A Contra corriente
Una revista de estudios latinoamericanos

Vol. 22, Núm. 1 (Fall 2024): 213-235

Maquila Hauntings: *Maquilapolis: City of Factories*, Global Capitalism, and Spectrality in the Maquiladora Industry on the Mexican Border

Pablo Zavala

Loyola University—New Orleans

Introduction[1]

This article employs spectral theories in order to explore the documentary *Maquilapolis: City of Factories* (Funari and de la Torre 2006) on border *maquiladoras*, or export-processing assembly plants, and the role the latter play in contemporary globalization and capitalist processes. These corporations house the assembly lines that are generally the result of U.S. companies outsourcing extremely cheap manual labor in Mexico. The documentary follows a series of women workers in the maquiladoras who organize to gain workers' rights, albeit often unsuccessfully. The film poignantly underscores the unfair conditions that are the direct result of neoliberal policies, such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).[2] By analyzing the documentary, I argue that the maquiladora is simultaneously a result of and a catalyst for neoliberalism's global policies that perpetuate violence against Mexican workers. The film enforces the notion that the maquiladora, as metonymy for neoliberalism, engenders at least three interrelated types of violence:

[1] Thank you to Josefa Salmón, Olivia Cosentino, Amanda Vredenburgh, and colleagues at the following conferences for allowing me to work out ideas relevant to this article: the Latin American Studies Association (LASA), the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA), and the Popular Culture Association (PCA).

[2] This is now called the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), but since very little has changed for the workers, I will continue to refer to it by its former initials.

environmental, economic, and gender. The documentary also enforces the idea that the fight against capitalism entails feminism and vice versa.

In what follows, I offer a synopsis of *Maquilapolis*. I outline a brief history of the maquiladora industry on the border between Mexico and the U.S. I then interweave an overview of the documentary and an analysis of the intersection between neoliberalism, patriarchal cultures, and poverty that results in environmental disasters, a perpetuation of socioeconomic inequalities, and feminicides. I include an element of contemporary contextualization by discussing how the COVID pandemic has exacerbated these dynamics. I employ spectral theories—particularly those of Achille Mbembe—in order to demonstrate how this situation presents a ghostly power that has supported similar oppressive capitalistic structures in the past, a system that is nearly impossible to challenge. However, as the documentary demonstrates, there are successful and necessary forms of resistance, such as organizing and creating consciousness. An important component in this vocabulary is the political and sociological idea of *the haunted* and the act of solidarity in talking with these subjugated ghosts by highlighting their stories. Dialoguing with spectral considerations is a way of underscoring the concrete social and economic effects neoliberal policies have on the population and the environment.

Maquilapolis: City of Factories is a 2006 documentary directed and produced by Vicky Funari and Sergio de la Torre. Instead of an omniscient narrating voice, the women maquiladora workers provide the voice-overs that explain the sociopolitical contexts, e.g., the passing of NAFTA. Throughout the documentary, the women are either interviewing themselves or responding to questions posed by the production team. And while most of the testimonies are from the women, occasionally we see a lawyer's perspective (working for an NGO). *Maquilapolis* is a film about how female workers in maquiladoras along the border in Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico work and move from assembly plant to assembly plant earning minimum wage and fighting for basic workers' rights and environmental causes. Told partly through cameras the workers themselves hold and direct—a process that took five years—the viewer sees the struggles the workers go through: health problems, precarious homes, severance payments the employers refuse to pay, weak unions, mistreatment and abuse at the workplace, exploitation, and unemployment. Throughout the film, the viewer learns up close and personal about different experiences that women have had since arriving at the border cities, usually from Southern Mexican towns. Thusly, one sees the different aspects that comprise the women's identities: workers, activists, organizers,

mothers, wives. The documentary is a collaborative project based on dialogue between filmmakers, NGOs (one of which fights for women's rights, *Promotoras por los Derechos de las Mujeres*, and another that is in favor of environmental justice, *Colectivo Chilpancingo Pro Justicia Ambiental*), maquiladora workers, activists, and lawyers, among others.

Maquiladora History

The history of the export-processing industry in Mexico began towards the second half of the twentieth century, when the country gradually came to terms with the forces of globalization and started outwardly looking for free trade with other countries. The story starts with the Bracero Program (BP), which consisted of a series of treatises between the U.S. and Mexico between 1942 and 1964 in order to bring Mexican agricultural workers to replace unfulfilled jobs left by American soldiers who left for the war (Cohen 2011). During this time, Mexico had imposed high protective tariffs and other blockades in order to stimulate the development of consumer goods industries aimed at domestic markets. In this vein, so far, the country had mainly looked inwardly for economic stimulation. Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI) was a set of policies implemented in Mexico from the 1940s to the 1980s that focused on promoting the domestic production of goods. ISI was widely credited with producing the economic Mexican Miracle from the 1940s to the 1960s that produced sustained, but uneven, economic growth (Thornton 2021). However, the U.S. decision to end the BP in 1964 caused a surge in unemployed Mexican workers along border towns,[3] which in turn prompted the Mexican government to create the Border Industrialization Program (BIP). The latter aimed at curbing Mexican unemployment by moving foreign production operations—mainly belonging to the U.S.—to Mexico for cheap labor. According to Rachael Kamel and Anya Hoffman (1998), under the BIP, Mexico granted licenses to foreign corporations for tax-free importation of equipment and raw materials. Mexican processing plants would then assemble the parts on national ground, and the (semi) final product would next be re-exported chiefly to the U.S. market. Workers would assemble such various parts as filters, electrical components, oxygen masks, and urinary bags. The import duties that the

[3] According to Christy Thornton (2021), the Mexican Miracle produced a middle class, particularly in Mexico City. However, the development was uneven and even though there was investment in industry (especially after 1965), rural, agricultural, and indigenous communities as well as the country's general southern areas were left out.

U.S. would levy would be based only on the "value added," meaning the actual cost of wages and similar costs in Mexico, instead of the products' full value.

