THE FUGITIVE SACRED IN THE SONORAN DESERT

sanctuary everywhere

BARBARA ANDREA SOSTAITA

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They weren't scared, or dispossessed, or fragile. They were possible.

—JUSTIN TORRES, *We the Animals*

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Para papi, quien me enseñó a contar historias,

y para mami, porque el cariño

entre nosotras es plenamente sagrado

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Stories are what remain of my home country. Like Lot in the Hebrew Bible, my parents focused squarely on our future when we left Argentina. They did not look back and have not gone back in twenty-five years. But they did pass down stories—of military dictatorships and the return of democracy, music legends and folklorists who teach that *todo cambia*, soccer stadiums and sports rivalries, my grandmother's *canelones* and grandfather's routes as a milkman. Convinced that I could not know myself unless I knew my past, my parents gifted me their stories. And now I know myself largely as a storyteller. This book is thanks to them: Irene Tarico and Daniel Sostaita, who left home in search of the otherwise, who chased possibility, and whose memories are my inheritance.

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never forget, who was made to migrate to Buenos Aires to look for work when her husband's death made her a widow with three girls under the age of ten. Her migration set into motion my mom's eventual move to the capital city, her first encounter with my dad, my birth, our departure to the United States. Migration is my heritage. My ancestors' movements have made any idea of homeland an impossibility. For this, I thank them.

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Introduction

The Fugitive Sacred

What she knows is not a solution, but a route.

—ALEXIS PAULINE GUMBS

The first thing I notice about Juana is her thick, curly hair, graying at the temples and parted down the middle. The second is the black ankle monitor squeezing her right leg. As she leads me down a narrow hallway inside the church she has called home since 2017, Juana's cotton skirt flutters back and forth over her compact frame. The skirt falls slightly above the ankle monitor, occasionally brushing the hard plastic box.

I arrive carrying Styrofoam containers from a local Colombian restaurant. During our first and only phone call, Juana joked about the food served at St. Barnabas—an Episcopalian church whose members are almost all white and elderly. And so, having read between the lines, I greet her with two *bandejas paisas*, sampler plates loaded with white rice, red beans, grilled beef, sweet plantains, and *arepas*. There's enough to feed the two of us, plus Juana's granddaughters who are visiting for the weekend.

The church hall is undergoing renovations. While some volunteers unravel new green drapes and hang them from curtain rods, others are busy applying a fresh coat of paint to the white walls. I notice rollaway beds leaning against a corner, awaiting the arrival of the rest of Juana's family. Everything here appears to be suspended in a state of transition. While Juana gathers silverware from the kitchenette, I peer out the window and see two police cars idling in the parking lot. Juana seems unaffected when I point them out, explaining that they have been coming more frequently ever since someone showed up in the middle of the night to harass her. A volunteer sees me eyeing the patrol cars and hints at possible danger,

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"Not everyone agrees with us offering sanctuary." I ask Juana if she ever interacts with the police, but she says they mostly keep their distance. She used to wave to them on her walks to take trash to the dumpsters. But after the incident, a church elder cautioned her against leaving the property even that briefly. Now she stays indoors, her view always the same: the cinder-block walls of her makeshift bedroom, the framed Bible verses and linoleum floors of the church hall, the wooden pulpit and altar at the front of the sanctuary. Her trailer park's lively sounds have become muffled and distant, replaced by the occasional speeding ambulance in the distance or desperate bark of a dog who wandered from its home. Juana creates small tasks for herself throughout the day, staying busy to survive. "When I slow down," she confesses, "I remember my situation. And I get depressed. So I have to keep moving."

As much as I try to keep the conversation lighthearted, the topic of her deportation order is inevitable. And, at this point, Juana has spoken to so many journalists and researchers that she has developed a script for first encounters. Juana tells me that she had barely turned twenty when she escaped violence in Guatemala and sought asylum in the United States. A few years later, with her case still pending, Juana returned to her home country to care for her daughter who was battling a life-threatening illness. "It's what any mother would do," she insists, "but it was that decision that led me to this place." Juana used a fraudulent visa to reenter the United States in 1999 and, over a decade later, in 2011, it was for that reason that she was detained at the garment factory where she worked. Because of Barack Obama's Felons, Not Family policy, which ostensibly prioritized deporting migrants with criminal records and avoided separating families, Juana was released under the condition that she appear for mandatory check-ins with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).[1] Two-and-a-half years before our first meeting, only months after Donald Trump assumed office, Juana was given an order of deportation during one of these check-ins, a practice that some activists call silent raids.

Juana does not elaborate on that moment, nor does she share how she felt when the officer gave her thirty days to say goodbye to the life she created in this country. She instead jumps ahead to how her family mobilized in response to the deportation order. According to her, they sprang into action immediately. Her eldest daughter learned about the tradition of seeking sanctuary in churches after making countless phone calls to lawyers and nonprofit organizations. Someone from the American Friends Service Committee told her about the tradition of harboring migrants in places of

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worship. They promised her that ICE respects sacred space and that Juana would be safe as long as she remained inside the building. While the family are active members of a Latinx church near their home in Asheboro, North Carolina, Juana could not seek sanctuary there because many congregants are also undocumented or members of mixed-status families. They worried ICE would not honor the bounds of a migrant church in the same way, that its sensitive locations policy would not apply to a congregation of undocumented aliens.[2] Juana moved into St. Barnabas on the last day of May, the

1.1
Peering into Juana's garden, a sanctuary from her sanctuary.

1.2
View of the door that leads out of Juana's sanctuary.

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day her flight was scheduled to depart to Guatemala. The church became her home and her prison—simultaneously promising refuge and capture, protection and immobility. Her daughter once described sanctuary as a form of family separation.

At times, Juana and I run out of things to say to each other. Our eyes meet and we smile timidly, embracing the pauses. I notice an assortment of handmade clay bowls sitting at the end of the folding table. Juana tells me that she has taken up pottery while living at St. Barnabas and that she also started a sewing business using machines donated by church members. She crafts bags for yoga mats and pillow covers, and she alters church members' clothing. Within a space of confinement, she finds ways to play and create beauty. Juana tells me that being alone makes her feel closer to God, that she has never prayed as often or as eagerly as she does now.

I open this book not in the Sonoran Desert, but in Greensboro, North Carolina—a short drive from the town where I grew up after migrating to the United States and where Juana Luz Tobar Ortega lived in sanctuary from 2017 to 2021. From the church hall where I got to know Juana, I was confronted with the paradoxes of sanctuary—a tradition that Jennifer Bagelman describes as a "prison-like form of protection."[3] Writing about Glasgow, Scotland, Bagelman challenges not only church sanctuary but also cities of sanctuary, both of which position themselves as "idealized site(s)" that "extend universal hospitality," but nevertheless reproduce asymmetrical power relations and suspend migrants in a temporality of waiting.[4] These types of sanctuary "situate the seeker as one who must prove his/her worthiness, rely on the charity of others, and wait."[5] Juana certainly lived in a state of waiting—for family to visit over the weekends, for the next volunteer to arrive for their shift, for a client to request alterations, for a zucchini to bloom, for God to answer her prayers, for a stay of deportation. And while church sanctuary did in fact limit ICE's reach, at the same time it limited Juana's mobility—not so much an escape from as a rearrangement of surveillance and policing.

In the wake of the 2016 US presidential election, the number of churches calling themselves sanctuaries nearly doubled.[6] Restaurants, universities, hospitals, and cities around the country also declared themselves sanctuaries for undocumented migrants in unprecedented numbers (as the Trump administration threatened to withhold federal funding from sanctuary jurisdictions). Pueblo Sin Fronteras, the transborder collective

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known for organizing migrant caravans, called on Mexico to refuse border militarization and instead declare itself a "sanctuary country." But sanctuary stretched beyond defending migrants. Public libraries announced "book sanctuaries" for banned literature; Black Lives Matter activists created a sanctuary fund for street medics, and organizers in Minneapolis, Minnesota, occupied an abandoned hotel and transformed it into a sanctuary for people experiencing homelessness—calling it an "experiment" or "radical moment of possibility."[7]

The American Friends Service Committee launched a campaign titled "sanctuary everywhere" in 2017, insisting that sanctuary could mean harboring someone in a place of worship, but it might also point to mobile practices of care and mutuality. This book takes its title from this longing to become refuge, from this opacity that facilitates fugitivity. To be everywhere means sanctuary cannot be captured, caged, or pinned down. By the time you think you have caught it, sanctuary has already moved on and fled elsewhere. Though at first I was drawn to places that call themselves sanctuaries—churches, restaurants, hospitals, campuses—in this book I honor moments when migrants and other artists or activists create sanctuary in flight. I trace how sanctuary emerges not when migrants arrive at a singular place of refuge, but as they and their collaborators traverse the Sonoran Desert's sinuous routes. And, while inspired by sanctuary movements that pursue legislative change and political transformation (and indeed, they are a sort of prelude to this text), I study the ways sanctuary plots against the profane and forces open gaps in the everyday.

Sanctuary Everywhere follows the fugitive sacred in the Sonoran Desert. This book turns to four scenes: moments when land disobeys or disregards the policy named Prevention through Deterrence (PTD); incarcerated migrants practice an illicit or contraband touch inside detention centers; a deported nurse heals migrants in Nogales, Sonora; and the migrant dead haunt the living and refuse closure from humanitarians. In these opening pages, I introduce theories of the sacred—as set apart, ambiguous, and, ultimately, fugitive—and detail some possible histories of sanctuary. I then present reflections on methodology and terminology before offering overviews of each chapter. That said, this manuscript is meandering. I invite readers to embrace its unpredictable routes, which echo rivers that change course and streams with unruly migrations. The dots in this book are points on a map and the route is circuitous. Like the red dots that haunt maps of the Sonoran Desert by indicating where a migrant has died, they suggest a pause, an invitation to move your body, to drink water before

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continuing to the next section, to memorialize deaths not remembered or recorded.

