

Global Citizenship as Neoliberal Propaganda: A Political-Economic and Postcolonial Critique

Debra D. Chapman,¹ Tania Ruiz-Chapman² and Peter Eglin³

ABSTRACT: We make the case for a program of critical studies devoted to analyzing the features, sources, institutional carriers and uses of the concept of global citizenship as neoliberal propaganda serving to mystify young people's understanding of their place in the world. To illustrate the analytic possibilities, we provide a case study of the concept's use in the neoliberal Canadian university with particular reference to international service/experiential learning. In a counter-example we unpack the mutual constituting of the Cartesian subject as ideal global citizen and the Latinx undocumented migrant as its 'other' by describing and analyzing the existential situation of the undocumented migrant at the US/Mexican border.

KEYWORDS: Global Citizen; Neoliberalism; University; Undocumented Migrants; Postcolonialism

“Global Citizenship: [Our] mission is: to responsibly provide financial services that enable growth and progress ... global institutions like ours are uniquely positioned to help society address global problems on a global scale.” (Michael Corbat, CEO, Citigroup)

¹ Debra D. Chapman teaches political science, global and North American studies at Wilfrid Laurier University. Email: debchapman@golden.net

² Tania Ruiz-Chapman is a Ph.D. candidate in Social Justice Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. Email: t.ruiz.chapman@utoronto.ca

³ Peter Eglin is Professor Emeritus of Sociology at Wilfrid Laurier University. Email: peglin@wlu.ca

“It takes a global outlook and a global approach to solve problems. In a word, it takes global citizenship - citizenship that acknowledges that each and every one of us has a responsibility to be part of the solution.” (UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, 2012)

“Education for global citizenship helps enable young people to develop the core competencies which allow them to actively engage with the world, and help to make it a more just and sustainable place.” (Oxfam)

“Take off with York International. Broaden your horizons. Experience new cultures. Become a global citizen.” (York University)

Informed by Marxist political economy and Foucauldian postcolonialism, we provide herein the basis for a program of critical studies of the features, sources, institutional carriers and uses of the concept of global citizenship as a propaganda device serving to mystify young people’s understanding of their place in the world by incorporating them into the benevolent sphere of its operations, while withholding from them, and cultivating their blindness to, the ideological function of the notion itself for neoliberal capitalism (cf. Potter’s [2010] “structural mystification”). We offer as illustration of the analytic possibilities a case study based on empirical documentation and fieldwork that examines the concept’s use in the neoliberal Canadian university (Newstadt, 2008; Eglin, 2013; Fanelli and Evans, 2015) with particular reference to international service/experiential learning. This is followed by a counter-example describing the existential situation of the undocumented migrant at the US/Mexican border in terms of a Foucauldian, postcolonial analysis of the mutual constituting of the Cartesian subject-citizen and the non-human non-citizen. The purpose of the counter-example is to show not just that global citizenship, actually rather than ideally, implicates a global non-citizen, but who it is that fills that slot.⁴

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We should emphasize that the paper is programmatic and illustrative. It does not pretend to fulfill the promise of critique with full-blown analysis of its subject but aims only to open up the topic to inquiry. It is important to note, also, that although drawing on Marxist and Foucauldian perspectives we are not primarily advancing, theorizing or debating a particular definition of citizenship, whether global or otherwise, but attempting to describe and analyze a concept to be found in use across a range of contemporary institutions. After Wittgenstein, we are not asking for the meaning of global citizenship but looking for its use. And that includes not theorizing actions that traverse frontiers such as, for example, those of would-be global activists (see Isin, 2012). Accordingly, we don't engage, beyond perfunctory citations, the large literature on citizenship in professional political science, global studies and sociology devoted to distinguishing liberal, communitarian, radical and cosmopolitan theories of citizenship (Delanty, 2000), or legal, social and other forms of the concept (see, for example, Dower, 2003; Dower and Williams, 2002; Hudson and Slaughter, 2007). Similarly, we don't engage other critiques of global citizenship that are developed under different auspices, such as Miller's (1999) argument that when stacked up against the weighty demands of republican citizenship the global type comes off as thin in substance. Or, as Soguk (2014, 49) puts it,

“Like the buzzwords ‘global’ and ‘citizenship’ from which it is formed, ‘global citizenship,’ both as concept and praxis, is often simply announced rather than exemplified or substantiated ... [D]espite considerable advances in theory, global citizenship as a practical ordering ideal and political agency is yet to establish strong roots ... It remains resilient as an aspiration but is unable to shake off doubts about its materiality.”