Seeking further economic development, during the next few decades Mexico continued to implement policies and join agreements that promoted global free trade. The two main treatises in this disposition were the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), signed by President Miguel de la Madrid in 1987, and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), signed by President Carlos Salinas de Gortari in 1994. Since the measured and steady opening up of the nation's economy, the maquiladora industry has taken the financial spotlight: in 1994, there were 583,044 maquiladora workers, launching the assembly plant industry into the second largest segment of the nation's economy. Six years later, in 2000, the numbers shot up to over 1.3 million workers, and by 2007 there were almost 2 million (Tuttle 2012, "Estadística Manufacturera…" 2021). In the immediate years following the economic crisis of 2008, there was a decline from 1.9 million laborers at the beginning of that fateful year, to 1.5 in the middle of 2009. However, after 2009, there was a steady increase until its historic zenith toward the end of 2019 with 2.7 million maquiladora workers. This was the most the country had ever seen up until that point. There was a slight decline in the first few months of 2020, probably because of the pandemic. However, after June of that same year, there has been a steady monthly increase up until the writing of this article that has already broken its previous 2019 record.[4]

Spectrality and Maquila Hauntings

Spectral criticism has been fertile theoretical ground with which to reflect on fragmented pasts; for instance, on the violence experienced by Central American female migrant bodies in contemporary Mexican films (Cosentino 2019), or on the hauntings in Latin American cultural productions dealing with authoritarian regimes (Ribas-Casasayas 2015). In "Life, Sovereignty, and Terror in the Fiction of Amos Tutuola" (2003), Achille Mbembe discusses "forms of existence" that are rendered "extreme forms of human life" and "death-worlds" in which certain populations are forced to live such miserable lives that they are made to be "living dead (ghosts)" (1).

[4] These statistics are gathered and collected by the INEGI (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática), the nation's foremost autonomous institution that collects statistical information on the population and the economy. Thanks to Javier Omar Campos González, Blanca Verónica Jáquez Nieto, and Víctor Hernández (employees at the Ciudad Juárez branch) for their help in deciphering these statistical reports. For updated reports, see ("Estadística Manufacturera…" 2021).

The extreme forms of human existence and the corresponding terror are brought on by a tenuous control that partly causes wars: "ghostly power is its encircling of the subject, surrounding it on all sides, investing it and tightening around it to the point that it cracks" (9-10). According to Mbembe, ghostly violence manifests itself in different forms upon its victims, physically, murdering, capturing, etc. Power is conceptualized as ghostly and spectral, i.e., inconclusive and amorphous, and therefore extremely difficult to challenge. It controls who must die, and who may live.

Moreover, it is helpful in the present context to think of this ghostly power vis-à-vis globalization. María del Pilar Blanco and Esther Peeren (2013) have defined *spectropolitics* as the following: "an attempt to mobilize spectrality to more precisely designate the diffuse operations and effects of present-day globalization, as well as to critique the way its processes produce certain subjects as consistently disenfranchised" (93). They go on to specify the relationship between the spectral global forces and the victim-subjects on the other end:

> […] the processes associated with the present-day spread of particular economic models (most prominently, neoliberal capitalism) and new (social) media, which reconfigure the world as one of inescapable interconnection, have been conceived as *spectral* (ungraspably complex, only partially material, accelerated to the point of disappearance, capable of occupying multiple spaces at once) and *spectralizing* (producing subjects that stand apart from the rest of society, either, at the top, as unaccountable or, at the bottom, as expendable). (93; my emphases)

In other words, it is a top-down influence within geopolitical ecosystems that comprise different ideological state apparatuses that exert terror upon their victims. The workers of the maquiladoras along Mexican border towns, as well as victims of feminicides, bear the brunt of neoliberalism's ghostly violence. Indeed, maquilas haunt.[5]

The fact that the maquiladora industry has survived the precariousness of the global economic ups and downs (discussed in the previous section) evinces its persistence, its ghostliness. Funari and de la Torre's documentary is as timely today as it was upon its release. The film documents a socioeconomic phenomenon that is not going away anytime soon. The COVID-19 disease started exponentially spreading at the beginning of 2020, and by March of that same year, economies in both the U.S. and Mexico began shutting down, causing layoffs in local, national, and international

[5] Put in a slightly different way, "ghosts are effects of the violence of the 'post' [-modernity] itself […]" (Elhaik 2012, 349).

businesses that were seeing a slowdown in their revenues. However, in terms of operations, the maquiladora industry seems to be largely unaffected. Nationally, as we saw earlier in this article how the number of workers employed at each manufacturing plant only slightly decreased in the immediate aftermath of the pandemic, but already near the end of 2020 seemed to be getting closer to pre-pandemic digits. Ciudad Juárez bears similar tendencies with an interesting and important difference: after June of 2020, the numbers jumped drastically, to such an extent that in September of that same year there were 294,786 employees, the most the city has ever seen ("Estadística Manufacturera…" 2021).[6] I argue that the maquiladora industry, as metonymy for neoliberalism, represents a ghostly power whose violence is represented in the documentary *Maquilapolis: City of Factories* (2006).[7]

Maquilapolis: City of Factories (2006)[8]

The film starts with worker Carmen Durán, one of the documentary's protagonists, shooting a scene on a personal hand-held camera. She is a maquiladora worker and a single mother. Through her voice, we hear that she has worked in nine factory plants and was thirteen years old when she first arrived at Tijuana. After six months of working at Panasonic, she kept getting sick and was not improving, so she was eventually fired in 2002. She then worked at Sanyo, where she assembled "flybacks" in both AC/DC and DC/DC conversions. There, the company exploited the workers: the personnel were pressured to work harder and were exposed to the chemicals in a working environment that produced a horrible smell of burnt plastic. Such gradual ecological damaging, and overall non-spectacular violence, is encapsulated by what Rob Nixon (2011) calls "slow violence." Although Carmen liked the general atmosphere and her co-workers who were often her neighbors, her nose would bleed, and her kidneys would hurt. They wouldn't let her drink water or go to

[6] Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua and Tijuana, Baja California are both border Mexican cities with comparable population sizes that have the highest concentration of maquiladora investments in the country. Therefore, while there remain some major differences between them, I will focus on and alternate between the two metropolises for the purposes of the present analysis.

[7] This ghostly power is in part facilitated by utterances of "the market knows best" and similar iterations of the "invisible hand" idea espoused by Adam Smith. See Vogl (2014) for an exposition of how, even in the face of recent financial disasters, economic theorists continue to ignore warnings of speculative markets' instability.

