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*FANM PA CHITA: MOBILITIES, INTIMATE LABOUR, AND POLITICAL
SUBJECTIVITIES AMONG HAITIAN WOMEN ON THE MOVE*

By

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Dissertation

Submitted to the Balsillie School of International Affairs

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for

Doctor of Philosophy in Global Governance

Wilfrid Laurier University

Waterloo, Ontario, Canada

2019

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Abstract

This dissertation asks: how does intimate labour interact with the mobility and political subjectivities of Haitian migrant women and women of Haitian descent in the Dominican Republic (DR)? It answers this question in three specific ways. First, it explains the relationship between intimate labour and the spatial trajectories of women of Haitian ancestry who work as domestic workers. Second, it examines how the interaction between intimate labour and human mobility plays out in the Dominican border regime. Third, it explains how these subaltern women act politically in the midst of the intersections between borders, mobilities, and intimacy.

The dissertation proposes the use of 'intimate-mobility entanglement' as a concept that explains the deep inter-relation between intimacy and human mobility. Intimate labour requires a certain immobility, while it also affects the pace and motivations of mobility. In tandem, mobilities may set the conditions under which social reproduction occurs and intimate labour is provided. The dissertation argues that the intimate-mobility entanglement has relevant geopolitical implications that affect the ways borders function, demonstrating, among others, some of the ways sexual violence is used as a form of control that is enacted by diverse state (i.e. border officers) and non-state (i.e. smugglers) actors and affect black women of Haitian ancestry. The dissertation identifies two ways of acting politically in the midst of the intimate-mobility entanglement. It argues that embodied struggles for survival and bodily integrity are a primary form of political claim-making that coexists with discursive claim-making practices such as labour union activism, and local-international grassroots organizing by and for subjects that experience precarity of status.

These contributions are the result of fourteen weeks of fieldwork, and qualitative analysis based on ethnographic methods that include participant observation, interviews, and focus groups with 165 domestic workers, migrants and activists in the DR, in communities located in 4 different geographic regions of the DR including the Haiti-DR border strip. One of the main contributions of the dissertation is to bridge scholarship on transnational social reproduction (which is mostly grounded on global political economy,

feminist geography, and international political sociology) with scholarship on migrant studies, geopolitics, and the mobilities paradigm. In particular it contributes to Hyndman's embodied mobilities, and Sheller's reproductive mobilities, by emphasizing the centrality of the sustenance of life to why we move, how we do it, as well as how mobility is controlled.

Thinking about the intimate-mobility entanglement brings livelihoods to the forefront of international relations and identifies existing ways of acting politically in a global context where new forms of differential inclusion and gradations of belonging continue to emerge. This research may be further developed by looking at the relationship between sexual and reproductive health, human mobility, and border politics in contexts of forced migration and denationalization.

Acknowledgements

*Mesi anpil, pou tout fanm e fi ki pataje rev yo avek istwa yo ave mewn.
Muchas gracias a todas las mujeres que compartieron sus historias y aspiraciones
conmigo.*

This research was possible due to the generosity of many women, Dominican, Haitian, and Haitian Dominican who chose to share their experiences with me and, in some cases, even invite their daughters, mothers, other relatives and friends to join our conversations. I am forever indebted to them and can only hope that the knowledge I share here does justice to their experiences.

I owe my deep gratitude to the communities that opened their doors to me in Santo Domingo, Barahona, Dajabón, Ouanaminthe, Vicente Noble, Pedernales, and Anse-à-Pitres. Thanks to the families who shared their *lakou* with me. In particular, I owe my gratitude to the local organizations that helped me get my feet on the ground by trusting me and sharing their knowledge and outreach with me. MUDHA shared their powerful trajectory of grassroots work and deep understanding of the experiences of Haitian Dominican women. The St. John's Sisters endowed me their trust and the deep trust that Haitian women have in them and their work in Ouanaminthe. The name of the support group they host and support "Fanm Pa Chita" condensed much of the sense of agency of the women who participated in this research. My gratitude to the Association of Household Workers (ATH) for its disposition to support this research from the very first time I met with its coordinator, Elena Pérez, back in 2016. *Mi sentido agradecimiento a Sirana, Juliana, Cristiana, Alexandra, Islande, Elena, Tamara, Rosalba, y María Odette.* I am also thankful to OBMICA, which provided me with an entry into the world of research and advocacy related to migration in the Caribbean. Special thanks to OBMICA's Bridgit Wooding and Allison Petrozziello for their support. It was through OBMICA that I got in touch with Ylemis Jean (Malena), a Dominican-Haitian activist and research assistant. Ylemis was an excellent interpreter, assistant and advisor throughout the fieldwork process and her insights significantly enriched our fieldwork. *Te agradezco mucho, Malena, por tu trabajo y dedicación por la sabiduría que compartiste conmigo, y sobre todo por tu amistad y solidaridad con mi gente.* My heartfelt gratitude to all the organizations and individuals that generously opened their doors to this research such as Reconoci.do, CEDES, ACMDH, Radio Marién, Beneco Enecia, Artemio, Guillermo Perdomo

(SJ), Regino Martínez (SJ), Teolé Yelé García, María Graciela Cuervo, Eulogia Familia, and Elena Lorac.

I made significant friendships during my time in Hispaniola. Mariana (Nita) Aramayo Donoso shared her deep love for the peoples of Hispaniola; together with Mayerline Ramos and Joakin, you made me feel at home in the borderlands, *Gracias*. Yaneris González Gómez and Camila Belliard made me feel at home and introduced me to the antiracist and feminist sides of Santo Domingo. *Gracias Camila por sostenerme en aquellos días duros*.

Thanks to Ivance Martine and Patricia Castillo for their vital translation and transcription work. Thanks to Trina King from Wilfrid Laurier University, Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, who produced the cartographic figures included in this dissertation using ArcGIS® software by Esri.

This research was funded through grants and support provided by different organizations. The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Doctoral Award was key in order to be able to sustain three months of fieldwork in four different regions of the DR. The Gender, Migration and the Work of Care Project at University of Toronto's Centre for Global Social Policy also supported this research through the Doctoral Research Associate program. The Balsillie School of International Affairs and Wilfrid Laurier University also provided travel funding that was key to sustain preliminary fieldwork, elaborate original maps, and disseminate and improve this research at different academic conferences.

