The Concept of *No Man’s-Land* as a Categorial Error with Meaning

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Abstract

“No-man’s-land” is a concept that, according to Campillo (2015), tends to be used to interpret the walled borders increasingly implemented by the governments in our globalizing world. This article is intended to show that the use of this concept applied to this phenomenon is descriptively inadequate, and to denounce that this use is intended to hide dynamics of injustice brought into action by these control devices. Following the conceptual framework proposed by Nancy Fraser, these dynamics will be systematized as dynamics of economic exploitation, identity recognition and political domination.

Keywords: borders, walled borders, no-man’s-land, exploitation, representation, domination, collective identity.

In the social world, discourses have the power “to constitute the data through the statement, to make see and believe, to confirm or transform the vision of the world and, through that, the action on the world” (Bourdieu 2001, 98). It is not, therefore, surprising that “symbolic power”, the ability to establish the hegemonic discourses or concepts from which reality is understood, is a fundamental moment within the social relations. Therefore, an attitude of suspicion seems prudent and

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even necessary: the concepts that their holders favour may have the purpose of concealing the relations that underlie their power and limit from the outset the possible action on the world.

The transformative potential of any theory depends on the fact that the categories it uses are adjusted to the reality on which it is intended to intervene (Sayer 2000, 18), that it can help us understand the real social relations that underlie the unequal distribution of power we find in the world. If this is so, the examination of discourses acquires for all critical thinking a decisive importance. To understand an overwhelmingly complex reality, humanity’s first step has always been to reduce complexity by developing conceptual frameworks. However, given this tendency, the fundamental task is “to determine what reductions of complexity will make best sense of the contemporary world and which ones are leaving out too many tones and voices” (Wimmer & Schiller 2002, 235). It is necessary to analyze whether they serve to justify injustices, whether they favour the concealment of the responsibilities of agents, whether they serve to conceal abuses and privileges or whether they help to neutralize the possibility of their transformation. In short, it is necessary to examine whether concepts and discourses move us in an emancipatory direction and help us to “the self-clarification of the struggles and wishes of the age” (Marx 1843).

This article addresses the growing use of the concept of no-man’s-land to refer to the “walled” border devices that have multiplied across the globe since the fall of the Berlin Wall. Is this concept applicable to this phenomenon? Is it an acceptable description of reality? What does its increasing use tell us and what are its purposes? The aim of this text is to unmask the features that make it an ideological notion, that is, a descriptively erroneous concept but one that is extremely useful for certain agents, governmental or otherwise. From the point of view of their intentions and interests, therefore, this would in no way be an “error”. The idea of a “no-man’s-land” contributes in a convenient way to the concealment of various structural dynamics for which “walled” borders are essential parts. Dynamics that favour the development of relations of exploitation, subordination and domination.
I. “No-man’s-land” and borders in the context of a globalizing world

The concept of no-man’s-land is part of the Western legal-political tradition. As Antonio Campillo points out (Campillo 2015, 22-28), in Roman law it was already used “to designate land that does not yet has an owner and which can therefore be appropriated by the first occupier”. After the dramatic changes in thinking that followed the “discovery” of America, the meaning of this concept was transformed to serve the geopolitical interests of the European imperial powers. It then went on to refer to “the overseas land inhabited by ‘wild’ peoples and therefore susceptible to occupation by some ‘civilised’ European state” or to “the border land which is disputed by two neighbouring states and which gives rise to wars, occupation regimes or international legal disputes” (26-27).

After the end of the European imperialist period, these three uses of the concept of no-man’s-land have ceased to have practical application. Firstly, against the original use in Roman law, the international system no longer accepts that there is any fraction of territory that has no owner and can be appropriated by the first to occupy it. Secondly, this idea has been abandoned as an instrument of international law to justify the occupation of territories inhabited by “uncivilized” people. Finally, with the generalization of the modern state to the territories of the five continents, every part of the planet is part of one state or belongs to all of them (international waters). Border conflicts do not occur because the disputed land belongs to nobody, but because each of the agents involved claims jurisdiction over it.

Due to these transformations in the way of representing the territory and its political cartography, this concept has been invested with two new meanings. On the one hand, it has come to designate “the border land between two neighbouring states which is walled by one of them to prevent the free movement of persons”. On the other hand, in current public debates the term may also refer to “land that is declared ‘common heritage of mankind’ and from which any territorial claim by anyone is excluded” (Campillo 2015, 27).