Consistent with Soguk's point is the rather remarkable fact that his is one of only two contributions to the 600-page *Routledge handbook of global citizenship studies* (Isin and Nyers, 2014), the other being Lee's (2014) consideration of decolonizing global citizenship, that actually addresses the concept of global citizenship. The book otherwise surveys citizenship by continental regions of the globe, a different matter entirely.

The Political-Economic Argument

The concept of citizen implies the liberal state. The concept of *global* citizen implies the *neoliberal* state (cf. Rygiel, 2010, 1). In the liberal state the citizen is the locus of the rights and responsibilities that define citizenship. In this conception the state is a nation-state, one among a population of such states, with *ad hoc* inter-national bodies like the United Nations dependent on their will; this is liberal internationalism. But in a political economy of “global monopoly-finance capitalism” (Foster, 2015) – what Harvey (2003, 158) calls “accumulation through dispossession” via privatization and market liberalization, a new “enclosure of the commons” – neoliberalism extols the primacy of private property rights and thus the commodification, privatization and deregulation of everything except state protection of these very rights (Teeple, 1995, 75-127; George, 2000; Harvey, 2005, 64-67; Teeple and McBride, 2011). Via the concept of globalization the *neoliberal state* claims that it seeks to remove the boundaries of nation-states for the purpose of conducting global economic transactions in the name of free trade.⁵ These transactions are then regulated by corresponding global institutions like the World Trade Organization that define the rights and responsibilities of the relevant actors. These actors are de-nationalized entities which, thanks to 132 years of US corporate law, are primarily corporations defined as persons (Noble, 2005, 117). They are, in effect, the actual global citizens of the neoliberal world order, corporate citizens conceived as investors whose rights are paramount. They seek to re-make the world after their own image by postulating such a ‘global citizen’ as the fitting identity for any fully integrated member of that order (cf. Marx and Engels, 1848/1987, 25; see also Shultz, 2007, 249, as cited in DeCaro, 2014, 6). Citigroup is such a corporate global citizen.

The neoliberal capitalist corporation does not, however, own the concept of global citizen. Like citizenship itself (Rygiel, 2010, 23) it is a “contested concept” (DeCaro, 2014, 5) with ancient antecedents (Carter, 2001, 1; Schattle, 2008a, 1-2). Previous formulations include international citizen, cosmopolitan citizen (see, for example, Hutchings and Dannreuther, 1999) and world citizen. They reached a sort of culmination in the kind of citizen postulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. Though still defined in relation to the nation state to which they belong, the rights-bearing

⁵ As Chomsky, in many places (for example, 2014, 139-140), and Mirowski (2013) have stated, neoliberals neither believe nor practice their own free-market doctrines when it doesn’t suit them.

individual of the Declaration is “born free and equal in dignity and rights” and is thereby nominally a member of a single, universal “human family,” a noble ideal.

But when translated from the national to the global context the idea of universal human rights has itself been understood in terms of other, long-standing notions of how to think about the foreign ‘other.’ The concept of the rights-bearing *global* citizen arises, we argue, from the secular humanism, liberal possessive individualism, Christian evangelism and obligation of self-realization that have formed the modern self in Western thought (cf. Delanty, 2000, 68-73). Together these provide a particular view of the self and of the other and of the relations between them. Thus, the good global citizen is constructed as a ‘helper’ motivated by a ‘saviour complex’ to deliver a ‘gift’ to the ‘other’ who, being ‘in poverty,’ is thereby ‘in need’ (Jefferess, 2014; cf. Boltanski, 1999, as cited in Martin, 2003, 79). This is the benevolent image promoted in the rhetoric of the UN, NGOs and universities; see, for examples, Benham Rennick and Desjardins (2013). Following Foucault’s discussion in his lectures of 1978-1979 of how “liberalism was transformed into neoliberalism” (Hammer, 2011, 87) with its particular technologies of governance, including of the self, we may say that under the *neoliberal* dispensation both the corporate capitalist global citizen and the benevolent global citizen come to embrace the idea of “one’s life as the enterprise of oneself” (Gordon, 1991, 44, as quoted in Hammer, 2011, 87; see Brady and Lippert, 2016) where the market is a “regime of truth” (Hammer, 2011, 87). This motivational idea is evident in the proliferation of social entrepreneurship programs at universities and in the corresponding growth of individually-run NGOs (Chapman, 2017). What is missing from this picture, however, is the socio-political-economic context in which these concepts of the global citizen are formulated and applied.