[8] See the film's official website ("Maquilapolis: City of Factories" n.d.) for more information on the filming process as well as how to donate. See also a useful PBS website ("Maquilapolis: PBS premiere" n.d.). The documentary can be viewed on Kanopy, or free of charge on YouTube.

the bathroom, the upshot of biopolitical processes. The workers were "sujetos disciplinados en sus lugares de trabajo" (Park 2018, 1119). The conditions were bad, but she had no other option because she needed the money. One of the main threads throughout the film is her fight against Sanyo, not because of the abuse just described, but because once the company left for Indonesia to hire cheaper manual labor, the bosses refused to pay her and others severance pay guaranteed by the Mexican Ley Federal del Trabajo. According to Carmen, they owed her $2,400 USD, she was asking for $1,800 USD, and they were offering $860 USD. At the end of the film and with the help of a pro-bono lawyer, the company ends up paying her $2,500 USD. A resounding "success." The poor working conditions in maquiladoras are well documented; see Flores (2017), Domínguez et al. (2010), and Velázquez et al. (2006).

It is noteworthy to observe that it wasn't a labor union that helped Carmen win her case; rather, it was the organization of the women along with a single lawyer working *pro bono:* Jaime Cota. The concept of grassroots organization is key. Here, there is a split in the spectral direction I have been exploring. On the one hand, there is the negative aspect related to ghostly terror. On the other, there is an effort to visibilize the victims. Firstly, a harmful intangible component in the colossal capitalist mechanism includes the gossamer unions that are paid for by the companies themselves, which in turn allows the corporations to simply vanish without repercussions.

Although today there are some unions with a *bona fide* interest in workers' rights, their survival is tenuous. At least since the 1980s, there has been a steady increase in the hegemony of unions that work in accordance with the maquila/investors' needs, that are corrupt, and that are affiliated with national unions such as the *Confederación de Trabajadores Mexicanos* (CTM) and the *Confederación Regional de Obreros Mexicanos* (CROM) (Quintero Ramírez 2006, Quintero Ramírez 1998, Carrillo Viveros 1989).[9] Founded in 1918, the CROM was very early on seen as an extension of the State, and its founder—Luis N. Morones—as a traitor by Mexican communists. In the 1960s, the cooptation enacted by the *Central Nacional de Trabajadores* (CNT)—along with adhered local unions—was the neutralizing mechanism by which workers were immobilized for more than a decade (Fernández Christlieb et al. 1985, 279). Since the end of the Revolution, the Mexican State and

[9] For a comprehensive history of unions in Mexico in the 20th and 21st centuries, see Escobar Toledo (2021). For more on the symbiosis between labor unions and the Mexican State, see Trejo Delarbe (1984).

union organizations have been bedfellows, the former often vindicating the latter in order to rally support within a schema Paul Gillingham has called a "capitalist dictatorship" (2021) that eschews a military takeover. In other words, it is more common for trade unions to side with the maquiladoras and the State. The *Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Educación* (SNTE), the continent's largest labor union, was involved in a scandal in 2013 when its leader, Elba Esther Gordillo, was arrested for embezzlement and organized crime. She represented the erosion of voters' autonomy by holding considerable influence over governments in return for coaxing the SNTE's members into voting as a single bloc for a particular political party.

In *Maquilapolis*, worker Lupita Castañeda, a *promotora*, talks about the existence of a *nominal* union at her place of employment. She describes how the purported unions don't really exist, since they protect the bosses instead, and that at her workplace, there was no real union representative. "The union should belong to the workers," Castañeda continues, "in other words, the workers themselves form a union to defend those very workers' [rights]." Cota explains the payment details: "The unions within the maquiladora industry, the majority are ghost unions. Unions that no one sees. Unions that no one knows exist. These types of unions don't exist due to fees that workers pay; rather, they exist due to fees the boss pays them directly. Therefore, the union protects the boss." Ghost union—as part and parcel of spectropolitics—are an extension of ghostly power, because they function to foment the intractability of the latter. You cannot fight the company, and you cannot use the weapons typically available. Worker Vianey Mijangos echoes Cota's view of fake unions: "Those that attempt to organize a union are fired." It is the opinion of the workers that the maquiladoras' ploy carries out its objectives in the least covert manner. The amount of abuse documented in the film is compatible with the view that trade unions in the maquiladoras are ineffective and complicit.

The other spectral focus involves a sense of justice. In *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International* (1994), Jacques Derrida talks about ghosts and "generations of ghosts," that is, "*others* who are not present nor presently living, either to us, in us, or outside us" (xviii). These "others" include, but are not limited to, victims of wars, violence, exterminations, and the oppressions of capitalist imperialism. In discussing the supposed death of communism and the fate of Marxism, Derrida discusses the need to live with ghosts, which involves speaking *of* the ghost, *to* the ghost, and *with* the ghost. The first and last prepositions most pertain to *Maquilapolis*, because the film is not speaking for the ghosts. Instead,

speaking with them entails empathy and a degree of solidarity. Without these actions, according to Derrida, then "no ethics, no politics," and no justice are possible in the "future-to-come" (xix). In other words, one must always tell the stories of the oppressed and fight for their cause by keeping their issues alive. We must conjure their spirits, to use his terminology. *Maquilapolis* engages in this ghostly conversation by underscoring the organizations I will discuss shortly, who are themselves fighting for workers' rights. And even though some victims have already fatally succumbed to violent neoliberal forces, others are very much alive and in need of this spectral dialogue. By presenting their stories in documentary fashion, the film emphasizes their voices by speaking with them and of them to us, the audience.

The second principal protagonist of *Maquilapolis* is Lourdes Luján, born in Tijuana and twenty-nine years old at the time of filming. While recording different scenes with her handheld camera in her poverty-stricken Chilpancingo neighborhood, she narrates the negative environmental impacts that the local maquiladoras have had in her community. The river that has always run near her house, Lourdes tells us, used to be clear and ideal for her to bathe in as a child. People would come and camp around it and swim in it. Now, the river often changes colors from black to green to red and is frequently foamy—all signs of contamination. The images that flash on the screen are of a river surrounded by and infested with polluting debris: long-shot and extreme-long-shot scenes of busted half-burned cars, tires, dirt, mud, while public transportation buses—themselves remnants of recycled U.S. school buses—cross the shallow river. While Lourdes is narrating, each scene lingers for a few seconds, allowing the spectator to contemplate what is happening. The resulting landscape is a decadent area on the fringes of a metropolitan city whose economic and social benefits do not reach its most destitute residents.