Here we will pay attention to the first of these two new uses, the concept of no-man’s-land applied to walled borders to prevent the free
movement of people, which Campillo only register without further analysis. Our concern will be focused, in particular, on the meaning and effect of applying this concept to this phenomenon. Undoubtedly, the understanding of borders is undergoing a profound change as a result of the current phase of globalization (Balibar 2004, 1). By this we are not simply referring to a change in the way in which we theoretically represent this concept to ourselves but, especially, to the transformations that borders are experiencing in their functional and material, spatial and temporal configuration, with the active participation of states. In this globalizing world, the primary function of borders is no longer simply to “delimit the territorial scope of each of the political entities recognized by the international community” (Velasco 2015, 51). Borders have become multi-scalar phenomena that can no longer be understood only from an international perspective (Fraser 2010, 43). They are essential pieces in the production of the “heterogeneity of the global” (Mezzadra & Neilson 2013, ix-x) and as a consequence they have also themselves been pluralized. Borders are no longer simple lines, but complex systems of various devices. They play a key role in the generation of the commodity labour power, according to the peculiar characteristics (heterogeneous and flexible) demanded by the global economy (61-93), incorporating not only spatial but also temporal dimensions (131-166). Not only are they devices to mark the exterior of states, but they also fragment spatially, normatively and economically the interior of the territory to generate the diverse nodes and differentiated spaces necessary for the articulation of highly selective and specialized global networks (Ong 2006, 75-79). They are essential for the constitution of identities and for collective self-representation (Brown 2010, 39-42). But it is important to note that these collective identities and representations are no longer coextensive with the territorial boundaries that delimit the nation-states.

In any case, the aim of this text is not to analyze all these transformations that are taking place both in the concept of frontiers and in their concrete manifestations, nor the wide range of phenomena that cross them. But rather to consider a particular configuration of them, the walled edges of the states that we see proliferating throughout the planet, and the application of the concept of no-man’s-land to them. This
analysis, however, will have to be done without losing sight of the above-mentioned complexity. As we said in the introduction of this paper, the criticism of discourses and concepts must be done with consideration of their adjustment to our social reality and what happens pragmatically when we apply them to this reality that can fit them or not.

2. The concept of no-man’s-land form a structural perspective

Applying Fraser’s terminology to this area (Fraser 2010), we could say that borders are systems of devices in which political, economic and recognition dynamics are intertwined. This approach is directly related to the so-called intersectional perspective, which, however, routinely address social inequalities by giving priority to the ways in which gender, race or other identity categories are mutually constituted (Walby, Armstrong, & Strid 2012, 231), in the line of what Yuval-Davis calls “politics of belonging” (Yuval-Davis 2007, 561-574; 2011, 1-16). In contrast, Fraser’s perspective would have the virtue of offering a large-scale theoretical framework. It adds to the questions of identity and recognition the dimensions of capitalist domination and production and distribution, emphasizing the need to analyze how these three structural mechanisms shape each other.

The complexities of the globalizing world require us to reconceptualize and broaden the notion of social system (Urry 2005, 243-249). In parallel, a theoretical framework must be developed that is capable of making visible the various structural dynamics of inequality through which increasingly complex, changing and flexible social systems are being developed and interconnected. Only by recognizing the complexity of the structural arrangements that we subject to normative evaluation, consisting of “levels that are linked within a social system, emerging from each other, but which are not reducible to each other” (Walby et al. 2012, 228), can we overcome the risk of reductionism and address large-scale issues with a global horizon (Benhabib 1999, 335-361).

Borders are fundamental devices in the functional, spatial, temporal and representational production of our globalizing world. They are undoubtedly one of those planetary scale issues that call for an
expanded intersectional perspective. In the following I will apply Fraser’s conceptual framework of global justice (2010) to the phenomenon of walled borders. The fundamental features of three closely related dynamics, separable only analytically, which I will call dynamics of domination, economic dynamics of production and distribution, and identity and representational dynamics of oneself, the world and the other, will be outlined schematically. The aim of this paper is to explain why it is not appropriate to apply the concept no-man’s-land to walled borders for any of these dynamics. Moreover, I will argue that this use is intended to camouflage, through an erroneous and self-interested description of the circumstances, some of the injustices generated by the global economic system, the global responsibilities or to exempt states from their obligation to guarantee the rights of all those who step on their formally recognized territory. In all cases, as we shall see, borders cannot be understood as “no one’s”. On the contrary, they are closely related to agents and systems from which such a concept would seek to dissociate.