Historically, liberalism came to political prominence in conjunction with capitalism, imperialism, ableism and the patriarchal state. Its attendant rights were understood to be those of the white, heterosexual, male, colonizing, able-bodied property owner (cf. Rygiel, 2010, 22-25). The task of extending these rights to non-property owning, female (and now trans), gay, non-white, colonized and disabled persons has been taking centuries of struggle and remains far from completion. While the contemporary idea of the global citizen may be thought to represent the culmination of the liberal dream of universal citizenship, our position is that the dream, in theory and practice, is fatally compromised. It is compromised by the restriction of the possibility of its realization to a small minority of the world’s mostly rich, mostly male, mostly

white, mostly straight, mostly Northern and mostly able-bodied people. It is also itself a means by which that subjection is actually exercised. This is the propaganda argument. Capitalism, imperialism, racism, patriarchy, heteronormativity and ableism work to ensure that a designated few realize the dream while the rest of us, in being seduced by it, are thereby mystified. Given that we are talking about *global* citizenship then it is capitalist imperialism that is of particular significance. As DeCaro (2014, 5) puts it,

“Imperialism is thus advanced through a concept of global citizenship in which Northerners impose their own values, and political and economic systems on the South. The global citizen becomes representative of the North through embracing a neoliberal approach to economic globalization.”

Furthermore, although we do not develop the argument here, part of our thesis is that the concept of global citizenship is particularly focused on the young people who will become what Michael Albert (2009) calls the co-ordinator class, the technocrats, professionals and managers who will run the neoliberal world order for the party of Davos, including taking on the task of international social work required to fix the global poor who are permanently re-produced as the inevitable outcome of the workings of global capital (for the racial dimension of international social work see Thomas and Chandrasekera, 2014). Since the fixers are found in both the global North and South this distinction is better articulated as one between the rich of the North and the South and their respective poor.

Finally, for all that some international development *scholarship* has developed a radical understanding of global citizenship as the practice of interrogating Northerners’ own participation in the imperialist subjection of the people of the South, this idea is not what generally informs the prevailing use of the concept. On the contrary, we argue that there is a *nexus* of discourse and practice that links together the following four institutional complexes: transnational corporations like Citigroup (the “leading global bank” according to its website), the United Nations (UN), major non-governmental organizations (NGOs) like Oxfam, and Northern schools and universities like York University (cf. Schattle, 2008a, 3). This nexus originates in the corporate capitalist intrusion into the UN represented by the Global Compact (Teeple, 2004, 153-159) and extends through the international NGOs facilitated by and linked to the UN, to international financial institutions such as the World Bank and to large

charitable foundations such as the Gates Foundation, through to the universities and schools whose internationalization strategies have linked them to these same corporate, governmental and non-governmental organizations (Eglin, 2013). In good liberal tradition the whole nexus is very much focused on liberalism's panacea for all social ills, namely education. It is called 'global citizenship education' (Schattle, 2008a, 93-116; 2008b), that is to say, in our terms, neoliberal propaganda. We take it up next in the context of the neoliberal Canadian university.

Global Citizenship in the Neoliberal Canadian University

Global citizenship is a concept steeped in Northern privilege implicating and implicated in neo-colonial relationships with the global South. "The rhetoric of global citizenship often serves to obscure the North's complicity in perpetuating systems of dominance that ultimately create an imbalance of power between the North and the South" (DeCaro, 2014, 3). Furthermore, the idea of global citizenship *education* emerges within the neoliberal political-economic model that emphasizes, as we have said, "one's life as the enterprise of oneself". On the basis of an extensive empirical study Schattle (2008b, 75) finds that it is in educational institutions (compared to governments, businesses and civil society organizations) that the discourse is most prominent. He holds that its aim is "[to] promot[e] moral visions for a more just, peaceful and sustainable world and [to] enhance[e] the academic achievement, professional competence and economic competitiveness of the next generation" (*ibid*). It is, in short, a blend of benevolence and self-interest. What it does *not* do, we argue, is educate young people about their actual place in the neoliberal world order of accumulation by dispossession, managed, supervised and protected by imperialist Northern states, above all the United States. It thus serves as propaganda for that very order.