Sanctuary traditionally refers to the innermost part of a church or temple, enclosed by a lattice or railing. Teeming with sacred potential, sanctuaries were historically protected and hidden, inaccessible or obscured from view. The term is an anglicized form of the Late Latin *santuarium* and Latin *sanctus*, a perfect passive participle from the verb *sancio*—meaning "to dedicate [to the gods]."[8] *Sanctus* connotes "holy" and "sacred" interchangeably, as does *sacer*, an adjective that comes from the same root. According to Émile Benveniste, the latter is unique in that it emphasizes the ambiguity of the sacred, as both alluring and dangerous to touch. He claims that this "double value," however, is not reflected in *sanctus*.[9] *Sanctus* denotes a place, person, or object that has been made sacred; *sacer,* on the other hand, refers to something that is inherently or intrinsically sacred. This is perhaps why sanctuary is more often related to *sanctus*, given that it is made and consecrated through sacred activity—what Elizabeth Pérez might name micropractices or Elaine Peña might describe as devotional labor.[10]

Both *sanctus* and *sacer* suggest that the sacred is set apart from or incompatible with the everyday or the profane. Contact with the sacred is dangerous, life-threatening even. Roger Caillois references Alfred Ernout and Antoine Meillet's definition of the sacred as "the one or that which cannot be touched without defilement."[11] Caillois explains that when someone committed a crime against religion or the state in ancient Rome, the assembled populace would cast them out, declaring them *sacer*—dangerous and untouchable, or negative sacred. This is precisely the "double value" of the sacred; *sacer* provokes both admiration and repulsion, wonder and fear. "It constitutes supreme temptation and the greatest of dangers. Dreadful, it commands caution, and desirable, it invites rashness."[12] *Sacer* is tied up with exile and the exiled, with those who are cast out of the profane because they have transgressed a boundary and thus pose a threat to the order of things.

Émile Durkheim similarly describes the sacred as the subject of a taboo or prohibition.[13] He insists that the sacred is not the same as what is good, majestic, or divine; it is not to be confused with the "holy." Rather, "the sacred thing is, par excellence, that which the profane must not and cannot touch with impunity."[14] There are moments when humans cross the

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threshold between the sacred and profane: instances when performance ruptures (and, in doing so, reinforces) boundaries between worlds. In these cases, there are procedures for encountering the sacred: cleansing rites, eating restrictions, sexual prohibitions, dress codes. And there are likewise procedures for leaving the sacred after one has been ritually defiled. Human beings must, therefore, approach sacred beings and spaces with an abundance of caution; they are dangerous, disruptive to the everyday.

Others have similarly made distinctions between the sacred and profane, including Rudolph Otto and Mircea Eliade who both write in the wake of the death of God and the Enlightenment and who are both concerned that an obsession with reason has stripped religion of its wonder and enchantment. Otto is interested in the "numinous," moments when humans are unmade and overpowered by the divine.[15] Though he focuses more on the holy than sacred, Otto's notion of *mysterium tremendum*—how the divine exceeds and overwhelms human reason—is helpful when considering the ways sanctuary disturbs the everyday.[16] For Otto, sacred forces are intoxicating, enchanting, haunting. They are too much—ineffable, unspeakable, incomprehensible. This too-muchness exceeds and escapes the rational human subject. Eliade draws inspiration from Otto to elaborate on hierophanies, or divine manifestations, which he proposes are "of a wholly different order, a reality that does not belong to our world." Yet, whereas Durkheim studies how the sacred is created and nurtured through human activity (*sanctus*), Eliade imagines a transcendent reality (*sacer*), a superhuman or supernatural experience where the sacred "shows itself to us."[17] I embrace these generative ways of thinking about the sacred—as the devotional labor of *sanctus* and as the unruly "double value" of *sacer*, as those forces that overwhelm the profane and so they are made subject to taboos.

Taboos are in place to protect the sacred from the profane and vice versa, to ensure the profane is not contaminated by the ambiguous and disturbing movements of the sacred. Juana, in defying her deportation order, also became separate or prohibited from the everyday. Instead of boarding her flight to Guatemala, she packed a suitcase and held a press conference before crossing the threshold of the church. Having violated the taboo, she was then denied the routine—unable to work, visit the grocery store, schedule a doctor's appointment, or even take her trash outside. As Caillois observes, when transgressing the profane to access the sacred, "all that is part of the ordinary process of human living must be rejected. . . . One who wishes to sacrifice, to enter the temple or to communicate with [their]

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God, must first interrupt [their] daily routine. [They are] enjoined to silence, vigils, retreats, inactivity, and continence."[18] Immediately after entering the church to see Juana, visitors were greeted by a binder detailing her background and listing emergency procedures in case of harassment or immigration enforcement. In addition to formalizing Juana's presence in the church, these pages offered instructions for approaching the sacred, ensuring visitors could return to the profane without defilement.

After all, sacred forces must be kept at a distance. As Durkheim writes, they are separated from the everyday and ordinary because of their "extraordinary contagiousness" or because they "radiate and diffuse," because they threaten society's illusion of stability and stasis.[19] And, indeed, Juana's migratory crossings disregarded sovereign borders. Her refusal to obey deportation orders exceeded the authority of the state. Because Juana transgressed these prohibitions, she needed to either be eliminated (through detention and deportation) or cleansed (assimilated and incorporated into the state). For Juana to be granted a stay of deportation, the profane world had to be convinced that she no longer presented a threat. So, when drafting petitions and holding press conferences to defend Juana, her family and supporters emphasized her rootedness—Juana's desire to stay put, to return to her home and her houseplants, to see her US-citizen children and grandchildren grow up, to settle back into old habits and routines.

But sacred beings and spaces are necessarily unsettled and unstable. Citing the sacredness of the totem and the initiation rites of a neophyte, Durkheim warns that "religious forces are so imagined as to appear always on the point of escaping the places they occupy and invading all that passes within their reach."[20] In turn, they provoke a "collective effervescence" or an unruly collectivity that is uninterested with the demands of the mundane. Mary Douglas writes in detail about those forces that refuse to stay put, that disrespect society's boundaries and conventions. Her work is interested in the impure or disruptive sacred; Douglas engages with *sacer's* potential to both consecrate and desecrate. For her, the impure sacred "offends against order"—not dangerous merely by virtue of its existence but because it is not in the place it has been assigned.[21] Taboos, then, "have as their main function to impose system on an inherently untidy experience."[22] Unauthorized migrants, including Juana, engage the sacred through unsanctioned acts of transgression, by violating taboos that are in place to maintain continuity and cohesion. In doing so, they become ritually defiled and therefore must be contained.

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Unauthorized migrants threaten systems of order and management. They abandon their nations, many tossing their government-issued documents before crossing. They move clandestinely through militarized and heavily policed deserts and bodies of water. Migrants refuse to stay in the place they have been assigned by systems of governance that draw up nations and manufacture boundaries. Taboos, as Daniella Gandolfo proposes in her reading of Georges Bataille, exist to police these acts of refusal and transgressions which "proper humanity struggles to ward off and exclude from social life but is never able to completely do away with."[23] Migrants like Juana become sacred (that is, dangerous) in their acts of transgression, and their movements can never be completely done away with.

Sacred forces migrate and blur boundaries, escaping what Bataille calls "the order of things."[24] Like Durkheim and Douglas, Bataille differentiates the profane "world of taboos" from a sacred world that "depends on limited acts of transgression."[25] For Bataille, too, sacred forces simultaneously provoke disgust and fascination, horror and respect. He describes the sacred as incompatible with the profane world of law and control, what Gandolfo in her reading of Bataille calls "everything that is inassimilable to the bourgeois order of capital and production."[26] Though human society surrounds sacred beings and spaces with taboos, Bataille suggests that what is sacred cannot be entirely contained (even as it is prohibited and criminalized). For him, the relationship between taboo and transgression (or between the profane and sacred) is less binary and more dialectical; "often the transgression is permitted, often it is even prescribed."[27] Each world reveals how the other is insufficient and incomplete. Each needs the other.

More recently, scholars have challenged categories of the sacred and profane, insisting that the sacred is part of the everyday, inseparable from the quotidian. Mujerista theologians like Ada María Isasi-Díaz insist that the sacred can be found in the everyday lives of women, in *lo cotidiano*.[28] And yet, for many of the people I met in the Sonoran Desert, spaces of everyday life—workplaces, neighborhoods, supermarkets, and schools—are not only inaccessible but impossible. For others, the everyday is simply uninteresting. While in transit, people are constantly being moved and on the move—overstaying their welcome at migrant shelters, packing their belongings and looking for temporary housing elsewhere; venturing into the desert with a group of strangers carrying only a backpack and a gallon of water; praying for the day they are released from detention, only to be deported and forced to attempt the crossing once again. There is repetition,

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but rarely is there routine. Migrants by definition flee the everyday, pursuing change and transformation. They are unsatisfied with the quotidian. Their movements express a longing for an otherwise.

