migrantes irregulares se desplazan viviendo sus vidas en la cotidianidad. Para ello, este trabajo destaca las prácticas que los migrantes irregulares utilizan para superar estas fronteras en un contexto urbano de precariedad, mientras hacen uso de diferentes tácticas tratando de encontrar un margen de maniobra para negociar su lugar en la ciudad. Por último, el documento contribuye a ampliar la literatura sobre la relación entre la migración irregular y su impacto en las ciudades multiétnicas.

Palabras clave: *autora:* ciudades multiétnicas; fronteras internas; Madrid-España; migración irregular; navegar la ciudad.

Navegando e negociando a cidade: experiências de migrantes irregulares nas paisagens fronteiriças de Madri, Espanha

Resumo: baseado no trabalho etnográfico, este artigo estuda os processos de criação de fronteiras (*borderscaping*) aos quais os migrantes irregulares enfrentam em Madri. O objetivo é estudar como as fronteiras internas ou fronteiras sociais são construídas nessa cidade, à medida que os imigrantes irregulares se deslocam e vivem na cotidianidade. Para isso, este trabalho destaca as práticas que os migrantes irregulares utilizam para superar essas fronteiras num contexto urbano de precariedade, enquanto fazem uso de diferentes táticas que tentam encontrar uma margem de manobra para negociar seu lugar na cidade. Por último, este documento contribui para ampliar a literatura sobre a relação entre a migração irregular e seu impacto nas cidades multiétnicas.

Palavras-chave: *autora:* cidades multiétnicas; fronteiras internas; Madri-Espanha; migração irregular; navegar a cidade.

In the current global economy, where every day there are ever more flows of people and goods, migration has become a central issue. Governments, policy makers, scholars, and the mass media have focused their attention on migrants from several perspectives: many related to control practices securitization, and particularly border controls. Although it has been largely demonstrated that migration is not a recent phenomenon, the contemporary flows of people are central issues on the political agenda and in the mass media, especially when the movement is from the Global South to the Global North.

The discussion of human mobility in this context is unavoidably linked to the geographies of power. The resulting world distribution, which is the consequence of unequal relations in the flux of different forms of capital, as well as individual agency, have produced movements that can be framed as part of global processes of interaction between nations. Thus, human mobility is not only the result of global disparities, but also a continuation of movements marked by power relations that have already been informed and constituted by colonial history (Grosfoguel, Oso and Christou 2015). Criminalizing people's mobility is associated with a fundamental

concept in political science: the constitution of nation-state and its role in the era of globalization where borders have become stronger (Anderson 1991). According to nationalist narratives, laws, and practices, people's relation to space has been territorialized to a specific place, thus "one's wage rates, access to employment, to rights, to welfare benefits, to land, etc. were all bound to one's recognized legal residence in particular spaces" (Anderson, Sharma and Wright 2012, 76). In this sense, borders are the result of State-led sovereign action and have an ideological dimension. For Anderson, Sharma and Wright (2012), "the migrant" is a concept centered on the nation-state. It implies that rights, access to employment, and welfare benefits for individuals are subject to the condition of being part of a territory. In view of the politics of borders, borders place people in a particular condition of power relations with others, so only those recognized with a legal residence in a particular space are allowed to claim these rights. Borders place people in new types of relations that inexorably exceed their physical characteristics.

Figure 1. Street vendors hold their merchandise, ready to escape from police operations

Source: Laura Vásquez-Roa, March 2017.

Border control and securitization may seem contradictory at a time when globalization was conceived during an era of mobility and there were less obstacles among nations. Nevertheless, concerns about security turned certain types of mobility into a problem and subsequently made it necessary to restrict and control. As Mezzadra and Neilson argue, "the idea presented there of a zero-sum game between globalization and borders (insofar as globalization progresses, the relevance

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of borders will be diminished), has been very influential but has been rapidly displaced by evidence of the increasing presence of borders in our present" (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013, ix). In contrast, together with other scholars, they affirm that the nation-state has been reorganized by globalization, and traditional conceptions of borders have been replaced by new ideas of the border (social, cultural, political, and economic) that "play a key role in the production of the heterogeneous time and space of contemporary global and postcolonial capitalism" (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013, ix).

The European Union Schengen Area illustrates an interesting shift in new forms of constituting borders. For instance, internal border dismantling in the EU has led to compensatory measures in terms of both supranational cooperation on the externalization of borders and internal practices that reproduce social boundaries and racialized policies (Bendixsen 2016). For Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson, in the current social world order, borders are more than solely geographical divisions: they are "complex social institutions, which are marked by tensions between practices of border reinforcement and border crossing" (2013, 3). Correspondingly, for Debra Shutika (2011), in areas where borderlands are the result of conflict and the subsequent negotiations that shape space, they are found further away from their simple geographical location. Shutika agrees that the spatiality in which people live exceeds the geographical space or the physical world; therefore, "boundaries between places are constructed and maintained through social processes that are the product of human construction and not natural features of the social or physical environment" (Shutika 2011, 10). The border can be in a different place than the boundary between two or more countries. Similarly, Dimitris Papadopoulos et al. explore the notion of territorial regimes beyond the classic idea of the nation-state (2008). This is extremely relevant in a time when borders are being redefined based on new paradigms.