Thanks to Leiv Marsteintredet who generously commented on chapter 4 on the history of the Dominican Republic and its relationship with Haiti. Thanks also to the International Migration Research Centre (IMRC) at BSIA for holding workshops and seminars that opened up the scope of alternative ways to think about human mobility. Special thanks to Pat Noxolo and the rest of the organizers of the workshop convened by the Caribbean In-Securities: Creativity and Negotiation in the Caribbean (CARISCC) Network in Amsterdam (2018) for it opened up the possibilities for a transdisciplinary approach as well as to find my own voice throughout the research process. Artist Sonia Barret's comments stuck with me in the best of ways: thank you for your generous advice, which changed not only how I thought about the stories confided to me during this research, but also about my own role in sharing these and other stories. Panels organized at the IMISCOE

Conference of 2019, and AAG's 2018 conference were also significant to my research process. These and other spaces for discussion and collegiality can make a significant difference for PhD researches and early career scholars.

Fabulous people and colleagues shared their homes and working spaces with me so that I could continue writing through my transnational moves. My gratitude to Valeria Esquivel, Jill Blau, Jozina Vander Klok, Francis Bourqui, and Magdalena for their generosity.

My committee has been supportive throughout the whole dissertation process. My Supervisor, Rianne Mahon, trusted my work and research even before I joined the PhD program and has continued to be a source of support during times of constant change. Thanks for your trust, Rianne. Kim Rygiel has always shared insights that helped me think theoretically while also seeing the significance of particular stories and women's voices; thank you for your generous disposition, Kim. Simon Dalby has always been generous in his theoretical insights and provocations; you introduced me to critical geography for which I will be always be thankful. The Balsillie School of International Affairs has been my academic home for the past 5 years and has also been the place where I have met friends and colleagues that have supported me through this research. The friendships and wisdom of my ruthless sisters Maysa Almustaffa and Tracey Wagner-Rizvi sustained me through the many challenges faced during this time, as well as the camaraderie of friends and colleagues such as Adam Malloy, Sarah J. Martin, Rhys Machold, Sara Rose, Charis Enns, Carla Angulo-Passel, Skylar Brooks, and all my cohort.

I developed this dissertation while living (affectively and physically) in more than one place. Haiti and the DR welcomed my family and me with their heat, their energy, and the mighty power of the Caribbean and its peoples. The DR was also the place where my mother and me re-encountered a forgotten part of our family history while I pursued this research. Venezuela, my country of origin, came up in every street corner of Santo Domingo and the remotest rural sites where I found a Venezuelan migrant trying to make a living away from our homeland. Canada has been our home and centre for several years now. And finally, Norway has welcomed my family and me for the past year and a bit, when we try, yet again, to love and belong in a new "far away place." All these travels have informed my way of thinking; and so has the constant yearning to understand this world we live in, which I have shared with my dear dad ever since I was a little girl and we had long conversations while we

walked, rode buses, cars, and subways every morning on the way to school in the messy streets of Caracas. *Gracias, papi.*

My writing through these mobilities has only been possible because I count on the love and support of my children, my partner, my mother in law and my own mom who passed away before this dissertation will see the light of day. *Gracias Lourdes por cuidarnos incluso más allá de la distancia. Gracias mami, por venir a Santo Domingo con nosotros y comer bacalao con mangú; por creer tanto como yo en la palabra de las mujeres y en la mía.*

To Antulio, all my love and gratitude: for being my life partner and my most loyal ally, my colleague and fellow traveler. To Vera Manuela and Ela Lucía, for joining every adventure with admirable boldness and vitality and for loving the Caribbean as much as your dad and I do.

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Once, while cradling someone else's child in my arms,
 Standing at a kitchen stove,
 Stirring a soup for the child's hunger,
 I dreamed of telling you a story.
 A story that rains with salt.
 I am telling you to open your mouth,
And catch as much of the salt as you can.
 The salt sizzles on your tongue.
 And suddenly you understand
 That this story is all I know,
 And that this story is all I have.

Edwidge Danticat, 2019

All Geography Is Within Me: Writing Beginnings, Life, Death, Freedom, and Salt

Chapter 1: *Fanm pa chita*

As a feminist researcher from the global south, I began this research with a clear concern about how transnational social reproduction was experienced in a south-south context, especially among subaltern women in the global south. Among these initial concerns was a question about how the transnational aspects of social reproduction played out in contexts of scarcity and precarity such as on the island nation of the Dominican Republic. More importantly, I was interested to learn how subaltern women experienced the provision and need of social reproductive labour in their lives, households, and communities.

Map 1: *The island of Hispaniola in context*



I arrived to the Dominican Republic in January 2017 armed with literature about the rights of migrants, particularly those of migrant domestic workers. The DR was one of the 25 countries that had subscribed the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Convention 189 on the Domestic Workers' Right to Decent Work (2011). What was

more, some Dominican labour unions, especially Domestic Worker organizations and unions, had shown exceptional openness towards migrant workers. Labour union leaders were generous in talking to me, inviting me to their mobilizations, and shedding light on the path ahead with regards to regulating, and potentially improving, the lives of domestic workers (no matter their citizenship or migration status).

Figure 1: Union leaders demonstrate for the implementation of ILO Conv.189



Photo: Leaders from diverse labour unions (including Tamara Normil, ATH migrant domestic worker leader and Eulogia Familia, CNUS Gender Vicepresident) protest for the implementation of ILO Convention 189 outside the Ministry of Labour, Santo Domingo. January 2017. (Photo by author).

I began by carrying out focus groups and interviews with domestic workers in Santo Domingo. When I asked interviewees and focus group participants why they worked as domestic workers, they often answered *Fanm pa chita* (in Haitian Creole), or *Yo no me puedo queda' senta'* (in Dominican Spanish). Although I got the same answer in different languages by different people, in different research locations, many said the same thing: 'a woman can't just stay seated!' When I asked them what they meant by this, they often explained that they could not stay idle while seeing their children's and other dependents' needs going unmet. One has got to do something

in times of duress! 'Doing something' often translated into moving (communities, cities, countries) and working, often taking care of others. Fanm Pa Chita was also the name of a support group of women workers in the town of Ouanaminthe supported by the St. John's Sisters who used the name as a reminder of this sense of agency. Providing, caring, and sustaining, were often associated with (and interrupted by) moving.

Figure 2: Focus Group outside Santo Domingo



Photo: Children of focus group participants and neighbors play on the streets during a focus group outside Santo Domingo. (Photo by author).