I read the profane as the routine and quotidian, that which *imagines itself as* or *aspires to be* settled, stable, rooted. Unlike scholars like Caillois, however, I cannot describe the everyday as a time or space of "dull continuity . . . daily repetition of the same material preoccupations" or as the "tranquil labor of the debilitating phases of existence."[29] Many unauthorized migrants are running from precarious profanes; my own family left Argentina in the months leading up to an economic crisis caused by neoliberal austerity that drove people to *cacerolazos* (protests defined by the banging of pots and pans)—where they defaced and destroyed banks and foreign-owned companies—and which culminated in having five different presidents in the span of two weeks. Before we ultimately left, my parents uprooted us from one apartment to another, unable to stay in any one for longer than a few months. There was no tranquility or dull continuity, only the desperation of people refused stability. And so, instead, I understand the profane as those beings and spaces that are invested in order and fixity, in sovereignty, borders, citizenship, nation-states. The profane polices our imaginations the same way it polices prohibitive boundaries and limits our capacity to envision otherwise worlds.[30]

Because of their restless mobilities, unauthorized migrants—and certainly border crossers—are kept from participating in the routine, from laying claim to the everyday.[31] The state excludes them from the world of papers and status through policy and policing. Deportability, or the constant threat or possibility of deportation, makes the routine or everyday even more inaccessible. Undocumented migrants are aware that, at any time, the everyday could be pulled out from under them. An ICE officer could barge into their home in the middle of the night. Police officers could be blocking a two-lane street on their way home from work, checking for valid driver's licenses. They could be swept up during a workplace raid. Locked out of the profane, migrants describe undocumented status as living in the shadows, a fugitive and underground space. The state even describes migrants as aliens, not of this world, unknowable to and incompatible with the everyday. Like Gloria Anzaldúa, who grew up in the South Texas borderlands, I find inspiration in the lives of "aliens," those who are too queer or abnormal to make home in the profane. In her short essay "La Prieta," Anzaldúa writes about not belonging anywhere—not in Mexico, not in the United States: "both cultures deny me a place in their

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universe."[32] She writes about taking refuge in *el mundo zurdo*, among those who do not fit and, because they do not fit, pose a threat.

Throughout *Sanctuary Everywhere*, I use "sacred" and "profane" instead of religion, agreeing with Todd Ramón Ochoa that "religion is . . . overladen with European assumptions of form, doctrine, and homogeneity, in short, with a static sense of belief and practice." I am drawn to the "sacred" for similar reasons that Ochoa turns to the word "inspiration," because it is "a more mobile term."[33] I am in conversation with theorists who trace the ways in which sacred forces move, including Caillois, who juxtaposes profane things, which are (or aspire to be) fixed in place, and sacred forces, which are "good or bad not by nature but by the *direction* [they] take or are given."[34] The sacred moves, rebelling against stasis and sovereignty. Consider as an example novelist Justin Torres' eulogy to Latin night at the queer club following the 2016 mass shooting at Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, Florida. While other writers mourned the loss of their "sanctuary," Torres extoled "the sacredness" of the queer club.[35] "Outside, the world can be murderous to you and your kind. Lord knows. But inside, it is loud and sexy and on. . . . If you're lucky, no one is wearing much clothing, and the dance floor is full. If you're lucky, they're playing reggaeton, salsa, and you can *move*."[36] Torres describes the world outside the nightclub as constricting, immobilizing. But Latin night at the queer club promises movement, intimacy, release; it is set apart by taboos and teeming with transgression. Latin night is unfit for the profane. Torres writes about how separate the queer club is from the outside, how the sacred makes it possible to lose the self, to loosen, to act loose. "The only imperative," he proposes, "is to be transformed, transfigured in the disco light."

The first time I hear someone speak of the Sonoran Desert, I instead hear the word "sonorous" and wonder if the two are related. Sonorous as in fullness, as in a sound that is cavernous and resonant, imposingly deep. Sonorous as the opposite of what deserts represent in the American imagination: empty and arid wastelands, willing and waiting to be tamed. Sonorous as the "inventory of echoes" Valeria Luiselli writes about, "not a collection of sounds that have been lost—such a thing would in fact be impossible—but rather one of sounds that were present in the time of recording and that, when we listen to them, remind us of the ones that are lost."[37] Sonorous as in hemispheric histories that are profound and ongoing: histories of settler colonialism, mass incarceration and Indigenous elimination, borders and

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their technologies of surveillance. Sonorous as the "fugitive landscape" of the Sonoran Desert—which Samuel Truett insists has "continually slipped out of [the] control" of corporations, states, and settler entrepreneurs seeking to tame and instrumentalize its sacred energies.[38]

Though many contemporary scholars describe the Sonoran Desert as an accomplice in border enforcement, I agree with Truett that land is a witness to and partner in ongoing histories of fugitivity: from Chinese migrants who crossed the desert covertly during the era of Asian exclusion to enslaved Africans who fled to Mexico to evade capture and Indigenous communities who found shelter and plotted escape routes in the mountains. Borders are contested lands, where humans and more-than-human beings crisscross, navigate, and transgress boundaries. The sacred and profane meet here—the world of order, law, and regulation comes into contact and conflict with what Dimitris Papadopoulos, Niamh Stephenson, and Vassilis Tsianos call the "uncontrollable, escaping potentialities of people."[39]

Fugitivity comes from the Latin *fugitivus*, or fleeing, which is a past-participle adjective from the stem *fugere*—which can mean to take flight or run away; leave a country and go into exile; hide, vanish, or disappear; escape someone's notice; or render yourself unknowable and unreadable. From the Old French *fugitif*, the noun *fugitive* refers to a runaway, deserter, or outlaw. By definition, fugitives are at odds with law and oppose order. They make themselves indiscernible to the profane or everyday, render themselves apart from the world of visibility and normalcy. Writing about Black, feminist, and queer US activists in the 1970s, Stephen Dillon suggests that fugitive ways of knowing and moving through the world produce an "estrangement" from the routine and the ordinary. He theorizes fugitive spaces as teeming with "alternative forms of knowledge, living, and seeing that escaped the normativities central to the functioning of the everyday."[40] Because they move through peripheries and underground spaces, fugitives can see what regularly goes unnoticed; they unmask the violences of the present. And, so, the profane criminalizes and polices fugitive movements, implementing prohibitions to control or slow them down. At times, as Papadopoulos, Stephenson, and Tsianos argue, the profane appropriates or absorbs fugitive movements—incorporating select migrants into the citizenry, granting rights and representation.[41] Nevertheless, sacred forces escape. Take, for instance, this line from a poem by Javier Zamora—"Every election, a candidate promises: papers, papers, & more. They gift us Advance Parole. We want flight."[42]

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Fugitives are on the move. They are, as Jack Halberstam observes in his reading of Fred Moten and Stefano Harney, "separate from settling," affirming that "there are spaces and modalities that exist separate from the logical, logistical, the housed and the positioned."[43] Their restless movements create other social worlds and political possibilities, ones that collude with more-than-human beings. Felipe Baeza, a migrant artist whose practice embraces printmaking, collage, embroidery, and sculpture, envisions "fugitive figures" that are simultaneously animal, human, and plant. In an interview with Zoë Hopkins, Baeza speaks about fugitivity as a commitment to "always escaping, always fleeing, always evading. . . . [I]t's a condition that deviates from laws and norms." For him, too, fugitivity necessarily involves defying the taboo, crossing the prohibition. According to the artist, fugitives surrender their individuality in favor of being in relation with others, humans and more than human: "They are legible on their own terms, not in the ways that any law demands." And they are hard to pin down, uninterested in fitting into one category or modality. By escaping fixed identities and categories, the fugitive beings in Baeza's artworks are able to nurture relations of immanence. Their nude torsos emerge from the earth, weeds growing out of their mouths. In place of legs, they stand on thorny vines. Red branches sprout from the crowns of their heads. Their human legs merge with the body of an octopus, its tentacles outstretched. For Baeza, these fugitive bodies inhabit interstitial spaces, more interested in the incomplete process of becoming than settling into a fixed being. He insists, "The room for liminality and possibility is what allows a subject to live a life worth living."[46]

Baeza's (and my own) thoughts on fugitivity are indebted to Black studies and to scholars like Moten and Harney, who describe fugitivity as a riotous intimacy or excess touch that is the "terrible gift" of the hold. Tiffany Lethabo King also theorizes Blackness as perpetually outside the borders of the human, confounding the rational, stable Man imagined by liberal humanism. The third chapter of Lethabo King's *The Black Shoals* studies the protagonists of Julie Dash's *Daughters of the Dust* and their indigo-stained skin. For the author, the blue hands of the Peazant family, formerly enslaved people who worked on indigo plantations, undo ontological boundaries that separate plant, land, and human. "Under slavery and conquest," she writes, "the Black body becomes the ultimate symbol of accumulation, malleability, and flux existing outside human coordinates of space and time. . . . Blackness is the raw dimensionality (symbol, matter, kinetic energy) used to make space."[47] Indigo-stained flesh marks "porous

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sites of instability and transition between states."[48] Fugitives are endlessly in the middle, in movement. To return to Moten, they refuse what has been refused—in this case, Enlightenment categories of the human that are stable, bounded, separate from "nature." What they imagine and create at the borders of the human open up unimaginable possibilities.

Fugitivity—being on the run from the law, at odds with the law—guarantees neither safety nor comfort. It is not paradise, and it is not permanent. But it does offer possibilities for transgressing often unlivable everydays. Many border crossers are fleeing everydays marked by ecological destruction, extractive economies, austerity politics, and capitalist abandonment. Denied the stability of home, they chase futures elsewhere. Not merely at the mercy of push-and-pull factors, however, they pursue transformation and remake life. Their creative movements challenge the power of nation-states to regulate mobility. In *Intergalactic Travels: Poems from a Fugitive Alien*, Alán Pelaez Lopez uses photographs, collages, email and text exchanges, and immigration forms to celebrate the ways fugitive aliens "craft unimaginable lives" that evade capture.[49] A Black and Indigenous migrant who was formerly undocumented, Pelaez Lopez describes fugitive living as losing contact with their family, running from intimacy out of a fear of deportation, experiencing intense anxiety with every knock on the door, "years and years of perpetual non-existence."[50] Pelaez Lopez searches for a "new type of fugitivity," one that (like Baeza and Lethabo King) leads them to more-than-human, "intergalactic" relations.[51] Toward the end of the collection, in a handwritten entry, they describe the first poem they wrote in the third grade, about becoming a sea horse so they could give birth. Pelaez Lopez dedicates this poem to their mom who, though alarmed that her "son" wanted to give birth, surely felt relieved they still had the capacity to dream. Fugitives become sea horse, become indigo, elude legibility. Fugitivity dwells in these moments of escape and transformation, resisting the romance of arrival. Here is where this practice meets the sacred—dangerous, unsettling, uncomfortable, and often unsafe. The fugitive sacred is too much for the profane world and, so, is subject to taboos and prohibitions. Set apart.