We will begin by analysing the dynamics in which the concept of no-man’s-land has a more direct application, the dynamics of domination. Among the multiple devices that constitute the walled borders, it has become frequent to speak of a no-man’s land that could be found between the various fences and walls. This term is intentionally applied to make believe that this territorial area does not belong to either of the two adjacent sovereignties. Thus, neither of them would be obliged to protect and fulfil the rights of the people who could be found there, being thus absolved from the responsibility for their suffering and the injustices they suffer.

In the other two types of dynamics, we do not find discourses that apply in such a literal way the concept of no man’s land. In these cases, what we will try to make visible are discourses that do apply the deep sense of this concept. What is found underlying the use of the concept of no-man’s-land is the idea that X does not belong to Y (to any Y). It implies the effort to disconnect the suffering and injustices generated by the borders from some other type of dynamics or collectives, with the purpose of absolving them of their responsibility in them and/or of presenting the structural dynamics implied as intrinsically just. To the extent that in these cases the application and function of this idea is not
so evident, they are of greater interest to our effort to unmask ideological discourses. In the case of economic dynamics, we will point out an ideological use of this idea consisting in presenting walled borders as devices that do not belong to the economic logic of our world in globalization, but rather to a nationalist logic in open contradiction with the former. Our economic order is thus absolved of the suffering generated by such frontiers. In the case of identity and representation dynamics, ideological use is found in the attempt to present walled borders as devices that merely respond to a functional logic of controlling the flow of people between autonomous and clearly delimited communities. They are thus disconnected from the processes through which we interpret the world and ourselves. This disconnection helps to hide the contingent processes of elaboration of anti-democratic political identities and to naturalize a distorted image of the reality of globalization.

3. Dynamics of domination

Here is where we most literally see at work the concept of no-man’s-land applied to walled borders. Surprisingly, Campillo does not analyses its function on the legal and political dimension. We should not, however, overlook the fact that in recent times,

“the understanding of the border as a simple administrative line of separation clearly drawn between two sovereign states (borderline) has been losing weight and at the same time the idea of a wider and more diffuse borderland has been promoted, a semantic mutation that seeks to make the application of legal norms more flexible” (Velasco 2016, 86).

The walls that are erected at the borders are not actually built following the topographical layout of the boundary lines. The borders widen spatially, giving rise to a series of interrelated devices. Among such devices (double or triple walls and gates, outsourced checkpoints, internment centres, etc.), it is imagined a no-man’s land, which does not fully belong to any of the adjoining sovereignties. Pretending to make us
believe that this is how reality is correctly described has a clear political intention: to institute a territory in which the “rule of law” characteristic of modern state power does not prevail. In these configurations, “the literal suspending of law, accountability, and legitimacy and the introduction of arbitrary and extralegal state prerogative that occurs in states of emergency” are at stake (Brown 2010, 31). These walls go beyond their mere physical character and are transformed into situations in which there is no law. The “neutral zone” between the fences that separate Spain and Morocco in Ceuta and Melilla is a clear example of this. The Spanish government uses this discourse to quickly expel people to the neighbouring country without going through the lengthy procedures required by law.

Applying the concept of no-man’s-land to these spatial configurations works in favour of the power dynamics of states by concealing some of their important characteristics and absolving them of serious responsibilities. From the point of view of the applicable legal rights, at least for constitutional democracies, the lines separating two states are geometrical lines without thickness, borderlines, precisely defined. It should always be clear what rights apply to all subjects on each piece of land. The idea of borderland is a mere self-interested fiction. Postulating no-man’s land where rights are suspended is an obvious violation of the legal guarantees that are supposed to apply throughout the state territory.

