

**Migration, Poverty, and Violence in Mexico:
The Role of *Casas de Migrantes***

*Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in International Development*

by

Jaime Alejandro Olayo Méndez

Campion Hall
University of Oxford

ABSTRACT

Migration, Poverty, and Violence in Mexico: The Role of *Casas de Migrantes*

Throughout the past three decades, poverty, violence, and assistance/care have emerged as three interrelated and self-reinforcing dynamics in the migration process in Mexico. However, the study of migration in Mexico has mostly focused on migrants' journeys or structural dynamics such as violence, neglecting a more systematic analysis of the relationships between migrants, humanitarian actors, contexts, and effects generated by their interactions. The role of poverty in migration processes and how humanitarian organizations function as migration intermediaries also remain underexplored in migration studies.

This study contributes toward filling this gap on the bases of an interdisciplinary theoretical framework and qualitative research conducted along migration routes in Mexico. The project explores different dynamics in the migration process by analysing the interactions between migrants and *casas de migrantes* (migrant shelters) in Mexico. It incorporates semi-structured interviews that include a multidimensional poverty measurement; in-depth interviews with migrants, humanitarian organizations, and other actors; and participant observations. Methodologically, *casas de migrantes* are an object of inquiry, the place where the interactions with migrants occur, and the space where the dynamics of poverty, violence, and assistance/care converge.

This study demonstrates how poor migrants use *casas de migrantes* as one of several resources to cope with hardship and precariousness during their journeys. At the same time, the study reveals how violence plays a significant role in migrants' journeys, leading them to seek safety in shelters. Thus, the main contributions of this research are the conceptualization of *casas de migrantes* as a type of humanitarianism that I call 'humanitarianism from below', and an understanding of the significant role the *casas de migrantes* play as migration intermediaries, which makes them part of the humanitarian governance architecture of migration in Mexico.

In memory of the 72 migrants who were massacred
in San Fernando, Tamaulipas (Mexico) in 2010,
and to all those migrants and refugees who have died
searching for a better life.

‘I am who I am because I have walked among you’.

Tenosique, 2015

En memoria de los 72 migrantes masacrados
en San Fernando, Tamaulipas (México) en 2010,
y a todos aquellos migrantes y refugiados que mueren
en busca de una vida mejor.

‘Soy lo que soy porque he caminado entre ustedes’.

Tenosique, 2015

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	VIII
ABBREVIATIONS	XI
LIST OF FIGURES	XII
LIST OF MAPS	XIV
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Migration and Humanitarian Aid in Mexico	5
1.2 Research Question and Contributions	10
1.3 The Transforming Nature of the Migration Process in Mexico	14
<i>Migration Routes</i>	15
<i>Central American Migrants</i>	18
<i>Deported Mexicans</i>	21
Refugees and the Emergence of a Mixed Flow	24
1.4 The Role of <i>Casas de Migrantes</i>	26
1.5 Argument and Structure of the Thesis	34
CHAPTER 2. MIGRATION, POVERTY, AND VIOLENCE: CASAS DE MIGRANTES IN THE THEORETICAL CONTEXT	39
2.1 Migration, Humanitarian Aid, and the Meso-level	40
<i>The Meso-level, Migration Journeys, and Casas de Migrantes</i>	40
Migration Industry(ies), Migration Intermediaries, and Brokerage	44
<i>What is Brokerage?</i>	48
2.2 Humanitarian Aid in Migration Contexts: Beyond Emergencies	51
Classical Approaches to Humanitarianism	52
<i>Humanitarian Crisis or Emergency</i>	53
Humanitarian Aid and Migration Contexts	57
2.3 The Role of Poverty in Migration Journeys	62
<i>Poverty as Multidimensional</i>	66
The Strategies of the Poor: 'An Economy of Makeshifts'	68
Networks, Social Capital, and Resources	72
2.4 The Larger Context of Violence in Central America and Mexico	75
<i>Violence in Central America</i>	76
<i>Violence in Mexico</i>	77
<i>Violent Pluralism</i>	79
Violence and Its Different Dimensions	80

2.5 Humanitarian Assistance as Welfare	83
<i>The Local Community</i>	84
Who Belongs: Identification and Control	86
Contemporary Notions of Welfare and Migration	88

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY, SAMPLE, AND REFLEXIVITY

93

3.1 Methods	93
<i>An Extended Fieldsite</i>	94
<i>A Mobile Method</i>	96
Sample, Operationalization, Research Techniques, and Data Analysis	98
3.2 Profiles of Interviewed Migrants	107
<i>Gender</i>	108
<i>Age</i>	110
<i>Country of Origin</i>	113
<i>Number of Attempts</i>	115
<i>The Case of Deported Mexicans</i>	118
3.3 Reflexivity	122

CHAPTER 4. DEVELOPMENT OF MIGRATION POLICIES IN MEXICO

128

4.1 Evolution of Migration Policies in Mexico	129
<i>Legal Framework</i>	129
<i>Regional Agreements</i>	137
Humanitarian Language, Control and Development	140
4.2 Relentless Control	143
Fixed Borders, Mobile borders, and Increasing Number of Detention Centres	143
<i>The Return</i>	149
4.3 Migration Policies in Practice	154
A Deportation and Containment Regime	154
Questions Regarding Citizenship and Context	156
<i>Zones of Confinement</i>	159

CHAPTER 5. ‘HUMANITARIANISM FROM BELOW’: CASAS DE MIGRANTES IN MEXICO

161

5.1 The Beginnings and Changing Nature of Casas de Migrantes	163
<i>Local Ethos and the Changing Nature of Casas de Migrantes</i>	165
<i>The Needs of Strangers</i>	171
5.2 The Emergence and Development of Casas de Migrantes	177
<i>Origins of a Migrant Shelter</i>	177
<i>Historical Development of Casas de Migrantes</i>	179
5.3 Fertile Ground: The Ongoing Work of Casas de Migrantes in Mexico	184
<i>A History of Social Commitment</i>	184
<i>Faith Matters</i>	187

5.4 Internal Dynamics of <i>Casas de Migrantes</i> in Mexico	194
<i>Everyday Life</i>	194
<i>Financing</i>	196
<i>Services</i>	197
5.5 Contestation, Alliance, and Institutionalization: The Relationship with the Mexican Government	200
<i>Contestation</i>	201
<i>Alliance</i>	205
<i>Institutionalization</i>	208
5.6 Humanitarian Aid in Practice	210
Spaces of Exception and Containment	210
<i>Humanitarian Governance in Mexico</i>	211
 CHAPTER 6. AN ‘ECONOMY OF MAKESHIFTS’: MIGRATION, POVERTY, AND THE STRATEGIES OF THE POOR	 213
6.1 The Poor Also Move	215
<i>Poverty</i>	217
‘ <i>Spark Money</i> ’	231
6.2 The Strategies of the Poor: An Economy of Makeshifts	234
<i>Begging</i>	236
<i>Delayed Activation of Networks</i>	241
<i>Sustaining Cash Transfers</i>	246
<i>The Body</i>	251
Conclusion	255
 CHAPTER 7. VIOLENCE: AN OMNIPRESENT THREAT	 259
7.1 Defining and Locating Violence in Migration Processes	261
<i>Defining Violence</i>	263
<i>Non-State Actors</i>	265
<i>State Actors</i>	275
An Omnipresent Threat: Violent Pluralism in Mexico	280
7.2 Dimensions of Violence and Its Normalization in the Migration Processes	281
<i>Everyday Violence</i>	282
<i>Structural Violence</i>	284
Legal Violence and the Failure to Protect	287
Power and the Normalization of Violence	291
7.3 The Effects of Violence in the Migration Process	293
Violence: Internal or External Dynamic, or Both?	293
Buffering Violence and the Search for ‘Pockets of Safety’	295
<i>Instrumentality of Violence</i>	297
Conclusion	298

CHAPTER 8. THE FUNCTIONAL RESPONSE OF <i>CASAS DE MIGRANTES</i>	302
8.1 Meso-level Dynamics: Facilitation, Control and Assistance/Care	304
<i>Facilitation</i>	305
<i>Control</i>	307
<i>Assistance/Care</i>	313
8.2 Brokering and Mediating in the Migration Process	314
<i>Local Communities</i>	315
<i>Local Government</i>	319
<i>International and Other Actors</i>	322
8.3 Double-Edged Sword: Between Welfare and Containment	325
<i>Resources Along the Way</i>	326
<i>Welfare and Containment</i>	328
Conclusion	336
 CHAPTER 9. CONCLUSION	 339
9.1 Key Findings	340
9.2 Limitations and Future Research	343
9.3 Advancing Meso-level Theory	347
<i>The Role of Poverty</i>	347
Functions of Migration Intermediaries	352
<i>The Significance of Brokerage</i>	353
Welfare and Humanitarian Governance	354
9.4 Relevance for Policy and Practice	356
 REFERENCES	 359

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

‘It takes a village to raise a child’.

— Unknown

This has been a long journey that started in Chicago, Illinois, where Dr Maria Vidal de Haymes guided and encouraged me to work with immigrants during my time in the School of Social Work at Loyola University Chicago. That is how I first got connected to humanitarian work in Mexico. Years later, I discovered myself as an immigrant in Spokane, Washington, a city that surprisingly became home. Then, my interest in and love for the topic of migration become more focused at the School of Theology and Ministry at Boston College. From there, it became clear that ministry among migrants was a special call within my own vocation as a Jesuit Catholic priest. That call brought me to the University of Oxford.

I owe my academic expertise to Dr Hein de Haas, who patiently challenged, guided, and helped me hone my academic skills. Dr Alexander Betts was always open for conversations and provided helpful insights at different stages in this process. Another key figure in this process was Dr Agnieszka Kubal, first as my supervisor during my MSc in Migration Studies work, and later as an assessor of my doctoral work. She became a friend who was a sounding board, a compass for direction, and a beacon of light at critical points in this process. To them I am deeply grateful.

I believe that collaboration and conversation must be a key feature in academic work. During this project, I benefited from the expertise, knowledge, and insight of many people. I owe recognition for insights about my research and support along the way to: Dr Julien Brachet and Dr Mathias Czaika, who read and assessed my work at different stages; to Dr Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Dr Susan Snyder, who supported me in the early part of doctoral applications; and to Dr Maryanne Loughry, who has been a great supporter and friend through all these years – I hope that we will be able to collaborate again in the future. Dr Ruben Andersson always had his door open for me, and his keen ear and feedback helped me to continue along this journey. Thanks to Dr Noelle Brigden for reading different iterations of my work, especially on violence, and for joining me in the adventure of training other Jesuits on migration and refugee issues; to Dr Priscilla Solano, for her support and feedback, especially for being part of a workshop in Oxford, in the LASA panels, and a conference in Lund University; to Dr Joris Schapendonk, for feedback about the role of *casas de migrantes* in the migration process. My gratitude to Dr Carlos Vargas-Silva, for his comments on the chapter on poverty; to Dr Maria Vidal de Haymes at LUC, and Dr Kathleen Coll and Dr Louis Lorentzen, both at USF, for their feedback at different conferences and for their unconditional support; to Dr Eveline Ersanilli, for giving me a solid foundation on research methods; and to Dr Gunvor Jonsson, for those conversations on violence. Finally, my thanks to Sabina Barone for her feedback on different chapters – I know you will be great at UCL. And to Geraldine Adiku for her comments on remittances and for being such a great colleague all these years.

I became interested in the role of poverty in migration thanks to my contact with the Oxford Poverty and Development Initiative (OPHI). I thank Dr Sabina Alkire, Dr Gisela Robles, Dr Bilal Malaeb, and Mihika Chatterjee for their support in designing my survey, helping me process my dataset, and for sharing feedback on my findings. Mihika, I am deeply grateful for those hours you spent helping me make sense of my data and for making suggestions about ways to present my results.

I thank those scholars who I have shared panels with at different conferences, especially LASA 2015 and 2016; ISA 2016; and a couple of conferences on Migration and Theology in Oxford, as well as those comments from the DPhil seminar at the ODID in Oxford.

During my field work, I had wonderful support from Arturo Gonzalez, SJ and the team at *Servicio Jesuita a Migrantes*. At La 72, Fr Tomas, Fr Aurelio, Ramon, Emely, and all the volunteers always made me feel at home – thank you for welcoming me. At the shelter in San Luis Potosi, I want to recognize Geraldine, Lupita, Fr Ruben, and the rest of the team. Thanks for your testimony and support -- I always felt loved during the time I got to work with you. At the Albergue Decanal Guadalupano in Reynosa, Sor Nidelvia, Sor Maria Luisa, Sor Ligia, Sor Carmen, and the team – thank you for your generosity and commitment. You always encouraged me to focus on the task at hand. Norma Romero and Las Patronas, your work always reminded me of what matters in life. Thank you. Maria de los Dolores Palencia, I am eternally grateful for your support. You always reminded me why getting this degree was important.

My nieces and nephews were of great support as research assistants when I needed to transcribe hours and hours of interviews. Adolfo and Ceci Méndez Ayala, Rebeca Méndez Ramírez, Fernanda Méndez Díaz, Paola Gonzalez, Andrea Martínez – your support has been invaluable. Keep looking for those things that fire up your heart, and work for them. Also, keep in mind the responsibility that we have toward others.

Academic work also benefits from a different set of eyes to support us in making knowledge more accessible. I thank Adrian Danker, SJ and Jayme Stayer, SJ for their support and proofreading of my work in Boston and part of my work in Oxford. I thank Joe Munitiz, SJ, Gerard Hughes, SJ, and Rob Marsh, SJ for patiently and generously reading my work. Maria Soriano, thank you very much for your patience and watchful eye to proofread early versions of my work and to help me with a review of the whole project. Jorge Picasso, thank you for your support with the graphic work in this project.

The Jesuits of UWE gave me the freedom and support to pursue this for the sake of those who suffer. I have always seen getting this degree as part of my mission. Thanks to the Jesuits of the Mexican Province for their welcome during my fieldwork. With them, I look for deeper collaboration. Thanks to the Jesuit Province in the UK – your generosity is exemplary. I am grateful for the care, nurturing, and supportive environment you provided for me during these years. Thanks to Campion Hall and all of its staff. I have really enjoyed being part of a vibrant academic community. Thanks to my Jesuit brothers at Campion and abroad. I am grateful because you responded to me and supported me very well during my highs and lows.

Thanks to all the migrants and refugees who were willing to give me an interview. I am indebted to all of you for your contributions to my research. I will try my best to give voice to your experiences and stories. I wish the best for all of you.

Finally, to the three most important women in my life: Li, Lina, and Chanita (La Bonita). I have no words to express how much you mean to me and how much I love each of you. I will be forever grateful to you for the freedom you have given me to live my vocation. It is because of your love and example that I have become who I am today.

ABBREVIATIONS

CEPMH	Comisión Episcopal para La Pastoral de La Movilidad Humana (Episcopal Commission for Human Mobility Ministries)
CGCSEV Veracruz	Coordinación General de Comunicación Social del Estado de (Social Communication Office of The State of Veracruz)
CIDH	Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos (Interamerican Commission for Human Rights)
CNDH	Comisión Nacional de Los Derechos Humanos México (National Commission for Human Rights (Mexico))
DPMH	Dimensión Pastoral de La Movilidad Humana (Pastoral Ministry of Human Mobility)
FN	Field Note
IDI	In-depth Interview
INM	Instituto Nacional de Migración (Migration Institute)
IOM	International Organization for Migration
OA	Other Actors
REDODEM	Red de Documentación de las Organizaciones Defensoras de Migrantes (Documentation Network of Organizations for the Defense of Migrants)
SEGOB	Secretaría de Gobernación Mexico Department of State
SD	Shelter Director
SS	Scoping Study

LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 1. Number of migrants detained by Mexican and American Migration Authorities between 1995-2015
- Figure 2. Mexicans Deported from the United States from 2000-2013
- Figure 3. Applications for Refugee Status vs people Recognized as Refugees. Data from 2007 – 2017
- Figure 4. Dimensions and Indicators of the Multidimensional Poverty Index
- Figure 5. Comparison of Migrants by Gender Among Interviewees, Migrants Detained by INM, and Migrants Registered by REDODEM
- Figure 6. Migrants Interviewed, Organized According to Age
- Figure 7. Comparison of Migrants by Nationality Among Interviewees, Migrants Detained by INM and Migrants registered by REDODEM
- Figure 8. Comparison of Migrants Interviewed by Country of Origin and Number of Attempts.
- Figure 9. Comparison of Migrants Interviewed, organized by Country of Origin and Previous Experience with Living in The United States
- Figure 10. Checkpoint along an interstate road in Southern Mexico. On the left is a vehicle from INM (Migration Institute) and on the right, a federal police vehicle
- Figure 11. Deported Mexicans arriving at the INM Reception Centre in Reynosa, Tamaulipas
- Figure 12. Multidimensional Poverty Levels and Deprivations among Interviewed Migrants
- Figure 13. Multidimensional Poverty Levels, Head Count Ratio (H) and Intensity Among Poor Interviewed Migrants by Gender
- Figure 14. Multidimensional Poverty Levels, Head Count Ratio (H) and Intensity Across Poor Interviewed Migrants by Age Group
- Figure 15. Multidimensional Poverty Levels, Head Count Ratio (H), and Intensity Across the Poor Interviewed Migrants, organized by Country
- Figure 16. Multidimensional Poverty Levels, Head Count Ratio (H) and Intensity Across the Poor. Global MPI Figures vs Interviewed Migrants by Country

Figure 17. Median Amount of Money at Departure in USD, Organized by Gender, Age Group, and Country of Origin

Figure 18. Strategies of an ‘Economy of Makeshifts’ and Strategies used by poor migrants to cope with hardship during their journeys

Figure 19. Countries Sending Cash Transfers

LIST OF MAPS

- Map 1. Mainland Routes Used by Migrants from Central America and Other Countries and Returning Points for Deportees.
- Map 2. Humanitarian Aid Actors Along Migration Routes in Mexico Until 2017
- Map 3. Location of The *Casas de Migrantes* Where I Conducted Fieldwork
- Map 4. *Estaciones Migratorias* (Migration Stations/Detention Centres) in Mexico in 2013
- Map 5. *Casas de Migrantes* in Mexico Until 2005
- Map 6. *Casas de Migrantes* in Mexico Until 2009
- Map 7. *Casas de Migrantes* in Mexico Until 2012

Chapter 1. Introduction

Rebeca

Rebeca, a 21-year-old woman, left her hometown in Honduras with her young daughter and 400 USD for the journey. She looked confused and fearful when we sat down. She tried to focus on our conversation the moment her little girl searched her lap for comfort. Rebeca's intended destination was Chicago, where her daughter's uncle lives. He promised to help us, Rebeca said: 'he said that he would find a way to help me once I get to Mexico City'. After spending some time at one of the shelters in southern Mexico, she lost her daughter's birth certificate and was considering returning to Honduras to get a new one. She said, 'I do not know if I have to leave my daughter with the people here at the shelter'.

Rebeca entered Mexico with some instructions given to her by a friend. She got to the shelter in Comitán, Chiapas after asking some people to recommend a place where she could receive help because she lost all her money. During the interview, Rebeca said that she had no idea how to get to Mexico City and was unsure of whether or not her contact in Chicago would help her. She said, 'I do not think he will fail me. He would not have let me start this dangerous journey just to leave me hanging with no help. But, I really do not know'. During her journey, Honduran officials asked her for 200 USD to let her leave the country with her daughter. Guatemalan migration officers also asked her for 500 quetzales (65 USD) to let her cross to Mexico. The rest of her money was used for transportation and food along the way. Describing some of the difficulties she encountered, Rebeca said:

They asked me for money because they saw me with my little girl. [...] At the beginning, I had my daughter's birth certificate and her baptism certificate [sometimes in Latin America this document serves as proof of nationality or identification]. [...] My daughter was playing with some papers and she ripped and destroyed those documents. Now, I do not have any document proving that she is my daughter. I am worried that if I continue the journey and they ask for identification, police can take away my daughter. I am thinking about asking a cousin I have back in my hometown to get a copy of the birth certificate and to send it to me. The other option I am thinking about is to leave my daughter here at the shelter and go back to get the document myself. (Rebeca, SS Comitán 1)

Rebeca was moving with the hope (even if uncertain) that she would receive help. However, she did not have a clear picture or plan for how to reach their intended destination. In addition, she had been the prey of governmental officers not only from Mexico, but also from neighbouring countries. Embarking on a migration journey for the first time and traveling with a small girl makes her journey even more difficult. The loss of her daughter's identification papers increased her vulnerability because she could be accused of kidnapping or smuggling if detained by Mexican authorities. Rebeca was standing at the shelter's door with her little girl in arms, when I left the shelter. Her eyes were filled with uncertainty and fear. A long road to her final destination awaited her.

Jorge

Jorge, a 32-year-old migrant, was born in Honduras but grew up in the United States and fathered two children there. He was initially deported from the United States in 2004, journeyed back to the U.S. in 2006, and was deported a second time in 2008. He tried another journey in 2009, but only reached the city of Puebla in Central Mexico, where he decided to remain for a while. He voluntarily left Mexico in 2010 to go back to Honduras, and in March of 2015, he was attempting another

journey back to Minnesota in the U.S. where one of his children lives. He left Honduras with 175 USD.

He was resting at a shelter located in Huixtla, Chiapas, 80 kilometres from the border of Guatemala, when I interviewed him. He had been on the road for eight days. Unable to take a shower upon arriving to the shelter, he was sweaty and dusty from the road. He also looked very tired. While he was familiar with the journey, he was also aware of how dangers and migration controls had changed dramatically since the last time he traveled. He said: '*el camino es mucho más peligroso* [the road is much more dangerous this time]. [...] I was robbed in Ciudad Hidalgo [at the border] by police and other people. I lost almost all I had with me'. After being robbed, Jorge had to rely on other strategies to cope with hardship. He managed to communicate with her mother in the U.S. and she sent him some money. He said:

I reached the town of Tapachula and I slept in the park. There, my mother, who lives in the United States, sent me 30 USD and I was able to rent a dump [a small room] for a couple of days. I reached the town of Huixtla riding a *combi* [public transportation]. [...] The shelters are the best thing that the government could have done [migrant shelters are not sponsored by the Mexican government]. I am not sure if it is *Grupos Beta* or who is doing it. They are a tremendous help to the migrants. Remember that migrants do not bring money. Some do not even have bread to eat along the road, others have only water. Furthermore, some may eat mangos that you can find on the trees because they do not have money to buy food. I have slept in the park, but with these places [referring to the shelters] at least we have a place where we can sleep. (Jorge, SS Huixtla 7)

Jorge recognized that no journey is alike. Even when he had previous knowledge of the migration routes, he still encountered challenges and precariousness. With little money available, staying at shelters was only one of the strategies he said he would rely on for the rest of the journey. Reynosa, his intended crossing point into the United States, was 3,840 kilometres far away. It was almost one o'clock in the afternoon

when we finished our conversation. He got up, looked around and walked towards a shaded corner at the shelter, threw his backpack to the floor and got ready to rest a bit more before lunch. He knew there was a long road ahead.

Las Patronas

For more than 20 years, a group of women known as Las Patronas have been offering relief to migrants who ride a cargo train identified as *La Bestia*. This train comes from southern Mexico and has been a mode of transportation for poor Central American migrants attempting to reach the United States for many years. The number of people riding the train has changed through the years, but not Las Patronas' desire to help them. On the busiest days, they have cooked 300 meals and put them in plastic bags, filled a similar number of plastic bottles with water, and carried them to the train tracks, where they tossed the sustenance to migrants riding on top of the cargo train as it passes through the small town of Guadalupe (La Patrona) in the state of Veracruz.

When these women started their work, they cooked in several of their houses. 'It was difficult to manage' said Norma, the leader of the group. 'We cooked as much as possible, but often we did not have enough for the people riding the train'. As the group grew, Las Patronas' capacity to cook more meals did as well. For awhile, the group restrained from becoming a non-governmental organization (NGO) because they wanted to preserve their original spirit and motivation. 'We do not want to lose the spirit of this work, which is seeing God suffering in these poor migrants. If we become an NGO we will be having other things to do and we will not be focusing on helping these migrants', Norma explained. However, in 2015, they finally became an NGO. Since then, they have been able to grow, establishing a soup kitchen and a

small shelter to aid injured migrants. They have also become a prominent advocacy group for migrants in Mexico.

Still, Norma's words from our first interview capture the initial spirit of many of the groups that have emerged along migration paths in Mexico. While recounting the beginnings of the group and their motivations to aid migrants she said: 'As the freight train was passing, they kept shouting at us from the top of the wagons – "Give us the bread! Give us the bread! We are hungry!" The clamour was such that we could not do otherwise. We threw them the bread we were carrying'.

1.1 Migration and Humanitarian Aid in Mexico

In 2017, there were 74 groups and NGOs — many of them faith-based — supporting migrants, deportees, and refugees in Mexico. The core mission of many of these organizations is to care for vulnerable migrants and refugees, as well as to advocate for their human rights. These groups often emerge as local initiatives and are commonly known as *casas de migrantes* (migrant shelters) or *albergues* (shelters). Sometimes they flourish, grow, and expand their services; other times these organizations struggle to remain open to provide basic services. The number of shelters has grown since the late 1980s due to increasing violence and migration controls throughout the country. They have grown not only in numbers but also in the services provided to migrants, which have required adjustments due to the changing profiles of the migrants over the years. Some migrants hear about the shelters before starting their journeys, while others learn about them during their journeys. Migrants recognize the usefulness of these humanitarian spaces by using them as resources along the way, as long as it is convenient for their trajectory or when the migrants are

in dire need. While staying in these temporary safe spaces, the migrants consider their next moves forward — although sometimes these options can be either to return to the country of origin or to remain in Mexico.

Mexico has long been known as an emigration country. In the past three decades, it has also become an important transit country for U.S.-bound migrants from Central America, mostly from Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras, due to push/pull economic factors, family reunification arrangements, and emerging patterns of displacement because of increasing levels of violence (Rodríguez Chávez 2016; Pederzini et al 2015; IOM 2012; CNDH 2011: 5; Imaz 2011: 454; Amnesty International 2010: 5; Casillas 2008: 141–142). Furthermore, Mexico has become a new immigrant destination as more migrants in transit are unable to enter the United States and as the number of people seeking refugee status has increased (Pederzini et al. 2015; Cave 2013; Durand 2011: 459; SEGOB 2011). According to official and unofficial data, the number of Central American migrants passing through Mexico on their way to the U.S. ranges from 150,000 to 450,000 a year (Rodríguez Chávez 2016; CNDH 2011: 3–5; Casillas 2008: 143; IOM 2012b). Furthermore, migration patterns in Mexico also reflect the number of Mexicans deported from the United States who are returning to the country with diverse social circumstances and needs. According to statistics from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the number of deported Mexicans has remained around 270,000 between 2011- 2016 (United States. Department of Homeland Security 2017).

In recent years, the main routes used by migrants have seen increases in violence, risk, and cost. These changes result from stricter immigration policies, an increase in border control — both in Mexico and the U.S. — and a rise in criminal

activity along migratory routes (Kimball 2007; CNDH 2009, 2011; Rosales Sandoval 2013: 216–217; Sørensen 2013: 238–240). The increase in immigration control relates to the Mexican government's efforts to present Mexico as a modern country that is able to maintain order of and control its migration flows (SEGOB 2013; Kimball 2007: 42–45). These efforts have been reinforced through the changes in the Mexican migration laws and framed within the National Development Plan 2013–2018 (SEGOB 2013, 2011). The increase in criminal activity is partially due to an overlap between the migratory routes and the routes used by drug traffickers and criminal gangs, since occasionally, drug traffickers and migrants use the same main or secondary roads to move through the country (Casillas 2008: 143–146; Casillas 2006; CNDH 2009; Rosales Sandoval 2013: 216–217; Sørensen 2013: 238–240, 250–254). Similar rises in violence and risk have been seen at the border cities where Mexicans arrive after deportation, consistent with a general increase of violence in Mexico where different groups (organized crime, drug cartels, and criminal gangs) use those means to preserve their particular agendas. Their goal is not to overtake the state, but rather to constrain its intervention so the groups can continue their illicit operations. Often these groups collude with government officials and local police (Arias and Goldstein 2010; Santamaría 2015).

As a result of the violence and the precarious conditions for the migrants during their journeys or after deportation, humanitarian aid organizations — shelters, soup kitchens, and human rights organizations — managed by local NGOs have emerged to assist and advocate for migrants and deportees. In this document, to give variety to the prose, I will refer to these groups and organizations as *casas de migrantes*, *albergues*, migrant shelters, or simply as shelters. The *casas de migrantes* offer a combination of humanitarian aid consisting of food, shelter, first aid, and

educational instruction both in human rights and in practical matters of health and safety (DPMH 2012: 54–55). Slowly, these humanitarian groups have gained prominence and have impacted the Mexican political landscape. For instance, Father Alejandro Solalinde, director of the shelter *Hermanos en el Camino* (Brotherhood along the Road) and Norma Romero, leader of *Las Patronas*, received the Mexican Human Rights National Award in 2012 and 2013, respectively. Other shelters have received state awards for their work among migrants like FM4 Paso Libre (FM4 Free Transit) a shelter in Guadalajara in western Mexico; Casa de la Caridad Hogar del Migrante (Charity House, Home for the Migrant) in San Luis Potosi, Central Mexico; or Posada Belén (Belen Shelter) in Saltillo, which is in northern Mexico. In addition, some shelters, like La 72 in Tenosique, Tabasco have become prominent advocates for refugees arriving from Central American countries.

Migration research has largely concentrated on its impact on origin or destination contexts and neglected the study of migration processes, which refers to those factors and interactions that lead to migration and influence its course (Giorguli-Saucedo, García-Guerrero, and Masferrer 2016; Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2014; de Haas 2010a; Massey et al 2008; Skeldon 1997; Singer and Massey 1998). Within the analysis of actors and structures that sustain, facilitate, and control migration, the focus has been mostly on social relations, collectives, social networks, and the formation of social and symbolic capital (Faist 1997: 196–203). More recently, concepts like ‘migration industry’, which commonly refer to individuals, organizations, and other actors who provide services that facilitate and sustain international migration (Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2014: 235; Hernández-León 2008: 24, 154), try to capture the ways intermediate actors shape and structure migration patterns (Gammeltoft-Hansen and Nyberg-Sørensen 2013: 3–7). As more

empirical evidence has been gathered, it has become clearer that the conceptualization of the migration industry, as it stands now, does not fully analyse other actors that also play key roles in migration processes, such as humanitarian groups and organizations providing aid outside of emergency settings (Gammeltoft-Hansen and Nyberg-Sørensen 2013; Sezgin and Dijkzeul 2013). Hence, the role of humanitarian actors and an exploration of the relationship between humanitarian aid and migration remain evident gaps in the existing migration studies literature.

In the case of Mexico, migration scholars have documented and analysed the experiences of Central Americans crossing the country, as well as the experiences of deported Mexicans arriving at cities along the border with the United States. Among others, Vogt (2012) and Brigden (2013) analysed the violence and exploitation migrants experience and the ways these experiences shape their journeys; Silva-Quiroz (2014) looked at the ways migration policies have affected the journeys of Central Americans; and Sládovák (2007) conducted a psychosocial analysis of the journeys of Honduran migrants to the United States. Examining the border between Mexico and the United States, Sanchez (2011), Martinez (2013), and Slack (2015) documented the experiences of migrants at the crossing point, explaining the interplay between violence, smuggling, and deportation contexts. These studies provide significant insights into the journeys of migrants and migration dynamics in Mexico, but their focus remains mostly on the migrants' experiences. Furthermore, several of these studies have collected data and conducted participant observations at different *casas de migrantes*, but with the growing number of shelters providing aid, few (Manenti 2002 and Solano 2017) have looked more deeply into the roles these humanitarian spaces play as intermediaries in the migration process in Mexico. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the role of humanitarian actors in

the migration process by analysing the interactions between migrants and *casas de migrantes* throughout Mexico and by focusing on three concurrent and self-reinforcing dynamics: Poverty, violence, and care (humanitarian aid).

1.2 Research Question and Contributions

The main research question addressed in this dissertation is: How and to what extent do poverty, violence, and the interactions between migrants and humanitarian aid organizations shape the migration processes within the larger regional socio-political context of Central American countries, Mexico, and the United States?

I consider interactions to be those instances where behaviours of individuals, groups, or institutions are mutually and consciously recognized, influencing the actions of the parts involved (Turner 1988: 13–16; Scheinkman 2008). Interactions have three interrelated aspects: motivational (actors' motives to engage or disengage in social relations); relational (the social exchange); and structural (repetition of the influenced behaviour) (Turner 1988: 13-16). More concretely, interactions could be understood as the composite of awareness, perception, relationship, and mutual influence between different individuals or organizations (Clark and Robboy 1992: 1–5; Chandler and Munday 2011). Also, while this study focuses on exploring migratory routes in Mexico, migration patterns in Mexico will be seen within the larger regional context of Central American countries, Mexico, and the United States (Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2014: 135-137). The migration processes in Mexico are not limited to journeys occurring within Mexico's political boundaries; many migration journeys through Mexico start well beyond the southern Mexican boundaries or in the

deportation processes from the United States. A deeper understanding of the migration journeys must acknowledge these contexts and the ways they can affect migration patterns. In this study, I consider ‘migrants’ those nationals from Central American, Mexico, and other countries who cross Mexico with the intention to enter the United States. In this conceptualization of ‘migrants’ I also include Mexican deportees from the United States because their presence complements the migration patterns in Mexico, especially those who interact with humanitarian organizations.

The reasons for conducting research along migratory routes in Mexico are threefold: First, the investigation permits the study of migration processes. This includes migration journeys that may be multidirectional, as well as an understanding of internal and external dynamics that shape and reshape the migration process. Second, the socio-political context in Mexico offers elements that help to analyse causes that may increase the costs of migration and the ways migrants and other actors mobilize resources to advance migration projects. Third, the project provides an occasion to interrogate and advance the theoretical approaches of meso-level structures (individuals, groups, and/or institutions) and the ways these facilitate, control, and assist migration processes, especially the role of humanitarian actors in transit countries beyond the classical settings of emergency situations and asylum and the emergence of what I call ‘humanitarianism from below’, which has become an integral part of the migration process in Mexico.

At a theoretical level, this research project belongs to the meso-level of analysis (Faist 1997: 187-217, 2000: 96-123; Castles, de Haas and Miller 2014: 39-46). It will contribute to the development of migration theory focusing on intermediate structures and internal and external migration dynamics, as well as

external feedback mechanisms of migration processes (Faist 1997: 187-217, 2000: 96-123; Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2014: 39-46). Migration feedback mechanisms are those instances that ‘explain why once started, migration processes tend to become partly self-perpetuating, leading to the formation of migrant networks and migration systems’ (de Haas 2010: 1587). Furthermore, this work contributes to our understanding of humanitarianism (Barnett 2005; Barnett and Weiss 2010; Calhoun 2010), humanitarian governance (Fassin 2012: 1-15), and the role migration intermediaries play in it.

The theoretical framework engages with literature on migration intermediaries and the migration industry (Agunias 2009; Cranston, Schapendonk, and Spaan 2017; Gammeltoft-Hansen and Nyberg-Sørensen 2013; Spener 2009; Hernández-León 2008) to analyse the role of *casas de migrantes*; considers scholarship on migration and development (Skeldon 1997; de Haas 2010b; Siddiqui 2012; Castles and Delgado Wise 2007), multidimensional poverty (Sen 1999; Alkire, Foster, et al 2015a), and the history of relief to the poor (King and Tomkins 2003; Hindle 2003; Hufton 1974) to analyse the role of poverty in migration journeys; and utilizes studies from Galtung (1969); Farmer (1996, 2004); Bourgois (2001), Menjívar and Abrego (2012), and Arias and Goldstein (2010) to gain insight into the ways violence impacts the migration process. Finally, literature on humanitarianism (Fassin 2012; Barnett 2011; Calhoun 2010; Barnett and Weiss 2008a; Barnett 2005) and welfare (Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman 2011; Faist et al 2015; Levitt et al 2016) supports the theoretical framing of the emergence of humanitarian aid in Mexico that is both an informal welfare system and part of the humanitarian governance of migrants in Mexico.

At the empirical level, what is at stake is understanding the relationship between migrants and humanitarian actors along migration routes in Mexico, as well as the role of poverty and violence that serve as a context for the migration process in Mexico. Migrants and deportees, who use shelters, are among those with the least resources. Also, the context where they move includes high levels of violence and increasing state control and surveillance, as well as many humanitarian actors trying to alleviate their distress. Thus, on the one hand, it is necessary to consider the role poverty plays in migrants' journeys which leads migrants to seek and interact with humanitarian organizations. Methodologically, I used the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) (Alkire, Foster, et al. 2015) to measure levels of poverty and to offer a different analysis of poverty which is not based on income. On the other hand, violence and care/assistance emerge as dynamics influencing the migration process in Mexico. Analysis of these dynamics provides insight into the context under which the relationship between migrants and humanitarian actors occurs. Hence, *casas de migrantes* appear not only as a subject of inquiry, deeply interrelated to poverty and violence, but also as the place where the interactions with migrants happen and where data was collected.

In addition, to the main research question, I address other important secondary questions in this project: From their perspective, how do migrants perceive and use aid and advocacy efforts along the migratory routes? How do they integrate or ignore these resources when it comes to their social networks? Do the resources become part of their social capital? From the perspective of humanitarian organizations, I explore the NGOs' perceptions of the migrants, and inquire, how do NGOs adjust their missions to the migrants' needs? How do they perceive their role in the regional socio-political context? What is the role of the faith-based component in the NGOs' work?

1.3 The Transforming Nature of the Migration Process in Mexico

Initially, scholarship about migration patterns in Mexico concentrated on the Mexico-U.S. border regions and focused on Mexican migration to the U.S. The analysis of the ‘other border’ emerged later, but the focus was mostly on regional migration patterns between Mexico and Guatemala (Vogt 2017). Studies documenting Central American migration in Mexico appeared in the early 1980s with the increasing visibility of irregular Central American migrants in Mexico (Basok et al 2015: 7-8).

Many of the works that document the movement of Central Americans through Mexico conceptualize it as transit migration. However, scholars contest the nature of transit migration as a fixed pattern, as well as its meaning, usefulness, and appropriateness (Sørensen 2006; Papadopoulou-Kourkoula 2008; Collyer, Düvell, and de Haas 2011; Düvell 2010; Collyer and de Haas 2011; Brachet 2012a). This debate emerges because the concept can present a linear, unidirectional, and simplistic understanding of migration that goes through departure, transit, and destination points (Basok et al. 2015: 9; Schapendonk 2012: 121; Brachet 2012b: 97). Furthermore, other scholars have emphasized the fact that migration journeys evolve and change according to the migrants’ aspirations and circumstances along their journeys (Schapendonk 2009, 2012; Collyer 2007). Changes in migrants’ journeys — either by factors related to their social networks or external factors like violence or migration control — can lead them to become immobile, stranded, stocked, blocked, or stagnant, or to permanently settle (Collyer 2007; Schapendonk 2014). In the case of Mexico, Arriola (2012) and Rivas Castillo (2010) have discussed processes leading Central

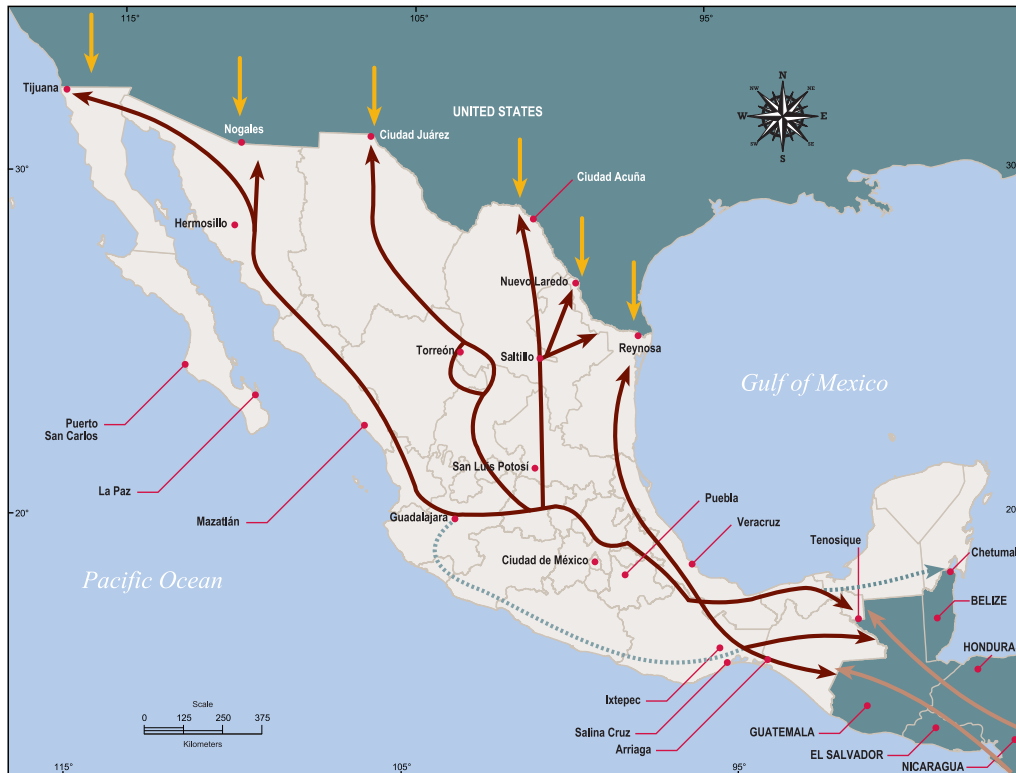
American migrants to settle there, revealing a growing trend of Central American immigration into Mexico.

Return and circular migration are often seen as separate processes in their own right because of the complexities and scope that they may entail, like in Europe (Brachet 2012a). However, the process of deported Mexicans arriving at different towns at the border between Mexico and the U.S. must be considered because at the heart of this work is the relationship between migrants — Central Americans and deported Mexicans — and humanitarian organizations in Mexico. With the increasing numbers of Mexican migrants returning or being returned from the U.S., research on various profiles of these migrants has appeared (Gandini et al 2015). Thus, considering deported migrants provides a deeper understanding of the current migration patterns in Mexico.

Migration Routes

Within Mexico, there are well-known and much-travelled routes that irregular migrants follow on their way to the United States. Mappings of those routes often coincide with the infrastructure of freight trains that run from the southern end of Mexico to the northern end, as well as with the road infrastructure (Casillas 2008; FN Reynosa, January 20 2016). Local humanitarian organizations and migration authorities can also map different migrant foot trails throughout the country (FN September 2014 - January 2016). Over the years, the routes have been used, developed, and maintained by networks of Salvadorans, Guatemalans, and, most recently, Honduran migrants (Rodríguez Chávez 2014; Sørensen 2013: 238–239). Map 1 below shows these routes and indicates the main cities where Mexicans are deported from the United States.

Irregular Central American migrants and migrants of other origins are especially visible and vulnerable along migratory routes because they often use the cargo train system to travel through Mexico (See Map 1) (Hagan 2006: 1554–1561; Sørensen 2013: 246–247). An increase in violence, extortion, kidnapping, mutilation, death, and accidents add to the already physically exhausting experience of traveling on top of freight trains (CNDH 2009; Rosales Sandoval 2013: 216–217; Sørensen 2013: 238–240; Rodríguez 2016; Vogt 2017). The increase in violence mainly resulted from the so-called ‘war on drugs’ declared in 2006 during former President Felipe Calderón’s mandate, as well as the rise of other criminal actors with particular agendas (Morton 2012). Furthermore, other social and political factors have contributed to a generalized climate of violent events, like the disappearance of 43 teacher trainees in the state of Guerrero or the increasing number of *feminicidios* (female killings) in different states (Amnesty International 2017: 250–254; Rodríguez 2016; CIDH 2015).



Map 1. Mainland Routes Used by Migrants from Central America and Other Countries and Returning Points for Deportees.
Sources: Adaptation from Casillas (2006) and Own Creation.

Casillas (2008) has indicated that both main and secondary migration routes exist and that these could be differentiated by functional distinctions such as long or short, safe, economical, alternative, or any possible combination. Migrants or smugglers may use parts of a main route and then take other parts through secondary paths. Their choice of direction depends on a series of factors that range from preference, to criminal activity, to migration control. Often, migrants may take diversions only to return to the original pathway once the migration control of the threat of criminal gangs has been averted. Another significant consideration is that routes may be used by other groups for different purposes. Thus, migrant trajectories may overlap with drug trafficking routes and/or those regularly used by the general public.

Overland paths are the most used and freight trains are the most frequently chosen mode of transportation by migrants with the least resources. Land routes are narrow in the southeast because of Mexico's geography, but diversify from central Mexico onward, mainly to the rail infrastructure. These may be activated or deactivated depending on the variety of factors mentioned earlier. For example, if part of a main route has a new migration control checkpoint, a secondary road may be activated. As Casillas (2008: 148) states, migrants use the existing infrastructure to move through Mexico, because 'there is no need to create new routes or means of communication other than those that already exist [...] migrants do not make their own routes; they make existing ones their own'.

Central American Migrants

From a historical perspective, Central American movement within the region has been constant. Internal migration movements characterized the region from the colonial expansion (19th century) until the 1970s (Hamilton and Chinchilla 1991; Sørensen 2014: 46). Usually, labour market opportunities drove these migration patterns (Sørensen 2014: 46–47; Casillas 1992: 1:8). In the second half of the 1970s and throughout the 1980s, armed conflicts in the region led to the displacement of many people. The vast majority remained internally displaced, but some found asylum opportunities in the U.S., Canada, and Europe. After conflicts ended, many returned, but others stayed in the countries where they took refuge. This, to some extent, was the pivotal moment of social network formation (Hamilton and Chinchilla 1991; Casillas 1992: 1:11–15; Sørensen 2014: 46; Alba and Castillo 2012: 8–9). Currently, 20 percent of Central American migration still occurs within the region, while the rest goes toward other countries (Sørensen 2014: 47). In recent years, the

main destination for Central Americans has become the U.S. Today, there are 4.6 million Central Americans (documented and undocumented) living in there. Over the past five decades, Central American immigrants' share of the total immigrant population has grown from less than 1 percent in 1960 to almost 8 percent in 2011. Since 2000, the number of undocumented entries from Central America to the U.S. has more than doubled (Stoney and Batalova 2013; Sørensen 2014: 47; Casillas 1992: 1:12–13).

Push and pull factors, increasing violence, and the possibility of sending remittances continue to be significant factors in the process of Central Americans' decisions about whether or not to migrate to the United States (Casillas 2003, 2008; Sørensen 2014: 53–56). For some Central Americans (Guatemalans, Salvadorans, and Nicaraguans), migrating may be easier since they have a longer history of social networks. For others, like Hondurans, the situation is more complicated since their migratory pattern developed at a later date (Rodríguez Chávez 2014; Sørensen 2013: 239–243). In any case, crossing Mexico has become a key step for irregular migrants (Casillas 2008: 141), who are classified as those who are entering, transiting, staying, and/or working in Mexico without the necessary authorization or documents required by immigration regulations.

Calculating the number of irregular migrants moving through Mexico — especially those of Central Americans — poses a challenge, and obtaining an exact number would be difficult. Numbers that are available often come from the composite of three sources: records from detentions by Mexican migration authorities, records from detentions by United States migration authorities at the southern border of the United States (which assumes that a certain number of irregular migrants are able to

cross Mexico), and estimates of the growth of the undocumented population living in the United States (this assumes that many other migrants are able to cross Mexico and successfully enter the United States). It is important to note that records are always from migrant events, which means that statistics do not distinguish if a migrant has been detained more than once in a year (Rodríguez Chávez 2016: 4–6). Figure 1 below shows the composite of these statistics from 1995 to 2015.

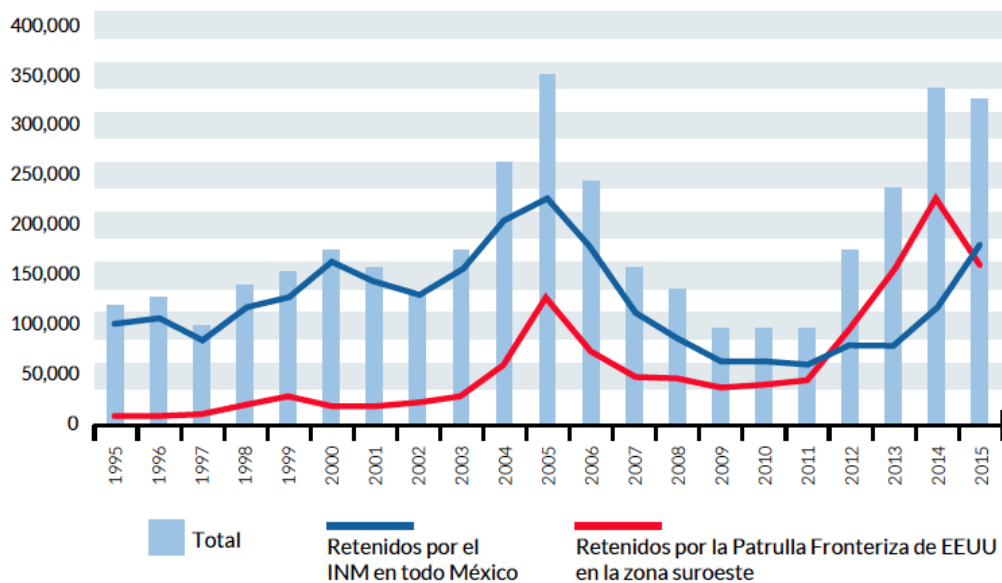


Figure 1. Number of Migrants Detained by Mexican and American Migration Authorities between 1995-2015
Source: Rodríguez 2016

As illustrated above, numbers remained stable until the end of the 1990s. In 2000 and 2001, an average of 145,000 Central American migrants were detained in Mexico; by 2004, the number had risen to around 200,000 (Ogren 2007: 212–213). On average, between 2005 and 2007 there were close to 150,000 detentions of migrants in Mexican territory, most of them from Central American countries. Even when official statistics of the number of detentions decreased by 2011 (SEGOB 2013b), the figures do not include the number of migrants capable of crossing the Mexican border without being

detained. Variations in the increase and decrease of detentions respond to changes in the labour market and migration policies (Montoya Ortiz and González Becerril 2015). Thus, it is estimated that between 150,000 and 400,000 migrants travel through Mexico each year (Casillas 2008: 143; CNDH 2009, 2011; Rodríguez Chávez 2016).

Deported Mexicans

As stated earlier, to better understand migration process in Mexico, it is necessary to consider the number of deported Mexicans returning to the country. In the past 5 years, an average of 540,000 Mexicans have been deported from the United States. Additionally, it is significant to note the change in the characterization of deportations, as there has been an increase in removals and a corresponding decrease in voluntary returns. On the one hand, ‘removal’ is a term used by the United States government instead of ‘deportation’. A removal is often accompanied by a period of detention, either in a jail or a detention centre, depending on the case (Rosenblum et al 2014; Gandini, Lozano-Ascencio and Gaspar Olvera 2015). On the other, a voluntary return refers to those departures not based on an order of removal (deportation) and often do not have a legal precedent for the deportee. Figure 2 shows the number of deported Mexicans removed from the United States between 2000-2013.

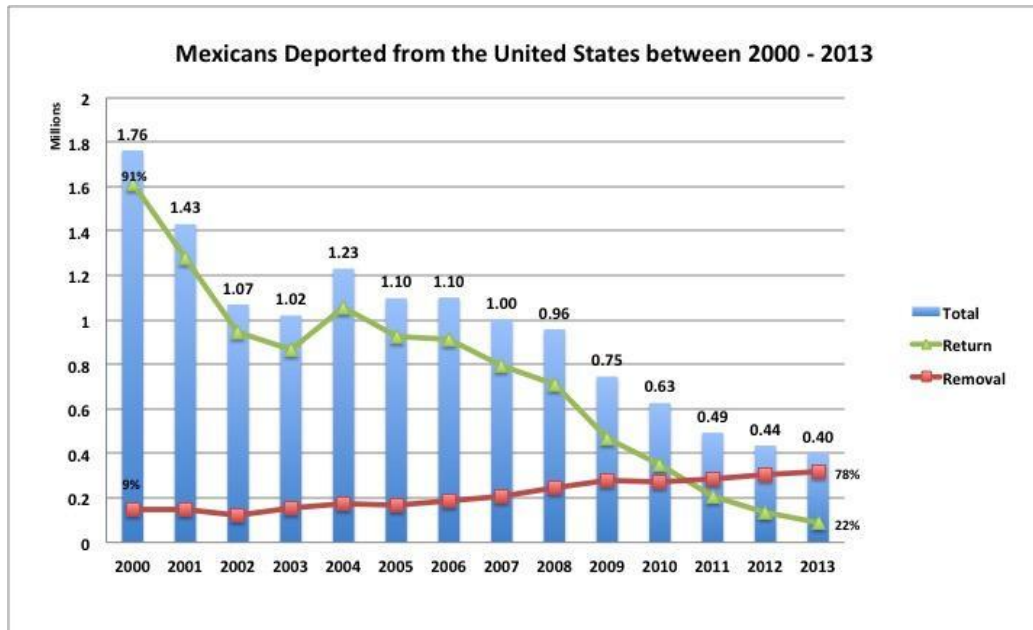


Figure 2. Mexicans Deported from The United States from 2000-2013
Source: United States. Department of Homeland Security 2016

While in 2000, 91% of deported Mexicans were removed from the U.S. under the label of ‘return’, in 2013, 78% were deported under the label ‘removal’. As opposed to the more neutral connotation of the former term, the label ‘removal’ has criminal consequences attached to it. This shift in labels reflects what Stumpf (2006) has called ‘crimmigration’, which refers to a current trend in immigration law that blurs the boundaries between immigration law and criminal law (Stumpf 2006: 10; Hartry 2012: 6). In practice, this means attaching both criminal consequences to immigration violations and immigration consequences to criminal conditions. The surge in enforcement leads to an increase in criminalization of migrants, as well as the professionalization of smuggling, creating a vicious cycle. Furthermore, the number of deportations and the increasing internal enforcement in the U.S. creates an environment of fear and insecurity, which can be characterized as ‘legal violence’ (Menjívar and Abrego 2012).

Furthermore, American migration authorities use several deportation practices that frequently put deported Mexicans at risk of being kidnapped, extorted, and/or killed. These practices include repatriating migrants to cities with high levels of drug-related violence and criminal activity, returning migrants in the middle of the night when services and shelters are closed, using ‘lateral deportation’ to return migrants (migrants detained in one sector may be deported through a far distant city, which constrains migrants’ ability to contact any social network — this is especially dangerous for women who may be separated from travel companions), and failing to return migrants’ belongings (meaning that migrants may return to their country without any money or identification) (Isacson, Meyer, and Davis 2014, FN September 2014 - January 2016).

These data provide an idea of the volume of irregular migrants and deported Mexicans who travel through Mexico. Migration patterns are multidirectional and these patterns often change due to contextual circumstances, policy changes, and enforcement practices. In the case of Mexico, regardless of the final outcome of their migration trajectories, a good number of migrants still transit with the intention to reach the United States and many deported Mexicans return to border towns with different needs and intentions for their next steps after deportation (FN September 2014 - January 2016).

These migrants and deportees are economically stratified (Sládková 2016), which means that some migrants may have more resources available for their migration trajectories or upon return, which decreases their vulnerability. In reality, not all Central American migrants or Mexican deportees are in need of support. Thus, only those migrants and deportees who have the least amount of resources or have the

highest needs use the humanitarian support that has emerged in Mexico. Still, it is estimated that around 30,000 migrants and deportees use the services of at least one shelter during their migration trajectories each year (REDODEM 2015).

Throughout this work, I will discuss how, due to the increasing violence in Mexico, migrants in precarious situations are led to use the services of humanitarian organizations. The figure of 30,000 migrants a year may represent less than 10 percent of the total number of migrants and deportees moving through Mexico. However, depending on their own resources, humanitarian organizations must exercise great effort to consistently provide adequate services to the migrants and deportees. Furthermore, the interactions between migrants and deportees and humanitarian organizations reveal that while migrants may receive care and aid, other forms of facilitation and control exist at the same time (FN September 2014 - January 2016).

Refugees and the Emergence of a Mixed Flow

A growing number of migrants remain in different shelters or points along the migratory route; many of them are in the process of being recognized as refugees. Those who are denied refugee status after months of waiting are left in limbo. Many attempt to continue their journeys north, but others stay close to the shelter areas. There are still others who attempt to move to bigger cities. Few return to an uncertain reality in their home countries.

While forced migrants and asylum seekers are not the prime focus of my research, the increasing numbers, and the role that humanitarian spaces play in advocating for their rights make it necessary to mention their presence in Mexico.

Figure 3 shows the upward trend of people applying for refugee status and the number of people granted the status in the past 10 years. Three reasons, among others, may explain this upward trend: First, social violence — especially gang-related violence — has increased in past years, displacing a growing number of people. Second, governments in Central America have been unable to secure protective measures for their population. And third, humanitarian organizations in Mexico have started to accompany and represent people applying for refugee status. Until 2016, around 90% of the applications corresponded with people from Central America. In 2017, apart from Central Americans, an increasing number of people from Venezuela applied for refugee status in Mexico. The growing presence of refugees contributes to the emergence of a mixed flow. Additionally, the ways migrants become asylum seekers and their decisions after being denied refugee status add to the dynamics present in Mexico’s migration processes.

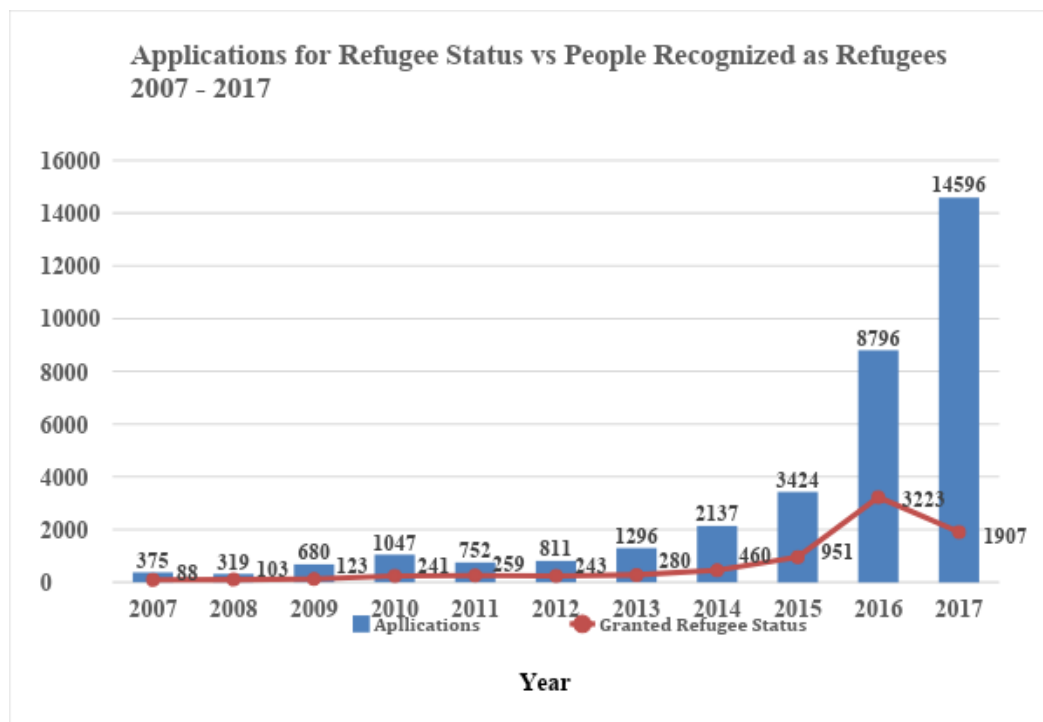


Figure 3. Applications for Refugee Status vs People Recognized as Refugees.
Data from 2007 – 2017
Source: (CONAPO, Fundación BBVA Bancomer, and Research 2017)

In all, these statistics about the numbers of deportations from Mexico and the United States, as well as the increasing number of people applying for refugee status, show that migration patterns in Mexico are dynamic. They include both not only the movement towards the United States, but also towards the south. The movement south is caused by deportations from the United States to Mexico and by deportations from Mexico to different countries in Central America. Migration patterns in Mexico must include people recognized as refugees settling in Mexico, and those migrants from Central America and other countries who may consider Mexico as a final destination. Poverty, violence, and migration policies increase the vulnerability of these groups that may need support or protection at different stages in their migration journeys. Hence, these patterns of migration, as well as people's precarity, have given rise to the emergence of humanitarian actors in Mexico.

1.4 The Role of *Casas de Migrantes*

Crossing Mexico as an irregular migrant or returning to the country as a deported Mexican can be a harsh, violent, and difficult experience. Vulnerability may increase if a migrant is poor or lacks active networks. While migration literature considers that poor migrants move less frequently and less further away (Skeldon 1997: 8), my data show that in spite of meagre resources at their disposal, poor migrants do move. Those with few resources or limited access to their networks rely on other resources to cope with the more challenging events during their journeys and still embark on long journeys. One of the resources they rely upon is the support offered by humanitarian organizations that help migrants in distress along Mexico's migratory routes.

These organizations can be distinguished as albergues (shelters), comedores (soup kitchens), and centros de atención (attention centres), but they are commonly known as *casas de migrantes* (migrant shelters) or simply as shelters (IOM 2012a). The differences between these organizations consist mostly of their internal regulations and the types of services they are able to provide to migrants, deportees, and most recently to asylum seekers. A shelter usually offers overnight stays for migrants, while soup kitchens offer food and health care during specific times, but no overnight stays, and attention centres offer only information and emergency assistance (FN January 2016).

Most *casas de migrantes* emerge locally and must sustain their work with the support of the local communities. Due to their faith-based nature, they are often linked to a local church. However, there are few humanitarian organizations that have no particular faith affiliation. Migrant shelters often start offering services at a small scale and grow over time. Their aid consists of food, shelter, medical care, legal assistance, educational instruction on human rights and health — especially AIDS prevention —, and information about the risks and dangers along the route. In addition, there are other places along the route that provide food and medical care, though not shelter (Olayo-Méndez 2013: 27).

Migrant shelters serving migrants and deportees in Mexico evolve continuously. Initially, most shelters and soup kitchens offered ad hoc humanitarian aid. As the needs of migrants and the sociopolitical circumstances changed, the services that the shelters and kitchens provided also developed, and educational functions were added (Hagan 2006: 1562; DPMH 2012). Other specialized services included programs to facilitate phone calls to places of origin and reception of money

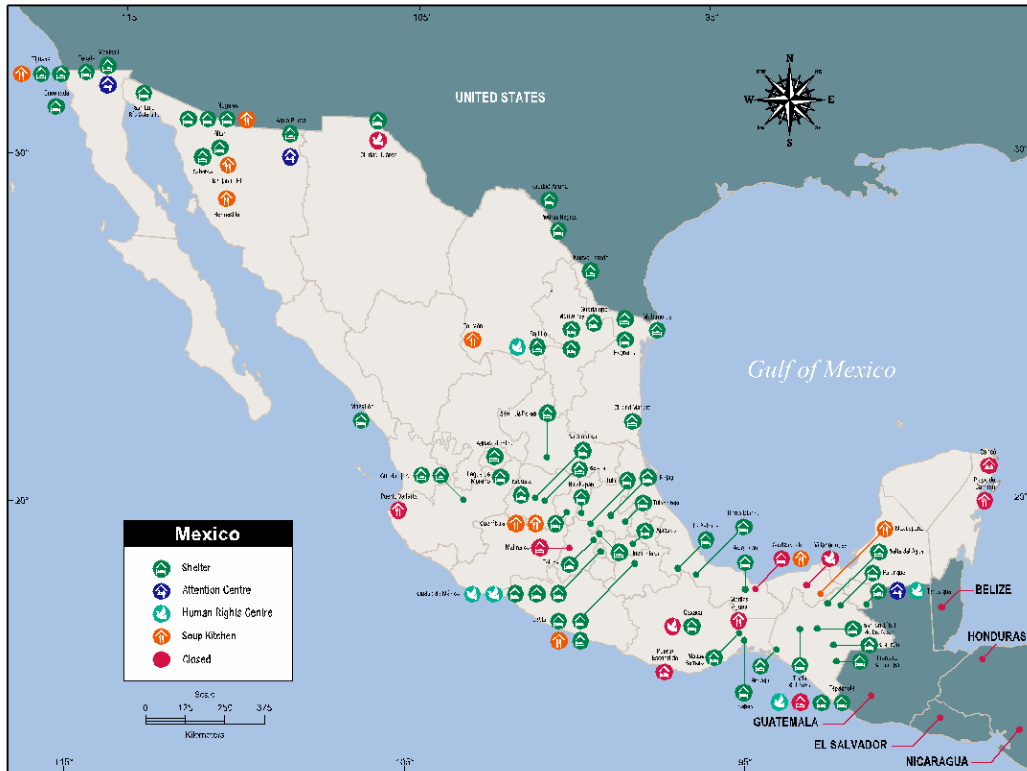
transfer services (Vogt 2012: 56; DPMH 2012: 91, 111, 175; FN September 2014 - January 2016).

As a result of these shifts and trends, humanitarian organizations have adjusted their services to better fit the changing profiles of migrants. Shelters report an increase in requests for help from homosexual, transsexual, and transgender migrants, as well as an increase in legal support and representation for people applying for refugee status (FN, Tenosique January 7 2015). Regulations and facilities have been adjusted as necessary to ensure the safety and fair treatment of these diverse populations (Brigden 2013: 317; DPMH 2012: 34; FN Reynosa, January 20 2015). Another population that has been identified are ‘migrants in train situation’ (*migrantes en situación de tren*), as *casas de migrantes* staff refer to them. This population consists mostly of migrants who lost their objectives along the way and consequently did not reach their final destinations. Sometimes, they ride up and down on trains along the route or remain in the locality. Many of them have substance abuse problems, show trauma from some type of violence committed against them, and are poor (DPMH 2012: 34-35). Others who failed in their attempts to cross the border remain at the outskirts of border towns, living under deplorable and unhealthy conditions (DPMH 2012: 35). Many of these migrants eventually find their ways to *casas de migrantes* in search of help.

Nowadays, certain shelters specialize in tending to specific populations. Some tend solely to injured migrants, while others serve women and unaccompanied minors. Some shelters offer space only to asylum seekers waiting for a resolution from authorities, while others offer protection to victims of grave crimes. And finally, there are mobile soup kitchens and attention centres that serve only returned or deported

migrants (DPMH 2012: 35-36; FN September 2014 - January 2016). These specializations are not only signs of the growing complexities in the migration processes in Mexico, but also of the proliferation of places offering types of aid that fill particular gaps within this informal welfare system.

By the end of 2012, there were 63 humanitarian organizations, 50 shelters, 10 soup kitchens, and 3 attention centres for migrants. Those figures also included six Human Rights Centres that advocated for migrant rights, among other causes (DPMH 2012: 55–56). At the beginning of my fieldwork in September 2014, there were 66 shelters providing humanitarian aid; when my fieldwork ended in January 2016, that number had reached 71 organizations. Furthermore, after my fieldwork was complete, at least three other places had opened along the migratory routes, and two others expanded their services from soup kitchens to shelters (FN January 2017). Map 2 below shows the current distribution of *casas de migrantes*, with a clear concentration of organizations working in central and southern Mexico, but with a continuing presence in the north.



Map 2. Humanitarian Aid Actors Along Migration Routes in Mexico Until 2017
Sources: Adaptation from DPMH (2012), Fieldwork.

While most shelters and soup kitchens have operated along the migratory routes defined by the freight train system in Mexico, some have started to appear on secondary routes and in urban areas that previously did not have a significant migratory presence. This change comes as a response to increased border control and violence — ranging from extortion, robbery, and physical assaults to kidnapping by criminal groups — that forced migrants to shift their journeys toward more isolated areas (Casillas 2003; Hagan 2008: 162; FN Reynosa, January 20 2016).

Casas de migrantes' operations are strongly linked to their locations and leadership. Migrant shelters located in small towns are different from those located in larger urban areas or at the Mexico-U.S. border (FN September 2014 - January 2016). Furthermore, the migration patterns also differ depending on the region. In Southern

Mexico, mobility tends to be faster and migrants spend less time at the shelters. In Central Mexico, migrants tend to stay for longer periods of time either because of the physical demands of the journey or because they may be rethinking their next steps. Up until the time when I began conducting my research, 90 percent of the migrant population tended by the northern shelters was comprised of deported migrants from the U.S. This change resulted from the increasing number of deportations from the U.S. in recent years (Manenti 2012: 42; DPMH 2012: 39). However, migration patterns can change rapidly in Mexico. For example, during 2016, some of the northern shelters tended to a significant number of Haitians, Congolese, and other African migrants who sought to file for refugee status in the United States (Peters 2016; Semple 2016; Tourliere 2016).

Through the years, migrant shelters have shared information and best practices. Nevertheless, each migrant shelter's internal regulations depends heavily on its location, size, funding, and leadership. For instance, there are shelters that are 'open' (meaning migrants can go in and out as they need) or 'closed' (meaning migrants are not allowed to go out until the day they resume their journeys). There are albergues that allow migrants to stay indefinitely, and others that restrict their stay to one or two weeks. There are shelters that partner well with INGOs like the Red Cross, UNHCR, or MSF (Doctors Without Borders), while other shelters do not have that support (sometimes because INGOs do not want to work with them). Size of facilities, available staff, and services available are other differences across shelters (FN September 2014 - January 2016)..

Based on my observations during fieldwork, it is difficult to identify one shelter that could serve as the model for the whole country. While taken with

caution, one way to facilitate the analysis of the role of *casas de migrantes* is by looking at them geographically: Shelters in Southern Mexico, shelters in Central Mexico, and those at the border between Mexico and the U.S. This perspective matches, to some extent, the changes in migration patterns. Migrants move more quickly while crossing Southern Mexico, perhaps because they have more energy and drive to continue the journey. The largest number of asylum seekers and refugees are also found in some shelters in the southern states of Mexico. Migrants able to reach Central Mexico start to elongate their journeys, often because of weariness from the journey or because they need time to rethink their journeys. As mentioned earlier, shelters at the border tend to serve Mexican deportees for the most part.

Additionally, the relationship with the government is also different by region. In Southern Mexico, relationships between *casas de migrantes* and the Mexican government appear to be more confrontational, while in Central Mexico, migrant shelters need to form more alliances with the local government. At the Mexican northern border, the relationship with the government is more institutional because some shelters receive support from the Mexican government, since shelters serve Mexican deportees (FN September 2014 - January 2016).

Finally, it is necessary to mention that many *casas de migrantes* have gained importance as advocates for migrants' human rights and have linked with several networks in the country. Dimensión Pastoral de la Movilidad Humana (DPMH) (Pastoral Dimension of Human Mobility), which is a ministry of the Catholic Church in Mexico, remains one of the main faith-based networks advocating for migrants. *Casas de migrantes* like Albergue Hermanos en el Camino (Shelter Brothers on the Road), Albergue Belen, Posada del Migrante (Shelter Belen, Inn for the Migrant), and

La 72: Hogar-Refugio para Personas Migrantes (The 72: Home-Shelter for Migrant People) are some of the shelters that have become prominent advocates for migrants' human rights (DPMH 2012: 114; FN January 2016). Other collectives — non-faith based — advocating for migrants are CODEMIRE (Collective of Defenders of Migrants and Refugees), REDODEM (Network for Documentations of Organization in Defense of Migrants), COMPA (Collective for Migration in the Americas), and IMUMI (Institute for Women in Migration). The work of different NGOs' networks has influenced the political landscape of policy and assistance to migrants, deportees, and refugees (Calderon Chelius 2016: 11–12).

The work of humanitarian organizations in Mexico not only illustrates the link between humanitarian aid and migration, but also reveals the variety of ways through which humanitarian assistance is delivered to migrants and the ways this assistance changes according to the needs of migratory patterns. While discussing the origins of humanitarianism, Wilson and Brown (2009: 2) write, 'faced with the suffering of others, humanitarians maintain that their ethical response arises from emotions: compassion, sympathy (in the nineteenth century), and, more recently, empathy'. The ethos of many of these shelters in Mexico is rooted in these humanitarian sentiments and concerns. Throughout the thesis, I analyse the ways in which migrants and *casas de migrantes* engage with one another in contexts of poverty, violence, and relentless migration control. Furthermore, I will show the effects this relationship has on the migration process in Mexico.

1.5 Argument and Structure of the Thesis

Drawing from the results of my fieldwork in Mexico and responding to the primary and secondary research questions in this dissertation, I argue that humanitarian organizations tending to the needs of migrants — both Central Americans and Mexican deportees — in distress in Mexico function as an incipient and informal welfare system. Vulnerable/poor migrants use these humanitarian spaces as resources, inasmuch as it is useful for their journeys. Furthermore, exchanges between migrants and humanitarian spaces occur in a context characterized by violence, as well as heavy migration and policing controls. This informal welfare system reduces the vulnerability of migrants and deportees. By looking at humanitarian actors as an informal welfare system, I offer a perspective that has an element of solidarity and that is not defined merely by a political economy approach where there are financial gains. Furthermore, the study of interactions between humanitarian groups and migrants provides insight into the role that groups and institutions have in facilitating, controlling, and aiding human mobility, as well as the internal dynamics of migrants' networks.

The core of this dissertation focuses on the role of *casas de migrantes* in the migration process in Mexico, but this role cannot be understood or detached from poverty and violence because they are other important dynamics in the process. Thus, the structure and sequence of the chapters aim to facilitate the analysis of these three dynamics and how they reinforce one another. The following chapters include a historical review of migration policies and humanitarian aid in Mexico, as well as particular analysis of poverty, violence, and the role of *casas de migrantes*.

The current migration landscape has been shaped and reshaped by the changes in migration policies in Mexico and the emergence and growing number of humanitarian organizations that respond to migrants and deportees in distress. A historical review of these changes and the emergence of humanitarian aid supports the analysis of a context that changes and requires the adaptation of actors. The role poverty plays in migration journeys starts with acknowledging that an economic stratification exists among migrants; migrants with more resources may travel with the support of smugglers and through different modes of transportation and the use of established social networks. This leads to the consideration of the types of strategies or the kind of resources poor migrants use to cope with precarity. Poverty in some way increases the vulnerability of migrants and deportees along the routes. Migrants enter a context where violence is an omnipresent threat and becomes both an internal and external dynamic in the migration process. These two dynamics have led to the emergence of local humanitarian organizations that support migrants. As shelters have grown in numbers and specialized their services, their role in the migration process has become more significant.

The overall structure of the dissertation is as follows. This introductory chapter frames the work by presenting the context, research question, and theoretical contributions. Chapter 2 then presents the theoretical framework. At the centre of this dissertation is the role that meso-level structures play and how they emerge and structure migration processes. The theoretical framework situates *casas de migrantes* at the meso-level of migration processes. It highlights the impact migration intermediaries have on shaping and sustaining migration processes, as well as their negative effects. Here, ‘migration journeys’ is a preferred term over transit migration because it allows for the consideration of multiple trajectories and states (transit,

return, strandedness, and immobility) in migration patterns. Also, I selected the term ‘migration intermediaries’ over ‘migration industry’ because it does not have the financial connotation carried by the latter concept. Additionally, I review how migration literature has analysed humanitarian aid beyond emergency contexts and discuss literature related to the three reinforcing dynamics that emerge in the migration process in Mexico: poverty, violence, and care/assistance.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology, sample, and reflexivity. The methodological discussion offers a discussion of the methods and research techniques in the project. Emphasizing some of the choices made during fieldwork. The presentation of the sample provides an intersectional breakdown of different categories (gender, age, country of origin) in comparison to other sources to aid in the analysis. The reflexivity section discusses positionality during fieldwork and the role of the researcher during the data analysis and writing stages.

Next, Chapter 4 provides historical information that will aid in understanding the current context in which humanitarian actors operate. The historical development of migration policies in Mexico, as well as the history of humanitarian actors providing aid to distressed migrants, is presented. After the discussion of the development of migration policies, I discuss how those policies are implemented and how the implementation has created a form of relentless control along migration routes.

Chapter 5 continues by reviewing the way humanitarian actors have emerged to aid migrants and deportees. It provides an in-depth analysis of humanitarian organizations aiding migrants in Mexico. The chapter frames the work of these shelters as ‘humanitarianism from below’ and analyses that which distinguishes it

from traditional forms of humanitarianism. Humanitarian work does not come from a top-down process, but rather, the other way around. Following Fassin (2012), I emphasize how migration policies and humanitarian actors are part of a ‘humanitarian governance’ of migration.

Three empirical chapters are next in the sequence. Chapter 6, the first in the sequence, argues that poverty plays an important role during migration journeys because it influences the ways migrants travel and the types of resources they may have available for the journey. Furthermore, it emphasizes the fact that migrants are poor while moving through Mexico and highlights some strategies migrants use to cope with hardship. Based on the findings from interviews with migrants, I discuss the value of using the global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), as well as the results of my research. Taking a historical perspective, the chapter draws a comparison between the ways poor people in the Pre-Industrial Era coped with poverty and how poor migrants rely on different strategies to move during their migration journeys at the time of my study.