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The date is March 24, 1982, two years to the day that Salvadoran Archbishop Óscar Romero was assassinated by death squad mercenaries as he consecrated the Eucharist. Romero was outspoken in his condemnation of the country's military dictatorship; only weeks prior, he had written

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a letter to Jimmy Carter urging the president to stop funding El Salvador's junta. John Fife, described by some as more cowboy than clergyman, honors Romero as he addresses the media from a folding table outside Southside Presbyterian Church in Tucson, Arizona. He is joined by his collaborator Jim Corbett, activist attorney Margo Cowan, and other ecumenical religious leaders. To his right sits a Salvadoran refugee who uses the pseudonym "Alfredo." Wearing a cowboy hat and bandana covering the lower half of his face, "Alfredo" offers a *testimonio* of the necropolitical conditions facing Salvadorans, insisting that staying in his country would have been a death sentence.[52]

Though they have been coordinating the clandestine movements of Central Americans since the summer of 1981, on this day the group goes public by calling on the tradition of sanctuary. Before Alfredo delivers his *testimonio,* Fife reads a letter addressed to the US Attorney General—making it clear that Southside will actively defy laws criminalizing the harboring of aliens. He denounces Ronald Reagan's "immoral, as well as illegal" policies toward Central Americans—referring to the US government's support of military juntas in Guatemala and El Salvador.[53] As part of his Cold War strategy, Reagan provided weapons, funding, and training to death squads and contributed to an exodus of hundreds of thousands of people from the region. Salvadorans and Guatemalans who reached US borders were then denied asylum due to the administration's support of right-wing dictatorships. Fife's tone is firm and unyielding as he announces Southside's plans to welcome a migrant into the "care and protection" of the church. He reiterates: "We will not cease to extend the sanctuary of the church to undocumented people from Central America. Obedience to God requires this of us."[54] Cloth banners hang from the church's adobe exterior walls. In handwritten capital letters, they announce: *Este es el santuario de Dios para los oprimidos de Centro América* ("This is a sanctuary for the oppressed of Central America") and *La Migra no Profana el Santuario* ("Immigration: Do not profane the sanctuary of God").

Sanctuary activists in the 1980s drew inspiration from the Underground Railroad and resistance to the Fugitive Slave Acts. Volunteers offered their homes as waystations and helped transport refugees across international borders and within the interior of the United States. Churches and other communities across Mexico offered food and shelter along the way, from Tapachula on the southern border with Guatemala through Mexico City and border cities like Nogales. As Leo Guardado notes, this underground network was especially important considering Mexico's collaboration

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with the Reagan administration to prevent Central Americans from reaching the US border to seek asylum.[55]

Sanctuary practices were mobile and insurgent, sacred routes for people on the run from enforcement. Across the Américas, fugitives have long engaged in such sacred acts of transgression. Cedric J. Robinson outlines a history of *palenques*, *mocambos*, and *quilombos* that "found sometimes tenuous, sometimes permanent existences" across the hemisphere.[56] These maroons fled to marshes, swamps, hills, and mountains to escape plantations and chattel slavery. In doing so, to invoke Neil Roberts, they articulated freedom not as a destination but as a practice of flight.[57] Derecka Purnell notes that the word *maroons* comes from the Spanish *cimarrones*, meaning wild or feral.[58] She cites Sylviane Diouf, who observes the more-than-human intimacies nurtured through marronage: "their secrecy forced them into a set of interdependent relationships with other maroons, animals, and the earth."[59] Maroons entered into immanent relations with other beings, including land. Their fugitive practices were sacred acts—betrayals of the routine, ongoing acts of transgression.[60]

By turning to marronage and the underground, I follow Aimee Villareal who calls for "a situated historiography of sanctuary in the Americas, one that acknowledges its coloniality as an instrument of pastoral power and centers Indigenous regions of refuge and negotiations with settler colonialism." Villareal describes Indigenous "sanctuaryscapes" as an insurgent response to colonization, "a dynamic autochthonous tradition and Indigenous survival strategy cultivated (and continuously remade) in regions of refuge and rebellion." She presents two examples—Pueblo cities of refuge and Apache autonomous enclaves—to trace how Indigenous sanctuaryscapes evaded the "coercive protection and care of the mission."[61] Meanwhile, the Catholic Church's sanctuary practices were based on ideas of sin and redemption and exclusive to those willing to be baptized. Clergy alone could hear confessions, determine a person's credibility, and grant sanctuary. Unlike conditional Catholic practices of sanctuary, Indigenous sanctuaryscapes facilitated escape routes. They embraced those on the run from colonial officials and favored fugitivity over conditional hospitality.

Sanctuary practices in the ancient world similarly conspired with the outlaw. As Linda Rabben outlines, Diana's sanctuary at Ephesus was famous throughout ancient Greece as a place of asylum for fugitives, slaves, debtors, social outcasts, and criminals. Temples, groves, and other sacred sites were set apart by boundary markers and delineated as inviolable.[62] And, like the 1980s movement—whose tactics involved economic boy-

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cotts, cross-country caravans, and political advocacy—ancient sanctuary was not always, or even mostly, imagined as a place. Among Hebrews, for example, there existed both altar and communitarian sanctuaries. Hillary Cunningham explains that the former were usually located in religious shrines and "asylums by virtue of their status as *holy places*," while the latter was based on communal practices that sheltered fugitives.[63] In communitarian sanctuaries, fugitives could claim refuge by petitioning the city's council of elders.[64] Sanctuaries were not only set apart or consecrated sites but also tied to a religious specialist and community. Cunningham notes that early Christians and medieval churches embraced these ancient traditions of sanctuary, affirming both places and people as sacred.

According to John Fife, "Sanctuary was a mobile strategy from the beginning." When I interview him, Fife mentions that he and his collaborator Jim Corbett—nicknamed the "Quaker coyote" by American media—partnered with churches across Mexico to develop an underground railroad into the United States and Canada. Fife shares that sanctuary did not begin when people reached the border; rather, it emerged as people received and offered care in transit. And, as I later notice in archives, workers unions, *comunidades de base*, and coalitions of mothers in Central America had organized to provide material support and facilitate escape routes. During our conversation, Fife recalls one of his visits to El Salvador. "I learned that Catholic and Lutheran churches were filled with refugees and internally displaced families. They had practiced sanctuary for years, long before we did." Even in Tucson, queer and feminist organizers practiced sanctuary before Southside publicly declared itself a space of refuge. As Karma Chávez explains, when Salvadorans began to arrive "with bullets lodged in their bodies" at the Manzo Area Council, a human rights and community aid program, advocates organized to offer legal services at El Centro, a detention facility in southern Arizona. Manzo's director, Margo Cowan, and her partner, Guadalupe Castillo, represented thousands of migrants detained and at risk of deportation. Chávez writes, "Though they lacked the capacity to support all the migrants who needed it, the Manzo Area Council workers' tireless efforts signaled the queer, feminist catalysts of the sanctuary movement, a movement that may not have existed without them."[65]

Wearing a paisley, button-down tweed jacket, and a silver watch etched with the Tohono O'odham deity I'itoi, Fife elaborates on the ways he and his collaborators navigated the law and legality. Working with the Manzo Area Council taught activists that the legal route was a dead end; efforts to

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bail migrants out of detention centers only delayed the inevitable. Almost every Central American they supported was denied asylum. Even still, sanctuary practitioners did not describe their smuggling and "evasion services" as acts of breaking the law or as "civil disobedience." Rather, they saw themselves as practicing "civil initiative." Based on the Nuremberg Trials, which determined that officers have a duty to disobey illegal or harmful orders, activists saw themselves as defending rather than violating the law.[66] Sanctuary workers argued they were not committing a crime by harboring fugitives; rather, state agents were the criminals for refusing to respect international human rights agreements. In 1983, the FBI set up Operation Sojourner to infiltrate the Sanctuary Movement. Two years later, sixteen people, including Fife, were indicted on counts of conspiracy and of transporting and harboring fugitives. According to Susan Bibler Coutin, to defend their work after the Sanctuary trials, activists developed more rigid definitions of who counted as a refugee and only smuggled those they deemed eligible—upholding distinctions between economic migrants and asylum seekers. "To validate their understanding of U.S. refugee law," Coutin elaborates, "Tucson border workers assumed responsibility for enforcing the law. In essence, they created a partial substitute for the immigration system."[67] Cunningham similarly explains that the Tucson movement adopted many of the Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) guidelines when screening and evaluating refugee cases.[68]

Fife confirms that once Central Americans reached the Sonora-Arizona border, sanctuary activists verified their stories with churches and human rights organizations in El Salvador. Once, an immigration officer angrily accused Fife, "You're trying to run your own Immigration Service, aren't you? You guys are making decisions about who crosses and who doesn't. Where the hell do you think you get the right to do that?" Fife chuckles as he recalls his response: "You claim to have half a dozen CIA agents in El Salvador. *I have thousands.* They're called priests and pastors. I've got a much better intelligence system than you could ever imagine." Not all activists saw sanctuary as a form of surveillance, though, nor did they all embrace civil initiative. The Chicago Religious Task Force on Central America, for instance, preferred the radical and insurgent tradition of civil disobedience. "Sanctuary by its very nature breaks the law," read an editorial published in 1985 in the Chicago organization's national newspaper, *Basta!* "All of us in the Sanctuary Movement have chosen to break the law, not as an end in itself, but to defend the powerless, the Central Americans in the U.S. and

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REFUGEES: Churches run a 'railroad'

Continued from page 10

On March 24, two years after the assassination of Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero by unknown assailants, the Tucson group ended its secrecy. The Rev. John Fife, pastor of Tucson's Southside United Presbyterian Church, announced he would openly defy the law and provide sanctuary to Salvadoran refugees illegally in the country.