In many respects, states have an interest in masking their actions and discharging themselves of their responsibilities. Privatization or outsourcing of control systems plays a key role in achieving this objective. One should avoid falling into the trap of some discourses that work in favour of these interests. Mezzadra and Neilson, for example, following Teubner, note a “fragmentation of normativity” and the growing relevance of the normativity decided by private companies (Mezzadra & Neilson 2013, 183). Such fragmentation would imply recognizing “that normative arrangements do not necessarily derive from formal law” (Mezzadra & Neilson 2013, 183). According to these authors, in more and more relevant social spheres, private agents are replacing retreating states as those responsible for control and normative regulation. The transformation of border control into a lucrative business for private companies is a good example of this (Andersson...
2014). In these areas where the state would no longer be the responsible authority, these private actors “make use of their own sources of law, which are developed outside the creation of national laws and international treaties” (Teubner 2010, 332). The problem with this rhetoric is that it runs the risk of concealing the role of states in transferring areas of control and decision-making to other actors not subject to public scrutiny, thereby discharging their responsibilities. If states seem to withdraw from control in some areas, it is because they have allowed it to be so (Sassen 2003, 7-16). This rhetoric of private regulation as a source of law independent of the state source ignores the fact that sovereignty remains a fundamental structuring and limiting framework. In the neoliberal world, the state remains the fundamental builder of the space and conditions of the market (Brown 2003, 4-14). These private companies do not constitute a source of autonomous law. They must continue to adapt their internal regulations to the national laws where they operate.

The land occupied by border devices has in every sense rigorous possessors and organizers. These mechanisms are designed by specific actors, especially state governments with the explicit support and even active collaboration of private citizens3, and respond to the specific interests and policies of these actors. Applying the concept of no-man’s-land to border systems means absolving all these actors of the serious responsibilities they bear for the deaths of thousands of people and the acute suffering of many more in these border areas. It is to blind ourselves to the intentions and the agency that underpin this walling activity.

4. Economic dynamics

As we said before, in this and in the next structural dynamic we do not find the explicit and literal application of the concept of no-man’s-land,

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3 In this sense, Brown’s description (2010) of the participation in border control of citizens residing in U.S. territories bordering Mexico, forming armed patrols and pressuring their political representatives to tighten control measures, is very illustrative. Of course, border walls also face opposition from many other citizens who recognize their pernicious effects and fight for a fairer way to organize the global system.
but certain discourses that without ostensibly applying it are based on its basic idea, an effort to disconnect ideologically (in the Marxist sense) some agents or structural dynamics from their unjust effects. To present the order of our world in globalization as the effect of neutral economic dynamics, as the product of social phenomena that necessarily respond to human nature or borders as just limits of natural, closed and self-sufficient societies, thought from the model of the individual, implies to place this order and its unjust effects in a no-man’s-land, for which nobody is responsible, inaccessible to our desires for change.

It has become commonplace among many thinkers to point to a supposed “contradiction” between two globalizing dynamics. One of them promotes fluidity and free movement in economic and financial exchanges, while the other promotes the growing walling and securitization of borders with the aim of preventing the free movement of people (Campillo 2015, 56). It would seem that for these authors the main problem pointed out by the walled borders for the current phase of globalization would be that the fluidity and free movement of free markets have not been fully generalized. In contrast to the direction shown by the economic logic of free trade and the liberalisation of the financial markets, the management of the movement of people, with its creation of unequal social statuses, would have taken the opposite direction, which belongs rather to a narrow social-nationalistic logic. We would be faced with two opposing strategies that belong to two opposing logics. The one applied to the control of people would not belong to the economic system of our globalizing world4.

This conclusion, however, doesn’t grasp the way the border devices—among others—produce the social divisions and power relations that have always structured the economic (Du Toit 2004, 1002). It is based on a superficial understanding of global economic dynamics and maintains the naïve representation, forged in the 1990s, of contemporary globalization processes as neutral, a smooth and homogeneous sphere in

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4 To be clear, here we are not discussing that the ideal of a perfect free market would be compatible or not with border controls, but the idea that only that ideal and not the social stratifications and divisions that these controls create is a proper piece of the economic system and its logic.
which any connection, flow or movement is possible\textsuperscript{5} (Johnson \textit{et al.} 2011, 61). This does not allow us to grasp the fragmented and complex logic of global phenomena, the violence through which their connections and disconnections are created and the radical heterogeneity of the different nodes through which they are articulated (Mezzadra & Neilson 2013, 209-212). In the context of a neoliberal economic system that requires the heterogenization of the workforce in order to maximize the flexibility and adaptability of markets, it is essential to note the decisive role that walled borders play in it. The reinforcement of borders responds to an intentional and fully coherent process of labour inclusion through the legal production of illegality (141-150). By making immigration more difficult and costly, unidirectional migration increases and the return of illegal immigrants is reduced due to difficulties in re-entering the country of destination (Brown 2010, 91). This forces migrants to remain in these countries as recognized, or even arguably needy, but nonetheless unauthorized subjects (Sassen 2008, 294-296). The effect of this is to reduce the cost of their labour for increasingly precarious jobs. They become victims of greater and easier exploitation than if they could return to their countries of origin and enter the host countries with greater flexibility. For all these reasons, it would seem that the walled borders “are not so much aimed at organizing people’s migrations as at optimizing the mechanisms for exploiting transnational workers” (Velasco 2015, 63).