To determine the use of the concept of global citizen(ship) at Canadian Universities, we examined the top four ranked universities in each of Maclean's (2017) three categories of types of universities. Maclean's rankings were chosen because they are most peculiarly attended to by Canadian universities, because they do distinguish different types of university and because of their convenience. The universities examined are listed here in order of their ranking. In the Medical/Doctoral category we examined McGill University, University of Toronto, University of British Columbia (UBC) and Queen's University. In the Comprehensive Category we looked at Simon Fraser University, University of

Waterloo, University of Victoria and the University of Guelph. In the Primarily Undergraduate category we examined the University of Northern British Columbia, Mount Allison University, the University of Lethbridge and Trent University.

We find that the concept of global citizen(ship) is used repeatedly on university websites. While most commonly occurring in International Development Studies and Global Studies, programs across the university claim to be providing the tools for students to become global citizens. As ideological marketing tool advancing the idea of “one’s life as the enterprise of oneself”, the concept is used in the self-descriptions of economics, international development studies, engineering, global studies, philosophy, fine arts and history programs. The concept is typically not defined on such websites so that it tends to have the character of a buzzword or mantric charm.

For example, the economics department at Queen’s University considers all its students to be global citizens. Its website states that the study of “economics will help [them] make better decisions in [their] personal life, in [their] business life and as a global citizen” (QUa). The university’s International at Home program invites students to “immerse [themselves] in international cultures and student led activities that will help [them] become...*true* global citizen[s] – right...on campus” (emphasis added) (QUb).

The University of British Columbia’s Vision Statement asserts that the university “creates an exceptional learning environment that fosters global citizenship, [and] advances a civil and sustainable society” (UBCa). Among the variety of programs designed to enhance or create global citizenship are midwifery, English for Global Citizens, the Global Citizens stream within the Coordinated Arts Program and a “Road to Global Citizenship” educators’ toolbox that is a joint initiative with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the (former) Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) (UBCb). This case is a transparent example of the links among the nexus of institutions posited above. UBC also has a Global Citizenship Award that is given “to an alumnus in recognition of significant community or voluntary service that has gained international recognition and made a global difference” (UBCc).

The University of Victoria (UVic) has the mantra engraved in its mission statement: “We are committed to...promote civic engagement and global citizenship...The university will enhance its leadership with regard to...the development of global citizenship” (UVa). Its 2017-2022 International

Plan states: “Our vision reinforces the importance of a global perspective and commits to enhancing UVic’s international leadership in teaching, research, scholarship, community outreach, experiential learning and the development of global citizenship.” The same document proposes the creation of a Global Citizenship minor (UVb). This mission is further developed in the Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education (ESPHE) program which states that “programs offered by ESPHE provide opportunities for you to immerse yourself in the exciting field of exercise science, physical and health education, to study abroad on international exchange or combine work with study to help prepare you for life as a responsible global citizen” (UVic). These are just a few of the examples of how global citizenship is promoted and marketed at UVic.

The University of Guelph offers a Certificate in Civic Engagement and Global Citizenship and Global Citizenship awards. In 2007, 10 “renowned Global Citizens” were given honorary degrees at convocation. One of the recipients, Paul Rusesabagina of Hotel Rwanda fame, was invited to participate in a panel discussion on Canada’s role as a global citizen (UGa). This example instructs us as to how the reference of the concept of global citizen may be extended from a person to a collective entity such as a country or a state. The marketing management program promises students that they “will be ready to start [their] careers as...more engaged, active global citizen[s]” (UGb). The global studies program at the University of Northern British Columbia claims to “train students to be global citizens”. By “developing a sense of global citizenship, [students will have the skills] to function in [the] cosmopolitan world” (UNBCa). While referring to international students, the President’s 2016 statement attempts to reassure students that the university is “right for them and...[that it] will help them become the global citizens of tomorrow” (UNBCb).

Mount Allison University’s philosophy, history and fine arts programs all help to develop “thoughtful, engaged global citizens”, “responsible global citizenship” and the tools needed to “become a global citizen” (MAUa). The student affairs strategic plan “challenge[s] students to become leaders as local and global citizens” (MAUb). In addition the university’s 2016 Internationalization Strategy states “International education has the potential to develop well-rounded global citizens...” (MAUc). The Alberta government’s 2013 International Strategy had four objectives. The second was to “build Alberta’s reputation as a global citizen” (Alberta Government, 2013). As a provincially funded and mandated institution, this objective is reflected in the University of Lethbridge’s “Certificate of Global Citizenship”, its reference to a

“global citizenship cohort” and its proposal “to develop global citizenship from a gender perspective” (UL).

