Border Meals: Detention Center Feeding Practices, Migrant Subjectivity, and Questions on Trauma

This article examines how state practices around food contribute to the militarization of the migration experience. Specifically, I argue for more attention to the feeding practices of detention centers, as the topic of food has been relatively absent from critical analyses of surveillance, detention, and deportation of unauthorized migrants. In the case of detention centers, depriving detainees of food is a primary mode of constructing detainee subjectivity. I present evidence of how detention systems both reinforce the logic of contemporary biopolitics by exacting discipline on migrant bodies through the provision of “border meals,” and extract value from detainees’ bodies in the form of profits for private industry. In looking to identify possible pathways toward change in this system, I suggest that there are problems with attempting to dismantle current detention practices by relying on a discourse that foregrounds detainees’ “trauma.” Instead, I argue that we may find migrants’ enacting resistance to the larger structures in which a system of detention is embedded through reinterpreting everyday expressions of affect.

While volunteering at an emergency food distribution in Santa Barbara, California, in November 2010, I met Pilar, a 28-year-old Guatemalan woman who was then eight months pregnant and had only recently migrated to the United States. Prior to migrating to the U.S., Pilar’s everyday life centered around one of her greatest passions: cooking. She had begun selling food that she prepared from a street cart outside her family’s home in Guatemala shortly after the birth of the first of her three children. Local factory workers were her primary patrons to whom she sold lunch and sometimes dinner.

Pilar enjoyed earnings from her street cart sales for several years, but also worried about gang violence in her neighborhood posing a potential threat to her business. In early 2010, Pilar witnessed the fatal shooting of a police officer:

I was selling food on the corner in front of my house. I love cooking and sales. So one night as I was packing up my things, a car rolled by with a man whose mother lived nearby. Some other guys [gang members] rolled up behind him and shot him, and this guy was a policeman. I was a witness, so they [local authorities] started to ask me about what happened and I couldn’t say anything. The [shooters] started to bother me all the time with threatening phone calls and such, and so that I wouldn’t be in harm’s way, my mother said that I should go be with my boyfriend [who was living in the U.S.]. I decided to leave at once because I didn’t want anything to happen to me. I also wanted a better future for my children. Police were coming to my home and I had to
hide. I had so much anxiety and I feared something might happen to my children. The next day I left my children with [my mother] because it was easier than bringing them with me to the U.S.4

At the time of the shooting, Pilar was pregnant with her third child. As she describes in the above account, local authorities sought Pilar’s eyewitness testimony while gang members threatened her with violence should she share such information. Concerned for her future and the well-being of her children, Pilar followed her mother’s advice to migrate to the U.S. where she could stay with her boyfriend. Her mother also offered to take in Pilar’s two children, then ages 8 and 2. Pilar crossed the border from Guatemala into Mexico using an illicit Mexican passport and then spent five days traveling across Mexico with her brother to reach the U.S.-Mexico border at San Diego, where she was immediately detained.

“Me agarró” (they took me), she said:

I was detained by la migra because I crossed illegally. I was detained for four months. I passed four months and many days locked up [encerrada]. Now I have permission to be here. I was held by ICE [U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement] in San Diego so that they could get proof from me that I feared persecution in Guatemala and they helped me to leave. Because I was being threatened in many ways, they gave me permission to stay here.5

Border agents detained her brother as well, but she had not seen him since the day of their arrival and was not aware of his whereabouts.

Pilar described being extremely underfed while in the detention center in San Diego, noting how detainees were frequently served contaminated foods and suffered from bouts of food poisoning: “The food, well, we spotted maggots in it. There are people who donate food and the donations they put in a storeroom – it’s the kind of food in which maggots form. We realized this is the kind of food they were feeding us.” Harsh conditions of the center compounded her experience of not getting enough to eat:

The place for sleeping was a small space on the floor. There’s a piece of metal coming off the floor, it’s a piece like this [tracing a table structure with her hands], like as if it were a table, a piece of metal and there is space above and space below. The mattress is like a mattress like you’d use for doing exercises. It’s very thin; it’s a piece of sponge. It is very difficult to sleep there. Your back hurts very much. It’s very uncomfortable.6
Pilar recalled feeling sleep-deprived and suffering from chronic back pain induced by sleeping on the bed frame that was “como una mesa” (like a table).

Unfortunately, Pilar’s detention experience does not represent the exception but rather the norm; despite the existence of detention standards issued by the U.S. government, instances of torture and misconduct prevail in the testimonies of recently released detainees. Reports compiled by human and civil rights organizations, for instance, cite deprivation of food and water in addition to grossly inadequate health care, physical and sexual abuse, overcrowding, discrimination, and racism.

As with the state of research on prisons, there is minimal ethnographic research on the detention of migrants. In calling for a more critical anthropology of prisons, Lorna Rhodes argues that it is possible to write ethnographies of prisons even with limited access to these sites. I suggest we extend this logic to detention centers, as these are vastly understudied and represent an important shift in the privatization of prisons that facilitates a militarization of the migration experience. Like “the other country” that is experientially lived in prisons, detention facilities are sites of constructing boundaries of belonging and drawing lines of inclusion and exclusion. Both the prison and the detention center (which is, more often than not, housed within a prison) seek to dominate the individual and challenge one’s membership in society through exercising power over the body. I argue that we may conceptualize surveillance in this context as both where the body trespasses and what trespasses the body.

In this article, I seek to advance several distinct, yet interrelated arguments corresponding to the biopolitics of citizenship and governmentality, with food serving as the locus of my analysis. First, I examine the composition, administration, and deficiencies of “border meals” — a term I use to denote both the spatiality in which detention center feeding practices unfold and the feeling of insatiety experienced by detainees — as these articulate with larger regimes of discipline and surveillance that characterize state treatment of those perceived as a threat to the social body and support the political-economic underpinnings of detention. Specifically, I argue that the feeding practices of detention centers represent a core tactic in the disciplining of “illegal” migrants, integrating with what I refer to as modes of affective discipline; in other words, the ways in which the state intervenes in the personal, and personally necessary, activities of migrants, including eating and feeding. At the geopolitical border, as well as at militarized sites that replicate the border, food may be seen as a key instrument of eliciting compliance among those the state categorizes as “transgressors” and securing future inroads to the accumulation of capital.

Second, I question the tendency of human and civil rights organizations to cite detainees’ “trauma” in attempting to mount opposition to the practices of detention centers. My aim is not to question the validity of trauma as it may surface in the lived experiences of detainees, but rather to underscore how this tendency in certain ways actually supports the very apparatus that human rights activists intend to dismantle. In other words, producing a narrative of “trauma” requires some invasion into one’s personal experiences and possible exaggeration or manipulation of emotions, another instance of affective disciplining. In the final portion of the article, I offer an alternative to this narrative, by considering expressions of migrant resistance to state disciplinary projects primarily enacted through the affective properties of food.