In the current phase of globalization, economic dynamics go far beyond the framework of the nation state. The modes of production, labour relations and the times and spaces of global capitalism are diversifying and becoming more flexible. In this context, the proliferation and increasing complexity of border mechanisms are paralleled by the systemic needs of today’s globalized capitalism. It is no coincidence that territorial boundaries are no longer understood as simple lines but rather as complex enclaves or systems of devices. Today’s state borders are often made up of terrible walls, no doubt, but

\textsuperscript{5} A beneficial narrative for the victorious neoliberalism that after the fall of its Soviet rival it set out to colonize the whole world as the true representative of freedom.
also of internment centres, demilitarised areas, free zones, special economic zones, etc. A primary objective of these elements is to shape and regulate the labour market and produce the commodity of labor power (Mezzadra & Neilson 2013, 101-102). Border devices proliferate and diversify to generate the multiplicity of labor force, time, rhythms, practices and regulatory norms that demand capitalist production processes that “are organized in hybrid and flexible networks that extend across increasingly differentiated global terrains” (65-66).

In analyzing the phenomenon of the increasing securitization of inter-state borders, we should not overestimate and be blinded by the dazzling violent spectacle of such reinforcement. Confronted with the terrible spectacle of violence and suffering that we often see on our televisions, the urgency of providing answers and urging action means that the injustices produced by borders are generally addressed from the most direct and least controversial rhetoric of human rights and humanitarian action, rather than from the slow and painstaking processes of digging into socio-structural conditions and elucidating responsibilities. This can cause us to lose sight of the complex processes of the inclusion of labour through the borders and its relationship with global economic dynamics, and that these processes are intentionally constructed to benefit some more than others, who could be held accountable. We must not represent these border mechanisms as dynamics that do not belong to the logic of global markets. Such representation works in favor of an “economicism” whose mission is to absolve global markets of the violence and exploitation they generate.

5. Identity and representational dynamics

Walled borders are often represented as a device whose function is to strictly control and limit the movement of people. If this were the case, given the global scale of migration flows and the numerous transgressions of borders, we would only have to proclaim that these mechanisms are pointless due to their functional inefficiency. However, this is not the case. The function of these devices is much more complex. As we saw in the previous section, the production of illegality through
the transgressions of border controls is an essential part in the constitution of the globalized economic system. But regarding the dynamics we are considering here, the idea that the construction of walls is solely a matter of controlling border crossings does not capture the deepest connections between the borders, the state and its citizenry. According to Wendy Brown’s analysis of the common characteristics of a diversity of examples of walled borders, but specially, those between the United States of America and México and Israel and Palestine (Brown 2010), this idea does not capture their symbolic role and the function of the interpretation of the world that they try to impose.

The walled borders play an important role, firstly, in the constitution of the identity of the citizens supposedly protected by them and, secondly, in the creation of a distorted understanding of the autonomy of the states, the threats they oppose and of how our globalizing world is and works. Projecting on walled borders the idea that they belong to no one, seeing them as devices that do not respond to the interests of specific agents but are simply the necessary marks of the natural borders of closed and self-sufficient communities, would help to hide the connections between the symbolic and the factual and to support the misrepresentation of the global and the concealment of interests and responsibilities that work on this level.