Within a proliferation of borders and securitization context, different scholars have shown how borders, beyond their geographical significance, are entities that can be experienced as a result of different practices in everyday life (Balibar 2000; Aas 2005; Nyers 2010; Shutika 2011; Bendixsen 2016; 2017). Furthermore, borders can also operate as the result of exercises in territorialization marked by disagreements. Thus, the multiplication of borders has resulted not only restrictions on mobility; there are also new subjectivities regarding unequal access to human rights where the image of the border as a wall goes beyond simply being a tool of exclusion, and "operate[s] to produce differentiated forms of access and 'rights'" (De Genova, Mezzadra and Pickles 2015, 57).

As an additional contribution to the conceptualization of borders, Prem Kumar Rajaram and Carl Grundy-Warr used the term borderscapes, which functions as an entry point permitting the study of borders as mobile, perspectival, and relational in practices, performances, and discourses (2007, x). Coined by Suvendrini Perera, the term borderscapes refers not to a specific location, "but [recognizable] tangentially in struggles to clarify inclusion from exclusion." (Rajaram and Grundy-Warr 2007,

xxviii). Works from scholars such as Arjun Appadurai (1996) have provided a typology of '-scapes' that exist in the current globalized world: ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes, and ideoscapes. His contribution to border studies relies on the conception of these -scapes as not fixed but fluid. Likewise, Brambilla comments on the value of borderscapes as a concept that takes into account the complexity of the border, and considers that they are continuously "traversed by a number of bodies, discourses, practices and relationships that highlight endless definitions and shifts in definition between inside and outside, citizens and foreigners, and hosts and guests across state, regional, racial and, other symbolic boundaries" (Brambilla 2015, 19).

Even though exclusion is present in the everyday life of racialized migrants, it particularly affects the experiences of individuals who also live in an irregular administrative situation. A border may be considered as not as something that is fixed but flexible. As Étienne Balibar (2004) suggests "[a] borders follow people and surround them as they try to access paid labour, welfare benefits, health, labour protections, education, civil associations, and justice" (Anderson, Sharma and Wright 2009, 6). However, and following Balibar's argument, due to the polysemic nature of borders (2002, 82), they are experienced differently by everyone. Irregular migrants tend to perceive the border differently from other individuals with a legal immigration status because of their lack of rights and the possibility of being deported. Considering that irregular migrants are not a homogenous group; gender, ethnicity, the concept of race, and even contact with networks of other fellow citizens affect the experience and the position of an irregular migrant in a city.

Moreover, De Genova explains how, for people without status, "everyday activities (working, driving, and going to school) are at risk of being transformed into criminal and illicit acts with dire consequences" (Genova 2002, 427, cited in Nyers 2010). Borders are present in diverse spaces and times; they discourage irregular migrants to be active members of society where detention and deportability are a constant threat if their lack of formal status is discovered (Nyers 2010, 133). The internal construction of borders is displayed in common space for irregular migrants to be reminded of. These borders create inequalities in the enjoyment of rights and the access to basic services, and they also exclude migrants from being active members of society who have responsibilities and are proportionally liable if at fault. Using public space and even simply moving around may be difficult experiences for an irregular migrant.

In response to these limitations, irregular migrants develop ways to contest borders. Migrants' performances, according to Erving Goffman (1959), lead to practices where visibility and invisibility become tactics that irregular migrants need to adopt in order to adapt their experiences to the reality of Madrid. Moreover, it also may help them to take advantage of the ambivalence of the Spanish State towards irregular migration. According to the French philosopher Michel de Certeau (1984), in a political dimension, strategies differ from tactics in the sense that the former are the result of relationships of subjects of power and the latter are the response of the "weak" to

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these strategies. Tactics, unlike strategies, depend on time and migrants must "watch for opportunities that must be seized" (De Certeau 1984, xvii). As such, tactics and ways of contesting borders become fundamental in irregular migrants' lives.

Exploring Borderscapes in Madrid

The experiences and reflections presented in this paper are the result of the field-work conducted in Madrid, Spain, during two different periods. The first (summer 2016) was an initial exploration of the city and the network of organizations sup-porting migrants. The second (December 2016–June 2017) was devoted to involve-ment within two organizations, Médicos del Mundo Madrid, an NGO focused on healthcare access issues, and the Association of People without Papers in Madrid (ASPM), a civil organization that works together with the Sindicato de Manteros y Lateros (Union of Manteros and Lateros). The ASPM and the Union are comprised of migrants and locals working together against the different forms of institutional racism, as they state in different spaces such as demonstrations or talks. I was also in contact with a day center run by a religious congregation. The center's services are meant only for sub-Saharan migrants (including asylum seekers and refugees).

Figure 2. Group of *manteros* selling on the streets of Madrid

Source: Laura Vásquez-Roa, April 2017.

The ethnography is the outcome of several interactions with migrants who have different legal statuses (mostly irregular migrants), and with activists, NGO workers, and other key informants from several areas. However, most of the cases are related

to the previously-mentioned groups. My interlocutors have different origins; they mainly come from sub-Saharan countries and some are from Latin America.

The narratives collected are part of many conversations, some were taped. Most of the interviews and conversations were held in Spanish, and a small number were held in French and Wolof with the help of interpreters. I also gained insights from participatory observation, informal conversations, and a social cartography workshop with a group of West African migrants who are regular visitors to the day center. The aim of this workshop was to inquire as to their relationship with the city as well as places that represent certain emotions and their perceptions of mobility, security, and the use of public space.