I found myself in the quest for more accurate terms to explain the entanglements between intimate labour and human mobility that I was finding in women's explanations. These reflections made me learn from research participants who experienced precarity of status (migrants and non-migrants) and reconsider my conceptual framework. I was originally focusing only on migrants' labour, and was planning on focusing mostly on paid reproductive labour in a way that was closely

aligned with the definition of paid domestic work implicit in ILO Convention 189 which requires that in order for an economic activity to be considered domestic work, it should a) be performed in or for a household(s); b) be mediated by an employment relationship; and c) exclude sporadic work (ILO 2011). However, my meeting with the first focus group in an urban *batey*¹ outside Santo Domingo raised three significant conceptual challenges that altered the path of my research and forced me to expand the scope of my research in two ways: a) I decided to work with the concept of 'Intimate Labour,' which is inclusive of but not limited to social reproductive work and moves beyond the Convention's definition. And, b) I focused not only on the experiences of Haitian migrant women but also on the experiences of women of Haitian ancestry born in the DR. I explain the three challenges that led me to make these analytical choices in what follows (these reflections are extended in chapter 3 on methodology).

First, for most informants, migration and citizenship status were vague categories. Migration status was often confused with ethnic background, as being Haitian was often conflated with being a Dominican born person of Haitian descent. I particularly wanted to interview Haitian migrants, but citizenship and migration statuses were not as clearly discernible as I expected. What I came to realize is that this ambiguity was not necessarily an arbitrary choice by informants, but the product of a systematic process of denationalization and precarization of statuses carried out by the Dominican state for decades, which had intensified since 2004 (see Chapter 4). This first challenge led me to embrace a more flexible approach to migration and citizenship status that welcomed migrants and non-migrants and opened the spectrum to different forms of precarity of statuses (see chapter 2).

Second, when women discussed their paid domestic labour routines, they described a wide variety of practices that included well known live-in domestic worker schemes, weekly visits, as well as more sporadic commitments that were either carried out on an informal, one-off basis and/or in simultaneity² with the workers' unpaid social reproductive responsibilities. In addition, their migration trajectories preceded their labour trajectories as migrant domestic workers and were not

¹ *Batey* is the Spanish word used to refer to the barracks provided to sugar cane cutters in plantation properties. Currently many *bateyes* are no longer producing sugar and exist as Haitian and Dominican-Haitian communities. With the demise of the sugar economy *batey* inhabitants have had to find sources of income outside the *batey* (see chapter 4). Some of them commute to work daily, weekly or byweekly, depending on their work (see for example, Liset's internal migration to Santo Domingo in chapter 5)

² Simultaneity is a central aspect of research in social reproductive labour, notably is time use research in the developing world (see for example, Esquivel et al 2008).

necessarily connected: paid domestic work was a default, highly-informalized labour niche for migrant women. This meant that the experiences they conveyed did not map into what ILO Convention 189 considered to be paid domestic work, namely that it must be mediated by an employment relationship; must exclude sporadic work; and in the case of migrant workers, requires a pre-departure labour commitment in the receiving country. This challenge led to move beyond the ILO Convention 189 definition in ways that I explain in relation to the third challenge.

Third, the participants' labour experiences were often sporadic, dispersed between paid and unpaid work, and interlaced with affective and other forms of intimate labour. In addition to unpaid affective and reproductive labour activities, sex formed part of their survival strategies and a means of getting by. It was constantly in the background of interviews and conversations, never addressed directly but conveyed through anecdotes and hearsay. This challenge, together with the findings described above, made me adopt the concept of "intimate labour" as a more appropriate analytical frame capable of including social reproductive labour (the work, paid and unpaid, conducted to sustain and reproduce the conditions of living) but also incorporated sex and other intimate transactions (see chapter 2).

Why do we need to talk about intimate labour and human mobility?

According to the second Dominican National Survey on Immigration in 2017, paid domestic work was the third most representative form of employment among Haitian migrant women (19.1%), and the second among women of Haitian descent (26.4%) (ONE, 2018b, p. 344). However, many women of Haitian ancestry in the DR (migrants or DR-born) are engaged in paid and unpaid reproductive labour in ways that are not registered by the survey. They engage in unpaid intimate labour for their families, which they often interweave with occasional paid intimate labour: cleaning a home for a day, doing laundry for others while they do their own, watching each other's children, occasional sex work and transactional sex. None of these activities are registered in labour statistics, according to which 47.9% of Haitian migrants and 76.9% of DR-born women of Haitian ancestry are categorized as economically inactive (ONE, 2018b, p. 337) and there is very little information about how they sustain their everyday lives and those of their dependents in the DR as well as in Haiti.

There is a strong body of literature on the transnational political economy of care, which includes the migration of nurses, domestic workers, and nannies (Williams, 2011). This body of work initially focused on south-north migration corridors and dealt mostly with circular patterns of mobility between countries of origin and destination. This work shed light on the global inequalities implicated in the migration of (mostly) women from developing countries into the so-called developed world, often passing on their own socially assigned care responsibilities to other less mobile women while they provided the paid care work that enabled women in the North to embark on market labour. Ehrenreich and Hochschild (2004) sought to capture these relations through the concept of global care chains. Some lines of research contemplated more south-south corridors, within developing societies, shedding light on rural-urban mobility and other less regularized labour and spatial trajectories (Esquivel, 2011; Kofman and Raghuram, 2010; Pérez Orozco, 2009; Staab, 2004; UN-Women, 2011).

Another relevant research stream links the notions of care, social reproduction and intimate labour. This body of research questioned the assumption of linearity of the global care chain literature. It also emphasized the increasingly fragmented nature of care and social reproductive labour (Pyle, 2006a; Vaitinen, 2014); as well as the power inequalities and colonial implications of the act of providing care for others while claiming one's right to wellbeing and autonomy (Brennan, 2004a, 2004b; Hankivsky, 2011; Noxolo, Raghuram, and Madge, 2008; Raghuram, 2019; Williams and Mahon, 2010). Some authors shed light on the continuum between what is traditionally associated with social reproductive work (i.e. cleaning), direct care (i.e. child rearing), and sex-related labour (i.e. escorting services). Boris and Parreñas (2010a) developed the concept of "intimate labour" to capture the close connections among these different practices and forms of labour. For them, the term intimate labour encompasses the paid and unpaid work required to satisfy affective, sexual and care needs of others. This work is both material (cleaning, fetching water, holding) and immaterial (making decisions, advising, and communicating). Given the concept's wide span, individuals may carry out more than one type of intimate labour, sometimes in simultaneity, sometimes in sequence, and often interrelatedly.