Trent University is one of the Canadian universities most tuned in to global citizenship. In fact Champlain College at Trent “has established itself as the college of choice for those who are passionate about adventure, discovery and global citizenship”. Their volunteering abroad program allows students to “become...global citizen[s]” (TUa). Through the Impact program, students can take a workshop on “becoming a global citizen” (TUb). International students can apply for the Global Citizenship Scholarships and Awards (TUc). In partnership with Aga Khan Foundation Canada, the university has organized a Going Global Together Exhibit that “inspires students to be Global Citizens”. One of the interactive components is an online quiz that claims to “determine what type of global citizen” one is (Aga Khan Foundation Canada). The University of Waterloo “creates global citizens in a global economy” (UW). It encourages students to become global citizens through its International Experience program. While nowhere defined in the statements reviewed above, the meaning of the concept of global citizenship for universities can be gauged from the practices claimed to embody it. Prominent among these is international service or experiential learning.

International Service/Experiential Learning (ISL)

International service/experiential learning and volunteer abroad programs, which have flourished throughout Canadian universities over the past 15 years in blind ignorance of Ivan Illich’s (2012/1968) stunning denunciation of the practice, typify the neo-colonial relationship between North and South. It is expressed in the Northern values, culture and political-economic outlook students bring to their placements (see DeCaro, 2014, 10). The concept of global citizen is appropriated by Canadian students providing ‘services’ to people in small communities in the global South, people who will never be seen by themselves or by others to be global citizens (see Andreotti, 2006, 9).

Whether designed to facilitate student recruitment and research opportunities, to give students an alternative learning experience or simply to create so-called global citizens, ISL raises several troubling ethical concerns (Tiessen & Huish, 2014; Chapman, 2016) that reveal not only the neo-colonial character of the *practice* of global citizenship but also its neoliberal colouring. Zemach-Bersin (2009, 303) warns that ISL programs appeal to students’ “sense of entitlement, consumerism and individualism”. As evident in the examples of

global citizenship at Canadian universities above, “foreign destinations and their citizens are products or commodities” (*ibid*, 305) that can be bought through ISL course enrolment and used to enhance Canadian students’ self perception. In order for them to turn into global citizens, ‘the locals’ serve as “backdrops [or] props” (*ibid*). Furthermore, “[b]oth study abroad advertisements and participating students discuss international education as an entitlement, a nonacademic adventure, and an experience primarily for personal advancement” (*ibid*, 313).

In fact one could say that there is little ‘global’ about global citizenship in the context of ISL. Students return from their ISL experience describing it as “life-changing, very rewarding [or] an opportunity to meet awesome people” (Chapman, 2016, 10). Rarely is there reflection on the impact their actions may have had on the people receiving the services or the unfinished projects that are left behind after students depart. Language barriers often limit the value of the interaction students have with people in the communities, casting doubt on the ‘globality’ of ISL. Other concerns emerge around the double standard universities shamelessly hold around such issues as proper certification (TESL certification to teach English as a second language not required; student doctors taking on the responsibility of a fully-trained doctor by performing procedures that they would not be allowed to perform in Canada), ethics approval (using names and photos of people encountered abroad in their written reports back home, without consent), police checks for those interacting with under-aged children (not required) and the Eurocentric values present in the determination and realization of projects, all in the name of global citizenship.

Unfinished projects, divided communities (the creation of haves and have-nots – those who receive services and those who do not), providing services that might otherwise be paid jobs, and travelling the world without disclosing one’s true intentions (tourist visa versus student visa) clearly do not fit well with the abstract ideal of ‘global citizenship’ (Chapman, 2016). Furthermore, it is only the privileged among Canadian students who will participate in ISL programs, as they are required to pay tuition fees for the course, plus an additional \$3,000 to \$9,000 CDN to go abroad. In fact, this is why at universities such as Carleton, the Global and International Studies program offers six different ways for students to fulfill the required International Experience component of their program, one of which does not require going abroad at all. A further consideration is the poverty porn many students engage in while abroad. For example, photographs of students surrounded by a bunch of local kids in Africa, or pictures of sick,

mal-nourished children, depict the needy and their superior, first-world helper. These images are often used in community and classroom presentations back in Canada.