For ethical reasons, as well as to protect their stories, I changed all the participants' names. Some explicitly asked me to change them while others did not. However, I concluded that I needed to use their information anonymously. Almost all the interviews were audio-taped and later transcribed; I also took notes in my fieldwork journal. Few of my interlocutors did not agree to the conversations being taped. Since narratives of my interlocutors were central for the analysis, I decided to attribute them with an important place in this text.

Moreover, during my fieldwork, I participated in several activities connected to issues related to migration, racism, and exclusion in Madrid. Consequently, my position as a researcher was influenced by different elements: my role as an activist and my position as a migrant from Colombia, a former Spanish colony, which makes me a racialized subject in that country. However, being an international student, a Spanish speaker, having "lighter" skin, and especially being involved in activists' groups where most of the members are Spaniards, made me forget sometimes I was also a migrant. At the end, my positionality was ambivalent. Sometimes I felt like an outsider, and sometimes I felt like an insider.

Considering the characteristics of this research, and that ethnographical writing is a vital element and not only a deliberate way of presenting the fieldwork (Geertz 1988), this paper is also an attempt to acknowledge the presence of narratives: not only my interlocutors' but also my own.

Furthermore, discussing borderscapes with all my interlocutors was fruitful in many ways. However, some narratives allowed me to gain a better understanding of the mechanisms in which borders are present in the lives of irregular migrants. Noé, a thirty-year-old man from Equatorial Guinea who has lived in Madrid for eight years became one of my main guides during my months in Madrid because of his own experience and his sharp ways of analyzing the situation of irregular migrants in Spain. He framed his situation as an irregular migrant in Madrid as one similar to the stories of other migrants without residence permits. For him, the Spanish government and its apparatus are present as a constant reminder that he is an individual without any rights in the society:

> To face the government is like running into a wall. Any administrative proceeding
> is running into a wall. They stop you on the streets, and the first thing they ask you

for, even to buy a ticket for the stadium, is the DNI (National ID). You cannot go
to a soccer match, buy a phone, anything. It's like you don't exist. There is a sense of
anguish. In 2013, I wanted to kill myself because many things happened. My illness
had come back as I had neglected treatment because it was expensive, and I didn't
have the money. Before, I spent 250 euros on food, then 90 and then sometimes
only 50. My girlfriend left me. I had to repeat the school year. I felt like they weren't
ever going to accept me. These people were telling me that I had to leave. I asked
myself what I was doing here. But then I thought "you cannot go back." If I had al-
ready been gone for five years, I had to come back to the country with something in
my hands. It's not that I'm afraid of going back home; I want to go back, but I want
to go back with a degree to be able to get a job. I don't want to just go to start over
again. That's my story, but at least I arrived by plane, I have lived in a house. Some
others have gone through worse things. (Noé, March 2017, taped conversation)

In Noé's narrative, the lack of National ID or DNI represents the materializa-
tion of the border in everyday activities. Without that document, Noé, as an irregu-
lar migrant, is caged in a condition where he is not able to develop a free life in Spain.
He is not legally allowed to apply for or accept a job. The precariousness of the still
persistent underground economy may allow him to find a job but generally under
unfair conditions, e.g. short-term jobs or with poor payments. The administrative
practice implemented by the Spanish State of controlling foreigners through the DNI
is a central issue in migrants' lives, not only illegal migrants:

[…] It really screws you up knowing that you are the only one who is different,
just because you don't carry a plastic card with your name, birth date, a letter and
a number in your pocket. It is very annoying to know that this plastic card prede-
termines your life. Without documents, I've felt anger and frustration, and I have
felt that I am sneaking around a place where nobody likes me. Why? Because you
cannot work. When you cannot work, you cannot live by yourself. Look at me;
I have no physical impediment, I can look after myself if the law permits. Many
times, you feel bad because it is as if you knocked on a door and they opened, but
when they see who you are, slam! They shut the door in your face. You can knock
5,000 more times, but they won't open. (Noé, March 2017, taped conversation)

Faced with this continuous reminder of exclusion, migrants respond using tac-
tics as a way of continuing with their lives despite the difficulties of residing in the city.

Finding Ways to Navigate Madrid

During my fieldwork, I observed that the relationship of irregular migrants with the
city was mediated by their legal status, but also by the tactics they implemented in
order to obtain the greatest possible benefit from it. Three specific aspects emerged
from the material I collected concerning navigating the city: first, mobility/immo-
bility as factors that shape the movements of irregular migrants in the city; second,

the migrant's visibility/invisibility (being in the right place with the right attitude and with the right people) that creates their room for maneuver in each situation; and third, the tacit agreements that irregular migrants and authorities may have and the consequences if these agreements are breached.

Navigating the city is an experience in urban life where one has, or acquires, knowledge that is used through tactics that allow the urban space to be negotiated and the borders in everyday life to be circumvented. Decisions have to be made about where to go and how to get there, including deciding not to leave the house at certain times: this is a case of mobility and immobility, and thought needs to be put into resources and the ways of moving. Finally, browsing is also a reading exercise. It is necessary to read the city to know how to move in it.

Mobility/Immobility

Irregular migration is highly connected to issues including mobility/immobility (Nyers 2015). In a global order with multiple borders, mobility restrictions can take different forms, both external and internal to the nation-state. Considering that invisible borders are also reproduced internally, mobility constraints may affect irregular migrants within spaces that are not perceived as borderlands for other individuals such as Spaniards or other people living legally in Spanish territories. Instead, borderscapes are present for irregular migrants: legal residents cannot see them. In Madrid, decisions of where to go and how to get there, where to live and when to go out, can be crucial for individuals without residence permits.