The concept of intimate labour helps to make sense of the research participants' accounts. For example, many research participants washed their family's clothes while they washed their neighbours' clothes as a paid task. Some of them had male friends for whom they did some laundry or had sexual intercourse in exchange for

some financial support. Other times they would do unpaid domestic work in their own household before heading into someone else's home to do the same labour for pay. In most cases, women engaged in some form of paid or unpaid intimate work in order to satisfy the care deficits experienced by themselves or their dependents. Engaging with this form of labour required them to move outside their communities, and often transnationally, reflecting the logics inherent to *Fanm Pa Chita*.

Mobility came as a logical aspect of social reproduction among all research participants. Women moved back and forth across national borders as well as between rural and urban communities in search for incomes and better living conditions. Their mobility was motivated by care deficits (Hankivsky, 2011) that affected them personally, as well as their children, parents, and other dependents. At the same time, their ability to provide intimate labour enabled their mobility as a form of creating and sustaining relations, as well as a potential source of income. At the same time, as Bélanger and Silvey (2019) argue, intimate labour also requires a certain immobility and isolation. This places migrant domestic workers (and others who undergo paid and unpaid intimate labour) in a paradoxical situation of im/mobility, which is often situated in lifelong precarity of migrant and citizenship status, interlinked with precarity and immobility of labour. Their im/mobility is a central aspect of their experience as workers, migrants or children of migrants, and has significant implications in how they relate to the nation-states they inhabit and those they or their ancestors come from. Im/mobility is thus central to one's politics: how one exists in a national territory, how one makes a claim over rights or space, and how one relates to state institutions. Political geography and mobilities literatures thus became important for this dissertation research.

Research questions and main findings

This dissertation addresses one main research question: How does intimate labour interact with the mobility and political subjectivities of Haitian migrant women and women of Haitian descent in the Dominican Republic?

This question raises three subsidiary questions:

1. How does intimate labour influence the mobility of Haitian women who work or have worked as domestic workers in the Dominican Republic?

2. How does intimate labour interact with the border regime as experienced by Haitian women and women of Haitian ancestry who work or have worked as domestic workers in the Dominican Republic?
3. How does intimate labour interact with the ways in which Haitian women and women of Haitian ancestry in the Dominican Republic exercise their agency and exist as political subjects?

The dissertation argues that intimate labour and human im/mobility are deeply enmeshed with each other and are mutually reinforcing. I refer to this deep interdependence as the intimate-mobility entanglement. The processes that are necessary for sustaining life cut across human mobility: spatial trajectories are made possible by the sustenance of one's own body; and mobility is motivated and mediated by intimate labour. Social reproduction and mobility are therefore immersed in geopolitics via spatial politics, migration and citizenship regimes that attempt to regulate migration and belonging, as well as people's individual and collective political claims. The dissertation develops this argument by engaging with each subsidiary question in depth in chapters 5, 6, and 7.

The intimate-mobility entanglement

The intimate-mobility entanglement is observable in at least two relations. First, social reproduction and intimate labour act as key motivators to move locally, nationally, and transnationally; and second, intimate labour functions as a strategy to move, or stay put. These relations highlight the three aspects that Pain and Staeheli (2014) propose as constitutive aspects of intimacy as a geopolitical realm. For them, intimacy works as a set of spatial relations, a mode of interaction, and a set of practices. As a motivator, social reproduction highlights the intimate practices that push people into migration processes. As a strategy, intimacy comes up as a form of interaction (and violence) through which women broker their mobility and immobility. I refer to the relationship between intimate and mobility as an entanglement because they may reproduce each other in a cyclical fashion that exacerbates the risks women undertake and self-reproduces.

Intimate labour is a key motivator for national and transnational mobility among Haitian women and women of Haitian ancestry in the DR. Social reproduction acts as a motivator of human mobility when individuals embark on migratory projects in

order to improve their own living standards or those of their dependents; to be reunited with family; and sometimes simply to survive. In this context, the dissertation brings Rai, Hoskyns and Thomas's (2014) concept of Depletion via Social Reproduction (DSR) as a useful device to refer to the economic, physical, social, and bodily costs of social reproduction, which often emerged as central motivators for the mobility of research participants. This was often linked to their paid work as domestic workers: their migratory trajectories, as well as their further engagement in different forms of intimate labour, came in the form of strategies to access enough income to provide food, shelter, and sometimes education to their own children. This finding reflected what had been observed by the existing literature on care and migration, where domestic workers' transnational trajectories were often immersed in a series of transnational care responsibilities toward their children and other members of their families (i.e. Locke, Seeley, and Rao, 2013; Pyle, 2006a, 2006b). Moreover, this discussion also resonates with recent mobilities literature, where Sheller uses the term "reproductive mobilities" to refer to the way migration trajectories affect and are affected by subjects' biological and social reproductive labour (2019, p. 178). Sheller categorizes reproductive mobilities as part of the micro-mobilities that underlie larger structural processes and mediate with political, economic, and labour processes experienced individually and collectively.

Paid and unpaid intimate labour is also deployed as a strategy to move and stay put. This is clear in the history of migratory trajectories of Haitian women into the DR, as documented by the works of Martínez (2007), Hintzen (2017), and Riveros (2014), among others. Haitian women's ability to find shelter in Dominican sugar plantations depended on their ability to provide paid and unpaid intimate labour in the form of the preparation of meals, sex work, transactional sex, and other tasks commonly associated with homemaking. I found traces of this historical pattern of mobility and immobility in traditional care arrangements that involved the mobility of girls, as well as women in recent times (see chapter 5). Some research participants had first moved out of their communities of origin through traditional fosterage arrangements (*restavek*³ arrangements) among Haitian and or Haitian-Dominican families, whereby children and youth moved into households other than their own in exchange for domestic tasks. In these cases, mobility into other communities (often

³ *Restavek* is a fosterage arrangement where a child or teen moves in to another household where she or he will provide unpaid reproductive labour in exchange for room and board. These arrangements can be temporary and are brokered by the receiving family with the parents or guardians of the child/teen. Although this arrangement is prone to significant exploitation, it is not intrinsically exploitative. Different forms of *Restavek* are explored in more depth through the trajectories of three domestic workers (Haitian and or Haitian descent) through the island of Hispaniola in Chapter 5.

transnationally) and access to basic care (i.e. shelter) was offered in exchange for intimate labour. Even though the girls were not consulted about these arrangements, they relied on their own intimate labour as a leverage to move or stay. The strategy of providing intimate labour in exchange for shelter continues beyond plantation settings and *restavek* arrangements, becoming an important aspect of women's spatial trajectories. This finding corresponds with research on the gendered aspects of migrants' agency. Authors such as Angulo-Pasel (2018), Bridgen (2018), and Vongt (2016) have explored the ways intimacy is used by women and men to negotiate passage through migratory routes between Central America and the United States. This strategy responds to a gendered order where women's bodies are sexualized and exploitable. Women strategized around this sexualization as something they have to endure as they negotiate their passage or settlement.