Concepts or assertions closely tied to ISL including, “Let’s wake up the world” (Zemach-Bersin, 2009, 307), “*The world is my classroom*” (Benham Rennick & Desjardins, 2013) and ‘culture shock’ inflate the importance of the programs. To suggest that the world needs waking-up and that students have the power and know-how to wake it up, suggests that the world is asleep and that a dose of Northern values and practices will get them on the right path. Fanon (2005/1961, 2008/1952), Said (1978, 1994) and a host of other anti-colonialist and post-colonialist writers are the necessary antidote for this misconceived propaganda, not to mention Harvey’s (2005) analysis of accumulation by dispossession already alluded to above. To consider the world as a classroom places communities at the disposition of students who will deconstruct them and fix them by reconstructing them using their Eurocentric norms. Freire’s (1970) radical critique of education that serves individual needs over collective transformation is a forceful rejection of the neo-colonial, Eurocentric characteristics of ISL. Culture shock implies that the communities to be serviced somehow shock our Northern values and negatively impact the cultural norms of our students, without considering how the community members might feel about the presence of students in their communities, often doing jobs that they are already doing, albeit in their way (Illich, 2012/1968, 78). The lesson being taught about global citizenship by the analysis of neo-colonialism inherent in and revealed through the ethical dilemmas posed by ISL can be radicalized in the language of Foucauldian postcolonial critique, to which we now turn (see also Lee, 2014).

The Mutual Constitution of the Global Citizen as Cartesian Subject and the Latinx Undocumented Migrant as Non-Citizen

The concept of global citizenship is rooted in the assumption that there is a ‘communality’ among us, as we are all human, and as such share a commonality of values and rights. This rhetoric is problematic insofar as it does not attend to the modes of production that create inequities in the first place, the inequities (or inequalities) referred to in the first part of the paper. Materially, we are not born equal. Global corporate capitalism would not function if we were. In this section of the paper we intend to show how the concept of global citizenship ultimately aids in the re-staging of some bodies, specifically Latinx

migrants, as non-human or less than human, which in turn 'borders them out' of any form of citizenship, including the global kind. We argue that crossing borders is a privilege of the *Cartesian subject* while migrants face 'death zones' in the search for work, subjectivity and humanity.⁶ The global citizen is always already an embodiment of the Cartesian subject. The celebration of global citizen rhetoric reduces citizenship to a metaphor, one that erases the material inequities of access to legal and social citizenship.

The current division of the world into nation-states is a legacy of imperialism and colonialism. So too is the Cartesian subject. The Cartesian subject is one that inhabits coherent, consistent, rational space, demarcated by exclusionary borders. It is through the development of the science and logics of cartography that the Cartesian subject comes into existence. "Cartography [...] is both an expression of the new form of subjectivity and a technology allowing (or causing) the new subjectivity to coalesce" (Kirby, 1998, 25). Cartography is the science of mapping borders corresponding to the territorialization of power and control. The Cartesian subject can only be formed through an identification and subsequent bordering out of the 'Other'. 'Otherized' bodies can never embody Northern (or Western) superiority and are part of an exploitable population, one that represents, and is only ever apprehended as, cheap labour or an excessive burden. This in turn keeps the 'Other' in a state of non-humanity.

The Cartesian subject is a legal citizen of the imperial state. The undocumented migrant, on the other hand, is perpetually excluded from enlightened subjectivity, which is based in legal citizenship according to the white imaginary of the Cartesian subject (Lipsitz, 2007, 13). The Cartesian subject is a white construct, so while the brown body can become the settler it can never embody the ideal Cartesian subject. The presence of racialized settlers, however, upholds the power of white settlement on indigenous land, through their complicity in imperial settlement. The undocumented migrant, though seeking to engage in this system, is always already excluded because of the processes of racialization that understand the Latinx as degenerate, but also because of their illegal status.

Merleau-Ponty points to the importance of marking boundaries as a way to organize, categorize and establish hierarchies. The "marking of

⁶ For a rather different treatment of "citizenship and the politics of death at the border" see Rygiel (2014, p. 62 onwards).

boundaries is necessary to give a sense of organization to the world, thus building ‘into geographical setting a behavioural one’” (Merleau Ponty, quoted in Mohanram, 1999, 17). Mapping the physical boundaries of the nation-state identifies who belongs where, which bodies belong on which side of specific borders. Through their undocumented status, and ‘taking up’ of imagined white space, the undocumented migrant suggests a weak imperial control of the border. The policies and institutions that target the capture, containment and/or death of undocumented migrants attempt to re-establish imperial rule and the superiority of the valid Cartesian subject.