My fieldwork has shown that for irregular migrants, transiting the city of Madrid is considered a skill that has to be developed after direct experiences of negative encounters with the police or through stories from other migrants and other Spanish citizens. Asking about irregular migrants' relations with public space was an important part of the interviews, and I talked informally with most of my interlocutors about this topic. Not only irregular migrants, but staff from organizations explained the difficulties in terms of mobility for irregular migrants in Madrid. In those cases, people without legal residence permits prefer to stay at home, avoid certain places and behave carefully. Morr, a thirty-year-old Gambian, has spent around seven years in Spain and was recently awarded legal residence. Nowadays he works as a cook, but he previously worked as a *mantero*[1]. For him, the constant presence of the police shaped various aspects of his life in Madrid, as he told me:

> I wanted to leave Lavapiés, but if you don't have documents you can't rent a flat.
> No one will rent you anything if you can't sign a contract. I used to avoid places

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1   *Manteros* is the Spanish word for referring to street sellers that usually display their merchandise on blankets (mantas) along the sidewalks in touristic areas or at metro stations. They normally sell imitation jewelry, pirate copies of sunglasses, bags, and movies. Not all street vendors are *manteros*. For instance, street sellers of drinks in cans are called by others and by themselves as "*lateros*" (lata = can in Spanish). Not all, but most of the *manteros* in Madrid are Senegalese or Gambian migrants, and the *lateros* are migrants from Bangladesh or Pakistan.

you usually find police controls, especially main bus stations. Some cops let you leave, but others catch you. We normally only try to go out when is necessary. (Morr, May 2017, taped conversation)

Sayfulie, from Ivory Coast, also preferred to stay at home. He is 33 years old and had spent ten months in Spain when we had our conversations. He clarified that he went out only whenever he needed to, and that his careful behavior was his way of living:

I usually go where I want to go, but I avoid going out at night or going to places where there are a lot of people. It is not fear, it is my way of living, being careful, attentive to things. If I have to do something, I'll do it. (Sayfulie, April 2017, taped conversation)

My female interlocutors, all from Latin-America, commonly mentioned their wish to be at home and not get involved in too many activities outside the house. For those I interviewed who work as domestic employees, public space is part of their movements around the city but mainly for going to work or for things that have to be done outside. Elvira, a 32 year-old Dominican exemplifies this situation: she has been in Madrid for three years, she has a daughter, and her husband is in prison in Spain. She has no legal residence, but has to go outside to work:

You have to know how to move here in Madrid, you have to always go the way you need to go and make no deviations. That's why I think nothing has happened to me. I try not to go out much. I go out to work or do paperwork for my daughter or for my husband. If not, I do not go out. I do not even go to discos or bars, none of that. (Elvira, April 2017, taped conversation)

Irregular migrants' mobility or immobility is highly linked with them becoming deportable subjects (De Genova 2002). The result of fearing deportation is that irregular migrants adopt a certain behavior in order to be more inconspicuous except when they interact with certain actors; this will be analyzed in the visibility/invisibility subsection. Jorge (32) is a Dominican who has spent more than five years in Spain. He very recently received notification that his legal residence permit was approved. I found a similar narrative about how he tried to avoid risky situations in Jorge's story:

I met many Dominicans who were deported, but all those deported had a previous expulsion order. They didn't do anything to remove the order, they didn't work, they spend the day lived on a corner, they were on the street the whole day. While I was not working, I was in my house, I used to leave the house on only very few occasions. I used to come out less because I was afraid I would be with them [other Dominicans] and something could happen. You entertain yourself with your phone, with the TV, I used to spend the day in the gym if I wasn't working. (Jorge, April 2017, taped interview)

Another key aspect of mobility is racial profiling. This practice is frequently used by police. Although this has not been permitted by the Ministry of the Interior since 2012, and it has also been condemned on a national and EU level in the European Court of Human Rights[2], it is still a common practice in Madrid and other Spanish cities. All my interlocutors, to some degree, mentioned the restriction of mobility as a result of their lack of legal residence permit. However, the frequency of being stopped by the police was higher for sub-Saharan migrants. Jessica's (a Dominican woman who has lived in Madrid for around eight months) fears of being stopped were based on recommendations from fellow citizens and from her boss.

Noé's has a different experience with the police. In eight years in Madrid he has been stopped so many times, that he has lost the count. For Noé, racial profiling is evident when he has been stopped. When his reaction is not passive, he faces even more trouble. The police do not expect migrants to state their rights. Doing so does not help him because he risks not being given those rights. In Noé's experience, controls are not only implemented by the police but by other actors such as train or metro inspectors. In these cases, both mobility and time are affected as well as daily routines and private lives. Being stopped means being in the spotlight in a public place, for example:

> The police are quite selective. If you and I go to the street, they will stop me, not you, because I have the perfect no-document immigrant profile. They are quite selective; they know where to find us. Whenever they want to, they find us. I've been stopped a million times; there are plenty of people but they stop only me. Not only the police, the metro inspectors are also the same. They see everyone, and they don't ask them for the tickets, but they ask you for yours […] you see that many people come in but only you are asked for the ticket. If you are in a hurry to take the train, they make you miss it by checking your documents. (Noé, March 2017, taped conversation)

Due to the migration system in Spain, irregular migrants live and work in precarious conditions; being detained by the police for three days has a serious effect on their lives because they earn money based on the days they are able to work. Additionally, being aware that the police can stop them at any moment can be very embarrassing as Noé explained to me in his metro station story. It is also interesting that he talks about always having his metro ticket, which his way to avoid problems. This behavior corresponds to Shahram Khosravi's writing about the constant feeling of being under surveillance that works as a disciplining mechanism for migrants. The result is that "ironically, the undocumented migrant exemplifies the impeccable citizen" (Khosravi 2010, 91).

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2   In 2017, a young Pakistani man took the Spanish State to the European Court of Human Rights after failing nationally to win his case of police abuse based of racial profiling in 2013. This process was supported by local NGOs and the case is currently being revised by the court. http://www.eldiario.es/desalambre/Espana-Tribunal-Europeo-Derechos-Humanos_0_640436765.html Retrieved, June 2017.

Some of my interlocutors expressed their preference for not going to public places with a large concentration of people, such as major tourist areas, because there will be more police officers. However, the areas they avoid are determined by their accumulated experience before coming to Madrid. It also depends on the community to which they belong; even though some avoid the city center, there is another large group of my interlocutors who enjoy being there. For other nationalities, it is more common to only interact in neighborhoods where other fellow citizens reside. Many ethnic communities have their own place in Madrid: like the Senegalese in Lavapiés. The neighborhood means two things for irregular migrants: For some, it is like being at home. As Baccar, a twenty-three-year-old man, mentions: "I love living in Madrid, we call Lavapiés "The Dakar." "The majority of Senegalese are here, the shops, the restaurants, and I feel glad to be here". Baccar, from Senegal, already has a legal residence permit and enjoys living surrounded by the Senegalese community. For others, however, regular police controls in the area make them avoid the neighborhood. At the same time, a place like Lavapiés also represents the opportunity to be in the public space with others and not to be totally exposed to the police. Cherno's experience concurs with this use of public space. This was the answer when I asked him about his favorite place in Madrid:

> Nelson Mandela Square [in Lavapiés][3]. I feel lonely at home; I have to go out to talk with my friends. I don't know many places; I couldn't talk about places I don't like. I don't go out. I only leave home to work and talk with friends. (Cherno, May 2017, taped conversation)

Cherno, a twenty-eight-year-old man from Senegal has lived in Madrid for five months; he is devoted to learning Spanish and sells merchandise in his *manta*. He has lived in Lavapiés since arriving in the city, and he spends most of his time at home or going out to sell. He is only on the street when he is in Lavapiés: always together with other fellow citizens. When we talked about places he likes in Madrid, he was only able to talk about his own neighborhood. Being a *mantero*, he mentioned the presence of the police as a factor that influenced his desire to go out several times.

Similarly, in my conversations with street vendors (mostly *manteros*) they told me about comparable experiences with the police. However, due to their occupation, the *manteros* are marked by even more restrictions in terms of mobility compared to migrants who are covered by the Humanitarian Assistance Program (HAP)[4]. The beneficiaries of this program usually receive an ID that proves the affiliation they have with the center in which they live. Since every center is autonomous in the administration

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3 Nelson Mandela Square was renamed in 2014 after the South African leader's death the. This square is typically occupied by residents of sector who are mainly Senegalese migrants.

4 The Humanitarian Assistance Program was regulated by the Royal Decree 441/2007. Spain has implemented this program for migrants and asylum seekers arriving to the Spanish territory's coasts (CEAR 2017). Since the Humanitarian Assistance Program only focuses its scope on this type of migration, many NGOs dedicate their efforts to this population and work as operators funded by the Spanish State.

of the services they provide, each ID is different. Although these IDs are not legal residence permits, and they do not prove the individual is an asylum seeker, the police are potentially less likely to detain migrants with this kind of document[5]. However, since the *manteros* work on the streets, they have to move around very carefully to avoid two types of police controls: 1) The operations carried out by the National Police, which is in charge of checking migrant status, and 2) The city police (Policía Municipal), which controls the uses of the public space and controls street sellers.

The *manteros* have a constant risk of violent encounters with the police. The job is risky, hard, and unpleasant, but is one of the few options that they have as irregular migrants in Madrid if they want to avoid illegal businesses. Working as a street salesperson is not desirable, but it is normally what they can do. Working with the *manta* implies at least two major risks for irregular migrants: They have no legal documentation to be in Spain, for which they can be detained. Also, they are carrying out an illegal activity, which reinforces their vulnerability and sense of deportability. Baccar tells me about his first experience selling on the street and the hard conditions this job entails:

> People are aware of that working with the *manta* has no future, you just earn some money. You carry a 20 kg weight and the police chase you. I'm not sure if police here are racist, but they discriminate against you. When you're running, they discriminate against you. You have a weight on your back when you are running. The first day I was astonished, "am I really doing this?" It was brutal because we were on the Gran Vía when they started yelling: "Undercover; undercover". I asked "Where?" I automatically took my blanket and went into the road and we fled. From the Gran Vía to Plaza España; from Plaza España to Casa Real, later to Puerta de Toledo, then to Parque del Retiro, that at least was 7 Km. We went separate ways and the police didn't know who to chase. Some were safe, others got caught. Some were deported, some spent 45 days at the *Aluche* [detention center], but most of them were deported. (Baccar, March 2017, taped conversation)

There are many undercover police in Madrid. If there is a tense relationship between uniformed police officers and irregular migrants, the presence of undercover police means the situation is even harder and more stressful, especially for street vendors. In the next subsection, I will describe how encounters with the undercover police and other actors are marked by the need to play the visible or invisible role depending on both the situation and the actors.

Visibility/Invisibility Roles

Moving freely or with restrictions is not the only factor that irregular migrants have to consider when navigating the urban space: not only *where to go*, but *how to get there,* is a key element in their movements around the city. Employing different

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5   Asylum seekers receive a red card that is a valid ID and allows them to work while they are waiting for a decision.

ways of moving around is a tactic that irregular migrants use in their daily routines. Within the context of irregular migration in Madrid, having a knowledge of the city and how to navigate it becomes crucial to take advantage of available opportunities while evading the ever present risks of the invisible borders.

Many irregular migrants who work as *manteros* complained during our conversations about the undercover police who used their "invisibility" to pursue *manteros*. In Madrid, street vendors, normally locate in very touristy and busy areas such as the Gran Vía. The *manteros* are constantly ready to quickly gather together their blankets containing their merchandise and run if the police arrive. Undercover police usually work without obvious signs on their clothes to catch the street vendors unawares. Although the presence of undercover officers may be unnoticed to other city dwellers and tourists, many *manteros* told me they know how to recognize some undercover officers who normally work in the same areas.

Figure 3. After of a mantero's merchandise was taken by undercover police officers, their colleagues look from the other side of the street the scene

Source: Laura Vásquez-Roa, May 2017.

Encounters with undercover police are normally accompanied by violent actions toward the *manteros*: sometimes only words or attitudes but other times physical. These encounters may seem confusing for pedestrians who are not aware that undercover police play a role in these kinds of operations. In several conversations with regular dwellers in Madrid, I had to explain in detail about the situation of irregular migrants in the city because outside the activist groups people are unaware.

For the *manteros,* as well as for other of my interlocutors, the role of the undercover police is a constant threat which is hard to elude. A uniformed officer also represents a threat for irregular migrants, but he or she can be easily detected from a distance so the migrant can avoid an encounter. The more knowledge the migrant has about how to move in the city, the better chances they have of protecting themselves.

Contrary to the previous situation, being visible can be convenient in certain circumstances. The interactions between irregular migrants and public and private institutions are crucial to establish support networks, although not all irregular migrants reach this stage. A good example of the need to being visible is the case of migrants who arrive at the southern border and register for the humanitarian Assistance Program. In that program, irregular migrants receive basic assistance for at least three months. If migrants do not register with the Spanish authorities, they do not benefit from this aid. Furthermore, public participation in events organized by social networks based on ethnicity or nationality may be important to obtain benefits. A third situation where irregular migrants could decide to go into a public space is when undertaking activism.

On other occasions, the decision to appear in public does not necessarily mean being visible. While some of my interlocutors avoided touristy areas because of the police presence, for others those places allowed them to be in public without getting too much attention. Due to the diversity of people who are normally in the crowded areas, some feel they can pass unnoticed. Noé explains this point with the example below:

> I often go to Sol and Gran Vía. Downtown I feel like a fish in water. That's the only place where you see people wandering freely; as there are many people, no one has time to look at the details. There are many people, but everyone is anonymous. I like that feeling so much: feeling anonymous, passing unnoticed. It's as if you were there but were not at the same time. That's also a good feeling; it's a beautiful spiritual calm. It's to enjoy looking at many people without knowing them. Those people are in front of me, but they don't know me and are not interested in meeting me. (Noé, March 2017, taped conversation)

For the *manteros*, on the other hand, being invisible could also mean being in public spaces but implementing tactics to avoid the police. Going out in groups or at times the police change shift, are part of the pre-established team agreements. Cherno explained the different times to go out and sell, "the police are looking for you; they chase you. I go out around [certain hours] then, at night, from [certain hours]. We take advantage of the police shifts to go out." In these daily events, communication plays a key role in their success. In Goffman's words (1959, 112), by colluding together, the *manteros* are able to share messages that allow them to sell with the least amount of hassle. Morr, like other *manteros*, explained the importance of going out in groups to protect each other:

> People without documents normally avoid places where there are a lot of people attend because the police are always there, like in Sol. You go there to sell, but we

don't go alone; we go in a group, all together in order to protect each other. We go and come back all together. We usually go out when the police change shift. We go before they come.

We learn how to identify the undercover police and their behavior by going out every day. The first day, you don't know. But then, since you go out often, you start to recognize their faces. If we recognize one undercover cop, we tell or call the other *manteros* to let them know. Not all the cops are mean; some are good people. We organize ourselves and decide what time to go out. There's always a natural leader who organizes the calls, the time we go out, and the meeting point. (Morr, May 2017, taped conversation)

Tacit Agreements

The blurry characteristics and ambiguity of the migratory apparatus in Spain take different forms. On the one hand, Spain supports programs that provide support to irregular migrants, and on the other hand, it has reinforced securitization and deportation, which affects the same population. This ambiguity emerged as part of discussions about the perception that irregular migrants have about their mobility in the city.

Through social cartography activities, my interlocutors expressed that main metro stations are the places they most fear or that they try to avoid. Areas that are near the places where they sleep are normally considered safe places. However, some of my interlocutors told of their experiences with police presence surrounding soup kitchens or shelters that are visited by irregular migrants on a daily basis. They deemed this to be strange and even petty behavior by the police. They expected to face uniformed officers in touristic places or at events with large concentration of people, but not in places that are meant to be for migrants. When I asked Morr, a Gambian man, about places he used to avoid, he mentioned:

In Moncloa, there are a lot of police raids. Many people go to the hospital to the emergency room, but there are many police raids. In Chamartín metro station, there are usually police as well. I think police officers there are very racist. They always stop you and ask you for documents if you are black. I asked why they stopped me if I'm not the only one in the station; I asked if it is because I'm black. I said I could be Spanish, and they replied black people are not normally from Spain. (Morr, May 2017, taped conversation)

Morr's statements reveal that both the police's presence at the places near where irregular migrants go and their racism as the reason for being stopped in public spaces. The participants in the social cartography workshop also told of police presence near to the social centers they used to attend.

Figure 4. "Stop police harassment"

Source: Laura Vásquez-Roa, April 2017.

The relationship between irregular migrants who are part of the Humanitarian Assistance Program (HAP) and the police is also ambiguous. Although they have not official residence permit, there is some permissiveness with regards to detaining them. Since the legal maximum stay in the detention center is sixty days, they cannot be detained once again if there is no repatriation agreement with the migrant's country of origin or if they have no new contravention (penal record). As was previously mentioned, irregular migrants are given IDs by the reception centers or from other associations that support migrants, and, unofficially, police are usually more relaxed when presented with these documents. However, this an unofficial agreement and the result depends on each individual officer.

As irregular migrants, workers in social centers for migrants, and local activists mentioned, these unofficial documents are useful at police check-points, but they do not prevent detention. Even though not all encounters with police will end in deportation, people are sometimes taken to the police station for up to three days. Ana, a social worker in a reception center, remarks that certain groups are targeted and then generally detained by the police. Sub-Saharan and also young Maghrebis, for instance, are often stopped. "The police make them criminals because they always focus on the illegality when migrants are forced to live illegally, not by choice" (Ana, April 2017, taped conversation).

Another example of the ambiguity that is also characteristic of borderscapes in Madrid has to do with access to public healthcare. Royal Decree 16 of 2012 limited

irregular migrants' access to healthcare, but in 2015 entities such as the Autonomous Community of Madrid decided to allow irregular migrants in the system. This is a favorable measure for irregular migrants; however, the decision is still not totally clear in administrative terms. Currently, irregular migrants are assigned with two different codes. One of the codes covers almost all kinds of services, as it does for other users, but the other code does not cover medication subsidies. It is not clear how the administrative staff decide to use which code, so some migrants are still receiving incomplete health care. Cherno, for example, told me about a negative experience he had several months ago:

> I've been to the doctor, but as I have no primary care doctor, they could not help me. They sent me to emergencies, and the specialist told me that only the emergency service could help me. In the end, I had to go back home because I had no documents or primary care doctor. (Cherno, April 2017, taped conversation)

In healthcare-related issues, a local NGO reported two main problems with access due to this confusing application of regulations. Migrants who seek support from this NGO are confronted with barriers both in health centers and hospitals. Most encounter an administrative barrier at the health center when it comes to enrolling in the system. In hospitals, the most frequent problem is that they are billed for the services they are used (and this is not supposed to happen); they are not denied access, but they are charged for it.

Last, but not least, another tactic I observed during my fieldwork linked to health issues is to take advantage of white people's "difficulty" in distinguishing one black person from another. I found this not only with my interlocutors from sub-Saharan origin, but also in the narratives of other researches of similar populations; racism may be used as a tactic to contest the border. Baccar explained his experience in this regard:

> Right now, a friend of mine is pregnant. She has not been treated because she has no health card thanks to not covered by social security. She's illegal, so they don't treat her or care for her. What we do nowadays is, as black people look all look the same to white people, we ask for a friend who is working for a health card, and that's how we can go to the doctor.
>
> Another time, I took a friend of mine with a problem to Moncloa hospital, and they told him that he needed insurance and so he had to pay. I told them that I was carrying a patient; that he was ill, but I didn't have the documents. I was mean to the assistant. In the end, I went somewhere else, I erased my face from my card and gave it to my friend for him to be treated. (Baccar, March 2017, taped conversation)

Sometimes tacit agreements that tolerate irregular migration are part of the interaction between people without legal residence and the representatives of the State

(police officers in this case). However, due to this ambivalence, when one of these tacit agreements was broken, irregular migrants were treated harshly.

Discussion

Taken together, these findings suggest that irregular migrants in Madrid face borders in several situations and places, and also that having a knowledge about how to navigate the city is crucial for them. Immersed in borderscapes, the city becomes a place to be navigated. Many different tactics could be used to navigate the city. Irregular migrants (as do regular) make use of urban space as a response to the limitations that their legal status imposes upon them.

The city of Madrid itself plays a role in the irregular migrants' daily practices. Each place has its own way of creating borders. Thus, the city is more than a simple background of the migration system. Although debates around the right to the city are beyond the scope of this research, terms such as "right to the city", a term coined by Henri Lefebvre, and "city for all" were common in our conversations and within activist circles (natives and migrants) in which I was participating.

Irregular migrants, as well as any other city dweller, give meaning to the city while inhabiting it. Migrants negotiate their place in the urban space. The city may produce changes in their lives, and at the same time, migrants may change the city. On one hand, following Arjun Appadurai's (1996) argument on translocality, many global processes take place at the local level, changing the ways the non-nationals are part of new demands on civic and national rights and resources. On the other hand, Noé mentioned the changes he had experienced while living in Madrid. His ways of moving around, for example, have given him the knowledge and the characteristics that now help him to look more confident and to be less bothered by the police:

> The times they stopped me the most were from 2010 to 2012. I don't know whether it is because I didn't go out; I hadn't settled. After 2012, I haven't been stopped too much either, maybe because I feel more confident now; I'm a veteran. I think they [the police] see your attitude. I don't know how they choose who to stop, but they are really good at spotting who has no documents. I avoided going to the city center because of that. I avoided going by the metro, and I got used to using buses. I avoid big public events because you are easy prey there. In my case, they don't stop me that often now; maybe they see I'm confident. It might be because I arrived here when I was 23, and I have now got experience. You look more like a man: an adult. All those things may have an influence. (Noé, March 2017, taped conversation)

For the *manteros*, negotiating public space is vital for them to work and live. As Alpha stated in a conference about the right to the city, street vendors are mistreated by the police while all they are doing is trying to survive. Him, a thirty-four-year-old Senegalese man, is a spokesman for the Union of *Manteros* and *Lateros* at different public events in Madrid, and for the ASPM (Association of People without Papers in Madrid, in Spanish: Asociación Sin Papeles de Madrid). One

frequently used street vendor motto in demonstrations where they work together raising awareness about the prosecution they suffer is, "To survive is not a crime" (Sobrevivir no es delito).

Figure 5. Demonstration in front of the Ministry of Employment and Social Security, government agency in charge of the Humanitarian Assistance Program

Source: Laura Vásquez-Roa, April 2017.

His opinion about the restrictions on movement was also an argument for his right to be part of the city: to use the streets regardless of the borders around. He was aware of the danger of his way of moving around; however, he thought it was his right to do so. I asked him if he used to avoid any areas while he was selling, and he said:

> You never know where they [the police] are going to be; you can't live like that. If I want to live my life, I can't think about them. I didn't. I said to myself that I had to make my life without thinking about them. (Alpha, April 2017, taped conversation)

Alpha's attitude towards the police's actions is also connected to his way of understanding his position in the city and the power relations involved in this situation. Even knowing that his behavior may get him into difficulties, Alpha decided to assume a more visible role. He did not worry about the police's presence, regardless of his disadvantaged position as a street vendor. This was a determinant factor for subsequently getting involved in activism. Currently, self-organized migrant associations are key in social struggles to get better conditions for irregular migrants in Madrid.

Conclusions

At various times during my fieldwork, I realized that the migration apparatus in Spain has ambivalent and unclear attitudes towards irregular migration. On the one hand, securitization and border control, especially on the southern border, are part of the Spanish State's obligations as an EU member. External borders are reinforced internally through methods including deportation, summary push-backs, and detention centers. Borders are present in irregular migrants' lives as part of the constant interactions with representatives of the nation-state. Borderscapes surround irregular migrants in their daily lives through discourses, laws, and practices. Yet, at the same time, Spain could be described as a country where informal institutions, intertwined with legitimate institutions, have supported irregular migration for several reasons (Engbersen and Broeders 2009). Part of this ambivalent attitude can be seen in the processes of regularization or even in programs that support irregular migrants in precarious conditions.

Irregular migrants face, negotiate, and/or get through borderscapes in the city by using different tactics. As part of this process, irregular migrants may find spaces where negotiation is possible and, at the same time, this negotiation becomes part of their ways of giving meaning to the urban space. Being visible/invisible is an important factor for such negotiation. They are visible in the places in which they can be visible, otherwise they try to remain unnoticed to the police or any other actor representing the Spanish State. However, on other occasions, remaining invisible is not possible. Street vendors have to negotiate their presence on the streets, thus they try to become invisible by using tactics.

As has been stated, there are certain spaces where being visible is convenient and preferable, such as in social aid centers, NGOs, soup kitchens, and shelters while other spaces are avoided. When the police locate themselves at the exit of metro stations and close to social centers where migrants receive assistance it is as if the tacit agreement is being broken, and the result is an incomprehensible experience. It may be possible that the tacit agreement simply does not exist, but the surprise expressed by my interlocutors (irregular migrants and members of staff at social centers) also suggested that this was the result of the Spanish State's ambivalent attitude towards migrants.

Since borderscapes are not only at the frontiers that divide countries —they are found inside social spaces— migrants face other forms of borders when they reach their destination country (Fassin 2011). In the case of Madrid, these borders are the result of the internal borders exercised through laws and practices. The Foreigners Law is restrictive in terms of mobility, but it also restricts how migrants behave. Through border practices, irregular migrants face boundaries that others pass unawares. These practices, however, shape a particular type of migrant. Borders exist for irregular migrants in different scenarios, partly as a reminder of their lack of membership. At the same time, migrants passively respond to these border constructions and border controls, but also, by navigating the city, they find ways to produce space and to make room for themselves. There are also political responses to

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the State and its strategies: through explicitly contesting borders through activism or in subtler ways by *just* using the public space, irregular migrants are disputing their place in Madrid. The simple act of navigating the city, knowing both where to go and how to get there, is crucial to create urban space that they cannot take for granted.

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