The need for intimate labour and exhaustion of social protection systems (DSR) motivates mobility. The ability to provide this form of labour enables women's mobility and is a significant broker in their ability to stay and settle down as workers, wives, sexual partners, etc. The provision of this form of labour, which often occurs in exploitative terms, intensifies DSR (Rai et al., 2014) while generating conditions of immobility and stasis (Bélanger and Silvey, 2019) from which women then need to flee. The cyclical aspect of the entanglement therefore occurs when women embark on new journeys of mobility that often rely on further intimate labour as a strategy to escape and survive.

The intimate and the border regime

Social reproduction, intimate labour, and mobility are immersed in spatial politics in which who gets to move, how they move, where do they go, come from, or stay, varies according to different power relations determined, among others, by citizenship and migratory status, gender, class, and race (Hyndman, 2004, 2012; Silvey, Olson, and Truleove, 2008). The sustenance of life, entangled with human mobility, is necessarily intersected by, and integrated with, the way sovereign borders work.

Even though border regimes expand well beyond physical border strips, actual border crossings offer a powerful vantage point from which to analyze the way they exist and are integrated into everyday lives. This dissertation explores the

interactions between social reproduction and the border regime through the experiences of transborder domestic workers in two border crossings between Haiti and the Dominican Republic: Ouanaminthe-Dajabón, which is the northern and most commercially active official border crossing; and Pedernales-Anse-à-Pitres, which is the southernmost as well as the poorest official passage. Research participants were women who lived in the Haitian side of the border and worked on the Dominican side. Chapter 6 looks at specific ways in which the intimate intersects with the border regime by looking at the ways social reproductive labour and bodily violence create certain openings as well as frictions in the everyday passage of domestic workers on their way to work.

Using social reproduction as the main lens of analysis sheds light on the socioeconomic costs of the border regime, as well as on the role of domestic work, and intimate violence in negotiating passage. This feminist political economy lens contextualizes everyday forced returns of unauthorized transborder domestic workers as the interruption of transnational livelihoods, which precedes the legal aspects of deportation and insists on the everyday urgency of survival. In this context, I argue, intimacy interacts with the border regime in at least three ways. First, one's identity as a domestic worker may facilitate border crossing through what De Genova (2013) refers to as "obscene inclusion" or the incorporation of 'others' through their abjection. Second, intimate violence functions as one of the main systems of control experienced by transborder domestic workers at the hands of smugglers, border security agents, among other border actors. A third way in which the border plays out in everyday aspects of the global intimate is through the indirect regulation of social reproductive labour through the official border schedules that regulate official border crossings. In this sense, this dissertation builds on Smith's argument that reproductive bodies (and I would add also intimate labour) "are caught up in geopolitical projects, as entities that can not only be territory but can also make territory" (2012, p.1513).

Looking at the border regime from the perspective of social reproduction and intimacy highlights how the border is being challenged and re-made on a daily basis. This contestation takes place, for example, in the form of women's quotidian transborder commutes to go to work despite their precarity of status (see chapter 6). Sovereign power reacts to this mobility through formal and informal control mechanisms that include unstable and ineffective migration categories, quotidian deportations, as well as sexual harassment and sexual violence carried out by

border officials and smugglers. These tensions bring into question the apparent stability of the territoriality of the nation-state and bring into purview some of the profound ways in which the peoples of, and territories attributed to, Haiti and the DR are inter-related.

The intimate-mobility entanglement lens unveils specific forms of agency and political subjectivities

With regard to the question of political subjectivities of Haitian migrant women and women of Haitian ancestry, this dissertation analyzes several forms of political exclusion. First, women who live in conditions of precarity of migration and citizenship status face tangible obstacles in making political claims within institutional and representative political means. Second, their labour, both paid and unpaid, is heavily unrecognized, undervalued and unregulated, which also creates limits to the way they can organize politically. Finally, being racialized black women also carries with it a specific history of political exclusion and violence. However, I argue that within this systemic abjection are specific forms of politics and claim-making that, even if imperfect and often ineffective, account for political subjectivities that are often ignored within the field of IR.

Transborder domestic workers co-constitute the functions of the border regime with varying degrees of intentionality that is primarily centered, but not limited to, survival. Haitian migrant women and women of Haitian ancestry also confront the border regime in other sites of the DR beyond actual border crossings. As demonstrated in chapters 4 and 7, they exist in and confront spatial politics affected by decades of deportability and the constant precarization of their migration and citizenship statuses. In a context where the state systematically marginalizes a certain group of subjects, in this case black women of Haitian ancestry, politics often circumvents the state or reaches it through alternative channels beyond representative politics.

At the risk of being accused of considering subaltern women somewhat pre-political (Vrasti, 2008), this dissertation argues that claims to survival are political, particularly in postcolonial contexts where bodily integrity and the sustainability of life have been structurally at risk for generations. In fact, the dissertation argues that there is not a pre-political sphere because claims to survival and bodily integrity, which are political, precede any other form of claim-making. Mobility acts as a form of political

relation that is closely linked to the struggle for survival sustained by Haitian migrant women and women of Haitian ancestry. Their survival is also sustained through small ordinary acts (Neveu 2014) of resistance, sustenance, and self-preservation that occur in the margins of formal citizenship.