Illegality, Zones of Confinement, and Centering Food in the Biopolitics of Citizenship and Governmentality

The field of critical food studies offers many examples of the social and historical relevance of a triadic relationship linking food, memory, and power. In her ethnographic analysis of food rationing programs in China, for instance, Brownell demonstrates how state practices of granting and withholding food endure in the form of cultural memory and individual subjectivity. Similarly, stories of deplorable practices in detention centers (including those linked to food) circulate in transborder social networks, which may later become internalized by the collective in pursuing opportunities in the U.S.

In the short term, food deprivation induces physical discomfort and psychological stress. However, as a recurring event that prolongs an individual’s sense of uncertainty, food deprivation is a powerful instrument of social control. Some research suggests that food-related “trauma” in detention centers may compound extant traumatic experiences linked to food insecurity, as food insecurity often impels transnational migration and the quest for asylum. Evidence from studies with Holocaust survivors as well as prisoners of war demonstrates that traumatic food experiences may endure for decades in the form of disordered eating. Interestingly, it is not only survivors whose disrupted relationship to food may contribute to more disordered eating — subsequent generations also may be inculcated to this relationship to food. Food deprivation and infringements on access to food may weigh especially heavily on migrants’ personhood in symbolizing the denial of personal aspirations to achieve upward mobility.
in migrating to the U.S. Thus, the denial of food or impediments to its access while in the process of migrant settlement represents another site of social injury. As Brownell notes, “hunger could refer to ‘the lack of fulfillment of personal aspirations and desires’ as much as to real malnourishment.”

Disregard for the human rights of detainees by the staff of detention centers and negligence by the state to actually enforce government-issued standards combine to reveal a “state of exception” in which the tethered production of “illegality” and “deportability” relegates many into the category of “bare life.” De Genova contends that migrant “illegality” is predicated on the erasure of legal personhood, marooning the individual into “a space of forced invisibility, exclusion, subjugation, and repression.” Simultaneously a juridical status, sociopolitical condition, and way of being-in-the-world, “illegality” renders an individual “physically present but legally absent, existing in a space outside of society, a space of ‘nonexistence,’ a space that is not actually ‘elsewhere’ or beyond borders but that is rather a hidden dimension of social reality.”

Gonzales and Chavez offer a revision to this representation by suggesting “to be illegally present is not to be ‘outside of society’ but to be allowed to participate in some aspects of society (e.g., schooling) but not others (e.g., work).”

In considering the experience of nonbelonging endured by those pushed into a position of “illegality,” Willen proposes the notion of “abjectivity.” As lived experiences, abjectivity and illegality “constrain daily life, create internalized fears, in some ways immobilize their victims, and in other ways motivate them to engage politically to resist the dire conditions of their lives.” Abjectivity imbues one with a feeling of “discomfort in one’s own physical body.” The despair that arises through this discomfort and uncertainty about a “possibility of an end to [this] condition” is part and parcel of abjectivity. In a “biopolitics of citizenship and governmentality” enacted through surveillance, random detentions, and deportations, Gonzales and Chavez allude to the prominence of the body as the site of restraining mobility and of “[constructing] subjective understanding” of what it means to be an undocumented person.

Drawing from the contributions of these scholars, I employ the term affective discipline in referring to an economy of surveillance – as part of a biopolitics of citizenship and governmentality – that targets the body as its primary site of intervention. State surveillance of those who are suspected to lack formal authorization in the U.S. has become increasingly pronounced in a post-9/11 context, yielding to a “network of detention structures,” noted by Fassin, that operate in tandem with a constellation of borderland “sites of exception,” comprising what I refer to herein as zones of confinement. This concept shares some overlap with Biehl’s usage of “zones of social abandonment,” in that both connote social death. Zones of confinement differ slightly, however, in confining people to social death by restricting physical and social mobility. I do not claim this concept as my own, but rather, I arrive at this terminology through my observations of migrant women’s articulations of “illegality” and how these overlap with first- and secondhand descriptions of being detained, specifically through the use of the Spanish verb encerrar. The word may translate as “to shut up,” “to lock up,” or “to confine.” In describing her life as an unauthorized migrant for instance, Luisa stated: “Here we live like little caged animals [animalitos encerrados].” Pilar also deployed this term in describing her detention (me encerró). While the detention center registers quite literally as the most confining of possible zones of confinement, this ideology of governing peoples’ movement circumscribes spaces of social life located far beyond the confines of a detention center. In addition to revealing a biopolitics of citizenship and governmentality, I argue that zones of confinement also represent opportunities for the accumulation of capital through exploitation and subjugation of migrant bodies. Affective discipline is an instrument of this biopolitics that reproduces the conditions of abjectivity, thereby reinforcing zones of confinement.

Interestingly, food had received scant attention in the literature on migrant “illegality,” “abjectivity,” and “deportability.” In the following pages, I intend to introduce food as a critical analytic for yielding insight into how these markers of social exclusion are both enacted and subverted through the linked practices of eating and feeding.

Methodology

Between 2008 and 2011, I conducted ethnographic fieldwork in the southern California region of Santa Barbara County, employing life history interviews, dietary surveys, focus groups, and participant observation with twenty-five Mexican and Central American migrant women. The focus of this research was on migrant women’s lived experiences of food insecurity and barriers to health as well as interventions by NGOs and the field of public health with regard to food insecurity and migrant health. In addition to the data that I present from this research for the purposes of this article, I also utilize data collected by NGOs working on issues pertinent to U.S.-Mexico border and immigration policy in the U.S.

I recruited participants for this research through community organizations in Santa Barbara County that had already
established rapport with the local migrant population. Women of age 18 or older, who had migrated from Mexico or Central America and had previous experience utilizing some form of food assistance, were eligible to participate in this research. Research participants ranged in age from 24 to 60 years (mean age of 38) and originated from Mexico (N = 23), Honduras (N = 1), and Guatemala (N = 1). Five of the women had obtained legal status in the U.S., but most (20 out of 25) were sin papeles (i.e., without papers/undocumented). Women’s length of residency in the U.S. spanned from as short as three months to as long as thirty years.

**The Everyday Threat of Detention**

While Pilar was the only woman in my research with direct experience of being detained, I met several other women who were very familiar with the detention system through firsthand narratives that had been shared with them by relatives. Moreover, as women were aware of deportations of individuals from the local community, the specter of detention and surveillance by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) prompted migrant women of unauthorized status to restrict their own physical and social mobility. The women told me of rumors that had been circulating about the local presence of ICE informants, and subsequently they exercised caution in daily interactions. This level of vigilance steered many toward social isolation. Among other modifications to everyday behavior, women expressed worries about being stopped at a random checkpoint on the road while driving without a license (California state law at the time of this research did not permit undocumented individuals to obtain driver’s licenses); certain DUI checkpoints – originally organized as a preventative measure against drunk driving among local college students – had become impromptu sites of screening a passerby’s citizenship and immigration status. In addition, women postponed plans to visit family abroad or to bring additional family members to the U.S. They avoided visiting the hospital or applying for entitlement programs even when children qualified, and they were afraid to confront employers about unfair working conditions.