Firstly, the crisis of sovereignty in the globalizing world, the diminishing capacity of states to control transnational flows and the growing global role of other non-state actors threaten the imaginary on which individual and national identity is based. Against this, the popular desire to erect walls restores to the state an image of sovereign power that no longer corresponds to reality: the walled borders “often function theatrically, projecting power and efficaciousness that they do not and cannot actually exercise and that they also performatively contradict” (Brown 2010, 25). But the impressive materiality and the enormous resources spent on its construction and maintenance cannot hide the precariousness of this projection. It has also been highlighted the paradoxical reality that these complex devices have the effect of precisely producing what they are meant to eliminate: more migrant illegality, increased sense of threats and insecurity, or the intensification of enmity (Andersson 2014, 8; Brown 2010, 34). Subsequently, contemporary
walled borders help to shape identities in a particular direction: they “produce a collective ethos and subjectivity that is defensive, parochial, nationalistic, and militarized. They generate an increasingly closed and policed collective identity in place of the open society they would defend” (Brown 2010, 40). In a reinforcing way, for a subjectivity constituted in this direction, walled protection becomes a requirement, a necessary condition for psychological well-being, demanding more and more fortifications.

Secondly, these devices foster a distorted understanding of how our globalizing world is and works and how its diverse agents relate to each other. They constitute an image of the world that favours the concealment of “the reality of global interdependence and global disorder with stage set productions of intact nationhood, autonomy and self-sufficiency” (Brown 2010, 104). They cover up the interdependencies of the global system and the dynamics of exploitation of the neoliberal order. This imaginative effect is relevant insofar as it works in favour of at least two sources of injustice. On the one hand, by staging the self-sufficiency of the nation-state, they help to maintain what has come to be called “methodological nationalism” as the reality of the global order, in spite of its obvious inadequacy:

“Methodological nationalism is a stance in the social sciences that unjustifiably presupposes the nation state, uncritically treats it as the natural form of social organization and/or reifies it. The nation state is assumed to completely control geographical space and is treated as synonymous with society. Methodological nationalism leads to a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of social reality by failing to recognize transnational, sub- and supra- state organizations, and by not taking into account how nations are situated in and constituted by local, transnational and global forces” (Sager 2016, 43).

Through this way of framing reality, it is hidden that the new order of sovereignty in the globalizing world goes beyond the national units. It absolves and places beyond critical analysis the transnational corporations and neo-liberal regulations to which our governments are
subjected, as well as the responsibilities of some nations in the misery of others. This encourages an unsustainable division between “insiders” and “outsiders”. An image of the nation as a closed social system in which the wealth of the insiders is explained exclusively as something endogenous and the poverty of the outsiders as something with which they have no connection (Beck 2004; Pogge 2002, 139-144; Wimmer & Schiller 2002).

On the other hand, and in connection with this, the symbolic relationship between the dominant and the dominated, the exploiter and the exploited, the privileged by the global order and the victim is reversed. Walled borders are represented as the protections that a vulnerable and innocent population needs from the ubiquitous and shapeless threat of transnational flows. “Walling”, through this twisted dynamic of recognition in which the privileged are presented as victims to be protected, “literally screens out a confrontation with global inequality or local colonial domination. It facilitates denial of the dependency of the privileged on the exploited and of the agency of the dominant in producing the resistance of the oppressed” (Brown 2010, 122). The rhetoric of walled borders, together with any discourse such as that of “no-man’s-land” that tends to hide their connection to the identities and interests of specific actors, is in opposition to global justice. They give free rein to nationalist chauvinism on the part of the countries that benefit most from the global order.

6. Conclusion

Walled borders are a fundamental device of the systems through which our globalizing world is shaped and made meaningful. These systems can create injustice. Understanding how borders work, in connection with other elements that constitute these systems, is key to fighting it. The conceptual frameworks through which we analyze the world’s phenomena can help or hinder this goal. It has been argued here that the growing application of the concept of no-man’s-land, and its underlying logic that fosters us to disconnect agents and systems, to walled borders hinders it. This is so because by describing them as devices opposed to the logic of the global economic system or as necessary marks of the
natural borders of clearly defined political communities or as not belonging to the territory of any rule of law, they tend to conceal the close connections and responsibilities that constitute our globalizing world.

The injustices generated by any institutional device cannot be understood without connecting it to the broader social context to which it belongs. The links between the walled borders and the wider social systems to which they belong have been schematically proposed following three dynamics: first, the dynamics of domination by which the obligations of states towards large numbers of migrants are concealed, secondly, the economic dynamics surrounding the construction of a global marketplace, and, finally, the symbolic dynamics that relate imaginary representations to the constitution of the identities of the agents. Applying the concept of no-man’s-land to the context generated by the dynamics we have outlined here is a clear spurious application of an idea with the aim of concealing exploitation or domination, to the benefit of the most powerful states, some of their citizens and transnational agents.

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