"We decided that we had to change the government policy (of denying asylum) if we were really going to help refugees," Fife said recently. Going public with evasion activities seemed a way to arouse support, he said.

Today 15 churches around the nation — including Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, Lutheran, Episcopalian, Unitarian and Quaker denominations — publicly provide sanctuary to Central American refugees. Another 150 churches openly support the sanctuaries with food, clothing, money and encouragement, according to Fife.

None has been raided by immigration agents.

Numerous people also offer their homes as way stations and their services as relay drivers to provide refugees with a means of travel — a loosely organized underground railroad.

The railroad takes its name from the Civil War network that helped slaves escape to non-slavery states.

Its hub lies in Tucson.

Its Mexico line, consisting mostly of Catholic churches giving food and shelter, runs from Tapachula in the southernmost tip of Mexico a dozen miles from Guatemala, through Mexico's capital, out to the Pacific coast highway and on to Nogales.

The main U.S. line runs from Tucson to Chicago, passing occasionally through Colorado. Tucson operators expect to have a line to the east

Quaker 'coyote' at war with U.S. over refugees

Hondurans Given Aid In Flight

Cleric a Conduit In Underground

By TOM COAKLEY
Denver Post Staff Writer

While other Americans were [illegible] last Tuesday, Brother Marshall Gourley risked arrest by aiding two illegal aliens in their underground journey across the United States.

Gourley, a deacon at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, [illegible] W. [illegible] Ave., took two fugitive Hondurans — a young man and woman — for pepperoni pizza in north Denver Monday night. He let them spend the night at the Guadalupe parish house and then made sure they had transportation Tuesday to Lincoln, Neb., the next stop on their journey to Chicago.

Through these actions, Gourley briefly joined a group of Christians in three Western states, whose common interest is keeping fugitive Central American nationals in the United States from being sent back to homes where they believe violence awaits them.

Some see their effort as "active resistance" to the United States'

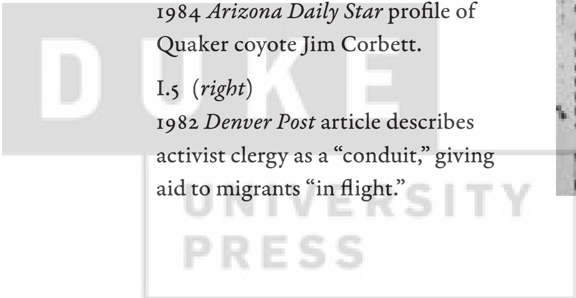
Please See HONDURANS on 4-A

Gourley says his activities will [illegible]

I.3 (*above*)
1982 *Rocky Mountain News* headline details sanctuary's mobile strategy.

I.4 (*above, right*)
1984 *Arizona Daily Star* profile of Quaker coyote Jim Corbett.

I.5 (*right*)
1982 *Denver Post* article describes activist clergy as a "conduit," giving aid to migrants "in flight."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those still in their homelands."[69] And though Fife likens priests and pastors to an intelligence system, Central Americans embraced fugitivity—often refusing to be seen, counted, administered. When they spoke to the press and offered *testimonios*, they typically appeared masked to avoid detection and some even changed their appearance by using makeup or cutting and coloring their hair. Their patterned bandanas and dark sunglasses were fugitive maneuvers even if and when they appeared in public. Migrants used pseudonyms or chose to remain anonymous to prevent harm to loved ones in their home countries. They entered the underground to escape capture and fled sanctuaries when they were no longer considered safe.

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Though they no longer use the word "sanctuary" to describe their work, Fife tells me that he, Margo Cowan, and other leaders of the 1980s movement returned to the concept of civil initiative when establishing humanitarian aid groups such as the Tucson Samaritans and No More Deaths in the early 2000s. During the George W. Bush administration, activists across the country invoked sanctuary in response to increased workplace raids and deportations. This New Sanctuary Movement (NSM) was catalyzed by Elvira Arellano's flights into and out of sanctuary in Chicago. In 2002, Arellano was arrested for using a false Social Security number at O'Hare International Airport, where she worked cleaning the passenger cabins of commercial planes. Arellano's arrest was part of Operation Tarmac, a post-9/11 series of raids of airport employees and part of a broader escalation of the US security state. Four years later, in defiance of an order of deportation, Arellano and her eight-year-old son fled to Adalberto United Methodist Church in Chicago's Humboldt Park neighborhood. The two received sanctuary at the church for a year, where Arellano credits the Puerto Rican community with protecting her and practicing care as solidarity.[70] She was deported in 2007, after she fled sanctuary to participate in protests for migrant justice in Washington, DC, and Los Angeles. After she was deported, Arellano cofounded Movimiento Migrante Mesoamericano, a network of activists and organizations that works to defend and shelter migrants crossing through and into Mexico and that organizes caravans of mothers of disappeared migrants. Arellano did not merely receive sanctuary while living in a church. Rather, she practiced sanctuary across borders—understanding that, while in transit, migrants are subject to extortion, detention, disappearance, and other forms of

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violence. She understood sanctuary as a form of collective action, a set of practices to collaborate with people on the run.

The NSM housed migrants at risk of deportation in places of worship, often for years at a time. Activists transformed religious spaces into living quarters, offered legal assistance to migrant families, and hosted press conferences to make public the violences of deportation. The Bush-era movement differed from 1980s sanctuary in its focus on defending long-term US residents more so than newly arrived "refugees." Rather than highlighting state terror in Central America, migrants involved in the NSM focused on the trauma of living in the shadows, lacking a driver's license, and fearing deportation.[71] Unlike the Sanctuary Movement of the 1980s, which encouraged migrants to share *testimonios* as a way of denouncing US foreign policy, the NSM uplifted migrant narratives that sought inclusion in the nation state. Marta Caminero-Santangelo explains that these stories often emphasized family separation and family values.[72] Through storytelling, the NSM sought to convince Americans, specifically white evangelical Christians, to defend undocumented families. Yet, to paraphrase Karma Chávez, the use of storytelling and selective support of deserving, law-abiding migrants often curtailed a critique of the conditions that create "illegality" in the first place.[73] These stories all too often sought inclusion in the state by making appeals to heteronormativity, capitalist productivity, and Christian devotion. They became cleansing rituals of sorts, in which unauthorized migrants who defied the taboo sought to reenter the profane.

Earlier, I described how, in the wake of Trump's election, organizers called for sanctuary everywhere—including restaurants, cities, hospitals, universities, homes, and hotels. Expanded sanctuary affirms a coalitional politics that collaborates with those most targeted by the new administration—especially Black, Indigenous, queer, and migrant communities. Chávez proposes a "queer politics of fugitivity," arguing that sanctuary's ambiguity opens worlds of possibilities. Given that there is no legal definition or precedent for this practice, Chávez embraces being outside of the law or "colluding with the criminalized."[74] A. Naomi Paik's work likewise challenges the liberal frameworks of sanctuary movements that selectively defend the "law-abiding, hard-working, gainfully employed, and normatively reproductive contributors to the economy."[75] Her vision of an "abolitionist sanctuary" dismantles and defunds policing in the present while also imagining and creating otherwise futures. Chávez's and Paik's understandings of sanctuary—as fugitive and abolitionist—shape

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my thinking around the sacred. Abolition, in the end, is unsatisfied with the routine and the ordinary, seeking escape routes out of the profane's prohibitions.[76]

Alison Harrington, the pastor of Southside Presbyterian Church since 2009, seems to agree with Chávez's call for a sanctuary outside the law. While conducting fieldwork, I meet with the pastor to discuss civil initiative in the 1980s and where the movement stands now. She reiterates Fife's point that sanctuary did not start in North American churches, but rather emerged in El Salvador and in homes across Mexico, along migrant routes. For Harrington, sanctuary is a practice of survival nurtured by people facing state violence and oppression. She says sanctuary comes alive in nightclubs like Pulse, through initiatives like the Black Panthers' breakfast programs and community defense tactics. She mentions Marisa Franco, a cofounder of Mijente—an abolitionist network of Latinx and Chicanx organizers—who defines sanctuary as a "ring of fire" around people and social movements. The ring of fire is hot, fraught with danger. It protects while also setting sanctuary apart.

In Harrington's office, I admire a screen print that reimagines a mugshot of Martin Luther King Jr. as a Byzantine icon and another of the Virgin of Guadalupe clandestinely crossing the border. Noticing these odes to transgression, I ask about the legality of this tradition. Harrington answers that sanctuary has a "conversion effect." By practicing sanctuary, "people are converted to the true gospel of Christ, which allows you to follow a higher authority than a law." She continues: "When we first started doing this work in 2014, we always questioned, is this against the law or not? I used to say no. Some of my colleagues, older white pastors, were concerned about losing their tax status." Harrington remembers one who stunned the room when he blurted out, "Screw our tax status! That's a holdover from Constantine and a merger between Christianity and empire. Who cares about that?" Harrington's understanding of sanctuary shifted when Trump was elected. "As we neared his inauguration, I was like, yeah, it's against the law. We are harboring. We are hiding people. And the closer the church can move out of a legal framework into a framework of illegality, the closer we are to our undocumented brothers and sisters. We need to be a church of illegality."

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Like many other young migrants, I learned I was illegal when I was a teenager. I remember the morning my parents sat me down at the coffee shop

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inside our local Barnes and Noble and gently explained that I was ineligible for a driver's permit because I did not have a Social Security number. We had overstayed our tourist visa in the United States and not only could I not drive, I also could not work legally; I was ineligible for financial aid to attend college, and—except for my youngest sister, who was born in this country—my entire family was subject to deportation. I was clutching a copy of Paulo Coelho's *The Alchemist* as my world came crashing down. "There is only one thing that makes a dream impossible to achieve," Coelho writes toward the end of the novel, "the fear of failure."[77] I told myself that Coelho must have never met an undocumented person before.