There are other forms of doing politics beyond survival that are also carried out by women of Haitian ancestry who experience different forms of precarity of status and place despite their systematic abjection on the part of the state. This dissertation examines different forms of politics enacted by collective organizations and individuals that engage the state through various political spheres such as the immediacy of sexual health and midwifery practices in plantation communities to national and transnational labour union activism. In these cases, the state is addressed through bottom-up activism (through local initiatives by women) that has reached interregional organizations such as the InterAmerican Court of Human Rights. In all the cases examined, intimate labour, and intimacy in general, are determinant in the way subjects make their claims and constitute their own subjectivities (i.e. as mothers, children of migrant mothers, or domestic workers) in relation to their peers and also to the Dominican and Haitian states.

Overview of chapters

Chapter 2 presents the theoretical framework that sustains this research. It locates this research within a Coxian approximation to International Relations (IR) that approaches 'the international' or the 'global' from the margins (Cox, 1996 (1981)), in a context of feminist and subaltern geopolitics. The chapter builds on Enloe's (2000 (1990)) palindrome: 'The personal is political and international and the international is political and personal', extending this logic to the relationship between social reproduction and human mobility. The chapter has three main sections informed by an intersectional approach that pays attention to gendered, racialized, and postcolonial aspects of intimacy, social reproduction, and human mobility. The first presents a feminist political economy approach whereby social reproduction and intimate labour are central for the sustenance of life. The second identifies how bodies and corporeality acquire a central role for their labour potential (productive and reproductive), but also for their centrality to human mobility and the production and contestation of territories. The third section elaborates on the potential for acting

politically in a context of structural exclusion from a perspective informed by mobilities and autonomy of migration scholarship, with a feminist perspective that sheds light on the primacy of social reproduction.

Chapter 3, on methodology, presents a detailed discussion of the inductive research process involved in the making of this research. First, it describes the methods carried out throughout fourteen weeks of field research in the Dominican Republic and Haiti between 2016 and 2018. It discusses the potential of multi-sited ethnographic research methods for the study of human mobility; and it addresses the challenges inherent in doing research with vulnerable groups such as populations that experience precarity of migration and citizenship status. The chapter then moves on to describe the four geographical sites where interviews and focus groups were carried out with 145 domestic workers who were Haitian migrants (105) or of Haitian ancestry (40) as well as with 24 activists, union leaders, academics and migrant advocates. The last section of the chapter examines the iterations between theory and empirical research as they play out in this research. This is informed by feminist methodological discussions, as well as a reflective approach to ethnography and social sciences whereby the ethnographic process is examined according to positionality, exploitability, and representation.

Chapter 4 provides a historical and intersectional analysis about how gender and race are present in the Dominican border regime. Based on a historical analysis of secondary literature as well as primary sources such as media and interviews, the chapter contains five sections. The first presents a transnational view of the island of Hispaniola that proposes a bottom-up approach to the politics between Haiti and the DR, which privileges the interconnection and mobilities of the peoples of the two nations, instead of reproducing state-centered narratives that prevail in most of the literature about the island. It then moves on to present a brief historical account of the bordering of the island and its division into two nation-states, which lasted about 250 years (Turits, 2003). The third section explains how women navigated a labour migration regime that formally excluded⁴ them. The fourth observes how these gendered and racialized processes bled into the development of the DR's current migration and citizenship regime. The chapter closes with a section focused on the denationalization process of Dominicans of Haitian descent that began to be carried out through informal practices during the 1990s and became institutionalized

⁴ With very specific exceptions explained in the chapter.

between 2004 and 2013 when the Constitutional Court brought into question the right to nationality of generations of Dominicans of Haitian ancestry.

Chapter 5 elaborates upon the argument that human mobility and intimate labour are two entangled processes. The chapter presents the spatial trajectories of three different women, two migrants and one of Haitian ancestry, throughout significant periods of their lives. The three women are of different generations and reside in different parts of Hispaniola. The chapter presents a reconstruction of their trajectories as they recounted them through interviews and focus groups. It argues that their mobility through the island was always motivated by DSR (Rai et al., 2014) as experienced by them, their households and their communities. It further argues that intimate labour acted as a strategy to move and settle down, often producing a cycle of DSR in which care deficits motivated their mobility, and intimate labour enabled it, causing further depletion. This cycle was present in different ways in all three spatial trajectories explored in the chapter and shed light on the ambivalence inherent to intimate labour.

Chapter 6 locates the intimate-mobility entanglement in the Dominican-Haitian border regime. The chapter is based on interviews and focus groups with transborder domestic workers that live in Ouanaminthe and Anse-à-Pitres (Haiti), and work across the border in Dajabón and Pedernales (DR); as well as on semi-structured interviews with local migrant rights' advocates, and local development organizations. The chapter analyzes everyday lives in two of four official border crossings. It then focuses on the experiences of mobility of transborder domestic workers as they attempt to cross the border several days a week in order to go to work, either through regular or irregular paths. The chapter unearths some of the ways the border regime intersects with processes of social reproduction, thus endangering fragile transnational livelihoods. The chapter advances the argument that intimate labour and intimate violence act both as motivators, enablers, and obstacles to human mobility.

Chapter 7 addresses the question of political subjectivities and resistance in the face of the significant structural constraints that Haitian women and women of Haitian descent experience every day. The chapter builds on literature about embodied mobility, irregularity, and gradation of agency and focuses on four experiences of political claim-making. It identifies two forms of exercising agency and being political in the everyday lives. First, it argues that survival and struggles over bodily

autonomy are political claims in a historical context of gendered and racialized violence against women. Second, it identifies three different cases whereby individuals and organizations elaborate political claims despite their systematic process of abjection at the hands of the Dominican state. The gradations of agency and belonging of Haitian women and women of Haitian ancestry is deeply interrelated with social reproduction and their intimate labour.

The dissertation closes with chapter 8, which contextualizes the main findings of this research in current policy and political discussions. It proposes new research that seeks to develop the concept of the intimate-mobility entanglement, paying particular attention to the effect of depletion via social reproduction and maternal mortality in current processes of human mobility. The chapter does not pretend to be an exhaustive representation of all the policy and political implications of this research. Instead it locates issues related to labour rights, categories of belonging, voice, and care and social protection in relation to national and global policy discussions. The dissertation closes with a reflection about the theoretical and political implications of holding the ambivalence of survival and hope as inherent to contestation and the sustenance of life.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

'Reproduction is the everyday'

Elias and Rai (2019), *Feminist everyday political economy: Space, time and violence*, *Review of International Studies*, p. 201

"[t]his care, which is coerced and freely given, is the black heart of our social poesis,
of making and relation"

Hartman (2016), *The Belly of the World: A Note on Black Women's Labours*, *Soul*, p.171

Intimate labour and human (im)mobilities are two deeply interrelated processes. This interrelation, which I describe as an entanglement, has relevant geopolitical implications that affect how individuals exist and act politically. These two theoretical claims engage an interdisciplinary approach that includes feminist political economy and feminist IR; feminist geography and the mobility and immobility turn; and migration studies. This chapter brings together literature from diverse disciplines and schools of thought that complement each other productively and yet are not sufficiently brought together in the existing literatures. It does so with an awareness of what Cox referred to as Critical Theory's "own relativity," whereby "the task of theorizing can never be finished in an enclosed system" (1996 (1981), p. 97). In line with Cox's tradition, this dissertation is interested in theory-making and knowledge production from the margins. In that spirit, this chapter makes references to Haiti, Dominican Republic and the Caribbean, in an effort to contextualize theory and to recognize Caribbean-based theory making.