**The Profitability of Immigrant-Detention**

Detention centers and economies of surveillance form part of the military-industrial complex in that they enable the adoption of profit-making technologies and provide jobs in rural areas. Incarceration of immigrant-detainees has generated colossal profits in recent years; economic experts estimate the value of this industry to be at $1.7 billion. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) oversees the detention system, receiving $18 billion annually in funding, an amount that exceeds spending on all other federal law enforcement combined. Private prisons reap enormous profits through contracts with DHS, one lasting benefit of a relationship that dates back to when prisons were first becoming privatized. The detention centers of the former U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (its functions now the responsibility of DHS) were among the first private prisons in the U.S.

DHS screens and detains more than 30,000 “immigrant-detainees” on any given day, and over 400,000 annually. The U.S. Border Patrol’s former “catch and release” policy toward migrants who were attempting to illicitly cross the U.S.-Mexico border has been replaced in recent years with short-term detention. Immigrant-detention has also supported record-high deportations in recent years, with more than 3 million individuals deported in 2010. Detention periods may last anywhere from one to two days or up to several weeks or months, sometimes even years. “Bed quotas” help to maintain a stable detainee population at centers, a practice that provides direct benefit to the private prison industry. A recent article in the *Wall Street Journal* reported that legislation underway in Congress regarding immigration reform would include several measures to ensure steady profits to private prison industry partners.

According to prison industry experts, state surveillance and detention measures tied to post-9/11 anxieties could not have arrived at a more opportune time. As revenues for private contractors declined drastically in the mid- to late 1990s largely due to overexpansion, INS provided relief by routing immigrant-detainees toward private prison facilities. The INS signed a landmark contract with private prison company Corrections Corporation of America in 2000 to detain a thousand immigrant-detainees at its then under-occupied San Diego facility – coincidentally, the site of Pilar’s detention. This contract, soon to be followed by many others, set a new precedent for both the detention procedures of the U.S. government and the source of revenue for private prisons.

Today, DHS owns and operates its own detention centers but it primarily leases from city and county prisons to hold around 67 percent of those who are in custody. Detention Watch Network, a national coalition working toward humane reform of the detention system, reported that DHS only owned eight of the 350 facilities currently in use for detention purposes. The U.S. government views outsourcing detention management to private contractors as more cost-effective than holding a detainee in one of its own facilities. The latter costs...
the government an estimated $122/day while a private contractor charges around $50/day.\textsuperscript{43}

Industry representatives tend to prioritize immigrant-detention contracts, as these generally pay more per diem than contracts with state governments for holding inmates. This preference is perhaps best visible in cases where private prison companies will even evict inmates to make room for immigrant-detainees, thereby increasing revenues.\textsuperscript{44} Private contractors such as Corrections Corporation of America and GEO Group report that 13 and 11 percent of their companies’ revenues, respectively, stem from immigrant-detention contracts.\textsuperscript{45} According to these industry representatives, revenues from immigrant-detainee populations constitute by far the largest growing sector of the private prison system and may even “make or break quarterly profits.”\textsuperscript{46}

**Dissecting Border Meals**

Based on the firsthand account provided by Pilar as well as the secondary accounts of other migrant women in my fieldwork, and interviews with former detainees conducted by concerned NGOs such as the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), there is strong anecdotal evidence that detention centers ubiquitously fail to provide adequate nourishment to those in custody and intentionally engage in dehumanizing acts even when detainees complain of hunger and thirst.

According to recent studies conducted by civil and human rights organizations, lack of food and water ranks as the most commonly reported form of abuse among former detainees. The nongovernmental organization No More Deaths, which provides humanitarian aid to migrants in the desert, found in its own “Culture of Cruelty” study of short-term detention (defined as lasting two to three days) that centers denied food to 2,081 individuals and provided insufficient food to 11,384 people out of the 12,895 interviewed, including children, teenagers, and women. In the same study, only 20 percent of recently released detainees who were held in custody for more than two days actually received a meal.\textsuperscript{47}

As the U.S. government proceeds to militarize its border with Mexico by investing taxpayer dollars into ever more sophisticated surveillance and detection technologies, migrants continue to attempt increasingly treacherous, life-threatening desert environments in order to evade border patrol.\textsuperscript{48} Dehydration and malnourishment are common during desert border crossings, as migrants are exposed to extreme temperatures and cannot carry enough supplies to last the multi-day journey.\textsuperscript{49} When caught by border agents, migrants will often have suffered without food and water for days, only then to be denied either while in custody.\textsuperscript{50} Border patrol is also known to vandalize life-saving resources such as food and water that have been deposited along migrant trails by humanitarian organizations.\textsuperscript{51} Ironically, anti-immigration proponents sometimes cite the presence of waste produced by the destruction of these “mundane and intimate objects” to denounce migrants’ bodily comportment, and subsequently, their general competency for becoming “American.”\textsuperscript{52}

The “Culture of Cruelty” report by No More Deaths also found that detention center staff consistently dismissed requests for sufficient food, including requests from children and pregnant women. Former detainees described centers as only supplying packets of crackers, or serving uncooked, frozen, or otherwise inedible food such as dry beans, cat food, or moldy or insect-filled food. These former detainees claimed that centers typically ignored religious dietary restrictions. As a result of being underfed while in custody, many former detainees cited weight loss.\textsuperscript{53}

In accounts of former detainees featured in the report by No More Deaths, there are also references to how dehumanizing treatment by center staff frequently accompanies the provision of food: staff discarded food belonging to detainees into the trash, fed it to dogs or horses in front of detainees, and threw unpackaged food at detainees or onto the floor. One former male detainee featured in the report recounted an instance in which burritos were tossed onto a cell floor, their contents unraveling in the process. In response to the detainee’s request for more, a staff member shouted at him, “No es una fiesta!” (It’s not a party). On this occasion and others, detainees were told to eat off the floor because, in the words of some detention center staff, they were “stinky pigs” or “dogs.”\textsuperscript{54}

Human and civil rights organizations note that outsourcing immigrant-detainee to the private prison system compromises the U.S. government’s ability to enforce minimal standards, to secure detainee rights, and to intervene in cases of misconduct toward detainees. One spokesperson for the ACLU told the *Wall Street Journal* in 2009, “We have serious concerns about for-profit prison companies because they are notorious for cutting essential costs that need to be provided to maintain a safe and constitutional environment for prisoners.”\textsuperscript{55} DHS has drafted a list of forty-one Performance-based National Detention Standards,\textsuperscript{56} a list that includes an exhaustive twenty-six-page document for food services alone, but currently there are no procedures in place for enforcing these standards. A report to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights of Migrants notes that while the standards issued by ICE are “theoretically mandatory for
all... [they] are merely guidelines.\textsuperscript{57} In other words, none of
ICE’s standards are legally binding, basically making them
unenforceable.