I am part of a generation who called ourselves DREAMers and came of age before Obama authorized the policy of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. My generation organized politically as young people who loved this country, who had earned citizenship through our diligence and decency. DREAMers staged mock graduations in congressional buildings—donning caps and gowns in front of politicians whose inaction kept us from pursuing our dreams—and campaigned for legislative reform. I was convinced we could redeem this country if only we were given the chance. In December 2010, I watched as the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act died in the Senate, five votes short of the sixty it needed to become law. I was eighteen and had recently enrolled at a women's college only a few miles from my parents' house. All I wanted was to contribute to the country I called home. How could lawmakers not understand? I was a hard worker and high achiever. I was not responsible for my parents' mistakes. I did not choose to migrate to the United States, but it was the only home I knew. Argentina existed only in the past, the way a deceased grandmother or great uncle exists, through the stories others tell.

What I did not understand at the time was that the DREAM Act not only excluded my parents, but that it also advocated for "the best and brightest" while leaving behind most undocumented people. The DREAM Act applied only to youth who attended college or joined the military for two years. Those of us eligible for conditional status had to have immigrated to the United States before the age of sixteen, be under the age of thirty, have lived in the country for five consecutive years, and have passed a criminal background test. Had it become law, we could have lost our status if we received a dishonorable or other than honorable discharge from the military or if we became a "public charge"—meaning if we became dependent on the government for financial support. To put it simply, the DREAM Act promoted what Tania Unzueta Carrasco and Hilda Seif describe as "racial-

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ized, gendered and class-bound ideas of the 'good citizen.'"[78] The DREAM Act recruited young undocumented people like me to reinforce American exceptionalism, to redeem the nation-state. We unwittingly (some, strategically) reproduced narratives that paint America as a nation built by migrants, one always made better—more diverse, inclusive, and fair—by entrepreneurial and exceptional people. As Walter Nicholls writes in his book on undocumented youth activism, "Rather than being a foreign threat to the country, these immigrants were presented as the exact opposite: extensions of the country's core historical values and a force of national reinvigoration."[79]

Unzueta Carrasco and Seif suggest that, for many undocumented organizers, the DREAM Act's failure "freed us to more publicly challenge the nation state and its definitions of citizenship and deportability."[80] They explain that, after 2010, organizers in Chicago felt more emboldened to challenge "middle class frames of morality, higher education, meritocracy, and individual success."[81] They began to take up deportation defense campaigns for people who would have been ineligible for relief under the DREAM Act, including proposing abolitionist alternatives to detention and deportation for a young person with multiple driving under the influence (DUI) charges and who lacked a high school diploma. They held more public deportation defense actions, challenging the United States to disappear community members in the open. And they refused to participate in the criminalization of their parents, to continue rehearsing narratives that excluded their family members. Unzueta Carrasco went on to cofound Mijente. Having been refused the DREAM Act, she and other organizers began to call "into question citizenship, as recognized by the state, as the determining factor for whether a person has a right to live, work and participate in the nation-state."[82] Being denied the everyday, organizers imagined futures beyond inclusion. Living in the shadows, they saw what was invisibilized in the routine.

At home working on this chapter, I know I am able to write this book because, twenty-one years after landing in Miami, my family became United States citizens. I was able to enroll in graduate school, gain lawful employment at a university, and receive grant funding to conduct research. But citizenship—not having it, the process of attaining it—has caused enduring harm to me and my loved ones. Years of undocumented living haunt our present; I can see the ways my parents still shudder when they see a police vehicle, how they avoid airports, how they continue to bear the weight of the debt they incurred to pay our legal fees. After his naturalization ceremony, my dad cried. He regretted betraying his ancestors, abandoning his

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dead. He lamented what he had to give up to become incorporated into the everyday. We are always between worlds, the sacred and the profane incompatible and at odds with each other but occasionally, inevitably, coming into contact.

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The morning after the 2016 election, I attended a gathering of faculty and staff committed to defending undocumented members of our campus. I arrived early enough to find a seat but, within twenty minutes, the classroom was packed with people standing shoulder to shoulder, sitting cross-legged on the hardwood floor, with others overflowing into the hallway. We had two months to prepare for a presidency that had promised to target migrants—especially those who were Muslim, Latin American, "bad hombres." Professors ripped pieces of paper from their spiral notebooks and distributed sign-up sheets to form working groups: one on mutual aid, another on education, and a third on direct action. Angela Stuesse—an activist anthropologist—proposed the word "sanctuary" to describe the solidarity practices we were envisioning and outlining on the whiteboard. That classroom is where I first became curious about these "expanded" understandings of sanctuary.

I could point to that moment as the birth of this book. But there are other origin stories or creation myths for my project, including July 2015, when I first traveled to Tucson and learned about the congregation's insurgent tradition of sanctuary. This project also began on May 1, 2006, when I participated in A Day without Immigrants. Instead of attending school, I joined a community forum at church where we collectively imagined how to defend each other in the absence of immigration reform legislation. Ultimately, this book was also set in motion on December 30, 1998, when, as anthropologists have done since Bronislaw Malinowski, my family left home and immersed ourselves in a distant culture, when we said goodbye to Buenos Aires and remade our lives in Tobaccoville, North Carolina. In the end, what are migrants, if not ethnographers, learning to live in an unfamiliar place and studying its rituals and routines—not only to survive, but to transform the everyday?

I spent several months in 2019 and 2020 conducting participant observation in the Sonoran Desert. When stay-at-home orders were implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic, I returned to North Carolina and continued to conduct interviews online, practicing what Gökçe Günel, Saiba Varma, and Chika Watanabe call patchwork ethnography.[83] I have

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since returned for weeks or months at a time in 2021 and 2022. During those years, I carried my notebook everywhere—to my citizenship interview, biometrics appointments, and even my naturalization ceremony. Mine is a mobile methodology. I follow Wendy Vogt's proposal for an "anthropology of transit," which highlights the tensions between "the transience of our interlocutors and the ethnographic authority attached to 'being there' in the field." Vogt provocatively asks, "Where, exactly, is 'there' when we are talking about such fluid, transient populations?"[84] Like Vogt, my field sites are mobile and temporary. Migrants are not fixed in place, and neither is my project.

My writing is a practice in the kinds of waywardness and errantry I observed in the field, and I am intentionally on the move on the page, meandering between (auto)ethnographic, historical, and theoretical scenes. This style is inspired in part by Kate Zambreno's novel *Drifts*, which is written in fragments and lacks a conclusive end. "The publishing people told me that I was writing a novel," Zambreno observes at the beginning of the book, "but I was unsure. What I didn't tell them is that what I longed to write was a small book of wanderings."[85] My own book of wanderings does not arrive at conclusions or syntheses, because the fugitive sacred does not and cannot arrive. Nor do I settle in one field or discipline; a migrant, I am on the move, most comfortable in *nepantla* or *lugar entre medio*. I often use fragments and vignettes—gesturing to moments of transgression, interruptions of the everyday. Unlike social movement scholars, I do not track sanctuary's outcomes, goals, or long-term political shifts. I am okay with the interruptions. Indeed, I prefer them.

Sanctuary Everywhere takes place in the Sonoran Desert not because the southern border is the only site of enforcement; I agree with Gilberto Rosas that the "borderlands condition" has "thickened" or migrated across the hemisphere, especially in the wake of the War on Terror following September 11, 2001.[86] Jonathan Inda and Julie Dowling also refer to the border as a "mobile technology," pointing to the regulation of movement across the interior of the United States.[87] Rather, I turn to the Sonoran Desert because of its sonorous histories of flight and fugitivity. Mobility controls in the borderlands have not and do not merely police Latin American migrants. Rather, as Harsha Walia teaches, the southern border has been shaped by the "entanglements of war and expansion into Mexico, frontier fascism and Indigenous genocide, enslavement and control of Black people and the racialized exclusion and expulsion of those deemed undesirable."[88] Though not analogous, the criminalization of migration "has been ines-

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capably structured through" the transatlantic slave trade and anti-Black mobility controls. For instance, Walia explains that, after the annexation of Texas, slave owners in the state organized militias to prevent Black people from crossing into Mexico and to capture those who had successfully fled.[89] There is a different kind of agency in Latin American migrant experiences, however, and I agree with Dionne Brand that "migrations suggest intentions or purposes. Some choice and, if not choice, decisions. And if not decisions, options, all be they difficult."[90]

I am in conversation with Black and Indigenous studies—not to analogize the migrant experience, but to critically examine ongoing histories of flight in the borderlands. Felicity Amaya Schaeffer writes about *vigias*, or watchtowers, used by the Spanish in the southern borderlands to monitor the movements of Indigenous people and argues that the "Indian savage" is the "original threat justifying militarized approaches to border security."[91] Some of the earliest immigration patrols in the desert were formed to detain Asian migrants during the era of Chinese exclusion. As Brandon Shimoda observes, after Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 in 1942, southern Arizona became an "exclusion zone" for Japanese Americans. The state housed at least seven internment sites, two of them occupying the Colorado River and Gila River Indian Reservations—both of whom resisted construction on their lands, uninterested in participating in mass incarceration and militarization.[92] Today, Black and Indigenous migrants are disproportionately targeted by immigration policing, detention, and deportation. By dwelling in these ongoing histories, I attempt what Édouard Glissant calls a poetics of Relation—a refusal of roots and rootedness and instead a search for the other, a "modern form of the sacred."[93]

My project follows an emergent tradition of "fugitive anthropology" that refuses anthropology's—more specifically, activist anthropology's—privileging of "masculine domains of the political—aligning oneself with a formal organization, political party, or ideology more broadly."[94] Like the coauthors of the article "Toward a Fugitive Anthropology," I consider practices that escape institutionalization and policy. In chapter 2, I study touch inside detention centers. The last chapter is a meditation on the dead, who stir us to action though they are not recognized as political actors or as organized in struggle. Like these authors, I could not easily enter and exit the field. Noting that their own fieldwork has been shaped by their sexualized, gendered, and racialized bodies, the coauthors insist "the field" is never fully separate from "home." These distinctions are muddled by their political commitments, ancestral histories, and diasporic connections.

