

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

FILED

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS

JAN 13 2020

FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT

MOLLY C. DWYER, CLERK
U.S. COURT OF APPEALS

WILBERT ALEXIS ROMERO-CASTRO,

No. 14-72664

Petitioner,

Agency No. A200-692-550

v.

MEMORANDUM*

WILLIAM P. BARR, Attorney General,

Respondent.

On Petition for Review of an Order of the
Board of Immigration Appeals

Submitted January 8, 2020**

Before: CALLAHAN, NGUYEN, and HURWITZ, Circuit Judges.

Wilbert Alexis Romero-Castro, a native and citizen of Mexico, petitions for review of the Board of Immigration Appeals' ("BIA") order dismissing his appeal from an immigration judge's decision denying his application for asylum, withholding of removal, and relief under the Convention Against Torture ("CAT"). Our jurisdiction is governed by 8 U.S.C. § 1252. We review de novo questions of

* This disposition is not appropriate for publication and is not precedent except as provided by Ninth Circuit Rule 36-3.

** The panel unanimously concludes this case is suitable for decision without oral argument. *See* Fed. R. App. P. 34(a)(2).

law, *Cerezo v. Mukasey*, 512 F.3d 1163, 1166 (9th Cir. 2008), except to the extent that deference is owed to the BIA's interpretation of the governing statutes and regulations, *Simeonov v. Ashcroft*, 371 F.3d 532, 535 (9th Cir. 2004). We review for substantial evidence the agency's factual findings. *Garcia-Milian v. Holder*, 755 F.3d 1026, 1031 (9th Cir. 2014). We deny in part and dismiss in part the petition for review.

The agency did not err in finding that Romero-Castro failed to establish membership in a cognizable particular social group. *See Reyes v. Lynch*, 842 F.3d 1125, 1131 (9th Cir. 2016) (in order to demonstrate membership in a particular social group, "[t]he applicant must 'establish that the group is (1) composed of members who share a common immutable characteristic, (2) defined with particularity, and (3) socially distinct within the society in question'" (quoting *Matter of M-E-V-G-*, 26 I. & N. Dec. 227, 237 (BIA 2014))). Substantial evidence supports the agency's determination that Romero-Castro otherwise failed to demonstrate a nexus between the harm he experienced or fears in Mexico and a protected ground. *See Zetino v. Holder*, 622 F.3d 1007, 1016 (9th Cir. 2010) (an applicant's "desire to be free from harassment by criminals motivated by theft or random violence by gang members bears no nexus to a protected ground"). We lack jurisdiction to consider Romero-Castro's contentions as to new proposed social groups and a political opinion claim that he did not raise to the agency. *See*

Barron v. Ashcroft, 358 F.3d 674, 677-78 (9th Cir. 2004) (court lacks jurisdiction to review claims not presented to the agency). Thus, Romero-Castro's asylum and withholding of removal claims fail.

Substantial evidence also supports the agency's denial of CAT relief because Romero-Castro failed to show that it is more likely than not that he would be tortured by or with the consent or acquiescence of the government if returned to Mexico. *See Aden v. Holder*, 589 F.3d 1040, 1047 (9th Cir. 2009).

PETITION FOR REVIEW DENIED in part; DISMISSED in part.