The array of food-related abuses reported by former
detainees contrasts significantly with the food service stan-
dards outlined by the ICE unit of DHS. The twenty-six-page
document on food service, comprising section 4.1 under the
category of “care” in the Performance-based National
Detention Standards, begins with emphasizing provision
of “a nutritionally balanced diet that is prepared and pre-
presented in a sanitary and hygienic food service operation.”\textsuperscript{58}
The list of standards includes a directive for feeding detai-
nees three meals per day, two of which should be hot. The
document also provides details for meals (in terms of time
allotment and dining spaces), food preparation, menu plan-
ning, security, detainee workers (who may participate in
preparing and serving meals), safety and sanitation, and food
storage and receiving. It further states that centers will rec-
ognize nutritional needs of detainees based on age, activity,
physical condition, gender, religious preference, and medi-
cal considerations and that those planning menu cycles
“shall accommodate the ethnic and religious diversity of the
facility’s detainee population.”\textsuperscript{59} Detention centers are also to
arrange for quarterly monitoring of menus by qualified
nutritionists or dieticians. Importantly, item number 13
under “expected outcomes” states that “food should never be used for reward or punishment.”\textsuperscript{60}

It could be surmised that the U.S. government does not
actually expect detention centers to follow its issued standards
and that standards do not exist for the protection of detainees’
rights. The argument could also be made that through the
government’s detainment of individuals, it has enacted a state
of exception thereby stripping those in custody of any political
rights.

The differential treatment of immigrant-detainees and
prison inmates in the provision of food services, with the latter
group faring better overall as rights-holders by default of their
U.S. citizenship, supports this notion. Although inmates
sometimes complain of being hungry on the official jail diet
in California’s penal system, for instance, Sandra Cate elabor-
ates on the privileges of prisoners to create alternatives (or so-
called spreads) to the institution’s food. Spreads function in
part to provide extra calories or allow inmates to recons-
ten with ethnic foods. Prisoners are able to purchase ingredients
through the commissary or “canteen” for concocting
spreads. Spreads contrast with the overall blandness of jail
food, but the institution’s food is not as one inmate imagines
being served in a “third world jail.” Rather, “Everything’s
clean. There are no bugs in [the food]. The milk is cold; it’s
not expired... The fruit is not rotten. The bread is not
moldy.”\textsuperscript{61} Ostensibly, if the inmates detect spoiled food, it
is immediately sent back to the kitchen. Officials within the
California penal system claim to accommodate ethnic
tastes, religious restrictions, and health issues. Cate’s depic-
tion of commensality in prisons suggests that inmates actu-
ally derive a degree of pleasure from the creative process
behind preparing spreads and in the shared partaking of the
spreads themselves.

In contrast, pleasure or at least a sense of satiety is
nowhere apparent in the testimonies of former detainees
regarding detention center food. Instead, detainees on the
verge of deportation forge occasional acts of resistance, such
as hunger strikes and self-mutilation. Under these circum-
stances, Fassin notes that disciplinary action toward the body
is reclaimed and refracted by detainees: “the body appears to
be the ultimate resource they can mobilize to legitimize their
social existence and obtain legal recognition.”\textsuperscript{62}

Compounding the deprivation of food at detention cen-
ters are other instances of misconduct that induce corporeal
suffering. For instance, former detainees report that centers
fail to transfer and keep track of their medical records, skip
health screenings upon admission, and withhold prescribed
medications.\textsuperscript{63} In addition, former detainees also report physical
and sexual violence, such as the use of shackles or tasers,
sexual abuse, and rape. Women are purported to suffer dis-
proportionately while in detention centers as they comprise
a smaller segment of the detainee population and are at
heightened risk of sexual harassment and assault.\textsuperscript{64}

Detention centers also sometimes isolate individuals
from those with whom they share an affective relationship:
centers do not usually permit family visits, and border author-
dies will frequently separate young children from their par-
ents while in detention.\textsuperscript{65} Between 2008 and 2012, ICE
detained 1,366 migrant children in adult facilities; a thousand
were held for over a week, five for more than a year, and one
for more than a decade.\textsuperscript{66}

Asylum seekers are often survivors of torture, political
persecution, and war, yet some scholars suggest that the con-
ditions of detention, including the rigorous procedures
undergirding the asylum process, may aggravate the precari-
ous emotional and mental states of detainees. These scholars
note that the reasons for seeking asylum frequently resurface
undergirding the asylum process, may aggravate the precari-
ous emotional and mental states of detainees. These scholars
note that the reasons for seeking asylum frequently resurface
and re-traumatize detainees during the asylum process.\textsuperscript{67} As
a result, asylum seekers may fail to give appropriate answers,
thereby jeopardizing their chances for formal entry.\textsuperscript{68}

In short, as the private prison industry continues to profit
from its relationship with the U.S. government, the “human
costs” of detention remain largely unaccounted for.\textsuperscript{69}
Beyond Detention: Eating in Zones of Confinement and La Lucha Diaria

The forms of affective discipline that surface in the context of feeding practices of detention centers and that shape migrant subjectivities also characterize many aspects of the migration experience beyond the spaces of detention. Personally necessary activities of eating and feeding, for instance, proved difficult for women in my fieldwork amidst everyday constraints on access to food, including feared encounters with the state. Zones of confinement regulated migrants’ alimentary behaviors, exposed their bodies to harmful foods, and undermined attempts at food-based sociality. Thus, post-migration struggles with food relate to the feeding practices of detention centers in that both speak to food as a site of state militarization of the migration experience.

Although Pilar was only a recent migrant to the U.S., she made several keen observations about how migrants’ diets were constrained by the demands of everyday life:

Sometimes there is not enough money to give [loved ones] something better to eat. Sometimes they don’t eat well because they eat fast food or food that makes them gain weight, that doesn’t nourish them. Or they eat something that only fills them for a short time, for the reason that they’re busy with their job. People only go to work, back home, and then to work again. Here the time is more rushed.

Such references to constraints on money and time frequently surfaced in women’s accounts of how diets had changed, together forming a larger narrative about la lucha diaria (the daily struggle). This struggle was characterized by relatively low wages and the high cost of housing in Santa Barbara that impinged on household food budgets. Financial insecurity within a precarious labor market that exploited workers of unauthorized status compelled many within the migrant community to work multiple part-time jobs, thus posing significant limits on time outside of work. Subsequently, many women described purchasing foods based on price alone (“el precio más que nada”) or turning to comida rápida (fast food).

Carolina, a woman in her late forties originally from the Mexican state of Guerrero who had been living undocumented in the U.S. for over fifteen years, described how people in her family and community ate less, skipped meals, and missed out on opportunities for sociality around meals as a result of work-life demands:

In Mexico we had three meals per day. In Mexico you had a little milk with tortillas that could be for breakfast or lunch. In the afternoon, [you had] your comida, and in the evening, [you had] your dinner. Here no more than one meal and no more than bread and milk in the morning. I think it is because of how busy people are, because one is always out and not at home. In Mexico, even if you are poor, you eat well with three meals.

The comida is the main meal of the day in Mexico and much of Central America. As a meal that is usually consumed with others, the comida represents a nourishing both of oneself and of social ties. Carolina’s regret about lacking time to prepare and consume meals with others in her family reflected how work-life demands foreclosed these opportunities and contributed to feelings of social isolation.

Women in my research emphasized the health consequences they associated with the above changes to eating, especially weight gain and diabetes, conditions they observed among family and friends. Juliana, a mother of three in her mid-thirties, originally from Guerrero, and living undocument ed in the U.S. for ten years, expressed her concerns about the effects of eating a diet of comida chatarra (junk food) and comida rápida (fast food): “They go buy something quick, perhaps because of work. Eating this way, in large part, is what does them harm, makes them gain weight.” Pilar was also concerned about how her weight could trigger what was possibly a genetic disposition for diabetes: “I feel unhealthy because I gained a lot of weight. I feel a lot of tension about this, worry. I feel very bad. I’ve gained so much weight and I don’t like it. I don’t feel well, because [this weight] is doing me harm. I run the risk of raising my blood sugar; my father died of this.”

Revisiting Detention: Some Problems with “Trauma”

There are several ways in which the migration experience has been militarized, many of these registering at the level of affect. Thus far, I have closely examined the role of food in shaping this experience. Yet I would also offer a critique of how current efforts to overturn this process are ineffective for the reason that they are predicated on the very ideology – affective discipline – that they wish to contest.

Humanitarian organizations have advocated for transparent oversight of immigrant-detention practices and legal enforcement of minimum standards as a means to eliminate harm and minimize mental health risks to detainees. They argue that until such improvements are implemented, detention centers “are literally walled off from public scrutiny.” The ACLU has filed a series of lawsuits contesting the conditions of detention centers; the site of Pilar’s detention in San Diego, for instance, was the target of one such lawsuit in 2007 because of generally overcrowded and unsafe conditions, with detainees sleeping on the floor near toilets and
being denied access to mental health care. The ACLU among other organizations also cites the commonality of fatalities at detention centers, often resulting from the negligence of staff to provide essential medications or to recognize suicidal symptoms among detainees.

Yet central to the arguments of these organizations is the attention to and validation of emotional suffering that is presumed to have a universal register. Kenworthy refers to “the singular and comparatively privileged place of trauma in immigration law.” Asylum seekers are often encouraged to use claims of trauma in persuading immigration officials as “a diagnosis carries much more weight than a narrative.” For instance, Pilar was subjected to different psychological examinations and pruebas (tests) almost daily about her fear of returning to Guatemala:

I couldn’t return to my country out of fear. Because I had fear of returning, I told them [immigration officials] that I couldn’t return to my country. So I had to take tests to prove the credibility of my fear to psychologists, to prove my case. Oftentimes they [psychologists] don’t believe them [detainees]. They relate their fear but to no avail, and they are deported. This happened to another pregnant woman who was there with me. As she conveys in the above account, although Pilar was successful in relaying her anxiety about returning to Guatemala, others were not as fortunate in obtaining permissions from psychological practitioners on staff.

Yet the practice of medicalizing migrants’ experiences as a path to inclusion contributes to biological constructions of citizenship that tie “rights of membership to biomarkers of political suffering.” Critical medical social scientists note the stigmatizing effects of psychiatric diagnosis and mental health approaches, which reinforce social exclusion while also reifying biomedical categories. In some instances, the prescription of trauma counseling may work against migrants’ efforts in seeking asylum or legal status: “Mental health conditions also weaken immigrants’ abilities to obtain and retain documentation.”

There are several potential problems with the logic of invoking “trauma” as grounds for contesting the conditions of detention centers. By attempting to incite public disapproval
of immigrant-detention through emphasizing the possible implications for detainees’ psychological and “emotional states,” humanitarian organizations’ calls for attention to the abuses of detention centers perpetuate a moral economy of migration that recognizes certain forms of suffering as legitimate while undermining others. In other words, just as the use of trauma as a form of currency for obtaining formal entry may actually cause further harm to asylum seekers in the long term, formulating an argument against the unregulated activities of detention centers premised on the trauma experienced by detainees constrains their agency. A privileging of trauma not only dictates the terms on which migrants may seek recourse for abuses incurred during detention but also distracts from the important ontological question: how ethical is it to subject migrants to a system of detention at all?

Pilar, for instance, did not easily conform to the status of “victim” or of one who could be suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. Indeed, she eschewed such labels through her bubbly personality and high level of optimism that she displayed during our interactions and as I observed in her forming friendships with others around her. Rather than seeming immobilized by her adverse life experiences, Pilar emphasized how she had become stronger. As she once relayed during a focus group:

Much that I’ve seen has made me very sad, ultimately. Thankfully, however, I have the will to continue. I think that despite the experiences that have done me wrong and tired me somewhat, I always think to tomorrow. I think that I am one of those people who doesn’t give up easily. So here I am.

I’ve had a very difficult life. I’ve always been given many challenges and some I’ve overcome and others have cost me. I think that only the gods [los dios] have given me strength to get ahead. I have many memories that have cost me. But now I feel more relaxed because my boyfriend, despite being twice my age, has been very responsible with me. He has helped me to get ahead, he doesn’t judge me. He has supported me and been by my side always. I hope that my situation improves so that I can work, get ahead, have my own place, my own house. But even if I don’t have a large house, I feel very grateful because I have a place to live, I have my baby, and I have the hope to hold on.53

Just because Pilar did not visibly suffer from a specific mental health problem or describe feeling immobilized from exposure to trauma in the detention center, was she not equally deserving of justice? In tracing the historical emergence of trauma as a social fact, Fassin and Rechtman reveal the political maneuvering behind utilizing trauma as a testament of one’s humanity: “Trauma is both a product of an experience of inhumanity and the proof of the humanity of those who have endured it.”54 They argue that those bearing the markings of trauma in articulating their “victimhood” are looked upon as more deserving, whereas an absence of trauma precludes our ability to hear victims’ accounts. Yet why must we first pathologize or medicalize the effects of violence before we can redress injustices? Why do we not privilege discourse on social repercussions alongside questions of trauma? I suggest that the answers to these questions are revealed, at least in part, through a discussion of affective discipline.

Revisiting Affective Discipline Within an Economy of Surveillance

If detention centers are willing to ignore human rights’ principles, and the U.S. government is willing to spend large sums of money on detention, then what is to be gained through this process? The broader social significance of affective discipline, and its corresponding economy of surveillance, demands further examination in this context. As with studying prisons, there is the timeless question of how those who have power have it and “what supports and legitimates its expression.”55

The U.S. government quite possibly acknowledges its own inability to impede the inflow of unauthorized migrants despite heavy investment into border militarization, in that “keeping people out” is not necessarily the intended result of militarized border zones. An economy of surveillance should not be confused with deportation, as noted by De Genova: “the disciplinary operation of an apparatus for the everyday production of migrant ‘illegality’ is never simply intended to achieve the putative goal of deportation. It is deportability, and not deportation per se, that has historically rendered undocumented migrant labor a distinctly disposable commodity.”56

Foucault observed that society’s elite set the parameters of delinquency. In the case of criminalizing migrants, power is inscribed and reinscribed through the everyday production of illegality and deportability. The notion that “illegal” migrants have committed a crime – ostensibly posing a threat to society through some form of moral depravity – underlies and sustains much of the public’s support for detention, without which this practice would founder. As Foucault further elaborated, social “mediation of penalty forms part of...mechanisms of domination.”57 The production of “illegality” alongside “deportability,” therefore, is mediated by political-economic interests that rely on detention and sites of surveillance to sustain zones of confinement as repositories for the supply of cheap labor.58

In stating that undocumented migrations “are not self-generating and random” but rather “produced and patterned”59 De Genova alludes to the state’s role both in
disciplining and in making available the “labor-power” of undocumented migrants. Detention centers function as important sites of subjectivization, instilling migrants with docility toward the state. Affective modes of discipline have the effect of relegating migrants toward a self-imposed exile, a space of both exclusion and inclusion, a zone of confinement that simultaneously invites participation by those internally in an economy of surveillance in the form of self-policing. This idea resonates with what Foucault described as “the soul”: “the effect and instrument of political anatomy.”

De Genova argues that undocumented migrants’ undergoing a “disciplinary apprenticeship” in “illegality” is a form of class conditioning. Insofar that this “apprenticeship” is able to penetrate the level of “the soul,” the condition of being undocumented may become obsolete. In other words, the practice of detaining migrants, as part and parcel of a broader biopolitics, coaxes undocumented migrants to accept the conditions of their abjectivity, of their identification as “nobodies,” and of their corporeal suffering as “natural and deserved.”

Thus emerges another problem with the logic of “trauma” in attempting to counter the inhumane treatment of detainees within detention centers. Affective discipline also corresponds to a political economy, or management, of the emotions. The performance of trauma as a means toward proving one’s moral legitimacy requires self-disciplining around the forms of affect that are permitted in trauma’s emotive articulation.

**Cooking Con Amor: The Meal as a Site of Biopolitical Resistance**

As an alternative to the trauma narrative, I argue that the affective properties of food provide a means of enacting resistance. I offer the following vignette from my fieldwork in which I visited Pilar at her home and was invited to share in a meal.

*January 18, 2011: Today Pilar showed me how to prepare a Guatemalan-style chilaquiles, which consisted of boiled chayotes (pear squash) layered with a blend of cheese and salsa and fried in egg batter. Her baby was asleep in a small rocking chair, milk dripping from the bottle that fell from his mouth. Pilar lights one of her gas burners with a match and uses the corner of a paper box to light the others. While chopping ingredients, Pilar says that she is happiest in the kitchen. She begins to boil some tomatoes with chile pimiento, garlic and onion. She slices chayotes and then brings them to a boil as well as some green beans. She says that she always cooks with a lot of vegetables. She puts the chopped tomatoes, onions, and garlic into a pan. She later adds cheese to the pan for the chilaquiles filling. She says that sometimes she’ll eat this dish with tortillas. In Guatemala, she made fresh tortillas on the comal. She has a small comal here but she uses it less often now. She adds chile, onion, and garlic “para el sabor” (for flavor) to a pan for the rice. She mixes dry rice with red bell peppers and onion. She uses bottled water for cooking rice, claiming that tap water ruins the flavor. She tears off a piece of aluminum foil and uses it to cover the pan of rice. She boils the chayotes until soft, but not too soft. She cracks eggs and separates the whites from the yolks. Using an electric mixer, she fluffs the egg whites. She adds yolks and salt to the egg whites and blends. Usually she adds flour, but does not today because she is trying to lose weight. She spreads the cheese mixture (tomatoes, onions, cheese, garlic) on one side of the boiled chayotes, pressing two sides together to make like a sandwich, and covers each one in the egg mixture which she puts into the pan to cook on both sides. She does the same with the green beans, coating them in the egg mixture and frying on both sides.

Of all the women I encountered during my fieldwork, Pilar was the most in love with preparing good food. She regularly invoked the metaphor of love as a core ingredient in any wholesome meal and equated cooking with compassionate care. As she cooed to her then three-month-old son in his rocking chair, she looked up to me and said: “When one cooks at home, one shows a little more love. Sometimes one has to work and doesn’t have the time, but when a mother insists, one enjoys the meal with love. I myself feel more rich. And it is a little healthier [to cook this way].” Following the
brief meal that we shared in her home that day, Pilar prepared a plate of leftovers for me to share with my partner. She always made plenty of servings to share with the other members of her household, her way of reciprocating the help they provided during her pregnancy. “As I’m waiting to find work until I have my baby, they are helping me. I’m not paying rent, but I’m living with them and I help them around the house. I help out with meals, in any way I can really. I’m trying to avoid anything too burdensome [pesado]. Yes, they are helping me very much.”

In a focus group, Pilar associated her love for cooking with her deceased father, the one-year anniversary of his death coinciding with the beginning of her detainment:

Cooking fascinates me. I invent my own dishes. My father loved to make carne asada. In Guatemala, we prepare it differently. He had a secret recipe that required eighteen ingredients. Of all my siblings, I was the only one who knew how to make it like him. Sadly my father died, exactly one year before I was detained. The same date. For this reason, [I say] that there is salt in my life. The salt: the sad and happy all at once. Exactly a year after my father’s death, I was locked up [in detention]. I really love to cook, and I learned to cook all by myself. Nobody taught me, I simply watched others . . .

I remember my father and the day that he died. He died very full because the days leading up to his death, I fed him very well. I admired how much he could eat. I made him a caldo de res, mole. The mole in Guatemala is also different, with fried plantains and it’s sweet. It is a sweet dish. There are many things that I like to cook, almost everything I guess. I think that salsa requires something special . . . I don’t know, it needs a special touch. One can use it to flavor [sazonarla] any food.95

Pilar claims that her father was the one who inspired her love of cooking, a love that she reciprocated through feeding him comfort foods as he was dying. The day of his passing is the last memory Pilar has of her father and thus it is a day that she does not want to forget. Her desire to retain this memory is complicated, however, because, as mentioned above, the day of her father’s death coincides with her capture by border patrol exactly one year later. This is a memory she would prefer to erase. Yet now these memories are entangled; thus, what she terms “the salt” (la sal): the satiating (as adding flavor to food) and the stinging (when added to wounds), a metaphor that she clearly appreciates in referring back to her intimate knowledge of cooking.

Even though I struggle as much now, as I did then in the context of the focus group, to fully comprehend all that Pilar was sharing with the rest of us, I think that she was highlighting her mastery over food as a site of personal strength, autonomy, and resistance. Subtle references to these sites of resistance appear throughout: “I invent my own . . .”, “we prepare it differently,” “I learned all by myself,” and so on. She also talks about how salsa can be used to flavor any food, but that a good salsa requires a “special” balance of ingredients and skill, a balance that she herself is able to attain. Her commitment to preparing food with love affords her a means of reclaiming value, of acknowledging people’s worth through nourishing affective ties. Instead of succumbing to a life deemed as less, her meals are a site of biopolitical resistance.

I cite these moments with Pilar here to underscore the fact that power is never totalizing, and as much as a system of detention – among other instruments of biopolitical maneuvering – attempts to mold migrant subjectivity, there is resistance. However, just because regimes of discipline and surveillance fall short in producing complete abjectivity does not mean they deserve any less scrutiny.
There is a degree of inauthenticity in the private prison company GEO’s president George Zoley contending that his industry is playing an important role in protecting “American workers by detaining and deporting immigrants,” when it is quite obvious that the absence of these individuals in the U.S. would translate to an implosion of profits. It also epitomizes the American public’s denial or unwillingness to acknowledge the impacts of its own policies that produce economic refugees from elsewhere and depend on this population as a source of cheap labor.

ICE requires annual inspection of immigrant-detention facilities, but NGOs have noted the failure of ICE to implement this requirement. While international human rights law requires humane treatment of all persons in custody, cruel and inhuman treatment continues to prevail in the lived experiences of former detainees for whom there is minimal recourse for seeking justice. It is important to consider the long-term consequences of these practices on the health and social fabric of migrant communities.

This article has been an attempt to include a critical food perspective in research on state processes of militarization, particularly as these processes unfold at detention centers. Anthropologists and other social scientists have an obligation to bring attention to the social and cultural effects of state surveillance, detention, and deportation on groups of individuals and society as a whole. To forgo this mode of inquiry is arguably to be in compliance with or an accessory to state disciplinary projects, which rely on the use of force and violence.

Rather than food being guaranteed as a human right, we are witnessing its violent transformation into a weapon of political-economic power. Private prison companies along with large corporations in the defense industry have derived colossal profits from the post-9/11 military-industrial complex. Anthropologists must be especially self-critical in this regard, in light of the ways in which the field has served state interests by providing information to the Department of Defense and more recently to the Department of Homeland Security. We must also remember that the making of a militant state comes at large social costs in the form of reductions to welfare spending. Thus, the current system of detention in the U.S. not only violates the rights of detainees who have been discussed here, but also demands that a greater share of the public good be redirected toward illicit activities overseen by private entities. The U.S. system of detention exemplifies how state policies in favor of neoliberal economic development benefit capital at the expense of human dignity, democratic control of public resources, and personally necessary activities such as those of eating and feeding.

Acknowledgments

The Comparative Border Studies Institute and the School of Transborder Studies at Arizona State University provided support for the completion of this article. I am extremely thankful to the two anonymous reviewers who provided very valuable feedback, and to Melissa Caldwell, Nicole Torres, and Lucas Johnson, each of whom carefully reviewed the article at various stages and offered insightful comments. A dissertation research grant from the University of California Institute for Mexico and the United States covered research expenses.

Notes

1. The names of migrant women that appear in this article are pseudonyms.
2. “Mi hermanito es muy especial aunque no habla, no camina, entiende bastante bien. Entonces quisiera ayudarle a mi mama con eso. Solo ella tiene una pequeña tienda pero le ha costado mucho. Es una mujer muy valiente porque ha tener a un niño acostado a una cama es muy difícil vivir así. No tiene vida porque ella no puede salir.”
3. “Sufri mucho porque mi papa tomaba mucho. Mi papa tomaba mucho y le faltaba mucho al respecto a mi mamá. Y peleaba con él por defender a mi mamá y él nos faltaba el respeto solo verbalmente, nos pegaba, pero nunca abuso de nosotros. Siempre nos respetó como sus hijas. Una persona alcohólica es muy difícil de control. Era muy responsable, a pesar del problema de tomar, nunca nos dejó de dar comida.”
4. “Yo tuve problemas porque vendía comida en la esquina de la casa. Me gusta mucho la cocina y las ventas todas las cosas navideñas. Y un día yo estaba vendiendo en la esquina de mi casa, yo empecé a extraer todos mis cosas. Entrando mis cosas estaba cuando pasó un carro de un muchacho que vivía la mamá cerca. Venían unos muchachos detrás de él le dispararon y ese muchacho era policía. Y yo me testigo y entonces a mí me empezaron a preguntar que había pasado y yo no podía hacer nada porque tenía miedo. Empezaron a molestarme mucha a veces llamados y muchas amenazas por no seguir corriendo el riesgo, mi mama tomó la decisión que irme con él. Entonces yo tomé la decisión de venirse de una vez porque no quería que me pasara nada. Porque yo quería un buen futuro para mis hijas. Y empecé a denostar todo eso. Como el policía quedó la puerta de mi casa yo me tuve que esconder por eso. Si tengo miedo que le pueda pasara algo a mis hijos porque la angustia es muy grande. Para el día pudo de mañana traer a mis hijos y porque ellos eran más fácil de venir acá yo.”
5. “Estuve detenida por enmiaga porque pasé ilegal. Estuve cuatro meses detenida. Y pasé cuatro meses y días encerrada. Y ahora tengo permiso de estar aquí político. Estuve en ICE allí en SD me pusieron sacar traves pruebas que tenía perseguimiento y me ayudaron a salir – con mis pruebas y lo que tenía no podía regresar a Guatemala, porque estaba amenazada por muchas cosas que yo me di cuenta y pues a mí me dieron permiso de estar aquí.”
6. “La comida pues a mí y otros muchachos vimos que había gusanos. Hay que gente que dona y los donativos los meten en una bodega entonces la misma comida forma los gusanitos. Entonces pues nos dimos cuenta de que había eso.”
9. Ibid.


19. De Genova, ‘Migrant ‘Illegality’ and Deportability’ (ref. 18), 472.


24. Gonzales and Chavez, “Awakening to a Nightmare” (ref. 22), 255.


26. Gonzales and Chavez, “Awakening to a Nightmare” (ref. 22), 258.

27. Ibid., 255.

28. Ibid., 267.


32. As a participant-observer, I documented interactions between staff and volunteers of NGOs with migrant women, particularly with regard to the manner and content of interventions, and I accompanied women on some of their daily activities such as grocery shopping, informal work, picking up kids from school, and preparing meals.

33. All interviews, surveys, and focus group with migrant women were conducted in Spanish. I recorded these interactions with women’s verbal consent and transcribed the recordings with the help of hired research assistants who were native Spanish speakers.