The theoretical arguments elaborated here build upon Enloe's addition to the common feminist premise: The personal is political *and international* (2000 (1990) italics mine). In the 2014 edition of her now classic 1990 work, Enloe adds that this principle operates as a palindrome; it can be read forward and backwards. In other words, the international is personal (2014, p. 161). This bidirectional aspect of the concept is key to approach intimate labour and its entanglement with mobility. How one conducts one's personal life is constitutive of the international and, more specifically transnational politics. Taking feminist contributions to IR seriously requires looking into the way power and the state operate through persons' bodies, their reproduction and mobility. These power relations are intrinsically gendered and

racialized and play out quotidian ways often considered marginal to conventional state-centric visions of 'the international.' This research thus accords with the concept of 'the international' put forward by Guillaume and Huysmans: "The international is (...) a series of personal stories of those ordinaries affected by and affecting the international, or a history of reiterative practices linked to embodied routines" (2018, p. 10).

The everyday is a central 'text' (Guillaume, 2011) in this research not only for its relevance to international politics, but also for its centrality to social reproduction and intimate labour, which are quotidian processes that are often invisible and undervalued. Elias and Rai suggest that there is conceptual richness in seeing the everyday and social reproduction in an articulated manner so "that we can begin to dismantle understandings of both as discrete, and to recognise their centrality to the functioning of the global political economy as a whole" (2019, p. 203). This dissertation is based on the potential of this framework, but instead of only social reproduction, it addresses intimate labour as a term that is inclusive of a continuum of labour practices, which sustain life and ways of living. It goes from sex work to child and elderly care, cleaning and cooking and other domestic tasks. ⁵

The objective of this chapter is to provide the theoretical bases that support the notion of the intimate labour-mobility entanglement and its geopolitical implications. Taking an interdisciplinary perspective, it is concerned with shedding light on the theoretical links between intimate labour, migration and human mobility, and political subjectivities. These links are reproduced and reinforced via biological reproduction as well as the reproduction of values and status; via spatial politics and the way territories are experienced, managed and bordered; and via laws, regulations and different forms of resistance.⁶ The first section looks at social reproduction and intimate labour as economic and political processes with intersectional and transnational implications. The second section looks at embodiment, mobilities and migration in ways that hone in on intimate labour and the intimate-mobility entanglement. The third section explores the forms of political control and resistance

⁵ This dissertation works with the concept of intimate labour for its expansiveness, which was reflective of the wide diversity of labour experiences of the women who participated in this research. However, it engages with a diversity of literatures that specifically work with the term care, or the term social reproduction. There is a rich literature on the discussion about these terms, which, although relevant, is beyond the scope of this research. Kofman and Raghuram 2015; Reddi et al., 2014; Duffy 2011, Esquivel 2009, and others provide relevant overviews and perspectives on this discussion.

⁶ These three forms of interaction are the basis of the intimate-mobility entanglement and are engaged respectively by each of the empirical chapters of this dissertation (chapters 5, 6 and 7).

that emerge from and through the intimate mobility entanglement, and its implications for subaltern political imaginations.

Social Reproduction and intimate labour: survival is political

For all of us
this instant and this triumph
We were never meant to survive.
Audre Lorde, *A Litany for Survival*, 1978

Reproduction is fundamental for the sustainability of life. Spike Peterson described it as a part of the economy “where human life is generated, daily life maintained, and socialization reproduced” (2003, p. 79). Reproduction necessitates a particular kind of labour in order to maintain standards of living, reproduce individuals and societies, and sustain the labour force that keeps political and economic systems afloat. Social reproductive labour in this context refers to the material labour of cleaning and feeding, cooking and fetching water, which is structurally undervalued and often unpaid. There are also important relational and intangible aspects of the reproduction of life, which are encompassed by the concept of intimate labour, which includes a continuum of social reproductive, care, and sex work (Boris and Parreñas, 2010). This form of labour is inclusive of what is commonly associated with social reproduction (the material sustenance of standards of living) and care work (relational, material and immaterial aspects of the sustenance of life).

Feminist scholars in global political economy, economics, and geography have explained the interdependence between the productive and reproductive spheres (Carrasco, 2001; Katz, 2001; Picchio, 2001). Since the 1970s and 1980s feminist global political economy scholars have worked to highlight the invisible costs and values implied in social reproductive labour, measuring the latter quantitatively and qualitatively (Benería and Sen, 1982; Folbre, 1982; Molyneux, 1979). Later, DAWN's milestone volume "Development, crises, and alternative visions: Third World women's perspectives" argued the necessity of incorporating a third world postcolonial lens into this analysis (Sen and Grown, 1987). This contribution pointed at the transnational implications of social reproduction and the centrality of survival

inherent to social reproduction amongst the most oppressed in the developing world. In other words, social reproduction occurs in a context of transnational inequalities.

The macro aspects of the postcolonial political economy of social reproduction are manifested among others, in policies that foster the migration of care workers. Countries like The Philippines, Sri Lanka and Indonesia have accumulated decades of experience relying on temporary migration of (mostly women) care workers (including domestic workers and nannies, as well as nurses and escorts in The Philippines' case) as a valuable source of foreign currency (Ireland, 2018; Sassen, 2001; Yeates, 2009). Governments in receiving countries have also developed policies to incentivize care immigration, mostly designed to prevent long-term migration, favouring instead circular trajectories (Dahinden, 2010). In some cases, these care-migration programs were pivotal to the development of public health services in the global north, as documented by Williams (2011, 2012), among others. Williams' work contributed to the development of what she refers to 'transnational political economy of care', which points out how micro processes of social reproductive labour "fit a global political economy of care and what the normative implications might be for social justice" (2011, p. 24).