In the next empirical chapter, Chapter 7 analyses the role violence plays in migration journeys in Mexico and its effects on the migration processes. The chapter argues that violence exercised by state and non-state actors has become an omnipresent threat, which migrants have to deal and cope with. At the same time, violence shapes and reinforces migrants and deportees’ vulnerability and creates a permanent sense of uncertainty and threat, ultimately leading migrants to seek support from humanitarian organizations. Additionally, a commodification process of migrants emerges in the dynamics of violence. In this process, perpetrators of violence regard migrants as commodities with different values, depending on where

they are on the migration route. At the theoretical level, the chapter moves from a micro- to a macro-perspective, conceiving violence as both an internal and external dynamic in the migration process. Furthermore, I argue that to properly understand violence in the migration processes in Mexico, it is necessary to consider the larger patterns of violence in the country.

Chapter 8 argues that humanitarian spaces aiding migrants in Mexico become an informal social welfare system for Central American migrants and an outsourced welfare system for deported Mexicans. However, the role of these humanitarian organizations is not defined only by their humanitarian aid; it is also framed and understood by their brokerage role, understood as the different relations shelters have with other actors to gather resources and aid the migrant population. However, while exercising their brokerage roles, *casas de migrantes* may also exercise dynamics of facilitation, control, and rescue. By examining the internal dynamics of these places, this chapter shows that sometimes, the line between a shelter and a detention centre can be blurred.

Finally, the conclusion of the dissertation, Chapter 9 highlights the key findings of my research and fieldwork; identifies the study's limitations, gaps, and opportunities for future research; discusses the theoretical significance of the findings and their contribution to migration theory, and presents other areas of inquiry. Finally, I share some of the implications for policy and practice.

Chapter 2. Migration, Poverty, and Violence: *Casas de Migrantes* in the Theoretical Context

The main concern of this research is to understand the interactions between migrants and humanitarian organizations along migratory routes in Mexico and the ways these interactions affect the dynamics of the migration process. While the main actors in this migration process are migrants and humanitarian actors, the interactions between them occur in a context where poverty, violence, and the delivery of humanitarian aid emerge as dynamics feeding off of one another. Migration theory has largely focused on sending and receiving contexts, contextual factors leading to migration, and migrants' motivations for moving from one place to another. Thus, the focus has mostly been on the macro- and micro- levels of analysis (Faist 1997: 187–188). The migration literature that discusses the meso-level — which links macro- and micro-levels — has focused on social relations, collectives, and social networks, highlighting their social and symbolic capital (Faist 1997: 196–203). Studies of the meso-level mention the existence of 'meso-structures', which are intermediate mechanisms linking macro- and micro-structures (Castles and Miller 2009: 29–30). These meso-structures, emerging out of migration processes, tend to perpetuate and structure further migration (Faist 1997: 188, 196–203). In practice, individuals, groups, and organizations have taken on this mediating role (Castles and Miller 2009: 29; Hennebry 2008: 345).

In the case of Mexico, *casas de migrantes* have emerged as a meso-level actor that affects the country's migration process. Thus, by studying interactions between migrants and *casas de migrantes*, we may gain a deeper understanding of meso-level actors in migration processes and both internal and external dynamics that pertain to

it. This theoretical framework draws on disciplines like sociology, political science, history, economics, and migration studies to aid in the analysis of dynamics, interactions, and the role of meso-level actors in the migration process in Mexico.

2.1 Migration, Humanitarian Aid, and the Meso-level

The Meso-level, Migration Journeys, and Casas de Migrantes

Migration can be conceptualized as an integral part of a broader process of global development, change, and social transformation (Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2014: 26; Castles 2010: 1566; de Haas 2010a: 1591). The concept of ‘migratory processes’ refers to ‘the complex sets of factors and interactions that lead to migration and influence its course. Migration is a process that affects every dimension of social existence, developing its own “internal” dynamics’ (Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2014: 27; de Haas 2010a: 1590–1593). In turn, these internal dynamics relate to the forces or properties that stimulate or hinder growth, development, and/or change in migration processes or systems.

Macro-, micro-, and meso-levels of analysis are social categories that do not objectively exist. Rather, they are frameworks of observation or heuristic devices that aid in the analysis of actors and dynamics in migration processes. Initially, the meso-level was considered the missing link between communities of origins and the migrants, emphasizing the roles of migrant networks and social capital in the creation of the transnational space (Faist 1997, 2000). As conceptualizations of the meso-level have developed, more empirical evidence has been added to understand how different parts of the migration process connect. Scholars stressing the role of meso-level social mechanisms argue that international migration is better understood not only as the

result of individual motivations and structural (macro-level) determinations, but also as the articulation of agents with particular interests and specific roles within an institutional framework (Goss and Lindquist 1995: 345; see also Faist 2000: 8, 96-123). Hence, the meso-level of analysis pays close attention to social structures and social relationships that facilitate, sustain, control, and constrain human mobility, emphasizing their social and symbolic capital (Faist 1997: 196–203; Hennebry 2008: 345; de Haas 2010a: 1587–1594; Manning 2013: 201–202; Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2014: 235–236). In other words, analysis of meso-level structures (intermediaries) in the migration process illuminates how the migration process works. The specific task of this dissertation is to gain understanding of the intricacies of the migration process in Mexico by looking at intermediate actors that offer humanitarian aid to migrants, deportees, and asylum seekers, especially those who are poor or move in precarious conditions.

Migration journeys dwell at the heart of migration processes and are determined by their contextual and internal dynamics. Some of these may contribute to the perpetuation of migration, while others may have a negative effect on subsequent migration (de Haas 2010a). Contextual dynamics in Mexico make migration journeys or returning to the country after deportation extremely difficult. Self-reinforcing dynamics of poverty, violence, and care determine how migrants, especially poor migrants, negotiate the journey, often without guarantee of success. Research on migration patterns in Mexico remains fragmented. While the focus of existing research has been on the transit journeys of Central Americans to the United States, border and deportation literature offers insights into both border-crossing patterns and the effects of removal from a receiving country (De Genova 2010). More recently, a growing interest in the emerging pattern of asylum seekers, especially at

the southern border of Mexico, has emerged. At the theoretical level, framing interactions between migrants and humanitarian actors within the context of ‘migration journeys’, rather than placing them within the framework of ‘transit migration’, is better because conceptualizations of transit migration have a directional bias towards developed countries.

While the literature on ‘transit migration’ has provided insights into the fragmented nature of journeys and the political implications of the term, no definitive consensus or theoretical approach has been achieved (Mainwaring and Brigden 2016: 243). In fact, Collyer and de Haas (2011), as well as Collyer, Düvell, and de Haas (2011) have debated the contested nature of the term. While much theoretical discussion on transit migration emerges from evidence gathered in regions bordering Europe, especially from Africa, some journalistic and non-fiction literary pieces provide insights into the lives and journeys of migrants passing through Mexico (Mainwaring and Brigden 2016: 243). The last two decades provided different approaches to understanding patterns and trajectories of migrants from Latin America — especially North Central America — crossing Mexico and attempting to reach the United States (Casillas 2006; Sládková 2007; Frank-Vitale 2011; Vogt 2012; Silva Quiroz 2014; Rodríguez Chávez 2014). More recently, the works of Brigden (2013), Solar Fonseca (Solar Fonseca 2014) and Basok et al (2015) have explicitly emphasized the mobile dimension of migratory journeys, which impacted my decision to consider migration journeys rather than transit migration.

An analysis of journeys and mobility must be able to capture and reflect on the changing social contexts (including legal status) and the adaptations people make. It also must explore and understand the repeated (re)negotiation of social relationships

and the changes in the sense of belonging (Brachet 2012: VI; Schapendonk 2011, 2012; Brachet 2005). Documenting mobility and its dynamics along migration routes in Mexico proves to be a challenge because migration patterns in Mexico include many types of journeys, each with its particular experiences, circumstances, and temporality. In describing clandestine migration journeys through Mexico, Brigden (2015: 242–243) writes, ‘the rules of the game are subject to unprecedented change. A common refrain is that “every trip is different”, even for the most experienced migrant or smuggler’. Papastergiadis (2000: 23–24) considers that the diversity of paths and the complexity of forms of migration journeys vary so widely that it is almost impossible to map movement with arrows on a two-dimensional representation. Furthermore, Mainwaring and Brigden (2016: 248) argue that simple and unilineal representations of migration trajectories risks the loss of historical considerations, contemporary war, and economic inequalities, as well as missing the multiple social relations that migrants have and develop, in addition to the structural forces that try to control them.

In this way, it is possible to describe migrants’ movements through Mexico, back to Mexico, or within Mexico, as well as to detail everyday practices and encounters with diverse actors such as police, migration authorities, criminals, communities, humanitarian actors, and other migrants. We can also illustrate migrants’ mobilities, immobilities, and strandedness and explore contextual dynamics that affect migrants’ journeys. Inquiries into migrants’ journeys, their ways of negotiating them, and the encounters they may have reveal intricacies of the state, borders, violence, humanitarian responses, and migrants’ agency.

Migration Industry(ies), Migration Intermediaries, and Brokerage

‘Migration industry’ is a concept that has been used to describe and analyze the role of migration intermediaries. There have been efforts to argue that the migration industry is not really an industry, but rather, a figure of speech (Spener 2009). In spite of this, empirical studies continue to emphasize its financial connotation, and there has been a multiplication of ‘industries’ that diminish the heuristic value of the term. Nowadays, facilitation, control, and assistance/care are seen as subdivisions of the migration industry. In addition, recent scholarship has started to use the term ‘migration industries’, aiming to make room for the multiple actors — in multiple contexts and with multiple agendas — that have intermediary roles in migration processes.

In early literature about migration intermediaries, there are no clear distinctions between refugees and migrants, the professional and the unskilled, or illegal and legal migration. The main focus was on the willingness of migrants to match the broker’s price, already emphasizing the financial aspect of the migration process (Cohen 1997: 163). Castles and Miller (2009: 201) later provided a more structured conceptualization of the term. For them, the migration industry embraces a broad spectrum of people who earn their livelihood by organizing migratory movements; these people include ‘travel agents, labour recruiters, brokers, interpreters, housing agents, immigration lawyers, human smugglers [...] and even counterfeiters who falsify official documentation documents and passports [...] Banking institutions have become part of the migration industry as well’ (Castles and Miller 2009: 201). These instances that describe and conceptualize the migration industry continue to emphasize the profitable, informal, and/or illicit aspects of it, as well as the different actors linking migration processes. Moreover, these definitions

begin to delineate more clearly not only the different actors that participate in it, but also the participation of corporate institutions like banks (Gammeltoft-Hansen and Sørensen 2013: 4–5; Massey et al 1998: 44–45). The interest in humanitarian actors as part of the migration industry is more recent and has emerged alongside other subdivisions of the migration industry, like the rescue industry (Gammeltoft-Hansen and Nyberg-Sørensen 2013).

Rubén Hernández-León (2008) offered one of the most comprehensive articulations of the concept. He explains the migration industry not strictly as an industry but as:

a matrix of private and specialized services that facilitate and sustain international human mobility and its related behaviors, including settlement, mobility, communication, and resource transfers. Migration entrepreneurs render these services for a fee, and the main objective is turning a profit. Still, because migration industries services are often embedded in immigrant networks and ethnic economies, the behavior of these entrepreneurs is also mediated by relations of kinship, bounded trust, patron-client relationships, and coethnicity (Hernández-León 2008: 28, 154; see also Hernández-León 2013: 25)

His take on the migration industry includes many actors at different stages of the migration process, as well as in different types of migratory movements (permanent, circular, undocumented). For Hernández-León, migration entrepreneurs may include ‘moneylenders, recruiters, transportation providers, legitimate and false paper pushers, smugglers, contractors, formal and informal remittance and courier service owners, lawyers offering legal and paralegal counselling to migrants, and, certain circumstances, promoters of immigrant destinations’ (Hernández-León 2008: 155). He also argues that these actors ‘grease’ the migration system, which is characterized by restriction and border control (Hernández-León 2008: 154; Harney 1977: 45; Massey et al 1998: 44). In a later development, he acknowledges the inclusion of the

‘control’ and ‘rescue’ industries as part of the more general concept of ‘migration industry’ (Hernández-León 2013: 24–44). Still, his approach is limited to profitable aspects of migration intermediaries, and, to those instances that ‘facilitate’ the migration process.

Several studies that build on his approach provide empirical evidence of the complexities and sophistication of the migration industry (Gammeltoft-Hansen and Sørensen 2013: 5; Hennebry 2008; Surak 2013; Garapich 2008). These studies confirm that the existence of multiple agents has played and continues to play specific roles in migration environments. These agents range from individuals and organizations to governmental agencies and international entities, and their interactions create, foster, regulate, maintain, and sustain migratory flows (Massey et al 1998: 44).

Two of the biggest challenges in the development of the notion of migration industry deal with the boundaries of the concept and the lack of criteria to determine what or who should be included. An example could be that of an immigration lawyer hired by individual migrants to help them join a labour program, as opposed to a lawyer who acts on behalf of a multinational corporation in order to facilitate the attraction of talent to the company. The former could be seen as a clear part of the migration industry, while some questions remain for the latter (Spener 2009: 7–9). Another challenge is provided by the conceptual multiplication of ‘industries’. The identification of different actors with intermediary roles in migration processes has led to the emergence of concepts like control industry, bastard industry, rescue industry, aid industry, *cachuco* industry, and illegality industry, usually in contraposition to one another (Agustín 2007; Barnett 2005; Menz 2013; Hernández-

León 2013; Vogt 2013; Andersson 2014). This multiplication of industries is the result of actors interacting but not fitting clearly into the current level of analysis of the migration industry.

These challenges evoke the need for various levels of analysis to help navigate the complexities of both the intermediate structures that play crucial roles in the migration processes and the negative connotations that are sometimes overemphasized with the use of the term ‘industry’ (Spener 2009: 1). This is why some scholars argue that ‘facilitation, control, and rescue [industries] should be treated as different subcategories within the migration industry’ (Gammeltoft-Hansen and Sørensen 2013: 6–7). This approach certainly broadens the scope of the migration industry; and helps to avoid seeing ‘facilitation’, ‘control’, and ‘rescue’ in opposition to one another.

In spite of its popularity in migration literature, I side with Spener (2009: 10) in arguing that the migration industry concept is yet to be fully accepted as an analytical category, even though it is ‘a useful shorthand term to guide our inquiry’ or theoretical analysis. Some scholars have argued that the term is more helpful for understanding the role of migration intermediaries to consider their essential functions (Spener 2009: 9; Spaan and Hillmann 2013: 68–69): ‘We might do better to focus less on enterprises and entrepreneurs as our objects of study and more on the types of service services provided to migrants, their families, and their employers [...] along with the types of relationships that exist among the actors involved [...] we would do well to focus less on what the migration industry is and more on what it does’ (Spener 2009: 9).

In practice, there are no clear-cut distinctions between ‘facilitation’, ‘control’ and ‘assistance/care’, since these dynamics — or a combination of them — could be exercised by the same actor in the migration process, just at different moments and with different intensities. I assert that conceptualizing ‘facilitation’, ‘control’, and ‘assistance/care’ as essential functions of migration intermediaries adds more to our understating of the meso-level because it illuminates what these intermediaries do in the migration process. Hence, in this work, I take two theoretical stances: First, I use the term ‘migration intermediaries’ rather than ‘migration industry’ when referring to humanitarian actors in Mexico because it enables the consideration of actors that do not obtain a financial gain in the migration process. Also, because it permits the inclusion of humanitarian actors that have an element of solidarity in their practices, as well as their modes of mediation or brokerage. Second, I argue that ‘facilitation’, ‘control’, and ‘assistance/care’ are essential functions of migration intermediaries because we these functions, that migration literature have seen in separate ways, can be exercised by the same actor in the migration process.

What is Brokerage?

Thomas Faist (2014a: 3) stated that brokerage is an essential yet understudied function in social life that is rarely systematized in migration studies, and argues that brokerage involves issues of connectivity between persons and groups as well as trust. Brokerage is defined as ‘the process of connecting actors in systems of social, economic, or political relations in order to facilitate access to valued resources’ (Stovel and Shaw 2012: 7.2). Gould and Fernandez (1989: 91) insist that at the core of brokerage is the role of mediator and facilitator, while financial gain is not a central feature. Furthermore, discussing the importance of brokerage as a social mechanism,

Faist (2014b: 39) and Alpes (2017: 265) state that brokerage as a social mechanism only makes sense in a clearly defined context. In their discussion, a social mechanism refers to the recurring actions and events (M) linking identifiable initial conditions (I) with a specific result or outcome (O), or [I — M — O] (Faist 2014b: 41). Alpes (2017: 265) advances the argument, emphasizing that the study of brokerage needs to be seen in relation to ‘stateness’ — by which she means the ‘ensemble of state actors and institutions, as well as regulatory instruments (such as papers) and normative frameworks (such as legality)’ — and also within the boundaries of legality. She pushes this notion to better understand modalities of power and representation.

Other scholars define brokerage as ‘the linking of two or more previously unconnected, social sites by a unit that mediates their relations with one another and/or with yet other sites’ (McAdam et al 2001: 26). They also argue that brokerage has been limited to mechanisms relating groups and individuals to one another in stable contexts. However, they argue that brokerage can also become a relational mechanism for mobilization during periods of contentious politics. As new groups and relations appear, their interactions allow them to discover common interests (McAdam et al 2001: 26). In all, in migration processes, intermediaries or brokers help circumvent or overcome barriers that migrants could encounter at any moment in the migration cycle (Faist 2014a) and they may or may not have a financial gain.

Since brokerage is situated within the field of sociology and closely related to social network analysis, it provides a larger canvas upon which the role of intermediaries in migration can be theorized. Faist (2014b: 40) writes, ‘brokerage helps to conceptualize the broader infrastructure that makes spatial mobility possible in the first place [...] brokerage helps to break down unhelpful dichotomies

(legal/illegal; altruism/profit; formal/informal)'. The focus in migration industry literature has been on the industry (profit) side, as well as the construction of illegality and control, setting aside the types of connections and purpose intermediaries have in the relationship. Understanding the types of connections and relationships helps to explain how the social mechanism works. Furthermore, theorizing brokerage helps to understand the creation of inequalities or the process of resource equalization in the local and transnational spaces. The interactions shelters have are not limited to those with migrants. Hence, the concept of brokerage permits a better analysis of the different links shelters must have to provide services for vulnerable migrants.

Sociologists have identified three types of brokerage processes: First, transfer brokerage allows resources to move from one party to another. Second, matchmaking brokerage facilitates the formation of ties between third parties. And third, coordination brokerage allows third parties to interact without the formation of a tie (Spiro et al 2013: 131–132). Aside from the categories of brokerage mentioned above, scholars have also distinguished the types of roles a broker or intermediary may have: liaison, itinerant, coordinator, gatekeeper, or representative (Stovel and Shaw 2012: 5–7); see also Gould and Fernandez 1989: 92–93). In practice, these five roles or structural positions represent concrete social roles in social interactions. While these five roles have been identified for analytical purposes, individual actors can perform any combination of the corresponding roles simultaneously (Gould and Fernandez 1989: 93–94). These distinctions are important because in exercising the different types of brokerage, actors may play different roles for various purposes.

Considering different types of brokerage provides a blueprint for analysing the ways shelters interact with other actors and migrants. The focus remains on the

relationships and the roles played, not necessarily on the effects of these relationships and roles (which is distinctive in the migration industry literature). Thus, looking at the types of brokerage and roles more closely reveals the ways social mechanisms play out at the meso-level.

2.2 Humanitarian Aid in Migration Contexts: Beyond Emergencies

Humanitarianism or humanitarian action has been linked to the provision of relief during emergencies, catastrophes, conflicts, and other sources of human suffering (Barnett and Weiss 2008b: 3; Calhoun 2010: 30). Associated with humanitarianism is the notion of ‘emergency’, which describes ‘a sudden unpredictable event emerging against a background of ostensible normalcy, causing suffering or danger and demanding urgent response’ (Calhoun 2010: 30, 52). Emergencies usually become visible through displacement of people and refugees often appear as the face of emergencies, since they become strangers in new places. Their movement in search for safety or relief indicates an alteration of their normal existence (Calhoun 2010: 32). Because of the suffering involved, people respond, provide assistance, or send help (Fassin 2010: 271–280; Barnett 2011: 9). In the case of Mexico, migration patterns show that some migrants move through the country or return after deportation in extremely vulnerable circumstances. Furthermore, increasing violence in the region accentuates migrants’ precariousness. In Mexico, there is no official humanitarian crisis. Thus, there is no full intervention of international humanitarian actors. What has emerged are *casas de migrantes* which are a type of local humanitarian aid based on solidarity. Theoretical analysis of the role of these actors is limited because literature on humanitarian interventions is

highly related to emergencies; few studies analyse humanitarian aid in migration contexts.

The link between humanitarian aid and migration rarely appears in academic literature because the focus is usually on contexts of forced displacement during war and natural catastrophes, as well as the emerging dynamics in delivering relief and support to civilian populations while protecting their basic human rights (Linde 2009: 568–570; Weiss and Collins 2000: 1–10). However, the literature’s emphasis on contexts of forced displacement leaves out certain types of migration — transit and return — that may not be framed within the context of forced displacement. Nevertheless, these forms of migration also involve a severe alteration to the normal existence as migrants transit to new places in very dangerous circumstances or return to their countries of origin after a traumatic process of deportation. The analysis of the roles of *casas de migrantes* as they provide humanitarian aid in Mexico advances the notion and conceptualization of humanitarianism in multidirectional migration contexts.

Classical Approaches to Humanitarianism

A classical approach to humanitarianism has emerged since the mid-19th century, which emphasized the provision of relief following the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence (Barnett and Weiss 2008b: 3; Calhoun 2010: 30; Slim 2015: 5). These core principles, proposed by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), aim to guarantee delivery of relief to those in need:

Humanity commands attention to all people. Impartiality requires that assistance be based on need and not on the basis of nationality, race, religion,

gender, or political opinion. Neutrality demands that humanitarian organizations refrain from taking part in hostilities or from any action that either benefits or disadvantages the parties to the conflict. Independence demands that assistance should not be connected to any of the parties directly involved in armed conflicts or who have a stake in the outcome. (Barnett and Weiss 2008b: 3)

The purpose of these principles is to create a humanitarian space capable of providing a sanctuary for both victims and aid workers (Barnett and Weiss 2008b: 4). However, there are divergent positions and tension between scholars that argue for a classical humanitarianism operating under the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence; and scholars state that humanitarianism is anything but neutral (Ignatieff 1994; Calhoun 2008: 90; Barnett 2005: 723). Practitioners often refer to the primary need of saving lives as a priority regardless of other factors in the context: ‘saving and protecting lives of people affected by conflict and crisis is fundamentally necessary and worthwhile activity. Humanitarian action is a safety net for the most vulnerable in times of disaster, whether man-made or not’ (Donini 2010: S221). The empirical chapters in this research will show how shelters and soup kitchens along migratory routes in Mexico become sanctuaries, pockets of safety, and humanitarian spaces that migrants use as resources along their journeys. These spaces alleviate the strenuous circumstances migrants and returnees endure, becoming respites or oases along the way or at the point of return. However, their ways of operating depart from classical understandings of humanitarianism, since many humanitarian organizations in Mexico are local and believe that their services go beyond merely delivering relief.

Humanitarian Crisis or Emergency

The second half of the 20th century has seen several armed conflicts and emergencies arising in such a variety of ways and circumstances that the term

‘complex humanitarian emergency’ was devised to describe ‘emergencies created by displacements of people and other collateral suffering occasioned by armed conflict in which sides and territories were unclear, and in which the primary parties were not (or at least not all) recognizable states’ (Calhoun 2010: 48; Barnett 2005: 726). Two important elements are who and when someone determines that a particular pattern of mobility or forced migration becomes a humanitarian crisis or a crisis migration (McAdam 2014). Situations have arisen when the UN and powerful countries use selective language, avoiding the use of terms such as ‘genocide’ as they did in Rwanda, as a way to evade the humanitarian duty to intervene (Wilson and Brown 2009: 3–4). Hence, some critical situations may arise where there will be no presence of international relief actors. In short, labels matter. In the case study at hand, migration patterns of Central Americans, refugees, and deported Mexicans have not been labelled as a ‘humanitarian crisis’ even when there are great levels of distress, violence, and suffering for the people involved. In the absence of an official crisis, international relief organizations like the United Nations, UNHCR, or Doctors Without Borders (MSF) have provided assistance in very punctual ways, but the main source of relief assistance has been offered by local actors, and their work has lasted more than 25 years.

Local organizations often appear at the front line of contexts of displacement. Emergencies not only attract international relief organizations, but they also give rise to the participation of local NGOs to deliver emergency assistance, to advocate for human rights, and to foster development that allows for sustainable growth (Barnett 2005: 727). People on the ground have clearly stated that no matter the type of emergency or circumstance, human suffering takes precedence:

In terms of the destruction of human life, what difference is there between the wartime bombing of a civilian population and the distribution of ineffective medicines during a pandemic that is killing millions of people? If individuals are at risk because of the authoritarian and repressive policies, then humanitarian organizations must be prepared to fight for human rights and democratic reforms. If individuals are at risk because of poverty and deprivation, then they must be prepared to promote development. (Barnett 2005: 727)

This means that occasionally, humanitarian support will be provided in circumstances that do not necessarily fit a static definition of emergency (Barnett 2005: 733–734). Furthermore, the extent of humanitarian interventions is not limited to the duration of the crisis. Just because an emergency subsides does not mean that people are no longer in danger or that the forces that threaten human welfare have been removed. As a result, humanitarianism has become institutionalized, internationalized, and relevant in the global agenda, as well as more long-term in certain circumstances (Barnett 2011: 29; Barnett 2005: 723; Calhoun 2010: 54). Furthermore, in some cases, approaches to humanitarianism argue for the need to address the root causes of conflict, leading to a more long-term presence of humanitarian organizations.

Humanitarian aid has grown in scope and methods of delivering services to afflicted populations. This has increased the visibility of the politics of humanitarianism, revealing the complex relationship between humanitarianism and power that is understood as ‘those effects that shape the capacities of actors to determine their own circumstances and fate’ (Barnett and Weiss 2008b: 39). This power is exercised not only at the institutional levels but also on the ground, where humanitarian agencies use symbolic and normative techniques to regulate behaviours in emergency situations (Barnett and Weiss 2008b: 38–40; Barnett 2005: 734). Thus, as conflicts and emergencies have become more complex and boundaries less defined,

humanitarian organizations have had to redefine themselves and their work, expanding their scope to include what was once a distinctive characteristic of social action and starting to address structural elements in conflicts. Currently, humanitarian work may include efforts such as ‘development, democracy promotion, establishing the rule of the law, respect for human rights, and post-conflict peace building efforts’ (Barnett and Weiss 2008b: 29).

In recent years, there has been discussion that among people in displacement, some are entitled to refugee protection and others are economic migrants. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement have expressed humanitarian concerns generated by international migration: ‘We are particularly concerned that migrants, irrespective of their status, may live outside conventional health, social and legal systems and for a variety of reasons may not have access to processes which guarantee respect for their fundamental rights’ (as cited in Linde 2009: 571–572). The document not only stresses humanitarian concerns and the role international organizations wish to play, but also recognizes ‘the role of national societies in providing humanitarian assistance to vulnerable migrants, irrespective of their legal status’ Linde (2009: 572–577). Hence, it is important to analyse instances where humanitarian aid is provided to irregular migrants.

In this work, I side with an expanded notion of humanitarianism, arguing that humanitarian work needs to attend not only to the immediate relief of suffering, but also in attempts to address some of the factors that cause suffering in the first place. Due to the specificities of Mexico and its migration process, the type of humanitarianism offered to migrants in Mexico remains deeply humanitarian while simultaneously evolving in other directions to promote human rights and advocacy

for different migration policies. What emerges is what I label ‘humanitarianism from below’.

Humanitarian Aid and Migration Contexts

Receiving Contexts

Amongst the available literature, few examples exist of ways that aid has been provided to precarious migrants in different contexts beyond emergency situations. Analyses of humanitarian aid in receiving contexts appeared in Ponthieu and Incerti (2016) and Rutherford’s (2011) studies of humanitarian aid delivered for Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa; Cook (2011) and Squire’s (2015) enquiries into humanitarian groups in the United States; and Pallister-Wilkins (2017) and Millner’s (2011) discussions of humanitarianism in the Mediterranean Sea and the delivery of aid in France.

Ponthieu and Incerti (2016) discuss the challenges of delivering healthcare to mobile populations in Southern Africa. They analyse the work of Doctors Without Borders (MSF) in two recent programs: the Musina farms project on the South Africa–Zimbabwe border, and the more regional ‘corridor project’. They argue that many migrants continue traveling through Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique, and Lesotho to South Africa, Zambia, and Botswana, and that these migrants have different statuses and patterns of mobility. For many of them, their irregular status makes them vulnerable to abuse, arrest, and deportation, as well as health and psychosocial risks because they lack access to healthcare. In addition, they are part of a population highly susceptible to HIV and TB. (Ponthieu and Incerti 2016: 100-102) Ponthieu and Incerti’s analysis links humanitarianism to restrictive humanitarian policies,

emphasizing that these policies make it very difficult to receive healthcare consistently.

Rutherford analyzed the experiences of Zimbabweans at the northern border of South Africa. Zimbabwean asylum seekers or undocumented migrants received aid in temporary transit shelters, mostly run by faith-based NGOs with the support of international organizations (Rutherford 2011: 1306–1309), because of their vulnerable situations. In practice, after crossing the border and filing claims, asylum seekers had to wait long periods of time. Many crossed the border and started working in farms as undocumented migrants: ‘A number of Zimbabweans arriving there are not looking for long term work. They are simply seeking a bit of money to allow them to move further south’ (Rutherford 2011: 1313). At some point, many Zimbabweans ‘resided in either the houses being built by the state [...] or in a few of the small fostered places near the town. Many also made their way to church-run feeding centres for small care packages and food organized for undocumented migrants’ (Rutherford 2011: 1314). In his analysis, Rutherford emphasizes how this region has become not only an area in which to come and wait for a permit, but also a permissible one to stay in while migrants consider their next moves. These arrangements, though, were short-lived and changed by 2009 (Rutherford 2011: 1316).

Cook (2011) and Squire (2015) analyse a different way of delivering humanitarian aid to migrants in discussing the work of NGOs like No More Deaths, Humane Borders, and Samaritans in the United States. These groups are concerned with the increasing number of migrants dying throughout the Arizona desert as they venture to cross the border between Mexico and the United States. These faith-based

NGOs seek to take death out of the immigration equation, relieve suffering, and honour human dignity, as well as work toward ending death and suffering in the U.S.–Mexico borderlands. For example, Humane Borders places water jugs along migrants’ pathways (Cook 2011: 571). Similarly, No More Deaths advocates for human rights of migrants by documenting border control abuses (Squire 2015: 17). The Samaritans proactively search for migrants in distress to provide minimal medical assistance — treating blisters or medical evaluations — or to offer migrants transportation to hospital emergency rooms. These groups also advocate for migrants and perform humanitarian activism at different levels. The political differences among them are more practical than the ethos of their work (Squire 2015: 17).

Pallister-Wilkins (2017) analyze the tensions of the humanitarian regime in the Mediterranean region. She asserts that practices of rescue and assistance at sea are based on humanitarian concerns for life, but also shape and reshape attitudes from governmental and non-governmental actors in the Mediterranean and eastern Aegean and along migratory routes of the Western Balkans (2017: 19). In some ways, Pallister-Wilkins argues that in practice, processes of rescue could be also processes of border control concerned with preventing migratory flows: ‘This humanitarian intervention concerned with saving lives both masks the violence of the border that renders people vulnerable in the first instance and masks the intimate relationship practices of rescue have with processes of capture more traditionally associated with border policing’ (Pallister-Wilkins 2017: 19).

Millner (2011) discusses how different types of humanitarian assistance were provided to economically-motivated migrants and legitimate asylum-seekers in the so-called ‘jungle’ the Port of Calais, France between 2001 and 2009. For example, the

Red Cross ran a shelter that provided accommodation, showers, and healthcare, but the shelter was closed in 2002 due to changes in international protection. Local authorities refused permission to Secours Catholique, a local aid charity that wanted to set up showers, nor did they allow Médecins du Monde and Médecins Sans Frontieres to deal with a scabies outbreak. Furthermore, local police harassed migrants who were seeking support at a health clinic that provided services to the camp (Millner 2011: 320–321). These contexts reflect the tensions between providing humanitarian aid to vulnerable populations and tightening restrictions on provision of aid, as well as changes to international protection, and reveal how NGOs can contest political-economic constructions of asylum by enacting an ethos of hospitality (Millner 2011: 321).

Return Contexts

Ample literature exists regarding the return of refugee populations. However, refugee studies and forced displacement are often considered categories that are distinct from migration. Many migration studies have focused on economic approaches, the role of transnationalism, or the psychological and emotional aspects of return (Kunuroglu et al 2016: 6). The different foci of research on return also depend on the type of return a migrant makes. Significant differences exist between a migrant who returns after a failed migration journey or deportation process, one who returns as part of a longer plan, and one who returns for retirement or to innovate in the home country (Cassarino 2004: 257–258; Isolato 2010: 131–132).

The existing gap in the literature that traces the link between humanitarianism and return migration in the immediate aftermath of removal finds its cause in the fact that returning migrants do so to the country of origin. Supposedly, in their home

countries, they may be able to find the resources and networks to support their reintegration, which is not always the case. Among the literature on return migration, I found one study that deals with the immediate support to deportees (Sørensen 2013: 247–250).

Sørensen (2013) analyses the fate of Honduran nationals deported from the United States upon landing in Honduras. These returned migrants receive humanitarian assistance to cover their basic needs at either of the two Centres for Attention for Returned Migrants managed by faith-based NGOs. Considering the high volume of returnees after a removal process from the U.S., the role of NGOs offering this basic humanitarian aid becomes critical (J. M. Hagan, Rodriguez, and Castro 2011: 1377–1378; Sørensen 2013: 247–248; United States. Department of Homeland Security 2012). Furthermore, while performing this work, these NGOs working in deportee reception remain highly critical of the government and advocate for the creation of just migration policies, facilitation of transnational mobility, and anti-trafficking campaigns (Sørensen 2013: 247–250; Ruiz Gamba 2009: 224–225).

The links between humanitarianism and politics, economics, and control emerge from the literature. Since migration processes emerge and move in diverse political contexts, it is not surprising that these links appear. However, I argue that the current literature on humanitarianism and migration neither fully considers humanitarian aid within the migration process nor explicitly argues about the effects humanitarian actors may have in the process. Furthermore, there is an absence of literature that studies transit contexts or contexts with multiple types of migration dynamics.

Multidirectional Contexts

Literature on humanitarian aid in multidirectional contexts has developed slowly, though several research projects have contributed to the field. Vogt (2012), Manenti (2012), Brigden (2013), Basok et al (2015), Solano (2017), and Candiz and Bélanger (2018) address the role of humanitarian aid in the migration process in a variety of ways. Some have done it as part of the analysis of migration journeys, conducting research and collecting data out of shelters in Mexico. Manenti, Solano, and Candiz and Bélanger are some of the few scholars who directly address humanitarian work in migration processes. What is at stake in this research project is not only understanding the role of humanitarian actors as they interact with migrants, but also examining the effects this relationship and the impact poverty and violence may have in the migration process as a whole. Furthermore, because of the type of humanitarianism practiced to provide aid to migrants, refugees, and deportees in Mexico, it is significant to analyze the intermediary or brokerage role of humanitarian actors.

2.3 The Role of Poverty in Migration Journeys

One end of the main argument in this dissertation analyses the role of *casas de migrantes* — which function as migration intermediaries or brokers of aid — tending to the needs of migrants that function as an incipient and informal welfare system. The other end deals with vulnerable/poor migrants using these humanitarian spaces as resources, inasmuch as they are useful for their journeys. Hence, it is necessary to discuss, even briefly, the role poverty plays in migration journeys.

Migration is rarely an individual's isolated decision to move in search of opportunities to cope with their current circumstances or to better their life. Still, we cannot deny that global inequalities in income, political freedom, and quality of life play an important role in explaining migration (Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2014: 25). Moreover, both internal and international migration have major impacts on development and poverty (Siddiqui 2012: 5; Sørensen et al 2002: 11-12). Migration can both be seen as the cause of poverty and be caused by poverty. Also, poverty can be seen as alleviating and fostering mobility. From an effects perspective, migration impacts poverty at the individual, household, community, and national levels (Siddiqui 2012: 5–7; Skeldon 2002: 67–71; Waddington and Sabates-Wheeler 2003: 4–10).

Migration theory not only considers poverty as both a cause and an effect of human mobility, it also appears implicit in many theories. Ravenstein (1885; 1889), who formulated the laws of migration in the 19th century, saw migration deeply embedded in development and pinpointed economic motives as one of the main reasons for migration. 'Push-pull' models refer to economic, environmental, and demographic factors as circumstances that push people to migrate, as well as those factors like demand for labour, availability of land, economic opportunities and political freedom that lure people to other places (Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2014: 28–29). Neoclassical migration theories examine migration in the context of the supply and demand of labour and differential wages (Massey et al 1993: 432; Massey et al 2008: 17–21). The new economics of labour migration theory place the decision to migrate not on the individual level, but on the household or the community (Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2014: 38; Massey et al 2008: 17–21). Other theories, like networks, transnationalism, and systems theories, challenge structural constraints

such as poverty, social exclusion, and government restrictions. References to poverty are more peripheral in these theories because their foci and emphases are on other aspects of the migration process (Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2014: 39–45; Massey et al 2008: 42–50).

More recent migration scholarship explores the roles of class and economic stratification in migration processes (Van Hear 2014; Sládková 2016), emphasizing the ways class or economic stratification shape the migration process and highlighting who is able to move and where, as well as the resources and access available to would-be migrants. Other authors have begun looking at increasing inequalities in the transnational space (Faist et al 2015; Solano 2017). These authors refer to inequalities as unequal access to material and symbolic resources, social status, and power, which influence an individual's ability to make and execute decisions (Faist et al 2015: 193).

In migration scholarship, the biggest contribution to discussions of poverty comes from the nexus between migration and development (Skeldon 1997; Skeldon 2002; Siddiqui 2012; Sørensen et al 2002; de Haas 2010b). However, the concept of development has not been explicitly defined, and research between migration and development has focused on the impact of remittances and their effects on alleviating poverty and inequality (de Haas 2007: 1; see also DeWind et al 2012). Furthermore, development cannot be achieved by individual migrants or remittances alone, and requires active state intervention. In short, migration and remittances are not the magic solutions that will solve structural development problems such as poverty (Castles and Delgado Wise 2007: 8–9; de Haas 2010b: 255–256).

While the focus of migration literature has been on the mutual cause-effect relationship between poverty and migration, the role poverty plays in the migration journeys has not been extensively analysed. Previous analyses of migration journeys have emphasized migrants' experiences, strategies, and resources available for the journey. But, rarely has there been an explicit emphasis on how poor migrants move and how they cope when resources are minimal.

This gap in the literature emerges partly from a recurrent idea in migration studies that states that it is not the poorest who migrate, but those who have resources — no matter how meagre these might appear — and contacts available, as well as the drive to do so (Skeldon 1997: 8; de Haas 2007: 10; Sørensen 2013: 246; Andersson 2014: 20). Skeldon asserts that most studies on migration, specifically about non-disaster situations, find that since 'migration always involves some costs of transportation and the abandonment of many of the few possessions the poor might have. The poorest of the poor cannot afford either risk or movement and the majority starves in situ' (Skeldon 2002: 71). However, Skeldon's argument includes with a seldom-referenced second part, which states that the poor do move (Skeldon 1997: 8) but locally and primarily within the same country.

While migration studies never explicitly state that migrants are not poor, the focus and emphasis have remained on migrants' experiences, journeys, and the resources they may have available. Sorensen (2013: 246) argues that often poor migrants are presented as sedentary due to the lack of resources, but in her research, she has encountered the fact that poor migrants do move. However, their movement and the assessment of those 'meagre resources' referred to later are rarely analysed in migration research. More research is necessary to understand the various strategies

that poor people employ to mobilize and to understand the strategies they use while on the move (De Haan and Yaqub 2009: 8–10; Siddiqui 2012: 11). The aim in revisiting Skeldon's argument and the link between poverty and migration is not to establish causality, but to highlight that poor and vulnerable migrants indeed do migrate, and to feature some of the strategies they use when resources are limited.

Poverty as Multidimensional

Part of this research used an instrument that understands and measures poverty in a multidimensional way to provide a deeper understanding of the deprivations migrants experience before they depart along migration journeys. This methodology is briefly mentioned in the introduction and detailed further in Chapter 3.

Poverty has been defined in a number of ways. Chambers (1995) referred to poverty as a multidimensional concept observable in different dimensions such as property, physical weakness, isolation, vulnerability and powerlessness. Privations in all or a cluster of these categories could potentially put people at a disadvantage, acting as a deprivation. The 1995 World Summit on Social Development, held in Copenhagen, defined poverty as a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. It was also emphasized that poverty depends not only on income but also by access to services that may increase the quality of livelihood for the people (United Nations 1996: 38). Other definitions of poverty have considered it the total absence of opportunities, along with high levels of undernourishment, hunger, illiteracy, lack of education, physical and mental ailments, emotional and social instability, unhappiness, sorrow and hopelessness for the

future. Furthermore, poverty is also accompanied by a permanent lack of economic, social, and political participation, leading to individuals' social exclusion. In turn, this prevents access to economic, social, and cultural development (Blanco 2003; Siddiqui 2012: 9). These definitions consider poverty from a multidimensional perspective, including criteria such as employment and income, food security, type of shelter, access to education, health, and sanitation, and level of social and economic inclusion. This approach to poverty aids in understanding why decisions to migrate are not only due to economic (income) deprivation.

Amartya Sen (1999: 13–21) offered one of the most significant and influential perspectives in development and poverty when he proposed his 'capabilities approach'. He conceptualized development as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy. He defined these freedoms with elements such as social well-being, poverty alleviation, income inequality, gender equality, and universal access to primary education, health care, and meaningful employment, and sees the lack of these freedoms as deprivations. Freedoms of individuals are building blocks in development, as well as the expansion of people's capabilities to secure those freedoms. For Sen, development requires the elimination of major sources of 'unfreedom' such as poverty, tyranny, poor economic opportunities, systemic social deprivation, lack of public facilities, and intolerance by states, especially repressive ones (1999: 15–17).

Other key concepts in this approach are functionings and capabilities. On one hand, 'functionings' allude to a person's successes in 'doing or being', such as participation in society and health. On the other hand, capabilities deal with a person's real or substantive freedom to achieve such functionings, like the ability to take part

in the life of society (Sen 1999: 75). Hence, for Sen, poverty ‘must be seen as the deprivation of basic capabilities rather than merely as lowness of incomes, which is the standard criterion of identification of poverty’ (1999: 87). Poverty identified in terms of deprivation may be characterized by premature mortality, lack of access to meaningful employment, unstable and insufficient income, limited opportunities for schooling, lack of health care, and social security (Sen 1999: 15, 20). Furthermore, Sen argued that income growth itself should not be ultimate proof of development, but rather an indication of whether or not the capabilities of people to control their own lives have expanded (Sen 1999: 72–73, 87).

Other key considerations in the capability approach are variability and intensity. Sen recognizes the possibility of variations in capabilities and poverty levels due to a person’s age, gender, social roles, and location (1999: 87–90). The latter considerations are significant in understanding how poverty could be reflected differently across communities and between families and individuals in the same group. Sen’s approach has served as an inspiration and basis upon which to develop measurements of poverty that are not only tied to income.

The Strategies of the Poor: 'An Economy of Makeshifts'

Poor migrants or would-be migrants are not passive actors in migration processes. Migration literature has emphasized the resourcefulness and creativity that migrants exercise as they embark on migration journeys (Mainwaring and Brigden 2016). Thus, understanding the interactions between the actors — migrants and humanitarian aid organizations — also demands an understanding of the role that agency plays (Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994: 141). In this research, agency is

understood as having the capacity to exert ‘some degree of control over the social relations in which one is enmeshed, which in turn implies the ability to transform those social relations to some degree’ (Sewell 1992: 20). At the same time, I consider that agency may have a collective dimension that ‘entails an ability to coordinate one's actions with others and against others, to form collective projects, to persuade, to coerce, and to monitor the simultaneous effects of one's own and others’ activities’ (Sewell 1992: 21). By entering into different types of social relations and through engagement with different structures, migrants exercise and develop deeper awareness and agency as they move in their journeys (Emirbayer and Mische 1998: 970; Brigden 2013; Bakewell, de Haas, and Kubal 2011: 11). Considerations of agency and migrants’ mobility strategies lead us to consider other concepts like networks and social capital, which are key in understanding migration processes.

Chapter 6 explicitly states that many of the migrants I interviewed were poor and embarked on their journeys with meagre resources. In spite of limited resources, migrants rely on other strategies to cope with and cover their journeys. To highlight the role agency plays in migration processes, the discussion of poverty and resources is framed by using the concept of ‘economy of makeshifts’, which was used to describe the ways the poor and vulnerable coped with poverty and precariousness in Europe during pre-industrial times. The economy of makeshifts is a concept that sums up the diverse, desperate, and sometimes failing strategies of the poor for material survival (Tomkins and King 2003:1). Hindle (2003: 65) states that an ‘economy of makeshifts is a series of sources of income – day labour, by employment and casual jobs, charitable doles, neighbourly and/or kin support, loans and begging – on which the poor could draw to support themselves’. In other words, an economy of makeshifts is better described as an economy of diversified resources. These resources were

found in a matrix of overlapping — though sometimes mutually exclusive — expedients, governed by a complex pattern of rights and obligations, claims, and counter-claims (2003: 65).

The parallels between the ways poor people coped with poverty in the past and the ways migrants find resources along their journeys is striking. Historians who have enquired about the relationship between the poor and welfare in Europe during the Pre-Industrial Era, acknowledging differences in the ways societies offered relief to the poor, agree that in one way or another there were several forms of relief. At the same time, the poor managed access to available resources in a variety of ways. Often the strategies of the poor were only to cope with hardship, not necessarily to overcome poverty (for studies on relief to the poor in England, see King and Tomkins 2003 and Innes 1996; in Italy, see Cavallo 1995; in the Netherlands, see van Leewen 2013; in France, see Hufton 1974; and in Antwerp, see Winter 2013).

While there were differences in the ways relief was provided to the poor in Catholic and Christian Protestant countries, in practice, scholars collectively indicate that relief to the poor is a process that evolved into a formal welfare system (King and Tomkins 2003). This suggests that the economy of makeshifts is more than a supply-demand chain, and instead is a web of relationships that needs to be managed. Issues emerge such as, who are the poor? Who is entitled to relief? How is the relief dispensed? (King and Tomkins 2003: 258). In all, there is no denying that relief was important to many of the poor back then. Van Leewen (1994: 606) says that ‘even a small amount of help could mean the difference between tolerable existence and fathomless misery. Poor relief offered a relatively certain source of income [or supply of needs] in an otherwise uncertain world, and it could be combined with other

survival strategies'. The poor choose relief options according to which seems to offer the most benefit and require the least cost.

In an analysis of humanitarian aid offered to migrants in Mexico, some of the same issues arise. If in the past the poor consisted of the vagrant, the mobile poor, and the settled poor, today in the migration processes in Mexico it is the migrant, the deportee, and the asylum seeker (see Anderson 2013). In the past, there was a need for migrants to provide proof they needed the aid, but it is clear that migrants on their journeys, upon return through Mexico, or after deportation may need to provide proof of their irregular status to access shelters and aid. At the same time, in pre-industrial Europe, there was an expectation of a good behaviour upon receiving the aid, which raises the question of what constitutes a 'good migrant' and a 'bad migrant' in migration processes (Lees 1998: 5; van Leeuwen 1994). In the past, a mix of public, private, and religious resources was available to offer relief to vulnerable populations (Hufton 1974). The same occurs in regards to humanitarian work offered to migrants in Mexico. In all, practices of relief had a controlling effect on the population; the empirical chapters of this dissertation will show that this dynamic of control and containment emerges in the migration process, just as it did in the past.

As previously mentioned, the poor are not passive recipients. Rather, the poor and vulnerable exercise their agency by putting into play a variety of strategies to cope with hardship. In the past, day labour, charitable doles, neighbourly and/or kin support, loans and begging were strategies included in the economy of makeshifts. While a significant body of migration literature exists that addresses the ways migrants creatively and actively respond to the challenges of migrating (Mainwaring and Brigden 2016; Stone-Cadena 2016; Brachet 2005; Collyer 2007), Chapter 6

discusses four of these strategies in more detail (begging, delayed activation of networks, sustaining cash transfers, and the use of the body as a resource) as those which add nuances or contribute to the understanding of migrants' coping strategies in the migration process. Humanitarian assistance remains a central matter in this research.

Networks, Social Capital, and Resources

The last considerations in this section provide some conceptual definitions that guide the understanding of the importance of networks or the lack thereof and the mobilization of resources. Migration researchers often present networks as static. It seems as if migrants access their networks and automatically find the resources and emotional support they need, either to make the decision to leave or to quickly integrate into their place of destination. Often, scholars do not give much explanation for how this occurs (Ryan et al. 2008: 675). Aware of this, some migration scholars have insisted on the urgent need for more understanding of how migration networks work (Boyd 1989: 655; Vertovec 2001; Ryan 2007: 296–298, 2011; Eve 2010: 1245; de Haas 2010a: 1591).

Migrant networks can be defined as 'sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through ties of kinship, friendship, and shared community origin (Massey et al 1993: 448). Networks are often fluid, changing as participants' needs and circumstances shift over time (Morgan 1990; Ryan et al. 2008: 675). Vertovec (2001) indicated that understanding the intensity, complexity, frequency, and density of networks is useful for providing a deeper knowledge of the dynamism and function

of migrants' networks. Ryan (2011: 709) also stressed the importance of paying attention to the locality or places — spatial dimension — where migrants engage with their networks, as well as the length of time — temporal dimension — over which migrants truly utilize the resources available to them through their networks while investigating network dynamics.

Thomas Faist (1997: 201) stated that one of the primary questions about the meso-level is how social capital is created, accumulated, and mobilized by collectives and networks, given certain macro-conditions. The conceptualization of social capital took off with the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1979; translated in Bourdieu 1985), who is considered the founder of the concept. Bourdieu (1985: 249) defined social capital as 'the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition'. Coleman (1990), Burt (1992), and Putnam (2000) further developed the concept, and Alejandro Portes (1998: 2) argued that as the concept of social capital has been used in many different contexts and has possible negative implications.

Seeing networks simply as structures that facilitate processes of migration impedes the ability to see the agency of migrants to navigate within those structures. Assistance and help do not automatically happen, as established immigrants do not have unlimited resources; rather, the assistance and help need to be mobilized (Bakewell, de Haas, and Kubal 2011: 11). Anthias (2007: 788) argues that 'networks and ties that are not mobilizable for the pursuit of an advantage, or the mitigation of disadvantage, are not usefully referred as social capital'. Thus, a network is only useful under three conditions: it must be active, have resources available, and must be

able to mobilize those resources. Furthermore, an active network can be deactivated at any time, depending on contextual dynamics.

A migrant network is a location-specific form of social capital (Massey et al. 1987: 170; Massey et al. 2008: 43; see also DaVanzo 1981). Portes (1998: 5) indicates that Bourdieu emphasized the need to distinguish between the network itself and the resources mobilized through the network: ‘After all, the volume of the social capital possessed by a person depends on, first, the size of the network connections and, second, the volume of the (economic, cultural or symbolic) capital possessed by each of those to whom she or he is connected. This distinction has been largely ignored by many later interpretations of the term “social capital” as well as its application to migration theory’ (de Haas 2010a: 1589–1590). Failure to make this distinction blurs the understanding of relationships in the network and the functionality or effects of the network itself. It is important to contextualize ‘the effectivity of networks and bonds and avoid treating them in a uniform way as modes of overcoming disadvantage. However, even when networks and bonds are not social capital in this sense they may indirectly contribute to providing the means for accessing social capital’ (Anthias 2007: 789; see also de Haas 2010a: 1590). Thus, the distinction between resources and social capital is key when talking in contexts of migration of relatively deprived people, who in the absence of social capital within the network may rely on other resources (Massey et al 2008: 97).

Anthias (2007) considers that the notion of resources is more neutral than the notion of social capital (see also Lister 2005). Distinguishing networks from resources permits the contextualization of the effectivity of networks, avoiding treatment of them in the same way as modes of overcoming disadvantage. Resources are those

available assets (personal, social, material, and cultural) that may help an individual or group to cope with hardship or threats to welfare. The notion of people drawing on a range of resources to manage their lives can be found in both psychological and sociological research (Lister 2005: 24; see also Titterton 1992). For migration studies, distinguishing networks from resources advances the understanding of the ways that resources may be available outside of the migrants' networks or ties. Chapter 8 shows how humanitarian aid becomes a crucial resource that migrants use to cope with hardship along their journeys.

2.4 The Larger Context of Violence in Central America and Mexico

The northern countries of Central America (El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras) have seen an increase in violence over the past two decades. In Mexico, this increase in violence has become more visible since 2007, and is due to a diverse set of factors such as chronic poverty and lack of development, endemic corruption, collusion between officials and criminal organizations, lack of access to justice and impunity, the drug and arms trade network, and the inability of states to maintain the rule of law (Davis 2010; CIDH 2015: 31–46; Rodríguez 2016: 8). At the same time, violence is exercised by a diverse group of actors ranging from state actors (such as local and national police forces, migration authorities, and specialized forces combating drug trafficking), groups of organized crime involved in illicit trafficking of arms and drugs, and other non-state actors like gangs (*maras*), self-defense groups, and local groups that may or may not have links to larger criminal organizations (CIDH 2015: 31; Davis 2010; Santamaría 2015: 115–116).

The most common violent crimes that occur along migration routes are robbery, kidnapping, rape, extortion, death threats, intimidation, and human trafficking. Not only could some of the effects of violence be fatal, but they also create displacement and instill a deep sense of insecurity and fear amongst civilians (CIDH 2015: 31–46). The violence in the region is not rooted in armed conflicts or driven by political objectives. Instead, it finds its explanation in the activity of groups that do not attempt to overtake the state but aim to diminish its intervention in their illicit activities. Thus, these groups seek their own agendas and exercise violence either for profit or to preserve their own interests (Davis 2010: 399–400; Santamaría 2015: 115–116).

Violence in Central America

El Salvador and Guatemala were affected by the civil wars in the 1980s, and Honduras experienced civil unrest in 2009. These states have been weakened by the emergence of gangs that have captured and control regions in these countries. Their operation is the result of the rise of criminal organizations and corrupt officials. A concrete example of violent groups are gangs or maras that exhibit violent and deadly behaviors and operate mafia-style protection schemes in various regions of Central America. These violent groups gain members through compulsory recruitment, which consequently displaces families who are aiming to protect their children (Rodríguez 2016: 8). Structural causes, such as endemic poverty and lack of opportunities, as well as incapacity of states to provide security, permit the operation and impunity of these violent groups.

Maras may be linked to drug trade organizations. Thus, some gangs have become transnational actors exercising violence along migration routes. The violence they exercise emerges as a way to preserve the interest of drug trade organizations. It is not uncommon for them to engage in territorial battles with other gangs or criminal groups (CIDH 2015: 31; Beittel 2013).

Violence in Mexico

Impunity, collusion, corruption, and other forms of control over the general population have been operating in Mexico for a long time. After the 1910 revolution, the state relented considerable coercive power to other actors in an effort to protect the revolutionary cause (Davis 2010: 39). Thus, new forms of caciquism emerged (a cacique may be defined as a local leader who has total or near total political, economic, and social control of a certain area or region) and their control became institutionalized over the years through connections to the ruling party. This allowed caciques to operate with a certain level of impunity and developed clientelism (political practices in which a person gives political or financial support to a patron privilege or benefit) (Villarreal 2002: 479–481). Other forms of coercion emerged through police and military enacting force and violence to impose the government's will. This action disregarded the law, which ultimately permeated civil society (Davis 2010: 39).

Bribery or *la mordida* took root in Mexican society as decades passed, especially with the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) as the governing party for over 70 years. After its collapse in 2000, the democratic transition in Mexico brought new realities. Those groups and people who had been involved in corruption,

patronage, and bribery schemes throughout the previous decades lost their privileges. Because of this change, police and army groups — especially from the lower ranks — turned toward citizens and to criminal gangs for sources of income, resulting in impunity and violence (Davis 2010: 50; Bergman 2012: 70–72). This reality permeated in the migration process as violence and extortion against migrants increased (FN Reynosa, January 8, 2016).

In 2007, the Partido Acción Nacional (PAN) in power triggered the war on drugs and organized crime, causing a dramatic surge in violence across the country. Homicides, threats, disappearances, extortions, and attacks on civilians particularly targeted women, journalists, human rights advocates, and migrants. At the same time, activity by both drug cartels and state security forces caused violence to escalate (Azaola 2012; Amnesty International 2017: 250).

The Mexican government has placed most of the responsibility for the violence on drug trade organizations; in reality, however, there are many other causes. The state and other actors are constantly interacting and competing with one another. In other words, in Mexico there are violent pluralities (Arias and Goldstein 2010; Burrell and Moodie 2013) that consist of state and non-state actors participating in organized crime, corruption, gang violence, lynching, and paramilitarism. These violent pluralities cause the lines between political violence and criminal violence to blur (Vogt 2013).

The first reports of the violence against migrants came out in the mid-90s (CNDH 1996). While the reports appeared regularly, they seemed isolated from other types of violence in the country. Within a decade, the violence increased, culminating in two reports regarding the massive kidnapping of migrants in 2009 and 2011 by the

Mexican Human Rights National Commission (CNDH 2009, 2011). These two reports brought more attention to the dynamics of violence against migrants. However, awareness of the violence did not stop it from increasing (Casillas 2011a). The main groups that commit violence against migrants are *maras*, state agents extorting migrants, smugglers or coyotes, and criminal networks of narcotraffic. So, violence against migrants and deportees in Mexico has moved from particular events (even if frequent) to an omnipresent threat along migratory routes, border towns, and areas that surround shelters providing aid to migrants. In the end, to properly understand the current violence against migrants, it is necessary to look at the bigger canvas of violent pluralism in Mexico. Violence in Mexico is an omnipresent threat not only for migrants and deportees, but also for the general population.

Violent Pluralism

Violent pluralism considers the role violence plays in preserving or challenging particular forms of lived democracy. In Latin America, there are multiple forms of violence. Examples include Colombia's guerrilla war, along with their drug trafficking organizations; Brazil's large-scale urban gang violence and the police impunity and growing vigilantism; Jamaica's current gang conflict and private security firms that are both politically and criminally aligned (Arias and Goldstein 2010); and Mexico's long-standing forms of institutionalized patronage, corruption, bribery and clientelism, which may use different forms of violence and threat, collusion with different groups involved in the drug and arms trade network, and land and rights disputes (Davis 2010: 20).

In Latin America, many actors — ranging from state actors such as police and military to non-state or civil society actors such as private firms, vigilante groups, death squads, and drug traffickers and guerrillas — employ violence. Violent pluralism also enables the analysis of the many relationships among civil society, violent actors, and different elements of the state including politicians, police, bureaucrats, and the military. All these groups may exercise violence within or outside of the legal framework. However, the violence they exercise corresponds to their own particular and more localized agendas (Arias and Goldstein 2010: 20–28; Santamaría 2015: 115–116).

While an in-depth analysis of the role of violence in Latin America and particularly in Mexico is outside of the scope of this study, Arias and Goldstein's (2010) edited volume *Violent Democracies in Latin America* provides a solid perspective of violent pluralism and provides evidence from different Latin American regions and countries. For our purposes, violent pluralism allows us to understand how different state and non-state actors committing violence against migrants could have other interests that are not limited to preying on migrants. This notion of violent pluralities helps us to understand the larger pattern of increased violence in Latin America.

Violence and Its Different Dimensions

Violence manifests not only in the micro-level experiences of migrants, but also in the ways enforcement and the legal systems foster vulnerability and exclusion. Violence may manifest at different levels, which Galtung categorized as direct and structural violence. The first can be understood as direct violence and can

be traced to concrete people or actors; in structural violence, it is not possible to identify a perpetrator (Galtung 1969; Farmer 1996, 2004). Chapter 7 considers the classical conceptualizations of structural violence (Galtung 1969; Farmer 1996, 2004), but rather than following Galtung's concept of direct violence, I use Kleinman's concept of 'violences of everyday life' (Kleinman 2000; see also Bourgois 2001; Scheper-Hughes 1992, 1996). The latter concept constructs violence more as a dynamic in a different social process rather than a particular event that happens to individuals. Scholars insist on the need to analyze violence within their geographic and temporal contexts in order to bring to light who carries out the violence, how it is perpetrated, and why (Jones 2016: 180). Additionally, sometimes there are gaps between the written law and the way it is enforced — hence the need to consider the concept of 'legal violence' (Menjívar and Abrego 2012), which explores how laws and enforcement create permanent environments of fear that affect people's everyday lives.

For the case at hand, violence against migrants has existed for a while, and the Mexican National Commission of Human Rights (CNDH) (1996: 101–106) reported the ways state and non-state actors committed human rights violations against migrants along the southern border of Mexico. As years have passed, scholars, as well as Mexican and international organizations, have documented and analyzed violence within the migration patterns in Mexico. Casillas (2006, 2008, 2010, 2015) and Rodriguez (2014, 2016) are two Mexican scholars who have documented the evolution of Central American migration patterns through Mexico, including the ways violence and actors have emerged in the Mexican context. Ruiz (2003), Ogren (2007), and Alvarez (2009) analyze the risks migrants take and human rights violations against them at the southern border of Mexico; Meyer and Brewer (2010) document

human rights violations, as well as migrants' kidnappings beyond the southern border; Amnesty International (2006, 2010) and CNDH (2009, 2011) reported rising violence levels against migrants and detailed some of the most important cases of massive kidnapping of migrants. Casillas (2015), Frank-Vitale (2011), Chavez and Landa (2011), Infante et al (2012), Sørensen (2013), Brigden (2013), and Basok et al (2015) all document in different ways violent interactions with diverse criminal groups, as well as the strategies and effects these have on migrants. Ample literature also exists on migration patterns and violence at the Mexico-U.S. border, including articles by Andreas (2000), Bustamante (2002), Alonso (2005), Anguiano Téllez and Trejo Peña (2007), Spener (2008), Slack and Whiteford (2011), Infante et al (2012), De Leon (2015), Slack and Campbell (2016), Jones (2016). Some of these studies analyze not only human rights violations or risks that migrants take as they cross the border, but also the intricacies of the drug trade and human trafficking.

In Mexico, there are other contextual instances of violence that exist as a permanent threat not only to nationals, but also to migrants crossing territories or returning migrants. Hence, while personal, structural, and legal violence help to analyze violence at micro- and macro-levels, they still remain focused on migrants' journeys and experiences. Thus, there is a need for a different analytical lens that aids in the understanding of this permanent violent threat that emerges from the context. The concept of 'violent pluralism' (Arias and Goldstein 2010) must not be understood as a multiplicity of violence, but rather as a type of violence exercised by different groups (states, social elites, and/or gangs) aiming to establish or contest regimes of citizenship, justice, rights, and a democratic social order. Though these groups are not trying to overthrow the established regime, they still exercise violence as a way to establish their own agendas or preserve their own interests. This is key in

understanding why violence becomes part of the internal dynamics in the migration processes in Mexico, which I will show in Chapter 7.

2.5 Humanitarian Assistance as Welfare

Neither virtue nor foresight can effectively shield individuals from the fragility of the human body in a hostile world. Communities, in contrast, can do much to protect their members. They can guard, insure, inoculate, and nurse. They can supply work, food, shelter, and defense. The group can protect — or at least sustain — its members in ways unavailable to most people, because of its greater resources. But should they do so? If the answer is yes, who should receive the benefit of communal protection? And what should they be protected against? (Lees 1998: 1)

With these words, Lees (1998) opens his study on the English Poor Laws (a system of poor relief in England and Wales that developed out of late medieval and Tudor era laws and was codified at the beginning of the 17th century) and argues that there is no simple solution to drawing the boundaries of individual needs and public and private resources, just as there is no simple answer about the motivations for people and groups to seek help and to offer aid. Van Leewen (1994: 606, 611) states that during the pre-industrial times, diverse charitable bodies assisted the poor or gave relief in the form of an allowance. The relief consisted of money, bread and other nourishment, peat, and clothes, as well as medical help, education, and Bible classes. Thus, the provision of welfare to vulnerable populations is not a new practice and groups have found ways to provide for the poor and vulnerable for centuries (Lees 1998: 2).

Earlier in this chapter, in relation to the poor and poverty, I mentioned the notion of ‘economy of makeshifts’ to explain how the poor and vulnerable populations made ends meet. The history of welfare is as much local as international, a history of

clients and patrons, a story of hopes, fears, and assumptions (Lees 1998: 6–7). Thus, while I am using this historical framework, there are some considerations to bear in mind: First, the distribution of welfare to the poor and vulnerable people varies across countries and regions. Additionally, while support is available, the poor are not passive recipients. They use other strategies to navigate hardship (see King and Tomkins 2003; Hufton 1974; Innes 1996; van Leeuwen 1994, 2013; Lees 1998: 6). Second, delivery of welfare to the poor and vulnerable evolves from local and informal settings to more regulated forms of delivery (King and Tomkins 2003: 6; van Leeuwen 2013: 180; Jones 1996: 57; Lees 1998: 11). Third, a dynamic of (un)deservingness remains present at all times (King and Tomkins 2003: 16; Hufton 1974: 201; van Leeuwen 2013: 178; Head-König 2013: 153).

Hence, in this final section, I return to framing the theoretical discussion within the ways welfare was offered to the poor in Europe and England during pre-industrial times and before the emergence of the welfare state. The discussion aims to highlight some forms of aid delivery to the poor at those times resemble the ways aid is provided to migrants in Mexico.

The Local Community

While discussing local relief as part of the ‘economy of makeshifts’, King and Tomkins (2003: 2) state that relief needs to be seen more as a process than a single event or events. The same goes for the understanding the experience of poverty, which evolves and changes according to age, employment, and other factors. This understanding of relief and poverty (or precariousness) is important in migration

processes, where policies and migrants' experiences shape and reshape one another constantly, as well as any responses of aid that may emerge.

The statutory relief system and the welfare state are modern creations that can be traced to the pre-industrial times in Europe, the Elizabethan Poor Laws in the 17th century, and later to the emergence of state social provision after World War II. However, even before the Poor Laws, there were other regulations like vagrancy laws that aimed to control the movement of people. Furthermore, the Ordinance of Laborers in 1349 criminalized the giving of alms to valiant beggars who refused to work. Forbidding the giving of alms to a group of people was a great challenge for a society with deep-seated beliefs and practices about poverty, charity, and Christianity. Furthermore, the vagrancy laws were used to encourage people to sell their work locally. Thus, these regulations were more than a simple prohibition of giving relief to the poor (Innes 1996: 142; B. Anderson 2013: 14). But before the Elizabethan Poor Laws, there was an understanding that relief must come not only from mandatory benefices, abbeys, and monasteries, but also from private donors. Modern research has shown that aid for the poor and vulnerable was also supplied through family or neighbourly networks:

Such support networks were sometimes formalized: 'help ales' might raise funds to bail out people in difficulties; religious guilds supported needy members. Alms were sometimes bestowed on individual supplicants; sometimes selectively distributed among the poor of the neighbourhood; sometimes more widely broadcast, at funerals, or on fixed days by monastic houses. Relief was sometimes institutionalized in the form of housing for travelers, the sick or aged. (Innes 1996: 142–143)

Delivering relief to the poor occurred at the local level with various levels of success and collaboration (King and Tomkins 2003: 2, 6). Religious activities were often the product of an association between laity and clergy, between political and religious

power. This makes it difficult to create a distinction between the secular and the religious.

I acknowledge that within the historical revision of relief to the poor there are conflicting positions and that the evolution of the welfare system has many other layers that make it a much more sophisticated process (van Leeuwen 1994; Jones 1996; King and Tomkins 2003). The aim of this historical framing is to highlight how the practicalities of relief distribution to the poor remained at the local levels even after different types of legislation and regulation were enacted. Additionally, highlighting the role of the laity will be significant in the empirical chapters, which analyse how shelters emerge locally and how their faith-based nature allows them to operate and develop.

Who Belongs: Identification and Control

Seeing the distribution of welfare simply as a supply-demand relationship minimizes larger social dynamics for the parts involved. The notion of economy of makeshifts allows us to understand the poor as more than simple passive recipients, and sheds light on the agency and intersubjectivity that poor people can exercise in using different strategies to navigate hardship (Jones 1996: 55). In the same way, across the distribution of welfare, one can see how other interests and agendas emerge, aside from the pure altruistic desire to provide aid. Dynamics of control of the poor, herding of resources, or plain individual interest to benefit oneself can be traced in the relief of welfare (Anderson 2013; van Leeuwen 1994). Historically, there has been a concern for rulers to control the mobility of people. The relationship between

territories, labour mobility, settlement, and claims of the community has always been present and still remains in modern society (Anderson 2013: 13).

Hence, one of the biggest concerns in the history of welfare deals with the issue of who is entitled to aid, who deserves or does not deserve to be supported, and who qualifies as poor. In other words, who belongs? (Innes et al 2013: 1–3). Until 1795, parish officers used the laws of settlement to regulate immigration of the poor to their parishes in England and Wales (Lees 1998: 29; Landau 1988: 409); in the Netherlands, letters of surety (letter from a person or organization ensuring payment for the sustenance of the carrier) were required to settle in different towns. Also, in the Netherlands, some cities used wardens to distinguish valuable migrants from liabilities (van Leeuwen 1994: 186–188). In France, the wandering poor and the domiciled beggar were treated differently; while

the latter might expect help in kind and a place by the fire whilst he ate, the former could not [...] There were farmers even in the poorest areas who were always prepared to offer the basic gift of overnight shelter in a barn; most offered a blanket or some other form of covering, but not all offered bread, which was, after all, a fairly expensive commodity [...] The known migrant offering to repay his board and lodging by work or entertainment was probably welcome. (Hufton 1974: 202)

In all, historical records show that there was a need to identify the poor and the needy. Controlling mobility and denying settlement were forms of social control enacted to avoid overburdening localities with the provision of relief to the poor. Different forms of control, identification, and belonging evolved in pre-industrial Europe. For centuries it was the vagrant and unsettled poor who were perceived as threats; now, for contemporary societies and especially developed countries, the figure of the migrant has taken the place of the vagrant and unsettled poor (Anderson 2013: 13).

Contemporary Notions of Welfare and Migration

Concerns for migrants' welfare can emerge at any stage of a migration process. These concerns emerge in response to different vulnerabilities of deciding migrants, transit migrants, (im)mobile migrants, arrived migrants, deported or returned migrants, and even the migrants' families left at home. Migration studies often assume that migrants (especially irregular ones) may have limited or no social protection (Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman 2011: 11, 15). Thus, analysis of the interactions between vulnerable migrants and humanitarian actors along migratory routes in Mexico provides insights into both how migrants negotiate precariousness along their journeys or in the aftermath of deportation, and the way humanitarian actors provide different levels of welfare to these migrants.

Casas de Migrantes as an Incipient Welfare System

Scholars have used the notion of welfare in different ways to describe material aspects of well-being such as contentment, happiness, an absence of threat, and confidence in the future. At the same time, it could be defined as a statutory procedure or social effort that promotes the basic physical and material well-being of people in need. Welfare can also be thought of in terms of individuals, and 'social welfare' can be used to refer to more collective forms of well-being such as the well-being of a community or a nation (Baldock et al 2012: 20–21). Thus, welfare can be seen from a person's everyday life perspective or in society at a macro-level and can be related to both the individual and to the collective, involving material as well as immaterial needs (Greve 2008; Baldock et al 2012: 20–21). In all, the notion of welfare cannot be defined very tightly.

In the literature, the word ‘welfare’ is rarely used by itself; the field of social policy deals with the complexities of how social welfare is produced, sustained, and distributed (Baldock et al 2012: 20–21). Furthermore, there is increasing interest in the ways welfare has been provided, not only by the state but also by a mixed economy of welfare, which describes the variety of organizational and economic arrangements for the delivery, funding, and regulation of welfare. These organizational and economic arrangements may include the state or the market, and voluntary or informal welfare (Johnson 1999: 22; Baldock et al. 2012: 28; Powell 2007: 2–3). In the case of the migration process in Mexico, this discussion of the meaning, production, and distribution of welfare relies on the analysis of the practical function of humanitarian actors supporting migrants, deportees, and asylum seekers.

There is also a growing interest in and an emerging body of literature that study the link between migration and the provision and access to welfare or social protection. Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman (2011), Faist et al (2015), Bilecen and Barglowski (2015), and Levitt et al (2016) are amongst the most recent scholars who produced studies on migration and welfare. Some of the features of these studies are the exploration of social protection within the transnational space, the informal ways in which these social protections emerge amongst migrants, and the inequalities that access to social protection may create in migrant populations. This strand of literature uses the term ‘social protection’ rather than welfare because of the negative connotation ‘welfare’ may have. MacAuslan and Sabates-Wheeler (2011: 62) state that ‘social provision or what is (often pejoratively) referred as welfare, relates to the provision of goods, services to protect people from, and prevent, the negative livelihood impacts of risk, and to reduce structural inequalities in opportunity’. They also emphasize that the understanding of welfare or social protection can be seen from

multiple perspectives, but often different perspectives are not mutually exclusive. Further, MacAuslan and Sabates-Wheeler consider that ‘social provisioning can be provided through a spectrum of market and non-market distribution systems or in other words, through formal and informal channels, public and private sources’ (2011: 62).

While other definitions of social protection have been provided (see Faist et al 2015: 194–195; Levitt et al 2016: 2–6; Başak and Karolina 2015: 204), definitions to aid in the understanding of social protection or welfare across borders or within the transnational space are in the early stages of formation. However, one of the most comprehensive definitions — and one that fits this analysis — is provided by Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux. They define social protection as: ‘All public and private initiatives that provide income or consumption transfers to the poor, protect the vulnerable against livelihood risks, and enhance the social status and rights of marginalized; with the overall objective of reducing the economic and social vulnerability of the poor, vulnerable and marginalized groups’ (Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux 2008: 70).

This definition of social protection includes dimensions like human rights and social justice, providing a sufficient framework for the analysis of the role of humanitarian actors in Mexico, which provides a type of welfare that goes beyond the coverage of migrants’ basic needs. In my analysis, I use their definition broadly and I use the terms ‘welfare’ and ‘social protection’ interchangeably to provide variety in the prose.

The other element that guides the analysis of humanitarian actors in Mexico as an informal welfare system deals with the informal delivery of assistance and access to welfare or social protection. The most significant source of non-statutory welfare seems to be provided by relatives, friends, and neighbours. This type of help is often called ‘informal’ as it does not come from formal organizations, but rather from different types of relationships among individuals (kinship or mutual obligations developed between neighbours, friends, and communities). The support can also come from people in similar situations, through self-help, or through other networks. A key feature in the delivery of informal welfare is reciprocity, which explicitly or implicitly assumes that help is offered as return for support received in the past, or that the support will be reciprocated in the future (Arskey and Glendinning 2007: 108; Başak and Karolina 2015: 207). These networks or groups are an essential complement to formal social protections, but are even more critical for undocumented immigrants. In times of crisis, these networks offer perhaps the only support irregular migrants can access (Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman 2011: 22; Faist et al 2015: 286).

Levitt et al (2016: 5) expand the scope of social protection by proposing the concept of ‘resource environment’. They argue that ‘an individual’s resource environment is constituted from a combination of all the possible protections available to them from our four potential sources (states, markets, third sector, and social networks)’. The concept is useful inasmuch as it helps to situate all the possible sources of social welfare available for a migrant regardless of status and place. Other authors have proposed similar concepts like ‘assemblages of social protection’ (Başak and Karolina 2015: 208) and without a doubt, those concepts resemble the notion of ‘mixed economy of welfare’ that is common in social policy. Nevertheless, ‘resource environment’ and ‘assemblies of social protections’ are concepts that have been

coined within the field of migration, and their scopes fit the diversity of situations migrants could experience. In all, these concepts can illuminate the ways protection may change if a migrant is (im)mobile and how welfare can become available across borders.

The exploration of the link between migration and social welfare (social protection) is still emerging. Some studies may situate the migrant as settled in a country and advocate for a portability of social protection (Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman 2011; see also Levitt et al 2016). Faist et al (2015) also look at social protection in the transnational space, but their focus is on the ways these protections create inequalities among migrants. However, they recognize that in some instances, access to certain forms of social protection or welfare may equalize the status of the migrant rather than contributing to inequality (2015: 201).

Framing the role of *casas de migrantes* as an informal welfare system contributes to this emerging literature and adds novelty in three areas: First, the context, rather than being transnational — in the strict sense —, is one of multiple directions (transit, return, and settlement). Second, welfare is offered to migrants with multiple profiles (transit, deported, return, (im)mobile migrants). And finally, while there could be a discussion of shelters' formal or informal delivery of aid, migrants access welfare from a third party outside of migrants' networks, making it possible to distinguish networks from resources.

The migration process in Mexico cannot be limited to the understanding of migrants' journeys at the micro-level. The forthcoming empirical chapters will show how poverty, violence, and assistance/care are dynamics that feed off of one another and shape and reshape the migration process in Mexico.

Chapter 3. Methodology, Sample, and Reflexivity

3.1 Methods

Migrants' trajectories are not a composite of different geographical points; rather, migrants often describe their journeys as a continuum even if those journeys are fragmented, have moments of immobility, or end in settlement (FN San Luis Potosi, November 2 2015). During my fieldwork, I found that migrants may consider 'one journey or attempt to reach their intended destination' what in practice were several journeys during a short period of time (FN Tenosique, September 30, 2015). At the same time, they constantly convey the idea of being *en el camino* (on the road). Migrants may speed up or slow down according to their needs or the circumstances that surround their journeys, but they are primarily on the move. Geography, mobility, and time are to some extent relative and flexible experiences for migrants. Thus, to investigate the interactions between migrants and humanitarian aid organizations that focus on the ways these interactions change throughout Mexico, I considered my fieldwork as an extended field site (Paerregaard 2008: 22; Gupta and Ferguson 1997: 8–11; Olwig 2003: 796–798) and approached it using an adapted mobile methodology (see Urry 2007; Schapendonk 2009; Brachet 2012b).

For this research project, I collected data between September 2014 and January 2016 (16 months) at 16 migrant shelters (out of 74 that currently exist) along migratory routes in Mexico. In addition, I visited another 8 migrant shelters that were close to the places where I collected data. While visiting these additional shelters, I only took field notes. During fieldwork, I conducted 168 interviews with migrants and

asylum seekers (80 were in-depth interviews); interviewed 18 shelter directors and stakeholders; and conducted participant observation at the 16 shelters and some key points along migratory routes. The project was divided in two phases. During the first phase, I collected data at the 16 shelters mentioned above, staying at each shelter for two weeks. I also conducted some observations at some main transit migrant places. During the second phase, I stayed for longer periods of time (two to three months) at three migrant shelters. These shelters were located in the town of Tenosique in southern Mexico, the city of San Luis Potosi in central Mexico, and the city of Reynosa, which is at the Mexican border with the United States.



Map 3. Location of The Casas de Migrantes Where I Conducted Fieldwork
Source: Fieldwork (own creation).

An Extended Fieldsite

Research on migration has greatly limited the field of inquiry to ‘departure’ and ‘arrival’ places, leaving aside the spaces in between (Collyer 2007: 670–671; de

Haas 2010a; Brachet 2012a: 92). In his proposal for multi-site fieldwork, Marcus (1995: 97) insists that researchers must not be limited to geography or location, and instead must follow connections, associations, and relationships. Other scholars have insisted that one can follow migration journeys (Khosravi 2010), study dynamics in migratory corridors and global pathways (Carling 2010; Werbner 1999), or focus on social processes and relations (Xiang 2007; Olwig 2003). Some scholars insist on exploring field locations beyond fixed or multiple settings. They argue for the consideration of the site as an ‘extended’ field, constituted by a number of brief in-depth studies on specific aspects of migrants’ lives in different places (Paerregaard 2008: 22).

Researchers of irregular forms of migration have frequently focused on ‘transit areas’, understanding them not as fixed, but rather as areas where migrants ‘arrive with the intention of continuing their journey as soon as possible to a further destination’ (Brachet 2012b: 94). In this research project, I consider the ‘extended field site’ the different routes taken mainly by Central American migrants toward the United States. These routes, while dictated to some extent by the cargo train system, are not completely fixed. They vary due to immigration controls, level of crime or violence, migrants’ economic resources, and migrants’ decisions.

Between September 2014 and July 2015, I travelled from the southern border to the northern border of Mexico using public transportation five times. Some of the journeys included visits to Guatemala, Honduras, and the United States. I travelled on different routes: the Gulf of Mexico route, the central Mexico route, and the Pacific route. While I tried to follow these routes, I realized early in the project that a fixed categorization of routes did not correspond with my findings in the field. Migrants

adjust trajectories through the field, especially if they were not successful using a particular route in the past. Moving through different migratory routes and observing how migrants and humanitarian organizations engaged with one another helped me see the extension of the field and, particularly, how these interactions change as well as how the migrants' needs change along their journeys.

When considering my fieldwork as an extended site, I could understand how migration journeys are not shaped only by single moments or spaces, but also how they are highly influenced by what occurs along the way. Furthermore, seeing the field as an extended site helps to understand how external migration dynamics play out all along the migratory route, as the empirical chapters of this work will show.

A Mobile Method

During fieldwork, I examined the extended field site through the lens of a 'mobile methodology' (Salazar, Elliot, and Norum 2017; Urry 2007). This methodology looks closely at the world of everyday life practices and emphasizes its mobile nature through the experiences of moving subjects. A mobile approach to migration emphasizes the role of the journey (Schapendonk and Steel 2014: 296–300) and challenges the 'rootedness' or 'sedentary bias' that scholars have criticized in studies of migration (Andersson 2017: 90). Looking at migration journeys through the eyes of those who are moving allows for an understanding of dynamics in ways and forms that are significant for migrants (Schapendonk 2009: 293–296). The mobile methodology requires the researcher to both be in motion in the field to understand the movement of the object of study itself, and remain in place at various transit points to observe the subject in motion and to understand its dynamics (Hein, Evans, and Jones 2008: 1266).

Brachet (2012b: 92-98) has used this mobile approach in his work on Saharan transit migration. Methodologically, he states, the mobility of the observer can be understood in two ways: first, as moving herself/himself onto the field to collect data; and second, as the researcher observes movement at a transit point, making sense of the movement and what it generates. He continues by saying that research on transit migration (mobility) can yield enormous insights if one understands ‘transit’ as a fluid process that needs to be observed in movement (Brachet 2012b: 97). Following Brachet (2012b), I argue that movement modifies individuals’ perceptions — more specifically, migrants’ perceptions — of the people and places they encounter. Movement also modifies what migrants say and how they act and react. Consequently, the movement of migrants also changes those who engage them on a daily basis.

Mobile methodologies have limitations and challenges. For example, how easy is it to have access to the subjects while they move? How can one understand movement if the ethnographer is not moving? How significant can experiences of movement be? Can a mobile methodology provide enough depth in a study? Notwithstanding these challenges, I argue that mobile methodologies have important added value because they yield different data, as compared to data gathered using more traditional methods (Hein, Evans, and Jones, 2008: 1280; Salazar, Elliot, and Norum 2017). For this project, I used an adapted version of a mobile methodology in the field.

Since the early 1990s, transit migrants travelled through Mexico using the cargo train that goes to the north end of the country. The train is commonly known as *La Bestia* (The Beast), and migrants must ride on top of the train’s cars because the train operates to move cargo and not passengers. Furthermore, migrants have to

navigate the different challenges — weather conditions, the train’s movement and speed, lack of sleep — of riding on top of a train not designed for passengers. In spite of increasing migration controls and violence, migrants with minimal economic resources still travel using the cargo train or use the main stops of the freight train system as a compass to move through Mexico. Thus, I chose strategic points at which to collect data and conduct field observations (Andersson 2017) and instead of traveling on the train with migrants or walking with them through different routes, I moved from one point to the next using public transportation and collecting data at points where migrants would embark or disembark from the train. I did not travel with migrants mainly because of the violence and dangers present along the migratory routes in Mexico, and because bonds would inevitably form with the specific group of migrants with whom I could travel. These bonds in turn could create a moral responsibility for migrants and the researcher in case of an incident. During interviews, I asked migrants about the events and circumstances along the way that led them to seek humanitarian spaces. Furthermore, as a researcher, I remained mobile by ensuring that I did not stay more than two weeks in one place during the first phase of fieldwork.

Sample, Operationalization, Research Techniques, and Data Analysis

Due to the irregular nature of Central American migration and the return patterns of deportees in Mexico, I used convenience and snowball sampling for both phases of my research. I collected most of the data at the shelters where migrants and deportees arrive seeking help. Few informal conversations were conducted outside of *casas de migrantes* with migrants who decided not to use services at the shelter. Additionally, I collected information while visiting two detention centres.

Shelters attract migrants who are in search of a respite during their journeys because their services are free of charge, operate along migration paths, and provide, to some extent, safe places for rest. Similarly, for researchers, *casas de migrantes* become convenient places to meet migrants and collect data. The daily life of a shelter (which includes new migrants arriving and spending time there) provides a setting where researchers can observe migrants' interactions, hear migrants' stories, establish a certain level of familiarity, and conduct interviews. Hence, shelters were convenient spaces to interview migrants who became part of the sample in this research. Snowball sampling was a useful strategy for recruiting more migrants, which I used in moderation because migrants travelling in small groups, either with friends or family members, may refer friends with similar experiences along the route.

This sample is limited and biased because it mostly includes migrants and deportees using shelters in the towns considered for this research. Irregular migrants can move through Mexico in different ways and use different networks. Migrants with more resources or money often use the services of smugglers and rarely use *casas de migrantes*. In a similar way, some deportees returning to Mexico may be able mobilize resources and move quickly from border towns, but others who are unable to access resources end up in vulnerable positions and need support. In other words, this research is limited to migrants and deportees who are poor, have few resources, and are in vulnerable situations while moving through Mexico or upon deportation from the United States. However, while not representative of the whole population of migrants and deportees, data still provides information on the migration process in Mexico.

To counter the bias and limitations of the sample, I collected data at 20% of the shelters operating in Mexico. The selection criteria were based mostly on geography, accessibility, and structure, avoiding shelters that appeared as case studies for other doctoral projects (Solano 2017; Brigden 2013; Vogt 2012; Manenti 2012). Thus, I travelled along three different routes commonly used by migrants throughout the country, collecting data at five shelters along each route. I worked to remain flexible enough to change shelters according to unfolding events in the field. For example, I was asked to go to a shelter in central Mexico to support the staff because a group of migrants was kidnapped nearby. On another occasion, very few migrants were at one of my chosen sites in southern Mexico. After waiting a few days, I decided to move to a different shelter. Thus, data collection was an active process that allowed me to change sites in response to the context. Furthermore, during fieldwork, I gained access to two migratory stations (detention centres) in Mexico; while I was not able to conduct interviews there, I was able to observe and converse with migrants and migration authorities. My visits to these migration stations provided insights into those migrants who do not use shelters.

Since migrants move quickly between shelters, collecting data at different moments, entry points, and shelters ensured variance in the sampling. On three occasions, I was able to conduct follow-up interviews with migrants who I met at one place and met again at a different place, further along the migration route. While the migrants using the shelters appeared to be predominantly men, I made an effort to keep a more balanced gender representation by conducting 20% of my interviews with women at each shelter. Also, migrants using the shelters predominantly come from Honduras. Using the sample of convenience ensures representation from other nationalities from Central American countries. Finally, my research protocol required

me to obtain verbal consent from migrants because of migrants' irregular statuses and vulnerability, and the discharge of recorded interviews after transcription. The protocol also allowed me to interview minors (16- and 17-year-olds), and I interviewed migrants of this age to document their presence at the shelters.

During my fieldwork, I used a semi-structured questionnaire and conducted in-depth interviews with both migrants and key informants. I conducted participant observations at each of the shelters where I stayed and took ethnographic field notes at different points along the journeys. The questionnaire covered general demographic information (age, level of education, number of migration attempts, experiences with living in the U.S.). Additionally, the questionnaire included a multidimensional measurement of the levels of poverty that migrants experienced at the moment of departure. This poverty measurement is called the Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), which is an international and standardized measure of acute poverty — used in 103 developing countries — that reveals who is poor and how they are poor, and gives an account of the range of different disadvantages they experience (OPHI 2016; Alkire and Robles 2017). To my knowledge, this is the first time this methodology has been used to measure the levels of poverty within a migrant population in transnational contexts. The poverty measurement aimed to provide insight into migrants' circumstances at departure, as well as the amount and types of resources available for their journeys. I used this questionnaire for both the semi-structured and in-depth interviews.

What follows is a brief overview of my methodology and other considerations for its use in this project. In recent years, several methodologies for multidimensional poverty measurement have been proposed. Multidimensional poverty measures create

a more comprehensive analysis of poverty and may provide indicators of poverty levels in different areas of a country, and among various sub-groups of people (Alkire and Robles 2017). The methodology proposed by Alkire and Foster (AF method, for short) builds on the Foster-Greer-Thorbecke poverty measures and involves counting the different types of deprivation that individuals simultaneously experience: lack of education, unemployment, poor health, and living standards. These deprivation profiles support identification of who is poor, and are then used to construct a multidimensional index of poverty (MPI) that provides more specificity about how people are poor and of what they are deprived (Alkire and Foster 2007, 2011; Alkire and Santos 2010; UNDP 2010).

The MPI has three dimensions and ten indicators (Figure 4). According to the method, a person is identified as multidimensionally poor if they are deprived in at least $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of the dimensions: ‘The MPI is calculated by multiplying the incidence of poverty (the percentage of people identified as MPI poor) by the average intensity of poverty across the poor. So, it detects both the share of people in poverty and the degree to which they are deprived’ (Alkire and Robles 2017: 2).

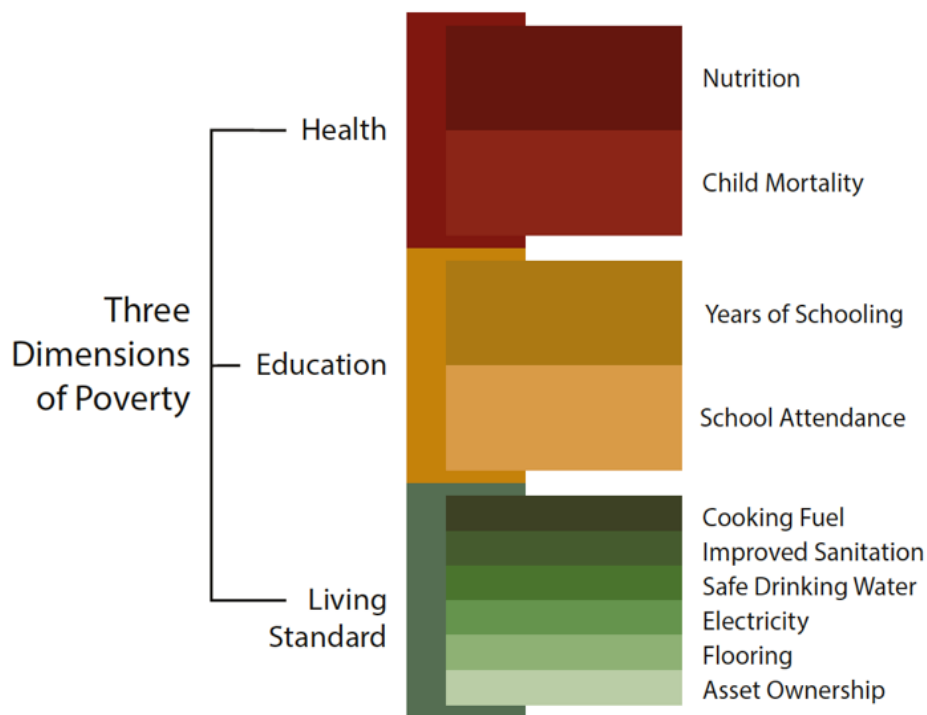


Figure 4. Dimensions and Indicators of the Multidimensional Poverty Index
Source: Alkire and Robles (2017)

The methodology is flexible and can be adapted to multiple situations by selecting different dimensions or indicators within each dimension and poverty cut-offs, such as education, years of schooling, and the consideration of less than five years of education as a deprivation. The methodology and the index continue to evolve. Currently there are modules available that measure missing dimensions like employment, agency, physical safety, social connectedness, and psychological and subjective wellbeing (Alkire and Robles 2017; Alkire 2007). These modules attempt to complement the indicators of the original MPI. More information and technical details on the MPI and the Alkire Foster Method can be found in *Multidimensional Poverty Measurement and Analysis* by Alkire et al (2015), as well as on the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative's website.

I used the standard questionnaire to measure the three dimensions and the ten indicators, and it was easily integrated into the structured part of the interviews. Additionally, I used the modules on work and physical safety to gain a deeper insight into the precarious lives of migrants and the contexts in which they live. I used this methodology not to establish causality, but to confirm that migrants already on the move were indeed poor. Recognizing their poverty, it was possible to gain insight into the strategies they used while moving through or returning to Mexico.

The in-depth interviews operationalize the interactions between migrants and humanitarian actors by inquiring about migrants' motivations for engaging with humanitarian actors and vice-versa (motivational aspects), documenting dynamics within shelters and the reasons behind particular practices (interactions), and questioning the perceptions of shelters that may seek help from humanitarian actors more regularly (structural aspect). Other questions in the interviews help to operationalize external dynamics in the migration process, like violence and surveillance. The interviews gave each participant the opportunity to articulate his or her understanding of these concepts through open-ended questions.

Interviews conducted during the scoping study allowed me to refine the script for the in-depth interviews but followed a similar structure. The script to interview migrants included a mapping exercise of the migrant's journey. In this exercise, interviewees identified cities or towns where they stopped to rest or changed transportation. Mapping migrants' journeys included the documentation of specific details, such as experiences with violence (both at the hands of government officials or other actors), reception of cash transfers (identifying the amount of money received

and the place where the money was sent), and strategies used to cope with hardship and vulnerability. The guide for interviewing shelter directors and other actors focused on perceptions of migrants, history and development of shelters, motivations to provide services, and relationships with other actors, including international humanitarian organizations and government entities. It also asked about internal affairs like funding, programs for volunteers, internal control practices, relationships with local communities, safety, and challenges with delivering services.

Data analysis consisted of two phases. The first phase included the organization of field notes, transcription of 78 out of 80 in-depth interviews (two interviews were discarded, one after the migrant requested it and the other of a migrant who requested that I did not record him), transcription of 18 interviews with shelter directors and other actors (a consul of El Salvador and Mexican government officials), and the creation of a database for general data and poverty information from questionnaires. The second phase required the codification of in-depth and other interviews using the software NVivo.

Organizing field notes and transcribing interviews allowed for an initial identification of themes. Field notes and observations focused on migrants' motivations for approaching *casas de migrantes*, migrants' experiences with spending time in the shelters (life at the shelters), and how shelters delivered services to migrants. Interviews with migrants followed a script that covered three large themes: (1) general data and information for poverty measurement, (2) experiences along the journey, which included the geographical mapping of the migrant's journey, and (3) motivations for seeking help at shelters and perceptions of the services the migrant received.

The data on poverty was analysed with the support of staff at the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI). The database containing the responses from the interview questionnaires was referenced to obtain the results on poverty, which are shown and analysed in Chapter 5. Analyses of these data consisted of obtaining poverty levels for different configurations such as age, gender, and nationality in an attempt to mirror the same configurations used for the description of the sample that appears later in this chapter. At a later stage, graphs were created to illustrate and interpret the results. Additionally, I compared those results to national level indicators on multidimensional poverty to gain a deeper perspective into the results on poverty that my project found.

The mapping exercise during the scoping study and the in-depth interviews with each migrant turned out to be key during the analysis. This mapping was integrated in the database, along with the general information and the data on poverty, which allowed for the identification of different events and key events during migrants' journeys. The lack of resources, experiences of violence, and diverse strategies for coping with hardship were easily identified and coded.

The use of NVivo (a software program for qualitative and mixed-methods research that supports the analysis of interviews, focus groups, surveys, social media, and journal articles) to code in-depth interviews provided a way to analyse and identify particular data that revealed and illustrated various dynamics in the migration journeys. The software facilitated the compilation and organization of migrants' responses in a variety of ways. For example, when identifying experiences with violence, the software allowed me to distinguish those with state actors from those with non-state actors. As another example, when coding the reasons migrants used

shelters, I was able to distinguish between using *casas de migrantes* for physical recovery, for safety, or for lack of resources among other reasons. I followed a similar process for the interviews with shelter directors, focusing on themes such as history, changes in services, perception of migrants, relationships with other actors, and the local community. My field notes complemented this interview analysis.

Coding and compiling information with NVivo was useful during the writing stage of the dissertation, as information was organized and easily accessible. The organization of migrants' testimonies enabled me to integrate their experiences into my chapters. The process of coding required several readings of the interviews, which allowed me to identify stories that could more clearly illustrate different patterns along the journey, like poverty, violence, and life at the shelters. Some of these stories appeared in more detail at the beginning of the dissertation and as opening stories in each of the empirical chapters. In all, NVivo was useful for organizing information, but is not an adequate substitute for the analysis a researcher must do with the data collected in fieldwork.

3.2 Profiles of Interviewed Migrants

An overview and general characteristics of the 168 interviews conducted during my fieldwork are presented below. Methodologically, these data cannot be considered representative, but the findings and analysis of these interviews provide insights into the characteristics of the migrants and deportees who use humanitarian services in Mexico. For some indicators, to complement and to compare my data, I incorporate data from the *Instituto Nacional de Migración* (INM) (National Migration Institute) — the branch of the Mexican government that manages migration — and from *La Red de Documentación de las Organizaciones Defensoras de Migrantes*

(REDODEM) (Network of Organizations Advocating for Migrants), which gathers information from 13 shelters across Mexico. Data were collected between September 2014 and January 2016. All data from INM and REDODEM corresponds with the year 2015.

Gender

During my fieldwork, I conducted interviews with 127 men (74% of the total number of interviews) and 41 women (26%) at different humanitarian spaces throughout Mexico. Of these interviews, 3% of migrants identified themselves as transgender, or part of the LGBTIQ population. While small in number, their presence is noticeable at the shelters, as is their willingness to identify themselves as part of this population (for statistical purposes, I included these migrants within the gender they indicated during the interview). Between January and December 2015, the INM detained 198,141 migrants (75% male/25% female). REDODEM reports that during the same period, 30,300 migrants (89% male/11% female) used shelters throughout the country. Figure 5 below compares those statistics.

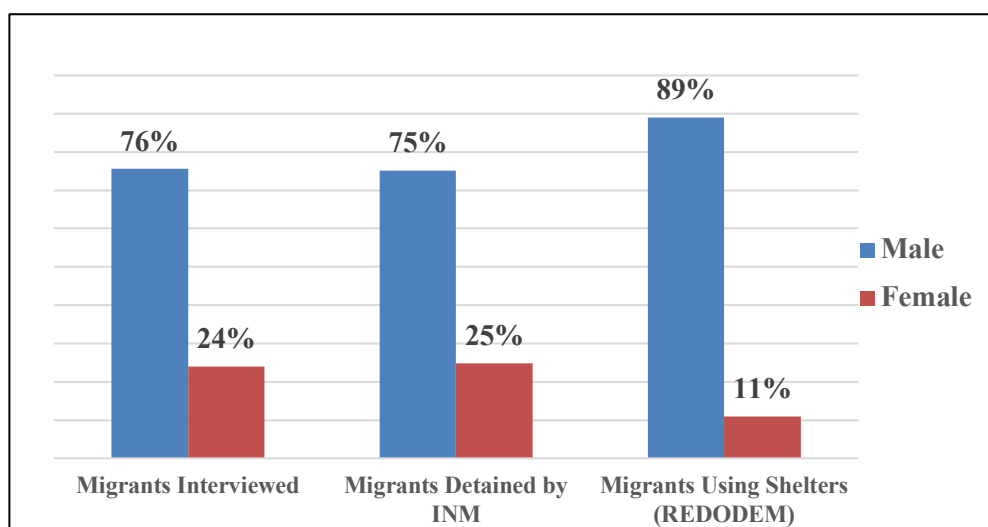


Figure 5. Comparison of Migrants by Gender Among Interviewees, Migrants Detained by INM, and Migrants registered by REDODEM
Source: Fieldwork, INM, and REDODEM Databases

These data indicate that the migrant population through Mexico is still predominantly male. From my observations in the field, migrants who use shelters are mostly young men. My observations coincide with the REDODEM's statistics, which report fewer women staying at shelters. The smaller number of women using shelters may be due to the fact that crossing Mexico is a dangerous and exhausting journey, both physically and emotionally. Thus, they might be traveling by other means or with the support of other networks. During my visits to two detention centres in Mexico, the women I spoke to stated they were travelling by bus or with the support of a smuggler (FN Detention Centre, September 2, 2015).

Another plausible explanation for the smaller number of women at the shelters is the increasing number of women and minors who seek refugee status at the shelters in southern Mexico, even when their preference is to file in the United States. For example, the shelter in Tenosique (Southern Mexico) has recorded an increase in female migrants. During my first visits, I observed close to 40 women waiting for status determination. After a year and a half, there were between 80 and 100 women waiting to apply for refugee status (SS Tenosique, January 5, 2016). This increase alone shows the changing patterns of migration and the emergence of a mixed flow of migrants through southern Mexico. My field observations suggest that the proportion of men and women seeking humanitarian aid closely aligns with the data from REDODEM. My data also appear to align almost identically with the data from INM because I purposely sought to interview a certain number of women.

As mentioned earlier, while limited in number, there is a visible LGBTIQ population passing through the shelters. Most of these people state that they left their countries of origin because of discrimination, harassment, and lack of opportunities.

Karla, a transsexual woman from Honduras, said, ‘Many times I looked for a job. But, I could not find it. I have been beaten and people have tried to kill me because I am a transsexual woman. Often it is because some men want us to be with them, but they do not respect that we do not like them. They think that because we are transsexuals, we want to have sex whenever they want. That is why they have harassed me and tried to kill me [...] It has happened so often that I fear for my life’ (Karla, SS Tenosique 8). As a result, many seek to file for refugee status in the United States. In some cases, that status was granted in Mexico. In the cases where refugee status had been denied, LGBTIQ migrants continue their journeys to the United States. Through contact in social media outlets, I have confirmed that some of them have entered the United States (FN Tenosique, April 13, 2015). The shelter in Tenosique is one of the few shelters that has made particular accommodations for this population.

Age

The breakdown of my interviews by age show that 4.17% (7 interviewees) were between ages of 16-17, 27.38% (46 interviewees) between 18-24, 26.19 % (44 interviews) between 25-29, 10.12% (17 interviewees) between 30-34, 14.29% (24 interviewees) between 35-39, 8.93% (15 interviewees) between 40-44 years-old, and 8.93% (15 interviewees) 45 or older. My research protocol did not allow me to interview migrants younger than 16 years old. Figure 6 below shows the number of interviewees by age bracket.

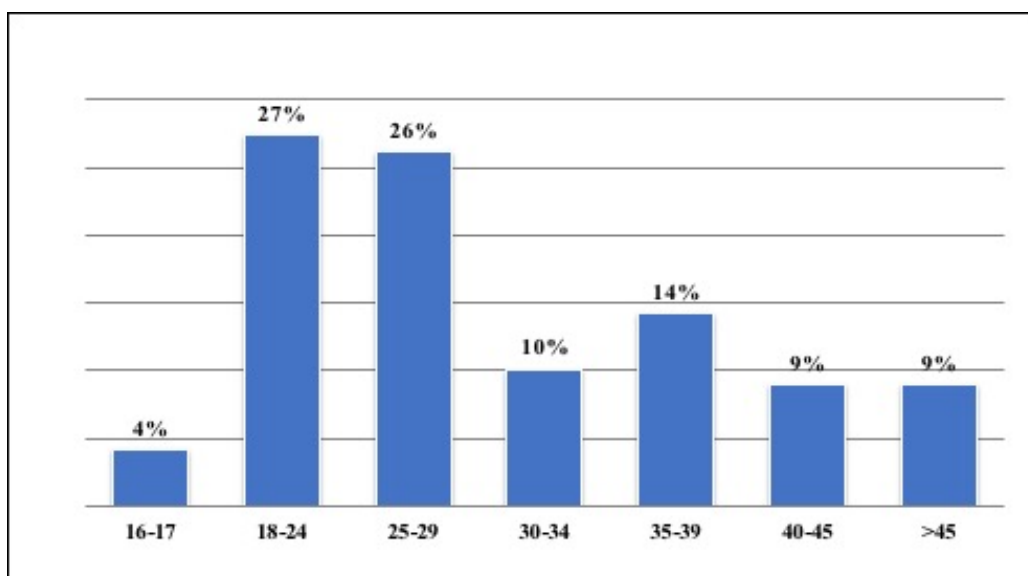


Figure 6. Migrants Interviewed, Organized According to Age
Source: Fieldwork

In spite of the ethical considerations with interviewing minors (individuals under 18 years old), my research design included this possibility because of the growing number of minors using shelters in Mexico. Minors are considered a vulnerable population. Thus, one important consideration while interviewing them was that they needed to show enough maturity to move independently if they were unaccompanied. The research protocol required me to obtain consent from the minor before the interview, and conduct it in the presence of a staff member. In cases of accompanied minors, I needed permission from both the minor and the guardian to conduct the interview. My field observations confirmed the presence of both accompanied and unaccompanied minors passing through the shelters in Mexico. The shelter in Tenosique is one of the few that has a project to tend to minors who wish to apply for refugee status and remain in Mexico (SS Tenosique, April 15, 2015). In total, I conducted seven interviews with minors; four with unaccompanied minors and three accompanied by an adult.

The majority of the migrant population (63%) is of working age (between the ages of 18 and 34), which provides more evidence that migration is a choice most often made by young people (Cortina et al 2014). However, the most distinct finding is that 32% of interviewees were at least 35 years old. Many of them came from rural areas, especially from Honduras, where 63% of the population lives in poverty and experiences high levels of inequality. In rural areas, poverty is even more acute since approximately six out of 10 households live in extreme poverty, or on less than \$2.50 USD per day (World Bank 2016).

From my interviews and questionnaires, I concluded that some of the reasons that migrants start journeys at this age are the lack of job security or the inability to provide basic sustenance for their families. Questionnaire responses reveal that food is one of the main privations of migrants interviewed. Furthermore, increasing violence and the inability of the governments to provide security create an unstable scenario where options for survival are slim (WOLA 2016; UNHCR 2015). A more detailed analysis of the main privations among the interviewees appears in Chapter 6. It also seems that a drought caused the loss of harvest used for self-sustenance in some of the cases, since Honduras has been susceptible to hurricanes and droughts through the years (World Bank 2016).

To illustrate the challenges that result from Honduras's climate, Rodrigo, a 21-year-old migrant from Honduras, said, 'I want to stay where I can find a job. I lost the harvest and I cannot find a job to sustain my family'. He was not sure where in Mexico he would like to stay (FN Tenosique, August 31, 2015). Samuel, a 39-year-old migrant from Honduras, who was travelling with his 9-year-old son, explained his journey: 'We lost everything, the whole harvest of corn and beans. It was the weather,

“El Niño”. I told my children, “we are in deep trouble” [...] One works as a peasant, working the land, but if you do not have water, you do not get anything from the land. In Honduras we are going through a water crisis. During the summer everything dried up’ (FN Tenosique September 9, 2015).

Country of Origin

The disaggregation of the interviews by country of origin reveals that the majority of migrants who use humanitarian spaces along the Mexican migration routes come from Honduras. Of all the migrants that I interviewed, 57% (96) were from Honduras, 14% (23) from Guatemala, 13% (22) from El Salvador, 13% (21) from Mexico, and 5% (6 interviews) from other countries. My findings align with the reports from REDODEM, but the data differs from reports from the INM with respect to Guatemalans. The INM reports a higher number of Guatemalans who are detained, while my interviews and data from the REDODEM database both show a significantly higher number of Hondurans using the shelters. Figure 7 compares these data.

There are two plausible explanations for the disparity in numbers of Guatemalans and Hondurans: First, Guatemalans may have more developed networks with more financial resources. And second, a higher number of Guatemalans move within the southern Mexican border. In the first case, smugglers make their own arrangements to move migrants using their services; therefore, Guatemalans moving through networks of smugglers need less support than Hondurans. Data collected during visits to the detention centres indicated that this could be an explanation (FN Puebla, February 9, 2015). In the second case, Guatemalans moving regionally — within the southern border of Mexico — may not have the intention of moving

forward, but are still detained by Mexican authorities and repatriated, increasing the number of Guatemalans detained by INM.

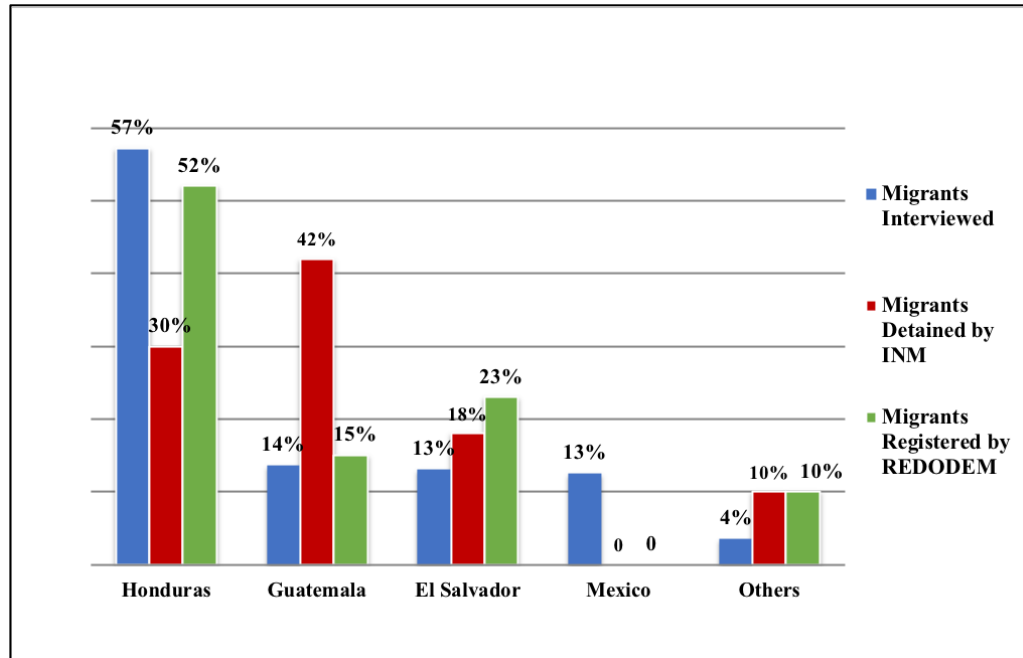


Figure 7. Comparison of Migrants by Nationality among Interviewees, Migrants Detained by INM and Migrants registered by REDODEM.
Sources: Fieldwork, INM, and REDODEM Database

My research also revealed that Honduran migrants have fewer resources available and often, their networks are not activated until they reach Mexico's border with the United States. Honduras is a lower middle-income country and is also one of the poorest countries in Central America. 63% of the population lives in poverty; many who reside in rural areas live in extreme poverty. Honduras has also experienced political unrest — in 2009, there was a *coup d'état* in the country — and in past years, the country has experienced a tremendous increase in crime and violence. Honduras has one of the highest homicide rates in the world. Furthermore, the country is susceptible to both external shocks, because of declining prices in agriculture products, and to adverse natural events (World Bank 2016). A rise in violence, a weak

state, corruption, and an elite sector of the population that controls a big part of the economic resources create a situation where options to improve economically are limited (Bull 2014; Sánchez-Ancochea and Martí i Puig 2014).

These circumstances force migrants from Honduras to move through Mexico by relying on their own resources. Guatemala and El Salvador experience similar economic constraints, which makes their populations susceptible to poverty and violence. Literature on migration through Mexico indicates that networks of Central Americans, from Guatemala and El Salvador, are often more developed and consolidated. Thus, it is probable that these migrants have more resources available to make their journeys by land and sea, or acquire the services of smugglers. Historically, the Honduran networks are younger and less established in the United States (Alba and Castillo 2012). Mexicans tend to make less frequent use of shelters; this group uses humanitarian spaces mainly upon deportation from the United States, so their presence prevails in shelters in northern Mexico.

Occasionally, there are some extra-continental migrants who may use humanitarian aid spaces in Mexico. In addition to the migrants I interviewed who originally resided somewhere in Mexico, I also interviewed migrants from Morocco, Ghana, and Uruguay. In these instances, the migrants had been on fragmented journeys and had lost most of their available economic resources. As a result, they used the shelters as support along their journeys (SS Saltillo, March 6, 2015).

Number of Attempts

While analyzing migration trajectories and migration patterns, one must bear in mind that migrants are not always on their first journeys (Brigden 2013;

Schapendonk 2012; Castagnone 2011). The frequency of migration journeys impacts migration patterns in Mexico. Sometimes, migrants may use different routes along their journeys, or may learn how to navigate through certain areas of control or violence. Other times, if the migrant is traveling with a smuggler, the smuggler may offer another opportunity for travel if the previous journey ended in a failed attempt (FN Comitán, January 26, 2015). Furthermore, as a result of each attempt, migrants gain useful knowledge about navigating the migration routes. Ricardo, a migrant traveling for a third time, said, ‘every time I attempt another journey I learn more. Each time I have gone further than the previous time. With luck, one time I will make it to the U.S.’ (Ricardo, SS Tenosique 2). These words are not uncommon among migrants. Migrants often adjust their migration trajectories according to their previous experiences. Even though every journey may be different and circumstances change along the route, migrants use their previous experiences and what they learned as a result to deal with their journeys.

My data show that migration trajectories through Mexico belong not only to those attempting the journey for the first time, even though 41% of migrants I interviewed were on their first journeys. There were also migrants on their second or third attempts (46%), and migrants who had attempted the journey four or more times (13%). An important nuance regarding the number of migration trajectories deals with the fact that sometimes, migrants considered themselves to be on the same migration trajectory, even if they had been deported several times (FN San Luis Potosi, March 1, 2015). Thus, migration journeys cannot be reduced to the official or unofficial number of times a person crosses a border. Rather, migrants may also have their own perceptions and interpretations of their journeys. In this research, I define the number of attempts as the number noted by the person interviewed.

Figure 8 presents a disaggregation of my interviews by country and number of attempts. Here we can see that for every country of origin, at least 40% of the migrants were on their second or third attempts to cross Mexico. This statistic suggests that despite migrants' previous experiences with the journey through Mexico and knowledge of the challenges and dangers they will face, they persist and embark on the journey once again.

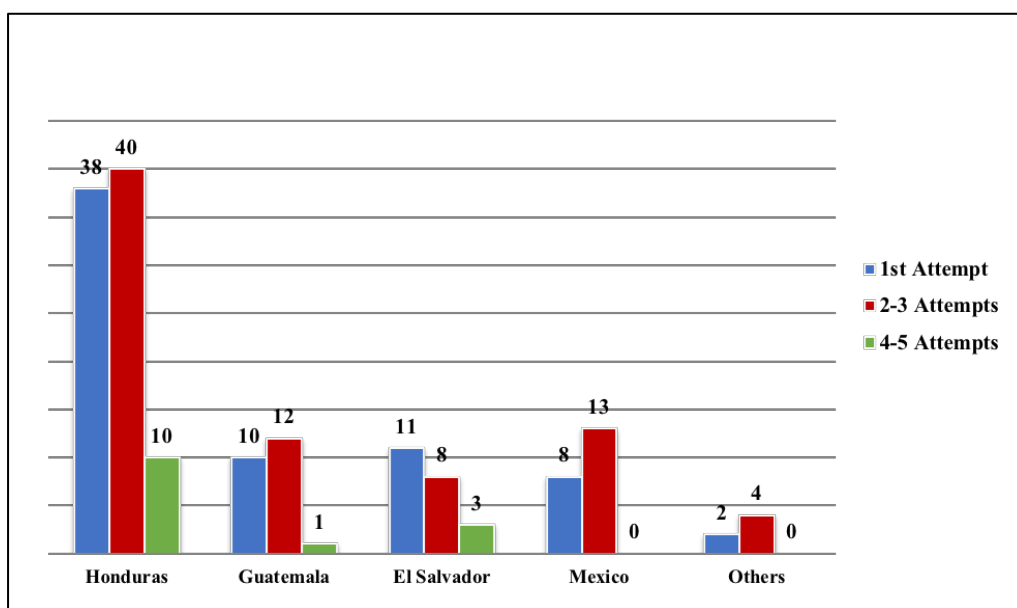


Figure 8. Comparison of Migrants Interviewed by Country of Origin and Number of Attempts
Source: Fieldwork

Embarking on a migration journey does not guarantee that a migrant will reach his or her intended destination. From my interviews, I gathered that while 59% of migrants have embarked on two or more migratory journeys, only 27% have lived or spent some time in the United States. Only one of the migrants indicated that he had previously lived in Mexico. Figure 9 organizes this data by country of origin. These figures indicate that migrants may reach the United States only to be detained by immigration authorities along the border or within some distance of the border. In any

case, when detained by migration authorities, migrants do not believe that they made it to their final destinations (FN September 2014 - January 2016).

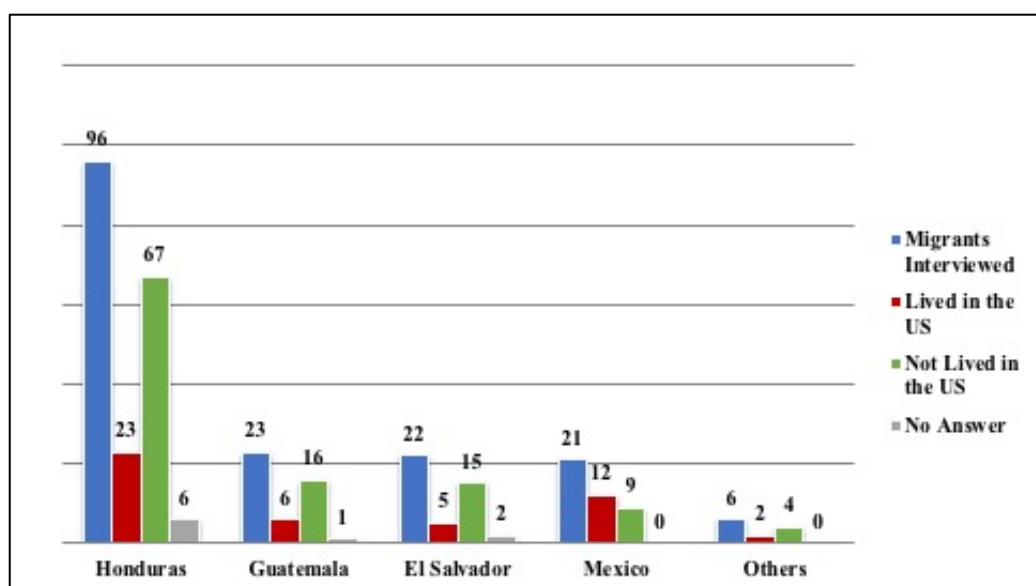


Figure 9. Comparison of Migrants Interviewed, organized by Country of Origin and Previous Experience with Living in The United States
Source: Fieldwork

The Case of Deported Mexicans

For the most part, migrants using shelters along the Mexico-U.S. border are of Mexican nationality and are often recently deported from the United States. 95% of the interviews conducted with Mexicans were collected at the Tijuana and Reynosa shelters, which border the United States. However, one can still find Central Americans in humanitarian spaces in northern Mexico; there is at least one shelter in the city of Reynosa that provides humanitarian assistance exclusively to Central Americans.

Among deported Mexicans, I discovered different profiles that deserve particular attention because of the support needed that was beyond humanitarian aid. This support depended on each migrant's particular situation and desire. Deported

Mexicans arriving at the shelters in Northern Mexico include (1) migrants on their first attempts to enter the United States and who have recently been deported; (2) migrants who have tried several times and continue with ‘one more’ attempt to make it; (3) Mexicans who have spent some time in detention centres in different parts of the United States (for some, up to 180 days); (4) Mexicans who have lived in the United States for many years with irregular status, but committed a serious crime and spent some time in jail (up to 10 or 15 years); and (5) Mexicans who have lived in the United States and are part of mixed status families (families consisting of Mexicans with irregular status and American nationals) (SS Reynosa; SS Tijuana; SS Nogales; IDI Reynosa; Gandini, Lozano-Ascencio, and Gaspar Olvera 2015).

As Chapter 4 will explain in more detail, the Mexican government and humanitarian spaces push for those deported Mexicans to return to their ‘places of origin’. In some border cities, the Mexican government has programs that will either pay for airfare or offer a bus discount to allow Mexicans to return to their hometowns (SS Reynosa, March 17, 2015; SS Tijuana, January 17, 2015). This policy of returning to the ‘place of origin’ clashes with the variety of profiles migrants have. For example, someone whose children and husband are in the United States may not want to go back to the place where she was born. Similarly, someone who has been living in the U.S. for many years may not have any family members left at their place of birth. In addition, someone who arrived to the U.S. as an infant and grew up as an American, adopting the language and culture, may not want to return to the place of origin. In this case, they may not even speak Spanish or be familiar with Mexican culture.

This policy of returning to the place of origin does not accommodate the profiles that I have outlined. The needs and support required for each case vary

greatly. Also, for shelters situated at the border with the United States, the internal rules and regulations to provide humanitarian aid are greatly determined by the violence that surrounds these places. Mexican policies do not take into account that some migrants may want to stay in the area or try to seek opportunities to return to the United States.

During the interviews, I found that in some cases, families at their places of origin did not want to establish contact with the deported Mexicans. For some migrants who had been in jail, sometimes there was no support from their families, or their communities were not ready to receive them. I discovered cases where the deported Mexican had only a vague recollection of his place of origin (IDI Reynosa, January 10, 2016).

As one example, Rodrigo, a 42-year-old Mexican migrant, was deported from the United States after having lived there for 18 years. He lost contact with his family shortly after arriving to the United States, and was in prison for 10 years before his deportation. When he arrived at the shelter, he vaguely remembered the place where he used to live in Mexico. He said ‘I recall the house being close to a Jumex — a juice factory — near Mexico City, but I cannot remember my family’s phone number’. It took two weeks for him to remember a cousin’s phone number. The phone number was in a very old format, and it took several tries to reach someone, even with my assistance. At first the family was suspicious of the information about him, but agreed to talk to him on the phone (FN Reynosa, January 18, 2106). After finishing my fieldwork, I learned that he was able to reunite with his family.

A different case was Edgar, another deported Mexican, who arrived at the shelter after 15 years of living in the United States. Having lost contact with his family shortly after his arrival to the U.S., he vaguely remembered his parents' home address. After two weeks and some investigation work, we were able to contact the family through the *Instituto del Migrante* (Migration Institute) in Michoacán. Similar to the case above, the family was concerned about his identity since they had not heard anything from him in years (FN Reynosa, January 12, 2106). Furthermore, the family was unsure whether or not they wanted to contact him because in the past he had substance abuse problems. Thus, migration trajectories of Mexicans could be uneventful if they head north or until the point when they try crossing the border. However, upon return, migration trajectories can be complicated by personal histories with the family of origin, circumstances that surround their removal from the United States, and the current circumstances of their families.

Overall, the sample provided a good opportunity to gain insights in the ways poor migrants and deportees journey through or return to Mexico, the different strategies migrants used to cope with their vulnerability and violence, and how they interacted with humanitarian actors in Mexico. Thus, the migrant population in the sample consisted mostly of young males from Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador. It was significant that a third of the interviewee population were migrants older than 35. The significance of this finding will appear with more clarity in the chapter that analyses the levels of poverty (pre-migration) and resources available for the journey. In the case of Mexican deportees there was a similar pattern of a population that was predominantly of male and representing a wide age range. Most of migrants interviewed were in their 1st, 2nd or 3rd attempt to reach the U.S. and only 27% of migrants have lived for some time in the United States, which indicates that even

when completing the journey, migrants are unable to settle in the United States and are often deported back to their countries of origin at some point. The discrepancy in numbers, especially with those from Mexican migration authorities reveal that certain groups of migrants may travel through other means and may not use or rely on shelters during their journeys. The sampling bias resulted from the limitation of collecting data at *casas de migrantes*.

3.3 Reflexivity

Fieldwork was an intense and challenging experience. Out of the numerous learning opportunities during those months in Mexico, I highlight three aspects that may contribute to the knowledge of conducting research in contested places: (1) the flexibility and awareness required to navigate dangerous environments, (2) the importance of safety and self-care while conducting fieldwork, and (3) power dynamics that develop while conducting research.

At the beginning of my research, I was aware of the dangers that existed along migratory routes. However, violence exists not only along the migrants' routes and at transit points, but also around the shelters where migrants receive help. At times, criminal gangs monitor migrants' movements at these pockets of security. In other instances, staff members at migrant shelters receive anonymous threats that need to be taken seriously. For example, staff members at four different shelters have received death threats to the point of being awarded protective security measures by the Mexican Human Rights Commission. After 20 migrants were kidnapped close to one of the shelters in central Mexico, the Mexican Human Rights Commission conducted a safety assessment at the shelter while I collected data there (FN September 2014 – January 2016).

During my fieldwork, I felt at danger on two occasions. The first was at a shelter in southern Mexico. This shelter's basic structure and lack of security measures, as well as the limited staff, made me wonder if the place was providing help or merely putting migrants at risk. Additionally, a group of men seemed to spend all of their time at a convenience store located in front of the shelter, which allowed shelter staff members to monitor every movement around the facility. After my first visit to the shelter and considering what was described above, I decided not to spend the night there as I had been doing in other places (FN Coatzacoalcos, November 13, 2014).

The other encounter with danger was at a soup kitchen in central Mexico. Originally, my plan was to visit a different shelter; however, organizations that supported and facilitated my fieldwork asked me to change my itinerary to support a group of nuns who ran a shelter that had received threats and where 20 migrants had been kidnapped the week before my arrival (FN Bojay, December 3, 2014). Due to these dangerous situations, the staff worked with members of the Mexican Human Rights National Commission to develop a security plan. Thus, my awareness was enhanced and I made sure that I followed security procedures to conduct my research at this particular place. From this experience, I learned that conducting research in contested places requires the ability to develop heightened awareness of the circumstances that surround the place where data is collected. Furthermore, it requires flexibility and a willingness to leave compromising situations or to change initial plans in case of possible dangers.

Moving through migration routes in Mexico is a challenging and physically demanding experience. Migrants encounter all types of geography and weather through landscapes that are often unfamiliar to them. The threat of violence or encountering migration authorities that may deport them is present at all times. Descriptions of their journeys clearly appear in interviews, and researchers can corroborate on how taxing the experience is by spending some time at the shelters and witnessing the coming and going of migrants and the first aid they receive for their wounds, blisters, dehydration, or hunger. Documenting and transcribing migrants' testimonies can also be a difficult task that can lead to one experiencing vicarious trauma from repeatedly listening to migrants' experiences.

During my fieldwork, I experienced physical exhaustion as a result of moving every two weeks from one shelter to another during the first phase of my work. I travelled by bus most of the time and conducted most of my research in rough conditions by staying at the shelters where I gathered data. As time passed, I realized that it was much easier to travel only with the most essential necessities and minimal equipment. Not only that, but after a year in the field, I noticed that I was getting overly anxious and sensitive as I listened to migrants' stories. Fortunately, my research timeline included a month in between phases one and two for data analysis. I returned to Oxford with the plan to analyse some of my data. In practice, I used that month to physically recover from the challenges of the previous months.

Reflecting back on those months, I remembered that at one of the shelters, the director emphasized the importance of a day off for all the volunteers, because 'Reality erodes you and takes a toll on you' (FN Tenosique, September 15, 2015). I realize now the importance of self-care while in the field. Also, researchers need to

find outlets for processing the experiences we encounter or the accounts we hear. While I had previous training as a clinical counsellor, I still needed time to process the stories I was hearing and reflect on my reactions. While I conducted research in contested areas and listened to stories of violence, I had to be proactive in seeking aid and support to process the personal accounts that I accumulated and documented.

During the research preparation stages, I was encouraged by my assessors to reflect on the way power dynamics will play out in my research, since I am a Catholic priest. Reflecting on my fieldwork, I think there are four areas where my role as a priest had an impact: First, there were power dynamics at play when I was at shelters. Second, being a priest facilitated my access to interviewees. Third, I had opportunities to minister migrants from a spiritual side. Fourth, during the data analysis and writing stages, I had to be mindful of my affinity for the work of *casas de migrantes*.

Power Dynamics. As I conducted my research, it was clear that I was always in a position of respect. Since many of the shelters providing aid to migrants in Mexico are faith-based, I was always introduced as Father Alejandro. People recognized me quickly. I never wore clerics' clothing or any other type of identification, but people often knew who Father Alejandro was, and I was very aware of this power dynamic. Thus, during interviews, I repeatedly clarified my role as a researcher. Every time I interviewed someone, I followed my consent protocol, stating that I was a researcher and that the interviewee was not obliged to give an interview just because I was also a priest. I also emphasized that people were not obliged to participate and insisted that services would not be denied to them if they did not want to share their stories.

Access to Interviewees. Migrants seek help at many of these places because of the shelters' faith-based nature not necessarily because the shelters proselytise a

particular form of religion, but because migrants see them as places where help or support will be provided. These are places migrants trust. Thus, I was lucky to feel like I did not have to work hard to gain migrants' trust. People were naturally friendly and open. Out of all the interviews I collected, my requests for interviews were only turned down twice, and only on one occasion did someone tell me at the end that he did not want his information to be used. Also, toward the end of my fieldwork, I visited a shelter where I did not disclose that I was a priest. There, interestingly enough, I noticed a difference in the migrants' willingness to give me an interview. This experience allowed me to recognize how my role as a priest influenced the way migrants related to me.

Pastoral Ministry. During the early stages of this research, my assessors and I reflected on how researchers often collect deep personal information without being able to be fully reciprocal with our interviewees. My assessors also asked: 'what would you do if an interview reaches a point at which the interviewee shares something deeply personal that goes beyond the scope of the research?' I responded that in that case, I would probably pause, stop recording or taking notes, and listen attentively to the person not precisely as a researcher, but as a priest. During fieldwork, as I reflected with my assessors, there were a couple of interviews during which I effectively stopped my recorder and started to listen to my interviewees in a different way. I think that on those occasions, I had the opportunity to perform some pastoral work and care for the people whom I was listening to. This made realize that at all times, I was both a researcher and a priest. Because of the sensitive nature of our discussions, I decided not to use the content of those interviews.

Affinity for the work of casas de migrantes. As a Jesuit Catholic priest, I value and have an affinity for the faith component and work of many of the *casas de migrantes*. During the data analysis and writing stages of this work, I was not afraid to recognize or name what I may perceive as flaws in the ways shelters operate or conduct their humanitarian efforts. This was of particular importance when analyzing the relationships shelters develop with the government and other humanitarian actors. At the same time, I made a conscious effort to share the stories of migrants and humanitarian workers who so generously participated in this research.

Overall, being a priest and researcher simultaneously presented more advantages than disadvantages. Being a priest facilitated access to interviews, informants, and stays at migrant shelters. Additionally, it gave me the opportunity to have privileged access to specific information like each *casa de migrantes* relationship with the Catholic Church, the Mexican government, and local communities. At the same time, in some shelters, due to my role as a priest or my expertise, I assumed a certain level of authority. If I had been only a researcher, I probably would not have been as involved in the inner lives of migrant shelters. This in some way was a challenge because I had to be very aware of the power dynamics my role as a priest fostered. Maintaining a neutral and critical stance also remained a challenge throughout fieldwork and the writing stage of the dissertation.

Chapter 4. Development of Migration Policies in Mexico

Currently, Mexico is considered a country of emigration and return, as well as a transit and destination country. Changes in migration patterns have been perceived at the macro-, meso-, and micro-levels; in particular, shifts from policies regulating the general population to managing migration reflect the current changes at the macro-level. New actors, such as humanitarian organizations emerging in the migration landscape, show developments at the meso-level. Different experiences of control, violence, and care, as well as various methods of exercising agency, continue to act as examples at the micro-level within the migration processes in Mexico.

This chapter offers background information regarding the political context and the emergence of humanitarian actors in the migration processes in Mexico. Three considerations are at stake: First, migration policies, in spite of their humanitarian language, operate as relentless forms of control throughout the country. Second, humanitarian actors initially emerged as a response to migrants' vulnerability and developed internal regulations that allow them to operate. And third, a discussion of two reasons that have allowed *casas de migrantes* to sustain their work through the years. I argue that social commitment and faith amongst the local population have been fertile ground for the facilitation of the emergence of humanitarian groups over time. This discussion sets up the context in which migrants interact with humanitarian organizations.

4.1 Evolution of Migration Policies in Mexico

Legal Framework

Mexico has developed many directives (laws, regulations, and decrees) to regulate migration. Even when some directives have not specifically been migration laws, the country has still regulated different issues regarding migration. The common topics covered by migration policies in Mexico relate to the differences between nationals and foreigners; regulations for attaining citizenship and naturalization; specifications for the loss of citizenship; emigration of nationals to foreign countries; and regulations pertaining to the entrance, transit, exit, and permanence in the national territory. Also, official directives have identified the authorities regulating migration and those bodies in charge of enforcement and removal (Arias Muñoz and Carmona Arellano 2012; see also Imaz 2011: 483–522).

From the beginning of the 20th century, different legal frameworks regulating migration in Mexico have defined certain roles and dynamics in processes of migration. These include the support of other actors, aside from migration officials, to enforce migration laws and regulations; the use of force to uphold immigration laws; and the requirements for immigration. Many existing documents articulate dispositions regarding migration, including: A government decree from 1854 on *Extranjería y Nacionalidad* (Foreigners and Citizenship); the *Ley de Matriculación de Extranjeros* (Foreigners Matriculation Law) from 1861; the 1886 *Ley de Extranjería y Naturalización* (Foreigners and Naturalization Law); the *Ley de Inmigración* (Immigration Law) from 1909; the *Ley de Migración* (Migration Law) from 1926 and 1930; the *Ley General de Población (LGP)* (General Population Law) from 1936, 1947, and 1974; and the most recent *Ley de Migración* (Migration Law)

from 2011. To describe some of the most relevant changes in these documents, the contributions of Arias Muñoz and Carmona Arellano (2012), Imaz (2011), and a document from the *Instituto Nacional de Migración* (2003) are incorporated in the following sections.

From 1854 to 1930

The government decree from 1854 regarding foreigners and citizenship required security letters that provided an address in the country as a form of control for foreigners. It also specified that foreigners do not have the same rights as nationals. The law from 1861 required foreigners to matriculate in order to have access to civil rights and due process. The 1886 law for foreigners and naturalization included a chapter on the rights and obligations of foreign citizens. In particular, Article 6 recognizes that migration is a ‘natural right inherent to every human being [...] which is necessary to the exercise of individual freedom’ (Arias Muñoz and Carmona Arellano 2012: 21). In practice, this law regulated the entry of foreigners to the country and the exit of nationals. The 1909 immigration law sought to attract foreign labour by giving free access to qualified workers and contains a provision that specifies the equality of persons from every country and race to seek entrance into Mexico.

The migration law that emerged in 1926 shifted from an approach of free entrance of people to an approach of entrance regulation according to the country’s interests. It framed the entrance of foreign labour as a cause for emigration and addressed transit through national territory, citizenship, and naturalization, according to the proper legal regulations. The 1930 version of the migration law recognized limited rights for foreigners upon fulfilment of specific requirements and classified

human mobility according to those people who may benefit or harm the country (Arias Muñoz and Carmona Arellano 2012; Imaz 2011; INM 2003). Furthermore, this migration law stipulated that the *Secretaría de Gobernación* (SEGOB or Department of State) regulates, controls, and attends to any migration-related issues in the country (Morales Sánchez 2012). Most notably, it specifically indicates that any authority can help migration officers enforce migration policy, including the use of public force (Arias Muñoz and Carmona Arellano 2012: 25).

From 1930 to 2008

One of the biggest shifts appeared when migration regulation appeared to be included in the law for the governance of the general population. This approach reflected an understanding of migration as an issue related to demography. Migration regulations remained under the *Ley General de Población* (LGP or General Population Law) until the late 20th century, when it appeared as an independent framework. Different versions of the LGP were released in 1936, 1947, and 1974. The version passed in 1936 approached migration as a matter of regulating flows that were beneficial to or harmful for the country. In this version of the LGP, Article 58 offered protection to foreigners fleeing their countries to avoid political persecution. The amendments of 1947 specified that while the law is not discriminatory, Mexico reserves the right to select those immigrants who it may deem suitable to contribute to the country. The amendments also mention a project to aid the return of Mexicans who have developed abilities abroad and reiterate the right to asylum for persecuted foreigners (Arias Muñoz and Carmona Arellano 2012; Imaz 2011; INM 2003; Morales Meléndez and Figueroa 1999).

The LGP from 1974 introduces three types of migration statuses: *no inmigrante* (non-immigrant), *inmigrante* (immigrant, or a person with the intention to reside in the country), and *inmigrado* (resident) (Cienfuegos Salgado 2008: 54–68). This law openly criminalizes irregular migration in Article 103 (later changed to Article 123), which says that a penalty of up to two years in prison and a fine of 300 to 5000 pesos will be imposed on foreigners entering the country illegally (Morales Sánchez 2012: 114). Later adjustments increased the penalties. Additionally, this law specifies support for the repatriation of nationals (Morales Meléndez and Figueroa 1999).

There were several amendments to the LGP after 1974, but one of the most significant changes appeared in 1993, when the Mexican government decreed the creation of the *Instituto Nacional de Migración* (INM) (National Institute for Migration) to support the work of the SEGOB that had been in charge of overseeing the application and enforcement of migration policies. Since its creation, the INM has become the executive branch of migration policy and enforcement in Mexico (Morales Sánchez 2012: 115-116; Morales Meléndez and López Figueroa 1999: 82; INM 2003). Another amendment to the LGP in 2008 derogated articles criminalizing migrants, but still did not guarantee respect for human rights and access to the justice system (Morales Sánchez 2012: 130).

The Migration Law of 2011

In 2011, Mexico introduced its most recent version of the *Ley de Migración* (Migration Law) and *Ley sobre Refugiados* (Refugees Law). These laws represented a significant change, at least at the policy level, from earlier versions of the law that

criminalized migration. In contrast, this version of the Migration Law emphasizes a human rights approach, and humanitarian language is present throughout. The *Ley de Migración* of 2011

aims to develop a migration policy that respects the human rights of migrants, is comprehensive in its coverage, facilitates the international movement of people, meets the country's labour needs, ensures equality between Mexican natives and immigrants to Mexico, recognizes the acquired rights of long-term immigrants, promotes family unity and sociocultural integration, and facilitates the return and reintegration of Mexican emigrants. (Alba and Castillo 2012; see also SEGOB 2011: 1–3)

A number of significant changes emerged with the revision of the law. The first included a clear definition of migration policy and guiding principles distinguishing them from the LGP; recognition that Mexico is a country of origin, transit, return, and destination for migration (Article 2); and reaffirmation of the decriminalization of migration (Article 2). Second, the law recognized Mexico's obligation to guarantee migrants' rights as outlined in the Constitution and international treaties, regardless of a migrant's immigration status. Third, it facilitated access to educational and health services, civic acts, and access to justice. And finally, it guaranteed the protection of unaccompanied minors and adolescents, pregnant women, and elderly people in migration detention centres and during migration control operatives (Arias Muñoz and Carmona Arellano 2012; Imaz 2011; SEGOB 2011). These changes reflect a movement to a human rights' approach in the migration laws. With this move, Mexico presents itself as an advanced nation among the international community.

New Actors and Key Articles in the Migration Law

Throughout the years, Mexican migration policies have responded to contextual factors and changes in the U.S.'s migration policies. For the purpose of this research, the three most significant developments in migration governance in Mexico were: The emergence of the *Institutos Estatales de Atención al Migrante* (State Institutes of Attention to the Migrant) in the late 1980s, the creation of *Grupo Beta* (Beta Group) in 1990, and finally, within the Migration Law of 2011, the recognition of local groups and non-governmental organizations providing humanitarian aid and advocating for migrants' rights.

The *Institutos Estatales de Atención al Migrante* responded to the needs of the increasing number of Mexican migrants residing abroad, mainly in the U.S. These government entities offer support for migrants who seek to obtain Mexican official documents, provide information regarding migrants in the process of deportation from the U.S., aid in the repatriation of remains in case of death abroad, and support hometown associations, among other forms of assistance. Services vary from state to state and are tailored to the particular contexts of each locality. Currently, 29 out of 32 states in Mexico have an *Instituto Estatal de Atención al Migrante* (Imaz 2011: 493).

Grupos Beta are interesting entities because they represent the humanitarian branch of the INM. A pilot program to protect migrants from criminal gangs launched in 1990 in the state of Baja California, which is located in Northern Mexico. At that time, it could be argued that they offered protection mostly to Mexican migrants who intended to cross to the United States. Once the program started, there was a need for the groups to extend their support to humanitarian activities due to the difficult

weather conditions in a region that is mostly desert. The program was successful, so it was replicated in the northern region. In the 2011 Migration Law, Article 71 stated that the Department of State will create groups for the protection and humanitarian assistance of migrants in national territory regardless of their migratory status (SEGOB 2011: 24-25). This officialized the work of *Grupos Beta*. Nowadays, the group specializes in search and rescue operations and emergency medical care, and provides legal and human rights information to migrants. *Grupos Beta* have offices in nine states and operate in 22 cities (Lothar Weiss and López Chaltelt 2011; INM 2017).

The 2011 Migration Law contains two articles that are crucial for the way humanitarian assistance for migrants has developed in Mexico. Article 72 states that the Mexican Department of State will create agreements with federal entities, state governments, and local municipalities to devise actions that will support the work of humanitarian actors who provide assistance to migrants. Furthermore, Article 76 states that INM cannot conduct operations or revisions in places where humanitarian organizations or people provide shelter or humanitarian assistance to migrants (SEGOB 2011: 25). In practice, the government has left the responsibility of providing care for migrants and deportees in the hands of citizens and non-governmental organizations.

Throughout history, Mexico has maintained a migration control approach. While at the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries the approach seemed to be very open to immigration, the process was still highly regulated. The shift to include migration affairs in the *Ley General de Población* reflects the increasing concern with demographic movement and a reaction to the emigration patterns in the

country. Here we must consider the emergence and growth of *Institutos Estatales de Atención al Migrante*. The criminalization of migration and subsequent decriminalization in 2008 also reflect a shift in approach to migration, as well as increasing international pressures to the transit migration patterns in Mexico. Even when *Grupos Beta* emerged in 1990, they responded to the widening spread of violence targeting migrants, which has continued and increased. But, their role is ambivalent because they are an official humanitarian branch of INM, which is the enforcer of migration policies in Mexico.

The increasing violence against migrants reached a peak with the massacre of 72 migrants in the state of Tamaulipas. This event and the mounting pressure that came with it were some of the reasons that led to the promulgation of the Migration Law of 2011. Furthermore, the recognition of humanitarian actors in the provision of humanitarian aid is an interesting step in the migration strategy because it creates spaces of exception. Since 2000, the Mexican government has offered several regularization programs for irregular migrants residing in the country. This is an effect of the fragmented journeys of irregular migrants, who are unable to reach the U.S. due to diverse motivations and ultimately decide to remain in Mexico. The increasing number of asylum seekers, the presence of irregular migrants deciding to remain in the country, and the increasing number of returning Mexicans who either return voluntarily or because of deportation will test the coherence between the migration law, its implementation, and enforcement.

Regional Agreements

Historically, Mexico belongs to the region of Mesoamerica, which extended from the northern and central parts of Mexico to parts of what are now El Salvador and Honduras. For this region, Mexico is a strong partner and holds the upper hand; often, Mexican nationals are not required to have visas to transit through Central America (Durand 2011: 458). At the same time, because of its geographical position and history, Mexico has a strong link with the United States. Until 1848, a large section of the current American territory was part of Mexico. For many years, strong commercial relations remained along the boundaries of the Rio Grande, which divides Mexico and the U.S. Currently, Mexico is part of NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) and while the North American region fosters the circulation of goods and ideas, it also restricts the movement of people. In this case, Mexican nationals are required to have visas to enter the U.S. (Durand 2011: 458). Thus, different regional agreements have been reached at both ends, but the Mexican position is highly influenced by the power and agenda of the United States, especially after the terrorist attacks of 2001.

Regional cooperation with Central America took off during 1980s, especially with bilateral agreements between Mexico and Guatemala to coordinate efforts attending to the needs of Guatemalan refugees. Later on, this bilateral agreement moved to address the situation of Guatemalan temporary workers in Mexico. In 1986, the so-called Puebla Process began its meetings. Through the years, this became a multilateral group known as the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM), which meets annually for the exchange of information, coordination, and cooperation on migration issues. Its original areas of focus were the protection of migrants' human rights, the relationship between development and migration, and the technical

cooperation for the management of regional migration flows. After the attacks on September 11th, the agenda changed to address illegal migration, terrorism, organized crime, and human trafficking. Currently, the RCM has 11 members, including the United States (Alba and Castillo 2012: 11-13).

Central American countries developed other important regional agreements like the CA-4, which fosters regional integration and economic development among Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua. This agreement allows free movement of people among the four countries, although travellers need a permit on their travel documents. Guatemala and Belize have established high-level cooperation groups to protect the border areas of southern Mexico, which are prone to crime, drug trade, and human trafficking (Alba and Castillo 2012: 11-13).

Another significant agreement was the Plan Puebla-Panama, which was introduced in 1998 and relaunched in 2007, renamed the Mesoamerican Initiative. This agreement, which included Mexico and Central America, sought to generate employment as a way to reduce regional emigration. Another agreement called the Merida Initiative, also launched in 2007, as a comprehensive long-term agreement and strategy focused on fighting transnational organized crime and detecting possible terrorist attacks. The agreement between the United States, Mexico, and Central America allocates funding and technical expertise to Mexico and Central America to build the region's capacity to fight trafficking of drugs, arms and people, and to prevent possible terrorist attacks. In 2010, a separate fund was established by the U.S. to more directly support Central American countries (Isacson, Meyer, and Smith 2017: 24–26; Alba and Castillo 2012: 13; Arteaga 2009: 103).

Finally, for the first time in its history in 2013, Mexico developed the *Programa Especial de Migración 2014-2018* (PEM) (Migration Special Program 2014-2018). This program belongs to the larger National Development Plan and has five objectives regarding migration:

- To foster a culture of legality, human rights and value of migration.
- To incorporate migration as a theme in the regional and local development strategies.
- To consolidate an efficient migration management, anchored in criteria of facilitation, international co-responsibility, border and human security.
- To favor integration processes and reintegration of migrants and their families.
- To strengthen access to the justice system and the security of migrants, their families and those who defend their rights.

(SEGOB 2013: 63–73).

This program, with its guiding principles, aims to be transversal and multi-sectorial and follow specific actions regarding migration. It further consolidates the collaboration between the government and civil society to promote, monitor, and evaluate the attention to migration in Mexico, which is a country of origin, transit, destination, and return of migrants (SEGOB 2013).

As part of the strategies of the PEM, since July 7, 2014, the Mexican government implemented the *Programa Integral Frontera Sur* (Southern Border Integral Program). This plan was part of a larger strategy to bring stability and governability to the southern border of Mexico (see Presidencia de la República 2014, July 7 2014). The program's main objectives included helping-migrants avoid putting their lives at risk by riding a cargo train that is not designed for passengers; developing strategies to guarantee the security and protection of migrants; and fighting and eradicating criminal groups that violate migrants' rights (mainly drug cartels and gangs that prey on migrants along their journeys).

In practice, the *Programa Especial de Migracion* is more about migration management and control than protection of migrants. The main actions of the program have centred on monitoring the cargo train system often used by Central American migrants, and there has been an increase in both patrolling and detentions issued to migrants trying to ride it (FN September 2014 - January 2016). The rhetoric of the human rights approach contrasts with the violence migrants suffer on the ground at the hands of criminal groups, such as drug cartels and groups that prey on migrants along migratory routes, and governmental institutions and officers. Thus, while on paper the program seems to be aligned with a framework of protection, the evidence from the field shows that rather than focusing on migrants' protection, the program has focused all its efforts on controlling the movement of irregular migrants through Mexico.

Humanitarian Language, Control and Development

During the 1980s, Mexican policymakers dealt with an influx of Guatemalan refugees who crossed to the southern states. Mexican migration policy makers worked with international organizations to set up refugee camps and, later, to help Guatemalans return to their communities while welcoming some of those who decided to permanently settle in Mexico. The 1990s saw the arrival of many irregular migrants from Central American countries who were crossing Mexico on their way to the United States. During these years, 'Mexican authorities expressed no clear or coherent preference to either control or openly tolerate Central American transit migration' (Alba and Castillo 2012: 1). It wasn't until 2001 that the U.S. shifted its migration policy to a security approach that Mexico began to have multiple and diverse responses to Central American migrants crossing the country. Since 2001,

Mexico's government has honed its rhetoric of defense of the basic rights of all migrants, independent of their legal status. The Mexican government uses humanitarian language to frame its migration policies in order to appear as a modern country capable of managing its migration patterns. It does so for each of the different migrant populations that must be accounted for: Mexican emigrants, foreign immigrants, regular and irregular transit migrants, and return migration.

Mexican migration policy is officially part of the *Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 2013-2018* (National Development Plan 2013-2018), in which the Mexican government seeks to approach migration from a humane, effective, and modern perspective. Furthermore, the Mexican government states that co-responsibility with Central American and North American countries is key to the success of regional development (SEGOB 2013: 24–27). Additionally, the Mexican government seeks to foster co-responsibility with members of society, private sectors, academia, and experts in the management of and attention to migration (SEGOB 2013: 27-28). After all, Mexico positions itself as a humanitarian government with a progressive humanitarian migration policy — first, through the objectives of the Mexican Migration Law and the inclusion of migration in the National Development Plan; and second, by the further implementation of the Migration Law through the *Programa de la Frontera Sur* (South Border Program).

If the Migration Law incorporated humanitarian language, *Programa de la Frontera Sur* (PFS) was definitely a migrant-centered program. Its main goal was not only to protect irregular migrants crossing Mexico with the intention of reaching the United States, but also to advance migration control and management in the region. The program proposed an investment of 400 million USD between 2014 and

2018 to repair train tracks, allowing trains to increase their speeds, promoting regional trade and mitigating social problems associated with the slow movement of the cargo trains. The PFS insisted on collaborating with *casas de migrantes* that support transit migrants, since shelters had been aiding migrants for many years; in addition, Mexican authorities had different types of relationships with the shelters. Article 76, as previously mentioned, creates ‘spaces of exception’ that migrants seek because in these spaces they can find safety and respite from the relentless enforcement that surrounds Mexican migration routes. The concept of ‘space of exception’ broadly refers to ‘situations in which the “normal” juridical order is suspended (sometimes temporarily, sometimes permanently) in order to pursue specific military and police objectives’ (Minca 2017). I use this concept in relationship to the shelters to highlight that *casas de migrantes* are protected by law. However, as I will show later, they also have a function of containment.

From this review of the evolution of migration policies in Mexico, three points are important for this research: First, the participation of police in the support of migration authorities. Since 1930, migration policy in Mexico has permitted the participation of diverse governmental actors in enforcement and control activities in support of migration authorities. Furthermore, migration enforcement is used by different law enforcement groups to extort and abuse migrants and deportees. Second, participation in diverse international agreements and collaborations has started a process of border internalization or staggered forms of control and surveillance throughout the country. This process fosters a climate of deportability throughout the country, with issues of citizenship at the northern border. Third, the law from 2011 — with its articles regarding humanitarian assistance — has led to the creation of

spaces of exception and particular forms of social protection for irregular migrants and deportees. Chapter 8 will show how these exceptions create and foster forms of containment.

4.2 Relentless Control

In Mexico, border and enforcement practices have fostered the emergence of internal borders that mainly surveil mobility patterns that lean toward the north. This process of border internalization has manifested in the increasing number of migration controls and detention centres throughout the country. Researchers have used terms like ‘vertical border’ (Rigoni 2007: 1; Anguiano and Trejo Peña 2007: 51; Meyer and Brewer 2010: 5), ‘elastic border’ (Marengo Camacho 2015: 11), ‘*país frontera*’ (country as a border zone) (Sandoval 2005), and ‘arterial border’ (Vogt 2017) to describe the existence of multiple border controls spread throughout Mexico or the dynamics of the removal process they create. We must begin by asking, where and how do migration surveillance and enforcement occur?

Fixed Borders, Mobile borders, and Increasing Number of Detention Centres

Detection, detention, and deportation strategies are some of the most visible forms of internal enforcement that exist today (Menjívar 2014: 360). During fieldwork, I found that migration controls and surveillance in Mexico occur in two ways: at fixed places (that could be located at the geographical borders of the country or at different fixed points along main roads) and with mobile units that could set up temporary checkpoints at any time in different parts of the country (FN September 2014 - January 2016).

Fixed Points of Migration Control

Mapping the migration trajectories of my interviewees allowed me to identify particular points along migration routes where migration controls operated. Migrants' narratives describe how they sometimes went around checkpoints at the border if they were entering through Tabasco (Luciana, IDI SLP 20; Santiago, SS Tenosique 2; Valentin, SS Puebla 1) or crossing the river when entering through Chiapas (Fabiola, SS Oaxaca 1; Jerónimo, SS Oaxaca 2; Virgilio, SS Huixtla 5). Migrants also described getting off the train to circumvent a checkpoint after passing the town of Palenque in southern Mexico, or having to walk around the checkpoint of Playas de Catzajá also near Palenque (Miguel, SS SLP 12; Bernardo, SS Coatzacoalcos 9; Benjamin, SS Puebla 2; Porfirio, SS Acayucan 7). Further along the route through the Gulf, migrants referred to the need to be aware of a checkpoint near Chontalpa, which was located right before the town of Coatzacoalcos (Carlos, SS Saltillo 12; Anabel, SS Coatzacoalcos 8). Migrants entering through the state of Chiapas and traveling along the Pacific route mentioned a checkpoint around the town of Pijijiapan, where they often experienced aggressive migration raids (Oliver, SS Bojay 4; Ubaldo, SS San Luis Potosi 8; Rodrigo, SS Tijuana 4; Sebastian SS, Acayucan 1). All of these checkpoints are located either near the train tracks or along main roads. (FN Comitán January 26, 2015). In one way or another, migrants became aware of these checkpoints either by word of mouth or through information they gathered at *casas de migrantes*.

During my travels through Mexico to collect data, I confirmed these locations and saw that at these fixed points of control, migration officers board commercial buses and request identification from passengers, questioning them about the purpose of their travels. Those who are unable to provide identification are detained (FN

Coatzacoalcos, November 11, 2014; FN Puebla, February 28, 2015; FN Saltillo, March 3, 2015).

Mobile Points of Migration Control

The other important form of migration control in Mexico appears in the form of mobile migration control units that could be stationed anywhere along the main roads or the train tracks. The Mexican government enabled 120 provisional-mobile stations in 14 states during 2016 (REDODEM 2016: 69–72; Díaz Prieto 2016). Earlier, I mentioned that by law, police groups can perform surveillance and migration control checkups. Hence, different states in Mexico have migration, military, and other police officials patrolling main roads, train tracks, ports, and coastlines. Since 2001, there has been an increase in the number of police and military actors along the southern border due to the security approach taken in the region after the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Federal police, migration officials, Army and Navy personnel, and state and local police (FN Huixtla, March 25, 2015) are among the actors that patrol the region. While programs like the *Merida Initiative* and the *Programa de la Frontera Sur* have aimed to foster development and security in the region, in practice they try to decrease irregular migration coming from Central America and control drug cartels and trafficking organizations (Herrera-Lasso and Artola 2011: 11).

The activities of these mobile units often require screening and questioning the passengers in vehicles or public transportation. As I travelled along different routes during my fieldwork, I observed many actors policing in one way or another along the different roads going north. There are mobile checkpoints run by federal police, by members of the Army, and by migration authorities along the roads. Some

of the strategies used for policing are X-ray screening and vehicle searches. Furthermore, any of these actors can question people transiting the region. Migration officers, as well as federal police, can ask for some type of identification. If travelling by bus, migration officers and federal police stop and board the vehicle at different mobile checkpoints. They screen the travellers on the bus, and if they perceive someone to be of a different nationality, they ask for identification and an explanation of the trip's purpose. As an example, during my travels, I was asked to identify myself three times. I also observed the detention of several migrants at different points in southern Mexico (FN Huixtla, March 27, 2015).

Migration controls along the train tracks often involved detaining the train in different places to verify that no irregular migrants were riding on top. The existence of these mobile units demands migrants' complete alertness and attentiveness to any information that can be gathered along the way. The last hurdle a migrant wants, deep into Mexican territory, is to be caught by mobile units of migration control (FN Saltillo, March 7, 2015). Figure 10 depicts a mobile unit from migration authorities and a vehicle from the federal police stationed along one of the main interstate roads along the southern border in Mexico.

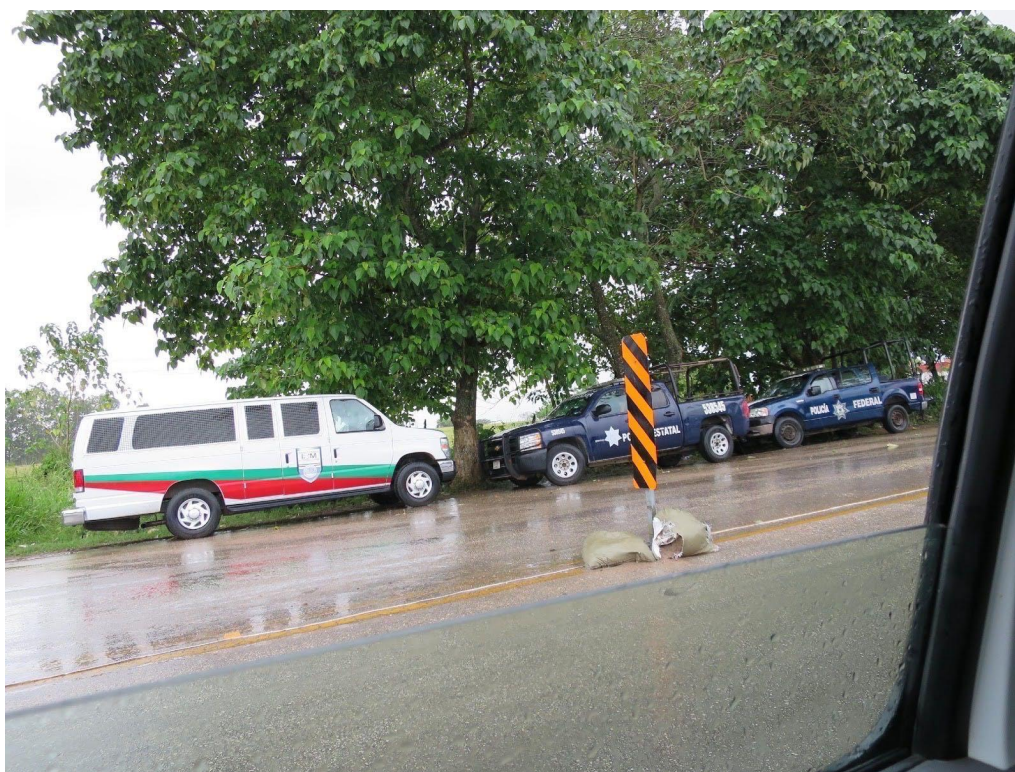


Figure 10. Checkpoint along an interstate road in Southern Mexico. On the left is a vehicle from INM (Migration Institute) and on the right, a federal police vehicle
Photograph by: Alejandro Olayo-Méndez

Increase in Detentions

In spite of the increasing number of detentions in southern Mexico, the evidence from detentions in other parts of the country suggests that control practices operate throughout the country. Accompanying these practices are the emergence of many detention centres in Mexico. Some scholars have described the migration routes in Mexico as *la ruta del encierro* (the route of confinement) (Sin Fronteras 2013), a description that comes from the increasing number of detention centres that have appeared all over the country. In 2000, there were 25 *estaciones migratorias* (detention centres) in Mexico, located in Mexico City, Sinaloa, Chihuahua, and Tamaulipas. Of these locations, 5 centres are in the latter two cities, which are in northern Mexico. The other 20 were in southern states like Guerrero, Oaxaca,

Tabasco, Chiapas, and Veracruz. The fact that most detention centres were in southern Mexico indicated the country's intention to contain irregular migration patterns coming from the south. By 2005 the number increased to 52 detention centres, still mostly located in southern Mexico. The number decreased to 48 by 2007 due to irregularities in the management of the detention centres that were brought to light by the CNDH (Mexico Human Rights National Commission) (Casillas 2008: 145–146). By the end of 2016, there were 32 detention centres and 26 substations throughout the country. Every state in Mexico but one has at least one detention centre (INM 2016). These changes in the number of detention centres that reach the point of covering almost all national territory, as well as the refinement in the size and operation, reflect the evolution of migration policies and the trend to manage migration patterns throughout the country.

Detention centres can hold irregular migrants for up to 15 working days, provide food, shelter, and special accommodations for particular groups (women, minors, families), and offer access to medical assistance, psychological services, and legal services, including access to consular services in some cases. Substations, by contrast, can hold migrants either for 48 hours or up to seven days. Often, migrants are transported from substations to detention centres, where they remain until the Mexican government arranges their removal from the country. Map 4 shows the location of the detention centres and the substations.



Map 4. *Estaciones Migratorias* (Migration Stations/Detention Centres) in Mexico in 2013
Source: INM (Instituto Nacional de Migración)

The Return

When discussing migration control and surveillance, most of the attention has been given to those moving north — in other words, to irregular migrants moving through the corridor to the United States. The work of many organizations that advocate for the rights of irregular migrants and asylum seekers reinforces this trend. However, attention to deportees, both Mexican and Central American, is underdeveloped and the effectiveness of governmental programs for deported Mexicans, who are returned to dangerous cities at the northern border of Mexico, remains in question (FN Reynosa, January 8, 2016).

Deported Mexicans are often returned through various cities along the U.S.-Mexico border. They frequently return without money or identification, and to places where they have limited possibilities for trying to contact their networks. Thus, many deportees risk becoming the prey of criminal groups in border cities or in collusion with commercial bus companies. Sometimes, criminal groups kidnap deported Mexicans for ransom, or extort them in cases where they want to return to the United States (Rodrigo, SS Tijuana 4; Ireneo, SS Reynosa 4; FN Nogales July 23, 2015).

Due to the increasing number of Mexicans returning voluntarily or after deportation from the United States, the Mexican government has collaborated with IOM to improve the repatriation program called *Somos Mexicanos* (We are Mexicans) and has opened 11 reception centres across the northern border states. The goal of the program is to make the repatriation process safe, ordered, humane, and respectful of the returnee. The program also offers information regarding other resources that are available to support social reintegration after deportation, communication with the consulate in case deportees want to file claims against foreign authorities, medical and psychological assistance, local and international phone calls, information about local shelters, support for transportation to the place of origin, or repatriation documents that may temporarily serve as an official ID (FN Tijuana January 26, 2015; FN Nogales July 24, 2015; FN Reynosa December 15, 2016; SEGOB 2017).

However, the process of return varies across border cities. Larger cities have better reception centres and more resources available to support deportees. In practice, the Mexican government ‘receives’ the deportee and scrutinizes them to ensure they are of their stated nationalities. The next step consists of registering deportees and providing them with the documents that serve as identification. Yet, many local police

officers do not recognize the documents and few banks or wire transfer companies accept them as a valid form of identification (IDs are essential in Mexican territory for most financial transactions) (FN Tijuana January 26, 2015; FN Nogales July 24, 2015; FN Reynosa December 15, 2016). When no large reception centre exists, deportees are dropped at the international bridge by American border authorities. In these cases, there is often confusion over what the next step is (FN Reynosa, December 18, 2015). While the government provides some immediate assistance at points of entry, there is no long-term or even medium-term assistance. The government instead pushes its policy of ‘returning to the place of origin’ or ‘the place where the person could be useful’ and pressures deportees to move quickly to the towns where they were born or where they have family members. In other words, there is no support from Mexican authorities to help migrants to move to another border town. The picture below depicts a group of Mexicans who were just deported from the United States through the city of Reynosa as they were waiting to be registered by the Mexican government.



Figure 11. Deported Mexicans arriving at the INM Reception Centre in Reynosa, Tamaulipas
Photography by: Alejandro Olayo-Méndez.

The repatriation program demonstrates that migration controls also exist for returning patterns of migration. But, deportees are not the only population the Mexican government caters to; Mexican authorities have developed good reception programs for Mexican migrants living in the United States who return to the country for vacation. The program, called *Bienvenido a Casa Paisano* (Welcome Home Co-national) and sponsored by the Mexican government, has developed a series of recommendations for returning migrants visiting the country that help them navigate dangerous routes through Mexico (INM 2016b). Federal police will occasionally escort caravans of returning Mexicans during the Christmas and summer vacation periods. Additionally, a new program emerged called *Amigo Centroamericano* (Central American Friend). This program tends to Central Americans residing in the

United States who travel through Mexico on their way to their home countries in Central America (INM 2016b).

Programs for the reception of deported migrants and programs supporting documented migrants (Mexicans and Central Americans) living in the United States indicate that migration patterns in Mexico also move south. At the same time, these programs reveal the ways that migrants are treated differently depending on their statuses and potential contributions to the country. Deported Mexicans receive limited support as they return to the country, while security and safety operations shield Mexicans and Central Americans — with visas or regular statuses in the U.S. — from organized crime. These programs also highlight that migrants perceived as heroes are treated differently because they are able to contribute to the country even when abroad, and that migrants perceived as failures are also treated inconsistently because of deportation (Schuster and Majidi 2015; Martínez-Saldaña 2003).

Fixed border controls, mobile border practices, an increasing number of detention centres, repatriation programs, and assistance for visitors residing elsewhere are evidence of a process of border internalization and different expressions of migration management. Thus, it is evident that the management and control of migrant populations in Mexico do not occur solely at the geographical and political borders of the country. Rather, management and control emerge and move through different routes and in a variety of directions along the country.

4.3 Migration Policies in Practice

Migration patterns in Mexico move through a south/north axis. Migrants often go north (which they refer to as '*pal' Norte*' or '*pa'rriba*', or 'going up'), or deported Mexicans travel south and are pushed far from the border by assistance programs for deportees. While Mexican authorities frame migration policies as humane and respectful of human rights and their main goal is the safety of migrants, in practice, the country is heavily patrolled and surveilled not only by migration authorities, but also by local and federal police. Thus, there is a gap between migration policies and enforcement practices. The effects of this gap in the migration process appear in three ways: First, an internal border that fosters deportation and containment is created. Second, questions of citizenship for deportees returning to the country are raised. And third, the emergence of spaces of confinement are fostered.

A Deportation and Containment Regime

The internalization of borders in Mexico promotes identification, detention, interdiction, and deportation of irregular migrants as they move north or as deported Mexicans return to the country. This policing of internal borders across Mexico has two effects. On the one hand, there is a benevolent government that uses humanitarian language and places migrants in a 'victim-savior' relationship (Pallister-Wilkins 2015: 64), and on the other hand, there are poor migrants who see the 'threat of deportability' at all times and hide, run, and seek to evade controls, thereby putting themselves in precarious situations (De Genova 2010; Nyers 2003; Willen 2007).

Since November 2014, as part of its use of humanitarian language, the Mexican government consistently began using the term '*rescate*' (rescue) rather than

‘detention’ to refer to its practices of migration control. Bulletins from the *Instituto Nacional de Migración* (INM) show this trend: ‘The INM rescues 12 Hondurans kidnapped by a criminal gang in Tabasco’ (INM 2014a), ‘INM rescues 61 migrants in Chiapas and Coahuila’ (INM 2014b), and in April 2015, the INM reported rescuing 804 migrants from risky situations. Headlines like this abound in communications from INM. Consistent with the way language is used in migration law, Mexico has preferred the term ‘assisted return’ when referring to the removal of irregular migrants (see Chapter VII. Art 114-125 in the Migration Law (SEGOB 2011)) rather than the term ‘deportation’. This preference in language, though, positions Mexico as a country with humanitarian practices of removal. In practice, the difference between deportation and assisted return is only administrative.

The official discourse and media coverage clearly present any operation from migration authorities as a rescue operation. However, the way in which these rescue operations occur is never discussed and the outcome often leads migration authorities to ‘assist’ migrants with their returns to the country of origin. In other words, migration authorities often remove ‘rescued’ migrants from the country. From my observations in the field (FN September 2014-January 2016), I perceived a clear gap between the way control is enacted and the ‘rescue’ discourse. Migrants often describe running away or hiding from the threat of deportation. Migration authorities chased Gerardo, a 22-year-old migrant from Honduras, in the town of Bojay in Central Mexico (SS Bojay 3, December 4, 2014). Ivan, a 29-year-old migrant from Honduras, described how migration authorities chased him and his friend just outside of the town of Palenque in Southern Mexico (SS Bojay 9, December 13, 2014). Migration journeys are filled with episodes like this throughout the country. Migrants’ escapes from migration authorities or police often lead to scratches, injuries, twisted ankles,

and broken bones (FN San Luis Potosi November 28, 2015). Hence, evidence shows that more often than not, rather than rescuing and respecting migrants, Mexican authorities attempt to forcefully control and contain migrants' mobility.

In practice, no matter how migrants move, efforts to control and contain their movement appear everywhere; in spite of the efforts, migrants continue to venture on to different migration projects. Bernardo, a 29-year-old migrant from Honduras, explains the constant threat of deportation and his desire not to be caught, because being caught often means removal from the country: 'You do not want to be caught. You have to stay for weeks at the detention centre, only to be returned to your country. Then, one has to start again hoping that this time, you will not be caught. But, the risk is always there. The road is hard, but it is harder to let life slip through your hands' (SS, Coatzacoalcos 9).

These experiences illustrate how migrants live under the threat of deportation. Sometimes this threat becomes real and migrants have to run from police and migration authorities. Other times, migrants simply deal with the anxiety and hope of not getting caught.

Questions Regarding Citizenship and Context

At the northern border of Mexico, deportees return after experiencing the power of another deportation regime. They arrive without identification, occasionally with limited belongings, and often after days, weeks, or months in detention. In addition, some deportees return to the country after serving years in prison for the crime of illegally reentering the country. In many ways, they end up becoming '*de facto* aliens in the country of citizenship' for different periods of time (Coutin 2010).

Over the past decade, a growing body of literature has emerged that covers different aspects of the consequences after deportation (see Anderson 2015; Rocha Romero and Ocegueda Hernández 2013; Rivera Sánchez 2015). I emphasize the immediate aftermath of the actual moment of deportation (the moment when deportees are left with or handed to Mexican authorities at international bridges) because without resources and instead with limited social networks and little information, deportees return in extremely vulnerable conditions. Previously, I described some of these circumstances at the moment of return. For deportees, return to the country raises questions of citizenship and differential treatment.

The return to the country of origin always involves a process of waiting and questioning. It is difficult to make any generalization about deportees because their circumstances could range from separation from families, to years in prison, to recent crossings. Thus, their needs are always different. Of concern here is the questioning deportees endure to prove Mexican citizenship. The reception process involves several questions regarding the place of origin, the entry of deportees' names into a database, and the presentation of a piece of paper to deportees as a proof of return to the country. Larger reception centres like Tijuana offer more onsite immediate support, but there is little to no assessment of the deportee's particular situation (FN Tijuana, January 25 2015). Smaller reception centres like the ones in Nogales or Matamoros offer minimal assistance (FN Nogales, July 24, 2015; FN Matamoros December 17, 2015).

At the moment of return there is always confusion, especially since groups arriving at the reception centres can vary in size from 10 to 70 to 135 (FN Tijuana January 26, 2015; FN Reynosa December 11, 2015). Any official transaction at banks

or some commercial activities in Mexico requires a form of official identification. Thus, the repatriation letter becomes a valuable document. However, police in border towns harass deportees or extort them, telling them that ‘that piece of paper is worth nothing’ (FN Tijuana January 27, 2015). While the Mexican government has tried to speed up the process of official documentation for deportees, obtaining an identity card can take up to 15 working days, which means that during that time, deportees live with certain limitations in their own countries. Coutin (2010: 206) has described the restrictions of movement and activities deported Salvadorans experience in El Salvador. Similarly, deported Mexicans return only to be regarded as aliens in their own country for awhile. Support comes from NGOs and other outsourced programs the Mexican government has implemented; however, an analysis of the effectiveness of these programs or the process of reintegration to Mexican society remains outside of the scope of this work. Nevertheless, my findings show that at most immediate moments after deportation there is limited support for deportees (FN Tijuana. January 8, 2015; FN Reynosa, January 6, 2016).

In contrast, the reception of Mexican migrants legally residing in the U.S. has become a successful program that has expanded through the years. The point here is that the context or circumstances for the return matter deeply. For Mexican nationals with legal status in the U.S., a red carpet is rolled out, protection is offered, and multiple services are laid out for them. For deportees, however, limited resources are available and there is always the pressure to remove them from the border. While the programs have been developed more in recent years, their effectiveness still remains in question.

Zones of Confinement

Roads and train tracks, detention centres, and *casas de migrantes* in one way or another have become zones of confinement and/or spaces of exception. Mexico's geography limits mobility opportunities (see Chapter 2 and Casillas 2008) for migrants; as much as there is discussion of new migrant routes, the mobility patterns followed by poor migrants often consist of some deviations around checkpoints just to return to train tracks or main or secondary roads further ahead. The routes get activated or deactivated according to the presence of migration or police authorities. In practice, the train tracks and the main roads migrants use have become zones of confinement. As irregular migrants move from south to north, they avoid 'belts of control' (Isacson, Meyer, and Davis 2014) that appear along the road. These belts of control refer to the checkpoints that have become fixtures along migration routes. Migrants who can use the train at different parts of the journey are aware of where to get off so they will not be caught by migration authorities. Some migrants walking along the train tracks hide in the mountains when migration authorities conduct raids, but still use the train tracks as a compass to keep moving north. Similar to deterrence (Fan 2008; Cornelius and Salehyan 2007), the control and policing strategies used in Mexico confine migrants to isolated and dangerous routes.

Detention centres are premier examples of the confinement of migrant populations, but they are often perceived as static entities. In the case of Mexico, it is not only the number of detention centers that have appeared everywhere in the country, but also the possibility of setting up mobile detention centres — sanctioned by the law — that breaks the boundary of understanding confinement as static forms of control. Hence, Mexico's migration policies and enforcement foster the emergence of itinerant forms of control or mobile spaces of confinement (see also McNevin

2010). Even when mobile detention centres can hold migrants for limited periods of time, the centres can also appear and disappear according to the way migration routes are activated or deactivated. Furthermore, their emergence functions as a way to channel and contain mobility, since migrants' mobility responds to the presence of migration controls.

Mexican migration laws appear to be concerned with the respect of human rights and care for migrants. In practice, the emphasis is on the management of migration patterns, as shown by the implementation gap that exists between migration laws and enforcement. Whether intended or unintended, the result fosters migrants' containment along migration routes and transfers and/or outsources responsibility to humanitarian actors for the care of migrants and deportees. Furthermore, Mexican migration law protects migrant shelters from any intervention by police or migration authorities. This reinforces the fact that migrants need to seek support at migrant shelters, and also highlights the funneling of migrants in places that are well-known along migration routes. The next chapter will describe and analyze the impact of migrant shelters in the migration process.

Chapter 5. ‘Humanitarianism from Below’: *Casas de Migrantes* in Mexico

Every day, around 7 A.M., you would hear a familiar voice saying: ‘*¡Compañeros, a levantarse! ¡Compañeros, a levantarse! Hay que hacer el aseo*’. (Companions, get up! Companions, get up! We have to clean up). This was the voice of Friar Aurelio every morning at *La 72*. Slowly after that wakeup call, the shelter begins to arise. People start to get up. You would hear some children crying, and the women’s dormitory begins to buzz. Men start to pile up the mats that they slept on. Some migrants start to clean up toilets, while others clean the showers. Others collect trash from the patio, while some set up tables in the dining room. Still others sweep the dirt floor that leads to the entrance. By 7:30 A.M., the shelter was clean, and people would begin to gather and line up near the kitchen; breakfast would be served at 8 A.M. There were some new migrants among the people that morning, who had arrived overnight. There were 127 migrants (including 63 asylum seekers). Breakfast consisted of tea, some rice and beans, and two tortillas for each person. Milk was reserved for the 23 children at the shelter. As they finished their breakfast, one by one, each migrant washed their plastic plate, cup, and spoon in a bucket containing greasy water and little bit of soap.

Soon after breakfast, some volunteers asked new migrants to come to the office for registration. They joined two other groups of migrants who just arrived at the shelter and were waiting to be registered. All of the migrants seemed to be tired and sweaty, probably because many of them walked the 58 kilometers from the Guatemalan border to the shelter. Three volunteers ran the intake, which consisted of giving a small talk about the rules of the shelter and some recommendations for the

road. Then, one by one, each migrant went through a short interview that consisted of collecting some general information, taking a picture, and answering an assessment to determine if any of those migrants qualified for asylum. To remain at the shelter, they needed to agree to the interview and show a form of identification.

The rest of the morning had the usual pace; some migrants went out to the small town of Tenosique in search of work. Other migrants, especially those who had been travelling, were seeking some shade at the shelter to be able to rest. Migrants asked for shoes, backpacks, or some clothes, which were valuable commodities. Unfortunately, the shelter does not receive many donations of this kind. By 1:30 P.M., Fray Aurelio had gathered another group of volunteers to clean up again and at 2 P.M., dinner was served. The rest of the afternoon would be uneventful, with migrants coming and going at will. Some migrants would wait to make a free 3-minute telephone call offered by the Red Cross. Some migrants had been playing cards since the morning, while others were just passing time. Idleness is one of the main issues at the shelter, for both men and women.

Supper would be offered by 8 P.M., accompanied by the previous ritual of cleaning up the shelter half an hour before. At 9:30 P.M., everybody gathered in a circle at the patio. This time, there were close to 90 migrants gathered, which meant that some groups had left the shelter through the day to continue their journeys to the United States. While gathered on the patio, some instructions about sleeping arrangements were given, a short prayer was offered, and a moment of silence for reflection was taken. Then, women and children go first to their dormitory, and then the men move to their dormitory. Lights go out by 10 P.M., but one can still hear some conversations. The next day, Fray Aurelio's familiar voice will wake everybody

up again, with the same morning call: '*¡Compañeros, a levantarse! ¡Compañeros, a levantarse! Hay que hacer el aseo*'.

In many shelters, migrants have similar routines and rules to follow. However, each shelter's geographical location determines some of the differences, including the length of stay, internal operation, and especially the shelter's relationship to the Mexican government. This chapter introduces the notion of 'humanitarianism from below' to discuss the role of *casas de migrantes* in the migration process in Mexico. Additionally, the chapter provides an overview of the historical development, internal dynamics, and circumstances for the sustaining work of migrant shelters. The chapter concludes by highlighting some of the effects of this type of humanitarian work and sets up the discussion of poverty, violence, and aid as self-reinforcing dynamics in the migration process in Mexico.

5.1 The Beginnings and Changing Nature of *Casas de Migrantes*

Common use of the term 'humanitarianism' began in the early 19th century, and can be understood as a form of compassion. The more contemporary definition of humanitarianism involves three key distinctions: a global and transnational reach expressed in assistance beyond borders, a belief that such transnational action was related in some ways to the transcendent or a higher morality, and the growing organization and governance of activities designed to protect and improve humanity regardless of race, political affiliation, or nationality (Barnett 2011: 10; Scott-Smith 2014: 10; Forsythe 2009: 58).

Classical approaches do not see humanitarianism as characterized by a long-term agenda of economic development, the promotion of democracy, or an advocacy for human rights. The primary focus is on an immediate response to ‘sudden, unpredictable, and short-term explosions of suffering’ (Calhoun 2010: 54). In his analysis and critique of humanitarianism, David Rieff (2002: 88) asserts that ‘there is humanitarianism as caring in Rwanda; humanitarianism as emancipation, as in Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban; humanitarianism as liberation, as in the case of humanitarian support for rebels of southern Sudan; and humanitarianism as counterinsurgency, as it was in Vietnam and may yet be again in Afghanistan. All are possible; all have been true at times over the past four decades’. While these words come in the context of how the media has portrayed humanitarian interventions to the public at large, they also reflect the fact that in practice, there is no objective definition of humanitarian action; it may be motivated, oriented, practiced, and interpreted in different ways.

Analysis of humanitarianism in practice could emphasize voluntarism and altruism, stress adhesion to classical humanitarian principles — even with internal contradictions —, or assess by outcomes and learned lessons. Different strands of humanitarianism have always existed (Calhoun 2008: 73; Bornstein and Redfield 2010: 5). In the words of Barnett (2011: 10), ‘We live in a world of humanitarianisms, not humanitarianism’. Overall, the approaches all converge on the notion of giving a compassionate response to those suffering in precarious situations (Boltanski 1999: xv; Wilson and Brown 2009: 1–28; Bornstein and Redfield 2010: 6; Donini 2010; Ticktin 2011; Barnett 2011; Slim 2015). Mexico offers a rich landscape for exploring a different type of humanitarianism — one which is neither neutral nor international but remains deeply humanitarian.

Local Ethos and the Changing Nature of Casas de Migrantes

Casas de migrantes emerge in local communities as a response to the presence of migrants along migrant paths, which are largely dictated by the existing road infrastructure and the freight train system. Nevertheless, humanitarian work in Mexico often starts in one way or another long before humanitarian groups become legally constituted and formal NGOs. La 72, a shelter in southern Mexico, started operations back in the 1990s. Las Patronas, a group of women aiding migrants in the state of Veracruz, celebrated their 20th anniversary while I was conducting fieldwork and decided to become a formal NGO just last year. The first shelter in Mexico began operations back in 1987 in Tijuana, a border town with the United States. The shelter's director describes its beginning: 'In 1987, while doing the due diligence, we saw a house and a church that could allow us to work. The local church gave us moral support, but no money to run the place. However, we had the freedom to do the work, to shape it in the best possible way. Later on, we had to become a legal NGO to gather more funds to be able to sustain this work' (SDI Tijuana January 16, 2015). The coordinator of *Centro de Atención al Migrante de Oaxaca* (COMI), the shelter in Oaxaca, explains the origins of the shelter in this way: 'Twelve years, in February, it will be twelve years since we started providing humanitarian assistance. Shelter, food, medical care. Later on, we have been adding more activities as part of our regular operation' (SDI Oaxaca February 2, 2015).

Among interviews conducted with directors and staff of different shelters along the migratory routes, the director of FM4 — a shelter in the city of Guadalajara,

in western Mexico — expresses in the best possible way the humanitarian and local natures of these places:

That is the beauty of these humanitarian spaces. Their histories and origins bring different capacities and perspectives to serve and bring justice to migrants in need. But they emerge from the ground, from the field. Then, they grow and start moving forward with some becoming really professionalized. In Mexico, the phenomenon of humanitarian aid emerges from the local base not like in other contexts where the international agencies arrive to provide aid. (SDI Guadalajara January 6, 2017)

Due to their long-standing work, *casas de migrantes* have become significant references in different towns. Migrants without knowledge of a town could simply ask ‘¿dónde está la casa del migrante?’ (Where is the migrant shelter?) and be directed by the interlocutor to the place (FN September 2014 - January 2016). So, as much as there is discussion of migrants seeking new routes, migrants go around migration checkpoints, often returning to common transit points along the route (FN Bojay, December 10, 2014; CCNIM 2017: 40) and reaching towns where they can access some type of support. As the freight train system has structured some of the migration routes in Mexico, similarly, *casas de migrantes* have also shaped and driven migration journeys, especially because they have emerged close to the train tracks. Migrants with few resources or vulnerable deportees know or quickly learn that shelters exist to support them with an array of services. Hence, they actively seek shelters’ services. In this way, if the train, public transport, or walking have been forms of mobility for poor migrants, shelters have emerged as stepping stones that migrants use to sort out the journey.

As the needs of migrants have grown, so have the services provided by shelters. Serving a highly mobile population, an important trait of *casas de migrantes* has been their ability to shape and reshape their services according to the changing

needs of migrants. Many shelters document the profiles of migrants who use their services, commonly sorting information by country, age, gender. Some shelters will make a note if migrants have been victims of human rights violations. Hence, *casas de migrantes* are attentive to the needs of migrants and often adjust their services accordingly.

Fr. Tomás, the director of La 72, said that migrants arrive at shelters for different reasons: ‘At this shelter arrive those migrants that really need services and help. [...] It could be because they ran out of money or because they were robbed, or because they were victims of a crime or maybe because the smuggler abandoned them and they need some help’ (SDI Tenosique, September 15, 2014). He also explained how the shelters adjust their services to better cater to migrants’ needs: ‘When you work in migrant shelters, you cannot help but notice how the profile of migrants changes. At some point we started to receive women and we had to have a room especially for them. At the beginning, we were able to fit 20 women and children. We also started to receive transgender and LGBTIQ people and we created a safe space for them. In the last 10 years the needs have changed. Now you have more women, you have unaccompanied teenagers, you have the LGBTIQ, we are seeing more families coming through, we also have more people seeking refugee status. All of them with a vast array of needs because of their circumstances’ (SDI Tenosique, September 15, 2014).

Human mobility often brings change and diverse needs arise at any time. Shelters have to be aware of the changing profiles of migrants, and must make adjustments to policies when necessary. These policy adjustments could be subtle, like relaxing the rules to allow for longer stays or permitting an additional phone call

in shelters that offer that service. Other changes are more significant, like creating playgrounds for children when the shelters saw a surge of women traveling with children back in 2014. The biggest and most successful shelters have been able to open projects to receive unaccompanied minors, receive LGBTIQ migrants, serve a growing number of people seeking refugee status by providing alternatives to detention, or developing programs to allow deportees to settle in border towns (FN September 2014 - January 2016). Nevertheless, shelters located at both borders (north and south of Mexico) have to react more quickly and adjust more effectively to serve migrant populations.

The director of the shelter in the city of Matamoros at the border with the United States explained how they had adjusted services during the 28 years the shelter has been in operation. He said, ‘the context and circumstances have changed, migration is not a standard thing. In the 80s we had the *braceros*, then we have Central Americans coming through. That stopped because of the changes in policy and “*Plan Frontera Sur*”. Then, five or six years ago we started to receive massive deportations from the United States’ (SDI Matamoros, January 14, 2016). He said that adjusting to the different needs had required extra effort and thinking beyond the static or fixed nature of a shelter: ‘Now, because less people come to the house, we go out and try to locate them wherever they are. That is the reason we opened the reception centre at the bus station, to serve deportees. We offer basic things, a phone call, food, and provide information. We assess the situation and then if needed we take migrants to the shelter to stay overnight. But, this is like a circle, every time a new reality or need emerges we have to learn and sometimes get training to deal with the new reality properly’ (SDI Matamoros, January 14, 2016).

Shelters at the southern border also deal with changes that challenge them not only to be more flexible and to develop programs that may meet emerging needs, but also to be more attentive to emerging forms of violence. The coordinator of the shelter in Tapachula, close to the border with Guatemala, said, ‘every year we have different situations. This year we have a lot of people fleeing violence, but with them also arrive some that are criminals. Some people arrive at the shelter pretending to be migrants, but in the end, they are just preying on people’. She also said that in the past two years, the shelter has received more people fleeing violence and poverty in their countries: ‘Either they cannot work or they simply cannot live in peace’ (SDI Tapachula, January 14, 2016). Shelters identify different needs in listening to migrants’ stories. For example, they have identified an increasing number of people fleeing due to gang violence. The shelter director in Tapachula said, ‘We received fathers and mothers fleeing with their children because gangs are trying to enlist them and if they do not flee they will be killed. First, we had teenage girls with their mothers. Now, we have mothers with children — boys and girls — fleeing their countries because the gangs have already killed some of their children. Since people started to request asylum, we had to be more flexible with their stays and help them to find another place to stay more long-term’ (SDI Tapachula, January 14, 2016).

The delicate balance between running the day-to-day operations of the shelter and understanding the needs that emerge from that operation triggers the start of new projects. In other words, humanitarian NGOs have to be self-reflexive. During the time I spent collecting data at La 72, a project for unaccompanied minors was taking form. Fray Tomás said that the project emerged because they noticed a rise in the number of unaccompanied teenage migrants at the shelters. Unable to continue the journey because of a lack of resources or contacts, teenage migrants remain at the

shelter for longer periods of time. Furthermore, for different reasons, they may get into trouble with the local population or become recruitment targets of criminal gangs operating in the area. Fray Tomás said:

I think migrants have the desire to get to *el norte* [the United States] to work. I will call that more ‘survival resistance’ because you find very poor people with nothing that still embark on the journey. Thus, it is not surprising that some migrants occasionally steal, or work with smugglers, or take on casual work. They do anything to achieve their goal. But, sometimes you find unaccompanied minors. We identified a teenager, probably 14 years old, who was recruited by a gang operating by the train tracks. They wanted to get information about the number of migrants in the shelter and so on. The teenager used to come to the shelter often and we learned he was conveying information to the gang. Probably he was making 300 pesos (15 USD) for three or four exchanges of information. But this money was enough for him to survive. [...] From the experience with that teenager, we decided to start the project with unaccompanied minors. (SDI Tenosique, September 15, 2014)

The experiences of those operating shelters confirm that migration processes are dynamic. Migrants’ profiles, needs, and circumstances change constantly and humanitarian organizations have to be able to adjust if they want to be effective. While some shelters have grown, developed, and evolved, others have struggled to continue providing services and much-needed safety for migrants. As Slim (2015: 12) explains, ‘humanitarian ecology is a lively and fruitful ecosystem that springs to life whenever crisis hits’; I believe that it is also an ecosystem that must adapt to a constantly-changing environment in order to survive.

Analysis of humanitarian work in Mexico widens the boundaries and the understanding of humanitarianism in at least three ways. First, in Mexico there is no official humanitarian crisis, thus there is no intervention or direct/primary participation of international INGOs (see Bakewell 2002: 105). In the absence of a full intervention by international humanitarian actors, what has emerged is a ‘humanitarianism from below’ that offers a humanitarian response to migrants

transiting through Mexico on their way to the United States, or those who have just been deported from the U.S., regardless of their legal status (see Scott-Smith 2016: 19; Linde 2009: 572–577). In addition, the humanitarianism of the shelters scattered throughout Mexico removes the emphasis on emergency, conflict, and disaster that could be found in the theoretical literature (Barnett 2011; Fearon 2008: 49–72; Calhoun 2008: 73–97). Second, the case of humanitarian organizations along migration routes in Mexico demonstrates how local experiences can overshadow the insistence on the global, transnational, and international actors delivering humanitarian aid. In Mexico, the transnationals (migrants en route to the United States or deportees) are the primary recipients of the aid. Third, Barnett and Stein (2012) have indicated that the secular notion of humanitarianism leaves aside the role of many faith-based organizations. In the case of Mexico, the faith-based nature of many humanitarian actors has allowed this humanitarianism from below to emerge and grow.

The Needs of Strangers

Contemporary humanitarianism highlights people like William Wilberforce (who helped to stop trade slavery in the late 18th century), Florence Nightingale (who introduced female nurses into the military and served as an inspiration for the classical principle of neutrality in humanitarian work), Henry Dunant (founder of the Red Cross), Englantyne Jebb (founder of Save the Children), Dr. Bob Pierce (founder of World Vision International), and Bernard Kouchner (co-founder of *Médecins Sans Frontières* and *Médecins du Monde*). In varied ways and contexts, they helped reshape society's viewpoint to be more inclusive of the helpless and wounded. In addition, they pressured states to extend their obligations to populations in distress,

and provided different components to build the current structure of care for distant strangers. Their contributions show that it is possible to answer suffering with something more than mourning (Barnett 2011: 9).

Still, the Battle of Solferino, which includes the experience of Henry Dunant, remains one of the iconic stories linked to the emergence of humanitarianism. The account of the battle focuses on the experience of Dunant and the compassionate response to the suffering of others. However, we must not forget that he collaborated with others, especially local women, to alleviate the suffering encountered (Dunant 1939: 62–63). Barnett (2011: 1), discussing the history of humanitarianism, wrote of Dunant: ‘appalled by the carnage and the misery of the injured soldiers abandoned on the battlefield, he joined townspeople to offer what relief he could’. Tending to the needs of others is never a one-person endeavor. If the idea of community has any meaning, it includes ‘the mutual obligations and moral responsibilities felt among its members’ (Barnett 2011: 13).

Solidarity and the desire to alleviate suffering are an ethos embedded in civil society Wilson and Brown (2009: 2). This desire drives secular and religious movements and organizations and goes beyond the responsibilities of legal and political institutions. Narratives of suffering ‘constitute a claim to be recognized, to be regarded, to be noticed, to be seen as someone to whom the living have ethical obligations’. ‘Seeing’ takes place in time and is not a matter of imagining a narrative. Seeing interrupts, challenges, and calls the other to action (Laqueur 2009: 39).

The ‘humanitarianism from below’ that serves the needs of migrants, deportees, and refugees is deeply humanitarian because it sees and recognizes the

other who is vulnerable and in distress. Thus, humanitarian actors in Mexico initially make their first concern to aid the other and alleviate their distress. Borrowing from Redfield and Bornstein's (2010: 17) discussion on humanitarianism, humanitarianism from below is several things at once: a feeling, a cluster of moral principles, a basis for ethical claims, and a call for action. Even when contemporary humanitarianism appears to be secular, it evokes religious categories and legacies of the sacred (Redfield and Bornstein 2010: 17). These ideas appeared repeatedly during interviews with shelter's directors. Describing how concerns for migrants' welfare emerged, Norma Romero, the leader of *Las Patronas*, a group of women that has provided humanitarian aid to irregular migrants crossing Mexico for over 20 years, said:

As the freight train was passing, they kept shouting at us from the top of the wagons – 'Give us the bread! Give us the bread! We are hungry!' The clamor was such that we could not do otherwise. We threw them the bread we were carrying. There were many of them. The train passed frequently and we saw those poor people riding the train, men, women, and children. At some point we said, we have to do something. We have to find a way to feed these people. (SDI La Patrona, March 2, 2015)

Shelters often start providing services when the needs of strangers become evident. Sor Nidelvia, a religious sister and director of a shelter at Mexico's border with the United States, related the humble beginnings of the shelters that mainly serve deported Mexicans today. She said that that the shelter started operations about 15 years ago and used to accommodate migrants passing through the city:

Migrants were all over the city seeking for help, begging. People fed them or gave them some clothes. [...] Members of the parish and volunteers got organized to accommodate and feed them. [...] They opened the Church's basement and used the multipurpose rooms as dormitories. They had to improvise a dining area, toilets, and showers to meet the needs of the people. [...] That is the beginning of this shelter. People who, seeing the need of

migrants, got organized to build a space that could provide a more consistent and dignified service. (SDI Reynosa, March 16, 2015)

A similar process happened at the southern border. Fr. Tomás González, director of a shelter in Tenosique, said that migrants from Central America started passing through the town in the late 1990s — the time when the concession of the railroad system passed to foreign companies and the train system changed from transporting passengers to transporting and moving cargo: ‘Slowly, this became a popular mode of transportation for poor migrants’ (SDI Tenosique, September 15, 2014). Nevertheless, at that time, migration authorities also opened an office in Tenosique and conducted raids in collaboration with local police. Tomás, describing abuse by the police, said, ‘they chased migrants all the time, even into the church. One day, authorities were conducting raids; when a migrant entered the church seeking protection; police entered the church and started beating up the migrant who was holding on to the altar. There was a confrontation with police and migration authorities. After that, we started thinking more about the needs of these migrants’ (SDI Tenosique, September 15, 2014).

Barnett and Stein (2012: 12) state that ‘people, organizations, and governments provide assistance every day, and most of the time we consider these kinds of actions as the fulfilment of obligations and do not describe their actions as ‘humanitarian’. [...] It is only when such assistance crosses a boundary that we tend to call it humanitarian’. In Mexico, assistance has not crossed an international boundary; rather, the transnational passes through. Hence, the pleas of migrants lead to actions; the presence of migrants in a particular town leads them to be seen and so be recognized. The beating of a migrant in a church triggers reflection on their needs. What we now call humanitarianism, our ancestors called charity. The idea that it is a

moral obligation of the more fortunate to assist the less fortunate and that those who are in need may legitimately expect help is one that is normative in all the major world religions. The impulse to help may be called altruism, pity, solidarity, or compassion, but it is so deeply rooted in human culture that, whether it is intrinsic or learned, it can rightly be described as one of the basic human emotions (Rieff 2002: 57; Barnett and Gross Stein 2012: 12). The humanitarian model and the way humanitarian aid has been made available to vulnerable migrants makes the Mexican case unique.

Christoplos (2002: 1) argues that the role of local service institutions does not appear in conceptualizations of humanitarianism and complex emergencies. In the places where it does, he says, ‘they are usually presented as either the seed of civil society and future democracy, or as pawns and components of the predatory economic, political and military elites’ (see also Donini 2010: S220-S221). In a way, local humanitarian organizations are seen as being of a lesser degree than international ones, where the expert knowledge of INGOs trumps the value of practical knowledge (Barnett 2012: 202). That is the case with humanitarian actors in Mexico, which are often categorized as ‘community experiences of protection to migrants’ (Castro 2015) or ‘migrant activism’ of civil society actors (Calderón Chelius 2006, 2016). The work of humanitarian actors in Mexico challenges the understanding of humanitarianism not only because of their humanitarian sentiments towards the other, but also because of the context of their work, which is migration rather than an emergency or humanitarian crisis.

While some strands of humanitarianism acknowledge that it is almost impossible for humanitarian NGOs to stay away from politics, they still advocate for humanitarian organizations to adhere as much as possible to the principles of

humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence. The contrasting position holds that it is not desirable to separate humanitarianism and politics. In fact, the work and operations of NGOs cannot be apolitical; their actions have political consequences (Barnett and Weiss 2008: 4). Since humanitarian organizations in Mexico emerge from a bottom-up process, it is difficult to see them operating purely within the classical humanitarian principles. Certainly, the *casas y comedores para migrantes* (shelters and soup kitchens for migrants) are humanitarian and act in solidarity with migrants, but few of them remain neutral and impartial. A later section of this chapter addresses the different types of relationships shelters have that make difficult for them to adhere to the classical principles of humanitarianism.

Thus, what are the *casas de migrantes*? They are local efforts (formal and informal) providing humanitarian aid to migrants in distress. These humanitarian actors in Mexico are a clear example of humanitarianism from below. To understand this kind of humanitarianism, it is necessary to consider the social processes from which it emerges. As I have shown, these shelters respond to their context and adjust to the changing needs of the people they serve. In spite of its limitations, this humanitarianism from below challenges the principles of neutrality and impartiality by showing a spirit of solidarity that moves into advocacy. Often, humanitarian work at the ground level demands that actors take sides — more specifically, the side of the most vulnerable. Some of these shelters become places of confrontation and advocacy, while others become places where alliances with other actors are key. The next section looks at the different levels and patterns of intermediation these places have with other actors, as well as the consequences of those intermediary roles.

5.2 The Emergence and Development of *Casas de Migrantes*

Origins of a Migrant Shelter

Salto de Agua, which is in the state of Chiapas in Southern Mexico, stands as one more town along the migratory routes in Mexico. However, in the past three years, the town emerged as another significant stop for irregular migrants entering Mexico. The town grew in importance mostly because migrants experienced difficulties riding the train. Without this option for transportation, they had no other choice but to walk close to 80 kilometres between Palenque and Salto de Agua, hoping to avoid migration authorities and criminal gangs. In late 2016, the Catholic Bishop of Chiapas announced the construction of a shelter for migrants in Salto de Agua (Gutiérrez 2016). The construction of this shelter was not the result of a sudden decision to aid migrants, but rather part of longer processes that reveal the ways humanitarian aid to migrants has emerged in Mexico.

Early in my fieldwork, migrants mentioned this town, but did not provide much significant detail. They simply mentioned that the train passed through it, and migrants were more concerned with avoiding migration authorities than anything else. However, while analyzing migration trajectories from the beginning of my fieldwork, I noticed a pattern: migrants arrived by foot to the town and often found themselves in need of support. Rafael, a Honduran migrant, said, ‘I was so exhausted that I knocked on the door of a house and plainly asked for some food’ (Rafael, SS Coatzacoalcos 3). Another two interviewees from November 2014 mentioned similar experiences. By March of 2015, several migrants mentioned that the parish priest gave them permission to sleep in the church, but those interviews did not provide more details of their stays (SS Puebla 2; SS San Luis Potosi 6, 10, 12). Patricia from

Honduras mentioned, ‘the priest let us stay for a couple of days; we were sleeping on the floor, but we were safe’ (Patricia, SS Saltillo 1). In interviews conducted by the end of October 2015, migrants began to mention the presence of a nun and a priest providing help with the collaboration of the community. Ruben, a Honduran migrant, said while describing his journey, ‘we arrived on foot, because there is no other way to get there if you want to avoid migration authorities, but now there are a nun and a priest helping in the church. Also, the townspeople come to support us’ (IDI San Luis Potosi, October 13, 2015). In February 2016, the bishop of Chiapas announced plans to build a shelter in Salto de Agua. Later that year, he reported the ongoing construction of a shelter for migrants in Salto de Agua (Gutiérrez 2016).

The genesis of this shelter in southern Mexico is similar to the genesis of many other places that offer humanitarian aid to migrants in Mexico and could be summarized in this way: Communities provide *ad hoc* help to migrants in distress, often in the forms of food and occasional shelter. As the presence or precariousness of migrants increases, a threshold eventually emerges where the community organizes to provide aid. In this way, the provision of aid moves to a more consistent and coordinated effort. Usually, it is at this stage that soup kitchens appear. Often the community uses the infrastructure that is available to them, mostly from churches. At a later stage and as other needs are identified, shelters emerge. While a process of institutionalization becomes evident, it is important to underscore that the beginning of these efforts is often the local community. Furthermore, in most cases, it is the local community that continues providing support to irregular migrants as individuals volunteer at shelters and find material support for migrants (FN September 2014 – January 2016).

The humanitarian model and the way humanitarian aid has been made available to vulnerable migrants, deportees, and asylum seekers makes the Mexican case unique. I argue that the reasons for the emergence of this bottom-up type of aid are not rooted in the presence of international actors — at least initially — and aid agencies, but rather, in cultural and historical experiences that allow the process to start, develop, and remain at the local level. Furthermore, there will be other factors that allow some of these shelters to grow and play significant roles in the migration paths and the political landscape. In practice, shelters become important brokers of aid and support for migrants in migration processes in Mexico.

Historical Development of Casas de Migrantes

The Catholic Church of Mexico has a long history of supporting migrants and refugees through different parish groups or organizations. By 1957, the Catholic Church of Mexico was running programs for labour migrants who were part of the Bracero Program (CEPMH 2003: 1). During the 1980s, projects emerged in southern Mexico to serve refugees from Central America (CEPMH 2003: 2-3). In 1983 the bishop of Tijuana, a city on the border with the United States, asked the Scalabrinians — a Catholic religious order specialized in ministering to migrants — to conduct a feasibility study in Tijuana to consider opening a shelter for migrants (DPMH 2012: 54).

Then, *Casa del Migrante en Tijuana* (Migrant Shelter in Tijuana) opened its doors in 1987 (DPMH 2012: 54). By 2000, several shelters had begun operations along the U.S.-Mexico border and in the southern part of the country. It is difficult to precisely date the moment *casas de migrantes* commenced providing services because

many offered support in informal ways before their official establishment as a formal shelter (DPMH 2012: 52–60; CEPMH 2004).

During the early 2000s, the leaders of the Catholic Church in Mexico pushed for the creation of a national network of *casas de migrantes* called *Dimension Pastoral de la Movilidad Humana* (DPMH or Pastoral Dimension of Human Mobility) (CEPMH 2004: 5). The goal of establishing the network was to articulate and support the efforts of shelters already serving migrant populations, establish contacts with other NGOs working with migrants, and foster relationships with governmental agencies regarding migration (CEPMH 2004: 5-6). The current structures of the network were consolidated in 2006 (DPMH 2012: 43) and still operate to this day.

The number of shelters actively serving migrants or deportees grew from one single shelter in 1987 to 32 until 2005. Map 5 shows the location of these shelters (DPMH 2012: 55). At that time, all of them were sponsored and managed by faith-based organizations, mostly the Catholic Church.



Map 5. Casas de Migrantes in Mexico Until 2005
Source: Adaptation from DPMH (2012)

Until 2005, most of the shelter locations were concentrated along the border between Mexico and the United States. Anecdotal evidence suggests that most shelters focused their work on tending to Mexican migrants attempting to cross the border. However, the presence of shelters in the southern part of Mexico indicates that some migration patterns from Central America were already present (DPMH 2012). Between 2006 and 2009, 19 shelters joined the DPMH, bringing the total to 51 organizations providing humanitarian aid and legal counsel to migrants (DPMH 2012: 55-56). Map 6 illustrates the geographical distribution of these shelters, which has now shifted towards the southern border of Mexico and includes some shelters in central Mexico and others in the Pacific region. By that time, shelters were clearly providing humanitarian assistance to transit migrants from Central American countries (DPMH 2012).



Map 6. Casas de Migrantes in Mexico Until 2009
Source: Adaptation from DPMH (2012)

In June 2009, the Mexican National Commission for Human Rights (CNDH) published the *Informe Especial Sobre Los Casos de Secuestro Contra Migrantes* (Special Report on the Kidnapping of Migrants), to document the growing trend of kidnapping and abuse perpetrated against migrants (CNDH 2009: 5–6). In the report, violence appeared more clearly as another dynamic that influenced the migration process: ‘Because of their undocumented status, migrants traveling through Mexico have long been subject to abuse by criminal groups [...] in recent years, the expansion of organized criminal groups in Mexico has added one additional layer of danger to the trip’ (Meyer and Brewer 2010: 2). In spite of the report from the CNDH, it was not until August 25, 2010, when the massacre of 72 migrants was discovered, that the issue was brought to international attention.

These events fostered the emergence of more shelters along migratory routes. By the end of 2012 the DPMH included 50 shelters, 10 soup kitchens, and three attention centres to migrants, as well as six Human Rights Centres advocating for migrants' rights (DPMH 2012: 55-56). Map 7 shows the distribution of shelters at that point. This distribution is shaped by the changes in migratory migration patterns that in turn respond to the changing patterns of control and violence existing through Mexico (DPMH 2012: 55-56).



Map 7. *Casas de Migrantes* and Other Organizations Aiding Migrants in Mexico Until 2012
Source: Adaptation from DPMH (2012)

Currently, there are 74 humanitarian actors — both faith-based and non-confessional — that provide direct service to migrants, deportees, and asylum seekers. Additionally, there are 5 human rights centres and at least six different networks pushing advocacy efforts. Map 2 depicts the distribution of *casas de migrantes* in Mexico until 2017.

5.3 Fertile Ground: The Ongoing Work of *Casas de Migrantes* in Mexico

The Mexican case of humanitarian aid to migrants in distress possesses several characteristics that make it unique as an expression of local humanitarianism. First, there is a political resistance to describe irregular migration patterns in Mexico as a ‘humanitarian crisis’ — the Mexican government has taken many steps to emphasize humanitarian language even when practice indicates otherwise. As a consequence, the presence of international aid agencies in Mexico is scarce and the funding for humanitarian efforts limited. In turn, this has fostered the emergence of local responses to migrants in distress. Second, the, mostly Catholic, faith-based nature of these organizations and the long history of social movements in Mexico have allowed humanitarian work to flourish and remain in different places and with different capacities. I argue that the faith-based nature and the history of social movements are key elements in the ways shelters for migrants operate in Mexico.

A History of Social Commitment

In his work *Democracy in Latin America*, Carlos A. Forment (2013) argues that during the 19th century, socio-moral practices played a key role in the emergence of civic democracy. He argues that citizens in Mexico:

- Were capable of creating new and diverse type of associations in the public arena.
- Developed complex relationships, extensive, and durable social networks based on a variety of ties (strong/weak; direct/indirect; local/regional/national).
- Protected institutional autonomy from the external threats that came from groups at the top either the state, the Church leaders, markets, or family clans.
- Used civic terminology in everyday life to make sense of each other.

(Forment 2013: 1:xxi)

These characteristics suggest that Mexicans have been capable of creating social movements that emerge from the ground, navigating the socio-political landscape, and tending to social and moral issues. Hence, humanitarian actors in Mexico are not only faith-based in nature, but are also organizations that are part of civil society and play significant roles in the socio-political landscape at local, regional, and national levels. Thus, by viewing these humanitarian actors as civil actors, these characteristics proposed by Forment seamlessly describe the way humanitarian actors have emerged and operated along the migratory routes in Mexico.

In other words, in Latin America, a sense of democracy emerged in civic, economic, and political associations; these associations developed strong ties among members at all levels. These groups, and their formal and informal networks, allowed members to move between the private and the public with ease and to navigate authoritarian governments. Forment (2013: xvi) writes that ‘associative life was the most effective safeguard available to modern democracy against the threat of totalitarianism’. In rural and some urban areas, resistance in daily life became a key component of the independence movement. Later on, civic and economic associations played important roles in the development of the country between 1840 and 1846. Community development groups emerged and formed partnerships with the local government to build an infrastructure and offer welfare and medical relief to the poor and the sick (Forment 2013: 99-106). The 20th century saw similar experiences during the Revolution and more recently with experiences of social movements in the late 60s, the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN) movement in 1994, and the recent social movements focused on fighting for justice, as in the case of the kidnapping of 43 trainee teachers in Guerrero and the attention paid to the increased violence in the country.

Hence, in Latin America and particularly in Mexico, local experiences and associations have played important roles in organizing people, developing ad hoc economic initiatives, fighting for justice, and providing relief and support to groups in distress. Many shelters providing aid to migrants emerged and are sustained by these forms of associations. But these shelters, rather than being just an alternative form of humanitarianism emerging out of the mobilization of empathy, are rooted in the larger tradition of social resistance and support for the vulnerable. These shelters and organizations advocating for migrants became an expression of civic engagement and public life.

The other key characteristic that greatly influences the role of many shelters and the way humanitarian aid is delivered to migrants is their faith-based component — mainly the role of the Catholic Church. Just as civic associations are expressions of local communities, it is very important to understand that I see the role of faith-based organizations aiding migrants as a bottom-up process that is often rooted in the local communities. While bishops and leaders of religious congregations may have a say in some cases, the shelters keep their spiritual ethos thanks to the communities of faith that sustain many of these places.

Historically, the Catholic Church has stepped up when ‘neither the state nor the local townships had the financial or administrative capacity to care for the destitute, which is why the Catholic Church, sometimes alone and sometimes in partnership with them, continued to play a significant role in [the Public Service] field’ (Forment 2013: 119). Many of these shelters play a dual role: they are simultaneously true local associations supporting vulnerable populations and communities deeply rooted in their faith. While in the 19th century this was understood

as ‘Civic Catholicism’ (Forment 2013: xii), I argue that nowadays, while not all the shelters have Catholic inspiration or are even faith-based, in many cases, their double identities as civil organizations and faith-based groups or networks with religious groups allows them to be more successful not only in their daily work of providing humanitarian aid, but also, in some cases, to be able to lobby with the government for the rights of irregular migrants and deported Mexicans.

Faith Matters

Contemporary notions of humanitarianism are considered secular and separate from faith or religion. However, it is not possible to study humanitarianism without recognizing the role religion and faith have had in the delivery of aid to the poor and vulnerable (Barnett 2011: 17–18). A recent trend in world history is that people have been joining in large numbers on expressly secular grounds to alleviate the suffering of others and to coordinate relief by establishing local, state, and transnational institutions. However, just because there has been a more secularized conceptualization of humanitarianism does not mean that religion or faith have gone away (Wilson and Brown 2009: 1). In the analysis of humanitarianism, a rigorous distinction between the secular and religious organizations often breaks down empirically (Barnett and Gross Stein 2012: 4–5).

Most of the relief and assistance work provided by faith-based organizations is not officially recorded anywhere. Local churches and mosques provide important tangible support to people in need in their communities. Soup kitchens organized by local religious groups or volunteers helping disaster victims are not recorded anywhere in the UN’s statistics on humanitarian contributions (Ferris 2011: 610;

Ager et al 2015: 208; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Ager 2013: 9). The scarce literature that analyses the role of the shelters in Mexico leaves the faith dimension of these places or the ways in which their faith-based nature may support their emergence and work unexplored.

While acknowledging that the Catholic Church and other denominations have fostered the emergence of many shelters along migration paths in Mexico, some accounts of the role of humanitarian actors in Mexico move quickly to talk about the actors in secular terms, referring to them as the ‘civil society’, without analysing whether or not their faith-based ethos has anything to do with their work (Basok et al 2015; Calderon Chelius 2016). However, Casillas (2011b) offers a short analysis of the faith dimension of shelters operating in Mexico and explains the role it plays in the migration process. To better understand the role of humanitarian organizations in Mexico and why they have been somewhat successful in their work, it is necessary to consider the faith-based component. To this end, an understanding of faith-based community or organization must be established.

Ferris (2011: 607) indicated the difficulties that exist in the field to offer a definition that could be accurate and can cut across multiple faith traditions. To add further complication, there are different levels of analysis that can guide the understanding of faith-based organizations. These can be classified or understood ‘according to their implicit or explicit connections to faith based on their organizational, administrative, environmental, financial funding, and programmatic characteristics’ (Scott 2003: 3). For the purpose of this work, I follow the definition of Clarke and Jennings’ (2008: 6) because it is broad enough to apply to different settings and geographic contexts. Therefore, a faith-based organization is: ‘any

organization that derives inspiration and guidance for its activities from the teachings and principles of the faith or from a particular interpretation or school of thought within that faith' (2008: 6). In addition, I also consider what Scott (2003: 1-2) writes regarding faith-based communities (FBOs):

At a minimum, FBOs must be connected with an organized faith community. These connections occur when an FBO is based on a particular religious ideology and draws staff, volunteers, or leadership from a particular religious group. Other characteristics that qualify an organization as 'faith-based' are religiously oriented mission statements, the receipt of substantial support from a religious organization, or the initiation by a religious institution.

Ferris (2011: 607) stated that there could be 'major differences between organizations in terms of their relationship with established religious structures, the degree to which considerations of faith are reflected in their work, the scale of their operations, their ways of working, and their understandings of the political and social context in which they operate'. My research confirmed this idea since even within Mexico, the ways these faith-based humanitarian actors operate could vary significantly. While some figures and organizations like Father Alejandro Solalinde, Las Patronas, Father Pedro Pantoja, Bishop Raúl Vera, OP, or Fray Tomás González, OFM have been significant in defending migrants' human rights and dominate the spotlight in the Mexican media regarding migration, I emphasize the role that local faith communities have in the origins, operation, and development of shelters and soup kitchens serving migrants across Mexico. During my research, I identified some factors or characteristics that allowed faith-based humanitarian organizations in Mexico to emerge and operate somewhat effectively resources, power of convocation, trust, and ability to mediate with other instances (see Ager et al 2014). The ways these traits operate in practice show a significant combination of institutional and communal dimensions in faith-based organizations

Resources. Faith-based communities may have some material assets available that can support or mitigate precarious situations for people in general or in emergency situations. Often, meeting rooms, bathrooms, buildings and other facilities exist in churches, mosques, and other places of worship. Narratives about the beginning of humanitarian spaces in Mexico repeatedly echo this idea:

Back in 1996 migrants did not come to the church or the town centre. They would remain next to the train tracks. Slowly, they started to make their way downtown and the parish started offering services. They used multi-purposed rooms as dormitories, they built some bathrooms on the ground floor, and the community organized itself to offer food. In the cases when a woman with children may appear a member of the parish will offer her and the children hospitality. (SDI Tenosique, September 15, 2014)

This comment from a shelter director illustrates how infrastructure (resources) becomes available, transformed, and adapted to cover the needs of migrants. Furthermore, the role of local communities in sustaining the work of shelters is explained in this way:

The local bishop (an ecclesiastical authority) offered us a small house to run the shelter. In 2009, they tried to open the shelter but had no success, even when the need was there. When we arrived, we did not have expertise or money, only the desire to help migrants and this little house. We started working, selling things and taking on donations. We tried to keep the shelter clean and with a sense of home. People from the local parishes (communities) helped a lot and slowly we put together the shelter. (SDI Bojay, December 9, 2014)

Shelters often start in multipurpose rooms or the small and seldom-used facilities churches may have. The above narratives suggest that while the faith community quickly responds to immediate needs like food or clothes, as other needs arise — like shelter or bathroom facilities —, occasionally people will offer their own living spaces. However, it is the more institutional church that makes resources available for shelters to operate on a more consistent basis.

Power of convocation. Faith communities are able to gather resources from larger pools of people and occasionally from external donors, especially since feeding hundreds of people on a regular basis presents a challenge. During fieldwork, I documented the reasons why reaching out to the community was important for gathering the basic means of food, clothes, and even volunteers for different projects. At the shelter in Tenosique, I accompanied volunteers as they collected remnants of food donated by grocery stores (FN Tenosique September 2016). At the shelter in Saltillo, various groups from the Catholic community came every night to offer dinner to migrants (FN Saltillo March 10, 2015); a similar operation was in place in Coatzacoalcos (FN Coatzacoalcos November 14 2014). Gathering goods that fulfill basic human needs is only one side of the power of convocation.

Occasionally, shelters use the church's structure to extend their reach and help people in distress. In Tenosique, the main church is in the centre of the town; however, there are several other small churches in the surrounding communities that are attached to or have a relationship with the main church. While the shelter in Tenosique now has its own facilities to receive migrants, it also offers training on human rights and issues surrounding migration to the communities that belonged to these satellite churches. In this way, migrants who have to walk the 58 kilometres from the border between Mexico and Guatemala to the town of Tenosique have a network of people who look out for them and will be sensible enough about their needs (FN Tenosique January 2016). This is a way to educate people in the communities about issues surrounding migration, as well as a way to gather the community and extend the reach of care a shelter can provide.

Trust. Trust may be understood as the firm belief in the reliability of someone or something. Migrants on the move or returning to the country regularly seek or accept support from humanitarian organizations based on the belief that people belong to the church and thus, migrants feel that they can confide in those people. Often migrants moving through Mexico find themselves in vulnerable positions and seek help at churches because they feel that they will receive support. For example, Uriel, a 29-year-old migrant from Honduras who walked along the train tracks for several hours until nightfall, decided to look for shelter and look for a church. He said: ‘We looked for a church because we knew they would be the only ones to give us food and shelter’. Migrants often trust the shelters because they belonged to faith communities back home and trusted that a faith community would offer hospitality. Higinio, a 22 year old Mexican migrant traveling for the first time, said, ‘I came to this shelter because I trust the people here. I know several priests and nuns and people who serve God and personally, I trust them. If the people helping in shelters are people of God, you can trust them’. These testimonies confirm what other studies have shown — that religious organizations are more accountable, often because they are embedded in the local community (Barnett and Stein 2012: 21). Additionally, faith-based organizations are present in areas that are hard to access and create links to small enclaves of priests and nuns whose legitimacy is based on decades of community service (Hopgood and Vinjamuri 2012: 43).

Mediation. Since many shelters in Mexico are locally run, their presence and work allow them to serve as interlocutors — with both good and bad results — with other local groups. Sometimes, shelters serve as mediators between migrants and the government either to gain access to some resources — especially medical resources — or as legal representatives and advocates (FN September 2014 - January 2016). At

other times, they mediate with the community itself. Just as the community gathers to provide support and help for migrants, the other side of that experience is the community that abuses and takes advantage of the migrants because it perceives migrants as a threat and blames them for social problems, or shows resentment because migrants may receive help while the poor in the community are unable to access some services. Furthermore, since shelters in Mexico have been working for a long time, NGOs like the Red Cross, MSF, UNHCR, IOM, UN, or Asylum Access look to partner with shelters to provide ad hoc services (FN September 2014 - January 2016). A deeper analysis of the brokerage role of shelters in Mexico will be offered in Chapter 8.

Similar to the ways shelters' services affect the migration process, the faith-based nature of many allows *casas de migrantes* to emerge, sustain their work, and function at a basic level. Aside from the fact that support and aid are free of charge, power of convocation, trust, and mediation are key traits that impact migration. Furthermore, the mediation role of these humanitarian organizations needs to be underscored. Thanks to shelters' abilities to mediate, migrants can access resources that otherwise may be out of reach — like legal representation or maintaining conviviality with a community that may see migrants' presence as a threat. As Ferris (2011), Ager et al (2015), and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Ager (2013) have indicated, some of these traits are not recorded or considered as humanitarian contributions. Nevertheless, it is these traits that make *casas de migrantes* a key actor in the humanitarian landscape in Mexico.

5.4 Internal Dynamics of *Casas de Migrantes* in Mexico

Everyday Life

Casas de migrantes have differing internal rules, policies, and services that structure the migration process. Aside from food, shelter, and first aid, other services — such as internet access, phone calls, or reception of cash transfers — are pull factors that migrants consider when interacting with *casas de migrantes*, which evokes considerations of structure-agency (see Emirbayer and Mische 1998). However, I follow the suggestions from Vogt (2012) and Brigden (2013) to consider the interaction between migrants and shelters within the larger migration process in Mexico.

One of the most significant rules at the shelters are those that allow migrants to go out of or remain in the shelter during their stays. These rules create what I call ‘open’ and ‘closed’ shelters. Open shelters are those that allow migrants to go out during the day. While they still have a curfew, migrants can go in and out of shelters as needed. Closed shelters, by contrast, do not allow migrants to go out at all. Once a migrant arrives, they cannot go out of the shelter until the moment they decide to continue their journeys. Representing a sort of middle ground, there are some shelters that cease operations at some point during the morning and resume activities in the afternoon. In these cases, migrants remain outside of the shelter during the day and can return in the evening (FN September 2014 - January 2016).

Shelters insist on treating migrants as people, not as criminals (FN Tenosique September 14, 2014). The benefits of an open door policy are that some migrants can rest at the shelter if needed, while others can go out to town either trying to find jobs or to *charolear* (panhandle) and gather some money to continue their journeys. The

director of one of the shelters with an open door policy, stated that they do not want to create a prison-like environment. By contrast, when questioned about their closed door policies, shelters directors often point out safety as the main reason for not allowing migrants to go out because the dangers that surround *casas de migrantes* are real. Additionally, keeping migrants enclosed avoids creating trouble in the local communities (FN September 2014 - January 2016; FN January 2017). However, making migrants spend the day outside the shelters fosters mobility and pushes them to resume their journeys as soon as possible. On the one hand, because they could be apprehended by migration authorities or detained by police, migrants make the decision to move quickly from particular towns or to resume their journeys more rapidly if they do not have the option of remaining at the shelter. In the cases of shelters at the border with the U.S., the policy forces deported Mexicans to seek jobs that could allow them to remain in the city or to also make the decision to move quickly from that town or city at the border (FN January 2016).

Shelters regularly post their policies in a visible place. Policies commonly cover topics like permitted length of stay, services provided, and basic rules that contribute to a good internal environment (no drugs, no alcohol, no fights). Migrants must agree to these rules if they want to receive services. In cases where migrants break any of these rules, they may be asked to leave the shelters or may be permanently banned from that shelter or others along the way. During my fieldwork, I witnessed some of these cases, including an issue regarding the use and selling of drugs inside the shelter (FN September 2014 - January 2016).

Financing

One of the biggest challenges shelters face deals with financing their operations. Casillas (2011b: 528) states that ‘No NGO serving migrants is self-sufficient and certainly none of them generates profit or any economic resource’. This means that they have to find ways to support themselves and their operations. Drawing from interviews and observations, I consider that the main sources for a shelter’s operation seem to be: social support from local communities (both in goods or money), private donations, and grants from national and international organizations. Those shelters led by members of the clergy or religious orders also contribute with staff members who do not require a salary (FN September 2014- January 2016).

I believe that migration literature — especially that which covers migration processes in Mexico — does not give enough credit to the role of faith-based communities and the ways they have been able to sustain humanitarian work for migrants. Private donations often help to offset the salaries of shelters’ small staffs, but most shelters rely on volunteers to provide services. Finally, shelters have to seek and apply for grants from national and international organizations; in searching for this funding, several results emerge. One is the appearance of specific projects at the shelters, which in turn contributes to the development of services. Second, looking for grants and meeting the requirements of agencies (creating proposals, managing a budget, and reporting) requires certain levels of professionalization and capacity that have been developed at the shelters. Finally, shelters create different alliances and partnerships with other actors (both international NGOs and governmental agencies) that allow them to grow and continue providing services (FN September 2014 - January 2016).

Services

Humanitarian actors in Mexico have grown both in numbers and in the variety of services provided to migrants. Initially, most shelters, soup kitchens, and attention centres offered basic humanitarian aid consisting of either shelter, food, and first aid, or some combination of these. As the needs of migrants and the context changed, the services provided evolved and educational pieces were added. In collaboration with other organizations, instruction regarding health education (mainly, AIDS prevention), human rights awareness, and information on the hazards and dangerous areas along the way are the most common educational talks migrants hear (DPMH 2012).

Rincón Gabourel (2018: 196–199) offers a useful classification of the types of services offered by shelters, which I have adapted based on my observations on the field. Services may be considered of a basic order when a *casa de migrante* offers food, shelter, clothing, cleaning facilities (showers), communication services (phone calls or internet), and information regarding human rights, asylum, and tips for the journey, as well as spiritual support (since many of the shelters are faith-based). Services are of a secondary order when the shelter offers medical services, juridical assistance, reception of cash transfers, and connections with governmental authorities to facilitate returns to the place of origin. Finally, services of the third order may include formal workshops on different topics (human rights and migration, access to the refugee's condition), and legal representation to file claims for human rights violations and crimes perpetrated by governmental authorities, as well as accompaniment for those seeking asylum. Advocacy efforts and collaboration for migrants' human rights are also part of this level of services. In practice, shelters function as brokers of aid and this differentiation of services may not be as clear, since

shelters may offer all, some, or a variety of combinations of services depending on diverse factors like locality, leadership, alliances, and resources available.

My observations in the field contribute to the argument that information about migratory routes and safety, communication, reception of cash transfers, and legal assistance for migrants and asylum seekers are some services of particular significance for migrants and for the dynamics along migratory routes.

Information. Migrants benefit from receiving information as they try to make decisions moving forward, so shelters have put special emphasis on making useful tips and strategies available to migrants. The information provided ranges from basic geographical orientation to pocket maps that include the main train routes and estimated times of transportation, contact numbers for the Human Rights agencies in Mexico (CNDH), and the contact details of various consulates in Mexico — mainly those of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Several versions of these maps have been created through the years, but they have always been adapted to include and reflect the reality of the time they were produced. Many of these maps have been produced in collaboration with the United Nations, the Red Cross, IOM, MSF, Jesuit Service to Migrants, and other NGOs. Most shelters may also post a map in their facilities that indicates the different routes and location of shelters throughout the country.

Communication. Some shelters may have programs that allow migrants to make phone calls to their places of origin. Occasionally, shelters may have computers and internet services that migrants use to communicate — often through Facebook (FN San Luis Potosi, October 13, 2015). This service proves to be crucial for migrants because it allows migrants to stay in touch with family or members of their networks

as they make decisions to move forward, stay put, or even return to their home countries.

Reception of Cash Transfers. In some places, money transfer services have been established. Two considerations arise with this service: First, migrants cannot receive cash transfers unless they hold valid passports that they can show to Western Union or similar companies. During my fieldwork, I found only one migrant who was carrying a passport; this suggests that many migrants do not carry official documents, which makes it difficult for them to receive the cash transfer directly. Second, these services are free of charge at the shelter (often volunteers rotate to receive the cash transfers). This practice allows migrants to avoid paying other intermediaries to cash the transfers for them, and reflects the trust migrants have in shelters, since the money order needs to be sent in another person's name (FN September 2014 – January 2016).

Legal Assistance. As violence has increased and migrants' profiles have changed, the provision of legal assistance in some shelters has become critical. Shelters may file claims for violations of human rights or crimes committed by governmental authorities. In some cases, these crimes are typified as 'grave' crimes, which gives migrants the possibility of receiving regularizations for humanitarian reasons. Neither the *Ley de Migracion* or its regulations provide a definition of a 'grave crime', making it difficult for authorities to apply the law consistently (FN Saltillo March 8, 2015). As migrants' profiles continue to change, a growing number of asylum seekers have arrived at the shelters. Shelters in turn have partnered with other NGOs or have found volunteers with legal backgrounds who can accompany asylum seekers during the process of filing for the refugee condition. Because migrants have to wait long periods of time (up to 45 working days), some

shelters have become de facto refugee camps (FN Tenosique, January 3, 2015; FN Guadalajara January 7 2017).

Services offered by shelters shape the migration process because they permit migrants to elongate their journeys or become stagnant when they are waiting to establish communication with a contact at the intended destination. Also, migrants may consider different routes when hearing of particular dangers along common migration routes. Additionally, due to the legal assistance, migrants may change migratory status while at the shelters, sometimes because they recognize they have a rightful claim to refugee protection and apply for it. At other times, migrants feel that they are granted a stay for humanitarian reasons, if they were victims of violent crimes.

Casas de migrantes have faced challenges as they navigate changing contexts, but have also evolved and adjusted their services to better fit the changing profiles of migrants. They often adjust their regulations and facilities to ensure the security and fair treatment of diverse populations (DPMH 2012: 34). These specializations are signs of the growing complexities in the migration processes in Mexico, as well as the proliferation of places offering aid of the first and second orders that allow emerging humanitarian actors to fill particular gaps in within this informal welfare system.

5.5 Contestation, Alliance, and Institutionalization: The Relationship with the Mexican Government

Humanitarian organizations take on different brokerage roles depending on the needs they try to fill while aiding migrants in vulnerable situations. Based on my observations in the field, it could be argued that shelters take on particular styles in

the ways they operate. These styles are highly influenced by the contexts and regions in which shelters provide services and the ways in which they broker with different actors. Historically, southern Mexico has been more violent and social movements have emerged there. The centre of Mexico has tended to be more conservative and centralized, and the northern border of Mexico has always been influenced by the proximity to the United States. Martin (2013: 97) states that any analyses of contention or other relational expressions need to examine the role space — localized, global or networked — has in the expressions of social groups. Thus, by looking at the way shelters operate and relate to other actors, these humanitarian spaces could be seen as places of contestation, alliances, and institutionalization.

Contestation

La 72 is a well-known shelter in southern Mexico. The shelter itself has given a number of artists the opportunity to paint different works with human rights and justice motifs. One can find quotes from Che Guevara, Mario Benedetti, and Monseñor Romero, as well as references to migration and social justice. One of the latest pieces of art reads: ‘Trump, you will ignite the fire of resistance amongst the people’. The profile of the shelter has grown enormously in past years, mainly because Fray Tomás González, OFM, the shelter director, has been a key figure in Mexico’s migration advocacy landscape. In 2014, the shelter promoted the *Viacrucis Migrante* (a mix of religious practice and protest). Fray Tomás described the experience by saying:

The first time we did it [the *Viacrucis Migrante*] we just wanted to ride the freight train to Palenque. There were like 200 people between migrants and volunteers. Once we were on top of the freight train the rail company decided not to depart. So, we decided to walk to Palenque. It was a way to emulate

Jesus' journey to the cross. The journey of these migrants is a Calvary. So, we arrived to Emiliano Zapata and from there we walked to Palenque but more people joined us. From there you know, we went to Villahermosa and then they were able to get us transportation to reach Mexico City. By the time we reached Mexico City there were close to 1,000 migrants taking part in the caravan. The support we had from shelters and civil organizations was unbelievable. But above all, migrants felt empowered and their movement was a way to assume their fight for justice. This journey is an act of civil disobedience. (SDI Tenosique, September 15, 2014)

Participants and organizers from the *Viacrucis Migrante* met with government officials in Mexico City. Their original intention was to meet with President Enrique Peña Nieto to request free transit through Mexico so they could avoid violence from organized crime and migration and police officers. While they could not meet the President, they were able to meet senators and members of Congress to discuss the experience of being an irregular migrant. They also requested changes to the migration laws and the enforcement code (Petrich 25 April 2014). In the end, migrants were granted special visas to transit through Mexico. Though they encountered difficulties, they reached the border with the United States. The *Viacrucis Migrante* returned to the city of Saltillo due to threats by criminal groups along the northern border (SDI Matamoros, January 14, 2016). The moment when the *Viacrucis Migrante* dissolved or how many migrants attempted to reach the United States are unclear.

When it began in 2014, the *Viacrucis Migrante* caught the Mexican government off guard. Shelters were unaware that the government would have a different attitude the following year (FN September 2014 – January 2016). In 2015, the *Viacrucis Migrante* took a different approach and each shelter organized particular activities. La 72 organized a hunger strike and protest outside the detention centre in Tenosique. The strike concluded with the celebration of Mass during Easter (FN

Tenosique, April 3, 2015). The shelter in Chahuities, Oaxaca promoted a *Viacrucis Migrante* through the Pacific Route. I met people from this shelter at the beginning of the event in the town of Tapachula, Chiapas, where I was collecting data at another shelter (FN Tapachula, March 27, 2015). The Mexican government reacted differently this time and tried to block the caravan in the town of Ixtepec. Police and federal authorities surrounded the shelter and threatened the migrants staying there with deportation (FN Tenosique, April 3). Amid tensions and with the support of Father Alejandro Solalinde, the *Viacrucis Migrante 2015* continued their trajectory. A smaller group reached Mexico City, where they decided to finish the caravan (FN Tenosique, April 27 2015; Adler April 22 2015).

Due to previous experiences and the pressures from the Mexican government, in 2016 shelters organized more local activities. Still, while these later efforts were of a smaller scale than the first *Viacrucis Migrante*, they reveal the ethos of these humanitarian organizations. ‘We want to empower migrants so they can be participants in the change we want to create’, said Fray Tomás (SDI Tenosique, September 15, 2014).

La 72 is very active in documenting abuse and human rights violations perpetrated by migration authorities, federal, state, and local police. Lately, the shelter has become very active in accompanying asylum seekers through the legal process. As a result, it can be said that the shelter exercises representative and liaison types of brokerage. However, taking a representative role and pushing advocacy efforts creates enormous tensions between local authorities and the shelter. Immigration officers have filed for lawsuits against different staff members of the shelters, including Fray Tomás. The shelter has received threats from criminal groups as an organization, as

well as individually. Tensions reached a point where Fray Tomás had to take part in a safety procedure offered by the National Human Rights Commission. This procedure provided bodyguards for Fray Tomás and an alarm system to contact federal and local police in case of an incident. These security bodies often remain outside of the shelter 24/7. Thus, the procedure provides even a minimum level of protection for Fray Tomás and serves as another layer of security for the shelter and for the migrants (FN Tenosique, January 3, 2015).

The *Viacrucis Migrante* is an act of contestation and part of the growing number of immigrant protests such as the migrant workers' rallies in the U.S. during 2006, the No Borders camp in Calais, the protests in immigration detention centres in the United Kingdom, and the protest marches by Tamil migrants in Toronto, to name a few (Tyler and Marciniak 2013; McNevin 2006; De Genova and Borcila 2011) and could be framed within the sociological debates about the nature of camps, the role of camp-like institutions, and the agency of those who are part of them (Sigona 2015). In this case, the *Viacrucis Migrante* is mediated and led by intermediate actors (*casas de migrantes*) and occurs in a country of transit, combining both the agency of irregular migrants and the advocacy efforts of citizens running humanitarian organizations in Mexico. At the same time, it turns a religious practice into an expression of migrant resistance.

Without a doubt, this practice emerges as a consequence of the intensification of border security, which is highly influenced by pressures from the United States on the Mexican government to manage migration at the southern Mexican border. The slogan during the *Viacrucis Migrante* in 2015 was '*Tránsito Digno*' (Transit with Dignity), which reflects the tension between irregular migration and a humanitarian

government (FN Tenosique April 8, 2015). Furthermore, the *Viacrucis Migrante* shows how humanitarian protection becomes mobile and portable, since humanitarian actors promoted the activity and travelled with irregular migrants throughout the country. The long-term effects the practice has had on the migration process are unclear, but certainly, humanitarian actors keep pushing the boundaries of their advocacy for irregular migrants. Paradoxically, there has not been a similar effort to advocate for deportees returning to Mexico.

Alliance

Central Mexico is a different story from southern Mexico. Located in larger cities and more populated areas, *casas de migrantes* have to create alliances with the cities or local towns where they operate. The shelters in San Luis Potosi and Guadalajara are good examples of humanitarian organizations that broker with the local government and officials to provide services to migrants.

The shelter in San Luis Potosi operated out of a parish in the outskirts of the city for several years; citing a health hazard to the migrant population and the community, the city council ordered the shelter to cease operations at some point, which they did. As a result, migrants who before remained close to the place or in the neighborhood were dispersed throughout the city. The city council asked the local Catholic bishop to reopen the shelter and offered to provide facilities and other services. The shelter reopened a couple of weeks later, and since then has received support from the city council and state government to provide assistance to migrants. It is one of the few *casas de migrantes* that is operated by the local chapter of *Caritas* (one of the Catholic Church's largest assistance institutions) (SDI San Luis Potosi, December 29, 2014). Hence, the local government supports the shelter, ensuring that

there is no crime in the surrounding areas, and a policeman comes through the shelter twice a day to verify that there are no issues. Cameras also record foot traffic and serve as a form of security. Some of these cameras are visible to the police, and the shelter has a direct line to them in case of an emergency. *Caritas* sponsorship allows the shelter to focus more on the services they provide and cultivating relationships with other actors than struggling to find where the next stock of food will come from (FN San Luis Potosi, October 20, 2015).

There is no question that the shelter in San Luis Potosi has strong ties to the government. The state governor has visited each shelter, along with high-ranking officials from the state security and police sectors, and the director of this *casa del migrante* won the state human rights award for his work. Hence, the alliance with the government and the reputation the shelter gained allows them to access good services in cases of emergencies. During my time at the shelter in San Luis, a couple of migrants were raped before reaching the shelter. The State Institute for Women received and followed up with the cases, which included physical and psychological assessment as well as legal assistance. A social worker was assigned to each case and the service was impeccable. In one case, both the victim and her partner were granted regularization of legal status for humanitarian reasons (FN Reynosa, December 5, 2015).

The caveat in the operation of the shelter in San Luis Potosi is that this particular shelter is closed, meaning that migrants cannot freely go in and out. Thus, while the alliance with the government and the sponsorship of *Caritas* help to provide better services, the shelter still ends up being a space of containment.

However, sometimes these alliances are necessary in order to operate. The FM4 shelter in Guadalajara is one of the few that does not have a faith-based connection. The director of FM4 explained his mode of operations: ‘We do not have the safety nets of a religious congregation or a parish; I cannot call the superior and say we do not have food to give to the people. Thus, I need to make alliances with the government. In fact, part of our work is to push the government to do their job and provide what is needed for the migrants in vulnerable situations’ (SDI Guadalajara, January 6, 2017).

FM4 is an interesting case because it closed due to the violence in the area. Similar to the shelter in San Luis Potosi, the city council, upon realizing that migrants had dispersed throughout the city, agreed to reopen the shelter. Through negotiations between FM4 and the city council, a location was selected and the organization sought the funds and grants to reopen the shelter in a former warehouse. This is an NGO that has no alliances to the Church and takes no break in making the government accountable for tending to the needs of migrants and asylum seekers (FN Guadalajara, January 5, 2017). Thanks to the alliances they have formed and constantly holding local authorities accountable, their services have grown and now, the shelter serves as a place where asylum seekers can stay long-term. However, similar to the shelter in San Luis Potosi, the agreement is that migrants cannot go out of the city, which of course questions the issues of mobility and containment. The question remains as to whether or not their humanitarian work serves also as containment.

Institutionalization

Northern Mexico is also a different story. While shelters originally served Mexican migrants aiming to cross to the United States, over time, these spaces have seen a reversed pattern. Now, shelters at the border with the United States serve mostly deported Mexicans dropped off at the border towns by U.S. authorities. These shelters do not see or serve many Central Americans. Some of these shelters receive funds from the Mexican government, becoming *de facto* outsourced services for the deported population (FN Reynosa, December 10, 2015). In some ways, the shelters function as gatekeepers, fostering the agenda of the government in trying to move deported Mexicans and migrants far away from border zones, which in practice reduces the possibility of migrants attempting to re-enter the United States or becoming victims of violence.

In some states of Mexico, there are governmental constituents called Institutes for Migrants. Depending on its location, each Institute has different goals. In the case of the state of Tamaulipas, which borders the United States, the Institute has an agreement with six other *casas del migrante* to provide services for deported Mexicans and Mexicans with legal status in the United States who are returning to visit family members in Mexico. One of the aims of the government is to aid deported Mexicans as they return to their places of origin. At the reception centres located near different international bridges, migrants are rushed to make decisions about returning to their places of origin (FN Reynosa, December 18, 2015). Those who cannot return immediately are offered the opportunity to stay at the shelter, although the policies at the shelters only allow them short stays. Migrants are not allowed to go out, and the rules pressure deported Mexicans to move quickly. Neither the government nor the shelter assesses whether or not there are particular needs or options for returning

Mexicans. The shelter director in Reynosa said that part of the reason for these rules is the high levels of violence in the region: ‘We want them to move quickly. Reynosa [the city where the shelter is located] is too dangerous and they can be kidnapped or killed. The presence of drug cartels makes this place dangerous and people can recognize if someone does not know where to go or if someone is an outsider’ (FN Reynosa, December 11, 2015).

During my stay at the shelter, I had to abide by a strict security code. At one point, there was a shooting and the city was in lockdown for several hours. Furthermore, I later learned that one of the migrants I interviewed was kidnapped and raped after leaving the shelter. All of these facts are signs that, at least in this city, the dangers are real (FN Reynosa, January 13, 2016). Thus, shelters at the border serve different populations, have a variety of purposes, and give space to other initiatives. However, for some shelters, their ties and alliances with the government make them operate as part of a larger apparatus of institutionalization of services for deported migrants.

Thus, to answer the question about how shelters work, it can be asserted that shelters are migration intermediaries exercising dynamics of facilitation, control, and assistance/care. Their work shapes and influences the way irregular migrants move through Mexico and the ways Mexican deportees cope with the immediate aftermath of deportation. Furthermore, *casas de migrantes* play different brokerage roles to obtain resources for or to advocate for migrants’ rights. The ways they exercise their brokerage role calls into question the impossibility of living or operating under the humanitarian principles of neutrality and independence. At the same time, the different relationships shelters have and the contexts in which they occur make *casas*

de migrantes places of contestation, alliance, and institutionalization. As previously mentioned, this is not the common top-down humanitarianism that operates in official emergency situations; rather, this is a type of humanitarianism that emerges from below, that develops, and learns by trial and error. It is also a humanitarianism that keeps at the centre the relief of suffering of these vulnerable populations. These places are deeply humanitarian and their work challenges the common notions of sheltering and aid provision. Shelters are highly politicized, as are their sheltering practices. These places are sanctioned by law and occasionally supported by the local governments. However, while shelters risk being a form of humanitarianism of containment, migrants may see them as a resource, abiding by their rules because it is convenient for migrants' purposes, which is discussed in the next section.

5.6 Humanitarian Aid in Practice

Spaces of Exception and Containment

Mexican migration laws protect *casas de migrantes* or any humanitarian space from acts of control or surveillance by Mexican authorities. Such policies create *de facto* sanctuaries or safe havens for migrants. Since one of the concerns of this work is the role of these humanitarian spaces in the migration process and their interactions with migrants, it is important to highlight the fact that the boundaries between humanitarianism and control are often blurred. Agier (2011: 4) argues that inherent to humanitarian interventions are forms of control and confinement: 'there is no care without control'. For now, it suffices to say that the protection migrants receive from the law creates a significant ambivalence for the shelters' role in the migration process. On the one hand, shelters offer support to migrants out of genuine humanitarian concerns, but on the other hand, migrant shelters end up being part of a

functional solidarity system sanctioned by the state. In this system, *casas de migrantes* end up being spaces of exception and confinement, which exemplifies the blurred line Agier described when discussing refugee camps.

Migrants recognize the fact that shelters are protected spaces and seek their services precisely for that reason. Shelters see themselves as oases for migrants where those migrants can find respite, help, and information before resuming their journeys (SDI Matamoros, January 14, 2016; SDI Tenosique, September 15, 2014). While migrants may refer to this image of an oasis from time to time, what really matters for them is safety (FN Reynosa December 8, 2016). Thus, there is a trade-off in the relationship between migrants and shelters, which is migrants' willingness to exchange freedom for safety, even if they sometimes do so reluctantly. Thus, *casas de migrantes* can be seen as spaces of exception, but also confine and control migrant populations.

Humanitarian Governance in Mexico

The interplay between migration policies, enforcement, and humanitarian work in Mexico reveals how humanitarianism is connected to governance (see Barnett and Gross Stein 2012; Barnett 2013; Fassin 2012, 2007; Agier 2011; Ticktin 2011; Betts 2013). Here, humanitarian governance refers to 'the increasingly organized and internationalized attempt to save the lives, enhance the welfare, and reduce the suffering of the world's most vulnerable populations' (Barnett 2013: 379; see also Fassin 2007: 1510). This notion does not consider particular forms of state or non-state as the foundation or model for governance. It may not only include governmental institutions, but exceed them by encompassing two political figures: one governmental and the other non-governmental (Fassin 2007: 151). Despite the

fact that ‘regimes of care’ and humanitarian assistance do not intend to be about politics, but about emergencies, protection, care, and compassion, humanitarianism has come to play a greater role in the management and governance of migrants and people in displacement (Tickin 2011: 61).

For Barnett (2013: 382), humanitarian governance is less concerned with effectiveness and more interested in the effects of the effort to reduce human suffering. These effects might be intended and desirable, but others might be unintended and harmful. At the same time, humanitarian governance can be associated with either emancipation or domination; without a doubt, it fosters distinct forms of power. Ultimately, humanitarian governance is about the ‘politics of precarious lives’ (Fassin 2012: 4).

Casas de migrantes emerge locally but deal with transnational movements. Also, while well-intentioned, shelters occasionally stretch themselves beyond what they can do well, raising questions of effectiveness and safety. Inevitably, as they interact with the Mexican government and other international actors, *casas de migrantes* become part of the humanitarian governance of migrants. Regardless of their size, shelters exercise different forms of control and power while providing assistance. Thus, shelters must navigate the tension between welfare and containment. In this context, poverty, violence, and care interact in the migration processes of migrants in Mexico, which will be explored in the next three empirical chapters.

Chapter 6. An ‘Economy of Makeshifts’: Migration, Poverty, and the Strategies of the Poor

Victor, a 27-year-old man from Guatemala, travelled for 60 days before reaching a shelter in Saltillo, Coahuila. He described parts of his journey like this:

Thanks be to God and to the people of good will who have fed us along the way. For the most part, nobody denies food to you. However, people do not want to give you money anymore. There are many Central Americans panhandling, supposedly to eat, but they are drunk. So, people do not give to you anymore [...] I panhandled in Arriaga [Chiapas], in Corazones [Oaxaca]. I mounted the train, but before arriving to Union Hidalgo [Oaxaca], migration authorities chased us again. I had to walk 30 kilometres to Juchitan [Oaxaca]. It was dark when I arrived and I had to sleep on the street. A lady gave me 20 pesos [1 USD] and I travelled to Ixtepec where I looked for *la casa del migrante* [...] After a couple of days, I mounted the train in the direction of Medias Aguas [Veracruz], but migration authorities made us get off the train and we had to walk to Matias Romero [Oaxaca] where I stayed for a couple of days at another shelter [...] Unable to ride the train, then I walked another two days before reaching Medias Aguas [Veracruz] [...] It took me another eight days by foot to reach the next town, which is Tierra Blanca in Veracruz [...] If there was a shelter where we passed, we stayed at the shelter. If there was no shelter, then one had to sleep on the street. (Victor, SS Saltillo 11)

Victor’s journey illustrates the complexities of migration journeys for poor migrants. He walked, rode on top of freight trains, and used public transportation to cover the 2,221 kilometres (1,380 miles) between his hometown in Escuintla, Guatemala and the shelter in Saltillo where I met him. During his journey, he slept in churches, at shelters, next to the train tracks in deserted regions, and in parks when he passed through some towns. Occasionally, he waited for several days in different towns and other times he tried to move as quickly as possible to cover more ground on his journey. On a few occasions, migration authorities chased Victor. He was deported from Mexico twice, but resumed his journey again and again. He began his migration trajectory with less than 30 USD. Along the road he panhandled to gather some money and often relied on people of good will to give him food. He has no relatives

or contacts in the United States. It is not the first time he has travelled through the migration route in Mexico, since he lived in the United States for two years before being deported in 2013, and now is trying to reach Atlanta, Georgia.

Two general conventions appear in migration literature: first, it is not the poorest who move, but rather those with resources and the drive to do so (Skeldon 1997: 8; de Haas 2007: 10; Sørensen 2013: 246; Andersson 2014: 20; Van Hear 2014; see also De Haan and Yaqub 2009). Second, it is suggested that much of poverty connects to the idea or feeling of being poor when comparing personal situations to others' success or circumstances (Skeldon 1997: 164). While these two ideas may remain true on a large scale, the focus of migration research on the types of resources available for migrants has precluded deeper exploration on the role poverty plays in migration journeys.

Migration literature does not explicitly sustain the notion that migrants are not poor. Furthermore, Skeldon (1997: 8) states that the poor move and my findings confirm that migrants who lack resources to finance their journeys use an array of strategies to cope with hardship and attempt their journeys. As the narrative at the beginning of this chapter illustrates, Victor begs for food, panhandles enough money to make it to the next town, looks for help at shelters and churches, and often uses his body (walks) to reach the next point of his journey. These types of experiences are not uncommon amongst migrants in different regions (Andersson 2012; Kastner 2013; Sutter 2013). Furthermore, there is a vast body of literature linking poverty and migration that has shown that internal and/or international movements of people have an impact on development and poverty; migration can be seen as the cause of poverty and can be caused by poverty (Siddiqui 2012: 5; Sørensen et al 2002: 7). The

measurement of poverty remains a challenge due to its changing nature (Skeldon 2012: 48), and thus, it is important to contribute and fill the gap in understanding the role of poverty in migration journeys.

By using the Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (Global MPI), a standardized measure of multidimensional poverty, my findings make explicit that migrants moving through Mexico are indeed poor; provide specificities that their feelings of being poor may be based on both perception and actual deprivations they experience; and analyse how migrants lacking resources to finance their journeys use an array of strategies to cope with hardship during their journeys. Additionally, I draw a parallel between the strategies migrants use in Mexico and the ones that poor people used before the Pre-Industrial Era to show how the poor managed precariousness. After all, the lack of resources leads migrants to move in vulnerable circumstances, be exposed to violence since they must use dangerous routes, and use *casas de migrantes* as one of several resources to cope with hardship. In this way, poverty, violence, and assistance/care converge in migrants' journeys.

6.1 The Poor Also Move

The Global Multidimensional Poverty Index was developed in 2010 by OPHI and the United Nations Development Programme and measures poverty across three dimensions: education, health, and standard of living. The Global MPI assesses the nature and magnitude of overlapping deprivations through ten indicators for each household: nutrition, mortality, years of schooling, school attendance, sanitation, access to clean water, access to clean fuel, electricity, flooring, and household assets (Alkire, Foster, et al. 2015; Alkire and Santos 2014).

A person is identified as multidimensionally poor, or ‘MPI poor’, if they are deprived in at least 1/3rd of the weighted indicators (the cutoff for poverty is 33.33%). The proportion of the population that is multidimensionally poor is known as the incidence of poverty (H). The average proportion of indicators in which poor people are deprived is described as the intensity of their poverty (A). For example, a person who is deprived in 50% of the weighted indicators has a greater intensity of deprivation than someone deprived in 30% of the weighted indicators. The MPI is calculated by multiplying the incidence of poverty (the percentage of people identified as MPI poor) by the average intensity of poverty across the poor.

MPI	Product of incidence and intensity: MPI = H x A
Incidence	Percentage of people who are poor (or the headcount ratio, H)
Intensity	Average share of indicators in which poor people are deprived (A)

The MPI measure, therefore, reflects both the share of people in poverty and the degree to which they are deprived. Additionally, if a person is deprived in 20-33.3% of the weighted indicators, they are considered ‘vulnerable to poverty’. This means that people may be one deprivation away from being poor. In addition, if people are deprived in more than half of the indicator categories, they are identified as being in ‘severe poverty’. The poorest of the poor — or the destitute — are identified as people who are deprived in at least 1/3rd of the same weighted indicators, but according to

more extreme criteria than those used to identify the MPI. The MPI indicates that the destitute may possess no assets whatsoever – not even a radio or mobile phone. In these cases, at least one member of the household may be severely undernourished and accessing safe drinking water requires a lengthy round trip of more than 45 minutes (Alkire and Santos 2014; Alkire et al. 2014; Alkire and Robles 2017; Alkire, Roche, et al. 2015; Alkire and Seth 2015).

Poverty

Some disclaimers are necessary to adequately present the results of the measurement. First, data collection was conducted at *casas de migrantes*. Thus, the sample is biased and skewed toward those migrants who rely on shelters to cope with hardships during their journeys. This also means that there may be other migrants moving through or returning to Mexico in other ways. Second, the data reflects levels of poverty experienced at the moment of departure, or pre-migration. Third, poor migrants use different strategies to cope with precariousness. Fourth, I excluded most Mexican deportees from the measurement mainly because they had been in detention or jail for some time prior to their removal from the U.S. Thus, I was unable to assess their previous living conditions. The Mexicans included in the measurement had never previously lived in the U.S., were first-timers, or were ‘quick turnaround’ deportees. Fifth, my results show that 1.8% of the total migrants in the sample belong to the destitute, or the poorest of migrants. Overall, my findings highlight that the poor move, and reveal the strategies they rely on to cope with their journeys precisely because of their poverty.

During fieldwork, I conducted 168 interviews. Of that total, I had to discard eight for the measurement of poverty because they were incomplete or I had not filled out the questionnaire. On those occasions, the poverty data was not completed for two reasons: A couple of migrants left quickly during the interview because the freight train was passing and they had to continue their journeys. In a couple other cases, the migrants had been on the road for over a year without a stable place that could serve as a reference as their home. Other interviews were with deportees who had either been in jail for several years before deportation or had stable jobs and houses while living in the U.S. Thus, the sample for the measurement consisted of 160 observations, and the results indicated the following:

<i>Multidimensional Poverty Index</i>	0.183
<i>Percentage of MPI Poor (H)</i>	43.75 %
<i>Average Intensity Across the Poor (A)</i>	41.82 %

The results indicate that 43.75% of the sample can be classified as MPI poor, and the average intensity of poverty experienced across the poor is 41.82%. In other words, almost 44% of the sample are MPI poor and they are on average deprived in 42% of the weighted indicators. One must remember that *indicators* are weighted differently, but each *dimension* of the measurement weights equally — 1/3rd each. Thus, a migrant may be deprived in two health indicators and one education, or deprived in five of the living standard indicators and one education. In any of these cases, the migrant is deprived in 42% of the weighted indicators. Additionally, 54.7% of the migrants I interviewed are vulnerable to poverty, which means that they are one

deprivation away from being poor. Also, 1.8% of the total number of migrants belong to the destitute or the poorest (a sub-sample of those MPI poor).

An examination of the deprivations of all migrants (not just MPI poor) show that among the ten indicators, the largest deprivations migrants experienced before departure were: nutrition (96.25 %), adequate sanitation (82.50 %), cooking fuel (57.50 %), and access to clean water (46.88 %). Figure 12 shows the percentages of people deprived for each indicator.

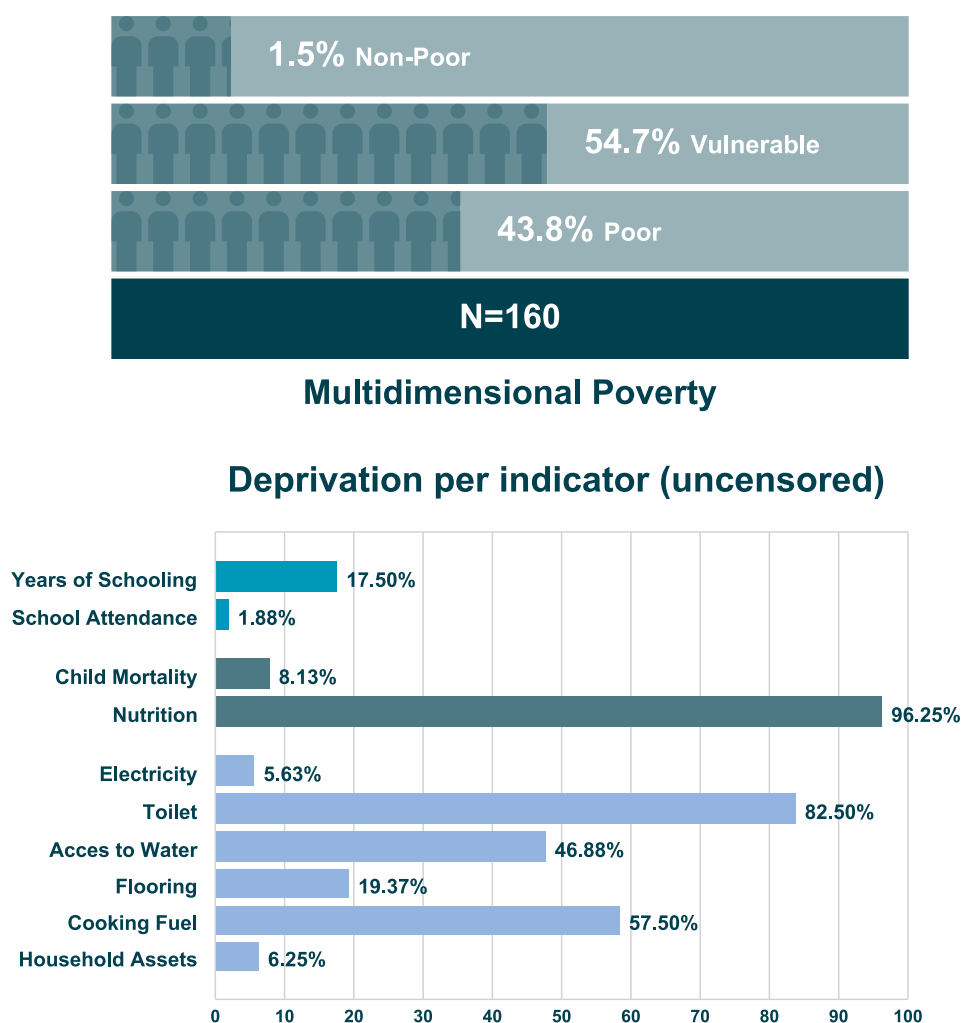


Figure 12. Multidimensional Poverty Levels and Deprivations among Interviewed Migrants

These data reflect the levels of poverty and deprivations migrants experienced in their countries of origin, representing a snapshot of migrants' contexts at the moment of departure. Since interviews were conducted at some point during migrants' journeys, it can be affirmed that, according to these findings, poor migrants do embark on migration journeys. Furthermore, the findings suggest that a significant number of migrants moving through Mexico are deprived of nutrition, adequate sanitation (toilets), cooking fuel, and access to clean water. The evidence gathered from the questionnaires also indicates that 71% of the interviewed migrants are either self-employed, work for self-sustenance, or have no jobs. Thus, people with precarious and unstable jobs are more prone to different 'shocks' (illnesses, less work, natural disasters, etc.). And yet, only 3% of the total sample have some type of social security.

Sládková (2016), Sorensen (2013), Basok et al (2015), and Solano (2017) all have indicated that poor migrants may move more than we expect or than researchers have been able to document. This means that the types of migration the poor and destitute engage in may not been explored in depth or have remained underreported because of the difficulties of capturing and measuring levels of poverty (De Haan and Yaqub 2009: 7). Many of the references to the poverty levels of migrants moving in Mexico have been based on ethnographic work or archival data from the World Bank and the United Nations Development Department. Even when the limitations and bias of the sample in this project prevent generalizations from being made, this work provides a measurement of poverty levels, identifies deprivations using a standardized instrument, and collects data from people already on the move.

Next, breakdowns of levels of poverty by gender, age, and country are presented. It is necessary to approach these subsets of information with a word of

caution. While the sample is large enough for the analysis and provides a clear picture of the levels of poverty among migrants, as the data is broken down into groups, the number of observations becomes smaller. While I made an effort to group the data in a way that is large enough to be of significance, the reader must consider that subgroups may include fewer observations. Hence, the next figures compare the Multidimensional Poverty Index (HxA), the head count ratio or the percentage of poor people (H), and the intensity of poverty among the poor (A) for each subgroup indicated.

Figure 13 compares the MPI by gender. The data show that a higher proportion of female migrants are MPI poor than male, while the average intensity of poverty remains pretty similar between male and female. In other words, while the sample includes a larger number of male migrants, the proportion of poor females in the sample is higher than males. This may indicate that a larger number of poor females are on the move.

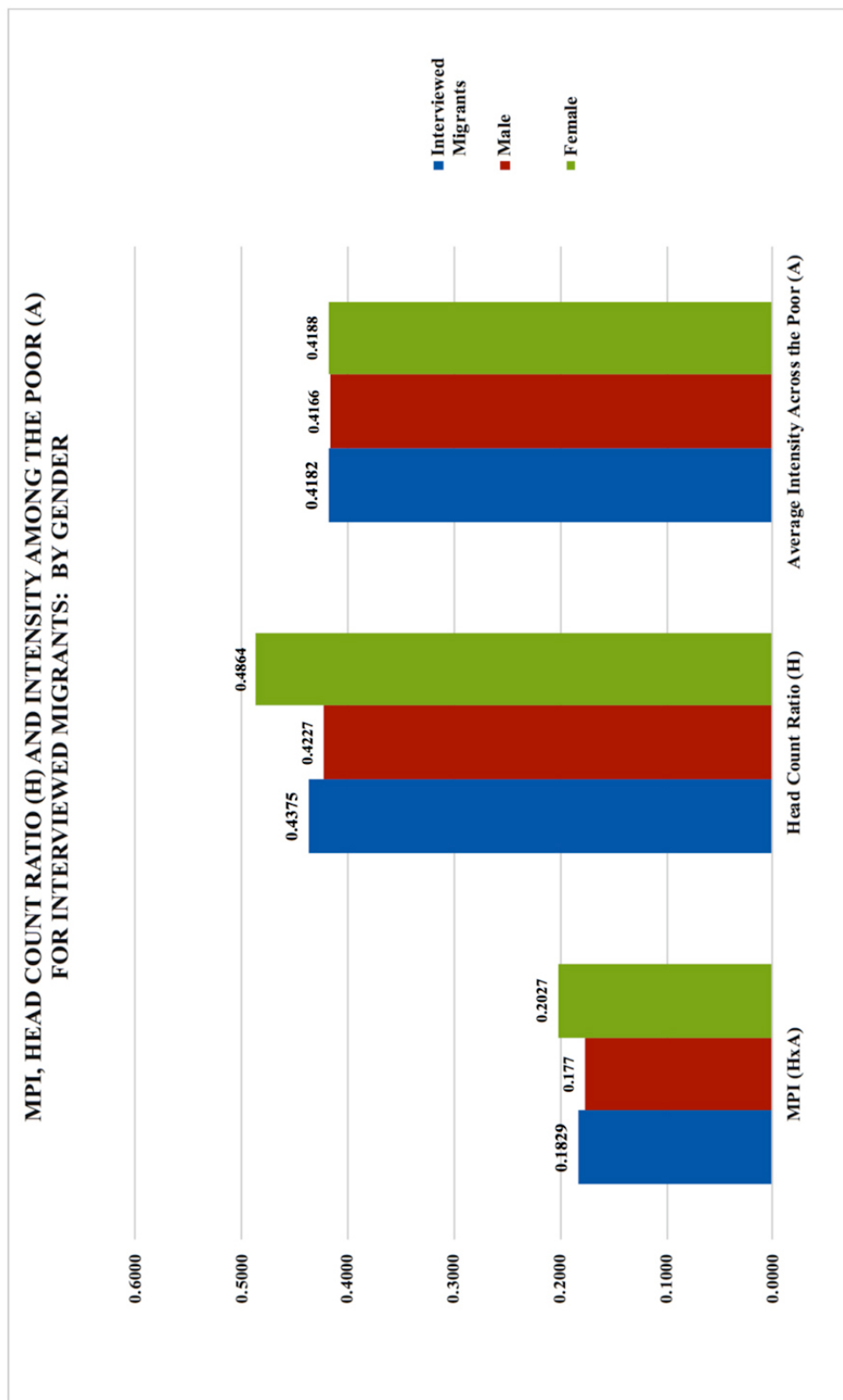


Figure 13. Multidimensional Poverty Levels, Head Count Ratio (H) and Intensity Across Poor Interviewed

Figure 14 shows the MPI, the number of poor migrants (H), and the intensity of poverty among poor migrants by age group. The data indicate that the prevalence of poverty is highest among migrants who are 35 years and older, followed by those between 16 and 24. The 35 and over group shows the highest average of poor people and the highest intensity in deprivations among all groups. If we consider that nutrition is the largest deprivation amongst all interviewed migrants (see Figure 12), it is plausible that poor migrants start their journeys because they are unable to bring food to the table. Also, it is necessary to consider the contextual factors of job insecurity and violence, as explained in Chapter 3.

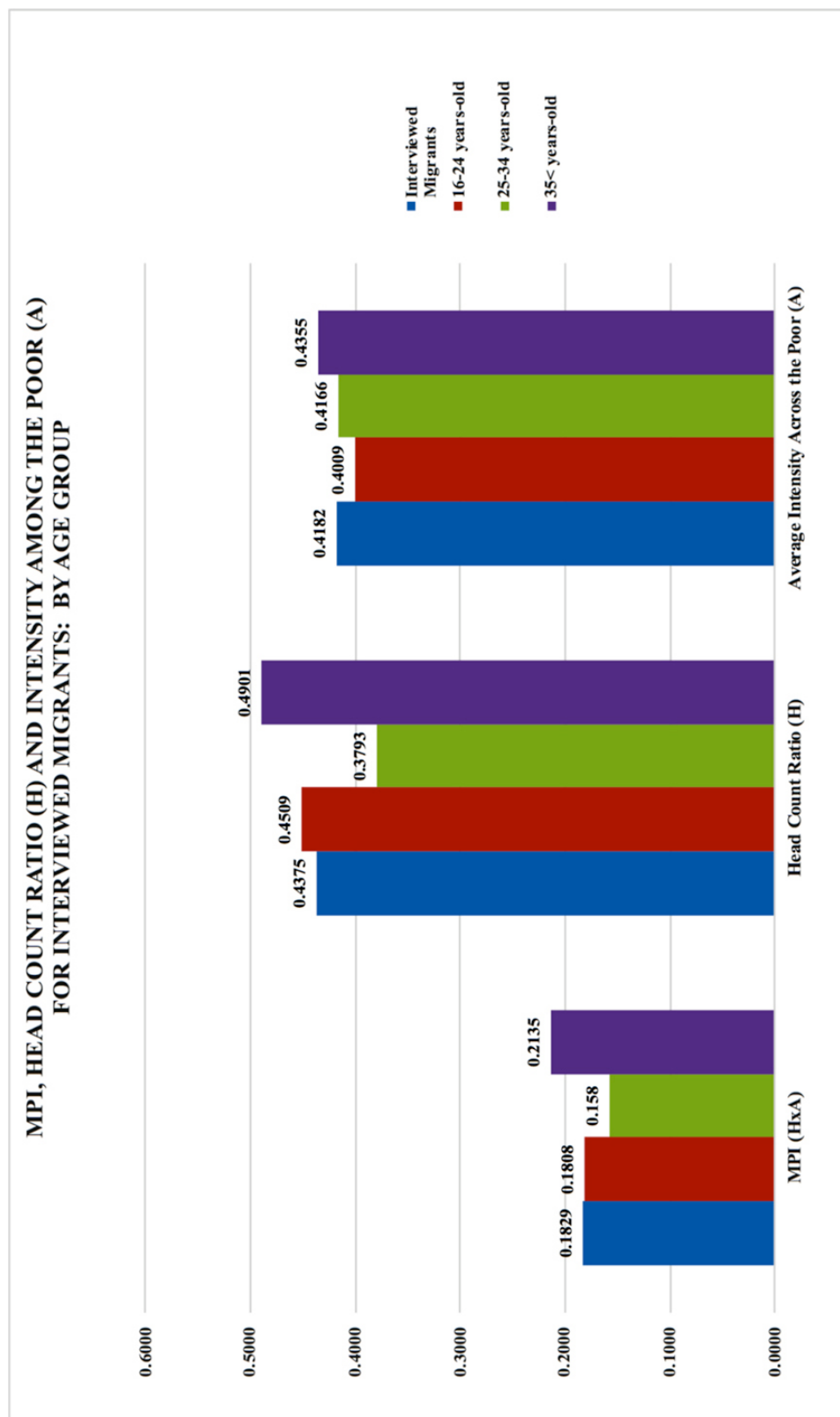
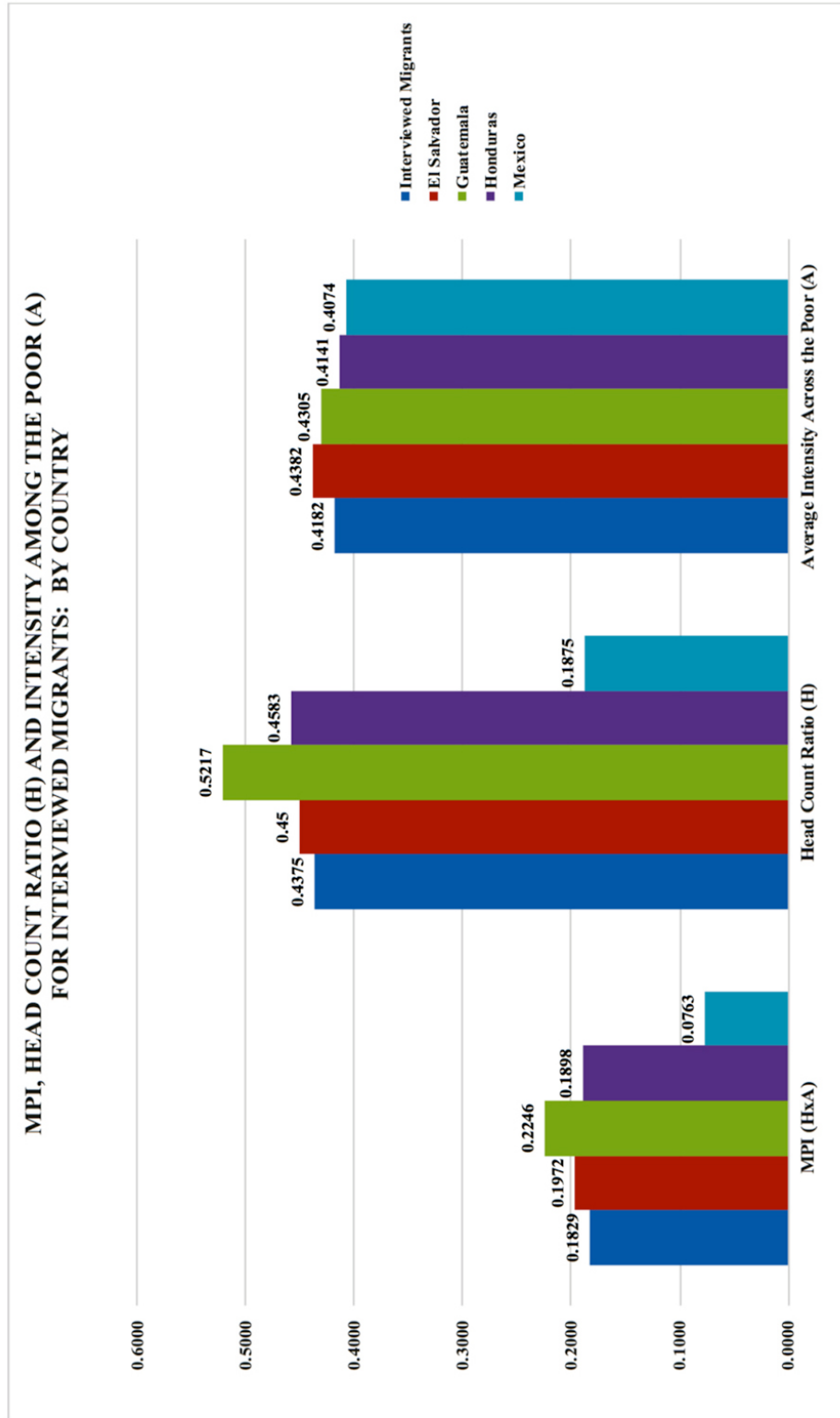


Figure 14. Multidimensional Poverty Levels, Head Count Ratio (H) and Intensity Across Poor Interviewed Migrants by Age Group

Figure 15 depicts a comparison of indicators and is organized by country of origin. Indicators for Nicaragua, Cuba, Ghana, and Morocco are eliminated from this figure because the sample size from those four countries is too small to include on the graph. The most significant result in this figure is that poverty is more prevalent among migrants from Guatemala. However, it can also be noted that the intensity of poverty across different countries in the sample does not differ significantly. This finding is somewhat surprising; I expected the poverty levels to be higher among Hondurans since more migrants from Honduras use shelters than other countries. Future avenues for research may include collecting data at detention centres in Mexico, where the presence of Guatemalan migrants is higher.



**Figure 15. Multidimensional Poverty Levels, Head Count Ratio (H), and Intensity Across the Poor
Interviewed Migrants, organized**

The MPI represents a new generation of multidimensional measures, and has been tested and standardized in more than 103 countries throughout the world (Alkire and Robles 2017). Thus, official information about levels of poverty in different countries is available, permitting a comparison of official poverty data from Central American countries and Mexico with the levels of poverty of the population represented in this study. Figure 16 compares each of the indicators (MPI (HxA), the percentage of poor migrants (H), and the intensity of poverty among poor migrants) from the sample against the corresponding national indicator for each country.

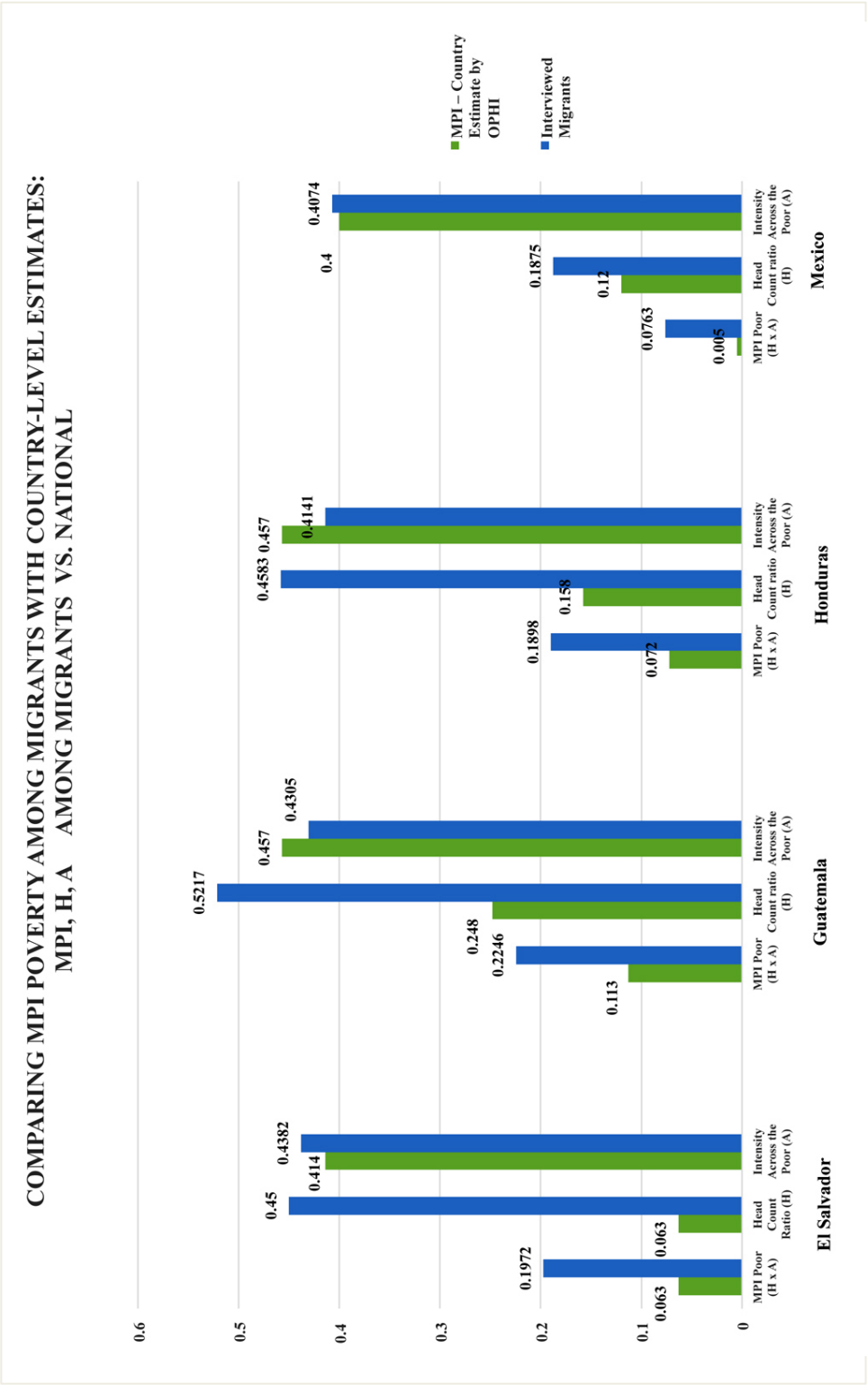


Figure 16. Multidimensional Poverty Levels, Head Count Ratio (H) and Intensity Across the Poor. Global MPI Figures vs Interviewed

The findings show that in all cases but Mexico, the incidence of poverty among migrants is double the incidence of poverty in each country. However, looking at the indicators reveals that the intensity among poor migrants is very similar to the national level of intensity of poverty. What drives up the MPI among migrants is the percentage of migrants who are poor (H) in the sample, which is disproportionately higher than the national average for each country. As an example, the national MPI for Honduras is .07. The MPI for the migrants from Honduras in my sample is 0.18. Thus, it seems that on average, more MPI poor households seem to be on the move than the national average suggests. By looking at the Head Count Ratio in Honduras, the proportion of individuals living in MPI poor households is 15.8%, but the proportion of migrants who come from MPI poor households in my sample is 45%. In other words, the percentage of people who migrate from MPI poor households is disproportionately higher than the national average of MPI. Since I interviewed migrants while they were on their journeys, we can argue that the poor, as defined by MPI, do indeed move. The same trends apply for the other countries in the sample. Here, the selection bias of the sample should be considered because it is limited to those migrants using shelters.

While the trend of higher prevalence of MPI poverty amongst migrant populations is seen elsewhere — like Vietnam and China (Quang and Thu 2015; UNDP 2014: 2–3; Alkire and Shen 2017) —, these trends refer to internal migration, particularly from rural to urban settings. My results, in contrast, provide evidence of the levels of poverty among migrants moving internationally. While my analysis cannot respond to the question of whether or not the *poorest* also move, future studies can use this same methodology with a larger and more robust sample to provide more information regarding the movement of that group. A larger sample

could also allow a better disaggregation of indicators, as well as the possibility of identifying if migrants are moving from the poorest regions of the country of origin.

What is at stake here is neither establishing causality between levels of poverty and migration nor making an in-depth analysis of poverty among interviewed migrants. What interests me is challenging some previous assumptions regarding the movement of the poor by making explicit and showing evidence that poor migrants move, and in spite of their poverty find ways to embark on migration journeys and cope with hardship. At the same time, while some migrants may feel that they are poor by comparing themselves to other standards, the evidence in this study shows that these feelings of being poor may be based on actual and specific deprivations (lack of nutrition, sanitation, water, and education) not on just perception.

The poor do choose to migrate, but some resources, no matter how meagre these might appear, are needed to initiate the move (Skeldon 2002). Skeldon (2002: 71) writes that ‘migration always involves some costs of transportation and the abandonment of many of the few possessions the poor might have. The poorest of the poor cannot afford either risk or movement and the majority starve in situ’. I consider this latter assertion too strong because it reinforces a sedentary bias and questions the agency migrants may exercise in survival situations. However, one question remains: if the poor indeed move, what types of resources do they possess when they embark on their different migration trajectories? In this research, I have found that poor migrants may start their journeys with what I call ‘spark money’, which is often enough to *start* the journey. Resources to *sustain* that journey, though, are a different matter, and may not come in the way of great financial resources, but rather from unlikely places and forms. As history has shown, the poor are capable of developing

their own resources and finding new strategies to cope with their deprivations and lack of initial resources as they move.

‘Spark Money’

Migrants must at least have meagre resources to embark on a journey, but what do ‘meagre resources’ consist of? How much does ‘meagre’ translate to in terms of capital and social capital? Research has overemphasized the need for resources and the role of networks, but has rarely explored, addressed, or attempted to quantify the resources needed to embark on a migration journey. During interviews, I asked migrants about the amount of money, contacts, and other resources they needed to start their journeys. While unable to afford smugglers, poor migrants were aware that they still needed resources to sustain their continued movement. They often started their migration projects with some ‘spark money’, or whatever amount of money they could gather, hoping that somehow, they would be able to cope or find resources along the way (FN September 2014 – January 2016). Figure 17 shows the disaggregation of data regarding the amount of money migrants had at the moment of departure. Some of this spark money was borrowed, some came from gifts, some was from savings, and some money represents what a migrant had available at that moment. In some cases, the cash a migrant had was all that was available for the family. Migrants took that money and relied on family networks to help those left behind to cope with the departure (FN September 2014 - January 2016). In some interviews, it was clear that migrants felt pressure to reach their intended destinations because they had no more money available. Overall, migrants left their countries with a median of 114 USD for the whole journey. This spark money was just enough to start the journey, but was often gone by the moment many migrants reached the border; in some cases migrants were left with nothing very early on along their journeys (FN Saltillo March 8, 2015).

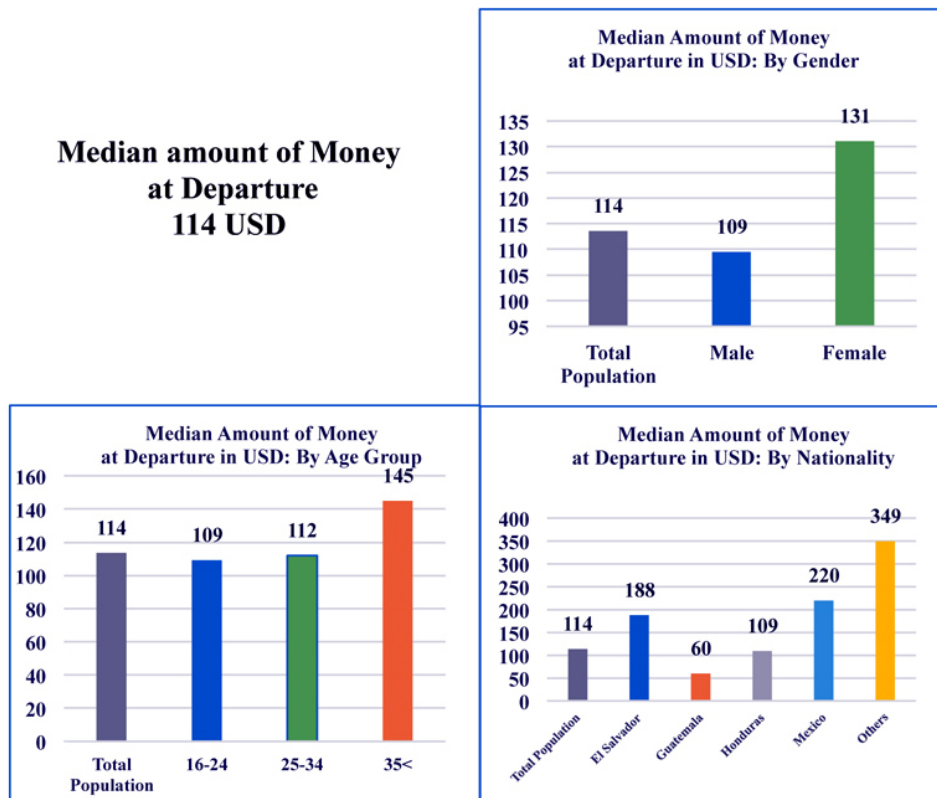


Figure 17. Median Amount of Money at Departure in USD, Organized by Gender, Age Group, and Country of Origin

Interestingly, the data regarding this spark money reflect some discrepancies with the information about the levels of poverty discussed earlier. Women left with higher amounts of money than men. While I was not able to track plausible explanations for this, literature on poverty and livelihood strategies has discussed the dexterity of women as they find ways to make ends meet, especially with little savings or other sources of income (Edin, Lein, and Young Conrad 1997; de la Rocha 1994). Discrepancies between income and MPI poverty are not uncommon, and show the value of the Multidimensional Poverty Index by providing a different reading of poverty — one not based on income but on deprivation in different indicators. In other words, measurements based only on income do not fully capture the reality of poverty. If someone has access to cash, that does not mean that he or she may not be deprived

in other domains. In this case, some women may have more access to cash either through income or because they could have acquired spark money from borrowing or selling assets. To be clear, the above factors do not mean that women are not poor. Data by age group show that migrants older than 35 embark on migration journeys with a higher median amount of money than other age groups. While this is also a discrepancy with the MPI findings, it is plausible to think that an older person has more control and access to savings, loans, or cash that could be made available for the journey, as in the case of women.

Data regarding spark money by country of origin retain the same trends as the MPI findings and show Guatemalans as the most vulnerable group. Among poor migrants, Guatemalans, who experience the highest levels of poverty, were the ones who started their journeys with the lowest amount of money with a median of 60 USD. In comparison, Hondurans leave their home countries with a median of 109 USD, which continues to reflect the fact that they are the second most vulnerable group. Salvadorans appear to be closest to the mean of the whole group but the fact that their economy uses USD as a currency may increase the average amount of spark money. The ‘others’ group, as I mentioned, includes countries such as Morocco, Ghana, Cuba, and Nicaragua, but I found that extra-continental migrants often start with a good amount of resources.

As I mentioned earlier, spark money is only enough to start the journey, and money is often gone by the time migrants enter into Mexican territory or even earlier if they are robbed or had to bribe officials along the way. But, as it has been documented not only in Mexico but in other parts of the world, migrants exercise their creativity and agency to cope with hardship along the journey. Similarly, the poor

have always found ways to cope with hardship and poverty. The main focus of my research is not on the strategies migrants use along their journeys in Mexico or upon returning to Mexico, but during the analysis of my data I identified certain strategies that regularly appeared and that add something new to or nuance the existing body of literature. For the analyses of these strategies, I borrow the concept of ‘economy of makeshifts’ (Tomkins and King 2003) that historians have used to describe the ways poor people used to cope with hardship and poverty.

6.2 The Strategies of the Poor: An Economy of Makeshifts

Poor migrants begin their journeys through Mexico with meagre resources. What strategies do they use to sustain their journeys? Scholars like Hagan (2008), Basok et al (2015), and Mainwaring and Brigden (2016) describe and analyze the journeys migrants undertake through Mexico. Without a doubt, there is an economic stratification in the migration processes. Those migrants who are able to hire a smuggler or have more contacts may have different strategies to reach their intended destinations than poor migrants who have less resources or fewer contacts. I found evidence of this in my fieldwork with migrants from India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Nigeria during my visits to detention centres in Mexico. My conversations revealed that some of them had paid large amounts of money to travel — between 20,000 and 25,000 USD (FN Acayucan, July 14, 2015). Occasionally, people from African countries and other nationalities could be found at the shelters, like the Ghanaian and Moroccan migrants I interviewed (FN Tenosique, September 15, 2015). Often, these migrants had lost all the resources or were making elongated journeys with meagre resources. Regardless of their native country, Victor’s story at the beginning of this

chapter resembles the journeys of many other poor migrants moving through or returning to Mexico.

Poverty is anything but new and the poor have always found ways to cope with hardship. Furthermore, the poor are not passive recipients of their fates and actively exercise their agency to overcome obstacles. Historian Olwen Hufton (1974: 15) used the term ‘economy of makeshifts’ to describe the different strategies poor people in the Pre-Industrial Era used to deal with poverty and hardship: an extra job, seasonal migration, begging, burglary, or even getting involved in criminal activities. Here, I draw a parallel between the poor during pre-industrial times and poor migrants in Mexico. If in the past the poor and the vagrants were considered threats and thus needed to be controlled, nowadays, the migrant is seen as a threat and in need of being controlled (see Anderson 2013). And similar to the poor in the past, migrants relied on different strategies to cope with their journeys. Figure 18 provides a comparison of the strategies of the poor in the Pre-Industrial Era, as described by Tomkins and King (2013), and some of the strategies appearing often in my interviews. The following sections in this chapter focus especially on begging, a strategy I call ‘delayed activation of networks’, ‘sustaining’ cash transfers, and the use of the body as a resource.

Strategies of an ‘Economy of Makeshifts’	Strategies of the Poor and Vulnerable Migrant
Begging	Begging
Neighbourly and/or kin support	‘Delayed activation of networks’
Loans	‘Sustaining’ cash transfers
Charitable doles	Humanitarian assistance (shelters)
Day labour (by employment and casual jobs)	Casual work
	The body

Figure 18. Strategies of an ‘Economy of Makeshifts’ and Strategies Used by Poor Migrants to Cope with Hardship during Their Journeys

I leave out the discussion of day labour because I do not have enough data from my interviews, even though begging could be seen as a form of work. I also leave out the role of humanitarian assistance, which is at the core of this thesis and will be analysed in-depth later (Anderson and Walker 2016: 11).

Begging

At the simplest level, begging is ‘to ask someone earnestly or humbly for something’ (Oxford Dictionary). Without a doubt, begging entails dynamics of inclusion and exclusion, as well as power. Historically, begging has been associated with escaping labour — as the opposite of work — and has been treated by authorities as acceptable only for those who cannot earn their living in other ways, although some argue that begging can become a career or a job. While begging, economic activity, and deservingness may all be interrelated, beggars often belong to vulnerable and excluded groups of society that may be perceived in different ways depending on the context and circumstances (Anderson and Walker 2016).

Begging, or *charolear* (panhandling) is a common strategy used by poor migrants and deportees to cope with hardship during their journeys. While the prevalence of this practice is difficult to capture, it is common to find migrants begging for food or money in transit towns along migration routes in Mexico. But the practice takes different forms depending on the place and circumstances of the journey. Seeking aid at shelters along the routes, begging for food and shelter at houses in remote places, and begging for money in different towns are some of the most common methods that poor migrants indicated during interviews. Since Chapter 8 analyzes the acts of seeking aid at shelters, the focus here is on begging practices in remote places and transit towns.

Knocking on the Door for Help

Rogelio, a 23-year-old migrant from El Salvador, ran out of money when he and his friend reached the town of Tuxtla, in the state of Chiapas. They had to walk from the edge of the city where the bus dropped them off to avoid a migration checkpoint. After several hours of walking, they reached a neighbourhood, knocked on the door of a house, and asked for sustenance: ‘We asked a woman for water and food. We told her we were migrants and the way we had been traveling [by bus and on foot]. She offered soup and we ate. We asked her about the next migration checkpoint. She said that it was five kilometres ahead. We hurried to finish the soup and resumed our walking’ (Rogelio, IDI Tenosique 6). He continues his explanation by emphasizing that they had to walk around the checkpoint and indicated that several times they had to stop and ask for water, especially because they were walking in the sun. Rogelio said, ‘I think we walked more than five kilometres. But at some point, we moved and walked far away from the road to avoid the migration checkpoint.

Thus, there were less and less houses, but from time to time when we saw a little house, we stopped, knocked on the door and asked for water. We asked for water four times before reaching the next point' (Rogelio, IDI Tenosique 6). Migrants who ask for food or water may concern local residents, especially those who have become suspicious of everyone since there is an exacerbated climate of violence in Mexico. Rogelio acknowledges this, saying, 'people give you something water or food, but they are suspicious of you. One time a man came out of his house with a machete in his hand. We asked him for water, and he gave it to us. But, you could feel the tension. He was suspicious of us and we were afraid of the machete. We kept walking, and thanks be to God, we avoided the migration checkpoint' (Rogelio, IDI Tenosique 6). The presence of strangers in local communities, especially isolated ones, may create anxieties because locals are unaware of the strangers' intentions. Hence, begging in remote places inevitably raises the tension of community residents. Additionally, mutual suspicion becomes the norm.

Arturo, a 17-year-old migrant from El Salvador, shared a similar story. After reaching Mexico City, he and a friend were wandering through a neighbourhood when they saw a man washing his car and approached him, asking for food. Recalling his experience, he said 'I explained to him that we were migrants and we were looking for food. He not only gave us food, but also let us take a shower. The house was very simple' (Arturo, IDI San Luis Potosi 14). Not only did this man give them food and an opportunity to clean up, he also allowed them to stay overnight and offered them a small job. 'He said that we could stay overnight and gave us a mat and a blanket', Arturo added. The man who helped Arturo and his friend worked as a handyman, and invited them to work with him. He gave them some money for their work. The man's wife used to sell food, so Arturo and his friend also helped with sales. They remained

in Mexico City with this couple for two months. Then, they decided to continue their journey. In contrast to Rogelio's story, occasionally, people may offer more support than originally requested. In any case, power dynamics are present and migrants are aware that they are beneficiaries of a favour. In return for these favours, good behaviour and gratefulness are expected from the migrant.

Standing at a Crossroad and Extending a Hand

Blanca, a 26-year-old migrant from Honduras, *charoleó* (panhandled) during her journey, first in Coatzacoalcos (Southern Mexico) and then in the town of Apaxco de Ocampo (Central Mexico). Without money, she attempted to get on the freight train in Coatzacoalcos. A gang controlling access to the train asked for a *cuota* (fee) to let her jump onto the train. Unable to pay, she went to beg for money: 'We went to a crossroad to beg, hoping to gather for the *cuota*. It took us like an hour to gather the 300 pesos (15 USD) that they were asking for. We returned to give them the money. We picked up our bags and waited for the train' (Blanca, IDI San Luis Potosi 18). Blanca was able to reach Mexico City, but not having any money left, she asked for help at a nearby church: 'I told the priest I needed to get to Huehuetoca [a town in the outskirts of Mexico City], but I did not have any money. He saw me with suspicion but gave me 50 pesos (3 USD). So, I made my way to Huehuetoca where I sought for the *casa del migrante*. We walked to the next town where we stayed at another church. We went out to beg for money for three days. In three days we gathered 45 USD. At first, we thought about looking for a job, but then we saw that were making like 15 USD a day. Thus, we decided to continue *charoelando*. We just wanted to get enough to take the bus to the next town' (Blanca, IDI San Luis Potosi 18).

Tidbits like the ones above appear often in the migrants' stories I documented during fieldwork, sometimes appearing early on or deep into migrants' journeys. They could be in urban places or in isolated areas where there are only small communities. From interviews, begging (in its many forms) clearly emerges as a coping strategy for the journey. In some instances, begging may be even a survival strategy. During my journeys along migrant routes, I constantly saw migrants begging in different transit towns. They often validated their status by showing a banknote (bill) from Honduras, Guatemala, or El Salvador to prove they were migrants (FN September 17, 2015). But, this common practice along migratory routes has some significant implications that deal with dynamics of power and (un)deservingness. This practice also poses a challenge to local authorities who want to contain them and dislike the idea of migrants spread out in town.

Begging is a fairly old practice; Innes, King, and Winter (2013: 1–28) have discussed different ways that European states dealt with the poor and how local communities responded to the changing composition of a wider 'economy of makeshifts' that the poor relied on to survive. They especially stress how beggars, the mobile poor, and migrants were seen with suspicion, as well as the laws that emerged to deal with them. Often the issues dealt with settlement, (un)deservingness, and criminalization of the migrants' activity. More recently, Rajaram and Grundy-Warr (2004) analysed how undocumented migrants unable to get jobs at their destinations may beg to gather money and pay their debts. Schapendonk (2014: 816) documented how migrants in Maghnia, Algeria beg in order to pay a 'connection man' to assist them with crossing to Morocco. Gazdar (2003: 15) also documented how poor Pakistani migrants rely on begging to survive. From data gathered and my observations in the field, I consider that the prevalence of begging and the dynamics

involved in the migration processes in Mexico raise significant questions: Why is a community willing to give to strangers? Why do people give and support migrants in particular but not other vulnerable populations? How much is a particular town able to support the begging practices of migrants? And, do people support migrants to avoid settlement? While Chapter 8 explores the initial questions, other questions and an in-depth analysis of begging practices and their effects are out of this project's scope. However, due to its prevalence in interviews, it is important to discuss begging as one strategy among others that poor migrants use to manage with the journeys.

Delayed Activation of Networks

Migrant networks can be defined as sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through bonds of kinship, friendship, and shared community origin. They can also be conceived as a form of location-specific capital that people draw upon to gain access to resources elsewhere. Networks tend to decrease the economic, social, and psychological costs of migration (Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2014: 40; de Haas 2010a: 1590; Faist 2000). A network is useful only if it is active, remains active, and is capable of mobilizing resources, which adds to the nuances of understanding social networks. At one of the shelters in southern Mexico, I assisted the staff with the registration of migrants passing through. During my time there, I registered 417 migrants. As part of those in-take discussions, I asked about the ways migrants organized their journeys and the contacts they may have at their destinations, noting their responses. Migrants repeatedly said in one way or another that their social networks would help them once they reached the U.S.-Mexico border. In other words,

migrants must move through Mexico with their own resources, and hope that help will come at the border with the U.S. This is what I call ‘delayed activation of networks’.

There are, of course, migrants who have no contacts or networks at their intended destinations, like Omar, a Honduran who is 28 years old. He said, ‘I want to get to Houston, but I have no one to help me. There is nothing I can do but to try by myself’ (FN Tenosique, September 17, 2015). As another example there is David, an unaccompanied 16-year-old migrant from Guatemala, who said, ‘I am going to California which is where the vast majority of people from my town go, but I do not know anyone over there. Furthermore, I did not tell my family I was leaving because they would not let me go. But, someone has to help my family’ (FN Tenosique, September 19, 2015). These types of migrants become extremely vulnerable during their journeys, and hence rely heavily on support from shelters. Occasionally, they may be able to create ties with other migrants and use other networks that may offer support. In the meantime, they are on their own.

The delayed activation of networks may have two different modalities: First, there are migrants who have not talked to anyone in their networks at the point of destination but hope those networks will help once they have reached the border with the U.S. Second, there are migrants who have talked to their contacts at the destination and have been asked to reach the border, where aid would be made available. In any of these cases, the network does not become active or mobilize resources until a certain geographical threshold is reached. The reason for this dynamic is often cost saving, since it is cheaper to pay a smuggler to cross someone at the border.

‘They do not know I am not coming’ said Emilio, a 22-year-old migrant from Honduras. He has two cousins living and working in the U.S., but has not contacted them. He said, ‘I am planning to call them, but when I am closer to the border. That way it will be easy for them to help me’ (FN Tenosique, September 27, 2015). Ariel, a 34-year-old migrant from Honduras, clearly expressed the nuances and complexities of delayed activation of networks when he said, ‘God has the last word. I do not feel pressure or enamoured by the idea of getting to the United States. I have family there, but I have not talked to them. They could potentially help me. But, I believe more in friendship than in family. I will contact my family once I am at the border between Mexico and the U.S. We will see then. For now, I have no illusions of getting there’ (FN Tenosique, September 29, 2015). Tomás, another unaccompanied minor from Honduras, also said ‘I heard that they allow minors to stay and study in the United States. I want to get there to help my family. My aunts and my cousins live there. I have not called them, I just want to get to the U.S. and then call them, so they can request that I live with them. I hope they will help’ (FN Tenosique September 12, 2015).

In the cases described above, migrants embark on their migration projects with their own resources and at their own risk, hoping to activate their networks at some point. I argue that migrants operate under the assumption of reciprocity, but assess that the likelihood and availability of support could be easier to obtain at the border. The fact that migrants do not want to contact members of their networks may signal that help may not be available at that stage of the journey, but the proximity to the final destination may entice members of the networks to offer support.

‘Put yourself at the border and we will see then’ — that was the response Filemon, a 44-year-old migrant from Honduras, got from his brother before departing for the U.S. (FN Tenosique, September 20, 2015). Similarly, Vinicio, a 27-year-old migrant from Honduras, described the agreement with his brother in this way: ‘He told me I need to get to the border of Nuevo Laredo. My brother said getting myself there is the only way in which he can help me’ (FN Tenosique, September 22, 2015). Francisco, a 45-year-old migrant from Honduras, does not have money and is traveling on his own. However, he spoke with some of his friends who were willing to help. One of them told him, ‘get to the border of Nuevo Laredo, there I will pay a smuggler to help you cross. It is cheaper that way’ (FN Tenosique, September 29, 2015).

In these instances, migrants have made contact with their networks and there is a willingness to help, but other resources could not be mobilized at that time or there were not enough resources to cover the costs to support someone coming from the deep south. These stories reinforce the notion that often, migrants have to rely on their own resources to move and only then, at the border, the network might be activated to mobilize resources.

Additionally, I encountered cases in which migrants moved through Mexico with the promise that they would receive help at the border, but at some point along the route, the promise was broken or other needs emerged for the contacts at the destination. Thus, the possibility of activating the network vanished. Other times, a migrant may have received some help from his or her contacts and the network was later deactivated. In other words, resources could not be mobilized anymore. Maria, a 28-year-old migrant from Honduras, left after establishing an agreement with her

sister that she would receive help at some point. When Maria reached the town of Coatzacoalcos, though, her sister told her she would not be able to help anymore. When I interviewed Maria, she was in the town of Coatzacoalcos, struggling with the decision to return and having trouble making a living (SS, Coatzacoalcos, November 18, 2014). Similarly, Jose, a 44-year-old Honduran migrant, was on his way home when I registered him at the shelter. He had been on the road for several months because his nephews offered help. At some point along the journey, his nephews had an emergency in the U.S. and told him they could not help anymore. It was then that Jose decided to make the journey back home.

Migrants often say that they have contacts at their intended destinations or in Mexico, but as shown not all family members are willing or able to help. Thus, having contacts or family members in a destination country is not necessarily a network or guarantee that aid will be provided. Historical accounts of the ‘economy of makeshifts’ have indicated that support from kinship for poor people was common in the late 16th century, but evidence also shows that by the early 17th century, support from kinship was less available (Barrett 2003: 200; Innes 1996: 142). Thus, like in the past, changes in the availability of support from kinship may vary depending on the circumstances of the supporters. Inevitably, reliance on networks may lead to social inequality among migrant groups (Portes 1998; Faist 2000).

Networks are not a static assembly of sustained ties, nor are they simply ‘out there’ so migrants only have to plug and mobilize resources their networks may offer (Schapendonk 2014: 810). Thus, nuances with the ways networks operate and how they could change reveal that a network is only useful inasmuch as it is active and able to mobilize resources; otherwise, migrants often find themselves relying on other

strategies to cope with the harshness of the journey. The focus only on ties within networks ignores meso-level actors in the migration process positioned outside the social network.

Sustaining Cash Transfers

Humanitarian spaces provide secure access to migrants' networks by offering means of communication, including free calls, texts, access to internet, or the reception of money orders. It is important to note that a shelter could receive around 8,500 USD during a month in money orders for migrants (FN Tenosique September 2015; FN San Luis Potosi October 2015). This does not mean that *migrants* receive large sums of money; I identified people receiving remittances as low as 10 USD and as high as 500 USD. Some migrants receive these small amounts of money once or twice during their migration trajectory. Also, the cash transfers do not necessarily come from the destination country; they could come from Central American countries, from the U.S., Mexico, and even from Europe. This activity is significant because those money orders sustain migration journeys. Furthermore, these findings give us a glimpse into the internal dynamics of networks.

I collected data regarding money orders from two different shelters over three months' time, meaning I registered the number of migrants receiving money for two months at a shelter in central Mexico and the number of migrants who received money for a month at a shelter in southern Mexico. Thus, my fieldwork permitted a closer look at this practice and provides evidence in the following areas: the prevalence of the practice amongst migrants using *casas de migrantes*, the amount of money received, and the origins of these transfers.

It is difficult to accurately measure the percentage of migrants who receive cash transfers during their journeys. However, my findings show that 20% to 25% of the migrants who stayed at the shelters where I collected these data received cash transfers. For example, 727 migrants passed through the shelter in Central Mexico during August and September; 83 and 97 of them received money orders during those months, respectively. Numbers were similar at the other shelter in southern Mexico, but may vary throughout the year. I collected this information during months that historically have lower numbers of migrants passing through. However, the numbers are consistent with what I registered during interviews, where 23% of my interviewees reported that they received money orders at some point during their journeys (FN September 2014 - January 2016). It follows then, that some migrants may receive cash transfers, but certainly not all.

My findings show that migrants receive a median of 45 USD in each transfer, which means that at least 50% of migrants receive less than that amount, though there are cases where migrants may receive much more money than expected. For example, I noted a case where the migrant did not reveal to the shelter that he was receiving 500 USD (FN Tenosique, September 23, 2015). Shelters have a rule against the reception of large amounts of money for security reasons and because transfer companies cap the amount of money a recipient can receive (a volunteer or staff member at the shelter often receives the cash transfer on a migrants' behalf). On the other end, I learned of a case of one migrant who received a cash transfer of 10 USD, which was probably equal to the cost of sending it (FN Tenosique, September 8, 2015).

Migrants' narratives often refer to small amounts of transferred money that barely sustain their journeys. Blanca, a 26-year-old migrant from Honduras, left her country with 43 USD and received a cash transfer in Coatzacoalcos. When talking about that cash transfer, she said, 'They only sent me 50 USD. They are poor like me and are barely making it. Those 50 USD were barely enough to move to the next town'. Similarly, Eduardo, a 39-year-old from El Salvador, said, 'One of my aunts is going to help me when I reach the border with the U.S. For now, I do not have anyone to help me. But, one of my friends was kind enough to send me 50 USD. She said that she could not send more because she has other expenses' (Eduardo, IDI Tenosique 11).

When considering migration journeys, it is easy to assume that support and cash come from the intended destination. I found that while that is still true for a good percentage of migrants, support for migrants comes not only from the destination, but also from the place of origin, or the transit country. My findings show that 71% of cash transfers (which were exclusively for Central American migrants) came from different parts of the U.S. and 29% came from countries of origin and Mexico. I even saw a small transfer that came from Spain. This suggests that resources for the journey come not only from networks located at the destination, but also from networks at the migrants' places of origin and beyond. Figure 19 illustrates these statistics.

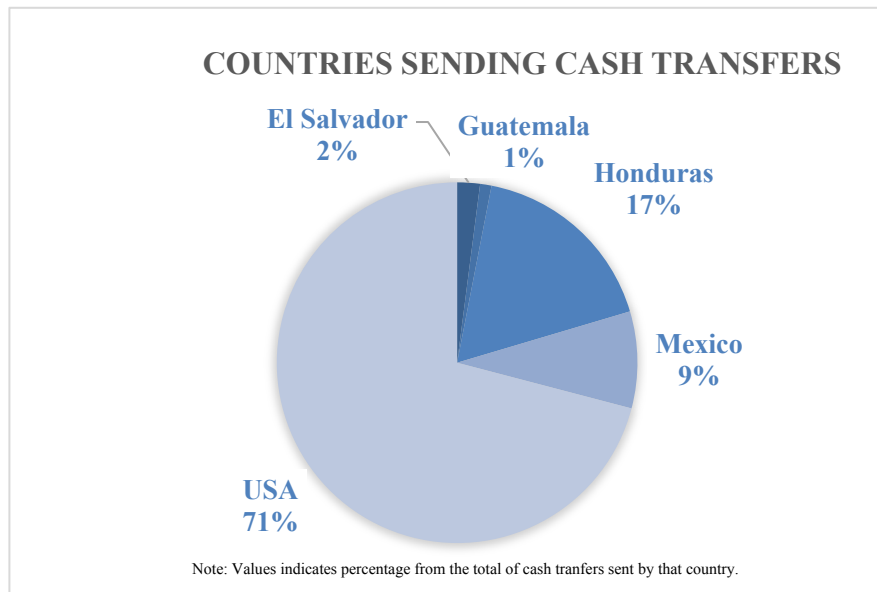


Figure 19. Countries Sending Cash Transfers
Source: Fieldwork

Some migrants may plan in advance to have money sent to them by their family members at different points along the journey. Each time, migrants factor in different costs that may include bribes or *derechos de paso* (fees for criminal gangs). While this strategy seems like an efficient response to violence because it saves migrants from carrying all of their money at once and avoiding being robbed of large amounts of money (Casillas 2006; Vogt 2012: 198–200), in practice, this is not as easy as it may first appear. Irregular migrants cannot cash a money order or receive a cash transfer unless they present official identification (like a passport). Thus, the presence of an intermediary who is a Mexican national, or someone who holds an official identification, is always necessary. This is also critical for Mexican deportees who return to the country without official identification. Sometimes in border towns, the post office is the only place that accepts the repatriation letter (a letter a deportee receives upon return to Mexico that supposedly serves as a form of identification) (FN September 27, 2014, December 14, 2015).

The money order always comes under the name that holds the identification; thus, if a migrant travels with a smuggler, the use of this strategy gives the smuggler an enormous amount of control over the migrant. If the migrant receives the money through a volunteer at one of the *casas de migrantes*, this still requires a good amount of trust. Furthermore, if a migrant asks another intermediary to receive the wire under his or her name, they may have to pay for the service and will be at risk of being robbed. In Chapter 1, I mentioned that shelters often find ways of responding practically to the needs of migrants. Thus, since some shelters have a more or less well-established system to support migrants with the reception of money orders, it follows that there is a concrete need among migrants. Some researchers have stated that reception of money orders as a strategy of migrants plays a crucial role in their migration strategies (Casillas 2006; J. M. Hagan 2008: 101; Vogt 2012: 198–200). However, I err on the side of caution when considering this a widespread practice of migrants as they transit through Mexico.

The practice of relying on money provided by networks to find support is common, and is not exclusive to migration processes. In fact, as indicated earlier, the role of kinship networks as a source of support was one of the strategies in an economy of makeshifts as a supplement for the poor in pre-industrial times. Such support allowed the poor to stay away from seeking welfare or to momentarily cope with shocks or crisis. However, it was one of several strategies the poor used to supplement income or cope with hardship. Furthermore, individuals and families relied on the economic support of kinship networks with different intensities and at various stages of the life cycle, or in response to different causes of poverty (King and Tomkins 2003: 221).

The strategies of an economy of makeshifts allow poor people to cope, not to move out of poverty. Thus, one must not assume that the strategies a poor person could rely on in an economy of makeshifts (including poor relief and material support from kinship) offered consistent and adequate income for poor people. Similarly, I argue that in the case of migrants depending on shelters, cash transfers have more of a sustaining role, as opposed to being a strategy that completely supported the migrant during his or her journey. If that were the case, migrants might not rely on or seek shelters for support, especially when they have to abide by the shelters' rules and regulations.

The Body

Without minimizing the significance of understanding irregular migration from a socio-economic-political perspective, there is still a lack of understanding of the migrants' embodied experiences of being on the road. Blisters, scratches, dehydration, tired bodies, broken arms, and — in extreme cases — missing limbs are traces that the journey through Mexico leaves on migrants' bodies. Therefore, it can be concluded that migrants use their bodies as a resource not only to cope with the journey, but to defy the systems that try to contain them.

Walking long distances or for significant periods of time appeared as a constant feature as migrants described their journeys. When faced with a lack of economic resources, migration controls, and/or irregular options for transportation, migrants walk. In addition, the freight train passes irregularly through the town of Tenosique, which means that everybody needs to be ready to run and try to catch it. On one occasion, four days had passed and there were no signs of a train 'going

up' (north). Migrants were restless and different groups debated what to do. 'We decided to walk to Zapata' [the next town], said one migrant from Honduras, who was traveling with another three friends. He added, 'we cannot keep waiting; with or without the train we will continue our journeys. We do not have many options, so we will walk' (FN Tenosique, September 10, 2015). That day, several groups of migrants started walking along the train tracks to the next town. I accompanied them to the end of town and later, I drove to the next town with the shelter's director. There, we saw some of the migrants who had left on foot and heard that migration authorities chased and captured some of them (FN Tenosique, September 2015). Migrants often walk at different stages of the journey; sometimes those journeys last a couple of hours until they are able to catch a freight train, but other times their journeys can last days or weeks. In any case, the physical demand is high.

To get to the shelter in Tenosique, migrants walk 58 kilometres from the border between Guatemala and Mexico. After Tenosique, the journey becomes more difficult because of the high number of migration control points and the irregularity of the freight train. Filemon, a 25-year-old migrant from Honduras, walked for two weeks and covered 420 kilometres (260 miles) before being able to jump onto the train. He said, 'we walked through the mountains and along the train tracks. We moved to the mountains when we saw migration checkpoints, returning to the train tracks once we were sure that we were far away from migration authorities. We spent two weeks just walking. We kept walking to the town of Juan Rodriguez Clara. We jumped onto the train around one in the morning. My feet were full of thorns and raw blisters. We were extremely tired and our stomachs were hurting because we ate a lot of green fruit that we found along the road' (Filemon, IDI San Luis Potosi 21). Filemon's experience reveals how migrants use their bodies to cover long

distances and how the journey takes a toll on their bodies, resulting in injuries and exhaustion.

When exploring the objects discarded by migrants crossing the Sonoran desert, De León (2013) borrows and expands the archaeological concept of use wear, which refers to the modifications objects suffer as a result of being used. In other words, ‘use wear seeks to show the intimate connection between people and objects and how those connections leave traces’ (2013: 331). Following his approach, I consider that as migrants walk or put themselves physically on the line during their journeys, these activities leaves traces on their bodies. The body is a human being’s first instrument, as well as the most natural object they could use in their interactions. Activity and movement such as climbing, jumping, walking, or trampling are among the most basic techniques of the body (Mauss 1973: 70). Migrants rely on walking, perhaps the most basic technique of the body, not only to avoid migration controls, but also as a tool to cover the distance towards their destination. Migrants ‘use’ their bodies to overcome the constraints of their journeys.

The body becomes part of what De Leon (2012; 2013) calls the ‘migrant habitus’, which refers to the material artefacts migrants carry, interact with, and use. The term also includes spaces, settings, and landscapes that migrants socialize with and transform: ‘The migrant habitus is not only represented in the traces of human activity embedded in individual artefacts but also in the long-term systematic use of particular objects associated with the alleviation of suffering that derives from exposure to the environment’ (De Leon 2012: 484). Thus, showers to clean tired and sweaty bodies, medication to alleviate pain, a supply of sanitary napkins, washboards to clean dirty clothes, or the provision of extra clothes and shoes, which are fixtures

in some shelters, acquire a deeper meaning when seen in relationship to how migrants ‘use-wear’ their bodies.

Occasionally, migrants pay a high price for daring to move through Mexico irregularly. The price may come in the form of a limb, another part of the body, a life-threatening infection that comes from exposure to different elements of the weather and landscape, or even attacks by criminals. Valentin, a 17-year-old from Honduras, lost a leg as he was trying to jump onto the freight train. When I interviewed him, he was recovering at a shelter in Puebla (SS Puebla 1). Like many other migrants who have suffered his fate, it is highly likely that he will return to the country of origin. ‘Without a fully functioning body, how am I going to be able to continue the journey?’, he said. During a visit to Honduras, I met the leader of a group called *Asociación de Migrantes Retornados con Discapacidad* (AMIREDIS) (Association of Migrants Returned with Disabilities), which includes close to 700 migrants who suffered accidents on their journeys and have lost different parts of their bodies. Similar groups exist in Guatemala and El Salvador.

Mountz (2004: 328) argues that ‘the body is a crucial element to understand the operation of power in relations between states and migrants [...] Embodiment locates power relations and contextualizes decision-making within workplace settings and life histories’. Furthermore, Hansen and Stepputat (2005: 13) states that mobile bodies defy disciplinary power and challenge manifestations of sovereignty. Migrant protests involve different bodily acts, such as lip sewing or hunger strikes, which only have political significance if they are mediated by public media or mobilizations on migrants’ behalf. To some extent, migrants’ protests require the intervention of local citizens (Johnson 2012: 118–119) because they may witness, broadcast, or highlight

the protest itself. In the case of migrants in Mexico, the use of the body as a mobility tool to cover distances in the midst of migration controls and limited resources emerges as an expression that defies the state. As a migrant at the shelter in San Luis Potosi said, ‘what can we do? If we cannot ride the train we have to walk. There is no money to do otherwise’ (FN San Luis Potosi, October 17, 2015). Walking is not often observed or considered as a public act of defiance. Nevertheless, migrants leave pieces of their bodies along the road when walking long distances to reach their destinations or to avoid system controls. The ‘use-wear’ of the body is an act of defiance to the system that attempts to manage migrants. The traces of this ‘use of the body’ appears in the relationship between migrants and the basic services of care for their welfare, which are fixtures at many shelters.

Conclusion

The interest in measuring poverty was not to establish causality, but to make explicit that poor migrants move internationally and travel long distances. The idea that it is not the poorest who move, but rather, those who have the resources to do so (Skeldon 1987: 8; de Haas 2007:10; Van Hear 2014) still remains true at a large scale, but has also led to an overemphasis of research on the role of networks and smuggling in migration processes. Migration literature does not explicitly state that migrants are not poor. Nevertheless, poverty levels among international migrants and the role of poverty in migration journeys are topics that have remained underexplored. It is plausible to think that the lack of tools to measure poverty among migrants has left this aspect under-researched, which leads to a gap in scholarship. Additionally, another goal of exploring poverty was to show evidence to contest that while migrants

compare themselves to others, their feelings of being poor may not be based only on their perceptions, but also in actual and concrete deprivations.

Even though there is a selection bias in the construction of the sample, the methodology used for this project has provided more details that illuminate a better understanding of the types of deprivations experienced among people using *casas de migrantes*. Nutrition, lack of sanitation, and cooking fuel were among the highest-reported deprivations migrants experienced before departure. Without establishing causality, these privations may be consistent with the lack of financial resources for the journey. If it is not possible to sustain a basic living standard in everyday life, then few resources may be available for a migration project. Nevertheless, the ‘economy of makeshifts’ reveals migrants’ agency, creativity, and the ways that other resources appear during migration journeys. I highlight three considerations: First, while interviews often conveyed the desire to continue the journey to the United States, staying in a particular town for an extended period of time and begging for food or money is always a possibility. Hence, begging as a coping strategy poses several questions for how local governments manage migrants’ presence and to what extent a local community is willing to help a foreign population. Second, many migrants, when facing restrictions, set themselves in motion and walk. This strategy also emphasizes migrants’ agency, as migrants put their bodies on the line during their migration journeys. Thus, the body is also considered as a resource and as an embodiment of contestation. Third, as much as *casas de migrantes* emerge to ease migrants’ vulnerability and poverty, migrants use them as a resource according to their own needs.

After all, poverty influences the way migrants move on their journeys, but does not stop them. Like the poor in earlier times, poor migrants still manage to cope with hardship. Without relying on one particular strategy, it is often an economy of makeshifts or a combination of different strategies that allows them to move. However, this economy of makeshifts does not solve poverty or guarantee success on the journey because it is a collection of coping strategies — *casas de migrantes* are *one of them* — that tend to be temporary and supplemental at all times. Poverty increases the vulnerability of migrants and deportees during their journeys. The migration paths through Mexico are characterized not only by heavy migration controls and the presence of groups that commit violence against migrants, but also by expressions of solidarity and care that support migrants and deportees.

Poverty, limited job markets, and unlikely possibilities to improve one's livelihood may lead migrants to seek opportunities somewhere else. Those migrants with limited financial resources for the journey become more vulnerable as they have to travel in more precarious conditions through Mexico either by using freight trains, public transportation through secondary roads, or by walking along train tracks or more desolated trails. These strategies make migrants more prone to becoming victims of violence by criminal gangs or extorted and abused by local and federal police. At the same time, poor migrants, unable to spend a night at a hotel or an inn, rely on the services provided by *casas de migrantes* that have emerged along migration paths. In the case of deportees, some also return to violent cities along the Mexico-U.S. border with limited resources.

At the theoretical level, links between poverty and violence emerge in circumstances where poor migrants move in more precarious situations than migrants

who have more financial resources. Humanitarianism appears as a response to ease migrants' poverty and vulnerability, as well as a response to violence by offering migrants 'safe havens'. Thus, poverty increases the likelihood of migrants and deportees becoming victims of violence. In addition, humanitarian organizations aiding migrants and deportees emerge in response to both migrants' poverty and contexts of violence. The next chapter illustrates and discusses the types of violence poor migrants encounter on their journeys and how poor migrants seek shelters for immediate help, but most importantly, do so to feel safe.

Chapter 7. Violence: An Omnipresent Threat

I interviewed María, a 28-year-old woman from Honduras, at the shelter in Coatzacoalcos, Veracruz in November of 2014. She left Honduras in March of 2014 with two other friends and 70 USD as her capital for the journey. Her destination was Los Angeles; her brother lives there and agreed to help her once she reached the U.S.-Mexico border. She said, ‘I want to go to the United States because I have seen how my brother’s family has advanced and I also want to have a better life. I am tired of paying “rent” to the local gang. They threaten us all the time’.

María entered Mexico as an irregular migrant through the southern end of the country. She and her friends hitchhiked from her hometown in Honduras to the border of Mexico. They crossed by boat and walked for two days, joining another group of migrants they found along the way. They were able to ride the freight train after paying 10 USD to a criminal gang who controlled access to it. While riding the train, another criminal group assaulted them, killing some and kidnapping others. In cases like this, police forces may have colluded with criminal groups or condoned these situations because they occurred in remote places. María, describing her experience, said:

The criminals appeared and started assaulting people and killing others. On the train there were women with their children. They kidnapped some of the women and children [...] I was so afraid that I jumped off the train. I was badly wounded, but I ran until I found some people and I asked for help. They called the police and *Grupo Beta*. They brought me to the city of Villahermosa [...] From there I was able to reach the shelter in Coatzacoalcos. But, I felt so insecure there that I sought help at a church. (María, SS Coatzacoalcos 7)

María stayed in the town of Coatzacoalcos for eight months. She was planning to continue her journey to the United States at the end of 2014. However, at that point,

she had no idea how to get to the border or where to cross to the United States. Her brother told her that he was not able to help her at the time, but he advised her to go to Mexico City and work there for a few months. She said, ‘at some point, my brother will pay for a smuggler for me to get to the United States’. María managed to find a job and rent a small room in Coatzacoalcos and was seriously considering staying in Mexico. ‘I am so afraid of continuing the journey’, she said.

María’s story is common among irregular migrants attempting to reach the United States, who often leave contexts of poverty, insecurity, and violence. They embark on journeys even when they have little or no assurance that help from their families, friends, or contacts will come through. Often, the migrants who have family members or friends at the destination are asked to reach the border between Mexico and the United States before receiving help. Such a task means that they must delay the activation of their social network, forcing them to move by their own means through Mexico. The reality for deportees arriving at the northern Mexican border is also difficult. They often return after being subjected to the American legal systems, which routinely criminalizes them (Stumpf 2006). They arrive without proper identification or resources, and have difficulty reaching family members or friends. This is because they are often deported through points far away from the places where they were detained in the first place.

This chapter highlights violence as one of the contextual elements of the migration process in Mexico. I argue that violence shapes and reinforces poor migrants and deportees’ vulnerability; creates a permanent climate of uncertainty, insecurity, and fear; and leads migrants to seek support from humanitarian actors not only because violence appears as particular events during migration journeys, but also

because violence emerges as an omnipresent threat for actors involved in migration processes. Thus, in the general context of this dissertation, violence shapes concrete migration experiences (micro-level) and larger dynamics (macro-level) in the migration process. The chapter differentiates itself from the forced migration literature that sees violence as the reason for flight and offers a more comprehensive analysis by avoiding an examination of violence as particular events that ‘happen’ along migration trajectories in favor of arguing that violence is both an internal and external dynamic that has specific effects on migration processes in Mexico.

7.1 Defining and Locating Violence in Migration Processes

Violence is a complex concept that can be studied from different perspectives, levels of analysis, and contexts (Scheper-Hughes 2007: 161). Forced migration studies consider violence as the cause for flight. In these cases, violence is coercive and based on different forms of compulsory power. In contrast, migration studies have often explored and analysed violence as events in the experience of migrants. However, understanding violence only in this way does not allow a more comprehensive analysis of violence as a dynamic in migration processes. The multiple actors and contextual settings require a theoretical lens that allows understanding violence in interactions with these multiple actors and in different contexts and levels of analysis.

In the study of violence, there are sociological approaches (Bourdieu and Nice 1997; Jackman 2002); medical and anthropological perspectives (Farmer 1996, 2004; Bourgois 2001; Kleinman 2000); power and violence studies (Arendt 1970); political studies related to violence and conflict (Della Porta 1995; D. McAdam, Tarrow, and

Tilly 2001); political-economy approaches (Scheper-Hughes 1992; Keen 1998; Collinson 2003); legal and criminal studies related to violence (Menjívar and Abrego 2012); and social-historical-contextual viewpoints (Lawrence and Karim 2007). Specifically, the migration context studies of Slack and Whiteford (2011), Casillas (2011a), Spener (2008), and Mountz and Loyd (2013) offer some interesting analyses.

Existing scholarship provides important insights into the relationship between migration and violence. Studies have taken different perspectives and approaches to this relationship. Fiddian-Qasmiyeh et al (2014), as well as Lindley (2013), discuss forced migration in contested places. Other studies explore the violence migrants experience while en route to their intended destinations (Brigden 2013; Brachet 2012a; Schapendonk 2011). There are also studies emphasizing a gendered approach to violence and migration (Simmons, Menjívar, and Téllez 2015; Stepnitz 2013; Donato et al. 2006; Piper 2003; Argüelles and Rivero 1993). In recent years, due in part to the growing number of fatalities, there is an emphasis on the analyzes of violence that occurs at borderlands in different regions of the world, especially at the U.S.-Mexico border and the European borders with Africa (Squire 2017; Jones 2016; Andersson 2014). The abundance of studies shows the prevalence of violence in migration processes, as well as the importance of analysing it. Many of the approaches look at violence as events that occur at the micro-level and become part of the migration experience, while others emphasize how political structures increase violence and risk, leading to fatalities.

The evidence gathered during my fieldwork in Mexico indicates that violence emerges not only as a particular experience for migrants during their migration journeys, but also as an omnipresent threat along the road and even in those spaces

that one could consider safe. Thus, violence can be seen as events that affect the migration process and become part of the migration experience and as an external or indirect feedback mechanism in the migration processes in Mexico.

Defining Violence

The understanding of violence cannot be limited to its physicality — force, assault, or the infliction of pain alone (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004a: 1). A broader understanding of violence must also consider how it includes a violation of the personhood, dignity, sense of worth, or value of the victim. Approaches to violence that focus only on physical violence leave out psychological outcomes like permanent states of fear and anxiety, material outcomes like loss of property or income, and social outcomes such as public humiliation, harassment, or stigmatization (Jackman 2002: 393; Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004a; Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004b). Violence always goes beyond the actual act. Along migratory routes in Mexico, the violence migrants and humanitarian workers experience is real and has painful effects. Gloria, a 43-year-old migrant from El Salvador, narrated her rape at the hands of two men. The physical assault has already left deep and life-changing outcomes, as well as the impotence and rage of her husband, who witnessed the event while being held hostage with a machete by one of the two men (SS, Acayucan 2). The same applies to Domingo, who was robbed and beaten by police officers during his first migration journey. Attempting to reach the United States once more, he was kidnapped, held captive for 10 days, and badly wounded during his second journey (SS, San Luis Potosi 1). Thus, any account and analysis of violence must acknowledge the suffering and the damaging effects that violence inflicts on people.

However, there are instances when violence affects people physically and/or psychologically without the possibility of clearly identifying a perpetrator. Galtung's definition and dimensions of violence helps consider not only the actual act of violence, but also those circumstances when there is no clear perpetrator. For him, 'violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations' (Galtung 1969: 168). He further clarifies his definition by arguing that violence is equated with those forces, dynamics, or acts that preclude people from realizing their full life potential. He also differentiates violence as personal (direct), or structural (indirect). The former is a violent act or 'event' committed by recognisable perpetrators of violence, while structural violence is more a social process in which an agent responsible for the violence is not possible to identify (Galtung 1969: 170–173). In explaining the distinction between structural and personal violence, he argues that structural violence is integrated in the social structures and is manifested as 'unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances' (Galtung 1969: 171). Perpetrators become merely tools of the entire system or structure in cases when they can be identified. This distinction between personal and structural violence aids in analysing the effects of violence at the micro- and macro- levels in migration processes. They help in seeing violence against migrants both as unfortunate events migrants experience and dynamics that may affect an entire migration process.

In this chapter, I use this definition as it relates to the experiences of irregular migrants in Mexico, as well as deportees returning to the northern border. I distinguish not only those interactions at the micro-level with both state and non-state actors, but also the effects of the application of the law and those factors that constrain migrants' agency in pursuing the fulfilment of the migration journeys. While Galtung's

definition does not emphasize the context where the violence occurs, I argue that context and time also play an important role in understanding the motivations and participation of different violent actors (Lawrence and Karim 2007: 1).

Non-State Actors

Maras

Rubén, a 26-year-old Honduran migrant, had been on the road for over a month when I interviewed him at a shelter in central Mexico. During his migration trajectory, he was deported once from Mexican territory, only to resume his journey as soon as he returned to Honduras. Because he started his journey with very little money, he travelled much of the way by foot and often had to beg to survive. Ruben's experience of violence started even before he embarked on his migration journey. After leaving the army in Honduras, he and his wife were able to secure a small house and run a small business selling fruit in his hometown. He used to make enough income until the *mara* started to ask him for money. He said,

I had to pay the *mareros* a monthly tax. Regularly, they asked for 500 lempiras [20 USD], but sometimes they asked for 1000 lempiras [40 USD]. Things reached a point when I just could not pay them, and I was only making enough to sustain my family. Then, they sent a message asking me to leave my house [...] Two days after, the *mara* showed up at my house and we had to leave. We left without anything. We locked the house and left [...] We took refuge with my father-in-law and I started working again. I only made [40 USD] a month that is not enough to survive [...] Then, another group threatened my father-in-law and me. So, I told my wife, 'I cannot keep running and hiding', I told her '*me voy pal' norte*' (I am leaving for the north). (Rubén, IDI San Luis Potosí 1)

Maras are street groups or gangs with different levels of organization exercising illegal activities. Some of these groups exercise transnational ties linking their activities from Central American countries to Mexico and the United States (Cruz et

al. 2017; Cruz 2010; Manwaring 2007). These groups ‘subtly take control of territory and people one street or neighbourhood at a time (*coup d’ street*) or one individual, business, or government office at a time’ (Manwaring 2007: 2-4).

The presence of *maras* and the violence they exercise appear not only in Central American countries, but also along the migration paths in Mexico. While their composition — in terms of nationality — is unclear, often migrants describe them as a mix of Mexican nationals and gang members from other nationalities, mostly Central Americans. As pointed out by Manwaring (2007), these groups, while stationed in one place, often control an area and either the access to the freight train or to certain migration paths. They ask for *cuotas* (fees), also known as *la renta* (rent). In the best of scenarios, migrants are simply not allowed to ride on the train. Often *maras* threaten migrants and beat them if they are unable to come up with the money they ask for. In extreme circumstances, they board the train, rob people, and exercise extreme violence by raping women or killing migrants who oppose them or offer resistance.

Andrés, a 20-year-old Honduran migrant traveling with his brother and cousins, met *maras* a couple of times during his journey, first in the town of Chontalpa in the state of Veracruz and again, further along the migrant route in the town of Tierra Blanca. He described how the *mara* beat them up, but casually minimizes the event: ‘the *mara* got on the train in Chontalpa, where they kicked us off. *Nomás nos dieron un par de pasadas* (they only roughed us up), but everything was okay. So, they kicked us off the train and the *mara* remained on board the train, supposedly providing “protection” to those migrants who had money and paid the *cuota* of 100 USD’, he said (Andrés, SS Saltillo 5). They had to walk another two days along the train tracks

until they were able to catch another train. During that time, they slept in the mountains. Ahead in the migrant route, he said that a different *mara* also kicked them off the train and asked for money. This time they had to wait for four days before continuing their journey. He said, ‘in Tierra Blanca, again, the *mara* kicked us off the train. They were asking for 100 USD. Since none of us had money we got off and had to wait another four days’ (Andrés, SS Saltillo 5).

Avoiding areas of criminal activity, taking elongated journeys, considering violence on the road as something normal, and living with a permanent sense of danger are some of the immediate effects from the everyday violence exercised by *maras* along the migrants’ paths. *Maras* are only one of the actors in this violent landscape. Criminal gangs that target migrants for profit, organized crime that makes money through extortion, and kidnapping are other potential dangers that exist, and reinforcing the fearful obstacles that may appear along the migration routes in Mexico.

Criminal Gangs and Organized Crime

Violence exists at any point along the route, but it is unclear exactly who these groups are. However, humanitarian organizations and government officials have identified areas of major risks of violence from criminal groups against migrants. This information is available to migrants at different points of their journeys. Migrants react to the presence of criminal gangs along the routes by adjusting their migration trajectories to avoid ‘hot’ places, or, having very little choice, going through the areas of risk. In southern Mexico, due to geography and the infrastructure in place (roads, freight trains, and official and unofficial crossing points), there are three routes

commonly used by irregular migrants: the Gulf or Jungle route, the Central route, and the Pacific route. These routes lead to towns where the freight train stops, in the case of the Gulf and Pacific routes, or have roads with less migration controls, like in Central route. These routes, while not being the only ones, are the most common migratory paths at the beginning of migrants' journeys in Mexico.

At the beginning of the Gulf route (in the state of Tabasco), NGOs and local authorities have identified two groups that beat, assault, rob, and rape migrants crossing the region (FN Tenosique, April 6, 2015). The Central routes go through a mountain region where there is active drug trade. The migrants' routes overlap with this activity, making migrants vulnerable to kidnapping and extortion. If migrants travel with a smuggler, the smuggler may have to pay a *cuota* (fee) to the drug groups. Unlike the Gulf and the Pacific routes where migrants may be able to ride the freight train, the only ways migrants can go through the Central route is by using public transportation, walking, or enlisting the assistance of private transportation contracted by smugglers. The lack of alternative forms of transportation makes migrants vulnerable to different groups that prey on them or extort them to transport them along the route (FN Comitán, January 26, 2015).

The Pacific route also has well-identified points where violence against migrants occurs. One is near the town of Huixtla, and the others are in La Arrocera and Chahuities, which are towns in the state of Oaxaca. Similar to the Gulf route, criminal groups often abuse, beat, and rape migrants as they try to move through Mexico. In August 2016, the Mexican government withdrew the concession granted to the company that operated the freight train in southern Mexico (SCT 2016). The government argued public interest and national security as the main reasons for

withdrawing the concession. Hence, the train has stopped its service in certain parts of the train system and migrants must find ways of avoiding authorities and checkpoints by using public transportation and/or walking around migration and military controls.

Some migrants walk along the train tracks because of their unfamiliarity with the geography. Josué, a migrant from Guatemala who was on his way to the United States and traveling for a second time, said, 'I use the train tracks because they always will take you to the next point. Also, I can always run to hide in case *la migra* [migration authorities] appear' (Josué, SS Huixtla 4). It is common for migrants to follow the train tracks when they are unable to ride on the freight train or when the train has stopped running through the region. This shows how migrants may use the landscape and geography to avoid migration controls. In any case, this strategy makes them vulnerable to local criminal groups.

Javier, a 34-year-old Honduran migrant and secondary school teacher, had been traveling with his friends for over a month. He left Honduras with 2,500 lempiras (100 USD), but he ran out of money quickly. Thus, he had to walk much of his journey and begged at least three times in different towns. The money was used to eat and to travel using public transportation from town to town. He recalled how before the town of Chontalpa in Veracruz, gang members got on the train and asked for money: 'At some point some gang members got on the train and started asking people for the *cuota* (fee). We were together with other migrants and because we were in a group they passed through without asking anything. There were three gang members. They started to beat people who were alone or who did not offer any resistance. Once we got to Chontalpa, the train stopped and a bigger criminal group asked for another

cuota' (Javier, SS Saltillo 13). However, small criminal groups are linked to larger organizations with bigger operations, as Javier experienced on his journey: 'They [*maras*] started to tell people to move to a place next to the train tracks. There were close to 300 people on the train that day. We realized they were leading us to a trap, so we ran in the opposite direction and asked for some help. An old man let us enter a small shack next to his house [...] We closed the door and saw what was happening through the shack's cracks. The *mareros* were chasing people, beating them, and putting them in a vehicle they had. They were kidnapping them! It was really scary, we were inside watching and hoping they would not come for us' (Javier, SS Saltillo 13). Later on his journey, Javier and his friends were assaulted by another criminal gang in the town of Tierra Blanca. This story displays how *maras* and criminal groups may be linked to larger criminal groups targeting migrants, and shows how easily migrants can suffer abuse repeatedly throughout their journeys.

There are other times where criminal groups operate in more sophisticated ways. Criminal organizations lure and recruit migrants by offering opportunities to supposedly help migrants before kidnapping them with the goal of receiving ransom for their freedom. Judith, a Guatemalan migrant traveling with her brother-in-law and his son, was kidnapped, but was able to escape before reaching the town of Puebla. She described how they stayed at Tuxtla Gutierrez in southern Mexico during their second attempt to reach the United States, waiting for the best time to continue the journey. During that time they took simple temporary jobs, which is common for poor migrants: 'We decided to wait some time [...] I went looking for a job from house to house. My brother-in-law and my son got a job at a bakery. A family helped us with shelter in a spare house they had. We paid only for electricity and water service' (Judith, SS San Luis Potosi 11). While waiting and mulling over their options to

continue, they were recruited to work in northern Mexico. The offer included transportation and a job: ‘My brother-in-law and my son told me that people were looking for workers in the town of Hermosillo [in northern Mexico] [...] We conversed with the recruiters and they agreed to take the three of us’, Judith said. After making the decision to accept the offer, they shared the information with the family who offered them shelter and heard that another member of the family had embarked north in a similar way. Things took a turn for the worst as they were riding the bus, when they learned that the trip was a scheme for human trafficking:

The family that gave us shelter in Tuxtla sent those messages. Their son had embarked on a similar trip a week before and he alerted the family that he was being held captive by an armed group and that he was being forced to work without pay. After many messages, we tried to remain calm on the bus and we did not say anything to anyone. At one of the rest stops before Puebla [in Central Mexico], we were able to run away. We left everything on the bus, backpacks, and bags. After wandering for some hours, we found a church and asked about a migrant shelter to seek help. (Judith, SS San Luis Potosi 11)

After some time collecting data in the shelters and observing the events that surround them, I noticed that different groups of people emerge. Some of these groups sell food or personal care items to migrants and others observe the coming and going of people. Staff members of *casas de migrantes* themselves have identified these latter groups as criminal groups that rob and intimidate migrants, or groups that share information with other criminal groups. Sometimes, these groups, preying on migrants, work in collusion with police forces (FN Coatzacoalcos, November 20, 2014). Furthermore, shelters are not exempt from recruiters, which are people disguised as migrants in need that enter shelters to recruit migrants, offering promises to help them reach the United States. Sometimes, these recruiters ask for some money or are linked to larger groups that may kidnap migrants (FN Bojay, December 14, 2014). Even when trying to be cautious, the experience of Judith and her son

illustrates how migrants, in their desperation to continue their journeys, can fall for easy promises. While listening to recruiters, migrants may fall into the trap of trafficking organizations (FN Tenosique, January 7 2016). These experiences are traumatic and contribute to a permanent sense of danger along the route, preventing the possibility of migrants trusting one another and developing some sense of collective agency. Because they cannot trust one another, the migrants lose their ability to enhance their sociocultural life, which allows them to share knowledge, work together, and cooperate to enhance their safety and welfare.

The line between contracting the services of a smuggler and criminal activity becomes blurry when migrants are held hostage because family members cannot pay more money requested by smugglers or when drug trafficking organizations take over smuggling rings. Barbara's story shows how the experience of traveling with a smuggler could move into a situation when a migrant is held hostage against her or his will, turning this into a *de facto* kidnapping situation.

Barbara, a 30-year-old migrant from El Salvador, travelled through Mexico with several other migrants, aided by a smuggler driving a truck. At different points on her journey, she got out of the truck to walk around checkpoints. Other times, her group rode public transportation with the smuggler, bribing any official who asked for identification. She travelled with one smuggler all the way to one of the border towns between Mexico and the United States. At the border, the group she was traveling with was separated and distributed among other smugglers, according to their intended destinations. She was put in a safe house close to the city of Reynosa where she had to wait to cross the border. There, she kept waiting until she realized that she had been kidnapped:

We arrived at a house [...] There were close to 18 people in that house. After we entered, the smuggler turned off the lights and we were in complete darkness. Later that night, more people arrived, some from El Salvador, others from Honduras, and there was even a Mexican there [...] The next day, the smugglers came and took some of the people and children among them [...] At some point I realized that something was wrong, people were coming and going. The smugglers kept discussing what would happen to us and by then it was only me and another young Guatemalan man. We stayed at that house for 24 days. Not knowing what was happening, one day I asked one of the smugglers if they were going to cross us. 'If you do not cross us, then I would rather go back to my country', I said. The smuggler told us that our families had not paid them. I said, 'the agreement was for my family to pay 4,000 USD at departure and the other 3,500 USD will be paid at the destination'. The smuggler answered that he did not care and he threatened us by saying, 'you bitch, you only cause problems. It would be better just to shoot you in the head'. (Barbara, IDI Reynosa 16)

Somehow, Barbara and her companion were able to escape from the safe house and wandered the outskirts of the city. *Grupos Beta* brought Barbara to the shelter, although the whereabouts of her companion were unknown. At the *casa del migrante*, she received help to file a claim with the federal police. She spent more than 20 days in detention, but she also received a legal regularization for humanitarian reasons to remain in Mexico, and she stayed at a border town for a couple of months. In September 2016, afraid that the smuggler could find her, she crossed the border of the United States and filed for refugee status. At the beginning of 2017 she was at a detention centre still waiting for a court date. In the end, she was deported back to El Salvador (FN January 19, 2106; FN Follow up February 2017).

Barbara's story shows everyday violence through an interpersonal exchange charged with abuse that was physical — since she was being held hostage — and psychological because of the threats she received. Her testimony also reveals the complexity of violence and how the line between a commercial agreement and kidnapping can blur. Even when smugglers may have commercial interests or a good

reputation to preserve, occasionally some may be colluded with organized crime. In these cases, the smugglers control the situation and migrants need to find ways to escape their oppressors. While the sample of this research is limited to those migrants or deportees using *casas de migrantes* and is not representative of the full border crossing patterns, still it shows some trends that recently appear more frequently in migration and border studies literature. However, the full complexity involved with smuggling, organized crime, and drug trade is beyond the scope of my project. Slack and Campbell (2016), Sanchez (2014), Slack and Whiteford (2011), Andreas and Wallman (2009), and Spener (2008), among others, offer more detailed ethnographic work on the migration patterns at the border between the U.S. and Mexico.

In spite of support from humanitarian organizations, migrants are reluctant to file reports with the local authorities. Often, local authorities are aware of these crimes and have identified criminal groups, but they do not pursue them or procure justice for migrants. This is largely due to authorities' corruption and inefficiency. Sometimes authorities collude with criminal groups, and at other times there is neglect from government officials in these situations. Thus, many events of violence go unreported or unattended. Several states have special instances in the courts to deal with human rights violations against migrants (FN Reynosa January 8, 2016). Even so, many cases of abuse still occur, but detention or prosecution is rare. The special prosecutor for crimes against migrants in the town of Tenosique told me, 'we have identified these groups and we are considering conducting a ride in the area to detain them. We have even thought about going undercover or pretending we are migrants so we can detain them' (FN Tenosique April 6, 2015). Furthermore, during one of my stays in the town of Tenosique, the *Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos* (CIDH) (Inter-American Commission for Human Rights) came to conduct a visit in

Mexico because of multiple reports of human rights violations. In its report, there were multiple recommendations to the Mexican government as a result of the visit which included more than the issues around migration (CIDH 2015). Unfortunately, very little has changed since the recommendations were issued. In response, the Mexican government argues that migration policies address the concerns expressed in the recommendation. This creates an ‘implementation gap’ in which the policy does not translate to practice.

State Actors

Violence against migrants is not limited or circumscribed to local non-state actors or other variants of organized crime. Those exercising violence against migrants can appear with uniforms of all kinds and have diverse associations with the government. These state actors include local, state, and federal police, as well as migration authorities. The type of violence committed against migrants also varies, ranging from threats, extortion, robbery, and beatings to the violence committed as state agents try to enforce the law. Sometimes there is collusion between gangs, criminal groups, and governmental offices. Illustrations of violence committed by state actors abound. Below, I highlight what I call the ‘violence of enforcement’ and show how state actors not only rob migrants, but also threaten them.

La Migra and the Violence of Enforcement

A recurrent theme in interviews with migrants is encounters with *la migra* (migration authorities). Migration officers often chase irregular migrants to detain and remove them from the country. Sometimes, migration authorities conduct raids with

the help of other police forces. Encounters with state actors can become violent as migrants are beaten and robbed of the little money they have. Some of these encounters are charged with psychological violence as migrants are told not to report the incidents. The following excerpt from one interview reveals different circumstances in which state actors abuse and threaten migrants:

Some 70 to 80 migrants boarded the freight train that day. As they were waiting for the train to resume the journey, local police, state police, federal police, and migration authorities arrived on the scene. As expected, migrants started to run everywhere, trying to avoid being captured. In this particular instance, it was the police forces that were persecuting migrants, throwing them to the ground once captured. The captured migrants were then handed over to migration authorities. I witnessed several migrants getting injured as police forces chased them. Brute force was used during their detention. They detained close to 25 migrants that day. At least five of them were bleeding from wrestling with officers and others were bruised from falling from the train as they were being persecuted. (FN Tenosique, October 12, 2014)

Migrants' narratives often describe instances like this in which migration authorities chase them. Often migrants are not chased once, but several times along their journeys, often sustaining injuries during the chase. Omar and his cousin were chased by migration authorities a couple of times during their journey (Omar, SS Acayucan 8). Victor, a 27-year-old Guatemalan migrant, had walked for more than 50 days when I interviewed him at a shelter 300 kilometres from the US-Mexico border. Lacking resources, he and other migrants walked for several days along the train tracks, where inevitably they encountered migration authorities that chased them: 'After that time, we were less. Migration captured four people. I was able to escape. People along the way have been good to us and had given us food, but sometimes we have to stay at different shelters to recover' (Victor, SS Saltillo 11). Even though migrants are able to escape from migration authorities, they may lose their identifications or drop the few items that might be in their backpacks. Moreover, migrants have to walk for

several days — elongating their journeys — through less transited routes, which makes them more vulnerable to criminal gangs (FN San Luis Potosi, October 20, 2015).

There are other occasions when migration authorities abuse migrants without a clear reason. Sometimes, abuse represents a form of showing and exercising power. Carlos, a 38-year-old migrant traveling with another three friends, was beaten up and abused by migration officers near the town of Orizaba: ‘We had been riding the freight train and were sleeping on one of the cars. [...] As soon as we arrived to Orizaba, they woke us up. It was a group of six people all wearing vests with the migration authority logo. They wore vests that read “*migración*” (migration). One of them asked us, “do you know who we are? We are migration authorities”. At first, I thought that they would arrest us. Instead, they started to beat us up with a baton — like the ones used by police. They made us undress, so we were naked, and they continued beating us up’. Carlos and his friends were accused of beating another officer in the previous town and after being beaten up, they were told not to report the incident to the authorities: ‘They told us to dress again and said, “make sure you do not report this. Continue your journey and do not say anything”’ (Carlos, SS Saltillo 12). Many instances of violence go unreported either because migrants do not want to spend the time to report to an officer or because they may fear retaliation since frequently, abusers tell them not to report the event. In any case, migrants assume the violence is part of the journey and normalize the event.

Sometimes, migrants are not only robbed of their belongings, but they receive threats from state actors because of their irregular condition while transiting through Mexico. Furthermore, occasionally officers take advantage of migrants travelling with

family members, threatening them with keeping hostage their partners or children. Enrique, a Honduran migrant traveling with his two children, was walking through the mountains when he encountered officers. The officers brought Enrique and the children close to the main road, subjected them to full body searches, and threatened to turn them in to migration authorities if they refused to hand over all their money. Furthermore, officers gave Enrique and his children a death threat if they reported the incident to the authorities. Enrique said, 'I showed them all that I had and they took everything. I told one of them to leave me some money so I could to buy some juice for my little kid. He told me, "You can figure out how you can do it". That is what he told me. I told him thank you anyway. We started walking again. Then, they told me "*si andas de lengua larga, aquí se les corta*" (if you say something, here we take care of snitches). "There is no problem", I told them. "Nothing has happened here". We just kept walking for three days, until someone gave us a ride to the town of Palenque' (Enrique, SS Palenque 11).

Carlos and Enrique's encounters with different state actors show how violence comes at the hands of criminal gangs, and how officials abuse migrants on their journeys. Migration law in Mexico (SEGOB 2011) indicates that federal and local police can support migration authorities in border control activities. Thus, federal police can request that a migrant identify herself if the situation seems pertinent. In Carlos' story, it is the migration authorities who abused their authority as they beat and intimidated the migrants. In Enrique's case, federal police were within their rights to stop the migrants and request identification. However, the violence against the migrants was not justified as it included a full body search, the seizure of belongings, and the psychological violence of the death threat should the event be reported. My

conversations with migrants confirmed that this violence from police forces against migrants occurs regularly (FN Tenosique, January 5 2016).

The experiences of migrants described above clearly show the interpersonal level of violence, as well as its delinquent side. These tense, difficult, and life-threatening encounters with *maras*, criminal groups, organized crime, or state actors are an everyday occurrence along the migration paths in Mexico or at the border with the United States. For deportees, the situation does not differ much since they return to Mexico without resources or even an ID. Deportees face abuse from police forces that do not recognize the provisional ID form provided by migration authorities. They also lack social support in the border towns they are returned to and become prey for criminal organizations. In other words, migrants are surveilled and chased in a pattern of hunter and prey (Andersson 2014: 98-130) by both state and non-state actors throughout Mexico.

For irregular migrants, violence leads to elongated journeys, strandedness, emotional and psychological costs, and a permanent sense of danger. Deportees may suffer the same psychological costs and permanent sense of danger. Furthermore, the need to continue their journeys or the inability to press charges often leads migrants to accept violence as normal. However, by focusing only on the types of violence, elements of everyday violence are lost. These elements include power dynamics, the normalization of violence as an element that comes with the journey, and the migrants' commodification caused by violence.

An Omnipresent Threat: Violent Pluralism in Mexico

Migration research in Mexico has increasingly tried to explain migrants' interactions with more complex patterns of violence that involve state and non-state actors, organized crime, and drug trade operations. In spite of these efforts, understanding the full spectrum of violence remains limited since the focus has remained on the effects of violence on migration journeys or dynamics at crossing borders, especially at the border of the United States or and more recently as part of migrants' journeys through Mexico. However, none of the approaches fully explain why migration has become an omnipresent and endemic dynamic in the migration process and in all of Mexico.

Thus, to better understand violence against migrants in migration processes in Mexico, we need to consider the evolution of larger patterns of violence in the region, which includes Central American countries, Mexico, and the U.S.-Mexico border. As explained in Chapter 2, the causes for increased violence are multifactorial and include, but are not limited to, endemic poverty, the rise of criminal gangs, organized crime, drug and arms trafficking, collusion of authorities, and police forces with criminal groups. This generalized violence can be understood as 'violent pluralities' (Arias and Goldstein 2010; Burrell and Moodie 2013). This notion considers that 'Latin American democratic society can be conceptualized as 'violently plural', with states, social elites, and subalterns employing violence in the quest to establish or contest regimes of citizenship, justice, rights, and a democratic social order' (Arias and Goldstein 2010: 4-5). Violent pluralism does not intend to suggest different types of violence in Latin American countries. Instead, the notion of violent pluralism allows the reflection of violence as part of the democratic process and much more than a social aberration: 'violence is a mechanism for keeping in place the very

institutions and policies that neoliberal democracies have fashioned over the past decades, as well as an instrument for coping with the myriad of problems that neoliberal democracies have generated' (Arias and Goldstein 2010: 5). In other words, in the regions of Central American and Mexico there are violent pluralities consisting of state and non-state actors participating in organized crime, corruption, gang violence, lynching, and paramilitarism. These violent pluralities or groups committing violence do not want to overtake the state, but to keep at bay its intervention, so they can continue with their particular agendas. Furthermore, these violent pluralities cause the lines between political violence and criminal violence to blur. Violence against migrants needs to be seen and analysed against this larger context of violence as an omnipresent threat.

7.2 Dimensions of Violence and Its Normalization in the Migration Processes

Violence should not be understood only as micro-level experiences of migrants along their journeys. Instead, a deeper analysis of violence should consider the different levels of analysis that allow us to see how violence in migration processes could be a contextual dynamic (macro-level) that influences the process. In the case of the migration process in Mexico, two factors are at stake: understanding that violence against migrants is part of a larger pattern of generalized violence in Mexico, and analysing the ways migrants normalize violence to the point that violence is expected and minimized.

Everyday Violence

At a shelter in Central Mexico, one migrant said, ‘everybody knows that the road to the American dream runs through the Mexican nightmare’ (FN Bojay, December 4, 2014). This is a common expression among migrants moving through Mexico hoping to reach the United States. A slightly different version of this saying among deported Mexicans is, ‘I was living the American dream and I have returned to the Mexican nightmare’ (FN Reynosa, January 10, 2016). These expressions refer to the awareness of the possibility that one could be robbed, wounded, mutilated, disappear, or even die on the migration paths through Mexico. Further, these ideas reflect not only the fact that acts of violence — some of them executed with extreme cruelty — exist and are committed against migrants, but also the fact that this violence is assumed as ‘normal’ or something that ‘happens’.

Phillipe Bourgois (2001: 8; 2004) adapts Scheper-Hughes’ (2007) concept of ‘everyday violence’ to describe daily practices and expressions of violence that occur at a micro-level. He states that while these expressions of violence are interpersonal, domestic, and delinquent, the focus is on the individually-lived experience that normalizes violence at the community level and creates an atmosphere of permanent violence. In other words, everyday violence looks at those violent interactions and the ways in which they reach a point or are perceived as ‘normal’ or ‘terror as usual’ (Taussig 2004). While Bourgois’ use of everyday violence may seem simple, the emphasis remains on the ways in which these acts of violence at the micro-level are perceived or assumed as something that is, in migrants’ experiences, ‘something that comes with the migration journey’.

What it is significant for the migration process is how migrants minimize the impact or the nature of violence. The more violence is ‘normalized’ the more is seen as part of the route. If violence is expected, then it becomes part of the dynamics in the migration process. In interviews or in conversations with migrants at the shelters it became clear that often migrants are aware of the dangers along the route. At the same time, they always express their lack of options and assuming of the risks by saying “but, what can you do?” (FN September 2014 – January 2016). The normalization of violence needs careful consideration. Violence creates fear, and fear may paralyze people. Thus, living and moving in contexts of violence, as well as assuming violence is ‘business as usual’, could be a necessary way of coping with the emotions and pressure of violence itself. María, mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, has remained in the town where I interviewed her for months because, in her own words, ‘I am so afraid of continuing the journey’. However, the way violence appears, operates, and affects lives is never clean-cut. Bourgois states:

how violence operates along multiple, overlapping planes along a continuum that ranges from the interpersonal and delinquent to the self-consciously political and purposeful. It also encompasses structural, institutional, and historical forms as well as symbolic, cultural and historical forms. (Bourgois 2004: 428)

This continuum of violence is significant for the migration process in Mexico because it captures the multiple actors — direct and structural — that may commit violence against migrants. It also reveals that everyday violence operates in different contexts and levels of analysis that may overlap. In the case of irregular migrants and deportees in Mexico, they move from violence, as they flee from poverty and violence or return from detention or incarceration; move through violence due to the dangerous conditions along migration routes and border cities; and arrive or return to violence,

since some migrants may arrive to live in the shadows of irregular migration in the United States and others may return to their countries of origin, often to resume a migration journey one more time. It follows, then, that violence in migration is not limited to direct encounters where a perpetrator is clearly identified, but there are other dimensions of the violence against migrants. The analysis of these dimensions allows for movement from the micro-level to the macro-level and development of understanding how violence becomes so endemic to the migration process.

Structural Violence

The notion of structural violence refers to forces, dynamics, or mechanisms that inflict harm on people by constraining individual agency and preventing them from meeting basic needs or achieving their full realization (Galtung 1969, 1975; Kleinman 2000; Farmer 2004). It could be expressed as oppressive dynamics in gender, race, ethnicity, and poverty (Farmer 1996, 2004; Slack and Whiteford 2011: 12; see also Jácome 2008). In other words, structural violence is embodied as ‘social, political, and economic mechanisms used to either create or enforce the inequality and continued marginalization of a group of people’ (Slack and Whiteford 2011: 12). An essential distinction of structural violence is the absence of an identifiable actor who commits or executes the violence itself. However, there is a sensible and damaging effect on the subject who suffers from the structural violence (Galtung 1969: 170).

Structural forms of violence appear in the histories of migrants who cross Mexico and Mexican deportees returning to the country. Chapter 5 argued that many migrants crossing Mexico are indeed poor and have to rely on particular strategies like walking, begging, day labour, or informal systems of social welfare like migrant

shelters to move forward in their migration journeys. Many Central Americans in particular not only leave because of poverty and lack of opportunities, but also because of the increasing violence or threat of violence in their communities. It is common for Mexican deportees to return after living in the U.S. and after spending several months or years in federal or state prisons, often with limited contact with their relatives while in detention. The response from the Mexican government at the border is limited and may consist of a phone call and some subsidy to help migrants reach their places of origin (FN, Tijuana, January 12, 2015).

Different forms of structural violence along migration routes in Mexico have been previously analysed in migration literature (Jácome 2008; Slack and Whiteford 2011; Vogt 2013; Izcara Palacios 2016). Migrants from northern Central America (El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras) come from contexts in which poverty and violence are the norm, the roots of which are deeply ingrained in the governmental and social structures, as well as in the historical processes of democracies in the structures of these countries (Sánchez-Ancochea and Martí i Puig 2014; Cruz 2010). As migrants enter Mexico, they encounter a violent context that has grown in the past decade (Heinle et al 2017). Violence comes not only from the war on drugs, but also from other social conflicts in Mexico (CIDH 2015: 31–46; París Pombo et al 2016; Arias and Goldstein 2010). Aside from a context of violence generated by other actors, migrants and deportees face a reality that has been marked by massive kidnappings, disappearances, and killings of vulnerable migrants (CIDH 2015; CNDH 2011, 2009; Rosales Sandoval 2013: 216–217; Sørensen 2013: 238–240). Furthermore, NGOs have reported increased violence from migration and other federal authorities in Mexico (REDODEM 2017). Those migrants who successfully reach their destinations, especially in the U.S., will arrive to a context that is characterized by a

permanent sense of fear and insecurity, which comes from being an irregular migrant (Menjívar and Abrego 2012).

In other words, the structural violence migrants and deportees experience can be seen as a continuum or a process in which migrants move out of violence, move through violence, and arrive into violence (Bank et al 2017). These insights are useful for understanding the faceless violence migrants experience. In what follows, I want to emphasize one key aspect in structural violence: the inability to or impossibility of naming a perpetrator responsible for the situation (Farmer 1996).

Oliver, a 21-year-old Honduran migrant, arrived at a shelter with seven other people. A criminal group had robbed them shortly after crossing the Mexico-Guatemala border. The two women in the group had been raped and some of the men were also sexually assaulted. The two women decided to stay at the shelter to receive help and file a claim with the police. Oliver also decided to stay to press charges (according to Mexican Migration Law, if a migrant was victim of a grave crime, he or she may be entitled to receive a visa for humanitarian reasons), hoping to regularize his stay in Mexico. After two months, he and the other two women were still waiting to hear back from civil and migration authorities on the outcomes of their cases. In the end, his case was denied and he decided to continue his journey as an irregular migrant (FN Tenosique, September 3, 2015).

In Gloria's case, which I mentioned earlier, after being raped by two men, she decided to continue her journey along with her husband. I interviewed them at a shelter near Veracruz in southern Mexico, when over a month had passed since the event. The shelter had no staff or organizational capacity to support them in seeking help or pressing charges. In the end, they decided to continue their journey as irregular

migrants, even though the emotional damage was evident for both of them (SS, Acayucan 2).

In all the experiences of violence presented in this chapter, one element is common: the inability to name or identify the perpetrator of the violence, as well as the impossibility or unwillingness of seeking justice for the claimants. *La mara*, the gangs, the federal police, *la migra*, the police, the smuggler, the drug cartel — all of these groups mediated by particular individuals or groups of individuals exercise real physical or psychological violence, but structurally it is almost impossible to call them by name (although I am aware of exceptions in which perpetrators are brought to justice, but in general the pattern of impunity remains). Police and migration authorities are supposed to protect migrants from violence. However, their participation fosters a climate of permanent fear and insecurity as migrants do not know if the violence can come from the hands that supposedly protect them even though they have irregular status or, in the case of deportees, lack identification.

Legal Violence and the Failure to Protect

One particular form of structural violence is what Menjívar and Abrego (2012) refer to as ‘legal violence’. The concept tries to capture the aggravation or effects of the law in particular populations. The law, in spite of having the objective of protecting rights and controlling behaviour for the general good, simultaneously fosters practices that harm a particular group (Menjívar and Abrego 2012: 1382-1388). Writing from the context of migration in the U.S., they argue that these harmful effects often manifest in the livelihood of immigrants, especially in family, school, and work settings.

In summary, the concept is ‘rooted in the uncertainty of everyday life caused by the insecurity of wages or income, a chronic deficit in food, dress, housing, and health care, and uncertainty about the future’ (Torres-Rivas 1998: 49). Furthermore, Benjamin (1986: 284-287) states that violence as a means is either ‘law making or law-preserving’. Thus, the creation of uncertainty in everyday life through legal practices and the effects it may produce could be seen as normal because it is the law (Menjívar and Abrego 2012: 1387). In addition, ‘legal violence’ reveals that the consequences of immigration laws that go beyond migrants themselves often reach communities of origin and family members of irregular migrants (Coleman 2007).

Applying this concept to the analysis of violence in the migration process in Mexico requires the expansion of its scope to those instances when the law is written in humanitarian terms and as part of the development of the country. The Mexican Department of State in the National Development Plan states this approach:

Mexican migration policy tends to govern migration patterns. In other words, it moves towards a relational model that fosters coordination among different actors (public, private, organized, non-organized, individual or collective). This not only with the purpose of strengthening an integral attention to the migration phenomenon, in an environment of national and international responsibility, but also with the aim of guaranteeing the due respect to the human rights of migrants. (SEGOB 2013)

Thus, Mexico’s approach to migration policy is roped in humanitarian language and framed with a human rights approach. But, it still seeks to control migration flows as a trait of a modern state, as discussed in the chapter 4 Mexican migration policies do not seek to criminalize migrants. However, I argue that if the enforcement or application of the law fails to protect or guarantee the rights of migrants, a form of legal violence becomes evident. Furthermore, Mexican government agents often exercise direct violence against migrants not only when conducting enforcement

routine procedures, but also when abusing or robbing migrants while in transit. Often, migrants and Mexican deportees accept violence as part of the journey or upon return. The acceptance of violence as a normal dynamic makes it even more important to understand how the failure of the law to provide protection reinforces the idea of legal violence.

Mexican migration law also guarantees a series of rights like access to education, health, due process, and basic security norms to migrants regardless of their migratory status. The law also has provisions that grant regularization of irregular status for humanitarian reasons in cases when migrants have been victims of or witnesses to a crime in Mexican territory (Article 52 of Migration Law 2011). Data from interviews show that migrants' experiences with authorities are not positive.

Drawing from interviews conducted during fieldwork, I argue that law enforcement fosters 'legal violence' in the following ways: by creating deterrence that reinforces vulnerability, fostering violent hunter-prey relationships, and allowing abuse of authority. After all, the way migration law is enforced in Mexico creates another layer of uncertainty to the migration dynamics in the migration corridor in Mexico.

Legal violence appears as migrants make efforts to avoid migration controls. In this way, enforcement functions as a deterrence strategy. Migrants are aware of the dangers of criminal gangs and unknown geography, but at the same time, they assume the risks rather than facing potential detainment by migration authorities. The migrants' narratives repeatedly emphasize this: 'we got off the train and walked around [the migration control point]. I was aware of the *maras* in that region. But, *'que le vamos a hacer'* (what can we do?). This is what happens when one is poor'

(Agustin, IDI, San Luis Potosi 6). It is not uncommon for migrants to be aware of the dangers despite the level of uncertainty inherent in the journey. This uncertainty is heightened by the fact that migrants have to face the ‘wall of violence and enforcement’ (Solano 2017: 26).

A hunter-prey dynamic has emerged as migration officers, accompanied by other authorities, conduct ‘operations’ to detain migrants. There is an inevitable tension between the migrants’ use of the freight train to move through Mexico and Mexican authorities preventing that mode of travel under the basis that migrants put their lives in danger. While it is true that riding on top of the cargo train is not the safest way to move through Mexico, it is also evident that authorities conduct ‘operations’ (*de facto* raids) that ‘hunt’ for migrants all along migrants’ paths. Jaime, a 20-year-old Salvadoran migrant, was injured while being chased by migration authorities. He said, ‘I got these bruises while migration officers were chasing us. I jumped over a fence and I fell head first. *La Migra* (migration authorities) officers chased me on three different occasions before I came here’ (Jaime, SS San Luis Potosi 8). Furthermore, the uncertainty increases because migration authorities conduct intermittent raids in places where no NGOs can monitor their work. Also, migration authorities use mobile checkpoints that change the nature and routes of the journey constantly (FN Saltillo, March 10, 2015).

Earlier in the chapter, I described forms of abuse inflicted by federal and migration authorities. These abuses reflect the ‘legal violence’ that the law creates. While there is an investiture that comes with the rank or from being part of enforcement police, when abuse occurs, this investiture prevents migrants from stepping up. Thus, migrants simply assume that they must follow the law. In several

states, there are special divisions that receive migrants' complaints of abuse both from regular crime and from Mexican authorities. There are cases that in compliance with the law, migrants receive regularization for humanitarian reasons (since they were victims of or witnesses to a crime). To file a claim and to wait for the outcome, which could be negative, takes a long time. Also, migrants need the support of local organizations to file the claim and to accompany them during the process. The long wait and the lack of accountability erode the willingness to even file a claim (FN, Tenosique October 1, 2015). This again depicts how the enforcement or application of the law creates more uncertainty among migrants, even when the law is designed to protect and there are structures in place to support justice.

Power and the Normalization of Violence

Burgois (2004) says that everyday violence operates at the individual level. I argue that this should not be understood only as one-on-one interaction, as this is rarely the case with the abuse committed against migrants in Mexico. Rather, the violence carried out at the micro-level reveals the power dynamics that point to the macro-level agents, as in the case of officials or drug trade organizations. Along the migration paths, violence is often carried by two or more people and with a minimum level of coordination. The violence can also be carried out through sophisticated networks that include collusion with several authorities and participation of local community members (Casillas 2011a: 304); FN Tenosique, January 4, 2016). The interactions between migrants and criminals or state actors reveal the power dynamics that often accompany violence (Arendt 1970). In the experiences of migrants previously described, power emerges through those that exercise force upon others, as described in Javier and Andres' stories who had to deal with *maras* during their

journeys. Power is shown in the form of weapons —machetes or firearms— used to threaten migrants as in Maria’s story. Power comes from the investiture authorities carry —migration and police forces— as Carlos, Rubén, and Enrique’s experiences reveal. In all of these cases, the exercise of power is magnified by the migrants’ awareness of their irregular status (De Genova 2013; Andersson 2014: 99), the experience of being deported from the United States, or the lack of ability to report or identify their perpetrators.

In part, this power dynamic accompanying violence gives way to the normalization of violence. Migrants often assume they will be subjected to violence because of their irregular status or as a characteristic of the journey. In Andrés’ story, he minimizes his experience by saying, ‘*Nomás nos dieron un par de pasadas* (they only roughed us up)’. In his encounter with federal police, Enrique ‘thanks’ the authority after the abuse. Gonzalo (IDI Guadalajara 2) explains his frustration with being robbed and feelings of discrimination by saying, ‘as a migrant, I do not have the money to be in this country freely. In spite of the road and the things one experiences, I try not to pay attention to it and to continue my journey’. All of these reactions are forms of minimizing the impact violence has in the lives of migrants.

I argue that this normalization of violence emerges as a form of coping with the journey, or a renegotiation of the uncertainty that violence brings to many due to the migration trajectories. Fear may paralyze people, like María, who remained in Coatzacoalcos because she was afraid of continuing the journey. One way to avoid paralysis is to ignore the violence and assume the costs. Often, this way of normalizing violence is accompanied by hope (Hagan 2008; Kleist and Thorsen 2017: 3–4), which refers to ‘the desire for a future, difficult, yet possible good’ (Doyle 2013; Bloch

1986). In the case of migrants, this hope translates to the desired destination or an imagined 'better life', and is intimately related to their religious and faith experiences. In interviews, migrants express their strong desire to continue the journey: 'God will protect us', or 'God is leading us on the road'. Just as the normalization of violence allows migrants to continue with their journeys, hope becomes a source of strength that helps them-cope with suffering and difficulties along the way.

7.3 The Effects of Violence in the Migration Process

The omnipresence of violence that creates a sense of insecurity and fear, as well as migrants' concrete expressions of violence along the migration paths in Mexico, affect the migration processes of irregular migrants and deportees on many levels. On one hand, violence has become an external and contextual influence on the migration process. Its effects as an external influence are tempered by migrants' normalization of their experiences of violence and by the presence of humanitarian actors helping migrants in distress. On the other hand, violence influences the internal dynamics of the migration process, as migrants assume it as part of the journey. Thus, violence does not necessarily hinder the number of migrants embarking on new journeys or people reattempting to migrate. In past years, the number of transit migrants and deportees has remained stable. Additionally, a process of commodification of migrants has been reinforced.

Violence: Internal or External Dynamic, or Both?

In the feedback loop of migration processes in Mexico, migration precedes violence and as migrants appear as vulnerable targets, violence by different actors

emerges and increases. However, the structural violence that precedes the journey or the deportation process reinforces migrants' vulnerability at meso- and micro-levels. Earlier in this chapter, I discussed migrants' experiences of violence with state and non-state actors, emphasizing how this violence increased migrants' vulnerability along the road. These experiences become common knowledge among migrants, both in their places of origin and along the road. The shared information regarding violence is indeed an internal mechanism in the migration process. Thus, one may expect a decrease in the number of migrants embarking on migration projects through Mexico. However, the normalization of violence, migrants' assumptions that it is part of the journey, and the presence of migrant shelters buffer the negative impacts violence can have.

As discussed earlier, the levels of violence and the emergence of diverse violent actors, including the cumulative violence of enforcement and migration controls, have allowed for violence to move from a micro-level to an external dynamic that affects the migration system. Violence as an external dynamic of the migration process and as an exercise of power influences the costs, resources, options, choices, and outcomes of migration journeys. In other words, violence affects the migration process at the micro-level but also gives rise to other external dynamics like humanitarian interventions.

This finding is significant because it shows that external feedback mechanisms not only give rise to the growth of different actors at the meso-level and influence decision processes, relationships, and aspirations at the micro-level, but can also give rise to other external and indirect dynamics that influence the migration process. As described in Chapter 5, the shelters operating in Mexico emerge as a response to the

violence and vulnerability of migrants and deportees. Poor and vulnerable migrants use them as resources as they move along their journeys, or as deportees are left in dangerous border cities. Hence, these humanitarian spaces spread throughout Mexico become an external dynamic in the migration process. Migrants seek safety and security, among other protective measures, as they interact with humanitarian spaces and use shelters inasmuch as they consider it useful for their purposes, showing that they are still able to exercise their agency in the migration process. These dynamics demonstrate how external or indirect feedback mechanisms can operate across different analytical levels (Bakewell et al 2016: 8).

Buffering Violence and the Search for ‘Pockets of Safety’

Feedback mechanisms can be understood as those social forces that could foster or hinder migration. Thus, feedback mechanisms may have positive and negative effects on the migration process. My findings show that the negative impact, or the influence violence can have, is buffered by both the ways migrants normalize their experiences of violence and the presence of shelters along migratory paths. Information on violence has been broadcasted through different mechanisms or through migrants’ personal networks. Migrants’ acceptance of the risks violence entails relates to the ways migrants talk about or assume the risks on the journey and also to the desire or aspiration to migrate that denies the significance of the information (Garip and Asad 2013). In this way, the ‘normalization’ of violence functions as an internal mechanism that buffers the negative impact of violence.

The existence of shelters is broadcasted through different means -- sometimes by word of mouth, pocket maps, and even information on the internet. Thus, migrants are aware or learn that shelters could be a resource for the journey, a place of safety,

and/or a source of support in case of emergency. Many interviewees shared responses that clearly reveal that one of the reasons migrants use shelters is to protect themselves from violence. For example, Luciana, a 52-year-old migrant from Honduras traveling with 10 other family members, said:

One is safer inside the shelter. Outside, you take the risk of being detained by migration authorities or being robbed and killed by criminals. [...] Here I do not feel at risk. I do feel safe. Here we receive food and shelter, so there is no need to go out and take any risks. In towns where there are no migrant shelters, people beg for money. If we have to ask people for help, we try to help them somehow. Cleaning here and there, painting or doing some chore they may have. (Luciana, IDI San Luis Potosi 20)

Luciana's response illustrates how migrant shelters have become 'pockets of safety' that vulnerable migrants recognize and seek in their migration trajectories. For them, safety represents protection against exposure to the different forms of violence (including enforcement from migration authorities) that are present in Mexico.

For migrants, security or safety equals protection from crime and migration controls. Mateo, an 18-year-old Guatemalan migrant traveling through Mexico for a second time, said:

Safety is to take care of yourself. For example, if I know that [criminal groups] are assaulting people who ride the train, that they rob them and maybe kill them, why am I going to ride the train? If someone tells me, at that corner there is a thief, why am I going to go and stand in that corner? As you know there is a lot of insecurity along the road, but if someone tells me on this street or this place you are safe or there are no dangers, then I feel safe. For me, in the shelters, one is safe from the outside dangers. (Mateo, IDI Tenosique 17)

From Mateo's response, it is clear that in these pockets of safety, migrants find refuge, protection, and multiple services. Chapter 8 analyses in detail different effects that emerge as migrants interact with these humanitarian spaces. For now, it suffices to

say that shelters work as an external mechanism in the migration process in Mexico.

The words of Genaro, a 20-year-old migrant from Honduras, illustrate this clearly:

I did not know about the shelters. I learned about them on the road. [...] I started using them when I ran out of money. [...] When one travels without money, the shelters are useful. When one does not have money to stay at a hotel, one has to sleep in the street. I prefer to look for a migrant shelter because I know that there I will be safe. [...] Being inside the shelter, I know that nothing is going to happen to me. If I am on the street or by the train tracks, I can be beaten, killed or robbed. If I am here [the shelter], I feel very safe. (Genaro, IDI San Luis Potosi 4)

Genaro stayed at four shelters and two Catholic churches along his journey. Thus, like the normalization of violence, the presence of shelters throughout the country also buffers the negative impact violence may have at the micro-level because migrants can seek help in cases of need.

Instrumentality of Violence

Finally, while analysing violence in migration contexts, it is essential to understand its instrumental character and its relationship to power. Violence is by nature instrumental; it needs direction and justification to achieve its goal. Power and violence, though distinct, usually appear together, with power being the predominant factor (Arendt 1970: 52). Usually, when power threatens, violence appears. Thus, if violent pluralism helps to understand that different groups exercise violence because they are taking care of their own agendas, this agenda will be tied to some search for power or control.

The instrumentality of violence could be found in different forms throughout the migration corridor in Mexico. Scholars researching *narco coyotaje* argue that groups involved in drug trade have complex, permeable, and changing structures of

power and hierarchy. These structures are always based on power and profitability, particularly in clandestine activities (Slack and Campbell 2016; Spener 2008; Gabriela Sanchez 2014; Vogt 2013). In illicit regimes, ‘power comes through direct relationships, through threats, interpersonal connections, acts of violence, and essentially, their ability to escape or negate the written law’ (Slack and Campbell 2016: 1384). Furthermore, in illicit regimes, state and non-state actors are linked (Boyce et al 2015), since criminal organizations involve illicit and loosely-structured activities. These activities are tied to forms of taxation (*cuotas*) and regulation, or punishments, often expressed through violence, and mimic (Slack and Campbell 2016: 1387) or coexist with state governance.

In the case of Mexico, as different groups exercise violence for various reasons, migrants end up being commodified or seen as a source of income or profit even if the profit is minimal or tangential to the main goal of the group exercising violence. Vogt (2013: 764-765) writes, ‘Everyday physical acts of violence must be understood as arising at the intersection between local and global economies that profit from human mobility [...] surplus value is derived from migrant’s potential as commodified labour as well as their more immediate use-value and exchange-value in local economies’. As migrants and deportees move through Mexico, they become economic objects of desire — justifiably or not — (Sharp 2000: 293; Vogt 2013: 765) as they lose and gain value during their journeys. After all, violence is also a way to obtain a profit out of commodified migrants.

Conclusion

The experiences of direct violence illustrated in this chapter lead to two revelations: First, direct instances of violence, without a doubt, reinforce and increase

migrants' vulnerabilities and precariousness as they move through Mexico or return to the country. Beatings, rapes, extortion, or threats have physical and emotional effects on migrants and deportees. Second, as concrete expressions of violence become a common trait in the migration process, they become 'everyday violence' (Bourgois 2001, 2004). In everyday violence, violent acts become normal, expected, and assumed; violence becomes 'terror as usual'.

In the case of migrants journeying through Mexico, violence is incorporated as part of the journey and internalized as part of the internal migration dynamics. Migrants are aware that something may happen to them along the journey; in their narratives, violence is the norm and an uneventful journey is considered to be lucky. Thus, the effects of direct violence against migrants appeared in their elongated journeys, strandedness, emotional and physical harm, and a permanent sense of insecurity.

Nevertheless, violence cannot be limited to experiences at the micro-level. Any analysis of violence needs to consider how it also emerges as a structural force that finds expressions at the macro-level. Structural violence is embodied in those social, political, and economic mechanisms and dynamics that either create or reinforce inequality and continued marginalization of people. The structural forces present in the migration process range from endemic poverty experienced by migrants as they reside in their countries, insecurity and fear as they move through or return to Mexico, and the failure of the government to protect citizens, migrants, and humanitarian workers. In the case of migrants in Mexico, while violence is real, identification of perpetrators remains blurred because migrants, who regularly remain on the move, are only able to identify their perpetrators generally. This situation often

negates any possibility of obtaining justice. This failure to protect or serve justice for migrants should be read as legal violence (a form of structural violence).

Thus, poor migrants unable to secure safe passage through Mexico enter migration journeys in contexts of extreme violence. Violence along migration routes is not only real, but is also a permanent threat for the general population in Mexico. Humanitarian assistance to migrants and deportees emerges in response to migrants' vulnerability and violence. Humanitarian organizations aim to ease migrants' suffering and to serve as a safe place where they can rest. Nevertheless, humanitarian actors are not immune to generalized violence; they are also victims and targets of criminal groups. In this way, violence is linked to both poverty and humanitarian assistance.

At the theoretical level, poverty may be considered a form of structural violence that exists not only in places of origin, but also in migration processes. In migration contexts, violence may elicit humanitarian responses aiming to mitigate its effects for migrants and deportees. Unlike war or forced displacement settings where humanitarian interventions remain neutral and, to some extent, safe, in the migration processes, violence may target humanitarian workers.

Violence against migrants also needs to be seen in a larger context of an increasing violence in the region (Central America and Mexico). While Central America is characterized by social violence and the government's inability to provide security for its citizens, in Mexico, there are violent pluralities exercising violence to preserve their particular agendas. In this violent landscape, violence against migrants becomes a by-product of larger violent patterns present in the country. Thus, violence also emerges as an external dynamic in the migration process and it serves as a context

that affects migration journeys. Migration patterns shift as violence increases and migrants seek for routes that may appear less dangerous. In response, criminal activity appears in other areas as new groups prey on migrants.

Three important effects of violence in the migration process emerge: First, violence gives rise to another external dynamic in the migration system in the form of humanitarian spaces that provide different services to migrants in distress. Earlier, I discussed how migrants seek help at these shelters because they see them as ‘pockets of safety’. Second, the normalization of violence does not hinder any impact that actual violence may have on migrants starting new journeys. Third, within the dynamics of violence, there is a process of commodification of the migrant that occurs, within which migrants are seen as an opportunity for profit. Migrants gain or lose value at different stages of the journey. The next chapter, on *casas de migrantes*, discusses in detail the interactions between migrants and humanitarian spaces. Understanding how endemic violence exists in the migration process helps to make sense of the role local humanitarian organizations have in Mexico.

Chapter 8. The Functional Response of *Casas de Migrantes*

Everything went completely quiet. The silence was striking in comparison to the blasting music often played through the speakers during the day. When I came down from the volunteers' room to investigate the silence, there was no one around in the patio. I heard a whisper coming from the dormitory; upon entering, I saw migrants gathered in a circle. At the centre of the circle, in a recliner, there was a body covered with a white sheet, and a candle was lit next to him. A man had died and migrants were already praying. The setting exuded mixed feelings, solidarity, and anxiety at the same time.

There were around 45 migrants that day at the shelter. Everybody remained quiet and prayed in the room until Mexican authorities came to take the body away. Once the body was put in a van, migrants accompanied the car as though in a procession until they reached the exit door. They could not go further since this shelter, which was in the city of Saltillo in northern Mexico, was a 'closed shelter' where migrants could not go out. Migrants kept singing and praying for awhile even after the body left the shelter. Later that night, a Mass was held. Padre Pedro, the shelter's director, said: 'At least he did not die like a dog on the street, alone and with no one to take care of him.'

Ruben, a 58-year-old Honduran migrant, died in a chair while watching television, surrounded by many other fellow migrants who, like him, were on the road to the United States. He had been at the shelter for over four months after several failed attempts to cross the border. He was sick and his family in Honduras did not have money to help him to get back home. He refused to return home through the removal process of Mexican migration authorities. Too ill to fend for himself, several

volunteers took turns taking care of him. Bathing him and changing diapers were part of the routine; migrants staying at the shelter sometimes helped to move him from place to place, until the day when his body finally gave up (SS Saltillo, March 8, 2015).

Humanitarian organizations in Mexico aiding migrants, refugees, and deported Mexicans provide not only basic support to cope with the journey or the aftermath of deportation, but also offer a variety of services and advocacy avenues that evolve according to the changing profiles and needs of migrants and deportees. The work of these places, as well as their interactions with migrants, challenge current notions of humanitarianism, which has been regularly analysed in contexts of forced displacement in international settings (Barnett and Weiss 2008a; Wilson and Brown 2009; Barnett 2011) forgoing humanitarian efforts in circumstances like transit and return migration. Also, the local genesis and faith-based nature of many of these shelters in Mexico add to the discussion of the challenges of following classical humanitarian principles. Furthermore, discussions of humanitarianism often centre on the role of international NGOs, their relationships to the state, or the way services are delivered (Ticktin 2011; Fassin 2012; Agier 2011), leaving a gap in understanding their intermediary roles in migration processes. This intermediary role is a key feature of the humanitarian work in Mexico. Shelters mediate with local communities, different police forces, and other actors. Additionally, shelters operate amidst high tensions with other actors, but at other times create significant alliances with local governments to provide aid. Like the literature of forced migration that analyses the aftermath and effects of humanitarian interventions, it is important to understand the effects of the interactions of migrants and deportees with these shelters, the ways they

influence one another, and the effects that these interactions have on the migration process.

This chapter presents ‘assistance/care’ as the last dynamic identified in the migration processes in Mexico. It answers two questions: How do *casas de migrantes* work? And, what effects do they have on the migration process? The chapter highlights the functional responses of migrant shelters and argues that due to their continual work and geographical distributions, *casas de migrantes* have become an informal welfare system for the migration processes in Mexico. The emphasis is on the local nature of these humanitarian spaces, their ability to evolve according to the changing profile of migrants, the changing dynamics of migration in Mexico, and the role of *casas de migrantes* in the migration process, which is defined not only by their delivery of aid, but also by their brokerage role in the migration process. Analyzing the role of shelters as an informal welfare system provides a different angle distinct from a political–economical approach to understand the role of humanitarian actors as migration intermediaries. However, it also reveals that the line between a shelter and a detention centre can be blurred, turning it into what can be called humanitarianism as containment (Donini 2010: S223).

8.1 Meso-level Dynamics: Facilitation, Control and Assistance/Care

Facilitation, control, and assistance/care need to be seen not as separate industries, but rather, as essential functions of migration intermediaries in migration processes. This perspective removes the focus from the notion of industries that has been prevalent in migration literature (Gammeltoft-Hansen and Sørensen 2013: 7; Cranston, Schapendonk, and Spaan 2017: 3), allowing a better understanding of the

dynamics that emerge in the migration process and the diverse roles meso-level actors can have in migration processes. It brings the attention to what migration intermediaries do. As Spener said, ‘by focusing less on the gains (either financial or any other type) that different actors may acquire in the migratory process and focusing more on the types of services provided to migrants, their families, and their employers [...] along with the types of relationships that exist among the actors involved [...] we would do well to focus less on what the migration industry is and more on what it does’ (Spener 2009: 9). Furthermore, empirical data shows that these three often overlap and even, as in the case of humanitarian actors in Mexico, could be played by the same actor. Hence, the question here is, how do the shelters work?

Facilitation

In the case of humanitarian actors in general, but particularly in Mexico, there is not necessarily an implicit contract or agreement to facilitate the migration process. However, one of the outcomes of the shelters’ work is precisely facilitating the movement of migrants in safer ways (Hernández-León 2013: 34). I interviewed Judith, a 38-year-old Guatemalan migrant, at a shelter in the city of San Luis Potosi. When discussing her reasons for using the shelters, she said, ‘Obviously, they help, they give you food, allow you to take a shower, give you clothes or shoes if they have some, and even allow you to see the doctor. I practically come for that to be able to sleep, to change clothes, and to rest. So, I can continue my journey. If it would not be for the *casa del migrante*, believe me I would not make it anywhere [referring to the United States]’ (IDI San Luis Potosi 11). This perception is prevalent among migrants who see the support provided by shelters as something that supports their journeys.

Ursula, a 48-year-old migrant woman from Honduras, had been traveling with her 11-year-old daughter. Ursula had been in the shelter for a couple of months when I interviewed her. During the interview, she explained how she and her daughter had received support from many people and how coming to the shelter allowed them to rest and prepare their next step. She said:

We went to the shelter in Apizaco because we did not have any money left. We came to this one because a bus driver told us that there were a lot of checkpoints and criminals in the area. He told us to come here so we could relax, rest, and think more carefully about our plan. So, we could decide either to ride the freight train or to take the bus. [...] The good thing about the shelter is that you have food and can take a shower, so you can relax and gather more information. We have learned about the dangers on the journey and have considered different options to continue the journey. Overall, I think the shelters do a good job in helping us. (Ursula, IDI San Luis Potosi 5)

I later learned that Ursula applied for refugee status in Mexico, but abandoned her case. However, she did make it to the United States and applied for asylum in the state of Texas. She was separated from her daughter, who was placed with some relatives. Although Ursula is free while she waits for the outcome of her application, she cannot leave the city where she resides and has to wear a GPS monitor on her ankle, allowing the government to track her movement (FN January 2017).

Judith and Ursula's comments illustrate how shelters support and facilitate migrants' movement even without an explicit arrangement. They do so by covering migrants' basic needs, providing safety, and allowing them time to gather information — among other measures of protection — to sort out their journeys. While not all migrants succeed in reaching the United States, some do, like Ursula and her daughter. In fact, I have confirmed that at least eight migrants I interviewed made it to their final destination. By the same token, I learned of six migrants who returned to their home countries. Hence, the presence and support of shelters — without

explicitly taking on the role of facilitators — facilitate migration journeys, serving as ‘stepping stones’, giving migrants either a respite to plan the next movement or to seek support for the next step. Furthermore, they may also serve as the first stop for a migrant after deportation.

Facilitation refers to the way in which migration intermediaries enable mobility. Researchers have identified the roles of mediators and facilitators in the migratory processes and demonstrated how these are intertwined for financial gain (Fairchild 1928; Harney 1977; Peck 1996; Cohen 1997; Romero 2004/2005; Garapich 2008; Hernández-León 2008; Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2014). Furthermore, there is a wide range of actors who facilitate migration processes, which could range from migrant entrepreneurs to international organizations, and government agencies (Gammeltoft-Hansen and Sørensen 2013: 15; Hernández-León 2013: 30-40; Cranston et al 2017: 2). Understanding facilitation as a function and not as an industry allows for the inclusion of more actors in intermediary roles without creating more niches within the notion of ‘industry’. Additionally, it permits analysing facilitation not only as a unidirectional process — towards developed countries —, but also in return settings or removal processes.

Control

Every shelter has particular rules and regulations responding both to their experiences serving migrants and to their particular contexts. There are shelters open 24 hours where migrants can come and go without much restriction (FN Tenosique September 28, 2014). At other shelters, migrants may enter and be allowed to leave only on the day they will resume their journeys (FN Reynosa March 12, 2015). Furthermore, some shelters offer lodging for a short period of time (FN

Tapachula March 22, 2015), while others allow migrants to stay as long as needed (FN Saltillo March 11, 2015). When it comes to security and protection from authorities, each shelter has its own strategy and level. Shelters' security protocols are based on location and other factors (FN San Luis Potosi, October 17, 2015; FN Coatzacoalcas, November 12, 2014).

At the very least, *casas de migrantes* need a minimum set of rules that allow the place to operate on a daily basis. Scheduling and rules about meals, help with cleaning up, access to dormitories, and so on are key for life at the shelters. In all, two forms of control and surveillance are consistently present in *casas de migrantes*: mandatory registration and expectations of appropriate conduct.

Mandatory Registration. Every time a migrant arrives to any shelter aside from asking for help or support, he or she is required to register. The process of registration often involves presenting a form of identification and gathering general information about the migrant (name, country of origin, age, gender, destination, and experiences with violence, among others). In most shelters, this information is entered in a computer database. In some, a picture is taken and in the most extreme cases, a shelter might use fingerprint technology (FN September 2014 - January 2016). Poor shelters simply use a notebook (FN September 2014 – April 2015). Registering migrants upon arrival has become important since the time of the massacre of San Fernando in 2010, when 72 migrants were kidnapped and killed. Since then, registration in some form has become key at the shelters that want to document the passing of migrants in case something happens to them. 'In that way we can say that a particular migrant passed through the shelter on a specific date' said Fr. Tomás González, OFM (SDI Tenosique, September 15, 2014). Regularly, volunteers or staff members conduct

interviews and assess particular needs or monitor if the migrant may be a smuggler (FN Tenosique January 13, 2015).

Earlier, I mentioned a database run by a network of *casas de migrantes* and other organizations (REDODEM); this database, which gathers migrants' general information, including pictures, allows shelters that are part of the network to share migrant records. The database has a historical function as well, so if a migrant has used another shelter in the network, their record and previous picture appears (FN September 2014 – January 2016). The argument behind the historical record is the possibility of documenting the migrant's journey and any events of violence they may have experienced along the way. This record is also a form of security because it allows *casas de migrantes* to identify migrants in case of an existing concern, like if certain migrants may pose a threat to other migrants. An example might be a case where a migrant has been identified as a smuggler or has been selling drugs. The shelters along the northern border that are not part of the database are more susceptible to infiltrations by smugglers or criminals posing for migrants (FN Reynosa, December 9, 2105), so electronic records are beneficial for the safety and protection of shelter employees and other migrants.

Shelter directors state that the goal of gathering and sharing migrants' information is to keep track of the migrant in case something may happen to them. Central American mothers looking for their disappeared children have used these records to track their whereabouts. In some instances, the record helps to find the migrant in question (FN Coatzacoalcos, November 20, 2014). Another goal of the database is to aid the network's advocacy efforts. The database is sophisticated enough to provide accurate statistics of migrants using the shelters. This means that if

a migrant uses two or three shelters during his or her journey, the migrant is not counted more than once in the number of migrants crossing Mexico (FN Ciudad de Mexico, October 29, 2014). Nevertheless, this record of information remains a type of surveillance, showing that migrant shelters also exercise forms of control.

Expected Behaviour. Before or after registration, migrants may be required to listen to a short lecture about the rules and the services available at the shelter. Rules of conduct are often visible and there is an expectation that migrants will abide by the code of conduct. Shelter directors concur that these measures have a twofold objective: first, to help with the operation and safety of the place, and second, to document the migrants passing through the shelter. Migrants are aware or become aware of the rules they have to follow to avoid tensions and conflicts in the shelter, especially in places that can house more than 200 people at any given time (FN Tenosique, January 3, 2016; FN Coatzacoalcos, November 10, 2014).

Migrants often have a positive perception of the rules, although it is unclear if their positive perception is due to the fact that they are benefiting from the service. Miguel, a 31-year-old migrant from Guatemala who was traveling for the first time, used four migrant shelters prior to the interview in the city of San Luis Potosi, which is located in central Mexico but leans towards the northern part of the country. In describing his perceptions about the shelters, he said: ‘When one uses ‘migrant shelters,’ one is extremely tired. So, one arrives here, one eats well and sleeps well. People help us. [...] One has to obey the rules that we are told. That makes me feel safe’ (SS San Luis Potosi 12). Another migrant, Ubaldo, who is 20 years old and is from El Salvador, had stayed at five shelters and was able to compare the way he had been treated: ‘In Arriaga, we did not like the way we were treated and we left. We

did not discuss with the coordinators, nothing. We just left. [...] The people at the shelter in Chahuities treated us really well even though the shelter is much smaller than the one in Arriaga', he said. Migrants perceive rules as a way to maintain order and to make them feel safe. Furthermore, they see a relationship between safety and being limited by rules. A migrant in San Luis Potosi said, 'I think that the rules are fine, people have more protection and one can confide in these places and relax. If they would not have rules, anyone could enter and cause trouble. [...] It is OK that we cannot go out. Outside there are people observing every movement of what happens here. Who comes, who goes. Here you are safe' (Ubaldo, SS San Luis Potosi 8).

At one of the shelters where I volunteered and collected data, the other staff members and I were asked to assess whether or not we would grant services to a migrant on a few occasions. One occasion was related to a migrant who was smoking cannabis, and the other one was because of a dress code issue (the migrant in question was exposing his genitals). There was an additional occasion where we asked someone to leave under the suspicion that he was a smuggler. The determining factors in these cases are to preserve the safety and the conviviality of the shelter (FN Tenosique, September 25, 2015).

My data repeatedly revealed that migrants associated rules with safety. The fact that a place had clear rules makes them feel safe. When asked about their perceptions of not being allowed to go out in certain shelters, Guillermo, a 27-year-old migrant from Honduras, said: 'One comes here because we have no money. If I had money, I would be traveling with a smuggler. But, here they treat you well, they give you food, clothes, and you are safe. Here migration authorities and criminals cannot enter. It feels a little bit like being in jail, but I am safe' (Guillermo, IDI San

Luis Potosi 13). Migrants using the shelters are, for the most part, those unable to afford paying smugglers and who use other strategies and means of transportation. The interviewees who had to use *casas de migrantes* repeatedly claimed that they would be willing to exchange freedom for safety (FN Acayucan July 19, 2015). While this is not surprising due to the high levels of violence, the dangers, and the threat of deportation that migrants may experience outside of migrant shelters, still it seems that in closed shelters, the lines between a detention centre and a migrant shelter blur. In some cases, the difference is the fact that at a migrant shelter, migrants can leave whenever they want, even though some of the dynamics of internal control, operation, and interaction resemble a detention centre (FN Saltillo, March 15, 2015).

Casas de migrantes are spaces where migrants could be controlled and contained, as well as spaces where migrants can be protected and supported. As Barnett (2011: 12) rightly asserts, ‘Yet any act of [humanitarian] intervention, no matter how well intended, is also an act of control. Humanitarian governance may have its heart in the right place, but it is still a form of governance, and governance always includes power’ (see also Hernández-León 2013: 34). In the case of migrant shelters in Mexico, this relationship between care and control is evident, although migrants are often willing to exchange freedom for safety.

Control is often associated with managing, containing, or deflecting migration. The migration literature has emphasized how multiple actors ranging from contractors, private actors, and of course governments are involved in this arena. Scholars have also pointed to the fact that many activities involved with managing migration are being outsourced, blurring the line of sovereign functions (Sørensen and Gammeltoft-Hansen 2013: 16-17). However, control cannot be limited

to managing migration and could be exercised in different ways. While it has been pointed out that humanitarian actors may exercise functions of control (Hernández-León 2013: 34; Vandevoordt 2017), there are different ways in which control could be analysed. Andersson (2014) has indicated that any migration intermediary can control the migration process to some extent. It is necessary to expand the understanding of control beyond management. This could help us realize that control could be heavily attached to surveillance. In the case of humanitarian actors in Mexico, rules at different shelters create one level of control, but the relationships of humanitarian actors with other actors also create patterns of containment or outsourced welfare which are, to some extent, other forms of control.

Assistance/Care

The story at the beginning of the chapter illustrates how migrant houses provide more than immediate relief for the journey. Not all migrants are successful on their journeys and some migrants, like Ruben, who died at the shelter, pay a steep price for their attempts. Occasionally, shelters provide a place for migrants to die with a certain level of dignity or to start the recovery road in cases of rape or loss of a limb. Thus, at this point, it should be clear not only that migrant shelters in Mexico provide at least a basic level of care and assistance to migrants, deportees, and refugees, but also that shelters go beyond this level of assistance to become representatives, advocates, and links with multiple actors.

Humanitarian efforts to assist migrants, deportees, or refugees try to compensate for the lack of governmental support or response to protect migrants' human rights and to care for their well-being (Hagan 2008: 83; Sørensen and

Gammeltoft-Hansen 2013: 16-17). However, a narrow look at the role of humanitarian actors or NGOs that care for migrants obscures the care or lack thereof that happens at other instances. In a way, migration intermediaries care for the individuals they control or serve. Smuggling and detention centres are two of the examples where care is also exercised and offered. Thus, a certain level of responsibility is expected from actors who ‘control’ or ‘aid’ migrant populations either on the journey, in detention, or upon return to their home countries. This function will be discussed further in the final section of this chapter, which examines the ways migrant shelters function as an informal welfare system for migrant populations.

8.2 Brokering and Mediating in the Migration Process

In past years, scholarship on the role of migration intermediaries has developed around the concept of the ‘migration industry’. Unfortunately, there has been a tendency to multiply the term when researchers try to emphasize a particular aspect in the migration process or when particular actors do not fit the category with the definitions available. I have identified at least six types of industries that describe the role of intermediaries in migration processes: control industry (Menz 2013), bastard industry (Hernández-León 2013), illegality industry (Andersson 2014), *cachucho* (derogatory term used for Central Americans in Mexico, roughly translated as ‘dirty pig’) industry (Vogt 2013), rescue industry (Agustín 2007), and aid industry (Barnett 2005) are some of the types of industries described in the literature. Novel concepts like ‘migration infrastructures’ (Xiang and Lindquist 2014; Lin et al 2017) try to move away from the term ‘industry’, but do not completely succeed because they still position it within an economic framework (Cranston et al 2017: 2). The

migration industry framework has developed to consider broader functions like enticement, promotion of cosmopolitan lifestyle, and market expansion (through knowledge creation on migrants, Cranston et al. 2017: 2). Nevertheless, literature on the migration industry still overemphasizes financial gains or political-economic dynamics of the relationship between migrants and intermediaries, often creating scenarios of victims and villains and other dichotomies. This often oversimplifies the relationships between migrants and migration intermediaries.

Casas de migrantes might be perceived as ‘safe islands’ scattered throughout the map of Mexico, but they do not operate in a vacuum — and neither are they true islands. These shelters operate in a dense context and engage with a number of different actors: the local community, the government, and international NGOs, and other actors. Their primary role is that of an intermediary between these different agencies and migrants.

Local Communities

While discussing the humanitarianism from below practiced in Mexico, I insisted that this humanitarian work emerges locally and asserted the importance of these places in the migration dynamics in Mexico, even though the work of these humanitarian actors operates in a paradox. While there is a response from local communities to aid and support migrants, there is a different part of the community that preys on and abuses migrants. Shelters always have to mediate between migrants and the communities where these shelters are located.

Arguably, the presence of migrants changes the landscape and the communities where they arrive or pass through (Brachet 2005). Migrants’ presence

allows ‘migration economies’ of a different scale to rise. A town may benefit from irregular migration or deportees by offering different types of services (including telephone services, food, rooms for rent, showers, and so on) and profiting from migrants by overcharging them. Along the tracks of Medias Aguas in the state of Veracruz, many people sold goods ranging from toilet paper to soda and backpacks. These people selling goods often told migrants not to get close to the soup kitchen because they could be handed over to migration authorities (FN Acayucan, February 10, 2015). In the town of Coatzacoalcos, a convenience store and an office supply store — offering internet service and reception of cash transfers — overcharged migrants staying at the shelter (FN Coatzacoalcos, November 20, 2014). These migration economies were booming in certain towns when the presence of migrants was more visible. As migration policies have changed and violence has increased, migration patterns have as well. Thus, like in any economy that operates by demand and supply, some of these economies in transit places have disappeared. For example, in the town of Palenque in southern Mexico, more than 200 migrants could congregate at any time waiting to jump onto the freight trains. Their presence allowed services like public bathrooms, convenience stores, and places offering telephone services to emerge. Even more noticeable were the construction of sleeping facilities where migrants could spend the night without being too far from the train tracks. As authorities started conducting raids along the train tracks, the migration patterns changed and the number of migrants decreased, taking with them business opportunities for these places. What was left were signs outside some houses offering services or abandoned facilities (FN Palenque, January 15, 2016).

Occasionally, communities do not allow shelters to operate or even start to operate for different reasons, which has been the case in towns like Huixtla in southern

Mexico. Father Heyman Vazquez said, ‘We were just about to open the new shelter. It was a good space, with showers, dormitories for men and women, a good kitchen, dining room, and common areas. However, a group of people came and put chains to the door. We tried to mediate with the government but we could not reach an agreement. The government sent me a letter telling that the area was an area of risk and it was not a good idea to create tensions’ (SDI Huixtla, March 29, 2015). The shelter in Saltillo has suffered different threats to the point that an unknown group has shot at the facilities. Their members also have received verbal threats through phone or anonymous messages. In this case, there was a need to activate a security mechanism with the National Human Rights Commission (FN Saltillo, March 8, 2015).

Other shelters, like the one in San Luis Potosi, or the soup kitchen in Guadalajara, were closed because of community pressure or increased dangers, although they later resumed operations at another site and upon petition from the local government. FM4, the shelter in Guadalajara, was forced to close due to security concerns. The shelter offers its services in a neighborhood with social issues of homelessness, substance abuse, and drug dealing. At the beginning of 2015, in spite of safety protocols, drug dealers and drug addicts verbally and physically threatened some members of the staff. The shelters asked for more support from the authorities without success and consequently decided to cease operations until the local government could guarantee better safety conditions. The shelter’s director said, ‘So, we felt that there were no conditions to keep providing services and at some point, we decided to close. We alerted the government about our decision. A couple of weeks later the local government contacted us to reopen services at another location’ (SDI Guadalajara, January 6, 2017).

It is evident that tensions and dangers exist and shelters emerge or operate within the paradox of those who seek to alleviate migrants' suffering and those who prey on them. Shelters have to exercise brokerage roles as liaisons with those members of the community who want to support migrants; but at the same time, shelters also must mediate with local communities that may see migrants as a threat. These roles need to be played if a shelter seeks to succeed in providing support for migrants or deportees, like the shelter in Tenosique that had to mediate a conflict between the community and a number of migrants who had been roaming around town. At a neighbourhood community meeting, neighbors expressed concern about the migrants' presence. The leader of the group said, 'these migrants are the ones that had been assaulting people and harassing young girls. Since the shelter opened, there has been an increase in the number of robberies and sexual assaults. Why are you defending these people and not us? Why are you not helping us to solve all the social problems that exist here? But we are sure it is the migrants who cause all the trouble' (FN Tenosique January 7, 2016).

Thus, in cases like these, humanitarian actors have to play a role that requires mediation and representative brokerage if they want to continue operations. In this case, like in the previous one of the soup kitchen in Guadalajara, humanitarian actors' brokerage role as representatives not only reaches out to the community, but also branches out to reach the government seeking aid and support. This type of brokerage becomes crucial for shelters to continue their services; without it, they would most likely end up closing because of mounting pressures or dangers.

Local Government

The relationship between humanitarian organizations aiding migrants and the Mexican government has several layers and is not limited to migration regulations. Without a doubt, shelters mediate the relationship between migrants and authorities. *Casas de migrantes* are ‘spaces of exception’ that migrants seek and use as sanctuaries to protect themselves from deportation or, in the cases of deportees, as an immediate support after deportation. Additionally, shelters become ‘pockets of security’ for migrants and go beyond immediate assistance to develop diverse programs or initiatives related to the protection of migrants. However, there are other levels that require different kinds of interaction and mobilization of resources to provide assistance to migrants, deportees, and refugees. Furthermore, without these intermediations, migrants representing themselves wouldn’t be able to mobilize such resources. Three areas of intermediation with local government actors exist: health, safety, and legal representation.

Health. During fieldwork, I observed that the biggest shelters could have somewhere between 120 to 250 migrants spending the night. In southern Mexico, the turnaround is very quick since migrants move more rapidly. In central Mexico, the numbers reached between 70 and 90 migrants a night, but the stays are longer; some migrants may stay for a couple of months. In northern Mexico, group variation is high. One shelter could have 10 deportees one night and 30 or 40 at other times. The turnaround is pretty fast and rules do not allow them to stay more than 3 days — although this is negotiable depending on the circumstances (FN Reynosa December 14, 2015). In any case, it is not easy managing the everyday lives of shelters, similar

to the difficulties of managing those who stay in refugee camps (Ager, Fiddian-Qasmiyeh Elena, and Ager 2015; Horst 2006; Koizumi and Hoffstaedter 2015).

Humanitarian actors must link and establish rapport with health and sanitary governmental agencies to fumigate, prevent outbreaks of infections, and provide immediate medical assistance (or in some cases, assistance in emergencies). While conducting fieldwork, at least two shelters were fumigated twice. On a few occasions, it was necessary to request pipes with water because of a drought in the region. This was occasionally necessary in order to empty septic tanks because of the number of people at the shelter. Additionally, I supported the shelter staff during a few emergency health crises (one person was actively suicidal and another had a psychotic episode). My background as a counselor and social worker allowed me to assess those situations, but the shelter had to work in conjunction with psychiatric hospitals to actively deal with the situations (FN San Luis Potosi, October 23, 2015). The vignette at the opening of this chapter also illustrates the link to other authorities when fatalities occur. What is at stake here is understanding that shelters do not own many of the resources that are made available to migrants. Thus, the need to broker with other constituents is essential to safely run humanitarian spaces. Although migrants may not link directly with those constituents that provide certain resources or support operations, they are still beneficiaries of those links.

Security. The previous chapter described the high levels of violence that exist in Mexico and explained that sometimes, this violence is directed or aimed at the shelters where migrants congregate. Thus, one of the priorities of any of the shelters is safety. Occasionally, humanitarian organizations need to establish links with local police, national human rights organizations, or federal police. Some shelters have

received threats or even attacks on their facilities (FN Saltillo, March 12, 2015). Through legal means, the Mexican Human Rights Commission has established safety mechanisms, which consist of a set of bodyguards and direct access to federal police. There are at least three shelters that have these protection mechanisms activated (FN Reynosa, December 10, 2015). Other shelters, like the ones in San Luis Potosi and Guadalajara, have made arrangements with the local government to be protected by the police and to have additional security measures in place in the areas surrounding the shelters. In some cases, there are security cameras outside of the shelters that can be monitored by local police (FN San Luis Potosi, October 10, 2015).

While safety and security mechanisms are established to protect humanitarian staff, in practice, what matters for the shelter is the safety of the migrants using the services. As the director of the shelter in Tenosique said, ‘We want everybody to be safe here. Thus, we have to pressure the government to provide the security that was supposed to exist in the first place’ (FN Tenosique, September 20, 2015). Thus, humanitarian organizations serve as representatives and liaisons for migrants and humanitarian staff when working with governmental bodies. The resources these NGOs mobilize ensure an intangible benefit: safety. Despite its intangibility, the effects of securing safety are felt, since migrants repeatedly stated in interviews that they were willing to trade freedom for safety.

Legal representation. This is the more contentious part in terms of brokering to access resources. Migrants who have been victims of grave crimes by criminal gangs, federal police, local police, or migration authorities are entitled to a regularization of legal status — in Mexico — for humanitarian reasons. Humanitarian NGOs often have to represent migrants with judicial authorities to be able to gain

access to justice and even a due process (FN Tenosique, September 15, 2015). Along the northern border, deported Mexicans return without identification or money, and they are often disoriented within the cities they are returning to. Upon return, Mexican migration authorities provide a simple letter of repatriation that is supposed to serve as identification. Deportees are often harassed by the local authorities who detained and extorted them, hoping to make some profit. In these cases, shelters serve as representatives and advocates for deportees who are detained or seek employment in border towns. Getting a new identification card — which in Mexico is essential for any administrative task — takes more than three months and requires a permanent residence or address. Furthermore, this identification, known as *credencial de elector* (electoral card), often needs to be processed in the district where the migrant is supposed to reside (FN Reynosa, December 8, 2015).

Without the efforts of humanitarian NGOs to advocate for and represent migrants in front of Mexican authorities, migrants could face even bigger challenges when trying to access the judicial system. While there is no guarantee that justice will be served for them, at least shelters continue to document human rights violations and crimes to push advocacy efforts. On the ground, shelters represent migrants to access justice; on a macro-level, shelters liaise with other organizations to advocate for the rights and wellbeing of migrants.

International and Other Actors

Casas de migrantes are hubs for information, from general information about the shelters to education on human rights, to emergency information, to information about access to refugee status. Furthermore, there is also education on general and

sexual health. Migrants who are able to reach the Mexican border with the United States have received a good amount of information along the way. That information comes in part from the shelters, but because shelters often have small staffs, humanitarian organizations liaise with multiple international actors to provide additional services. The Red Cross, UNHCR, MSF, Asylum Access, the United Nations Development Program, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, and IOM are some of the international actors that partner with *casas de migrantes* to provide special services.

The Red Cross provides medical relief and telephone services at different points during a migrant's journey, often operating outside the shelter (FN Tenosique, September 28, 2015). MSF runs a program addressing mental health issues along migrant paths. They also provide counseling and social work services in cases of violence (particularly rape), and occasionally they provide *ad hoc* medical services (FN San Luis Potosi, October 18, 2015). UNHCR and the UNDP provide training on humanitarian practice standards and sponsor publications for migrants, which often include information about the shelters along migrant routes.

As much as the partnership works, tensions exist. While shelters have been operating for a long time, international organizations often arrive with the 'know how', minimizing the labour people have done before. This attitude perpetuates dynamics where local organizations are not treated as equals. Occasionally, this dynamic causes partnerships to end, or because of a clash in values, agreements have to be terminated (FN San Luis Potosi, October 17, 2015). While in some cases it is appropriate to form staffs at the shelters to improve the service levels — some shelters may have very low standards of service —, there are times when the experience of the

place is not taken into account. Thus, organizations that have great trajectories and experience are treated like children who need to be taught the alphabet. In these cases, shelters may not work with INGOs because partnerships are not on equal grounds (SDI Saltillo, March 10, 2015; SDI Guadalajara January 6, 2017).

The shifting nature of the context and the required ability to adjust according to the needs of migrants requires humanitarian NGOs to serve as a liaison with INGOs to provide information, education, and other services. Occasionally, personalities and different responses may cause conflict and clash with the agendas of INGOs because determinate action falls out of the scope of service. However, these partnerships have proven to be fruitful, challenging, and above all, beneficial for migrants, deportees, asylum seekers, and refugees. The *casas de migrantes* broker aid and information towards migrants, and also liaise with external actors to make visible the realities of migration, deportation, and asylum in Mexico. Not only that, but another way to broker information toward the exterior is to make visible the situations of migrants. By participating in different advocacy networks, shelters share information about what occurs on the ground. Furthermore, shelters also link to the academic world, as many researchers — like myself — collect data at these places (FN Reynosa, December 20, 2015).

The brokerage role exercised by these places is important in order to be effective in supporting migrants. As Christoplos (2002: 2–3) insists, humanitarian assistance requires local organizations to be attentive to the partnerships they enter into and consider how they broker between migrants, an array of bureaucratic instances, and contextual predatory forces. An analysis of this partnership reveals and illuminates the way meso-level actors work. Hence, analysis of the work of *casas de*

migrantes in Mexico and the ways they broker to gain access to resources for migrants provides significant insight into the ways intermediate structures function in migration processes (see de Haas 2010). This analysis also demonstrates that facilitation, control, and rescue/care are key working attributes of intermediate structures, which inevitably overlap. Furthermore, analysis of shelters' brokerage roles and the different relationships they develop deepens our understanding of the 'indirect feedback mechanisms' (Bakewell, Kubal, and Pereira 2016: 7–8) — in particular, the spatial dimension, which refers to the place where the social facilitation, *control*, or *care* (my emphasis and addition) occurs and the role of 'network externalities', which refers to the relationships of migrants with other actors. In the migration process in Mexico, humanitarian actors broker those relationships between migrants and other actors.

8.3 Double-Edged Sword: Between Welfare and Containment

Shelters operate in a liminal state and become a double-edged sword while serving migrants and deportees along the migration paths in Mexico. Humanitarian actors seek migrants' and deportees' emancipation through their services and advocacy efforts. However, they also confine a captive audience who seeks their services and are willing to trade their freedom for safety, food, and shelter. In all, it seems that the government, shelters, and migrants themselves are willing to be part of this dynamic. This final section responds to this chapter's third guiding question: what are the effects of *casas de migrantes* on the migration processes in Mexico?

Resources Along the Way

Resources are available assets (personal, social, material, and cultural) that may allow an individual to cope with hardship or threats to welfare. For resources to become social capital, they need to be mobile through the social network (Anthias 2007: 793). The relationship between *casas de migrantes* and migrants is a patron-client one, similar to the one that could be established between refugees and INGOs in a refugee camp (Harrell-Bond et al 1992). The interactions between migrants and shelters are always asymmetrical and the shelters hold the upper hand. Migrants are not in control of the shelters; they have to abide by the rules and if for any reason a shelter is closed in a particular town, that resource is not available for the migrant anymore. Additionally, while shelters may offer access to more resources, they also have the right of refusal for any reason, just as migrants have the option to use the shelters or not. In this way, migrants are unable to mobilize the resources to gain an advantage because they are receiving a service offered due to their precarious situations. Thus, shelters are resources outside of migrants' networks and cannot be integrated as part of their social capital.

At this point, it is clear that some irregular migrants and deportees use *casas de migrantes* because they do not have many options, mainly due to a lack of money and for security reasons. Hence, shelters exist as resources along migrant paths, as opposed to being integrated into a migrant's social network. The distinction between networks and resources allows migration scholars to recognize how resources may be available outside of the migrants' networks or ties.

A few of the interviews I conducted reveal narratives that clearly illustrate these points. One example is the case of Angel, a 42-year-old migrant from Honduras,

who said: ‘I am traveling with my own means. I am on this road because we are poor and I need to. I left only 2,000 lempiras [80 USD] for my family and I need to cross to the U.S. as soon as I can to start working before they run out of money and have nothing to eat. I have no money so I have slept on the street, in the mountains, and in some shelters. That is why I came here’ (Angel, IDI San Luis Potosi 11). Another case comes from Guillermo, a 27-year-old migrant from Honduras, who said: ‘I heard that they helped you in these places. [...] One comes here because we have no money. If I had money, I would be traveling with a smuggler. But, here they treat you well, they give you food, clothes, and you are safe. Here migration authorities and criminals cannot enter’ (Guillermo, IDI San Luis Potosi 13). Angel had been on the road for 24 days before reaching the shelter in San Luis Potosi and Guillermo was using a shelter for the first time. Thus, these excerpts from interviews reveal that in the absence of money or other means to move through Mexico, migrants use shelters as resources, among others, for their journeys.

Shelters are also social hubs that provide access to other types of resources (information, health care, legal opportunities, and so on). While the interviews I conducted mostly focused on migrants staying *in* different shelters, I was also able to converse with migrants who *did not* use shelters. For instance, I met a family from El Salvador outside the shelter in San Luis Potosi who said they did not want to miss the train, which was the reason they did not enter the shelter (FN San Luis Potosi, October 20, 2015). Another migrant I met by the train tracks in Tenosique said that he did not like rules and therefore, he preferred not to use shelters (FN Tenosique, September 26, 2015). Following Titterton’s (1992: 5) argument that vulnerable and poor populations may rely on social support as an informal resource to cope with hardship, I argue that migrants use shelters (social support) as resources according to their

circumstances and their perceptions of these places. Certainly, the geographical distribution of these places along migration routes in Mexico fosters their use. But, migrants may choose whether or not to use them, and migrants who have attempted the journey before and are familiar with the shelters may decide to skip a particular shelter if they did not have a good experience there the last time they visited (FN Reynosa, December 14, 2015).

Welfare and Containment

Using *casas de migrantes* is one strategy poor migrants frequently rely on to cope with hardship. Soup kitchens, shelters, and community or neighbourly support fall into the category of informal social resources. The primary aim of shelters is to alleviate the precariousness migrants and deportees experience during their journeys. In other words, shelters aim to care and provide a basic welfare for migrants in distress. Referring back to Chapter 2, welfare or social protection should be understood in this case as those public and private initiatives that provide consumption transfers to the poor, protect the vulnerable against livelihood risks, and enhance the social status and rights of the marginalized (Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux 2008: 70). Thus, while humanitarian actors aiding migrants in Mexico have become a social net distributed all along the country with the purpose of alleviating their suffering, migrants engage with them on their own terms or truly in cases of emergencies. My interviewees repeatedly said that shelters provided basic need; for instance, Arturo, a 17-year-old migrant from El Salvador who was traveling with a friend, said, ‘I think shelters are a great help. They treat you well, you have food, a place to sleep. Here you can get clothes, the doctor checks you if you arrived dehydrated, you eat well, I can take a shower, and rest for a couple of days, and then

get on the road again up north. [...] I will use other shelters. Now, I have the map that they gave me here' (IDI, San Luis Potosi 14)

Migrants using a particular shelter for a second or third time express their continued appreciation of the basic welfare they receive, but are also aware of how the delivery of services changes over time. Gonzalo, an 18-year-old migrant from Guatemala who was traveling for a second time with two other migrants, said, 'I am surprised how everything has changed in this shelter. This is how a "migrant shelter" is supposed to be. It is not only because of the facilities, but also because of the staff and rules that one can be completely sure and convinced that here one is safe. At the same time, staff encourage us to continue with our journeys and provide everything you may need (IDI, Tenosique 17). These words show not only how shelters may change over time, but also how they can improve their services and the way they interact with migrants.

However, as much as shelters function as an informal welfare system for migrants, the shelters' internal rules, policies, and relationships also foster a form of containment. Carmen, a 43-year-old Mexican migrant, was in jail for three years in the U.S. After completing her sentence, she was deported to Mexico through the city of Reynosa, one of the most dangerous cities in the country because of gang and drug cartel presence. Even when there was an agreement between Mexico and the U.S. not to deport people in the evening, she was left at the International Bridge around 7.30 PM. She explained that when migrants come back, they often return in extremely vulnerable positions: 'you come back and you do not know anything, you do not know anyone. Everybody is suspicious of everyone. You start looking around and everybody is nervous. I was very afraid [...] I stood by the door with another woman

because I did not know what to do. I think they saw us very confused and afraid so the person at the counter came to tell us [...] “A religious sister or a priest will be here soon and they will help””.

Shelters offer services that help migrants to cope with distress, and migrants often are appreciative of that. However, shelters often have rules, schedules, and areas reserved for women or men, as well as policies that must be followed to check in and out. Thus, sometimes the boundaries between a shelter and a detention centre are blurred. Carmen clearly expressed this tension:

Thank God for the *casas de migrantes*. [...] These places are extremely helpful. If the officer did not tell us about the shelter, we could have spent the night on the street. [...] I am extremely thankful for the help, the roof, the food [...] but, when they turn off the television at 8.30 PM, told us to go to bed, closed the door and turn off the lights, it reminded me of jail. But, I also felt this during the day. The door to the street is locked and we cannot go out even to the convenience store. I know is for security reasons, we do not know the place and people do not know us. Still, for a moment I feel like back in prison [...] the more days you spent here, the more you feel like in prison. At the same time, I feel safe. (IDI, Reynosa 8)

Deported Mexicans return to the country under diverse circumstances; some return after being held in detention for a short time, while others return after years in prison. Carmen described the often chaotic and dangerous circumstances deported Mexicans return to. Some may have assistance and find their way quickly, while others, like Carmen, return to the country with minimal to no support. Regardless of their location — southern, central, or northern Mexico — shelters become a significant social net that aids vulnerable migrants, giving them some relief as they consider their options moving forward. At the same time, those shelters are entering the advocacy arena to fight for migrants’ rights. However, Carmen’s observations about the rules, the impossibility of going out, and the feelings of being in jail simultaneously reveal the

tension that exists in the delivery of humanitarian aid and that humanitarianism also functions as containment.

In the history of welfare, rulers have been concerned with controlling the mobility of people. The vagrants and the wandering poor were threats that needed to be controlled (Anderson 2013: 13). At the same time, in the delivery of welfare, another concern deals with the issue of who is entitled to aid and support (Innes et al 2013: 1–3). In the past some regulations attempted to address this. For example, the Law of Settlement regulated the immigration of the poor (Lees 1998: 29; Landau 1988: 409); ‘letters of surety’ (letters assuring payment for the sustenance of the carrier) were required to allow settlement (van Leeuwen 1994: 186–188); and ‘wardens’ at the doors of several cities identified ‘valuable migrants’ from liabilities (van Leeuwen 1994: 186–188). Thus, requirements and regulations to settle, suitability inspections, and proof or assurance of support are forms of control exercised by those providing aid.

However, the fact that shelters exercise the function of containment is fraught with complexities. After all, many shelters utilize these different forms of control, requesting proof of identity and documenting who comes to the shelter to receive aid with a final aim of fostering mobility. This dynamic of containment blurs the line between humanitarianism and control. As much as shelters offer welfare, on the other side of the coin are forms of containment that keep migrants under control. In addition, in one way or another, the *casas de migrantes* have the expectation that people will move. Some shelters may have rules aimed at leading migrants to make a decision to stay on their journeys. For example, the shelter in Palenque closes during the day and reopens at night, and migrants cannot stay more than three days. The shelter director

said, ‘this rule helps migrants to make a decision quicker and continue their journey. We do not want them stuck in this town’ (FN Palenque, January 24, 2015). Migrants strongly feel the need to continue their journeys because being outside of the shelter makes them more prone to being captured by migration authorities or becoming targets of criminal gangs (FN Palenque February 2, 2015).

Other shelters have a rule that does not allow migrants to go outside; migrants can only leave the shelter to continue their journeys. In some cases, shelters may allow migrants to stay five to 10 days, occasionally reassessing and adjusting case by case and on an as-needed basis. The expectation is that migrants will continue their journeys. Even in those shelters that allow indefinite stays, the fact that migrants cannot go out makes them want to move quickly rather than remaining in an environment that may resemble a detention centre (FN Saltillo, March 8, 2015). Those shelters serving deported Mexicans at the border may have similar rules that gently urge deportees to move or define their situations quickly. In all, the expectation of the *casas de migrantes* is that people will move, and also that the rules, particularly the days of stay, foster mobility. These dynamics create scenarios that do not allow migrants to settle or to stay longer in particular towns. More recently, shelters have recognized that some migrants end up settling in particular towns. Recognizing this reality has led *casas de migrantes* to develop support programs for migrants remaining in the area (FN Tenosique, March 12, 2017).

Humanitarian actors clearly have a number of not-so-subtle ways of controlling and exercising surveillance of migrants. Mandatory registration, photographs, and even digital fingerprinting are some of the requirements migrants must accept in order to receive support (FN September 2014 - January 2016).

Paradoxically, shelters' forms of surveillance aim to make *casas de migrantes* safer. However, there is no doubt that while registration and pictures occasionally help with identifying potential smugglers or criminals, these practices echo ones from pre-industrial times that aimed to ensure that aid was being delivered to the right people.

From a more contemporary perspective, scholars have indicated that humanitarian aid always has a component of control. Barnett (2011: 11-12) stated that at the core of humanitarianism, there is the paradox of emancipation and domination:

Humanitarianism operates in the best tradition of emancipatory ethics. It aspires to keep people alive, to expand their opportunities, and to give them greater control over their fates. It does so through various interventions, all defended on the grounds that they improve the health and welfare of others who are too weak and powerless to help themselves. [...] Yet any act of intervention no matter how well intended, is also an act of control. Humanitarian governance may have its heart in the right place but it is still a form of governance, and governance always includes power.

Humanitarian actors in Mexico epitomize the tension, described by Barnett, between emancipation and domination by blurring the line between being an oasis — as some migrants call shelters — and functioning as *de facto* detention centres. This chapter has demonstrated how *casas de migrantes* serve migrants, deportees, and asylum seekers with the best of intentions. Even when the success of particular shelters is called into question, one can see the efforts made to provide assistance or the reasons migrants perceive them as oases that provide respite and support. The same can be said about the ways shelters morph to meet the needs of migrants or the efforts of the main shelters in advocating for migrants.

Shelters' policies and regulations, as well as the dynamics involved in the migration process (violence, control by migration authorities, and migrants' agency) lead shelters to foster environments that may feel like detention centres. Not being

allowed to go out, schedules, idle time, searching their bags before entering the shelter, sometimes collecting their belongings, and uncertainty about the journey itself are some of the elements that contribute to create detention-like environments. At the same time, migrants often express their willingness to exchange freedom for safety, which again indicates that indeed some of the shelters settings resemble detention (FN San Luis Potosi, October 23, 2015). Nevertheless, acts of humanitarian intervention or assistance no matter how well intended are acts of control (Barnett 2011: 12).

Policies, alliances, location, and services converge to stimulate a type of humanitarianism that functions as containment (see Donini 2010: S223). Migration policies in Mexico make humanitarian spaces a type of sanctuary that migrants use to guard themselves from migration and police authorities. Intended or not, the migration policy funnels vulnerable migrants towards humanitarian spaces throughout Mexico. This chapter ultimately showed how shelters and local governments create alliances to provide humanitarian aid to migrants, either because it is convenient for local councils so migrants will not be roaming through the towns where shelters are located (like the shelter in San Luis Potosi) or because humanitarian actors need the alliance with the government to access resources that allow them to operate (like the shelter in Guadalajara). There are also those alliances between the government and shelters that end up being *de facto* outsourcing of care for deportees (like the shelter in Reynosa). Alliances between humanitarian actors and the government prevent migrants from spreading throughout the cities or towns where shelters are located, and also contain migrants in one space, making control easier in case it is needed. It is thus inevitable that the politics of humanitarianism reveal the complex relationship between humanitarianism and power that is understood as ‘those effects that shape

the capacities of actors to determine their own circumstances and fate' (Barnett and Weiss 2008b: 39).

Regarding the effects of humanitarian aid in the migration process, it is important to note that power is exercised not only at the institutional levels but also on the ground level, where humanitarian agencies use different techniques to regulate behaviours in emergency situations (Barnett and Weiss 2008b: 38–40; Barnett 2005: 734). In this case study, location and delivery of services also function as forms of containment embedded in humanitarian aid provided to migrants in Mexico. Many shelters are located along migratory paths; the shelters' presence makes these routes more visible, while at the same time encouraging migrants to remain around those geographical locations. In this way, geography plays a role in containing migrants to a particular town — and further, at a specific location within the town where the shelter is. Vulnerable migrants seek support or aid along their journeys. They are aware, or quickly become aware of, the services they can get at different shelters. Thus, they go looking for those services, mostly food, shelter, clothing, and help in cases of emergency. This fact, along with the rules about not allowing migrants to go out, promotes a captive audience that regularly occupies humanitarian spaces.

In all of the ways described above, humanitarian aid offered by *casas de migrantes* serves as a double-edged sword. Humanitarian actors respond to migrants' vulnerability through their services and advocacy, becoming an informal welfare system along migration paths. At the same time, migrants concentrate in different places that contain them, even when they willingly trade their freedom for safety,

food, and shelter. Migration policies in Mexico, shelters' operations and structures, and migrants themselves form part of this dynamic of welfare and containment.

Conclusion

Casas de migrantes are the places where poverty, violence, and assistance/care converge. Poor migrants and deportees seek assistance at migrant shelters due to a lack of resources and to shield themselves from violence. At the same time, shelters emerge in response to migrants' vulnerability and violence. As violence emerges as an omnipresent threat in Mexico, violent groups target migrant shelters. After all, poverty, violence, and assistance/care reinforce one another in the migration process in Mexico.

Casas de migrantes develop into a 'humanitarianism from below' and an informal welfare system for migrants, deportees, and refugees transiting through or returning to Mexico. At the same time, shelters work in different social contexts and link with organizations and government entities to provide assistance/care to migrants in distress, and become brokers of aid, exercising dynamics of facilitation, control, and care in the migration process in Mexico. Furthermore, as shelters evolve and develop in response to the changing profiles of migrants and the context, they have to navigate the tension between offering welfare or become a form of containment. After all, *casas de migrantes* almost inevitably become part of the structures of humanitarian governance in Mexico.

In contrast to a 'humanitarianism from above', where multiple international actors intervene in the alleviation of suffering, a local ethos and an uncanny ability to

adapt and respond to the needs of migrants characterizes this ‘humanitarianism from below’. Unable to secure financing for their work, *casas de migrantes* must link and network with different entities that range from local communities, local governments, and international human rights organizations. Furthermore, depending on the type of relationship with the Mexican government, shelters can become places of contestation, alliance, and institutionalization. Framing *casas de migrantes* outside of the migration industry(ies)’ conceptualization provides the opportunity to see facilitation, control, and care not as separate industries, but rather as essential functions of migration intermediaries and offers the opportunity to highlight their brokerage role, which often is forgotten.

Migrants use *casas de migrantes* as resources, inasmuch as it is convenient for their purposes, due to the meagre resources they have available for their journeys. Among the motivations for migrants to seek and interact with humanitarian organizations are the availability of welfare, safety, and sanctuary. Migrants quickly learn about the existence of shelters and services available, but they cannot integrate the shelters as part of their social capital because they lack control over the shelters or the ways shelters operate. In fact, in order to receive services or aid, they must abide by the shelters’ rules, entering into a social contract where some level of good behaviour is expected. By the same token, when shelters have to close due to pressures by the local community or because they are incapable of providing aid, migrants have no choice but to seek aid in other places or towns. This suggests that shelters function as resources for the migrant community outside of their networks and therefore cannot be mobilized.

In the migration process of Mexico, humanitarian actors have become a double-edged sword, with welfare and containment on each side. This exemplifies the tension between emancipation and domination, revealing that shelters exercise a certain level of control over migrants. When compassion is exercised in a public space, it is always directed from above to below, from the more powerful element to the weaker one, the more fragile to the more vulnerable. Humanitarian actors are always in a stronger position in the migration process. As much as shelters are a type of humanitarianism from below, they operate within a power dynamic as migrants seek their services. Fassin describes this by writing: ‘the concept of precarious lives therefore needs to be taken in the strongest sense of its Latin etymology: lives that are not guaranteed but bestowed in answer to prayer, or in other words are defined not in the absolute of a condition, but in relation to those who have power over them’. Precarious does not correspond to the static description of a condition; it involves a dynamic relation of social inequality (Fassin 2012: 4, 264).

Chapter 9. Conclusion

This research represents an inquiry into the migration process in Mexico, which refers to the whole set of circumstances, actors, and relationships that shape and affect migration patterns. The guiding question throughout the thesis was: The main research question addressed in this dissertation is: How and to what extent do poverty, violence, and the interactions between migrants and humanitarian aid organizations shape the migration processes within the larger regional socio-political context of Central American countries, Mexico, and the United States? The secondary questions focused on migrants' perceptions and use of the *casas de migrantes*, and the humanitarian organizations' perceptions and responses to the changing profiles of migrants.

The study had three objectives: First, taking a closer look at migration journeys of migrants and deportees in Mexico. Second, understanding the role of migration intermediaries, especially of humanitarian actors. And third, analysing how the regional socio-political context shapes the migration process in Mexico.

Through the exploration of the journeys of migrants in transit and deportees, I aimed to explore the internal and external dynamics at play in such a process. I sought to understand the role of poverty in migration journeys, the experiences of migrants along the way, and the ways in which they found resources and mobilized their networks in order to cope with or sustain their journeys. By studying external dynamics, I worked to reveal how contextual factors, actors, and dynamics shaped the migration process in Mexico.

The second objective aimed to advance the theoretical approaches of meso-level structures (individuals, groups, and/or institutions) and the ways these facilitate,

control, and assist migration processes, especially the role of humanitarian actors in transit countries beyond the classical settings of emergency situations and asylum. Other studies on migration journeys have focused on migrants' experiences, but few studies have looked more comprehensively at the role of *casas de migrantes* in Mexico, especially at the ways their presence and support influence the migration process. Furthermore, the research shed light on the link between humanitarian aid and migration.

Finally, the third objective sought to explore the socio-political context in Mexico, especially the role of violence and migration controls, to understand how the socio-political situation increased costs of migration and affected migration strategies. I focused on how, in a violent context, migrants and other actors mobilized resources to advance their migration projects.

9.1 Key Findings

Poverty, violence, and care emerge as three interrelated and mutually reinforced dynamics in the migration process of Mexico. Migrants, without means to migrate in safer ways, embark on perilous journeys through Mexico. Their lack of resources makes them extremely vulnerable along the road, as they enter or return to a country that has increased levels of generalized violence that can be attributed to larger structural causes like endemic corruption, poverty, as well as illicit drug and arms trade. Thus, humanitarian assistance emerges as a response to a-migrant's vulnerability and violence. At the same time, humanitarian organizations in Mexico are vulnerable to the increasing violence in the country.

The study showed that migrants crossing Mexico are poor; not the poorest or destitute, but poor nonetheless. They often start their journeys with meagre resources and little certainty of what lies ahead, but using *casas de migrantes* is only one of several strategies migrants use along their journeys to cope with hardship. Guillermo's words illustrate the fact that migrants using shelters are indeed poor and unable to migrate in other ways. He said: 'One comes here because we have no money. If I had money, I would be traveling with a smuggler' (IDI San Luis Potosi 13). Similarly, Victor's story at the beginning of chapter 5 showed how poor migrants rely on other strategies to cope with hardship. In this way, *casas de migrantes* appear as one of several strategies in migrants' 'economy of makeshifts'. In the case of deportees, they return to the country in vulnerable positions. Deportees' profiles vary from people who had been incarcerated for several years to those removed after some time in detention centres. In any case, deportees often lack immediate resources, identification documents, and the possibility of communicating with family members. Thus, many of them return to Mexico in precarious conditions and in extremely vulnerable positions, especially during the initial moments of the aftermath of deportation. These findings regarding poverty reveal how migrants' agency is exercised and how resources and strategies emerge outside of a migrant's social network.

Violence in Mexico appears as a contextual dynamic for the migration process and for the country in general. At the same time, it is assumed as something normal that is part of the journey. Migrants may experience violence at the hands of state and non-state actors at any point along the journey or upon return to Mexico; often migrants are aware of the dangers and assume that their encounters with violence are simply part of the journey, something that is normal. Aware of the possibility of

violence, migrants seek shelters as a place that may appear as safe. Mateo's words illustrated this: 'you know there is a lot of insecurity along the road, but what can you do? [...] but if someone tells me on this street or this place you are safe or there are no dangers, then I feel safe. For me, in the shelters, one is safe from the outside dangers' (Mateo, IDI Tenosique 17)

In spite of the violence, migration patterns do not seem to reflect any negative effects (like decreasing numbers of migrants). As migrants normalize their experiences of violence and expect that something may happen to them, violence becomes an internal dynamic in the migration process. Overall, violence is both an internal and external dynamic in the migration process. Furthermore, the omnipresent threat of violence in Mexico needs to be considered within the larger increase of violence in the region.

Casas de migrantes function as an informal welfare system that serves poor and vulnerable migrants along migratory routes or border towns in Mexico. Shelters exercise dynamics of facilitation, control, and assistance, and play brokerage roles with local communities, government institutions, and other international humanitarian actors. In this way, they become migration intermediaries. Furthermore, the role, history, and local nature of shelters allows them to emerge as a type of 'humanitarianism from below'. Rafael Alonso Hernández, director of the shelter FM4, explains this very clearly by saying, 'That is the beauty of these humanitarian spaces. Their histories and origins bring different capacities and perspectives to serve and bring justice to migrants in need. But they emerge from the ground, from the field. [...] In Mexico, the phenomenon of humanitarian aid emerges from the local base' (SDI Guadalajara January 6, 2017).

However, as much as shelters work as an informal welfare system and tend to the needs of distress migrants and deportees, they also serve as a form of containment for migrants along migratory paths, exercising new forms of domination and power. Fr. Tomás, the shelter director in Tenosique, insisted on keeping an open-door policy to avoid creating a prison-like environment. By contrast, those shelters with closed-door policies point to safety as justification for the decision not to allow migrants to go out. This is further reinforced when migrants like Guillermo, who I interviewed at a shelter in San Luis Potosi, says: ‘here they treat you well, they give you food, clothes, and you are safe. Here migration authorities and criminals cannot enter. It feels a little bit like being in jail, but I am safe’ (IDI San Luis Potosi 13). For another perspective, Carmen, a deportee I met in Reynosa, mentions, ‘I am extremely thankful for the help, the roof, the food [...] but, when they turned off the television at 8.30 p.m., told us to go to bed, closed the door and turn off the lights, it reminded me of jail. [...] The same during the day, the door to the street is locked and we cannot go out [...] I know is for security reasons. [...] The more days you spend here, the more you feel like you are in prison’ (IDI, Reynosa 8). Thus, the interplay between the context and shelters’ internal operation creates a functional tension between welfare and containment. Almost inevitably, *casas de migrantes* become part of the humanitarian governance of migration in Mexico.

9.2 Limitations and Future Research

This project is accompanied by three methodological limitations: the adjustment of the proposed ‘mobile methodology’, the geographical scope of the project, and the constitution of the sample. The latter became a recurrent challenge

during the data analysis and writing stages of the research. Nevertheless, the contributions of this work advance migration research and could serve as a building block for future studies.

The research used a mobile methodology that required the researcher to move with the subject. I adapted the methodology because the violent context of the migration process made it extremely dangerous to move with migrants, and I did not want to add any burden to them by asking them to document their journeys with recordings, disposable cameras, or use of video, even though these techniques had been used in other research projects. Traveling with migrants could have allowed me to observe the process of reaching shelters and gain insights into the process of deciding whether or not to access or not humanitarian aid. But, the risks did not allow me to make full use of the mobile methodology. Furthermore, it was not possible to travel with deportees returning to Mexico. Thus, my project used a customized version of the mobile method.

The project sought to analyse the role of humanitarian actors in the migration process, and its design included interviews with irregular migrants and Mexican deportees returning to the country. Previously published literature on the migration processes had focused on irregular migrants moving through Mexico, emphasizing the experiences of migrants in transit. Nevertheless, humanitarian aid was being provided to both groups. Thus, a more complete analysis of the migration process needed to include the experiences of deportees at the border between Mexico and the United States. In spite of having a scoping study phase during fieldwork, selecting only one place at the border created an imbalance in the number of in-depth interviews gathered for the project. In other words, there were more interviews with irregular

migrants than Mexican deportees. The research could have benefited from collecting data at two shelters along migratory routes and two shelters at the border between the United States and Mexico, but that was not possible with the scope and timeframe of my field.

The size of the sample was significant enough to use the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), but as a more nuanced analysis was completed, the subgroups became too small to allow me to identify trends. Since it was the first time the measurement was being used with international migrants, I used the instrument as it was offered by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), including a couple of modules on work, violence, and empowerment. Thus, collecting data during fieldwork took a good amount of time. In future research, the instrument could be simplified into a more streamlined version that could foster a more robust sample.

In a way, *casas de migrantes* serve two different populations; shelters from southern Mexico up to a certain part in the north mostly serve Central American migrants, and shelters at the border serve mostly Mexican deportees. In any case, few Mexicans would be found at shelters in Central or southern Mexico, and only some Central Americans would stop at shelters at the border. Thus, the imbalance in the data collected created constant tension during the analysis and writing portions of my work, and it was difficult to balance the amount of information regarding irregular migrants and deportees.

Some avenues for future research could be in the measurement of poverty, inclusion of other stakeholders to gain a deeper perspective on the role of humanitarian actors, and a move toward a comparative perspective with other regions

in the world. First, the measurement of poverty has a number of implications. It provides a deeper perspective on the dimensions in which people are poor, which, when complemented by modules measuring violence and work, can provide a more complete picture of the circumstances of poor migrants at their moments of departure. Furthermore, a refinement of the instrument could be used in other projects to provide deeper insights into the mobility of poor migrants. In the particular case of the migration process in Mexico, a more robust sample would allow more in-depth observations regarding the characteristics of migrants. Second, the inclusion of more stakeholders (more governmental organizations, international actors, and police bodies) could provide a more comprehensive insight into the ways humanitarian actors operate and are perceived. The inclusion of other actors' perspectives can also provide more insights into the different brokerage roles of *casas de migrantes*.

Finally, a comparative perspective with other regions across the globe can help to construct a more solid approach to meso-level theory. Similarities do exist between the migration process in Mexico and others in the world, especially with Africa. A comparative study could also provide deeper insight into the reasons why humanitarian actors have operated for a long time in Mexico, or show the causes that fostered their emergence. Finally, a comparative perspective of the functions of migration intermediaries (facilitation, control, and assistance/care) and their brokerage roles in regions like Africa, Asia, and South America can aid in developing a more robust meso-level theory that focuses on how intermediaries work in migration processes.

9.3 Advancing Meso-level Theory

Four contributions from this project advance meso-level migration theory. The first is the role of poverty in migration processes, which contributes to the literature on migration and development. Additionally, the role of poverty provides nuanced scholarship on migrants' resources and agency going beyond social networks. Here there is a key distinction between resources and networks in migration processes. The second contribution is the identification of facilitation, control, and assistance/care as essential functions of meso-level actors in migration processes. The third contribution is the significance of brokerage as an important element in the understanding of how meso-level actors operate. These two contributions add to the literature on the role of intermediaries in migration and the ways meso-level structures function in social processes. The final contribution is the notion of humanitarianism from below in relationship to welfare and humanitarian governance, which advances the theoretical understanding of humanitarianism in migration contexts, as well as the role of humanitarian organizations in structuring migration patterns.

The Role of Poverty

At the theoretical level, the discussion on poverty is key to affirming that poor migrants move, as well as to identifying the strategies they use in spite of the lack of resources. Migration literature has relied on the assumption that those who migrate are not the poorest; rather, regardless of income and assets, those who migrate are the ones who have the resources and drive to do it (Skeldon 1997). While studies on migration do not explicitly state that migrants are not poor, the emphasis on the resources shifts the focus away from poverty and instead stresses the role of networks and strategies as they help migrants complete migration journeys. In other words, this

emphasis creates the perception that the poor do not move. This emphasis on resources for the journey also clouds the second part of Skeldon's statement, which asserts that the poor do move, but less frequently and less far (Skeldon 1997: 8). This assertion has been restated in the literature by Skeldon (2012), de Haas (2010a), DeWind and Holdaway (2008), Waddington and Sabates-Wheeler (2003), and Siddiqui (2012) among others. Nevertheless, a deeper understanding of the role poverty plays in migration journeys is still needed. A significant contribution of this work has been to make explicit that poor migrants do indeed move, and to further assert that they also travel long distances (depending on what one considers a long distance).

Recently, some migration researchers have started to address a few issues around poverty. Sládková (2016), Sørensen (2013), Basok et al (2015), and Solano (2017) all indicated that poor migrants move. Also, Van Hear (2014) highlighted the role class plays in migration journeys. Nevertheless, data regarding poverty comes from national numbers, poverty measurements based on income, and/or ethnographic material. Using the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) (OPHI 2016) as a measure has added to the research a measurement of poverty that is not based only on income and revealed the types of deprivations migrants experience. Furthermore, the MPI provided a closer look at poverty by identifying the number of people that suffer deprivations, the intensity of poverty (average number of deprivations) experienced by a household, and the types of deprivations. The measurement showed that these migrants were most commonly deprived of adequate nutrition, sanitation, cooking fuel, and access to clean water at the moment of departure on their migration journeys. Thus, the use of the MPI provides a different take on poverty. While migrants were able to gather 'spark money' to jump start their journeys, the MPI

revealed that these migrants are still poor and on the move. Although the sample was limited to those migrants using *casas de migrantes*, the findings provide a closer look at the level of poverty and types of deprivations migrants dealt with. As far as I am aware, this is the first time the MPI has been used to measure poverty levels among transnational migrants, thus providing a new methodology for gaining a deeper understanding of poverty in future research.

The migration processes in Mexico reveal a social differentiation and economic stratification among migrants (Sládková 2016), where migrants with more social and financial resources may migrate with the support of smugglers or other strategies and means, and poor migrants must rely on other resources, such as *casas de migrantes*. Thus, the fact that poor migrants move begs the question about how migrants manage their journeys or the types of resources available to them. Among the strategies poor migrants use during their journeys, which were previously listed, delayed activation of networks and sustaining cash transfers provide nuance and insight into the internal dynamics of migration (see de Haas 2010a). A delayed activation of networks is understood as the promise of help or support by one or more members of a migrant's social network. A delayed activation of networks shows that the relationships migrants have within their networks change frequently. Support can be offered or withdrawn at any point along the journey. In other words, a promise of support may be fulfilled upon reaching a certain point or points along the journey. At the same time, that support may also change at any time on the journey. Hence, these relationships or social networks are only useful when they are willing to help and are capable of mobilizing resources, which confirms what Schapendonk (2014) indicated before that networks are not a fixed and static social entity.

While some scholars who study migration through Mexico have identified the reception of cash transfers as a strategy used by migrants to move through the country (Casillas 2006; Hagan 2008: 101; Vogt 2012: 198–200), for poor migrants, the reception of cash transfers maybe more sporadic than a full strategy for the journey. This means that members of social networks may have limited resources, so the aid that a migrant may receive only arrives during emergencies and is delivered in small amounts. Additionally, the process of receiving cash transfers always requires an official identification from the recipient. Thus, irregular migrants without a passport depend on an intermediary who would receive the cash transfer on the migrant's behalf. This makes trust and communication necessities in the relationship with an intermediary. In addition, the sporadic support migrants may receive through cash transfers could correlate with the strategy of delayed activation of networks because migrants, who referred to this strategy, argued that contacts at their destinations did not have enough capital to support a journey from the place of origin. Thus, they needed to reach the border in order for help to possibly be provided. Furthermore, support does not necessarily come from the intended or preferred destination, but can come from other countries.

Bourdieu has drawn attention to the often-forgotten distinction between networks and resources (de Haas 2010a: 1589; Anthias 2007: 793). Chapter 8 incorporated evidence and emphasized that resources may not be equated with the social networks. This distinction is significant for internal dynamics of migration, especially with poor migrants. Resources — those available assets (personal, social, material, and cultural) that may allow an individual or group to cope with hardship or threats to welfare (Anthias 2007: 793) — are still needed in order for a migrant to become mobile. Thus, distinguishing resources from social networks allows for the

consideration that resources may become available outside of networks. In this project, *casas de migrantes* become crucial resources outside of the network. At the same time, distinguishing resources from networks makes room for the emergence of other actors at the meso-level who can play significant roles in the migration process.

Thus, analysis of the role poverty plays in migration journeys and the strategies poor migrants may use to cope with precarity or vulnerability advances the understanding of the internal dynamics of migration processes. It also helps to comprehend the emergence of other intermediary actors, such as *casas de migrantes* in the case of Mexico. Additionally, poverty's role in migration journeys reveals other external dynamics, such as violence, in migration. External dynamics influence the way migrants cope with the journey and the type of strategies and resources they use.

The strategies migrants and deportees use to cope with hardship and vulnerability attest to their resilience and to the ways in which the relationship structure/agency emerges in the migration process in Mexico (see Emirbayer and Mische 1998). Bakewell (2010: 1698) discusses how international processes are shaped both by migration policy (macro-structure) and by potential migrants making decisions (micro-level). In this study, the ways migration policies have been enforced affect how migrants organize their journeys and the strategies they use to survive. Poverty and policy constrain available choices for migrants, thus shaping the ways migrants engage with the road. However, the structure-agency relationship in the migration process in Mexico is highly influenced and further constrained by the violence that exists in the country. A structure-agency reading of the migration process in Mexico must acknowledge violence as a contextual dynamic (Vogt 2012; see also Lacroix 2012; Cerny 1990) that conditions the relationship between migrants

and other actors. There are several studies that have taken a structure/agency approach to analysing the journeys of migrants in Mexico (Mainwaring and Brigden 2016; Frank-Vitale 2011; Thompson et al 2017). Thus, I decided to focus on the role of *casas de migrantes*. Nevertheless, it is necessary to acknowledge how structure/agency is at play in the experiences of migrants.

Functions of Migration Intermediaries

The analysis of migration intermediaries has become more nuanced, to the point that facilitation, control, and assistance/care are seen as subcategories of the so called ‘migration industry’ (Hernández-León 2008: 24, 154; Gammeltoft-Hansen and Sørensen 2013). Furthermore, Schapendonk (2018: 665) has argued for the need to analyse the opaque boundaries and shifting roles between facilitation and control. My analysis and results further advance these theoretical stances by considering facilitation, control, and assistance/care as essential functions of migration intermediaries. These functional characteristics often overlap and could be exercised by the same actor at any time in the migration process.

Thus, I move away from the notion of ‘migration industry’ to advocate for the more neutral use of migration intermediaries. Migration intermediaries may facilitate, control, and assist/care in the migration process. But, rather than seeing these as distinct industries or subsets of a general concept, I side with the idea that facilitation, control and assistance/care are essential functions of migration intermediaries. This perspective contributes a specific answer to the question, what do migration intermediaries do? Furthermore, it removes the emphasis on the financial gain that is prevalent in the migration industry literature and allows for the inclusion of different actors in a migration process, such as humanitarian actors. These functions may be

singled out and highlighted as a way to analyse them. In practice, these functions are intertwined and may be exercised by migration intermediaries at different degrees and different moments in the migration process.

The Significance of Brokerage

The research project emphasized the need to focus on the types of relationships developed and maintained by migration intermediaries. I demonstrated how humanitarian actors engage in different types of brokerage, each of which has a significant effect on the migration process. Analysis of brokerage advances meso-level theory because it reveals how linking happens in the migration process. Faist (2014a) has stated that brokerage is an understudied function of social life. While sociology has a larger tradition of studying brokerage, in migration studies, brokerage has taken a back seat because the theoretical debates have been around developing the understanding of the migration industry. However, if the meso-level links micro- and macro-realities, the study of brokerage is essential in order to understand how intermediate migration actors link through different relationships. Schapendonk (2018) argued that intermediate actors create a ‘forced field of relationalities’ (see also Ingold 2011: 93). I argue that to better understand how the meso-level works and how the different actors in it link, it is necessary to consider, study, and analyse the complex web of relations that contribute to the functions of the migration process.

A better understanding of the context and different types of brokerage contributes to an understanding of how social mechanisms link and work (Faist 2014b, 2016; Gross 2009). An analysis of brokerage may include the types of relationships migration intermediaries develop, how these are shaped and in which context, and what effects the linking has in the migration process. In the case of

shelters in Mexico, those *casas de migrantes* connect migrants (micro-level) to governmental entities, local communities, and international humanitarian actors (macro-level), revealing how meso-level actors serve as a link in the migration process (see Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2014: 235; Hernandez-Leon 2008). The insights that surface from an analysis of facilitation, control, and assistance/care in migration processes are limited if the types of relationships developed by migration intermediaries are not considered.

Welfare and Humanitarian Governance

The initial purpose of *casas de migrantes* was to alleviate the distress of migrants and deportees. Through the years, provision of food, shelter, and first aid has been a staple of their work. As the context and profile of migrants has changed, so have the shelters. Thus, they have become an informal welfare system. By looking solely at the work and evolution of shelters' services, it is possible to see that the work of shelters fit what Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux (2008) described as welfare or social protection. The recent trends on welfare in migration studies emphasize the way welfare becomes mobile between countries or how other forms of welfare emerge from social networks and migrants' relationships (Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman 2011; Faist et al. 2015; Levitt et al. 2016). The humanitarian work in Mexico provides evidence of social protection outside of migrants' networks and within a transit country. In this case, welfare is not transnational, but local. Furthermore, analysis of the role of *casas de migrantes* in the migration process of Mexico provides a case study that contributes to the emerging literature of humanitarian assistance in contexts of transit and return migration, which do not fit the label of emergency (see Barnett

2005: 733–734; Manenti 2012; Vogt 2012; Brigden 2013; Basok et al. 2015; Candiz and Bélanger 2018).

I called the type of humanitarianism practiced in Mexico ‘humanitarianism from below’, distinguishing it from the types of humanitarianism provided in emergency settings, but reinforcing the idea that we live in a world of humanitarianisms (Barnett 2011: 10). There are contextual and historical reasons for why this type of humanitarianism has emerged and remained in Mexico. At the theoretical level, comparing this type of work with other experiences of humanitarian assistance to migrants in distress, such as those in the Mediterranean (Cuttitta 2017; Pallister-Wilkins 2017), provide insight into how migration policies and context shape the ways humanitarian assistance may emerge and unfold. Nevertheless, even when problematized, humanitarian work has at its core the notion of giving a compassionate response to those suffering in precarious situations (Boltanski 1999: xv; Wilson and Brown 2009: 1–28; Bornstein and Redfield 2010: 6; Donini 2010: S220; Ticktin 2011; Barnett 2011: 14–15; Slim 2015: 1). Invariably, *casas de migrantes* see themselves as resources that alleviate the suffering of migrants, refugees, or deportees.

The convergence of Mexican migration policies with their abundant humanitarian language and the shelters’ process of institutionalization has led to a form of ‘humanitarian governance’ of the migration process in Mexico. Here, humanitarian governance means ‘the increasingly organized and internationalized attempt to save the lives, enhance the welfare, and reduce the suffering of the world’s most vulnerable populations’ (Barnett 2013: 379). Thus, on one hand, Mexican migration policy clearly moves in that direction, linking humanitarian language to development and collaboration. Nevertheless, an implementation gap exists in the

way these policies are enforced (Czaika and de Haas 2013). On the other, ‘humanitarianism from below’, as a particular form of humanitarianism that extends beyond situations of emergency relief, seeks to protect the welfare of others, address root causes, and may get involved in advocacy efforts. As shelters go through processes of professionalization and institutionalization, their operations and internal rules lead to new forms of control and domination (see Barnett 2013; Fassin 2012). It follows that humanitarian actors operating as intermediaries in migration processes inevitably become part of humanitarian governance; as much as they seek to emancipate and care for the well-being of vulnerable populations, they also create new forms of power and domination (Barnett 2013: 394).

9.4 Relevance for Policy and Practice

When we think about the architecture of migration governance, we need to recognize that humanitarianism from below is part of it. Humanitarianism is not just a top-down process, where governments and international agencies deliver aid, but is also a process where local actors emerge and in many cases are the first respondents to distress and vulnerability. At the same time, while deeply rooted in humanitarian values of compassion for those who are suffering, humanitarianism from below has ambiguous effects manifested in the tension between welfare and containment.

Without a doubt, migration policies shape migration process and determine who moves through territories and how they do so. Sometimes, like in the case of Mexico, policies shift from criminalizing migration to including abundant humanitarian language that guarantees safety and justice, and values migration. However, if an implementation gap exists, those attributes that are held

high in migration policy may become simply words without real impact. Occasionally, they can appear as deeply contradictory due to the ways migration enforcement and detention operate.

The emergence of humanitarian actors as a response to migrants' vulnerability and contextual violence may lead to a deflection of responsibility on the part of governments. In Mexico, NGOs and local actors have emerged to fill the gap in protection left by the government. In turn, the government has let humanitarian actors take the lead while offering minimal support other than the recognition of the work of humanitarian NGOs in the migration law. Furthermore, humanitarian operations can be outsourced and stratified to tend to specific populations, such as the differentiation in care for deportees and visiting migrants with legal status in other countries.

Similarly, as humanitarian organizations become part of the humanitarian governance structure, they must be aware of the ways their work reshapes structures and dynamics of power and domination. In particular, humanitarian actors need be aware that their practices and regulations may risk resembling detention centres. In the case of Mexico, it may be difficult to find a general model or structure for delivering humanitarian assistance to migrants in distress. Their local nature and their particular contexts preclude a unified model of service, and their differences enrich the humanitarian model and help to navigate the changing socio-political contexts. Nevertheless, solid organizational structures, professionalization, and implementation of best practices are important components for the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance. Thus, NGOs must be aware of and acknowledge their limits by questioning themselves to ask, when does the desire to support vulnerable populations create harm or endanger the populations they attempt to serve?

One of the biggest challenges in this humanitarianism from below is creating synergy to advance advocacy efforts. Humanitarian work requires work, effort, and resources, but efforts to aid are easily duplicated. As multiple humanitarian actors emerge, so do particular agendas and personalities that dominate the landscape of humanitarian assistance. In a way, there is always the risk of losing sight of the focus of humanitarian efforts: empowering migrants and preserving their well-being.

Casas de migrantes in Mexico serve poor migrants and deportees, which are two of the most vulnerable groups among all the migrants moving through Mexico. In this thesis, shelters' role in the migration process has taken the spotlight, but this does not take away from the ways in which migrants creatively navigate a complicated socio-political arena with the hope of a better life. During my time collecting data and living at shelters, I was always impressed by the migrants' stories. At the same time, my appreciation for those who work at shelters grew more and more. I was deeply moved by the commitment of an array of volunteers from all over the world, as well as religious sisters, priests, and people in local communities who generously support migrants. Finally, something constantly present and useful during fieldwork and the writing of this dissertation has been to remember the motivations people have to engage and remain in humanitarian work. Words from Norma — the leader of Las Patronas — express this clearly: 'these poor people are suffering and we must do something. Let's start by cooking some food for them. [...] Migration patterns may change, but we also have to change if we want to keep aiding and supporting migrants in need. As long as there will be migrants in distress, there will be Patronas to tend to their suffering'.

REFERENCES

- Adler, David R. K. 2015. “‘Mexico Is Doing the Dirty Work’: Mexican Government Cracks Down on Immigration on US Behalf.” *THE BLOG, Huffpost*. https://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-r-k-adler/mexico-is-doing-the-dirty_b_7111954.html.
- Ager, Joey, Fiddian-Qasmiyeh Elena, and Alastair Ager. 2015. “Local Faith Communities and the Promotion of Resilience in Contexts of Humanitarian Crisis.” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 28 (2): 202–221.
- Agier, Michel. 2011. *Managing the Undesirables*. Cambridge; Malden, Mass.: Polity.
- Agunias, Doreen Rannveig. 2009. *Guiding the Invisible Hand: Making Migration Intermediaries Work for Development*. Human Development Research Paper 22. New York: UNDP. https://rojasdatabank.info/HDRP_2009_22.pdf.
- Agustín, Laura María. 2007. *Sex at The Margins: Migration, Labour Markets and The Rescue Industry*. London: Zed.
- Alba, Francisco, and Manuel Ángel Castillo. 2012. *New Approaches to Migration Management in Mexico and Central America*. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute. <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/RMSG-MexCentAm-Migration.pdf>.
- Alkire, Sabina. 2007. “The Missing Dimensions of Poverty Data: Introduction to the Special Issue.” *Oxford Development Studies* 35 (4): 347–359.
- Alkire, Sabina, Mihika Chatterjee, Adriana Conconi, Suman Seth, and Ana Vaz. 2014. *Destitution. Who and Where Are the Poorest of the Poor?* OPHI Briefing 22. University of Oxford.
- Alkire, Sabina, and James Foster. 2007. *Counting and Multidimensional Poverty Measurement*. OPHI Working Paper 7. University of Oxford.
- Alkire, Sabina, and James Foster. 2011. “Counting and Multidimensional Poverty Measurement.” *Journal of Public Economics* 95 (7): 476–487.
- Alkire, Sabina, James Foster, Suman Seth, Maria Emma Santos, José Manuel Roche, and Paola Ballon. 2015. *Multidimensional Poverty Measurement and Analysis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Alkire, Sabina, and Gisela Robles. 2017. *Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2017*. OPHI Briefing 47. University of Oxford.
- Alkire, Sabina, Jose Manuel Roche, Suman Seth, and Andrew Sumner. 2015. “Identifying the Poorest People and Groups: Strategies Using the Global Multidimensional Poverty Index.” *Journal of International Development* 27 (3): 362–387.
- Alkire, Sabina, and Maria Emma Santos. 2010. *Acute Multidimensional Poverty: A New Index for Developing Countries*. OPHI Working Paper 38. University of Oxford.
- Alkire, Sabina, and Maria Emma Santos. 2014. “Measuring Acute Poverty in the Developing World: Robustness and Scope of the Multidimensional Poverty Index.” *World Development* 59: 251–274.
- Alkire, Sabina, and Suman Seth. 2015. *Identifying Destitution through Linked Subsets of Multidimensionally Poor: An Ordinal Approach*. OPHI Working Paper No. 99. University of Oxford.
- Alkire, Sabina, and Yangyang Shen. 2017. *Exploring Multidimensional Poverty in China: 2010 to 2014*. OPHI Research in Progress 47a. University of Oxford.

- Alpes, Maybritt Jill. 2017. "Papers That Work: Migration Brokers, State/Market Boundaries, and the Place of Law." *Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 40 (2): 262–277.
- Álvarez Velasco, Soledad. 2009. "Transitando En La Clandestinidad: Análisis de La Migración Indocumentada En Tránsito Por La Frontera Sur Mexicana (Dossier Central)." *Andinamigrante* 4: 2–10.
- Amensty International. 2006. *Living in the Shadows. A Primer on the Human Rights of Migrants*. London. POL 33/006/2006.
- Amnesty International. 2010. *Invisible Victims: Migrants on The Move in Mexico*. London: Amnesty International Publications.
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR41/014/2010/en>.
- Amnesty International. 2017. *Amnesty International Report 2016/2017: The State of the World's Human Rights*. London: Amnesty International Publications.
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR41/014/2010/en>.
- Anderson, Bridget. 2013. *Us and Them?: The Dangerous Politics of Immigration Control*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Anderson, Bridget, and Sarah Walker. 2016. *Citizenship and Work: Case Studies of Differential Inclusion/Exclusion*. bEUCitizen Project Deliverable. 2016:10.
- Anderson, Jill. 2015. "'Tagged as a Criminal': Narratives of Deportation and Return Migration in a Mexico City Call Center." *Latino Studies* 13 (1): 8–27.
- Andersson, Ruben. 2012. *Clandestine Migration and the Business of Bordering Europe*. Doctoral Dissertation. The London School of Economics and Political Science. London.
- Andersson, Ruben. 2014. *Illegality, Inc. : Clandestine Migration and the Business of Bordering Europe*. Oakland, California: University of California Press.
- Andersson, Ruben. 2017. "From Radar Systems to Rickety Boats." In *Methodologies of Mobility: Ethnography and Experiment*, edited by Alice Elliot, Roger Norum, and Noel B Salazar, 88–108. New York: Berghahn Books.
- Andreas, Peter, and Joel Wallman. 2009. "Illicit Markets and Violence: What Is The Relationship?" *Crime, Law and Social Change*, no. 52: 225–229.
- Anguiano, María Eugenia, and Alma Trejo Peña. 2007. "Políticas de seguridad fronteriza y nuevas rutas de movilidad de migrantes mexicanos y guatemaltecos." *LiminaR. Estudios Sociales y Humanísticos* V (2): 47–65.
- Anthias, F. 2007. "Ethnic Ties: Social Capital and The Question of Mobilisability." *Sociological Review* 55 (4): 788–805.
- Arendt, Hannah. 1970. *On Violence*. Orlando, Florida: Harcourt, Inc.
- Argüelles, Lourdes, and Anne M Rivero. 1993. "Gender/Sexual Orientation Violence And Transnational Migration: Conversations with Some Latinas We Think We Know." *Urban Anthropology and Studies of Cultural Systems and World Economic Development* 22 (3/4): 259–275.
- Arias, Enrique Desmond, and Daniel M Goldstein. 2010. *Violent Democracies in Latin America. The Cultures and Practice of Violence Series*. Durham NC: Duke University Press.
- Arias Muñoz, Karina, and Nancy Carmona Arellano. 2012. *Evolución y Retos Del Marco Normativo Migratorio En México: Una Perspectiva Histórica*. Ciudad de Mexico.
- Arriola, Luis Alfredo. 2012. "Migrantes Centroamericanos En Transitoriedad." In *Migración Internacional: Algunos Desafíos*, edited by Ana María Aragonés, 193–216. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

- Arskey, Hilary, and Caroline Glendinning. 2007. "Informal Welfare." In *Understanding the Mixed Economy of Welfare*, edited by Martin A Powell, 107–128. Bristol, UK: Policy Press/Social Policy Association.
- Arteaga, Nelson. 2009. "The Merida Initiative: Security-Surveillance Harmonization in Latin America." *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* 87: 103–110.
- Azaola, Elena. 2012. "La Violencia de Hoy, Las Violencias de Siempre." *Desacatos* 40 (Septiembre-Diciembre): 13–32.
- Bakewell, Oliver. 2002. "Uncovering Local Perspectives on Humanitarian Assistance and Its Outcomes." *Disasters* 24 (2): 103–116.
- Bakewell, Oliver. 2010. "Some Reflections on Structure and Agency in Migration Theory." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36 (10): 1689–1708.
- Bakewell, Oliver, Hein de Haas, and Agnieszka Kubal. 2011. *Migration Systems, Pioneers and The Role of Agency. International Migration Institute Working Papers Series*. Oxford: University of Oxford.
- Bakewell, Oliver, Agnieszka Kubal, and Sónia Pereira. 2016. "Introduction: Feedback in Migration Processes." In *Beyond Networks: Feedback in International Migration*, edited by Oliver Bakewell, Godfried Engbersen, Maria Lucinda Fonseca, and Cindy Horst, 1–17. Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Baldock, John, Lavinia Mitton, Nick Manning, and Sarah Vickerstaff. 2012. *Social Policy*. 4th Ed. Oxford. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bank, André, Christiane Fröhlich, and Andrea Schneiker. 2017. "The Political Dynamics of Human Mobility: Migration out of, as and into Violence." *Global Policy* 8 (S1): 12–18.
- Barnett, Michael. 2005. "Humanitarianism Transformed." *Perspectives on Politics* 3 (4): 723–740.
- Barnett, Michael. 2011. *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
- Barnett, Michael. 2013. "Humanitarian Governance." *Annual Review of Political Science* 16: 379–398.
- Barnett, Michael, and Janice Gross Stein. 2012. *Sacred Aid: Faith and Humanitarianism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Barnett, Michael, and Thomas George Weiss. 2008a. *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
- Barnett, Michael, and Thomas George Weiss. 2008b. "Humanitarianism: A Brief History of The Present." In *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*, edited by Michael Barnett and Thomas George Weiss, 1–48. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
- Barrett, Sam. 2003. "Kinship, Poor Relief, and The Welfare Process in Early Modern England." In *The Poor in England 1700–1850: An Economy of Makeshifts*, edited by Stephen King and Alannah Tomkins, 199–227. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press.
- Başak, Bilecen, and Bargłowski Karolina. 2015. "On the Assemblages of Informal and Formal Transnational Social Protection." *Population, Space and Place* 21 (3): 203–214.
- Basok, Tanya, Daniele Belanger, Martha Luz Rojas Wiesner, and Guillermo Candiz. 2015. *Rethinking Transit Migration: Precarity, Mobility, and Self-Making in Mexico. Mobility and Politics*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Beittel, June S. 2013. "Mexico's Drug Trafficking Organizations: Source and Scope of the Violence." *United States Congressional Research Service*, no. 7–5700.
- Bergman, Marcelo. 2012. "La Violencia En México: Algunas Aproximaciones Académicas." *Desacatos* 40 (Septiembre-Diciembre): 65–76.
- Betts, Alexander. 2013. "The Migration Industry in Global Migration Governance." In *The Migration Industry and The Commercialization of International Migration*, edited by Thomas Gammeltoft-Hansen and Ninna Nyberg Sørensen, 45–63. London: Routledge.
- Blanco, Ramon Osiris. 2003. "How We Define Poverty." *UN Chronicle* 39 (4): 28.
- Bloch, Ernst. 1986. *The Principle of Hope*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Boltanski, Luc. 1999. *Distant Suffering: Morality, Media and Politics*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bornstein, Erica, and Peter Redfield. 2010. "Forces of Compassion: Humanitarianism between Ethics and Politics." Santa Fe, New Mexico: School for Advanced Research Press.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1979. "Le Capital Social: Notes Provisoires." *Actes de La Recherche En Sciences Sociales* 31 (1): 23.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1985. "The Forms of Capital." In *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, edited by J G Richardson. New York: Greenwood.
- Bourdieu, Pierre, and Richard Nice. 1997. *Pascalian Meditations*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Bourgois, Philippe. 2001. "The Power of Violence in War and Peace Post-Cold War Lessons from El Salvador." *Ethnography* 2 (1). Oxford, UK: 5–34.
- Bourgois, Philippe. 2004. "The Continuum of Violence in War and Peace: Post-Cold War Lessons from El Salvador." In *Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology*, edited by Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois, 425–434. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing.
- Boyce, Geoffrey A, Jeffrey M Banister, and Jeremy Slack. 2015. "You and What Army? Violence, The State, and Mexico's War on Drugs." *Territory, Politics, Governance* 3 (4): 446–468.
- Boyd, M. 1989. "Family and Personal Networks in International Migration - Recent Developments and New Agendas." *International Migration Review* 23 (3): 638–670.
- Brachet, Julien. 2005. "Constructions of Territoriality in The Sahara: The Transformation of Spaces of Transit." *Stichproben. Vienna Journal of African Studies*, 237–253.
- Brachet, Julien. 2012a. "From One Stage to The Next: Transit and Transport in (Trans) Saharan Migrations." In *African Migrations Research: Innovative Methods and Methodologies*, edited by M Berriane and H de Haas, 91–113. Trenton: Africa World Press.
- Brachet, Julien. 2012b. "Geography of Movement, Geography in Movement: Mobility as a Dimension of Fieldwork in Migration Research." *Annales de Géographie*, no. 5: 543–560.
- Brigden, Noelle K. 2013. *Violent Odysseys: How Central American Migrants Navigate Unauthorized Routes. Doctoral Dissertation*. Cornell University. <http://ecommons.library.cornell.edu/handle/1813/34327>.
- Brigden, Noelle K. 2015. "Transnational Journeys and the Limits of Hometown Resources: Salvadoran Migration in Uncertain Times." *Migration Studies* 3 (2): 241–259.

- Bull, Benedicte. 2014. "Towards a Political Economy of Weak Institutions and Strong Elites in Central America." *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies Revista Europea de Estudios Latinoamericanos y Del Caribe*, no. 97: 117–128.
- Burrell, Jennifer L, and Ellen Moodie. 2013. "Central America in the New Millenium: Living Transition and Reimagining Democracy." New York: Berghahn.
- Burt, Ronald S. 1992. *Structural Holes : The Social Structure of Competition*. Cambridge, Mass ; London: Harvard University Press.
- Calderon Chelius, Leticia. 2016. *Organized Civil Society in Response to Transit Migration through Mexico*. CANAMID Policy Brief Series, PB13. Guadalajara, Mexico: CIESAS. www.canamid.org.
- Calderón Chelius, Leticia. 2006. "El Estudio de La Dimensión Política Dentro Del Proceso Migratorio." *Sociológica* 21 (60): 43–73.
- Calhoun, Craig. 2008. "The Imperative to Reduce Suffering : Charity, Progress, and Emergencies in the Field of Humanitarian Action." In *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*, edited by Michael Barnett and Thomas George Weiss, 73–97. Cornell University Press.
- Calhoun, Craig. 2010. "The Idea of Emergency: Humanitarian Action and Global (Dis)Order." In *Contemporary States of Emergency: The Politics of Military and Humanitarian Interventions*, edited by Didier Fassin and Mariella Pandolfi, 29–58. New York: Zone Books.
- Candiz, Guillermo, and Danièle Bélanger. 2018. "Del Tránsito a La Espera: El Rol de Las Casas Del Migrante En México En Las Trayectorias de Los Migrantes Centroamericanos." *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies/Revue Canadienne Des Études Latino-Américaines et Caraïbes* 43 (8): 277–297.
- Carling, Jørgen. 2010. "Migration Corridors: Conceptual and Methodological Issues." Oslo: Peace Research Institute Oslo.
- Casillas, Rodolfo. 1992. *Los Procesos Migratorios Centroamericanos y Sus Efectos Regionales*. Vol. 1. FLACSO Mexico.
- Casillas, Rodolfo. 2003. "Los Desafíos de La Emigración Centroamericana En El Siglo XXI." *Amérique Latine Histoire et Mémoire*. <http://alhim.revues.org/369>.
- Casillas, Rodolfo. 2006. *Una Vida Discreta, Fugaz y Anónima: Los Centraamericanos Transmigrantes En México*. México D.F.: FLACSO. <https://www.elfaro.net/templates/elfaro/migracion/vida.pdf>.
- Casillas, Rodolfo. 2008. "The Routes of Central Americans through Mexico: Characterization, Principal Agents and Complexities." *Migración y Desarrollo*, no. First Semester: 141–157.
- Casillas, Rodolfo. 2010. "El Secuestro, Un Nuevo Rostro de La Vulnerabilidad Del Migrante Centroamericano En México." *Ecuador Debate* 80: 179–196.
- Casillas, Rodolfo. 2011a. "The Dark Side of Globalized Migration: The Rise and Peak of Criminal Networks—The Case of Central Americans in Mexico." *Globalizations* 8 (3): 295–310.
- Casillas, Rodolfo. 2011b. "La Labor Humanitaria y Los Organismos Civiles: La Experiencia de Los Albergues y Las Casas de Migrantes, Realidades y Desafíos." In *Políticas Públicas Sobre Migración y Sociedad Brasil, Colombia y México*, edited by Mario Chiarello, 524–559. New York: Scalabrinian International Migration Network.

- Casillas, Rodolfo. 2015. *La Migración de Algunos y La Inseguridad de Todos. Análisis y Recomendaciones Para Pasar de La Ficción Al Trato Humanitario*. Cuaderno de Trabajo 2. Ciudad de México.
- Cassarino, Jean-Pierre. 2004. "Theorising Return Migration: The Conceptual Approach to Return Migrants Revisited." *International Journal on Multicultural Societies* 6 (2): 253–279.
www.unesco.org/shs/ijms/vol6/issue2/art4.
- Castagnone, Eleonora. 2011. "Transit Migration: A Piece of The Complex Mobility Puzzle. The Case of Senegalese Migration." *Cahiers de l'Urmis [En Ligne]*.
<http://urmis.revues.org/927>.
- Castles, Stephen. 2010. "Understanding Global Migration: A Social Transformation Perspective." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36 (10): 1565–1586.
- Castles, Stephen, Hein de Haas, and Mark J Miller. 2014. *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World (5th Ed.)*. Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Castles, Stephen, and Raúl Delgado Wise. 2007. *Migration and Development: Perspectives from the South*. Geneva: International Organization for Migration.
- Castles, Stephen, and Mark J Miller. 2009. *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in The Modern World (4th Ed.)*. New York, London: The Guildford Press.
- Castro, Elizabeth Mariana. 2015. *Experiencias Comunitarias de Protección a Migrantes En Tránsito En México*. Mexico: PNUD (Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo).
<http://www.mx.undp.org/content/mexico/es/home/library/poverty/experiencias-comunitarias-de-proteccion-a-migrantes-en-transito-.html>.
- Cavallo, Sandra. 1995. *Charity and Power in Early Modern Italy: Benefactors and Their Motives in Turin, 1541-1789*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cave, Damien. 2013. "For Migrants, New Land of Opportunity Is Mexico." *The New York Times*. <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/22/world/americas/for-migrants-new-land-of-opportunity-is-mexico.html>.
- CEPMH (Comisión Episcopal para La Pastoral de la Movilidad Humana). 2003. *La Comisión Episcopal Para La Pastoral de La Movilidad Humana: Su Historia, Identidad y Trayectoria (1957-2003)*. México: CEPMH.
- CEPMH (Comisión Episcopal para La Pastoral de la Movilidad Humana). 2004. *V Taller Nacional: Seguimos Juntos En El Camino de La Esperanza. Fortaleciendo La Pastoral de Migrantes*. México: CEPMH.
- Cerny, Philip G. 1990. *The Changing Architecture of Politics: Structure, Agency and the Future of the State. Structure, Agency and the Future of the State*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Chambers, Robert. 1995. "Poverty and Livelihoods: Whose Reality Counts?" *Environment and Urbanization* 7 (1): 173–204.
- Chandler, Daniel, and Rod Munday. 2011. *A Dictionary of Media and Communication. Oxford Paperback Reference*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chávez, Ana, and Antonio Landa. 2011. "Migrantes En Su Paso Por México: Nuevas Problemáticas, Rutas, Estrategias y Redes." *Centro Regional de Investigaciones Multidisciplinarias de La Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México*. <http://www.somede.org/xireunion/ponencias/Migracion internacional/147Pon Ana Ma Chavez-Antonio Landa.pdf>.

- Christoplos, Ian. 2002. "Humanitarianism and Local Service Institutions in Angola." *Disasters* 22 (1): 1–20.
- CIDH (Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos). 2015. *Situación de Los Derechos Humanos En México*. México: Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos. <http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/informes/pdfs/Mexico2016-es.pdf>.
- Cienfuegos Salgado, David. 2008. "Sobre El Régimen de Los Extranjeros En México." In *Temas de Migración y Derecho*, edited by David Cienfuegos Salgado, Manuel de Jesús Esquivel Leyva, and Julieta Sánchez Morales, 51–72. México: Fundación académica Guerrerense, Universidad Autónoma de Sinaloa, Universidad Autónoma de Chiapas. <https://archivos.juridicas.unam.mx/www/bjv/libros/6/2993/6.pdf>.
- Clark, Candace, and Howard Robboy. 1992. "Social Interaction : Readings in Sociology." New York: St. Martin's Press. <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/enhancements/fy0601/90063538-d.html>.
- Clarke, Gerard, Michael Jennings, and T Shaw. 2008. *Development, Civil Society and Faith-Based Organizations: Bridging the Sacred and the Secular*. Hampshire. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- CNDH (Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos México). 1996. *Informe Sobre Violaciones a Los Derechos Humanos de Los Inmigrantes. Frontera Sur*. México: Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos México.
- CNDH (Comisión Nacional de Los Derechos Humanos México). 2009. *Informe Especial de La Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos Sobre Los Casos de Secuestro En Contra de Migrantes*. México: Comisión Nacional de Los Derechos Humanos México.
- CNDH (Comisión Nacional de Los Derechos Humanos México). 2011. *Informe Especial Sobre Secuestro de Migrantes En México*. México: Comisión Nacional de Los Derechos Humanos México.
- Cohen, Robin. 1997. *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Coleman, James S. 1990. *Foundations of Social Theory*. Cambridge, Mass; London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Coleman, Matthew. 2007. "Immigration Geopolitics beyond The Mexico-U.S. Border." *Antipode* 39 (1): 54–76.
- Collinson, Sarah. 2003. *Power, Livelihoods and Conflict: Case Studies in Political Economy Analysis for Humanitarian Action*. Humanitarian Policy Group Report 13. London, UK: ODI (Overseas Development Institute).
- Collyer, Michael. 2007. "In-Between Places: Trans-Saharan Transit Migrants in Morocco and the Fragmented Journey to Europe." *Antipode* 39 (4): 668–690.
- Collyer, Michael, and Hein de Haas. 2011. "Developing Dynamic Categorizations of Transit Migration." *Space, and Place* 17. doi:10.1002/psp.635.
- Collyer, Michael, Franck Düvell, and Hein de Haas. 2011. "Critical Approaches to Transit Migration." *Population, Space, and Place* 17. doi:10.1002/psp.630.
- CONAPO (Consejo Nacional de Población), Fundación BBVA Bancomer, and BBVA Research. 2017. "Anuario de Migración y Remesas. México 2017." México: CONAPO-Fundación BBVA Bancomer-BBVA Research.
- Cook, Maria Lorena. 2011. "'Humanitarian Aid Is Never a Crime': Humanitarianism and Illegality in Migrant Advocacy." *Law & Society Review* 45 (3): 561–591.

- Cornelius, Wayne A, and Idean Salehyan. 2007. "Does Border Enforcement Deter Unauthorized Immigration? The Case of Mexican Migration to the United States of America." *Regulation & Governance* 1 (2): 139–153.
- Coutin, Susan Bibler. 2010. "Confined within: National Territories as Zones of Confinement." *Political Geography* 29 (4): 200–208.
- Cranston, Sophie, Joris Schapendonk, and Ernst Spaan. 2017. "New Directions in Exploring the Migration Industries: Introduction to Special Issue." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 1–15.
- Cruz, José Miguel. 2010. "Central American Maras: From Youth Street Gangs to Transnational Protection Rackets." *Global Crime* 11 (4): 379–398.
- Cruz, José Miguel, Jonathan D Rosen, Luis Enrique Amaya, and Yulia Vorobyeva. 2017. *The New Face of Street Gangs: The Gang Phenomenon in El Salvador*. The Kimberly Green Latin American and Caribbean Center, The Jack D. Gordon Institute for Public Policy, Florida International University, Fundación Nacional para el Desarrollo (FUNDE).
- Cuttitta, Paolo. 2017. "Repoliticization Through Search and Rescue? Humanitarian NGOs and Migration Management in the Central Mediterranean." *Geopolitics*, 1–29.
- Czaika, Mathias, and Hein de Haas. 2013. "The Effectiveness of Immigration Policies." *Population and Development Review* 39 (2): 487–508.
- DaVanzo, Julie. 1981. "Repeat Migration, Information Costs, and Location-Specific Capital." *Population and Environment* 4 (1): 45–73.
- Davis, Diane E. 2010. "The Political and Economic Origins of Violence and Insecurity in Contemporary Latin America: Past Trajectories and Future Prospects." In *Violent Democracies in Latin America*, edited by Enrique Desmond Arias and Daniel M Goldstein, 35–62. Durham NC: Duke University Press.
- De Genova, Nicholas. 2010. "The Deportation Regime: Sovereignty, Space, and the Freedom of Movement." In *The Deportation Regime: Sovereignty, Space, and the Freedom of Movement*, edited by Nicholas De Genova and Nathalie Peutz. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- De Genova, Nicholas. 2013. "Spectacles of Migrant 'Illegality': The Scene of Exclusion, The Obscene of Inclusion." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36 (7): 1180–1198.
- De Genova, Nicholas, and Rozalinda Borcila. 2011. "An Image of Our Future: On the Making of Migrant 'Illegality.'" *AREA Chicago*. <http://www.areachicago.org/an-image-of-our-future/>.
- De Haan, Arjan, and Shahin Yaqub. 2009. *Migration and Poverty: Linkages, Knowledge Gaps and Policy Implications*. Programme Paper 40. Social Policy and Development. Geneva.
- de Haas, Hein. 2007. "Remittances, Migration and Social Development: A Conceptual Review of the Literature." *Social Policy and Development Programme Paper*, no. 34. United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD).
- de Haas, Hein. 2010a. "The Internal Dynamics of Migration Processes: A Theoretical Inquiry." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36 (10): 1587–1617.
- de Haas, Hein. 2010b. "Migration and Development: A Theoretical Perspective." *International Migration Review* 44 (1): 227–264.

- de la Rocha, Mercedes González. 1994. *The Resources of Poverty: Women and Survival in Mexican Cities*. Oxford and Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.
- De León, Jason. 2015. *The Land of Open Graves: Living and Dying on the Migrant Trail*. Oakland, California: University of California Press.
- Della Porta, Donatella. 1995. *Social Movements, Political Violence, and the State : A Comparative Analysis of Italy and Germany*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- DeWind, Josh, Richard H Adams, Hein de Haas, and Una Osili O. 2012. "Web Anthology on Migrant Remittances and Development: Research Perspectives." Edited by Social Science Research Council. New York.
http://essays.ssrc.org/remittances_anthology/?page_id=3.
- DeWind, Josh, and Jennifer Holdaway. 2008. *Migration and Development within and across Borders: Research and Policy Perspectives on Internal and International Migration*. Geneva, New York: International Organization for Migration (IOM), Social Sciences Research Council (SCRC).
- Díaz Prieto, Gabriela. 2016. *Operativos Móviles de Revisión Migratoria En Las Carreteras de México, Una Práctica Discriminatoria e Ilegal*. México.
- Donato, Katharine M, Donna Gabaccia, Jennifer Holdaway, Martin Manalansan, and Patricia R Pessar. 2006. "A Glass Half Full? Gender in Migration Studies." *International Migration Review* 40 (1): 3–26.
- Donini, Antonio. 2010. "The Far Side: The Meta Functions of Humanitarianism in a Globalised World." *Disasters* 34 (S2): S220–S237.
- Doyle, Dominic. 2013. "'A Future, Difficult, Yet Possible Good': Defining Christian Hope." In *Hope*, edited by Richard Lennan and Nancy Pineda-Madrid, 16–26. New York; Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press.
- DPMH (Dimensión Pastoral de La Movilidad Humana). 2012. *Informe de Actividades de La Dimensión Pastoral de La Movilidad Humana, En El Periodo 2006-2012*. México: Comisión Episcopal para La Pastoral Social: Conferencia del Episcopado Mexicano.
- Dunant, Henry. 1939. *A Memory of Solferino*. Geneva: International Committee of the Red Cross.
- Durand, Jorge. 2011. "La Dinámica Migratoria En México." In *Las Políticas Públicas Sobre Migraciones y La Sociedad Civil En America Latina: Los Casos de Argentina, Brasil, Colombia y México*, edited by Mario Chiarello, 458–482. New York: Scalabrinian International Migration Network.
- Düvell, Franck. 2010. "Transit Migration: A Blurred and Politicized Concept." *Population, Space and Place*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/psp.631>.
- Edin, Kathryn, Laura Lein, and Sally Young Conrad. 1997. "Making Ends Meet: How Single Mothers Survive Welfare and Low-Wage Work." *Journal of Public Health Policy* 18 (4): 480–483.
- Emirbayer, M, and J Goodwin. 1994. "Network Analysis, Culture, and the Problem of Agency." *American Journal of Sociology* 99 (6): 1411–1454.
- Emirbayer, M, and A Mische. 1998. "What Is Agency?" *American Journal of Sociology* 103 (4): 962–1023.
- Eve, M. 2010. "Integrating via Networks: Foreigners and Others." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 33 (7): 1231–1248.
- Fairchild, Henry Pratt. 1928. *Immigration: A World Movement and Its American Significance*. Revised. New York: The Macmillan company.

- Faist, Thomas. 1997. "The Crucial Meso-Level." In *International Migration, Mobility, and Development*, edited by Tomas Hammer, Grete Brochmann, Kristof Tamas, and Thomas Faist, 187–217. Oxford. New York: Berg.
- Faist, Thomas. 2000. *The Volume and Dynamics of International Migration and Transnational Social Spaces*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Faist, Thomas. 2014a. *Brokerage in Cross-Border Migration: From Networks to Social Mechanisms*. 121. COMCAD Working Papers. Bielefeld: Universität Bielefeld. <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-50965-7>.
- Faist, Thomas. 2014b. "Brokerage in Cross-Border Mobility: Social Mechanisms and the (Re)Production of Social Inequalities." *Social Inclusion* 2 (4): 38–52.
- Faist, Thomas. 2016. "Cross-Border Migration and Social Inequalities." *Annual Review of Sociology* 42: 323–346.
- Faist, Thomas, Başak Bilecen, Karolina Bargłowski, and Joanna Jadwiga Sienkiewicz. 2015. "Transnational Social Protection: Migrants' Strategies and Patterns of Inequalities." *Population, Space and Place* 21 (3): 193–202.
- Fan, Mary D. 2008. "When Deterrence and Death Mitigation Fall Short: Fantasy and Fetishes as Gap-Fillers in Border Regulation." *Law & Society Review* 42 (4): 701–734.
- Farmer, Paul. 1996. "On Suffering and Structural Violence: A View from Below." *Daedalus* 125 (1): 261–283.
- Farmer, Paul. 2004. "An Anthropology of Structural Violence." *Current Anthropology* 45 (3): 305–325.
- Fassin, Didier. 2007. "Humanitarianism: A Nongovernmental Government." In *Nongovernmental Politics*, edited by Michel Feher, Gaëlle Krikorian, and Yates McKee, 149–160. New York: Zone Books New York.
- Fassin, Didier. 2010. "Heart of Humaneness: The Moral Economy of Humanitarian Intervention." In *Contemporary States of Emergency: The Politics of Military and Humanitarian Interventions*, edited by Didier Fassin and Mariella Pandolfi, 269–294. New York: Zone Books.
- Fassin, Didier. 2012. *Humanitarian Reason*. Berkeley. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.
- Fearon, James D. 2008. "The Rise of Emergency Relief." In *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*, edited by Michael Barnett and Thomas George Weiss, 49–72. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
- Ferris, Elizabeth. 2011. "Faith and Humanitarianism: It's Complicated." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 24 (3): 606–625.
- Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Elena, and Alastair Ager. 2013. *Local Faith Communities and The Promotion of Resilience in Humanitarian Situations: A Scoping Study. Working Paper Series No. 90*. Refugee Studies Centre. University of Oxford. http://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/publications/working-papers-folder_contents/wp90-local-faith-communities-resilience-150213.pdf/view.
- Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Elena, Gil Loescher, Katy Long, and Nando Sigona. 2014. "The Oxford Handbook of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies." Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press.
- Forment, Carlos A. 2013. *Democracy in Latin America, 1760-1900: Volume 1. Civic Selfhood and Public Life in Mexico and Peru*. Vol. 1. Chicago. London: University of Chicago Press.

- Forsythe, David P. 2009. "Contemporary Humanitarianism: The Global and the Local." In *Humanitarianism and Suffering: The Mobilization of Empathy*, edited by Richard Ashby Wilson and Richard D Brown, 58–87. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Frank-Vitale, Amelia. 2011. *Guerreros Del Camino: Central American Migration through Mexico and Undocumented Migration as Civil Disobedience*. American University. <http://gradworks.umi.com/15/04/1504740.html>.
- Galtung, Johan. 1969. "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research." *Journal of Peace Research* 6 (3): 167–191.
- Galtung, Johan. 1975. "Structural and Direct Violence: Note on Operationalization." In *Peace: Research Education Action. Essays in Peace Research Vol. I*, edited by Christian Ejlertsen, 135–139. Copenhagen: International Peace Research Institute, Oslo.
- Gammeltoft-Hansen, Thomas, and Ninna Nyberg-Sørensen. 2013. "The Migration Industry and The Commercialization of International Migration." *Routledge Global Institutions Series*. London: Routledge.
- Gammeltoft-Hansen, Thomas, and Ninna Nyberg Sørensen. 2013. "Introduction." In *The Migration Industry and The Commercialization of International Migration*, edited by Thomas Gammeltoft-Hansen and Ninna Nyberg Sørensen, 1–23. London: Routledge.
- Gandini, Luciana, Fernando Lozano-Ascencio, and Selene Gaspar Olvera. 2015. *El Retorno En El Nuevo Escenario de La Migración Entre México y Estados Unidos*. Ciudad de México: CONAPO. <http://www.conapo.gob.mx/>.
- Garapich, Michal P. 2008. "The Migration Industry and Civil Society: Polish Immigrants in The United Kingdom before and after EU Enlargement." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 34 (5): 735–752.
- Gazdar, Haris. 2003. *A Review of Migration Issues in Pakistan. Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit, Bangladesh, DFID*.
- Giorguli-Saucedo, Silvia E, Víctor M García-Guerrero, and Claudia Masferrer. 2016. *A Migration System in the Making*. Mexico City.
- Goss, Jon, and Bruce Lindquist. 1995. "Conceptualizing International Labor Migration: A Structuration Perspective." *International Migration Review*, 317–351.
- Gould, Roger V, and Roberto M Fernandez. 1989. "Structures of Mediation: A Formal Approach to Brokerage in Transaction Networks." *Sociological Methodology* 19 (19): 89–126.
- Greve, Bent. 2008. "What Is Welfare?" *Central European Journal of Public Policy* 2 (1): 50–73.
- Gross, Neil. 2009. "A Pragmatist Theory of Social Mechanisms." *American Sociological Review* 74 (3): 358–379.
- Gupta, Akhil, and James Ferguson. 1997. *Culture, Power, Place : Explorations in Critical Anthropology*. Durham, N.C. ; London: Duke University Press.
- Gutiérrez, Oscar. 2016. "Iglesia Aumenta Apoyo a Migrantes En Chiapas." *El Universal*, 13 de Noviembre 2016. <http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/articulo/estados/2016/11/13/iglesia-aumenta-apoyo-migrantes-en-chiapas>.
- Hagan, Jacqueline. 2006. "Making Theological Sense of the Migration Journey From Latin America Catholic, Protestant, and Interfaith Perspectives." *American Behavioral Scientist* 49 (11). Sage Publications: 1554–1573.

- Hagan, Jacqueline Maria. 2008. *Migration Miracle: Faith, Hope, and Meaning on The Undocumented Journey*. Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press.
- Hagan, Jacqueline Maria, Nestor Rodriguez, and Brianna Castro. 2011. "Social Effects of Mass Deportations by The United States Government, 2000-10." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 34 (8): 1374–1391.
- Hamilton, N, and N S Chinchilla. 1991. "Central American Migration: A Framework for Analysis." *Latin American Research Review* 26 (1): 75–110.
- Hansen, Thomas Blom, and Finn Stepputat. 2005. *Sovereign Bodies: Citizens, Migrants, and States in the Postcolonial World*. Princeton University Press.
- Harney, Robert F. 1977. "The Commerce of Migration." *Canadian Ethnic Studies / Etudes Ethniques de Canada* 9: 42–53.
- Harrell-Bond, Barbara, Eftihia Voutira, and Mark Leopold. 1992. "Counting the Refugees: Gifts, Givers, Patrons and Clients." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 5 (3–4): 205–225.
- Hartry, Allison S. 2012. "Gendering Crimmigration: The Intersection of Gender, Immigration, and the Criminal Justice System." *Berkeley Journal of Gender, Law & Justice* 27 (1): 1–27.
- Head-König, Anne-Lise. 2013. "Citizens But Not Belonging: Migrants' Difficulties in Obtaining Entitlement to Relief in Switzerland from the 1550s to the Early Twentieth Century." In *Migration, Settlement and Belonging in Europe, 1500-1930s: Comparative Perspectives*, edited by Stephen King and Anne Winter. New York. Oxford: Berghahn Books.
- Hein, Jane Ricketts, James Evans, and Phil Jones. 2008. "Mobile Methodologies: Theory, Technology and Practice." *Geography Compass* 2 (5): 1266–1285.
- Heinle, Kimberly, Octavio Rodríguez Ferreira, and David A Shirk. 2017. *Drug Violence in Mexico. Justice in Mexico. Department of Political Science & International Relations*. San Diego, CA: University of San Diego.
- Hennebry, Jenna L. 2008. "Bienvenidos a Canada? Globalization and The Migration Industry Surrounding Temporary Agricultural Migration in Canada." *Canadian Studies in Population* 35 (2): 339–356.
- Hernández-León, Rubén. 2008. *Metropolitan Migrants : The Migration of Urban Mexicans to The United States*. Berkeley, CA, London: University of California Press.
- Hernández-León, Rubén. 2013. "Conceptualizing The Migration Industry." In *The Migration Industry and The Commercialization of International Migration*, edited by Thomas Gammeltoft-Hansen and Ninna Nyberg Sørensen, 24–44. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Herrera-Lasso, Luis, and Juan Artola. 2011. "Migración y Seguridad: Dilemas e Interrogantes." *Migración y Seguridad: Nuevo Desafío En México, México, Colectivo de Análisis de La Seguridad Con Democracia*, 11–34.
- Hindle, Steve. 2003. "'Not by Bread Only'? Common Right, Parish Relief and Endowed Charity in a Forest Economy, c. 1600-1800." In *The Poor in England 1700-1850: An Economy of Makeshifts*, edited by Stephen King and Alannah Tomkins, 39–75. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press.
- Hopgood, Stephen, and Leslie Vinjamuri. 2012. "Faith in Markets." In *Sacred Aid: Faith and Humanitarianism*, 37–64. Oxford University Press New York, NY.
- Horst, Cindy. 2006. "Buufis amongst Somalis in Dadaab: The Transnational and Historical Logics behind Resettlement Dreams." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 19 (2): 143–157.

- Hufton, Olwen H. 1974. *The Poor of Eighteenth-Century France 1750-1789*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Ignatieff, Michael. 1994. *The Needs of Strangers*. London: Vintage.
- Imaz, Cecilia. 2011. "Políticas Públicas Sobre Migración y Sociedad Civil En México." In *Las Políticas Públicas Sobre Migraciones y La Sociedad Civil En America Latina: Los Casos de Argentina, Brasil, Colombia y México*, edited by Mario Chiarello, 483–522. New York: Scalabrinian International Migration Network.
- Infante, César, Alvaro J. Idrovo, Mario S. Sánchez-Domínguez, Stéphane Vinhas, and Tonatiuh González-Vázquez. 2012. "Violence Committed against Migrants in Transit: Experiences on the Northern Mexican Border." *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health* 14: 449–459.
- Ingold, Tim. 2011. *Being Alive. Essays on Movement, Knowledge and Description*. London: Routledge.
- INM (Instituto Nacional de Migración). 2003. *Compilación Histórica de La Legislación Migratoria En México: 1821-2000*. Edited by INM (Instituto Nacional de Migración). 3a ed. Ciudad de México: SEGOB (Secretaría de Gobernación).
- INM (Instituto Nacional de Migración). 2014a. "Rescata El INM a 12 Hondureños Secuestrados Por Una Banda Delictiva En Tabasco." SEGOB (Secretaría de Gobernación). <https://www.gob.mx/inm/prensa/rescata-el-inm-a-12-hondurenos-secuestrados-por-una-banda-delictiva-en-tabasco?idiom=es>.
- INM (Instituto Nacional de Migración). 2014b. "Rescata INM a 61 Migrantes En Chiapas y Coahuila." SEGOB (Secretaría de Gobernación). <https://www.gob.mx/inm/prensa/rescata-inm-a-61-migrantes-en-chiapas-y-coahuila?idiom=es>.
- INM (Instituto Nacional de Migración). 2016a. "Folio Infomex No. 0411100087716. Solicitud de Información." Edited by Acceso a la Información y Protección de Datos Personales Instituto Nacional de Transparencia.
- INM (Instituto Nacional de Migración). 2016b. "Programa Paisano Del INM." Edited by Acceso a la Información y Protección de Datos Personales Instituto Nacional de Transparencia. SEGOB (Secretaría de Gobernación). <http://www.gob.mx/inm/acciones-y-programas/programa-paisano-del-inm>.
- INM (Instituto Nacional de Migración). 2017. "Grupos Beta de Protección a Migrantes." SEGOB (Secretaría de Gobernación). <https://www.gob.mx/inm/acciones-y-programas/grupos-beta-de-proteccion-a-migrantes>.
- Innes, Joanna. 1996. "The 'Mixed Economy of Welfare' in Early Modern England: Assessments of the Options, from Hale to Malthus (c.1683-1803)." In *Charity, Self-Interest and Welfare in the English Past*, edited by Martin Daunt, 139–180. London: UCL Press.
- Innes, Joanna, Stephen King, and Anne Winter. 2013. "Settlement and Belonging in Europe, 1500-1930s. Structures, Negotiations and Experiences." In *Migration, Settlement and Belonging in Europe, 1500-1930s: Comparative Perspectives*, edited by Stephen King and Anne Winter. New York. Oxford: Berghahn Books.
- IOM (International Organization for Migration). 2012a. "IOM Launches Migrant Mass Information Campaign in Mexico and Guatemala." <http://www.iom.int/cms/en/sites/iom/home/news-and-views/press-briefing-notes/pbn-2012/pbn-listing/iom-launches-migrant-mass-information-ca.html>.

- IOM (International Organization for Migration). 2012b. "Migration Trends. Mexico." <http://www.iom.int/cms/en/sites/iom/home/where-we-work/americas/central-and-north-america-and-th/mexico.html>.
- Isacson, Adam, Maureen Meyer, and Ashley Davis. 2014. *Border Security and Migration : A Report from Arizona*. Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA). https://www.wola.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/131204_arizona_sm.pdf.
- Isacson, Adam, Maureen Meyer, and Hannah Smith. 2017. *Mexico's Southern Border : Security, Central American Migration, and U.S. Policy*. Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA). https://www.wola.org/files/WOLA_Increased_Enforcement_at_Mexico's_Southern_Border_Nov2015.pdf.
- Isolato, Riina. 2010. "Politicizing the Transnational: On Implications for Migrants, Refugees, and Scholarship." In *Migration, Development, and Transnationalization: A Critical Stance*, edited by Nina Glick Schiller and Thomas Faist. New York. Oxford: Berghahn Books.
- Izcara Palacios, Simón Pedro. 2016. "Violencia Postestructural: Migrantes Centroamericanos y Cáteles de La Droga En México." *Revista De Estudios Sociales* 56 (abril-junio): 12–25.
- Jackman, Mary. 2002. "Violence in Social Life." *Annual Review of Sociology*, no. 28: 387–415.
- Jácome, Felipe. 2008. "Trans-Mexican Migration: A Case of Structural Violence." Edited by Center for Latin American Studies (Research). *Working Paper 2*. Georgetown University / London School of Economics. http://pdpa.georgetown.edu/CLAS_RESEARCH/Working_Papers/WP2.pdf.
- Johnson, Heather. 2012. "Moments of Solidarity, Migrant Activism and (Non) Citizens at Global Borders: Political Agency at Tanzanian Refugee Camps, Australian Detention Centres and European Borders." In *Citizenship, Migrant Activism and the Politics of Movement*, edited by Peter Nyers and Kim Rygiel, 109–128. Routledge.
- Johnson, Norman. 1999. *Mixed Economies Welfare. A Comparative Perspective*. Hemel Hempstead: Prentice Hall Europe.
- Jones, Colin. 1996. "Some Recent Trends in the History of Charity." In *Charity, Self-Interest and Welfare in the English Past*, edited by Martin Daunton, 51–64. London: UCL Press.
- Jones, Reece. 2016. *Violent Borders: Refugees and the Right to Move*. London, UK, Brooklyn, NY: Verso.
- Kastner, K. 2013. "Nigerian Border Crossers: Women Travelling to Europe by Land." In *Long Journeys. African Migrants on the Road*, edited by Alessandro Triulzi and Robert McKenzie, 25–44. Leiden. Boston: Brill.
- Keen, David. 1998. "The Economic Functions of Violence in Civil Wars." *The Adelphi Papers* 38 (320): 1–89.
- Khosravi, Shahram. 2010. *"Illegal" Traveller : An Auto-Ethnography of Borders. Global Ethics Series*. Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kimball, Ann. 2007. *The Transit State: A Comparative Analysis of Mexico and Morocco Immigration Policies*. 150. Working Paper. San Diego, CA. http://ccis.ucsd.edu/_files/wp150.pdf.
- King, Stephen, and Alannah Tomkins. 2003. "The Poor in England 1700–1850: An Economy of Makeshifts." Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press.

- Kleinman, Arthur. 2000. "The Violences of Everyday Life: The Multiple Forms and Dynamics of Social Violence." In *Violence and Subjectivity*, edited by Veena Das, Arthur Kleinman, Mamphela Ramphele, and Pamela Reynolds, 226–241. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.
- Kleist, Nauja, and Dorte Thorsen. 2017. "Hope and Uncertainty in Contemporary African Migration." New York, NY; Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- Koizumi, Koichi, and Gerhard Hoffstaedter. 2015. *Urban Refugees: Challenges in Protection, Services and Policy*. Routledge.
- Kunuroglu, Filiz, Fons van de Vijver, and Kutlay Yagmur. 2016. "Return Migration." *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture* 8 (2). <https://doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1143>.
- Lacroix, Thomas. 2012. *Designing a Structure/Agency Approach to Transnationalism*. 65. *IMI Working Papers Series*. Oxford, United Kingdom.
- Landau, Norma. 1988. "The Laws of Settlement and the Surveillance of Immigration in Eighteenth-Century Kent." *Continuity and Change* 3 (3): 391–420.
- Laqueur, Thomas. 2009. "Mourning, Pity, and the Work of Narrative in the Making of 'Humanity.'" In *Humanitarianism and Suffering: The Mobilization of Empathy*, edited by Richard Ashby Wilson and Richard D Brown, 31–57. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lawrence, Bruce B, and Aisha Karim. 2007. "General Introduction: Theorizing Violence in the Twenty-First Century." In *On Violence: A Reader*, edited by Bruce B Lawrence and Aisha Karim, 1–15. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Lees, Lynn Hollen. 1998. *The Solidarities of Strangers: The English Poor Laws and the People, 1700-1948*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Levitt, Peggy, Jocelyn Viterna, Armin Mueller, and Charlotte Lloyd. 2016. "Transnational Social Protection: Setting the Agenda." *Oxford Development Studies* 45 (1): 2–19.
- Lin, Weiqiang, Johan Lindquist, Biao Xiang, and Brenda S A Yeoh. 2017. "Migration Infrastructures and the Production of Migrant Mobilities." *Mobilities* 12 (2): 167–174.
- Linde, Thomas. 2009. "Humanitarian Assistance to Migrants Irrespective of Their Status: Towards a Non-Categorical Approach." *International Review of The Red Cross* 91 (875): 567–578.
- Lindley, Anna. 2013. "Displacement in Contested Places: Governance, Movement, and Settlement in The Somali Territories." *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 7 (2): 291–313.
- Lister, Ruth. 2005. *Feminist Citizenship Theory: An Alternative Perspective on Understanding Women's Social and Political Lives*. Working Paper 12. *Women and Social Capital*. London: Families & Social Capital ESRC Research Group London.
- Lothar Weiss, Thomas, and Pedro Arturo López Chaltelt. 2011. *México: Políticas Públicas Beneficiando a Los Migrantes*. Mexico: OIM (México: Organización Internacional para las Migraciones).
- MacAuslan, Ian, and Rachel Sabates-Wheeler. 2011. "Structures of Access to Social Provision for Migrants." In *Migration and Social Protection: Claiming Social Rights Beyond Borders*, edited by Rachel Sabates-Wheeler and Rayah Feldman, 61–87. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Mainwaring, Cetta, and Noelle K Brigden. 2016. "Matryoshka Journeys: Im/Mobility During Migration." *Geopolitics* 21 (2). Routledge: 407–434.
- Manenti, Rene. 2012. *Migration and Borders: The "Casas Del Migrante" and The Flow of Unauthorized Migrants. Doctoral Dissertation*. Fordham University. <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1399597266>.
- Manning, Patrick. 2013. *Migration in World History*. 2nd ed. London / New York: Routledge.
- Manwaring, Max. 2007. *A Contemporary Challenge to State Sovereignty: Gangs and Other Illicit Transnational Criminal Organizations in Central America, El Salvador, Mexico, Jamaica, and Brazil*. Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute.
- Marcus, George E. 1995. "Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24 (1): 95–117.
- Marengo Camacho, Jorge. 2015. "Fronteras Elásticas, Hegemónicas y Teoría Del Discurso: La Frontera Sur de México." *Revista CIDOB d'Afers Internacionals*, no. 111: 9–34.
- Martin, Deborah G. 2013. "Place Frames: Analysing Practice and Production of Place in Contentious Politics." In *Spaces of Contention: Spatialities and Social Movements*, edited by Byron Miller, 85–103. Ashgate Publishing.
- Martínez-Saldaña, Jesús. 2003. "Los Olvidados Become Heroes: The Evolution of Mexico's Policies Towards Citizens Abroad." In *International Migration and Sending Countries: Perceptions, Policies and Transnational Relations*, edited by Eva Østergaard-Nielsen, 33–56. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Martínez, Daniel E. 2013. *The Crossing Experience: Unauthorized Migration along the Arizona-Sonora Border. Doctoral Dissertation*. University of Arizona. <http://hdl.handle.net/10150/293415>.
- Massey, Douglas S, Joaquín Arango, Graeme Hugo, Ali Kouaouci, Adela Pellegrino, and J Edward Taylor. 2008. *Worlds in Motion: Understanding International Migration at The End of The Millennium*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Massey, Douglas S, Rafael Alarcón, Jorge Durand, and Humberto González. 1987. *Return to Aztlan*. University of California Press.
- Massey, Douglas S, Joaquín Arango, Graeme Hugo, Ali Kouaouci, Adela Pellegrino, and J Edward Taylor. 1993. "Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal." *Population and Development Review* 19 (3): 431–466.
- McAdam, Doug, Sidney G Tarrow, and Charles Tilly. 2001. *Dynamics of Contention*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- McAdam, Jane. 2014. "Conceptualizing 'Crisis Migration': A Theoretical Perspective." In *Humanitarian Crisis and Migration: Causes, Consequences, and Responses*, edited by Susan F. Martin, Sanjula Weerasinghe, and Taylor Abbie, 28–49. New York: Routledge.
- McNevin, Anne. 2006. "Political Belonging in a Neoliberal Era: The Struggle of the Sans-Papiers." *Citizenship Studies* 10 (2): 135–151.
- McNevin, Anne. 2010. "Border Policing and Sovereign Terrain: The Spatial Framing of Unwanted Migration in Melbourne and Australia." *Globalizations* 7 (3): 407–419.
- Menjívar, Cecilia. 2014. "Immigration Law Beyond Borders: Externalizing and Internalizing Border Controls in an Era of Securitization." *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 10 (Nov): 353–369.

- Menjívar, Cecilia, and Leisy Abrego. 2012. *Legal Violence in the Lives of Immigrants: How Immigration Enforcement Affects Families, Schools, and Workplaces*. Edited by Center for American Progress. Washington, D.C.
- Menz, Georg. 2013. "The Neoliberalized State and The Growth of The Migration Industry." In *The Migration Industry and The Commercialization of International Migration*, edited by Thomas Gammeltoft-Hansen and Ninna Nyberg Sørensen, 108–127. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Meyer, Maureen, and Stephanie Brewer. 2010. *A Dangerous Journey through Mexico: Human Rights Violations against Migrants in Transit*. Washington, D.C.: Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) and Centro de Derechos Humanos Pro.
http://www.wola.org/publications/a_dangerous_journey_through_mexico_human_rights_violations_against_migrants_in_transit.
- Millner, Naomi. 2011. "From 'Refugee' to 'Migrant' in Calais Solidarity Activism: Re-Staging Undocumented Migration for a Future Politics of Asylum." *Political Geography* 30 (6): 320–328.
- Minca, Claudio. 2017. "Space of Exception." In *The International Encyclopedia of Geography*, edited by Douglas Richardson, Noel Castree, Michael F. Goodchild, Audrey Kobayashi, Weidong Liu, and Richard A. Marston. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.
- Montoya Ortiz, Merari Stephanie, and Juan Gabino González Becerril. 2015. "Evolución de La Migración de Retorno En México: Migrantes Procedentes de Estados Unidos En 1995 y de 1999 a 2014." *Papeles de Población* 21. scielomx: 47–78.
- Morales Meléndez, Víctor Hugo, and Luis Ricardo López Figueroa. 1999. "La Política de Inmigración de México. Interés Nacional e Imagen Internacional." *Foro Internacional* 39 (1 (155)): 65–92.
- Morales Sánchez, Julieta. 2012. "Despenalización de La Migración Irregular En México: Análisis y Perspectivas de La Reforma a La Ley General de Población de 21 de Julio de 2008."
- Morgan, David L. 1990. "Combining the Strengths of Social Networks, Social Support, and Personal Relationships." In *Personal Relationships and Social Support*, edited by Steven Duck and Roxane Cohen Silver. London: Sage.
- Morton, Adam David. 2012. "The War on Drugs in Mexico: A Failed State?" *Third World Quarterly* 33 (9): 1631–1645.
- Mountz, Alison. 2004. "Embodying the Nation-State: Canada's Response to Human Smuggling." *Political Geography* 23 (3): 323–345.
- Mountz, Alison, and Jenna M Loyd. 2013. "Constructing the Mediterranean Region: Obscuring Violence in the Bordering of Europe's Migration 'Crises.'" *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies* 13 (2): 173–195.
- Nyers, Peter. 2003. "Abject Cosmopolitanism: The Politics of Protection in the Anti-Deportation Movement." *Third World Quarterly* 24 (6): 1069–1093.
- Ogren, Cassandra. 2007. "Migration and Human Rights on The Mexico-Guatemala Border." *International Migration* 45 (4): 204–243.
- Olayo-Méndez, Alejandro. 2013. *Refining the Concept of the Migration Industry: The Emergence of a Humanitarian Aid Network in the Mexican Migration Corridor*. University of Oxford. Unpublished Manuscript.
- Olwig, Karen Fog. 2003. "'Transnational' Socio-Cultural Systems and Ethnographic Research: Views from an Extended Field Site." *International Migration Review* 37 (3): 787–811.

- OPHI (Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative). 2016. "Global MPI Frequently Asked Questions." Oxford, United Kingdom.
<http://www.ophi.org.uk/multidimensional-poverty-index/mpi-faqs/>.
- Paerregaard, Karsten. 2008. *Peruvians Dispersed: A Global Ethnography of Migration*. Lanham, Md.; Plymouth: Lexington Books.
- Pallister-Wilkins, Polly. 2015. "The Humanitarian Politics of European Border Policing: Frontex and Border Police in Evros." *International Political Sociology* 9 (1): 53–69.
- Pallister-Wilkins, Polly. 2017. "Humanitarian Rescue/Sovereign Capture and the Policing of Possible Responses to Violent Borders." *Global Policy* 8 (S1): 19–24.
- Papadopoulou-Kourkoula, Aspasia. 2008. *Transit Migration: The Missing Link between Emigration and Settlement. Migration, Minorities, and Citizenship*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Papastergiadis, Nikos. 2000. *The Turbulence of Migration: Globalization, Deterritorialization, and Hybridity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- París Pombo, María Dolores, Melissa Ley Cervantes, and Jesús Peña Muñoz. 2016. *Migrantes En México: Vulnerabilidad y Riesgos. Un Estudio Teórico Para El Programa de Fortalecimiento Institucional "Reducir La Vulnerabilidad de Migrantes En Emergencias."* Mexico: Organización Internacional para las Migraciones (OIM). El Colegio de la Frontera Norte.
- Peck, Gunther. 1996. "Reinventing Free Labor: Immigrant Padrones and Contract Laborers in North America, 1885-1925." *The Journal of American History* 83 (3): 848–871.
- Pederzini, Carla, Fernando Riosmena, Claudia Masferrer, and Noemy Molina. 2015. *Three Decades of Migration from the Northern Triangle of Central America: A Historical and Demographic Outlook. CANAMID Policy Brief Series PB01*. Guadalajara, Mexico: CIESAS. <http://www.canamid.org>.
- Peters, María de Jesús. 2016. "La Ruta de La Migracion Africana: Congo-Brasil-México." *El Universal*.
<http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/articulo/nacion/sociedad/2016/09/1/la-ruta-de-la-migracion-africana-congo-brasil-mexico>.
- Petrich, Blanche. 2014. "El Viacrucis Surgió Por La Violencia Contra Migrantes." *La Jornada*. <http://http://www.jornada.com.mx/2014/04/25/politica/009n1pol>.
- Piper, Nicola. 2003. "Feminization of Labor Migration as Violence Against Women: International, Regional, and Local Nongovernmental Organization Responses in Asia." *Violence against Women* 9 (6): 723–745.
- Ponthieu, Aurélie, and Andrea Incerti. 2016. "Continuity of Care for Migrant Populations in Southern Africa." *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 35 (2): 98–115.
- Portes, Alejandro. 1998. "Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology." *Annu. Rev. Sociol.*, no. 24: 1–24.
- Powell, Martin A. 2007. "The Mixed Economy of Welfare and the Social Division of Welfare." In *Understanding the Mixed Economy of Welfare*, edited by Martin A Powell, 1–21. Bristol, UK: Policy Press/Social Policy Association.
- Presidencia de la República. 2014. "Programa Frontera Sur." Mexico City.
<https://www.gob.mx/presidencia/articulos/programa-frontera-sur-10290>.
- Putnam, Robert D. 2000. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York ; London: Simon & Schuster.

- Quang, Pham, and Anh Thu. 2015. *Multidimensional Poverty and Migrant Households: A Case Study of Vietnam*. Sydney, Australia: Macquarie University.
- Rajaram, Prem Kumar, and Carl Grundy-Warr. 2004. "The Irregular Migrant as Homo Sacer: Migration and Detention in Australia, Malaysia, and Thailand." *International Migration* 42 (1): 33–64.
- Ravenstein, Ernst Geog. 1885. "On the Laws of Migration." *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, no. 48: 167–235.
- Ravenstein, Ernst Geog. 1889. "The Laws of Migration." *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* 52 (2): 241–305.
- REDODEM (Red de Documentación de las Organizaciones Defensoras de Migrantes). 2015. *Migración En Tránsito Por México: Rostro de Una Crisis Humanitaria Internacional*. Mexico: Red de Documentacion de las Organizaciones Defensoras de Migrantes.
- REDODEM (Red de Documentación de las Organizaciones Defensoras de Migrantes). 2016. *Migrantes En México: Recorriendo Un Camino de Violencia*. Mexico: Red de Documentacion de las Organizaciones Defensoras de Migrantes.
- REDODEM (Red de Documentación de las Organizaciones Defensoras de Migrantes). 2017. *El Estado Indolente: Recuento de La Violencia En Las Rutas Migratorias y Perfiles de Movilidad En México*. Mexico: Red de Documentacion de las Organizaciones Defensoras de Migrantes.
- Rieff, David. 2002. *A Bed for the Night: Humanitarianism in Crisis*. London: Vintage.
- Rigoni, Flor María. 2007. "La Ultima Frontera Del Crimen: El Secuestro Del Migrante Indocumentado." *Migrantes. Revista de Información y Pastoral Migratoria*.
- Rincón Gabourel, Elvira. 2018. "La Sociedad Civil Organizada Responde Al Impacto de Políticas Públicas." *Gestión y Política Pública* xxvii (1): 181–209.
- Rivas Castillo, Jaime. 2010. "Centroamericanos En El Soconusco: Reseña de Su Presencia a Través de Sus Paradojas." *LiminaR* 8 (2): 106–128. http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1665-80272010000200007&lng=es&tlng=es.
- Rivera Sánchez, Liliana. 2015. "Narratives of Return Migration and Mobility. Between Practices of Engagement and Multiple Spatialities in the City." *Estudios Políticos*, no. 47: 243–264.
- Rocha Romero, David, and Marco Tulio Ocegueda Hernández. 2013. "After Many Years, I Was Deported. Identifying and Deportation Process of Non-Criminal Immigrant Women." *Estudios Fronterizos* 14 (28): 9–34.
- Rodríguez Chávez, Ernesto. 2014. *Central American Transit Migration through Mexico to The United States: Diagnosis and Recommendations*. Edited by Ernesto Rodríguez Chávez. Mexico: ITAM.
- Rodríguez Chávez, Ernesto. 2016. *Migración Centroamericana En Tránsito Irregular Por México: Nuevas Cifras y Tendencias*. PB 14. CANAMID Policy Brief Series. Guadalajara: México. www.canamid.org.
- Rodríguez, Hipólito. 2016. *Governmentality and Violence towards Central American Migrants in the Gulf of Mexico*. PB 12. CANAMID Policy Brief Series. Guadalajara, Mexico. www.canamid.org.
- Romero, Robert Chao. "Transnational Chinese Immigrant Smmugling to The United States via Mexico and Cuba, 1882-1916." *Amerasia* 30 (3): 1–16.

- Rosales Sandoval, Isabel. 2013. "Public Officials and The Migration Industry in Guatemala: Greasing The Wheels of a Corrupt Machine." In *The Migration Industry and The Commercialization of International Migration*, edited by Thomas Gammeltoft-Hansen and Ninna Nyberg Sørensen, 215–237. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Rosenblum, Marc R, Doris Meissner, Claire Bergeron, and Faye Hipsman. 2014. *The Deportation Dilemma: Reconciling Tough and Humane Enforcement*. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute.
- Ruiz Gamba, Ligia. 2009. "Pastoral Del Inmigrante En Honduras: Trabajo En Redes." *REMHU - Revista Interdisciplinar Da Mobilidade Humana* 17 (32): 221–226.
- Ruiz, Olivia. 2003. *La Migración Centroamericana En La Frontera Sur: Un Perfil Del Riesgo En La Migración Indocumentada Internacional*. UC San Diego: Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies. <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9wh8s0bk>.
- Rutherford, Blair. 2011. "The Uneasy Ties of Working and Belonging: The Changing Situation for Undocumented Zimbabwean Migrants in Northern South Africa." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 34 (8): 1303–1319.
- Ryan, Louise. 2007. "Migrant Women, Social Networks and Motherhood: The Experiences of Irish Nurses in Britain." *Sociology* 41 (2): 295–312.
- Ryan, Louise. 2011. "Migrants' Social Networks and Weak Ties: Accessing Resources and Constructing Relationships Post-migration." *The Sociological Review* 59 (4): 707–724.
- Ryan, Louise, Rosemary Sales, Mary Tilki, and Bernadetta Siara. 2008. "Social Networks, Social Support and Social Capital: The Experiences of Recent Polish Migrants in London." *Sociology* 42 (4): 672–690.
- Sabates-Wheeler, Rachel, and Stephen Devereux. 2008. "Transformative Social Protection: The Currency of Social Justice." In *Social Protection for the Poor and Poorest*, edited by Armando Barrientos and David Hulme, 64–84. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Sabates-Wheeler, Rachel, and Rayah Feldman. 2011. "Migration and Social Protection: Claiming Social Rights Beyond Borders." *Rethinking International Development*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, UK ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Salazar, Noel B, Alice Elliot, and Roger Norum. 2017. "Studying Mobilities: Theoretical Notes and Methodological Queries." In *Methodologies of Mobility: Ethnography and Experiment Responsibility*. New York: Berghahn Books.
- Sánchez-Ancochea, Diego, and Salvador Martí i Puig. 2014. "Handbook of Central American Governance." *Routledge International Handbooks*. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Sanchez, Gabriela. 2014. *Human Smuggling and Border Crossings*. New York: Routledge.
- Sanchez, Gabriella. 2011. *Border Crossings: Human Smuggling Operations in the Southwest*. Doctoral Dissertation. Arizona State University.
- Sandoval, Juan Manuel. 2005. "México: País Frontera. La Nueva Frontera Geopolítica Regional de América Del Norte." In *Integración Latinoamericana, Fronteras y Migración: Los Casos de México y Venezuela*, edited by Juan Manuel Sandoval and Raquel Álvarez, 65–100. México: Universidad de Los Andes (Venezuela); Centro de Estudios Chicanos y de Fronteras, A. C. y Plaza y Valdés, S.A.

- Santamaría, Gema. 2015. "Drugs, Gangs and Vigilantes: How to Tackle the New Breeds of Mexican Armed Violence." *Estudios Internacionales (Santiago)* 47 (181): 115–134.
- Schapendonk, Joris. 2009. "Moving and Mediating: A Mobile View on Sub-Saharan African Migration Towards Europe." In *Communication Technologies in Latin America and Africa: A Multidisciplinary Perspective*, edited by M Fernández-Ardèvol and A Ros, 293–318. Barcelona: Universitat Oberta de Catalunya.
- Schapendonk, Joris. 2011. *Turbulent Trajectories: Sub-Saharan African Migrants Heading North. Doctoral Dissertation*. Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen. <http://repository.uibn.ru.nl/handle/2066/91326>.
- Schapendonk, Joris. 2012. "Migrants' Im/Mobilities on Their Way to the EU: Lost in Transit?" *Tijdschrift Voor Economische En Sociale Geografie* 103 (5): 577–583.
- Schapendonk, Joris. 2014. "What If Networks Move? Dynamic Social Networking in the Context of African Migration to Europe." *Population, Space and Place* 21 (8): 809–819.
- Schapendonk, Joris. 2018. "Navigating the Migration Industry: Migrants Moving through an African-European Web of Facilitation/Control." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 44 (4): 663–679.
- Schapendonk, Joris, and Griet Steel. 2014. "Following Migrant Trajectories: The Im/Mobility of Sub-Saharan Africans En Route to the European Union." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 104 (2): 262–270.
- Scheinkman, José A. 2008. "The New Palgrave Dictionary of Economics." Edited by Steven N Durlauf and Lawrence Blume. Basingstoke New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. 1992. *Death without Weeping : The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil*. Berkeley ; London: University of California Press.
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. 1996. "Small Wars and Invisible Genocides." *Social Science and Medicine* 43 (5): 889–900.
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. 2007. "The Gray Zone: Small Wars, Peacetime Crimes, and Invisible Genocides." In *The Shadow Side of Fieldwork: Exploring the Blurred Borders between Ethnography and Life*, edited by Athena McLean and Annette Leibing, 159–184. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, and Philippe Bourgois. 2004a. "Introduction: Making Sense of Violence." In *Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology*, edited by Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois, 1–32. Malden, Oxford, Victoria: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, and Philippe Bourgois. 2004b. *Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology. Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Schuster, Liza, and Nassim Majidi. 2015. "Deportation Stigma and Re-Migration." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 41 (4): 635–652.
- Scott-Smith, Tom. 2014. *Defining Hunger, Redefining Food: Humanitarianism in the Twentieth Century*. Doctoral Dissertation. University of Oxford. <https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:a19a116e-21b6-4cac-aef1-1a1feb642ba2>.
- Scott-Smith, Tom. 2016. "Humanitarian Dilemmas in a Mobile World." *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 35 (2): 1–21.

- Scott, Jason D. 2003. *The Scope and Scale of Faith-Based Social Services: A Review of the Research Literature Focusing on the Activities of Faith-Based Organizations in the Delivery of Social Services*. The Roundtable on Religion and Social Welfare Policy. Citeseer.
<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.200.9953&rep=rep1&type=pdf>.
- SCT (Secretaría de Comunicaciones y Transportes). 2016. "SCT Declara Rescate Del Ferrocarril Chiapas-Mayab." *Comunicado*.
<https://www.gob.mx/sct/prensa/sct-declara-rescate-del-ferrocarril-chiapas-mayab?hootPostID=dca8d434b3bee0de27c7e23a1e21258b>.
- SEGOB (Secretaría de Gobernación). 2011. *Ley de Migración*. Edited by Diario Oficial de la Federación. Ciudad de Mexico: Diario Oficial de la Federación.
- SEGOB (Secretaría de Gobernación). 2013a. "Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 2013-2018: Programa Especial de Migración 2014-2018." Edited by Diario Oficial de la Federación. Ciudad de Mexico: Gobierno de la República.
- SEGOB (Secretaría de Gobernación). 2013b. "Síntesis 2013: Estadística Migratoria." Edited by Unidad de Política Migratoria. Mexico.
http://www.politicamigratoria.gob.mx/work/models/SEGOB/CEM/PDF/Estadisticas/Sintesis_Graficas/Sintesis_2013.pdf.
- Semple, Kirk. 2016. "Haitians, After Perilous Journey, Find Door to U.S. Abruptly Shut." *The New York Times*.
https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/24/world/americas/haitians-mexico-brazil-deport-united-states.html?ref=nyt-es&mcid=nyt-es&subid=article&_r=0.
- Sen, Amartya. 1999. *Freedom as Development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sewell, William H. 1992. "A Theory of Structure: Duality, Agency, and Transformation." *American Journal of Sociology* 98 (1): 1–29.
- Sezgin, Zeynep, and Dennis Dijkzeul. 2013. "Migrant Organisations in Humanitarian Action." *International Migration and Integration*.
- Sharp, Lesley A. 2000. "The Commodification of The Body and Its Parts." *Annual Review of Anthropology*, no. 29: 287–328.
- Siddiqui, Tasneem. 2012. *Impact of Migration on Poverty and Development*. Work. Pap. 2. *Migrating out of Poverty*. Research Programme Consortium. Sussex.
- Sigona, Nando. 2015. "Campzenship: Reimagining the Camp as a Social and Political Space." *Citizenship Studies* 19 (1): 1–15.
- Silva Quiroz, Yolanda. 2014. *Transmigración de Centroamericanos Por México: Su Vulnerabilidad y Sus Derechos Humanos*. Doctoral Dissertation. El Colegio de la Frontera Norte.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265240925_TRANSMIGRACION_DE_CENTROAMERICANOS_POR_MEXICO_SU_VULNERABILIDAD_Y_SUS_DERECHOS_HUMANOS?ev=prf_high.
- Simmons, William Paul, Cecilia Menjívar, and Michelle Téllez. 2015. "Violence and Vulnerability of Female Migrants in Drop Houses in Arizona: The Predictable Outcome of a Chain Reaction of Violence." *Violence against Women* 21 (5): 551–570.
- Sin Fronteras I.A.P. 2013. *La Ruta Del Encierro: Situación de Las Personas En Detención En Estaciones Migratorias y Estancias Provisionales*. Mexico.
- Singer, Audrey, and Douglas S Massey. 1998. "The Social Process of Undocumented Border Crossing among Mexican Migrants." *International Migration Review* 32 (3): 561–592.

- Skeldon, Ronald. 1997. *Migration and Development : A Global Perspective*. Longman Development Studies. Essex: Addison Wesley Longman Limited.
- Skeldon, Ronald. 2002. "Migration and Poverty: Ambivalent Relationships." *Asia-Pacific Population Journal* 17 (3): 67–82.
- Skeldon, Ronald. 2012. "Going Round in Circles: Circular Migration, Poverty Alleviation and Marginality." *International Migration* 50 (3): 43–60.
- Slack, Jeremy. 2015. *Drugs and Deportation on the Border: Post-Deportation Geographies of Enforcement and Conflict*. Doctoral Dissertation. University of Arizona. <http://arizona.openrepository.com/arizona/handle/10150/556876>.
- Slack, Jeremy, and Howard Campbell. 2016. "On Narco-Coyotaje: Illicit Regimes and Their Impacts on the US–Mexico Border." *Antipode* 48 (5): 1380–1399.
- Slack, Jeremy, and Scott Whiteford. 2011. "Violence and Migration on the Arizona–Sonora Border." *Human Organization* 70 (1): 11–21.
- Sládková, Jana. 2007. "Documenting the Undocumented Journeys of Honduran Migrants to the United States." Doctoral Dissertation. The City University of New York. <https://search.proquest.com/openview/178619d43336fe91dfe0b4805ba41401/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>.
- Sládková, Jana. 2016. "Stratification of Undocumented Migrant Journeys: Honduran Case." *International Migration* 54 (1): 84–99.
- Slim, Hugo. 2015. *Humanitarian Ethics: A Guide to the Morality of Aid in War and Disaster*. London: Hurst & Company.
- Solano, Priscilla. 2017. *Assisting in the Shadows: Humanitarianism, Shelters and Transit Migration Politics*. Doctoral Dissertation. Lund University.
- Solar Fonseca, León Felipe. 2014. "Así Se va Yendo La Plebe. Identidad(Es) y Socialización Migratoria En Las Travesías Terrestres Entre Chiapas y Tijuana." Universidad de Ciencias y Artes de Chiapas. Centro de Estudios Superiores de México y Centroamérica. Universidad de Alicante; San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Chiapas, México. <http://hdl.handle.net/11595/895>.
- Sørensen, Ninna Nyberg. 2006. *Mediterranean Transit Migration*. Edited by Ninna Nyberg Sørensen and studier Dansk institut for internationale. Copenhagen, Denmark: Copenhagen, Denmark : Danish Institute for International Studies.
- Sørensen, Ninna Nyberg. 2013. "Migration between Social and Criminal Networks: Jumping The Remains of The Honduran Migration Train." In *The Migration Industry and The Commercialization of International Migration*, edited by Thomas Gammeltoft-Hansen and Ninna Nyberg Sørensen, 238–261. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Sørensen, Ninna Nyberg. 2014. "Handbook of Central American Governance." In *Routledge International Handbooks*, edited by Diego Sánchez-Ancochea and Salvador Martí i Puig, 45–58. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Sørensen, Ninna Nyberg, Nicholas Van Hear, and Poul Engberg-Pedersen. 2002. "The Migration–Development Nexus Evidence and Policy Options State-of-the-Art Overview." *International Migration* 40 (5): 3–47.
- Spaan, Ernst, and Felicitas Hillmann. 2013. "Migration Trajectories and The Migration Industry: Theoretical Reflections and Empirical Examples from Asia." In *The Migration Industry and The Commercialization of International Migration*, edited by Thomas Gammeltoft-Hansen and Ninna Nyberg Sørensen, 64–86. London: Routledge.

- Spener, David. 2008. "Global Apartheid, Coyotaje and The Discourse of Clandestine Migration: Distinctions between Personal, Structural, and Cultural Violence." *Migración y Desarrollo*, no. First Semester: 115–140.
- Spener, David. 2009. "Some Critical Reflections on The Migration Industry Concept." *Migration in the Pacific Rim Workshop*. University of California at Los Angeles.
- Spiro, Emma S, Ryan M Acton, and Carter T Butts. 2013. "Extended Structures of Mediation: Re-Examining Brokerage in Dynamic Networks." *Social Networks* 35 (1). Elsevier: 130–143.
- Squire, Vicki. 2015. *Post/Humanitarian Border Politics between Mexico and the US: People, Places, Things*. Edited by Martin Geiger, Parvati Raghuram, and William Walters. *Mobility & Politics*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Squire, Vicki. 2017. "Governing Migration Thorough Death in Europe and the US: Identification, Burial, and the Crisis of Modern Humanism." *European Journal of International Relations* 23 (3): 513–532.
- Stepnitz, Abigail. 2013. "A Woman's Place: Violence and the Creation of Gendered Migrants and Migration." *Critical Legal Studies*. Queen's University, Belfast .
- Stone-Cadena, Victoria. 2016. "Indigenous Ecuadorian Mobility Strategies in the Clandestine Migration Journey." *Geopolitics* 21 (2): 345–365.
- Stoney, Sierra, and Jeanne Batalova. 2013. *Central American Immigrants in the United States. Migration Information Source*.
<http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/central-american-immigrants-united-states-1>.
- Stovel, Katherine, and Lynette Shaw. 2012. "Brokerage." *Annual Review of Sociology* 38 (7). Annual Reviews: 139–158.
- Stumpf, Juliet P. 2006. "The Crimmigration Crisis: Immigrants, Crime, and Sovereign Power." *American University Law Review* 56 (2). Lewis & Clark Law School: 367–419. <http://law.bepress.com/expresso/eps/1635>.
- Surak, Kristin. 2013. "The Migration Industry and Developmental States in East Asia." In *The Migration Industry and The Commercialization of International Migration*, edited by Thomas Gammeltoft-Hansen and Ninna Nyberg Sørensen, 87–107. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Sutter, Brigitte. 2013. "Untangling Immobility in Transit: Sub-Saharan Migrants in Istanbul." In *Long Journeys. African Migrants on the Road*, edited by Alessandro Triulzi and Robert Lawrence McKenzie, 93–112. Leiden. Boston: Brill.
- Taussig, Michael. 2004. "Terror as Usual: Walter Benjamin's Theory of History as State of Siege." In *Violence in War and Peace*, edited by Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Thompson, Amy, Rebecca Maria Torres, Kate Swanson, Sarah A. Blue, and Óscar Misael Hernández Hernández. 2017. "Re-Conceptualising Agency in Migrant Children from Central America and Mexico." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2017.1404258.
- Ticktin, Miriam I. 2011. *Casualties of Care: Immigration and the Politics of Humanitarianism in France*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.
- Titterton, Michael. 1992. "Managing Threats to Welfare: The Search for a New Paradigm of Welfare." *Journal of Social Policy* 21 (1): 1–23.

- Tourliere, Mathieu. 2016. "Más de 5 Mil Haitianos y Africanos, Varados En Baja California." *Revista Proceso*. <http://www.proceso.com.mx/457832/5-mil-haitianos-africanos-varados-en-baja-california>.
- Turner, Jonathan H. 1988. *A Theory of Social Interaction*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Tyler, Imogen, and Katarzyna Marciniak. 2013. "Immigrant Protest: An Introduction." *Citizenship Studies* 17 (2): 143–156.
- United Nations. 1996. *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995*. New York: United Nations.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 2010. *Human Development Report 2010: The Real Wealth of Nations: Pathways to Human Development*. New York: United Nations Development Programme.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 2014. *Migration, Resettlement and Climate Change in Viet Nam: Reducing Exposure and Vulnerabilities to Climatic Extremes and Stresses through Spontaneous and Guided Migration*. Hanoi, Vietnam: United Nations Vietnam.
- United States. Department of Homeland Security. 2012. "Yearbook of Immigration Statistics: 2011." Edited by Department of Homeland Security: Office of Immigration Statistics. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics.
- United States. Department of Homeland Security. 2016. "Yearbook of Immigration Statistics: 2014." Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics.
- United States. Department of Homeland Security. 2017. "Yearbook of Immigration Statistics: 2016." Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics.
- Urry, John. 2007. *Mobilities*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Van Hear, Nicholas. 2014. "Reconsidering Migration and Class." *International Migration Review* 48 (s1): S100–S121.
- van Leeuwen, Marco H. D. 1994. "Logic of Charity: Poor Relief in Preindustrial Europe." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 24 (4): 589–613.
- van Leeuwen, Marco H. D. 2013. "Migration, Settlement and Belonging in Europe, 1500-1930s: Comparative Perspectives." In *Migration, Settlement and Belonging in Europe, 1500-1930s: Comparative Perspectives*, edited by Stephen King and Anne Winter, 173–203. New York. Oxford: Berghahn Books.
- Vandevoordt, Robin. 2017. "Between Humanitarian Assistance and Migration Management: On Civil Actors' Role in Voluntary Return from Belgium,." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 43 (11): 1907–1922.
- Vertovec, Steven. 2001. "Transnational Social Formations: Towards Conceptual Crossfertilization (WPTC-01-16)." In *Transnational Migration: Comparative Perspectives*. Vol. 30. Princeton University.
- Villarreal, Andrés. 2002. "Political Competition and Violence in Mexico: Hierarchical Social Control in Local Patronage Structures." *American Sociological Review* 67 (4): 477–498.
- Vogt, Wendy Alexandra. 2012. *Ruptured Journeys, Ruptured Lives: Central American Migration, Transnational Violence, and Hope in Southern Mexico. Doctoral Dissertation*. The University of Arizona. <http://arizona.openrepository.com/arizona/handle/10150/238677>.

- Vogt, Wendy Alexandra. 2013. "Crossing Mexico: Structural Violence and The Commodification of Undocumented Central American Migrants." *American Ethnologist* 40 (4): 764–780.
- Vogt, Wendy Alexandra. 2017. "The Arterial Border: Negotiating Economies of Risk and Violence in Mexico's Security Regime." *International Journal of Migration and Border Studies* 3 (203): 192–207.
- Waddington, H, and R Sabates-Wheeler. 2003. "How Does Poverty Affect Migration Choice? A Review of Literature." *Institute of Development Studies, Sussex, Working Paper T3*.
- Weiss, Thomas George, and Cindy Collins. 2000. *Humanitarian Challenges and Intervention*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Werbner, Pnina. 1999. "Global Pathways. Working Class Cosmopolitans and the Creation of Transnational Ethnic Worlds." *Social Anthropology* 7 (1): 17–35.
- Willen, Sarah S. 2007. "Toward a Critical Phenomenology of 'Illegality': State Power, Criminalization, and Abjectivity among Undocumented Migrant Workers in Tel Aviv, Israel." *International Migration* 45 (3): 8–38.
- Wilson, Richard Ashby, and Richard D Brown. 2009. *Humanitarianism and Suffering: The Mobilization of Empathy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Winter, Anne. 2013. "Settlement Law and Rural· Urban Relief Transfers in Nineteenth Century Belgium: A Case Study on Migrants' Access to Relief in Antwerp." In *Migration, Settlement and Belonging in Europe, 1500-1930s: Comparative Perspectives*, edited by Stephen King and Anne Winter, 228–249. New York. Oxford: Berghahn Books.
- World Bank. 2016. "Honduras. Country Overview." <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/honduras/overview>.
- Xiang, Biao. 2007. *Global "Body Shopping": An Indian Labor System in the Information Technology Industry*. Princeton University Press.
- Xiang, Biao, and Johan Lindquist. 2014. "Migration Infrastructure." *International Migration Review* 48 (s1): S122–S148.