37. Includes “illegal” immigrants, asylum seekers, legal residents appealing deportation, and others.


42. Detention Watch Network (ref. 35).

43. Ibid.


46. Ibid.


49. Adams et al., “Culture of Cruelty” (ref. 47); De León, “Conflicting Roles of Migrant Material Culture” (ref. 48).

50. Adams et al., “Culture of Cruelty” (ref. 47).

51. Ibid.


54. Adams et al., “Culture of Cruelty” (ref. 47).


57. Patel y Jawetz, "Conditions of Confine ment" (ref. 53), 202.
59. Ibid.
60. Ibid., 204.
63. Patel y Jawetz, "Conditions of Confine ment" (ref. 53), 5.
64. Cardozo et al., “Karenni Refugees” (ref. 15); S. M. Falencón, “Ra pe a Weapon of War. Militarized Rape at the U.S.-Mexican Border,” in Segura y Zavella, Women and Migration (ref. 12); López, V. “In Their Own Words: Enduring Abuse in Arizona Immigration Detention Centers” (Phoenix: American Civil Liberties Union, 2011).
65. Adams et al., “Culture of Cruelty” (ref. 47).
68. Ibid.
70. “A veces no hay suficiente dinero para darles algo mejor comida. A veces no se alimentan bien la gente. Comen a veces así comida rápida o lo que pone a uno muy gordo, no nutre. O sea no más lo llena a uno por un rato, tal vez por el tiempo del trabajo. La gente solamente es del trabajo, a la casa, y otra vez a trabajar. Aquí el tiempo es más corrido.”
71. “En México se hace tres por día. En México aunque sea su lechita con tortillas, tan sencilla es un desayuno o almuerzo. En la tarde su comida y en la noche su cena. Aquí no más una comida y no más en la mañana su pan con leche. Yo creo que por la actividad que tiene uno, porque tiene que ir a comer, y no está uno en la casa. En México es bonito porque aunque sea pobre como bien se come tres comidas.”
73. “Pues van comprando algo más rápido, tal vez por el tiempo del trabajo… porque muchas veces comen eh y a la larga eso les hacen daño se ponen gordos.”
74. “[Me siento mal de salud] porque subí mucho de peso. Me siento con mucha tensión, preocupación. Me siento bastante mal… He subido mucho de peso y no me gusta. Y no me siento bien, porque me hace daño. Como riesgo que se me suba la azúcar, mi papa murió de eso.”
75. S. Patel y T. Jawetz. “Conditions of Confine ment” (ref. 53), 17.
77. Kenworthy, “Asylum’s Asylum” (ref. 25), 124.
78. Fassin and Rechtman, Empire of Trauma (ref. 78).
79. “Pues he visto muchas cosas que me han hecho muy triste, últimamente. Gracias a Dios sigo en pie y con ánimo para continuar. Creo que a pesar de que he tenido muchas cosas que me han hecho bastante mal y me han debilitado un poco, pienso siempre en el día de mañana para continuar. Creo que soy una de las personas que no me doy por vencida tan fácilmente. Y aquí estoy… Pues he tenido una vida muy difícil. Siempre me propuse cosas y algunas las he logrado y me ha costado mucho. Yo creo que solo dios me ha dado fuerzas para salir adelante. Tengo muchos recuerdos que me han lastimado. Yo ahora me siento más tranquila porque mi marido a pesar de que es mayor, me dobla la edad, ha sido muy responsable conmigo. Le ha costado mucho pero me ha ayudado a salir adelante, no me juzga. Me ha apoyado, ha estado conmigo en todo momento. Espero que mi situación se arregle para poder trabajar, poder salir adelante, para tener mi propio lugar, mi propia casa. Porque aunque no tenga una casa grande, me siento agradecida con dios porque tengo en donde vivir, y tengo mi bebé y me entretengo.”
80. Fassin and Rechtman, Empire of Trauma (ref. 78), 20.
81. Rhodes, “Toward an Anthropology of Prisons” (ref. 8), 74.
82. De Genova, “Migrant ‘Illegality’ and Deportability” (ref. 18), 438.
85. De Genova, “Migrant ‘Illegality’ and Deportability” (ref. 18), 438.
86. Foucault, Discipline and Punish (ref. 87), 70.
87. De Genova, “Migrant ‘Illegality’ and Deportability” (ref. 18), 429.
88. Green, “Neoliberalism, Violence, and Migration” (ref. 88), 566–85.
90. Foucault, Discipline and Punish (ref. 87).
91. Rhodes, “Toward an Anthropology of Prisons” (ref. 8), 74.
92. De Genova, “Migrant ‘Illegality’ and Deportability” (ref. 18), 429.
93. De Genova, “Migrant ‘Illegality’ and Deportability” (ref. 18).
95. “Cuando uno cocina en la casa, uno le demuestra un poquito más de amor. A veces uno tiene trabajo no tiene tiempo pero cuando uno como madre se empeña uno disfruta la comida con amor. Yo siento rico. Además es un poquito más salud able.”
96. “Como estoy esperando un bebé después me ponga a trabajar y las muchas cosas me ayudan. No, no les paga renta, estoy viviendo con ellas, y les ayudo así en la casa, a ser cosas de la casa. Les ayuda a cocinar, en todo lo que puedo ayudar, tratando de no hacer trabajos pesados. Si, ellas me están ayudando…”
97. “Me fascina cocinar. Yo invento mis comidas. Mi papa le gustaba mucho hacer la carne asada. Allí en Guatemala se hacía diferente. El tenía una receta secreta, que lleva dieciocho ingredientes. De todos mis hermanos yo soy la única que la sé hacer como él. Lamentablemente mi papa falleció al año que a mí me agarraron. Esa misma fecha. Por eso viene la sal en mi vida, la sal, cosas tristes y alegres a la vez. Acabar el día que mi papa cumplió un año a mí me agarraron. Me gustaba cocinar, y aprendido a cocinar sola. Nadie me enseñó he aprendido yo sola o miró cómo hacen las cosas.”
98. “Me recuerda a mi papa. Me recuerda a mi papa y el día que murió pues, murió muy lleno porque ese día le di mucho de comer. Me acuerdo mucho de lo que comió. Pues hice un caldo de res, y mole. Pero el mole de Guatemala es con plaintano frito y es dulce. Es un platillo dulce. Hay muchas comidas que me gustan casi todo. Creo que la salsa tiene algo especial… la salsa tiene un toque no sé especial. Que uno puede sazonarla como en cualquier comida.”
99. Quoted from Counterpunch (ref. 55).
100. Patel y Jawetz, “Conditions of Confine ment” (ref. 53).
102. C. Lutz (ibid.) notes that the companies General Dynamics, Raytheon, and Lockheed Martin “experienced a sharp rise in their stock prices in the immediate wake of the September 11 attacks. They were to be the prime beneficiaries of the immediate increase of $48 billion dollars [sic] and the five-year increase of $120 billion in the military budget” (on 733).
104. Green, “Neoliberalism, Violence, and Migration” (ref. 88).