Mohanram writes, “bodies are specifically linked with nations” (*ibid*, 4). The white subject is the truest embodiment of the American nation-state and the Cartesian subject, while the undocumented migrant gets locked into a zone of illegality (Da Silva, 2001). Through a re-articulation and reproduction of these hierarchies the legitimacy and power of the Cartesian subject and the imperial/neo-colonial state, under which the Cartesian subject exists, are fortified. Boundaries (both physical border boundaries, and categorical boundaries) are constructed in order to exclude some bodies from full, enlightened subjectivity.

Teune (2008) acknowledges that “the linkage of citizenship to territory attained maturity with the emergence of modern territorial states, where land is decisive as a component of wealth and hence of political power” (239). By implication *global* citizenship entails the deterritorialization of citizenship (*ibid*). The abstract ideal of benevolent global citizenship introduced in the first part of the paper embraces the idea that we can identify with a global community as an entry point for delivering help to impoverished people. It understands identity to transcend geographic borders and calls for a unity amongst people. It celebrates that we are, at our core, all humans. The idealism of unity and underlying humanism is easy to accept as wholly beneficial. However, this take on ‘development’ overlooks the material conditions that create the inequities faced by marginalized groups, specifically by migrants who are perpetually deported to the site of non-humanity and global non-citizenship. A non-critical embracing of global citizenship reduces the concept to a metaphor at best, a restaging of the Cartesian subject as all-powerful at worst.

Constructed Death Zones: Constructing a Cartesian Global Citizen

Stasiulis and Bakan note that “while citizenship appears to be an inclusive, universalistic concept, in reality all state citizenships are not

equivalent; nor are all state citizenships allocated in equivalent ways” (Stasiulis & Bakan, 2006, 2). As citizens of imperial states, Cartesian subjects can cross all borders easily and safely. Their universal and materially experienced global citizenship grants them legitimized access, occupation and use of all space. The undocumented migrant, conversely, risks disability and death, perpetrated by the imperial state with impunity, when crossing borders.

The imperialist U.S. state, for example, constructs death zones in an attempt to safeguard the pure white Cartesian subject, while catching, killing and disabling undocumented migrants along their journey to safety. The journey of undocumented Latinx migration claims many lives. Most bodies and/or body parts never get identified (Maril, 2011). The journey of undocumented migration is one that disappears people at high rates with little to no public reaction and total impunity.

The Falfurias traffic checkpoint exemplifies the murderability of undocumented people. Falfurias is located in the interior of Texas and is specifically designed to catch undocumented migrants who have managed to cross the border. There are 33 permanent traffic checkpoints inside the U.S. (Jimenez, 2009) that operate as internal manifestations of the border. Instead of risking driving through these checkpoints, undocumented migrants will walk around them. It is this part of the journey that claims the largest number of lives within the U.S. portion of the migrant’s journey. Most of these deaths are attributed to dehydration and heat stroke, as the land is dry and desolate. Undocumented migrants must walk for days, frequently running out of water and food as they are exposed to the harsh elements of the land. Migrants are at the mercy of the land they travel across rather than being in control of it. The rational occupation and control over land is a right reserved to the truest citizen, the Cartesian subject. The migrant in contrast travels through a death world designed to legitimize and safeguard the power of the Cartesian subject.

The checkpoints are strategically positioned to ‘deter’ migrants from attempting to go around them. The intentional threat of death surrounds the checkpoint. According to the institutionalized logic of deterrence theory, the migrant will cross through the checkpoint and subsequently be caught by government officials in order not to risk dying. Deterrence theory concludes that if the undocumented migrant ‘chooses’ to walk around the checkpoint then they are also choosing to expose themselves to possible death. Mbembe articulates what a death world is:

“Michel Foucault has argued that biopower is, to a large extent, power’s hold over the right to preserve life and administer death. He also showed how modern societies that function through biopower can justify the killing of populations only through appeals to race or racism, that very ‘pre-condition that makes killing acceptable’ By ‘killing,’ Foucault meant not simply ‘murder as such, but also every form of indirect murder: the fact of exposing someone to death, increasing the risk of death for some people, or, quite simply, political death, expulsion, rejection, and so on.” (Mbembe & Foucault, quoted in Mbembe, 2004, 392)

The establishment of the checkpoint pushes undocumented migrants either to travel through these spaces that kill many of them or succumb to the political death resulting from deportation.