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This is certainly true for me, as a migrant who lived undocumented in this country for almost two decades, Though, I agree with Kirin Narayan's complication of the outsider/insider binary. Narayan proposes that rather than trying to sort out who is authentically a "native anthropologist," it may be more generative to examine all our commitments, entanglements, and privileges in relation to our collaborators.[95]

Fugitive anthropologists critique the trope of ethnographers as martyrs and rethink activist anthropology's endorsement of "lone acts of bravery" that put collaborators at ease at the expense of the woman of color anthropologist's well-being.[96] For the many years I conducted research as a noncitizen, I was hyperaware of my deportability. There were moments in "the field" when I had to walk away from a scene or practice of sanctuary. For part of the time I lived in Arizona, Scott Warren was on trial and facing twenty years in prison on two counts of harboring migrants for offering food, water, and clothing to border crossers. I knew that a conviction for me would mean deportation. In my field notes, I often question if I am a failure for not engaging in certain activities that could lead to my arrest and deportation. At those moments, I describe feeling "like a fraud—for prioritizing my own safety, for being unable or unwilling to engage in the sanctuary practices that I celebrate in my work. And then I remember my dad's words, that I am no one's hero, and my advisor's reminder—that the trope of anthropologist as savior is tied up in a long history of colonialism." In the following pages, I am not fearless nor am I brave. I am not always willing to lay my body on the line.[97] I often come undone in this work. I frequently fail. Neither I nor my collaborators are martyrs or heroes.

In these pages, I attempt to document the entanglements, itineraries, intimacies, and aspirations of people on the move. I wanted to document with care, refusing to replicate images of violence and brutality, using pseudonyms for people and places—unless my collaborator explicitly asked me to name them in the manuscript. Sarah Horton similarly suggests that ethnographic writing "demands care in deciding which parts of the story to divulge to which audiences and how to package potentially controversial material. It also requires care to ensure that research participants are appropriately represented as complex, sympathetic characters rather than as one-dimensional victims of suffering."[98] This book is not mostly, or even largely, about the violences facing migrants on their journeys. Even when militarization and enforcement are foregrounded, I trace the fugitive sacred that creates alternative worlds in the present.

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Leslie Jamison writes about her fears of betraying her interlocutors and notes the limits of the essay form. In her collection *Make It Scream, Make It Burn*, she laments that "representing people always involves reducing them, and calling a project 'done' involves making an uneasy truce with that reduction. But some part of me rails against that compression. Some part of me wants to keep saying, *there's more, there's more*, *there's more*."[99] I am hesitant to call this project done, because every day I read the news or check my inbox and there are more immigration restrictions, more demonstrations against border militarization, and more escape routes around these controls. My project is mobile, and it wants to keep running. Writing this introduction involves making a truce with this reduction. Sanctuary exceeds this page. There are words I wanted to write and others I could not write. There are times I paused the voice recorder or left my notebook in the glove box of my car. There are experiences I avoid narrating and practices I refuse to detail. Dionne Brand might call these my left-hand pages.[100] This is all to say that, behind the sentence, there is a world I am withholding. *There's more, there's more, there's more*.

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Chapter 1, "The Desert: Vanishing Time and Sacred Landscapes," imagines how the Sonoran Desert meanders in ways that defy and unsettle PTD, a 1994 strategy that militarized urban entry points and rerouted migrants to less accessible areas. While recent scholarship has identified land as an accomplice in enforcement, I argue that the desert is fugitive—refusing efforts to control and contain its sacred forces. This chapter draws on humanitarian water drops and interviews with Tohono O'odham and Hia-Ced O'odham land defenders to think about the desert as sacred, at odds with the profane's taboos: metal beams, roadside checkpoints, surveillance technologies. I show how the desert, both positive and negative sacred, exceeds state attempts to turn its forces to utilitarian, profane ends. Rather, it poses a perpetual problem to efforts to seal or secure the border. It is too much—one of the lushest deserts in North America—and is inhabited by more-than-human beings that cannot be entirely policed. They offer escape routes and hidden passages, which human beings navigate through fugitive methods.

Chapter 2, "The Detained: Contraband Touch in the Carceral Borderlands," considers how incarcerated migrants pursue what Bataille calls a "lost intimacy" despite prohibitions on contact. Through conversations with a Venezuelan couple detained in neighboring detention centers in Arizona,

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I show how contraband touch circulates among the smuggled—a concept inspired by Fred Moten and Stefano Harney's shipped. In these pages, I focus on the fugitive sacred as forbidden, prohibited from contacting the profane because of its contagion and restlessness. Inside the prison, touch is excessive. There are rules that limit how those from "outside" can embrace those "inside" the prison. Upon entry, a metal detector scans visitors and guards pat down bodies, disciplining with a coercive touch. Touch is outright banned between those inside the prison—a contraband intimacy that has the potential to inspire disruption and rebellion. Through interviews with Eva Contreras, I trace the fugitive sacred and its restless, rebellious desire to spread.

Chapter 3, "The Deported: Lines of Flight through Nogales, Sonora" studies sanctuary in the wake of deportation. While most sanctuary campaigns focus on preventing deportation, this chapter travels across the southern border with Panchito Olachea, who was deported from the United States and now operates a mobile clinic in Nogales, Mexico, treating migrants and other residents of the border town. In this chapter, I trace Panchito's many conversions and becomings—arguing that the sacred threatens the profane world of things in its impulse for rupture and change. Panchito says he arrived in Nogales drunk and barefoot. He slept among the dead, making home in a cemetery. I follow his life in this *lugar entre medio*, or *nepantla*. I argue that the fugitive sacred is most comfortable here—in the in-between, not interested in settling down in any single place.

Chapter 4, "The Dead: Scenes of Disturbance and Disarticulation," highlights the mobilities of the migrant dead in the Sonoran Desert and how their fugitive movements prompt us to practice sanctuary as ongoing "wake work," to summon Christina Sharpe. Through fieldwork with Álvaro Enciso—a cultural anthropologist and artist who makes and plants crosses for the migrant dead—this chapter highlights the tensions between the urge of the living to lay the dead to rest and the urge of the dead to resist closure. Largely unidentified and anonymous, spread out over miles on the desert floor, the crowd of the dead is restless and unruly. In their haunting, they prompt us to deal with the ongoing and unending nature of violence in the borderlands and unfinished losses in our personal lives. They escape forensic care and humanitarian desires for closure, suggesting that sanctuary is not an arrival nor a destination. Álvaro himself nurtures this haunting, returning every Tuesday with a shovel and cross in hand. In his words, *"así los chingo."*

A note on language: Throughout this book, I use "Latinx"—a more expansive term that resists the gender binary implicit in Latino/a—to refer to people of Latin American descent. I also use "migrant" to describe people

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who cross national borders. I do not differentiate between refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants, or migrants. In doing so, I reject hierarchies created to determine who is worthy of migrating and whose entrance is deemed legitimate. I also rarely translate fieldwork material into English. There are select moments when I offer English-language readers excerpts from the Spanish-language material. This is an intentional meandering maneuver, in which I echo migrants' fugitive flights. Anthropologists have compared the ethnographic task to translation and, in these pages, I am translating scenes that often did not take place in English. I am inviting the reader into a world that is not immediately available or accessible. Sometimes, I translate select words to emphasize affect or tone. Other times, I intervene with clarifications or clues. All translations are my own. And though I used to avoid italicizing text in Spanish because I felt the italics othered my first language, I have chosen to employ italics here. This is a poetic and aesthetic choice. Italics make words appear mobile, almost as if they are blowing in the wind, slanted and crooked, running toward an exit. In my eyes, the italics are fugitive. Migrants are on the run in the borderlands, and so are their words on these pages. *Adelante*.

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Notes

INTRODUCTION

Epigraph: Gumbs, *Spill*, 95.

1 Felons, Not Families is part of a long history of criminalizing migrants, creating harmful binaries that ignore the ways immigration policy determines what activity counts as criminal and who is eligible for deportation. A. Naomi Paik elaborates on the narratives and laws that contribute to criminalization in "Abolitionist Futures and the US Sanctuary Movement."

2 In 2011, ICE released a memo detailing its sensitive locations policy, which prohibits certain enforcement activities at schools; hospitals; churches, synagogues, mosques, or other institutions of worship; sites of funerals, weddings, or other public religious ceremonies; and sites that are the occurrence of public demonstrations, such as marches, rallies, or parades. There are, of course, exceptions to this rule. While Juana was living in sanctuary, she told me about an Indonesian asylum seeker, Binsar Siahaan, living at a church in Maryland, who was arrested by ICE officers who knowingly violated the agency's sensitive locations policy.

3 Bagelman, *Sanctuary City*, xvii.

4 Bagelman, *Sanctuary City*, 95.

5 Bagelman, *Sanctuary City*, 68. Bagelman turns to medieval England to trace a history of "rituals of supplication," or performances that require migrants to confess their distress and desperation in exchange for welcome and hope. She shows how sanctuary seekers had to first confess their crimes to clergy (in elaborate detail), surrender their arms, pay a fee, and agree to obey the rules and customs of the religious space. She explains that the ritual was highly dramatized and that the person seeking sanctuary was often expected to wear a letter branded on the skin to publicize their criminal status (*Sanctuary City*, 79–80).