Williams (2011), Raghuram and Kofman (2010), and others point out that research on social reproduction and migration has had a South-North bias that overemphasizes the experiences of households and women in the global North and excludes the experiences of migrant care workers that follow South-South trajectories. Another common assumption in the literature is that the migratory process is attached to a relatively clear labour project within the intimate economy. This perspective may accurately describe the experiences of workers who migrate through state and private agencies that broker this form of transnational labour arrangements, such as those prevalent in South and East Asia. However, it is not representative of the experiences of those who engage with paid intimate labour after having embarked on the migratory process; or of those migrants whose lives are centered on unpaid and /or occasional, unregulated and underpaid social reproductive labour. Even when paid social reproductive labour was part of the migratory project of Haitian domestic workers (or of those of Haitian ancestry) in the DR (Wooding and Sangro, 2011, 2012), their migration processes were not brokered through any formal or informal labour arrangements, with the exception of those who had travelled as children or teenagers through *restavek* arrangements.

The link between social reproduction and human mobility plays out in informal and mundane ways in a south-south context such as Haiti and DR. The two countries have highly informalized labour markets that are interconnected by a significant history of Haitian labour immigration. Unpaid (as well as unregistered and unvalued) labour has been a central strategy to move and get by among Haitian women and women of Haitian ancestry in DR since the early twentieth century.⁷

The terms under which women of Haitian ancestry engage with paid and unpaid intimate labour illustrate part of what Sen and Grown (1987, pp. 28-29) identify as constraints linked to the colonial legacy. These include unequal access to income and employment and the deprivation of basic needs, based on different social positions and markers such as gender, class and race. The latter also affected the distribution of the values produced, and costs implied in intimate labour. Kofman and Raghuram explain that "paid caring activities are highly stratified" and "relegated to those who lack economic, political and social power and status" (2010, p. 50). This gendered inequality, which is intersectional, also applies to unpaid reproductive labour. It is visible among women; among women and men; through race, social class and legal statuses. The categories that compound intersectionality are unstable and relational; they imply different things in different contexts; and have different implications for individuals, families and communities' social reproductive needs. In this regard, Williams linked "subjectivity, subject position, and political agency (...)" with how people "articulate their welfare needs, both individually and collectively" (1995, p. 128). In other words, how one exists politically and socially affects one's ability to enunciate one's individual and collective social reproductive needs.

Race is a constitutive element among the diversity of factors that compound the intersectionality of intimate labour and its relevance is acute in the postcolonial Caribbean. The trafficking and enslavement of African peoples primarily defined racial hierarchies that structured the history of the region. Forced mobilities and forced labour had direct implications for how social reproduction took place. In Raghuram's words, "slavery and colonialism defined who cared and who received care" (2019, p. 5); it defined the structural terms under which social reproduction took place, and most significantly, exploited black women's biological and social reproductive labour in specific ways. Pat Noxolo et al. explained that "under slavery,

⁷ The use of unpaid (and underpaid) intimate labour as part of the migration journeys of Haitian women and their descendants is explored in depth in Chapters 4 and 5.

the black female body was heavy with racial and sexual exploitation, a site of multiple and intense forms of material exploitation-- labour, rape, reproduction" (2008, p. 160).

As illustrated by Hartman's quote in the beginning of this chapter, in the context of slavery, care labour was both coerced and freely given. Building from a North American Black History tradition, Hartman argues that "[t]he work of sex and procreation was the chief motor for reproducing the material, social, and symbolic relations of slavery" (2016, p. 169). Black women's intimate labour was historically exploited for the production of the conditions of living of slave owners (through their coerced domestic labour), and also for their sexual exploitation (through sexual violence and harassment). At the same time, their social reproductive labour sustained their families (the rearing, the feeding of their own dependents) and produced their survival under significant constraints (in a context where children were often forcefully taken away from their mothers, i.e.). This is why intimate labour in the postcolonial age is marked by a structural ambivalence: this labour is potentially harmful in the same measure as it is central to survival.

Raghuram recently captured the ambivalence inherent to social reproduction when she proposed that "care is risky" (2019, pp. 15-17). Social reproductive labour is risky for those who provide it as well as for those who receive it. As an open-ended process, the result may differ from what was expected. The process of providing may also be labour intensive and draining. Rai et al.'s work (2014) points in a similar direction when they highlight the potential harm inherent to social reproduction from a feminist political economy perspective. Their work contextualizes this harm in terms of the costs and values produced by social reproductive labour, which are unregulated and often unrecognized or undervalued, and scarcely replenished. If these costs are not redistributed and providers are not replenished, the wear of intimate labour provision ultimately limits individuals', households', and communities' ability to live and function. Borrowing the term from Environmental Economics, Rai et al. refer to this systemic exhaustion as "Depletion via Social Reproduction" (DSR), which causes harm at personal, household and community levels. DSR is "the level at which the resource outflows exceed resource inflows in carrying out social reproductive work over a threshold of sustainability, making it harmful for those engaged in this unvalued work" (op cit, p. 3-4). In this way, this form of depletion highlights the paradox of social reproduction being both fundamental for the sustainability of life and a potentially harmful process.

Rai et al. explain that the potential harmful consequences of DSR play out at different levels. Individually, they may appear in the form of mental and physical health deficiencies that in extreme cases may lead to increased mortality. At the household level, DSR appears in the form of decreased collective resources, diminished support structures or exacerbated gendered division of labour whereby girls and women are disproportionately made to bear the costs of intimate labour. At the community and more societal levels, DSR is observable in an overreliance on community resources and the reduction of the capacity or time for different forms of political, social, and other forms of mobilization (op cit, 5-6). Recent research by Maria Tanyag effectively draws the connection between DSR and the Philippines' "care-work remittance-driven economy" (2017, p. 40). In this case, DSR is a consequence of the overreliance on, and undervaluing of, women's labour, which manifests through sustained high maternal mortality rates. This form of DSR is aggravated in times of crisis, when "the continued provision of care is increasingly divested unto women and girls to mitigate on their own or as individuals" (Tanyag, 2018, p. 659).

Hankivsky's (2011) work with Ukrainian women during the post-soviet transition to a market economy illustrates other ways in which women's bodies and autonomy are endangered via social reproduction. