustaría tener papeles para viajar! Quiero regresar de donde yo soy. Es algo que anhelas, regresar a tus raíces, ver a tu familia que hace mucho no has visto. Por tener el sueño Americano, avece pierdes algo tan valioso que es la familia. Poder vivir algo mejor y perder algo que mas quieres. Es lo que mas anhelas - eso sería numero uno porque trabajo, trabajas de una forma, pero es la parte mas valiosa, volver*’
>
> ‘I would like to have papers to travel! I want to go back from where I am. It is something that one yearns, return to your roots, see your family that for a long time you have not seen. For having the American dream, sometimes one loses something so valuable that is the family. To be able to live a little better and lose that which you love the most. That is what one more yearns for – that would be number one because work, you work one way or another, but the most valuable part, is to return’ (Antonia, personal interview, 2016).

And so, looking for (and creating) safety and survival - a better life, the "American Dream" - in another place comes with a high price – losing some of what one most values and facing legal death! While my participants have overcome many barriers produced by legal death – with limitations and constraints, they find jobs, housing, enact politics across borders, and produce meaningful life and community - to some extent, the ability to cross the colonizing border has become more and more difficult – expensive and risky – without documents.

Nevertheless, my participants are not socially dead, but on the contrary, it is social life that enables them to thrive against all odds. In a city that apart from practicing racialization, persecution and criminalization, works hard to erase the presence of the Mexican community. If one googles Pasco, the image one gets demonstrate that the Latinx presence is erased from the city's virtual landscape. In addition, as stated in chapter four, the Latinx presence has been erased from the historical record in places like the Historical museum. As part of my research, I wanted to incorporate archival material, so I visited the only historical museum of Franklin county, which is located in downtown Pasco. While about 70% of the population in Pasco are Latinx – mostly Mexicans. In downtown Pasco – where the Museum is located - over 90% of the residents and businesses are Mexican. However, I was surprised to find that there was no mention of the Mexican community at all in the Museum. And while radical and progressive politics and spaces of thriving for Latinx/Mexicans (and other racialized groups) are often in the form of public representations of this community (through murals, paintings, rallies, etc.), my work brings into the conversation different forms of politics of thriving – of producing *social life* through intimate/everyday politics that produce affective networks across borders and generations. These are Radical Politics of Thriving that take place in erased geographies and are influenced by transnational connections. These politics transform the everyday life of those

denied and persecuted by the state. There is so much that we, scholars, and privileged students can learn from such political and radical ways of knowing, living and relating.

SOMOS SEMILLAS – SOMOS MAÍZ

Chapter 6

Quisieron enterrarnos, pero no sabían que éramos semillas
They tried to bury us, but they didn't know we were seeds

(Ernesto Cárdenal)

A Special Letter of Conclusion…

Dear Anelsy and Arisbeth, my beautiful, kind and smart daughters – I am writing this conclusion to you. In fact, I have written the whole dissertation to you, to my next generations, to my entire immigrant and Mexican community. In this last chapter, I of course assume you read the dissertation (!), I will talk directly to you. In doing this, I am following a relational writing model set by Indigenous scholars such as Shawn Wilson (2012). He wrote his dissertation, which he converted into a book titled "Research is ceremony" to his two sons. I agree with Wilson (2012), writing to someone is relational and makes it for a more engaging practice, rather than writing for the unknown, in the abstract. Now, I must confess that, although I often think of you and our immigrant community as my audience when I write, this is my first attempt writing directly to you and so, it might not work because, for almost seven years, I have been trained to write in the abstract -- not that I write only about theory, I actually always engage both, theory and empirics, in my writing; but what I mean is that, I have been trained to write my academic work to an indirect audience. Although it is common to think about an audience for our writing, the way in which we (scholars) often write is towards a disembodied audience, rather than directly writing to someone with whom one relates. This was also a struggle for Wilson (2012).

First, I will place you in context to other relations because this is a practice that we all do in seeking connections and relations with other people (and places) - as Wilson (2012) says, we are our relations. You are the daughters of Mexican immigrant parents, Yolanda González

Mendoza and Jose Armando Valencia Osorio. You see, in Mexico children are given both, the father's and mother's first last names. The father comes first, although this might be changing - I recently I heard that now the mother can also be first. My dad (your abuelito or papá Miguel, one of ten siblings) is Miguel González Magaña (González after his own dad, Encarnacion Gonzalez Mendoza; and Magaña after his mother, Elvira Magaña Ramirez). My mom (your abuelita or mamá Reyna, one of eleven siblings) is Reynalda Mendoza Alvarez (Mendoza after her dad, Emilio Mendoza Mendoza; and Alvarez after her mom, Reymunda Alvarez Guzmán). As for your dad: his father (your papá Guillermo) is Guillermo Valencia Martinez, and his mother (your mamá Chepa) is Josefa Osorio Escobar. Our family and extended community in transnational. Some live in the United States and some in Mexico. For instance, a few of your grandparents (and their siblings) still live in Mexico – in El Rancho[25]. It is in this land and surroundings areas where our ancestors - of many generations back- rest. Here they have been buried and are now part of the land and soil that generates (and feeds) life.

We each have four siblings. I am the youngest of my siblings and your dad is the oldest of his siblings. I have two sisters (your tías Ana Lilia and Carmen, aka Blanca) and two brothers (your tíos Gonzalo and Leonel); your dad has three sisters (your tías Marisela, Ana Olivia and Cindy) and one brother (your tío Antonio). Everyone now has a significant other and a family and so your tíos and tías are twice as many; not to mention our many, many cousins who are also married and have a family, which augments your tíos, tías and your own cousins both in Mexico (mostly in the states of Michoacán, but also in Colima and Jalisco) and in the United States (in Washington, Oregon, California, and Florida). This is in addition to our extended family composed of friends, comadres and compadres (*coparents*) in the United States and Mexico.

[25] Pseudonym for anonymity

Now, why do I say that you are the daughters of immigrants? Well, we both migrated as teenagers to the United States. Crossing the United States-Mexico border converted us into 'immigrants of color.' We do not fit the normalized "American" body – white, tall, blond, European – and so we are classified as outsiders. In fact, our Mexican-looking phenotype is been made to fit what is framed (and normalized) as the "illegal alien" even though our ancestors have inhabited this continent (or what is also known as Mesoamérica and Aridoamérica for the purpose of studying it; but more specifically the area of Anahuac which is its pre-colonized name) for thousands of years. Indeed, about half of the United States used to be Mexico – a territory first colonized by the Spanish and then by the United States – and so we are now the "aliens," while the European colonizers are the "legitimate citizens" (Walia 2014; Vigil 1998). Sadly – and to illustrate how identity is fluid, and in our case, how we are forced into the borderlands - the more time we sped in the United States, the less we belong to any place. What do I mean by that? In Mexico we become less "Mexican" as we are often described as no Mexican enough – as "Americanized". In the United States we are too "Mexican" to qualify as the normalized "American," and so we occupy as status (and space) of in between: we are not "American" enough or "Mexican" enough. And so, binaries of identity do not apply for us; we are both and none and much more. Sadly, you will not escape this dilemma; in fact, it might be more difficult for you. You were born in the United States, this is the only land you know as your home, and yet, you do not fit the mainstream, reductionist description of the "American." You are not (and will not be) alone, this dilemma has been widely analyzed by our Chicana sisters who call such status (and space) as being in the borderlands (Anzaldúa 1987; Cahuas 2019; Ramirez 2019). In fact, this dilemma is not only experienced by Mexicans (and Latinx). Recently, I referred to someone as African American and that person told me, "I not an African

American. I am a Black American. When I go to Africa, they call me American, not African. I have been in this country for many generations. If I am an African American, then we need to call white people, European Americans." I agree with him, but in that case, should we call people by their color before the American identity: white, brown, yellow, and even red American? Can we just all recognize our common humanity and unite towards undoing structures that have produced unequal power relations and fragmentation of society? This made me realize that this country is a country of borderlands for all people of color, not only for Latinx and Chicanx; and that indeed, there is no such thing as binary and static identities. We are not this OR that, we are both and none; and we are not whom we were and whom we will become, we are both and more. And so, for me, as long as our community is framed as immigrants/outsiders in the United States, I am also one. As Shawn Wilson says, we are our relations. And so, you are daughters of immigrant parents; and you are part of a large and supportive immigrant community. You know, most people in this country are immigrants or immigrant descents, unless they are descendants of the people inhabiting this land since pre-colonization. However, white supremacy laws work to include some through practices of exclusion. Let me explain, in order for there to be such thing as citizenship, there has to be the creation of the non-citizen. Else, if everyone were citizens – as it should be, we should all be citizens of this planet – then there would be no point of having the idea of citizenship because this status is relational. The state, through the law has been able create the idea (and legal status) of the non-citizen. This benefits capitalism as this is a "normalized" way to take advantage of those targeted by the law in the United States, many of whom are forced to immigrate from their own lands as a result of unequal power relations. That is definitely the case of many people in the so called "Global South" countries, especially of

Mexico. Over 50% of the undocumented immigrants in the United States are from Mexico; this was the case for your abuelito Miguel.

Ever since I remember (and according to my mom, soon after they got married in 1964) your abuelito Miguel migrated to the United States without documents because it was hard to get a stable and well-paid job in Mexico. Also, the price of corn, a crop that our community cultivates in Mexico, continuously dropped. Most recently, after the passage of NAFTA in the mid 1990s, it is more expensive to grow corn than to buy it because the market has been inundated with subsidized (and thus artificially cheaper) corn from the United States and Canada. While the United States and Canada heavily subsidize their farmers (many of whom are industrial), Mexico is supposed to reduce subsidies in order to pay its ever-growing external debt (Clapp 2012). With the passage of NAFTA, Mexico was supposed specialize in the production and exportation of corn and yet, Mexico who invented corn, is now buying it from the United States and Canada (Bonfil Batalla and Dennis 1996). In the meantime, your abuelito wanted to work and give us (his kids) a better life. However, as a result, we grew up only with a single mother who would work doing laundry for the rich and selling food in the streets. We would help her form a very young age. You have heard some of these stories.

When I was 17 years old, your abuelito was able to get residency status for my mom, and his two youngest daughters (Tia Blanca and I). And so, this is how I migrated at age of 17 to the United States. We migrated to Pasco in order to join our community because we knew that we could count on them for support. Our tías and tíos gave us free housing and oriented us on how and where we could get our IDs and apply for jobs. Unfortunately, we were not hired at stores or restaurants due to lack of experiences and language skills, they said, and so we ended up working

in at temporary position in several orchards, food processing plants and in a more stable job at the slaughter house.

Your dad was brought to the United States at age of 12, undocumented. This is one reason why he was not motivated to study arduously in high school because he knew that going to college was not an option –denying access to higher education is one of the many legal discriminations toward those made illegal by the law. Also, it is challenging to build a strong base for education – as we know it - when one has parents who never went to school because they grew up in agrarian communities in Mexico where the state is not investing in education, and who do not have time to help with homework because in the United States they are forced to work extra hours at minimum wage to barely afford paying for basic needs. In addition, not being able to relate to anyone with a university career, makes it so that going to college seems a world in which we do not belong. And so, your dad worked in the slaughter house right after high school for a year and then in construction where he continues to work. For his family too, deciding where to migrate in the United States was determined by where the community was, not where the jobs were. We assume that there will be jobs wherever we go in the United States and so the community (our relations) is/are our main deciding factor for location.

And so we migrated to Pasco Washington, where currently about 70% of the 73,000 thousand people residing there identify as "Hispanic[26]." Pasco dependents on the Mexican labor for its thriving as its economy is mostly agricultural driven. However, as I explain in chapter 4, Cities like Pasco WA (and the United States in general) are not a place made for our success. In this city – (and the tri-cities in general) almost all of the people in positions of power are white –

[26] Well, most use Hispanic due to the vocabulary in the census – language matters. I will use Latinx because Hispanic includes everyone who speak Spanish, including our colonizer from Spain, and so that is a bit painful. Although Latin is also an European language, it has been appropriated by the all the countries in the American continent – (except for the US and Canada) as a way to unite our similar history of colonization.

there has never been a Latinx major and until recently all the city council members were also white. Also, Pasco is not a sanctuary city and the local police cooperates with ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) agents to conduct arrests about one time per month; this is what Bob Metzger, he chief of the police, indicated when I interviewed him in summer of 2017 (see chapter 4 for details on a political economy analysis and subject formations in Pasco).

What I just told you is to give you a context of our community' experiences across national and psychological borders, and to explain what motivates my current work. While so much academic work on Latinx immigration to the United States in focused on the structures that produce violence and suffering (Cacho 2012; Chavez 2008; De Genova 2004; Ngai 2004, among others), my work reveals how our immigrant community is thriving in places where they supposed to survive. Indeed, through methods of creating meaningful and supportive communities, which have been brought from places of origin and adapted in the United States, these heroes are creating a place of tranquility, of family, a peaceful place in an anti-immigrant and hostile context – in places like Pasco which has been made hostile through racialization of space and legal criminalization of race. I write this because I want you to see - to some extent – the genealogy of such practices and understand the power that they have in providing tools for other types of humanity, life meaning, and production of place and space. We live in a close relation to a western culture - which as you have noticed, tends to be very individualistic, materialistic, and believes itself as superior: as above all nature and people of color. I want you to be proud of who you are – of our/your roots - and have the ability to continue to adapt and readapt our practices (our ways of being and relating) in order to confront ongoing barriers and maintain a thriving present and future. Our relations to each-other produce our relations to (and experience of) place and vise-versa.

However, the way in which we build our relations of community in Pasco is contextual and situated to our experiences and practices before migrating, our ongoing transnational connections/relations with our community in Mexico, our experiences of the law in the United States (laws that enable legal discrimination and criminalization of Mexican immigrants, laws that produce material benefits to whites while disadvantages the non-whites), as well as our experience of state sponsored violence and racism produced by (and sustaining of) white supremacy. As such, I employ a transnational/trans-border approach. In doing so, I account for places of origin in shaping our lives in the United States. I have dedicated chapter 3 to places of origin in order provide a historical context as I analyze colonial, and imperial practices of subject formation and displacement. Here I reveal that while some have been set to believe that they are no longer Indigenous, but Mestizos, in practice our ways of being, relating and living are rooted in Indigenous core values of respect, reciprocity and accountability. Sadly, there has been a successful de-Indianizing project in order to "Modernize Mexico." Described as the intuitional practice of devaluing all that is Indigenous (knowledge, languages, ways of being, and even our existence) by framing them as backward and irrelevant. Such de-Indianization has been possible, in large part, through institutional distortion of our full existence and history. In public schools, most kinds are taught that the majority of the Indigenous peoples are dead. I often see some of our cooking tools such as molcajetes, metates, and cantarillas already in museums. As if that is the usage of those tools are also already gone/death/antique, but we will use them! Also, the Spanish conquest is often framed as a positive act. Some public schools organize parades in celebration of Christopher Columbus (!). I participated in them. In addition, our ancestors' languages are framed as dialects and their knowledge as backward because it is said that 'they' (our ancestors) had a different cosmology built on the basis of myths, of believes, rather than on

positivist 'objective science' – whatever that means. This is what I learned as a student in Mexico through middle school and also what I learned (to some extend) from some local professors during the study abroad program I co-directed in Oaxaca in the past 4 summers! Indeed, much of the material used in public education in Mexico comes from the point of view of the conqueror, which justifies colonization. This is in addition to the vast majority of our catholic religious images (saints, angels, god), and the media (Hollywood movies, TV shows, magazines, the internet, etc) that tell us that white is beautiful, pure, kind, smart, modern, heroic; while dark represents the opposite.

And so, these processes invade our subconscious and enable the "de-Indianization" of many people (but not of all, Mexico continues to have one of the highest numbers of Indigenous peoples in the world), including our community there and in the United States. This is what produces internalized racism – meaning that many in our community strive to look 'white' to some extent; we talk about our Spanish descent with pride while we avoid talking but our Indigenous abuelitas. I even fell for it, I remember straightening and highlighting my hair blond soon after you were born. However, in practice, our ways of being, knowing and relating continue to be rooted in Indigenous core values of respect, solidarity, accountability and reciprocity. These practices enable the production of meaningful and humane relations, life and space, in places like El Rancho where the government is not working for their protection. And this is the case in most rural communities in Mexico.

For instance, there is very low investment in health services and education in these communities. In El Rancho, there is one small clinic (which just like the schools, was built by the community) that rarely has a doctor in it. When someone gets sick, it is common to use traditional remedies and be cared for by family and friends. However, in extreme cases,

treatment is sought in the nearest city, which takes over 3-hour drive (including 2 hours in a dirt road). This is why your tío abuelo (great uncle) Tanilo, could not make it to the doctor when he got a heart stroke during a community meeting last year. The meeting got suspended when he collapsed, and some community members rushed him to the doctor, but he died on the road. In addition, there is lack of state investment in education and health services in rural places. In El Rancho, the higher level of education there is tele-secundaria - middle school via televised lectures with one teacher for 3 classroom grades. While in Mexico attending the university is highly subsidized (almost 100% of tuitions is covered), acceptance is based on an admission's test. This means that youth from places like El Rancho are disadvantaged because most likely they are not prepared to reach the required score. Worse, there is no high school in El Rancho and the process of attending the university is basically unknown. This leaves youth to work on the land as the only form of sustenance. Sadly, through structural polices, the state is reducing subsidies for agrarian communities; at the same time that it is opening markets for highly subsidized agrarian products from the United States and Canada – especially corn – which is what our community grows to consume and sell. As I explain in chapter 3, this has been one reason why people are forced to migrate to the United States or join the drug cartels. Then wars on drugs declared by the United States since the 1970s and by Mexican President Calderon in the early 2000s (with support and pressure from the United States) has enabled the criminalization and militarization of most agrarian places in Mexico. This is another reason why Indigenous and Indigenous-descendants are often forced to leave their communities risking their lives in the border; then are forced to become the "illegal aliens" and occupy the status of what I am calling *legal death* in the United States. I define this concept of legal death in chapter 4 and also briefly below.

These are just some examples to show how the community has been mostly neglected by the state and so, our community there continues to practice methods that have been passed from generation through generation in order to maintain meaningful and humane lives. They practice communality as described by Zapotec Indigenous scholar Jaime Martinez Luna when describing how Indigenous communities in Mexico organize – I really hope for you to meet him one day. He is very inspirational and empowering. He describes communality as follows: the land, work and fiestas are by and for the community. Despite the Mexican government's effort to weaken the ejido system since the 1990s, in el Rancho, the land is communally owned in the form of ejido. Some of your abuelitos, great uncles, and our relatives have ejido lands in el Rancho. Also, community projects - such as the schools, the clinic, the community house, etc. – have been built mostly by the community, collectively. And the fiestas del pueblo (people's fiestas/celebrations) are organized by and for the community. I really hope we can go to some of these celebrations in the near future. In addition to land, community projects and las fiestas del pueblo, in intimate celebrations in El Rancho – such as weddings, quinceañeras, and funerals – everyone is expected to attend, and no one requires invitation. Further most people clean their home every day in preparation for possible visitors at any time. When someone visits, it is common to offer food, water, fruit or whatever. Not only that, but it is common that those who can afford to have cattle, would invite people to stop by for a glass of free leche caliente in the morning. Also, and very important, in el Rancho whenever people meet someone new, they put them in context to other relations in order to seek commonality and connection. All of these practices are rooted in values of respect, solidarity and accountability.

Sadly, as I explain in chapter 3, it is common that displacement from Mexico happens in rural communities because they/we have been most affected by structural adjustment policies

and unequal power relations. This is, in large part, why there is lack of investment in education and health services in El Rancho, as I explain above and in chapter 3. Free trade agreements such as NAFTA enable the inundation of the Mexican market with artificially low-priced agrarian products including corn, a crop our community consumes and sells. It has become cheaper to buy than to sell but to buy people need money. Also, the minimum wage in Mexico is about $100 pesos, while a kilo of beef is almost twice as much, $180. In a place like el Rancho where there is lack of access to education, the jobs most people can get – if any – are those who pay close to the minimum wage. This is also why cartel members were able to infiltrate into el Rancho, as they offered better-paid jobs. This then lead to the criminalization of people there and increased violence, especially after the declaration of the war on drugs. All this has forced many to migrate to the United States. And when they do, they bring with them methods of producing meaningful relations and lives in the United States, outside the protection of the state.

Surviving the deadly United States -Mexico border – a border that is at once: closed for the displaced (for those most affected by unequal global power relations) and open for the rich and for capitalism (Nevins 2007) – converts the displaced into the "illegal alien" and forces them to inhabit a space of what I call legal death. Due to this status - which produces what (Alexander 2012) describes as civic death; in addition to the threat of deportation (De Genova 2002), and denial of mobility across borders - many are trapped in cities like Pasco where, as I describe in chapter 4, they face criminalization, segregation, intimidation and are under constant threat of deportation. Yet, as I indicate in chapter 5, and this is the primary message of my dissertation, our immigrant community has created of Pasco a place of tranquility, of family, a peaceful place. Indeed, our community has adopted and readapted similar traditions as in Mexico. Especially in the case of celebrations, of visiting and offering, of inviting for free leche caliente, of seeking

ways to connect with each other. Further, given the layer of legal death; our community practices transnational spiritual rituals – especially in the case of death and spiritual celebrations. As for communality, some have made of their citizenship status, a communal tool to move (and connect) between the United States and Mexico. this research brings into the conversation practices of re-territorialization of United States citizenship. The acts of Mexican-American people in Pasco using their United States citizenship to take children (who are not their kids) to Michoacán is an example of how citizenship goes from being an individualized possession to a shared, collective good. And more importantly, citizenship becomes a trans-border tool to move between Pasco and Michoacán, the United States and Mexico, and a tool to reproduce transnational practices of thriving and responsible relations to each other in our extended community.

Overall, our community reveals that politics (methods/strategies) of thriving that foreground the importance of affective relations – rooted in respect, solidarity, and reciprocity - are crucial for oppressed and marginalized peoples in the reproduction of LIFE, of social life, of thriving communities. Our community in Pasco and El Rancho reveal how acts of mourning (at funerals), celebrations (at weddings, quinceañeras, birthdays, rituals, etc), and kinship (co-parenting, compadrazgo) make each other strong, whole, and happy. It is exactly as Shawn Wilson says, we are our relations. In addition, the fact that so many of these rituals celebrate life (even at funerals) that make them work as an antidote to *social death*, described by Lisa Mari Cacho (2012) as the status of permanent criminalization by the law, as denial of personhood (and thus humanity) that the undocumented is forced to inhabit. However, I refine that concept to think, not about social death because our communities practice relations of communality, of support, of social life – as such, I am refining that concept to mean legal death. And legal death

to be a type of status/identity *in relation* to the immigration law and what it produces and protects. As such legal death is not permanent - it is *spatial, temporal and fluid*. This is to highlight that the state (through the law) does not have the power to produce permanent denial of personhood (of humanity) – and thus social death. In other words, the state cannot produce social death because the state does not determine all of our relations and as Shawn Wilson says: we are our relations. Indeed, the ability to connect, relate and belong, are of such power that people have constructed of Pasco, a place of community, family, and tranquility. After all, as feminist scholars explain, our relations with each-other (and with the non-human) produce our relations to places and in turn, places shape societies and our experiences of the place (Ahmed 2014; (Morrison, Johnston, and Longhurst 2013). Indeed, feelings and love have a big role in shaping place and our experiences in it (Morrison, Johnston, and Longhurst 2013). In fact, our community - even as they are oppressed, erased, and forgotten - are making and experiencing place and other kinds of humanity (McKittrick 2015; McKittrick and Woods 2007). And this is the focus of my work. While our community confronts structural barrier produced by broad processes in Mexico (see chapter 3) and in the United States (see chapter 4), they enact politics (that is actions) that humanize each other and produce a meaningful and humane life. Current immigration theories could not help me explain this paradox and so my work focuses on uncovering structural violence, but most importantly on how immigrants thrive in places designed for their failure. They do so through practices of celebrations of LIFE (in weddings, quinceañeras, birthdays, spiritual rituals: la virgen de Guadalupe, in baptism, 1st communions, etc), in conviviality (getting together any weekend or afternoon at home), mourning at funerals (and novenarios, often across national borders), and kinship (compadrasgo/co-parenting and extended relationality-connections) which extends family connections beyond the western

normalized ideas of family only through blood ties. All of these practices are rooted in Indigenous core values of relationality, respect, solidarity and reciprocity. These demonstrate our multiple, complex and humanizing relations outside the reach of the state.

Lastly, this work reveals the fundamental importance of transnational and trans-border approaches in order to understand our politics of thriving. These approaches are attentive to multiple borders and memberships, that help to illustrate the connection across and between Pasco and El Rancho; to show how thriving in the diaspora must be intimate and trans-border. Transnational/trans-border approaches help to understand how meaningful humanizing relations travel across borders and boundaries enabling people to thrive in places where they are not supposed survive. Our community faces many challenges and is easy to focus on these. My intervention is to focus on ways in which our community builds meaningful and humane life. And how these practices (or politics) are rooted in knowledge that travel across space, borders and generations, and are influenced by (and helping maintain) transnational networks and relations that enable our thriving in the diaspora, in places set for our failure in the United States. Places that our community is transforming into spaces of tranquility, peace, and of family. This indeed shows the outmost importance of relations; because this is what we are! Our immigrant community's relations transverse all kind of boundaries including national borders and what it means to be a 'normal' family. We inhabit transnational/trans-border relations, and so that is who we (and you) are, have been and will be.

Bibliography:

Acevedo, Luz del Alba. 2001. *Telling to Live: Latina Feminist Testimonios*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Agamben, Giorgio, and Daniel Heller-Roazen. 1998. *Homo Sacer. Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

Ahmed, Sara. 2014. *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Second edition. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. http://www.dawsonera.com/depp/reader/protected/external/AbstractView/S9780748691142.

Alanís Enciso, Fernando Saúl. 2017. *They Should Stay There: The Story of Mexican Migration and Repatriation during the Great Depression*. Translated by Russ Davidson. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

Alarcón, Norma. 1990. "Chicana Feminism: In the Tracks of 'the' Native Woman." *Cultural Studies* 4 (3): 248–56. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502389000490201.

Aldama, Arturo J. 2001. *Disrupting Savagism: Intersecting Chicana/o, Mexican Immigrant, and Native American Struggles for Self-Representation*. Latin America Otherwise. Durham: Duke University Press. http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=1167484.

Alexander, Michelle. 2012. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. Revised edition. New York, New York, New York : [Jackson, Tenn.], New York: The New Press, New Press ; Distributed by Perseus Distribution, New Press. http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=829777.

Amoore, Louise. 2006. "Biometric Borders: Governing Mobilities in the War on Terror." *Political Geography* 25 (3): 336–51. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2006.02.001.

Ann Twinam. 2015. *Purchasing Whiteness: Pardos, Mulattos, and the Quest for Social Mobility in the Spanish Indies*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

Anzaldúa, Gloria. 1987. *Borderlands : The New Mestiza = La Frontera*. San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute.

———. 2015. *Light in the Dark = Luz En Lo Oscuro : Rewriting Identity, Spirituality, Reality*. Latin America Otherwise. Durham: Duke University Press.

Anzaldúa, Gloria E., Simon J. Ortiz, Inéz Hernández-Avila, and Domino Perez. 2003. "Speaking across the Divide." *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 15 (3/4): 7–22.

Bacon, David. 2008. *Illegal People: How Globalization Creates Migration and Criminalizes Immigrants*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Bauman, Robert. 2005. "Jim Crow in the Tri-Cities, 1943-1950." *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 96 (3): 124–31.

Beezley, William H. 2011. *Mexico in World History*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Bell, Lee Anne. 2003. "Telling Tales: What Stories Can Teach Us about Racism." *Race Ethnicity and Education* 6 (1): 3–28. https://doi.org/10.1080/1361332032000044567.

Benner, Katie, and Caitlin Dickerson. 2018. “Sessions Says Domestic and Gang Violence Are Not Grounds for Asylum.” *The New York Times*, June 12, 2018, sec. U.S. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/11/us/politics/sessions-domestic-violence-asylum.html.

Beverley, John. 1989. “The Margin at the Center: On Testimonio (Testimonial Narrative).” *MFS Modern Fiction Studies* 35 (1): 11–28. https://doi.org/10.1353/mfs.0.0923.

Boehm, Deborah A. 2008. “‘For My Children:’ Constructing Family and Navigating the State in the U.S.-Mexico Transnation.” *Anthropological Quarterly* 81 (4): 777–802. https://doi.org/10.1353/anq.0.0037.

———. 2011. “US-Mexico Mixed Migration in an Age of Deportation: An Inquiry into the Transnational Circulation of Violence.” *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 30 (1): 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1093/rsq/hdq042.

Bonfil Batalla, Guillermo, and Philip Adams Dennis. 1996. *México Profundo : Reclaiming a Civilization*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Brown, Kate. 2013. *Plutopia: Nuclear Families, Atomic Cities, and the Great Soviet and American Plutonium Disasters*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=1132280.

———. 2015. “Only Part of the Story Is Being Told About the Police Shooting in Pasco.” *Time*, March 3, 2015. http://time.com/3729247/police-shooting-pasco-history/.

Cacho, Lisa Marie. 2012. *Social Death: Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected*. New York: New York University Press. http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=495876.

Calavita, Kitty. 1992. *Inside the State: The Bracero Program, Immigration, and the I.N.S.* New York: Routledge.

Camacho Schmidt, Alicia R. 2008. *Migrant Imaginaries : Latino Cultural Politics in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands*. Nation of Newcomers. New York: New York University Press.

Castillo, Richard Griswold del. 1992. *The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo: A Legacy of Conflict*. University of Oklahoma Press.

Caulfield, Sueann, Sarah C. Chambers, and Lara Putnam. 2005. *Honor, Status, and Law in Modern Latin America*. E-Duke Books Scholarly Collection. Durham ; London: Duke University Press. http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=1168407.

Cedric J. Robinson. 2000. *Black Marxism The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

Centeno, Ramón I. 2018. “Zapata Reactivado: Una Visión Žižekiana Del Centenario de La Constitución.” *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 34 (1): 36–62. https://doi.org/10.1525/msem.2018.34.1.36.

Césaire, Aimé. 2001. *Discourse on Colonialism*. Translated by Joan Pinkham. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Chavez, Leo. 2013. *The Latino Threat Constructing Immigrants, Citizens, and the Nation, Second Edition.* Palo Alto: Stanford University Press. http://grail.eblib.com.au/patron/FullRecord.aspx?p=1162035.

Chavez, Minerva S. 2012. "Autoethnography, a Chicana's Methodological Research Tool: The Role of Storytelling for Those Who Have No Choice but to Do Critical Race Theory." *Equity & Excellence in Education* 45 (2): 334–48. https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2012.669196.

Clapp, Jennifer. 2012. *Food*. Resources (Polity Press). Cambridge, England ; Malden, Mass: Polity Press.

Cookson, Tara Patricia. 2018. *Unjust Conditions: Women's Work and the Hidden Cost of Cash Transfer Programs*. First edition. S.l.: University of California Press.

Dahl-bredine, Philip, and Stephen Hicken. 2008. *The Other Game: Lessons from How Life Is Played in Mexican Villages*. Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books.

Davidson, Dr Joyce, Mr Mick Smith, and Professor Liz Bondi. 2012. *Emotional Geographies*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.

De Genova, Nicholas. 2002. "Migrant 'Illegality' and Deportability in Everyday Life." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 31 (1): 419–47. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.anthro.31.040402.085432.

De Genova, Nicholas. 2004. "The Legal Production of Mexican/Migrant 'Illegality.'" *Latino Studies* 2 (2): 160–85.

———. 2013. "Spectacles of Migrant 'Illegality': The Scene of Exclusion, the Obscene of Inclusion." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36 (7): 1180–98. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2013.783710.

———. 2017. "The Incorrigible Subject: Mobilizing a Critical Geography of (Latin) America through the Autonomy of Migration." *Journal of Latin American Geography* 16 (1): 17–42. https://doi.org/10.1353/lag.2017.0007.

Dear, Michael, and Hëctor Manuel Lucero. 2005. "Postborder Cities, Postborder World: The Rise of Bajalta California." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 23 (3): 317–21. https://doi.org/10.1068/d2303ed.

Delgado Bernal, Dolores1, dolores.delgadobernal@utah.edu, Rebeca2 Burciaga, and Judith3 Flores Carmona. 2012. "Chicana/Latina Testimonios : Mapping the Methodological, Pedagogical, and Political." *Equity & Excellence in Education* 45 (3): 363–72. https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2012.698149.

DeRocher, Patricia. 2018. *Transnational Testimonios: The Politics of Collective Knowledge Production*. Decolonizing Feminisms. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Diamond, Jared M. 1999. *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*. 1st edition. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Diaz, Antonio Fuentes, and Guillermo Paleta Perez. 2015. "Violencia y autodefensas comunitarias en Michoacán, México." *Íconos - Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, no. 53 (September): 171–86. https://doi.org/10.17141/iconos.53.2015.1702.

Escobar, Agustin, Philip Martin, Peter Schatzer, and Susan Martin. 2003. "Mexico-US Migration: Moving the Agenda Forward." *International Migration* 41 (2): 125–37. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2435.00238.

Foucault, Michel, Mauro Bertani, Alessandro Fontana, François Ewald, and David Macey. 2003. *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76*. New York: Picador.

Forbis, Melissa M. 2016. "After Autonomy: The Zapatistas, Insurgent Indigeneity, and Decolonization." *Settler Colonial Studies* 6 (4): 365–84.https://doi.org/10.1080/2201473X.2015.1090531.

Galeano, Eduardo. 2010. *Las venas abiertas de América Latina*. Siglo XXI de España Editores.

Gamboa, Erasmo. 1987. "Braceros in the Pacific Northwest: Laborers on the Domestic Front, 1942-1947." *Pacific Historical Review* 56 (3): 378–98. https://doi.org/10.2307/3638664.

Gamboa, Erasmo Coronado, and Kevin Leonard. 2000. *Mexican Labor and World War II: Braceros in the Pacific Northwest, 1942-1947*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Gillespie, Kathryn, and Patricia J. Lopez, eds. 2019. Vulnerable Witness: The Politics of Grief in the Field. First edition. Oakland, California: University of California Press

Gilmore, Ruth Wilson. 2002. "Fatal Couplings of Power and Difference: Notes on Racism and Geography." The Professional Geographer 54 (1): 15–24. https://doi.org/10.1111/0033-0124.00310.

Gleeson, Shannon. 2010. "Labor Rights for All? The Role of Undocumented Immigrant Status for Worker Claims Making." *Law and Social Inquiry* 35 (3).

Golash-boza, Tanya. 2013. "Latino Immigrant Men and the Deportation Crisis: A Gendered Racial Removal Program." *Latino Studies* 11 (3): 271–92.

Gonzales, Richard. 2018. "Trump Administration To Open Temporary Tent Shelter In Texas For Migrant Children : NPR." NPR.Org. 2018. https://www.npr.org/2018/06/15/620543880/trump-administration-to-open-temporary-tent-shelter-in-texas-for-migrant-childre.

González, Juan. 2000. *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America*. New York: Viking.

Goodman, James. 2018. "WALLED IN: Immigration Detentions Are Way Up Under Trump." *Progressive*, January 18, 2018. http://progressive.org/api/content/675d9442-02c3-11e8-a548-121bebc5777e/.

Gregory, James N. 1991. Review of *Review of Mexican Labor and World War II: Braceros in the Pacific Northwest, 1942-1947*, by Erasmo Gamboa. *The American Historical Review* 96 (4): 1312–13. https://doi.org/10.2307/2165236.

Hahamovitch, Cindy. 1997. *The Fruits of Their Labor: Atlantic Coast Farmworkers and the Making of Migrant Poverty, 1870-1945*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Haraway, Donna. 1988. "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective." *Feminist Studies* 14 (3): 575–99.

Harris, Cheryl I. 1993. “Whiteness as Property.” *Harvard Law Review* 106 (8): 1707–91. https://doi.org/10.2307/1341787.

Herrera, Juan. 2016. “Racialized Illegality: The Regulation of Informal Labor and Space.” *Latino Studies* 14 (3): 320–43. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41276-016-0007-1.

Helsel, Phil. 2015. “No Charges for Pasco Police Officers Who Killed Antonio Zambrano-Montes.” *NBC News*, 2015. https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/no-charges-pasco-police-officers-who-killed-antonio-zambrano-montes-n424571.

hooks, bell. 1984. *Feminist Theory from Margin to Center*. Boston, MA: South End Press.

Humboldt, Alexander von. 1966. *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain*. New York: AMS Press.

———. 2008. *Belonging: A Culture of Place.* Hoboken: Taylor & Francis. http://www.123library.org/book_details/?id=82777.

Innes, Alexandria J. 2013. “International Migration as Criminal Behaviour: Shifting Responsibility to the Migrant in Mexico–US Border Crossings.” *Global Society* 27 (2): 237–60. https://doi.org/10.1080/13600826.2012.762342.

“IWGIA in Mexico.” n.d. Accessed April 1, 2018. https://www.iwgia.org/en/mexico.

Kobayashi, Audrey, Victoria Lawson, and Rickie Sanders. 2014. “A Commentary on the Whitening of the Public University: The Context for Diversifying Geography.” *Professional Geographer* 66 (2): 230–35. https://doi.org/10.1080/00330124.2012.735943.

Kohl-Arenas, Erica. 2015. *The Self-Help Myth: How Philanthropy Fails to Alleviate Poverty*. Oakland, California: University of California Press.

Luna, Jaime Martinez. 2015. “Comunalidad as the Axis of Oaxacan Thought in Mexico.” *Upside Down World* (blog). October 27, 2015. http://upsidedownworld.org/archives/mexico/comunalidad-axis-of-oaxacan-thought/.

Lawson, Victoria, Sapana Doshi, Antonadia Borges, Dia Da Costa, David Boarder Giles, Jim Glassman, Felipe Magalhaes, et al. 2018. *Relational Poverty Politics: Forms, Struggles, and Possibilities*. Edited by Heynen. Athens: University of Georgia Press.

León-Portilla, Miguel. 1990. *Aztec Thought and Culture: A Study of the Ancient Nahuatl Mind*. Translated by Jack Emory Davis. Revised ed. edition. University of Oklahoma Press.

Lipsitz, George. 2011. *How Racism Takes Place*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Maldonado Aranda, Salvador. 2012. “Drogas, Violencia y Militarización En El México Rural: El Caso de Michoacán.” *Revista Mexicana de Sociología* 74 (1): 5–39.

Martínez, Maria Elena. 2008. *Genealogical Fictions: Limpieza de Sangre, Religion, and Gender in Colonial Mexico*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

Martinez, Oscar, and Francisco Goldman. 2014. *The Beast: Riding The Rails And Dodging Narcos On The Migrant Trail*. Translated by Daniela Maria Ugaz and John Washington. Reprint edition. Verso.

Massey, Doreen B. 1994. *Space, Place, and Gender*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

McKittrick, Katherine, ed. 2015. *Sylvia Wynter: On Being Human as Praxis*. Durham: Duke University Press Books.

———. 2016. "Rebellion/Invention/Groove." *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism* 20 (1 (49)): 79–91. https://doi.org/10.1215/07990537-3481558.

McKittrick, Katherine, and Clyde Adrian Woods. 2007. *Black Geographies and the Politics of Place*. Toronto, Ont: Between the Lines ; Cambridge, Mass.

Menchú, Rigoberta, and Elisabeth Burgos-Debray. 1984. *I, Rigoberta Menchú: an Indian woman in Guatemala*. London: Verso.

Meráz Garcia, Martin. 2012. *Ordinary Individuals Who Become Narcotraffickers : A Theoretical & Interdisciplinary Approach to Drug Trafficking*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt Pub. Co.

Mignolo, Walter. 2011. *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*. Duke University Press.

Mignolo, Walter D. 2005. *The Idea of Latin America*. 1 edition. Malden, MA ; Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Mignolo, Walter D. 2012. *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking*. Princeton University Press.

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade, Ann Russo, and Lourdes Torres. 1991. *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Morrison, Carey-Ann, Lynda Johnston, and Robyn Longhurst. 2013. "Critical Geographies of Love as Spatial, Relational and Political." *Progress in Human Geography* 37 (4): 505–21. https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132512462513.

Mountz, Alison, and Jennifer Hyndman. 2006. "Feminist Approaches to the Global Intimate." *Women's Studies Quarterly* 34 (1/2): 446–63.

Muñoz, José Esteban. 1999. *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*. Cultural Studies of the Americas ; v. 2. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Munoz, Lorena. 2016. "Entangled Sidewalks: Queer Street Vendors in Los Angeles." *The Professional Geographer* 68 (2): 302–8.

Nevins, Joseph. 2002. *Operation Gatekeeper: The Rise of the "Illegal Alien" and the Making of the U.S.-Mexico Boundary*. New York: Routledge.

———. 2007. "Dying for a Cup of Coffee? Migrant Deaths in the US-Mexico Border Region in a Neoliberal Age." *Geopolitics* 12 (2): 228–47. https://doi.org/10.1080/14650040601168826.

Ngai, Mae M. 2004. *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Nguyen, Mimi Thi. 2012. *The Gift of Freedom: War, Debt, and Other Refugee Passages*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Paley, Dawn. 2014. *Drug War Capitalism*. Oakland, CA.: AK Press.

Peterson, Madelyn. 2012. “NEW REPORT: Impact of Secure Communities on Latinos and Local Law Enforcement in Eastern Washington.” 2012. http://www.walatinos.org/2012/02/impact-of-secure-communities-on-latinos-and-local-law-enforcement-in-eastern-washington/.

Pierce, Sarah, and Randy Capps. 2016. “Top 10 of 2016 – Issue #2: As Trump Takes Office, Immigration Enforcement and Policy Poised to Undergo Major Changes.” Migrationpolicy.Org. December 15, 2016. http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/top-10-2016-issue-2-trump-takes-office-immigration-enforcement-and-policy-poised-undergo.

“PolicyMap.” n.d. PolicyMap. Accessed May 29, 2019. https://www.policymap.com/.

Probert, Cameron. 2018a. “Immigration Agents Arrest Several People in Franklin County.” *Tri-Cityherald*, 2018. https://www.tri-cityherald.com/news/local/crime/article213934724.html.

———. 2018b. “This Basin City Woman Says ICE Arrested Her Mom to Get to Her Brother.” *Tri-Cityherald*, June 2018. https://www.tri-cityherald.com/news/local/article214001609.html.

Ross, Janell. n.d. “Immigrant Community on High Alert, Fearing Trump’s ‘deportation Force’ - Chicago Tribune.” Accessed February 23, 2017. http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/ct-immigrants-trump-deportation-force-20170211-story.html.

Rubin, Barry. 2014. *Silent Revolution: How the Left Rose to Political Power and Cultural Dominance*. Broadside e-books.

Rygiel, Kim. 2010. *Globalizing Citizenship*. Vancouver: University of Washington Press.

Said, Edward W. 1979. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books.

Said-Moorhouse, Lauren Said-Moorhouse. n.d. “Every Order Trump Has Signed and What His Actions Mean.” CNN. Accessed February 18, 2017. http://www.cnn.com/2017/01/26/politics/executive-orders-presidents-actions-presidential-memoranda/index.html.

Sánchez, Rosaura. 1995. *Telling Identities: The Californio Testimonios*. Minneapolis, Minn.: University of Minnesota Press.

Segato, Rita Laura, Anand Dacier, Rita Laura Segato, and Anand Dacier. 2005. “Território, soberania e crimes de segundo Estado: a escritura nos corpos das mulheres de Ciudad Juarez.” *Estudos Feministas* 13 (2): 265–285.

Semali, Ladislaus M. 2002. *What Is Indigenous Knowledge?: Voices from the Academy*. Routledge.

Sousa Santos, Boaventura de. 2012. “Public Sphere and Epistemologies of the South.” *Africa Development / Afrique et Développement* 37 (1): 43–67.

Sheppard, Eric S. 2009. *A World of Difference: Encountering and Contesting Development*. New York: Guilford Press.

Silvey, Rachel, and Victoria Lawson. 1999. “Placing the Migrant.” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 89 (1): 121.

Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake. 2017. *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance*. University of Minnesota Press. http://muse.jhu.edu/book/55843.

Smallwood, Stephanie E. 2008. *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora*. 1st Harvard University Press pbk. ed. Cambridge, Mass. ; London, Cambridge, MA ; London: Harvard University Press. http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=3300396.

Smith, Andrea, and J. Kēhaulani Kauanui. 2008. “Native Feminisms Engage American Studies.” *American Quarterly* 60 (2): 241–49. https://doi.org/10.1353/aq.0.0001.

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. 1999. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London; New York; Dunedin, N.Z.; New York: Zed Books ; University of Otago Press ; Distributed in the USA exclusively by St. Martin’s Press.

———. 2013. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Zed Books Ltd.

Sousa Santos, Boaventura de. 2015. *Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide*. Routledge.

Spade, Dean. 2011. *Normal Life: Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics, and the Limits of Law*. Brooklyn, NY: South End Press.

Sparke, Matthew. 2013. *Introducing Globalization: Ties, Tensions, and Uneven Integration*. 1st ed. Wiley-Blackwell.

Stang, John. 2018. “Pasco Police Criticized for Spanish Lesson from Border Patrol.” *Politics*, June 9, 2018. https://crosscut.com/2018/07/pasco-police-criticized-spanish-lesson-border-patrol.

Taube, Karl. 1996. “The Olmec Maize God: The Face of Corn in Formative Mesoamerica.” *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 29/30: 39–81.

Thien, Deborah. 2011. “Emotional Life.” In *A Companion to Social Geography*, edited by Vincent J. Del Casino, Mary E. Thomas, Paul Cloke, and Ruth Panelli, 309–25. Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444395211.ch18.

Torres, Rebecca Maria, and Melissa Wicks-Asbun. 2013. “Undocumented Students’ Narratives of Liminal Citizenship: High Aspirations, Exclusion, and ‘In-Between’ Identities.” *The Professional Geographer* 0 (0): null. https://doi.org/10.1080/00330124.2012.735936.

Urrea, Luis Alberto. 2004. *The Devil’s Highway: A True Story*. New York: Little, Brown.

Valencia, Yolanda. 2017. “Lo Que Duele Es Que La Gente Lo Cree: What Hurts Is That People Believe It.” *Journal of Latin American Geography* 16 (2): 183–86. https://doi.org/10.1353/lag.2017.0032.

Valencia, Yolanda. 2017. “Risk and Security on the Mexico-to-US Migrant Journey: Women’s Testimonios of Violence.” *Gender, Place & Culture* 24 (11): 1530–48. https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2017.1352566.

Vigil, James Diego. 1998. *From Indians to Chicanos: The Dynamics of Mexican-American Culture. Second Edition.* Waveland Press, Inc, POBox 400, Prospect Heights, IL 60070 $1795.

Villenas, Sofia A. 2015. "AESA 2012 Presidential Address 'What My Community Means To Me': Reimagining Civic Praxis With Latina/Chicana Feminisms." *Educational Studies* 51 (1): 72–84. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131946.2014.984811.

Walia, Harsha. 2014. *Undoing Border Imperialism*. New York: AK Press.

Walter A. Oberst. 1978. *Railroads, Reclamation and the River: A History of Pasco*. Pasco, Wash.: Franklin County Historical Society.

Walters, William. 2002. "Deportation, Expulsion, and the International Police of Aliens." *Citizenship Studies* 6 (3): 265–92.

"Washington State Report Card." n.d. Accessed May 13, 2017. http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/summary.aspx?schoolId=64&OrgType=4&reportLevel=District.

Weath, Dan. 2018. "Washington H-2A Guestworker Use Keeps Growing." Capital Press. 2018. http://www.capitalpress.com/Orchards/20180119/washington-h-2a-guestworker-use-keeps-growing.

Wilson, Bobby M. 2000. *America's Johannesburg: Industrialization and Racial Transformation in Birmingham*. Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Wilson, Shawn. 2009. *Research Is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*. F First Edition Used edition. Black Point, N.S: Fernwood Publishing Co., Ltd.

Wright, Melissa. 1998. "Maquiladora Mestizas and a Feminist Border Politics: Revisiting Anzaldua." *Hypatia* 13 (3): 114.

Wright, Melissa W. 2014. "The Gender, Place and Culture Jan Monk Distinguished Annual Lecture: Gentrification, Assassination and Forgetting in Mexico: A Feminist Marxist Tale." *Gender, Place & Culture* 21 (1): 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2014.882650.