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6 Orozco and Andersen, “Sanctuary in the Age of Trump.”
7 Lurie, “They Built a Utopian Sanctuary.”
8 Thank you to Krishni Burns who provided these definitions and helped me think through the differences between *sacer* and *sanctus*.
9 Benveniste*, Indo-European Language*.
10 Pérez writes about micropractices such as ceremonial food preparation and storytelling in the kitchen that are relegated to the sidelines of religious life, but that nevertheless are crucial in “fashioning sacred selves, spaces, and societies” (Pérez, *Religion in the Kitchen*, 11). Peña describes acts of devotional labor, including walking long distances for pilgrimage and sweeping the sidewalk in front of a shrine that sanctify space and imbue devotees’ “bodies and keepsakes with a form of the sacred” (Peña, *Performing Piety*, 44).
11 Caillois, *Man and the Sacred*, 35.
12 Caillois, *Man and the Sacred*, 22.
13 Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms,* 44.
14 Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms*, 38.
15 Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*.
16 I learned to think about the sacred and excess as a teaching assistant in Todd Ramón Ochoa’s “Introduction to Religion and Culture” course. These insights would not be possible without his lectures.
17 Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, 11.
18 Caillois, *Man and the Sacred*, 39.
19 Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms*, 322, 327.
20 Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms*, 322.
21 Douglas, *Purity and Danger,* 2.
22 Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 5.
23 Gandolfo, *The City at Its Limits*, xii.
24 Bataille, *Theory of Religion*, 52.
25 Bataille, *Erotism*, 67–68.
26 Gandolfo, *The City at its Limits*, 14.
27 Bataille, *Erotism*, 63.
28 Isasi-Díaz, *En La Lucha*.
29 Caillois, *Man and the Sacred*, 99.
30 Lloyd Barba, in *Sowing the Sacred*, similarly uses “the profane” to refer to forms of routinized violence faced by Mexican farmworkers from the 1920s to the 1960s. He writes about the profane as “dehumanization, biological reductionism, delousing, DDT fumigation, pesticide exposure while out at work, wage exploitation, relegation to the status of replaceable laborers, squalid housing, polluted water, denial of cultural and legal citizenship, and deportation along with its constant threats” (*Sowing the Sacred*, 7–8).
31 Through their social movements and political organizing, many do lay claim to the United States. Slogans like “Home Is Here” and “Here to Stay” show these longings for settlement and stasis. Sanctuary campaigns that

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stress how long a migrant has lived in this country, how they have become beloved members of their communities, and how they cultivate social ties in their schools and workplaces are other examples of the ways migrants make claims to home and roots.

32 Anzaldúa, "La Prieta," 232. *This Bridge Called My Back*.
33 Ochoa, *Society of the Dead*, 8.
34 Caillois, *Man and the Sacred*, 34 (my emphasis).
35 Bayetti Flores, "The Pulse Nightclub Shooting."
36 Torres, "In Praise of Latin Night" (my emphasis).
37 Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*, 141.
38 Truett, *Fugitive Landscapes*, 6.
39 Magrane and Cokines, *The Sonoran Desert*.
40 Papadopoulos, Stephenson, and Tsianos, *Escape Routes,* 43.
41 Dillon, *Fugitive Life*, 55.
42 Papadopoulos, Stephenson, and Tsianos, *Escape Routes*.
43 St. John, *Line in the Sand*, 16.
44 Zamora, "Poems," 31.
45 Halberstam in Moten and Harney, *The Undercommons*, 11.
46 "Felipe Baeza with Zoë Hopkins."
47 Moten and Harney, *The Undercommons*, 97.
48 Lethabo King, *The Black Shoals*, 122, 123.
49 Pelaez Lopez, *Intergalactic Travels*, 82.
51 Pelaez Lopez, *Intergalactic Travels*, 91.
52 Pelaez Lopez, *Intergalactic Travels*, 77.
53 See Cunningham, *God and Caesar*, for more description on the process of declaring sanctuary (32–34). *Testimonio* as a genre emerged alongside insurgent and revolutionary movements in mid-twentieth-century Latin America. Told by witnesses of state violence or colonial injustice, these narratives are expressions of struggle and survival. They challenge official narratives told by the elite and government agents and instead privilege women, the poor, illiterate, and Indigenous. Rigoberta Menchú's autobiography is among the most well-known *testimonios*.
54 Fife, "Letter to William French Smith, March 23, 1982."
55 Fife, "Letter to William French Smith, March 23, 1982."
56 Guardado, *Church as Sanctuary*, 19.
57 Robinson, *Black Marxism*, 137.
58 Roberts, *Freedom as Marronage*.
59 Purnell, *Becoming Abolitionists*, 107, 108.
60 However, as I will mention in chapter 1 by citing the work of Hazel Carby, maroons sometimes collaborated with colonial powers by surveilling formerly enslaved fugitives and suppressing rebellions.
61 Villareal, "Sanctuaryscapes in the North American Southwest," 44, 44, 47.

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62 Rabben, *Sanctuary and Asylum*, 32.
63 Cunningham, *God and Caesar*, 69 (original emphasis).
64 Cunningham, *God and Caesar*, 701.
65 Chávez, "Sanctuary, Fugitivity, and Insurgent Models," 91.
66 Cunningham, *God and Caesar*, 40.
67 Coutin, *The Culture of Protest*, 110.
68 Cunningham, *God and Caesar*, 175.
69 *Basta!*, quoted in Cunningham, *God and Caesar*, 40.
70 In an interview with *Borderless*, Arellano shares: "The Puerto Rican community was one of the most important communities that helped me during that time. All of them, including young people, came to the church to protect me. There was one person always outside guarding the church entry. The most impactful moment for me was when that person held up the Puerto Rican flag as a symbol of resistance and the lucha." Arellano quoted in Hurtado, "Keeping the Faith."
71 Caminero-Santangelo, "The Voice of the Voiceless," 96.
72 Caminero-Santangelo, "The Voice of the Voiceless," 97.
73 Chávez, *Queer Migration Politics*, 61.
74 Chávez, "From Sanctuary to a Queer Politics of Fugitivity," 65.
75 Paik, "Abolitionist Futures," 16.
76 Groups like Mijente also embrace the queer, fugitive, and abolitionist visions proposed by Chávez and Paik. Tania Unzueta—the organization's political director—calls for dismantling "the current policing apparatus that acts as a funnel to mass incarceration and the deportation machine" (Unzueta, "Expanding Sanctuary"). She proposes expanding sanctuary by decriminalizing and reducing arrests, eliminating the use of local and state gang databases (which are used to exclude people from protections in sanctuary cities), ending local contracts with immigration enforcement, decreasing police funding, and reinvesting in community institutions. For years, Mijente has pointed to the limits of sanctuary cities, showing how—through contracts with data broker companies—ICE is able to bypass sanctuary protections and collect data on undocumented migrants. See Unzueta, "Expanding Sanctuary."
77 Coelho, *The Alchemist,* 147.
78 Unzueta Carrasco and Seif, "Disrupting the Dream," 283.
79 Nicholls, *The Dreamers*, 50.
80 Unzueta Carrasco and Seif, "Disrupting the Dream," 288.
81 Unzueta Carrasco and Seif, "Disrupting the Dream," 291.
82 Unzueta Carrasco and Seif, "Disrupting the Dream," 296, 297.
83 Günel, Varma, and Watanabe, "A Manifesto for Patchwork Ethnography."
84 Vogt, *Lives in Transit*, 20.
85 Zambreno, *Drifts*, 5.
86 Rosas, "The Thickening Borderlands," 336.

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87 Inda and Dowling, *Governing Migration through Crime*, 10.
88 Walia, *Border and Rule*, 21.
89 Walia, *Border and Rule*, 29.
90 Brand, *A Map to the Door of No Return*, 24.
91 Schaeffer, *Unsettled Borders*, 4.
92 Shimoda, "State of Erasure."
93 Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 16.
94 Berry et al., "Toward a Fugitive Anthropology," 550.
95 Narayan, "How Native Is a 'Native' Anthropologist?," 677.
96 Berry et al., "Toward a Fugitive Anthropology," 547.
97 See Goldstein, "Laying the Body on the Line."
98 Horton, *They Leave Their Kidneys in the Fields*, 188.
99 Jamison, *Make It Scream, Make It Burn*, 148 (original emphasis).
100 Brand, *The Blue Clerk*, 3.

1. THE DESERT: VANISHING TIME AND SACRED LANDSCAPES

Epigraph: Gómez-Barris, *The Extractive Zone*, 3.

1 Riley, *The Bahidaj Harvest*.
2 Schermerhorn, *Walking to Magdalena*, 6.
3 Anzaldúa, *Borderlands*.
4 Underhill, *The Papago Indians*, 49.
5 Wright, *Long Ago Told*, 7.
6 Wright, *Long Ago Told*, 8.
7 For more background on PTD and its deadly consequences, see the collaborative series of reports by No More Deaths / No Más Muertes and Coalición de Derechos Humanos—*Deadly Apprehension Methods: The Consequences of Chase and Scatter in the Wilderness*, *Interference with Humanitarian Aid: Death and Disappearance on the US-Mexico Border*, and *Left to Die: Border Patrol, Search and Rescue, and the Crisis of Disappearance*, http://www.thedisappearedreport.org/reports.html.
8 US Border Patrol, "Border Patrol Strategic Plan 1994."
9 Samaritans hike migrant trails and leave behind water, food, and other supplies in an effort to mitigate suffering—practicing a mobile approach to aid. I met Álvaro while volunteering with the Tucson Samaritans during the summer of 2015. The group introduced me to direct aid in the borderlands, and it was by joining them on water drops that I entered into relation with the Sonoran Desert.
10 US Border Patrol, "Border Patrol Strategic Plan 1994" (my emphasis).
11 Simpson, *As We Have Always Done*, 178.
12 Though, as I mentioned in the introduction, especially after the Sanctuary trials, sanctuary participants in the Southwest were selective about

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