After noticing severe health problems in babies in the area, such as hydrocephalus (water in the brain) and anencephaly (underdeveloped brain and skull), Lourdes established a correlation with the waste produced by the *Empresa Metales y Derivados* (EMD), which included six thousand tons of dross, particularly lead. EMD was a metal recycling company that imported to Mexico items such as discarded car batteries to extract their lead. In 1994, after the *Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente* (PROFEPA) closed EMD, the owner of the company, José Kahn, fled across the border to San Diego where he was earning one million dollars as of the recording of the film. Lourdes and company want to extradite him. This strategy of maquiladoras (or their owners) fleeing the country in order to avoid legal or economic

responsibilities in Mexico is echoed in other parts of the documentary, where assembly plants suddenly leave the country on suspicious grounds. Allow me to call this phenomenon "ghost companies." The term is useful because it points to the spectrality, in Mbembe's sense, of the corporations; one cannot fight what is not there. Moreover, the companies leave when they should not have done so, since they have presumably broken national law. They are ghost companies with ghost unions: they don't exist. Lourdes and the *Colectivo Chilpancingo Pro Justicia Ambiental* fight to have the local and federal governments hold the metal recycling company accountable for the negative repercussions of the pollution they left behind. Some of the strategies they employ include staging a demonstration at PROFEPA to talk with the elected official in charge, traveling with reporters to see the junk left behind by EMD, and sending an unrequited letter to the president of the country. The culmination of their fight has yielded a couple of results. The first, more material than the second, is a financial grant by the U.S. government and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to broker a cleaning initiative with regards to EMD's left-behind trash. The second is a performative event with the governor of the state of Baja California, Eugenio Elordui Walter, the director of the Baja California Ecology Department, Enrique Villegas, the director of the EPA, Jerry Clifford, and members of the *Colectivo Chilpancingo Pro Justicia Ambiental*, including Marta Cervantes Soberanes and Lourdes herself. In the latter's own words: "When we talk about globalization, one can basically see the capacity of the companies to be simultaneously everywhere around the globe. But along with capital, there is also the effects on the environment and on people's health." To workers who are in the thick of those processes, globalization becomes apparent as the root of many problems.

In another section of his paper, Mbembe discusses the harmful effects of ghostly violence on victims' bodies. If ghostly power does the haunting, then the living (dead) ghost is the haunted: "Where ghostly power undertakes to model its victim's bodies in its own image, terror can easily be transformed into a demiurgic surgery—crippled bodies, lost parts, scattered fragments, misshapings and wounds, the libidinal dance of hopeless wars, in short, generalized dismemberment" (2003, 10). The maquiladoras clearly have a negative impact on the environment, and that in turn harms the bodies of the nearby residents. Damaged body organs and limbs render the workers' bodies collateral damage, insufficient to significantly alter the operations of the assembly plants. Because the powers-that-be are stuck in a capitalistic mode of thought whereby humans are akin to the machines they are operating, the situation

for them is not unlike that of a broken piston. It is an important component of the overall apparatus, but one that is expendable and necessarily so in order to maintain a smooth operation. Rather than thinking of alternative ways to run the mechanism, or to stop running that mechanism completely, the bosses deem humans' wellbeing as an insignificant detail, and/or less important than the paramount goal of profit. Humans, as workers, become commodities.[10] The workers' bodies are a necessary casualty.

A recent development that lends credence to the previous argument is a never-before-seen pilot vaccination program deployed on May 24, 2021, which set out to vaccinate close to ten thousand maquiladora workers. The program was intended only for those assembly plants owned by the United States in Baja California, Mexico, in northern border cities like Tijuana. The Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Marcelo Ebrard, deemed this project so important that he gave a press conference about it: "Surely this will grow and we intend on replicating it along the border" (Mendoza 2021). The initiative was a collaboration between San Diego County, the Mexican Consulate in San Diego, UC San Diego, and six U.S, corporations: Poly, *Compañía Embotelladora del Fuerte* (Coca Cola), Jacuzzi, Flez, Call Center Service International CCSI, and *Sempra-IEnova*. Only the workers employed by these corporations were eligible for the vaccine. Any semblance of humanitarian care or altruism as the driving force behind the effort was dismissed when Nathan Fletcher, Board of San Diego Supervisors Chair, explained the situation: "Mexico is our largest trading partner and we need the border workforce to be healthy. This vaccine pilot project will protect the working population, slow disease transmission and speed up the production and shipping of goods between the U.S. and Mexico" ("San Diego County…" 2021). Beyond the fact that leaders in the region failed to point out how the project endorses a system that tolerates and even supports vaccine and socioeconomic inequalities, the effort also reflects the tension between the tightly interwoven fabrics of economics and democratic values such as human rights.[11]

---

[10] This dynamic is depicted in the film *Sleep Dealer* (Rivera 2009) where, in a near-future dystopian society, Mexican workers have nodes attached to their bodies that allow them to remotely operate (without leaving Mexico) labor robots in the U.S. The film portrays the U.S.'s cognitive dissonance in lambasting immigrants while simultaneously depending on immigrants' labor. It underscores work, while disregarding the toll on human bodies.

Moreover, for a recent journalistic study that discovers faults in buses that continue to be hired by maquiladoras in Tijuana to transport their workers, see Rosales and Rubio 2019. In the latter, a bus accident in 2018 killed two people and injured thirty-four more.

[11]. See Beaumont 2021; "Vaccine inequity posing…" 2021; and "Without access to vaccines…" 2021.

Throughout *Maquilapolis*, Carmen and Lourdes shoot videos of their homes, their kids, their neighborhoods, and each other as women workers of and in maquiladoras. The film speaks *with* the ghosts, in the Derridean sense. In their own words, they narrate their struggles, including the ones just described above. By using modern-day handheld cameras, the women use a piece of machinery not unlike those made in the maquiladoras they work at. Because the plants, with their characteristic assembly process, are usually midway between the production of the raw parts and the consumption of the assembled end product, the camera represents the completion of this process. The women take hold of that stage of the process generally reserved for higher-end consumers, and use that tool for their own ends. In this way, they turn those instruments of oppression into instruments of resistance, the latter of which is a term that looms large in the film. The camera, as a dialectical mirror that reflects the workers' struggles, functions to create conscience. The distinction between the filmer, the filmed, and the subaltern collapse, as there is minimal interference from the filmmakers. It is this refreshing dynamic that proposes a counterhegemonic way of producing knowledge. As an audience, we become privy to this process when meta-filming takes places: they film each other filming their environment. Although not often, the audience does capture glimpses of other women workers walking around with cameras. What this shows is that there is an autonomy gained when they challenge hegemonic visual narratives that have been used since colonial times to exercise colonization practices (Gruzinski 2001). In other words, the film is an instance of a countervisuality, a term developed by Nicholas Mirzoeff (2011) to refer to those narratives that contest the dissemination of authority and which claim the right to look as a claim of the right to the real. In Mirzoeff's words: "The 'right' contests first the 'right' to property in another person by insisting on the irreducible autonomy of all citizens" (24). The "right" being contested in the present case is important because successful neoliberal assembly plants depend on human bodies as commodities, as discussed earlier; therefore, problematizing a unilateral way of seeing is tantamount to a dispute of that commoditizing. The autonomy of humans hinges on a web of gazes: the workers looking at themselves, looking at each other challenging oppression, while the spectator views and recognizes the workers. The audience is invited into this space, through the transformative power of the camera.

An important aspect of the documentary is that not only do the women speak on their own terms, but they also collaborate and participate in the decision-making of the overall creation of the documentary. The idea of giving women cameras was

conceived of even before recording or researching the film, since the directors did not want to repeat the exploitative model of the maquiladora that arrives to the city, utilizes cheap manual labor, and exports the final product—rendering a situation in which many of the profits leave the country and the workers aren't paid well or afforded workers' rights. This was an intentional feature of the documentary. Indeed, the workers have multilayered roles in the film. As director/producer Sergio de la Torre has said: "We were very interested in the woman's role not only as maquiladora worker but also as activist, as […] *promotoras*, which are like communitarian activists."[12] According to the director, the women collaborated in different stages of the creation of the documentary, which included giving input on how scenes were shot, as they could review the footage and suggest corrections and changes. They also participated in workshops where they learned about the wider globalized context of cities along the Mexican border, reading books on capitalism and its impacts on human beings as workers. They themselves wrote the narrative that we hear: i.e., both when they hold the cameras as well as the voiceovers. In this way, they learned about the maquiladora industry they have participated in for years and gained the class consciousness Marx discussed. When the film premiered, many of the workers accompanied the crew on the journey from Buenos Aires to Seoul, passing through different parts of Europe and Canada. They also embarked on a tour along the Mexico/U.S. border in 2007/2008, visiting eighteen cities, where the production crew—with two or three of the workers—rented a van, a projector, and speakers, and projected the film in football fields, churches, and bakeries. The workers could present their documentary but also witness that there were similar resistance groups composed of women, mothers, sisters, activists, and maquiladora workers fighting for many of the same issues. The end goal was to foster solidarity. The production crew consulted NGOs whose work often resists the oppression of the maquiladora system. The idea was that the workers understood the project as their own and, in fact, Lourdes still uses the camera as her own tool.

Neoliberalism and The Erosion of Women's Rights Qua Workers

Capitalism's intimate ties to heteronormativity have resulted in the type of violence that Mexico has seen in the last few decades (Valencia 2016). Globally,

[12] Sergio de la Torre, phone interview with the author (December 30, 2020). The translation from Spanish to English is my own.

capitalist development has had a negative impact on women, women's rights, and gender relations throughout the centuries. Violence against women has taken place in different forms—such as land removal, effacing of communitarian affairs, and the exploitation of women's bodies and labor—and the root causes lie in the new manifestations of capital accumulation (Federici 2018). Women's bodies have been exploited and used under a variety of banners and for different reasons. One of the most appalling consequences of the crossroads between misogyny and neoliberalism is the violence against women that takes place in Ciudad Juárez, where since the early 1990s, hundreds of (and probably more than a thousand) women have been brutally tortured and killed with impunity. Because of factors such as being disappeared, or murdered and uninvestigated, the victims are "more or less dead" (Driver 2015). These *feminicidios*—a term coined by Marcela Lagarde in the Mexican context—are not an isolated phenomenon that occur in a geopolitical vacuum. The physical and individual male violence is made possible, in large part, by the economic and gender violence perpetrated against women that undermines their autonomy and their rights: they lack healthcare, have limited access to abortion, and are discriminated against if they are pregnant in the workforce. Socioeconomic inequalities have been a significant factor in the feminicides (Tiburcio Zamudio 2018, Zavala 2016, Monárrez Fragoso et al. 2010).[13] Significantly, during the previous decade, those inequalities were exacerbated as a direct consequence of neoliberalism's global ascent (Harvey 2005). The maquiladora, as a microcosm of the larger patriarchal order, reproduces these pernicious dynamics. Nonetheless, some attenuating factors include the passing of a law in 2007 criminalizing feminicides.[14]

Although the Border Industrialization Program (BIP) was designed to replace jobs for Mexican *men*, most of the workers at the maquiladoras ended up being *women* (Staudt 2008; Fernández-Kelly 1983). This is due to a confluence of reasons that includes the sexist idea that women are gentler and work better with their hands. Indeed, *Maquilapolis* includes re-enacted sequences that expose this myth. In one such scene, a group of women stand outside in the middle of a barren land with the maquiladora a couple kilometers away in the background. Wearing the traditional outfit of the maquiladora workers, the women move their hands through the air in a

[13] For a general discussion of femicides, see Atencio (2015), Russell (2001), and Caputi and Russell (1992). For feminicides in Mexico, see Olamendi (2016).

[14] The *Ley General de Acceso de las Mujeres a una Vida Libre de Violencia* was ratified when Marcela Lagarde was an elected official in the Mexican Congress. It was sponsored by a similarly minded group of legislators.

coordinated and mechanical fashion, imitating movements they would perform had they actual machinery before them. It is a performance that is devoid of any actual capitalist production, and instead defiantly isolates the manual labor so valuable for, but exploited by, the transnational companies. They all stand about a meter from each other while executing these actions. The film foregrounds the women and the repetitive nature of their gestures, making invisible the end products that their bodies produce. They are the protagonists of the scene, about whom the stories are being told. The mise-en-scène conjures up social life, which according to Avery Gordon, involves "a particular form of calling up and calling out the forces that make things what they are in order to fix and transform a troubling situation" (2008, 22). Indeed, the situation with the maquiladoras is extremely troubling. There is a prescriptive dimension, rather than merely descriptive. Ghosts appear "when the trouble they represent and symptomize is no longer being contained […] or blocked from view" (xvi). The ghosts demand our attention since they appear when, according to Gordon, "people who are meant to be invisible show up without any sign of leaving" (xvi). The women as workers demand our attention, unwilling to leave until the viewer sees and hears the validity of their demands. On the one hand, the situation is so out of hand that one cannot ignore it any longer. They tell and show us the dire conditions in which they live. On the other, the women appear as empirical evidence that there is a haunting taking place—a manifestation of an abusive system of power. This is a calling that the documentary responds to by producing a non-Western epistemology consisting of a narrative by and about workers.

Moreover, the scene dialogues with what Melissa Wright calls the "the myth of the disposable third world woman" (2006, 2), which is the global and persistent notion that women who work in manufacturing factories of global firms in poorer countries are disposable. According to Wright, the myth includes the idea that the third world woman worker represents human disposability when the factory that employs her values her less than the cost of her dismissal or her substitute, all while benefitting from the valuable objects or parts she produces. This is demonstrated in the case of Carmen Durán, for instance, who was refused by Sanyo the severance pay guaranteed by Mexican law. She, like many other workers, has already worked at multiple maquiladoras, suggesting that workers like her are indeed disposable, and their rights irrelevant. She moves from one factory to another through a string of decisions that are largely out of her control. In virtue of the maquiladoras and feminicides occupying the geographical border between Mexico and the U.S., she has

become a sort of "Maquiladora Mestiza," a term Wright develops to add a layer of "borderization" to Gloria Anzaldúa's theorizations on the subject: a woman worker in the maquiladoras that embodies multiple borders and that attempts to subvert the myth. The myth of the disposable third world woman takes on a double meaning. As discussed above, women are seen as cheap labor that can work hard, for long hours, for very little pay. Although other unequal countries such as Indonesia and China sometimes provide cheaper labor and out-outsource Mexico, the workers nonetheless represent agile labor in Mexico for foreign companies.[15] They are the base of the companies. On the other hand, because of the toxic masculinity prevalent in the country, gangs, businessmen, politicians, and powerful men see these poor women as disposable objects of their desires. The documentary overcomes the pitfalls associated with "reified narratives," in the Marxist sense, that regurgitate the myth of female disempowerment (Avila 2015). With rampant impunity and corruption, it is impossible to determine the perpetrators of the feminicides. However, thanks to the work of journalists such as Diana Washington Valdez, Sergio González Rodríguez, and others, we can begin to point a finger in the right direction. Women's bodies become disposable at the hands of men who refuse to reject the myth in part because they stand to gain from the status quo.

The type of misogyny that often accompanies neoliberal policies has been exacerbated by the COVID pandemic. Indeed, women have been one of society's most affected. According to the United Nations, women are so far bearing the brunt of the economic and social results of the pandemic. "Women who are poor and marginalized," the global organization affirms, "face an even higher risk of COVID-19 transmission and fatalities, loss of livelihood, and increased violence" ("COVID-19 and its Economic Toll on Women" 2020). They go on to state that globally, seventy percent of health workers and first responders are women, and yet there is an even greater gender pay gap in the health sector than there is generally. Mexico's newspaper *Sin Embargo* has started a series documenting the different ways in which the pandemic has affected Mexican women:

> The pandemic has caused unprecedented harm to humanity. Millions of families suffer all over the world. Different international organisms say that from all the social sectors, women's is at the head of the suffering. Mothers, daughters, little girls, the elderly: the pandemic has compounded pain to several generations. In Mexico's case, the virus SARS-CoV-2 has been as hard

[15] See (Bui 2015) for an analysis of *Maquilapolis* with an eye towards East Asian nations' influence on the U.S.-Mexico border, what Bui calls "glorientalization."

> on them as the same violence from years, centuries, ago. But, at the same time, Mexican women went out to the streets to protest feminicides and violence. And they left their houses to work because they are the backbone of their families […] This series is dedicated to them. ("La resistencia: Mujeres y COVID" 2021)

According to the World Health Organization, globally, 1 in 3 women have already experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner, or sexual violence by any perpetrator in their lifetime, and these trends tend to increase during every type of emergency, including epidemics. Although data is scarce, there appears to be an increase in domestic violence cases since the COVID-19 outbreak began, particularly involving risks of violence for women ("COVID-19 and Violence Against Women" 2020). Times of crises exacerbate and highlight existing misogyny in the world.

Lastly, the pandemic has highlighted the pervasive prioritization of maquiladora capital over workers' rights, as there has been a constant tension between these two forces. Although not a zero-sum game, it is telling that while maquiladora workers protest their unfair treatment, maquiladoras remain open and employ even more personnel than before the pandemic. Not only did Ciudad Juárez see the most fatalities in Chihuahua in June, but the maquiladora industry—as the prime motor of the local economy—was an early center of the epidemic because the U.S. pressured factories to keep operating even while workers did not have adequate personal protective equipment (Filosa et al. 2022). This is not a coincidence. The sector that provides the most jobs and brings in the most revenue is also the place that is least effectively handling the sickness. What is driving the impetus to keep the factories open in the face of deathly sickness? Why has the maquiladora industry not been successful in curbing the disease? Answers include economic interests in the United States, as well as businesspeople and politicians in Mexico.

Conclusion

In this article, I have referred to spectrality, and specifically to Achilles Mbembe's ideas, in order to reveal how ghostly power that inflicts ghostly violence upon workers of maquiladoras can be difficult to challenge. The maquiladora, as a symptom of neoliberalism, develops a symbiotic relationship with capitalism and reflects its same noxious characteristics. Maquiladoras perpetuate neoliberal ideals and haunt workers with a ghostly terror, with consequences, as I have described above, such as environmental disasters, socioeconomic inequalities (and the shunning of

workers' rights), and feminicides. Laying out the anatomy of these violent measures is an exercise that delves deeper into Mexico's geopolitical composition since that country is often analyzed solely in terms of its physical violence, usually inflicted by narcotraffickers. The documentary *Maquilapolis: City of Factories* (Funari and de la Torre 2006) dialogues with the Derridean ghosts in rendering justice. It also visibilizes the victims/workers. Because maquiladoras are so closely associated with women and feminicides, it becomes nearly impossible to see the injustices neoliberalism brings about and not also be aware of the need to foster women's rights. The inverse is also true: advocating for women's rights is tantamount to fighting for workers' rights in the maquiladoras. In other words: the fight against capitalism entails feminism and vice versa. The film shows points of resistance to the neoliberal mandate: the women organize to counter obstacles like ghost unions and ghost companies. The ability to organize can also be seen in other successful groups like *Justicia para Nuestras Hijas*, *Casa Amiga*, and *Red Mesa de Mujeres* (all in Ciudad Juárez), and complements other sources of defiance, such as the women's sewing studio in Ciudad Juárez, *NI EN MORE* (Castro Luna et al. 2020), in which workers essentially own their means of production. In analyzing the documentary, Ruth Brown (2010) puts it a different way: the author consults theories on urban spaces to conclude that the *promotoras* defy global hegemonies through a cinematographic dialogue between the narrative of globalization eviction and the *promotoras'* local activism.

As spectators who are not laborers in the maquiladoras, the viewers of the film recognize the workers' plights and the legitimacy of their demands, and thusly acknowledge their autonomy. *Maquilapolis: City of Factories* is a documentary that has facilitated this recognition, and it is a powerful attempt to circumvent problems that have plagued subaltern studies in terms of representation and speaking for oneself. Future intermediary endeavors would do well in providing similar tools. As global economic disasters have shown, maquiladoras are stubborn and they are not slowing down. Potential studies should continue to uncover similar oppositional nodes within neoliberal networks and shed light on the haunting problems that plague workers. Despite the apparent intractability of the maquila hauntings, telling the stories of the haunted becomes ever more significant.

Works Cited

Atencio, Graciela, ed. 2015. *Feminicidio: El asesinato de mujeres por ser mujeres*. Catarata.

Avila, Edward. 2015. "The Maquila Complex: Reification, Disposability, and Resistance in *Maquilapolis: City of Factories*", *Forum for Interamerican Research* (8, 2): 182-205.

Beaumont, Peter. 2021. "Vaccine inequality exposed by dire situation in world's poorest nations." *The Guardian*, May 30. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/may/30/vaccine-inequality-exposed-by-dire-situation-in-worlds-poorest-nations.

Brown, Ruth. 2010. "El activismo local de 'Maquilapolis': Armonizando la mirada femenina con una política de lugar", *Letras Femeninas* (36, 2): 199-213.

Bui, Long Thanh. 2015. "Glorientalization: Specters of Asia and Feminized Cyborg Workers in the US-Mexico Borderlands", *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism* (13, 1): 129-156.

Caputi, Jane, and Diana E. H. Russell. 1992. *Femicide: The Politics of Woman Killing*. New York: Twayne Publishers.

Carrillo Viveros, Jorge Héctor. 1989. "Dos décadas de sindicalismo en la industria maquiladora de exportación: Exámen de Tijuana, Ciudad Juárez y Matamoros", Master's Thesis, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

Castro Luna, Claudia, Corinne Chin, and Erika Schultz. 2020. "Disappearing Daughters." *The Seattle Times*, March. https://projects.seattletimes.com/2020/femicide-juarez-mexico-border/.

Cohen, Deborah. 2011. *Braceros: Migrant Citizens and Transnational Subjects in the Postwar United States and Mexico*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

Cosentino, Olivia. 2019. "Haunted Bodies: Spectrality, Gender Violence and the Central American Female Migrant in Recent Mexican Cinema." *iMex* 16(3): 41-54.

"COVID-19 and its Economic Toll on Women: The story behind the numbers." 2020. *UN Women*, September 16. https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020/9/feature-covid-19-economic-impacts-on-women.

"COVID-19 and Violence Against Women: What the Health Sector/System can do." 2020. *World Health Organization*, April 7. https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/331699.

Del Pilar Blanco, María and Esther Peeren. 2013. "Spectropolitics: Ghosts of the Global Contemporary / Introduction." In *The Spectralities Reader: Ghosts and Haunting in Contemporary Cultural Theory*, edited by María del Pilar Blanco y Esther Peeren, 91-129. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

Derrida, Jacques. 1994. *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*. New York: Routledge.

Domínguez, Edmé, Rosalba Icaza, Cirila Quintero, Silvia López, and Åsa Stenman. 2010. "Women Workers in the Maquiladoras and the Debate on Global Labor Standards," *Feminist Economics* (16, 4): 185-209.

Driver, Alice. 2015. *More or Less Dead: Feminicide, Haunting, and the Ethics of Representation in Mexico*. Arizona: The University of Arizona Press

Elhaik, Tarek. 2012. "Borderline Ghosts: From *Touch of Evil* to *Maquilapolis: City of Factories*". In Josh Kun and Finamma Montezemolo, eds. *Tijuana Dreaming: Life and Art at the Global Border*. Durham: Duke University Press. 339-354.

Escobar Toledo, Saúl. 2021. *El camino obrero: Historia del sindicalismo mexicano, 1907-2017*. Ciudad de México: Fondo de Cultura Económica.

"Estadística Manufacturera y Maquiladora de Exportación". n.d. *Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática* (INEGI). Accessed June 26, 2021. https://www.inegi.org.mx/temas/manufacturasexp/.

Federici, Silvia. 2018. *Witches, Witch-Hunting, and Women*. Oakland: PM Press.

Fernández-Kelly, María Patricia. 1983. *For We Are Sold, I and My People: Women and Industry in Mexico's Frontier*. Albany: SUNY Press.

Fernández Christlieb, Paulina and Octavio Rodríguez Araujo. 1985. *La clase obrera en la historia de México. Vol. 13. En el sexenio de Tlatelolco (1964-1970)*. Pablo González Casanova, coordinator. México: Siglo XXI Editores.

Filosa, John N., Adrian Botello-Mares, and David Goodman-Meza. 2022. "COVID-19 Needs No Passport: the Interrelationship of the COVID-19 Pandemic along the U.S.-Mexico border," *BMC Public Health* (22, 1081): 1-13.

Flores, Esteban. 2017. "Misery in the Maquiladoras," *Harvard International Review* (38, 1): 10-12.

Funari, Vicky and Sergio de la Torre, dirs. 2006. *Maquilapolis: City of Factories*. CA: California Newsreel. Film.

Gillingham, Paul. 2021. *Unrevolutionary Mexico: The Birth of a Strange Dictatorship*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Gordon, Avery F. 2008. *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

___. 2013. "*from* Her Shape and His Hand." In *The Spectralities Reader: Ghosts and Haunting in Contemporary Cultural Theory*, edited by María del Pilar Blanco and Esther Peeren, 103-29. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

Gruzinski, Serge. 2001. *Images at War: Mexico from Columbus to Blade Runner (1492-2019)*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Harvey, David. 2005. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Jensen-Moulton, Stephanie. 2014. "Sounds of the Sweatshop: Pauline Oliveros and *Maquilapolis"*. In Benjamin Piekut, ed. *Tomorrow is the Question: New Directions in Experimental Music Studies*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. 211-228.

Kamel, Rachael and Anya Hoffman, eds. 1998. *The Maquiladora Reader: Cross-Border Organizing Since NAFTA*. Pennsylvania: American Friends Service Committee.

"La resistencia: Mujeres y COVID". n.d. *Sin Embargo*. Accessed June 26, 2021. https://www.sinembargo.mx/las-mexicanas-y-la-covid.

"Maquilapolis: City of Factories." n.d. Accessed June 26, 2021. http://www.maquilapolis.com/outreach_eng.html.

"Maquilapolis: PBS Premiere." n.d. Accessed June 26, 2021. https://www.pbs.org/pov/films/maquilapolis/.

Mbembe, Achille. 2003. "Life, Sovereignty, and Terror in the Fiction of Amos Tutuola." *Research in African Literatures* 34(4): 1-26.

Mendoza, Alexandra. 2021. "Inicia programa transfronterizo para vacunar a miles de trabajadores de maquiladoras en la frontera". *Los Angeles Times*, May 26. https://www.latimes.com/espanol/mexico/articulo/2021-05-26/inicia-programa-transfronterizo-para-vacunar-a-miles-de-trabajadores-de-maquiladoras-en-la-frontera.

Mirzoeff, Nicholas. 2011. *The Right to Look: A Counterhistory of Visuality*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Monárrez Fragoso, Julia E. and Cynthia Bejarano. 2010. "The Disarticulation of Justice: Precarious Life and Cross-Border Feminicides in the Paso del Norte

Region." In Kathleen Staudt, Césary M. Fuentes, and Julia E. Monárrez Fragoso, eds. *Cities and Citizenship at the U.S.-Mexico Border*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan New York. 43-70.

Nixon, Rob. 2011. *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Olamendi, Patricia. 2016. *Feminicidio en México*. Ciudad de México: Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres.

Orihuela, Sharada Balachandran and Andrew Carl Hageman. 2011. "The Virtual Realities of US/Mexico Border Egologies in *Maquilapolis* and *Sleep Dealer*", *Environmental Communication* (5, 2): 166-186.

Park, Jungwon. 2018. "La frontera en ruinas: El cuerpo enfermo y la biopolítica global en *Maquilapolis* y *Sleep Dealer*", *Revista Iberoamericana* (84, 265): 1117-1133.

Quintero Ramírez, Cirila. 2006. "El sindicalismo en las maquiladoras: La persistencia de lo local en la globalización", *Desacatos* (21): 11-28.

___. 1998. "Sindicalismo en las maquiladoras fronterizas. Balance y perspectivas", *Estudios Sociológicos* (16, 46): 89-116.

Ribas-Casasayas, Alberto y Amanda L. Petersen, eds. 2015. *Espectros: Ghostly Hauntings in Contemporary Transhispanic Narratives*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press.

Rivera, Alex, dir. 2009. *Sleep Dealer*. Maya Entertainment. Film.

Rosales, Elizabeth and Daniel Ángel Rubio. 2019. "Maquiladoras transnacionales ahorran a costa de vidas mexicanas". *Border Center for Journalists and Bloggers*, December 6. https://www.borderhub.org/noticias-especiales/maquiladoras-trasnacionales-ahorran-a-costa-de-vidas-mexicanas/.

"San Diego County, Mexican Consulate Partner on Cross-Border Vaccines." 2021. *kpbs*, May 25. https://www.kpbs.org/news/2021/may/25/san-diego-county-mexican-consulate-partner-cross-b/.

Schreiber, Rebecca M. 2018. *The Undocumented Everyday: Migrant Lives and the Politics of Visibility*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Staudt, Kathleen A. 2008. *Violence and Activism at the Border: Gender, Fear, and Everyday Life in Ciudad Juárez*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Thornton, Christy. 2021. *Revolution in Development: Mexico and the Governance of the Global Economy*. Oakland: University of California Press.

Tiburcio Zamudio, Kevin Sander. 2018. "Violencia de género: Prevención y

erradicación, el caso del municipio de Tijuana", Licensiatura en Universidad Autónoma de Baja California.

Trejo Delarbe, Raúl. 1984. "Historia del movimiento obrero en México, 1860-1982." In Pablo González Casanova, coordinator. *Historia del movimiento obrero en América Latina*. Mexico: Siglo xxi Editores. 11-87.

Tuttle, Carolyn. 2012. *Mexican Women in American Factories: Free Trade and Exploitation on the Border*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

"Vaccine Inequity Posing 'Significant Risk' to Global Economic Recovery: UN Report." 2021. *United Nations*, May 11. https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/05/1091732.

Valencia, Sayak. 2016. *Capitalismo Gore: Control económico, violencia y narcopoder*. México: Paidós.

Vogl, Joseph. 2014. *The Specter of Capital*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

"Without Access to Vaccines, COVID Will Continue Widening Inequality everywhere." 2021. United Nations, April 9. https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/04/1089462.

Wright, Melissa. 2006. *Disposable Women and Other Myths of Global Capitalism*. New York: Routledge.

Zavala, Pablo. 2016. "La producción antifeminicidista Mexicana: Autoría, representacieon y feminismo en la frontera juarense", *Chasqui* (45, 2): 57-69.