Detention/Deportation Showing the Impossibility of Global Citizenship for the Non-Cartesian Subject

The result of being caught as an undocumented migrant is detention and subsequent deportation. “When the state punishes, say, a murderer, it not only removes a threat from the body politic, it also authoritatively repudiates the criminal person as an offending individual not deserving recognition as a citizen” (Kumar & Silver, 2008, 61). The undocumented migrant is always already understood as criminal. When they are detained they lose all rights to citizenship. In Canada, undocumented migrants face indefinite detention while in the U.S. they are thrown into the detention industrial complex: “this type of industry operates with a market that pursues private profit not only at the expense of the taxpayers but also those who are held in immigration detention” (Welch, 2012, 30). That profit can be extracted in the US from detainees living under conditions worse than citizens in correctional detention facilities, and that the Canadian government can indefinitely detain undocumented migrants, reifies the undocumented migrant’s status as non-human. Detainees cannot enter the fold of humanity and can therefore not enter any kind of citizenship. Even once released, this constructed criminality follows them, keeping them outside of citizenship. The criminal cannot embody the global citizen as their movements are restricted and monitored. Furthermore, the philanthropic helper imagined to embody global citizenship is not imagined as the criminal,

demonstrating once again the propaganda value of this rhetoric. The sovereignty of the individual (Teune, 2008) that is celebrated in global citizen rhetoric always already refers to a specific type of individual, one who can move freely and safely through the world bridging gaps across borders. The undocumented, the criminal, and the poor themselves cannot do so.

Most detainees face deportation upon release. The forcible removal of undocumented migrants again points to the fact that some bodies – those of Cartesian global citizens – have control over where and how their bodies move while others have none. Furthermore, once ‘returned’ to their ‘homeland’ many are still unable to embody citizenship.

“First, despite the popular and legal rhetoric depicting deportation as the unproblematic return of non-citizens *to* their homelands, deportees frequently experience removal as an exile *from* their home. This sense of exile is often reinforced by the reactions of fellow citizens in their countries-of-origin, who perceive and treat deportees as outsiders, foreigners, and/or violent criminals threatening state security. Second, deportees and their family members experience a post-deportation victimization that confounds popular perception of the migrants as troublemakers who, at a minimum, have violated prohibitions on unauthorized entry or, at a maximum, have victimized others through violent crime” (Dingeman-Cerda & Coutin, 2012, 114; emphasis in original).

Their criminality is not specific to the site of detention but rather is treated as inhering within *them*. Hence, even after living as documented citizens they are still understood and often understand themselves as non-citizens, looping them out of humanity and subjectivity and ultimately out of any possible embodiment of global citizenship.

Conclusion

“The question for the future of citizenship is whether a ‘global’ citizenship can transcend citizenships defined by ‘local’ states on the basis of blood and birth or through an act of the state itself. That is beginning to happen” (Teune, 2008, 249). In sharp contrast to Teune our answer to his question is an unequivocal no. We reject any claim that ‘transcendence’ is beginning to happen

for anyone outside those embodying the Cartesian subject. Universal global citizenship is an impossibility until there is a complete dismantling of the neoliberal world order that requires the colonialist territorializing of nation-states and bodies (cf. Lee, 2014, 76). To suggest that universal global citizenship is a current possibility is only to reify the dominance of the Cartesian subject – whether as transnational corporation or co-ordinator class member or rich tourist – at the expense of marginalized ‘Others’.

The imaginary of good global citizenship ‘desires’ that our loyalty be to humanity as a whole, to all humans around the world with a particular emphasis on speaking and advocating for the global poor. Global citizenship is taken up as a call to action for people in the North to save people in the global South under a mirage of unity and ally-ship. Moreover, under the neoliberal dispensation whereby one’s life [is] the enterprise of oneself, “the rhetoric of global citizenship contributes to the illusion that global inequities and poverty are issues that can be addressed through simplistic methods, such as fundraising. Although these methods may alleviate specific hardships, they fail to advocate for systemic change” (DeCaro, 2014, 3). As a result, ‘global citizens’ turn out to be in practice “privileged individuals who have the opportunity to learn about the world, often through travel” (Roddick, 2008, 55, quoted in DeCaro, 2014, 8). No sources that we found that celebrate global citizenship offer a concrete critique of the neoliberal world order, nor do they recognize the legacies of and ongoing colonization projects that allow some to embody the global citizen over others. Furthermore, few call for individuals to hold their own states to account or to act against them. Rather they are encouraged to envisage themselves as stateless, classless, sovereign individuals that come from nowhere. We cannot just suddenly transmute into global citizens when the global economic system does not allow for the de-territorialisation of the world. To suggest otherwise is neoliberal propaganda that only serves to reaffirm the global supremacy of the Cartesian subject, as it, in its various forms, is the only figure to truly embody the global citizen.

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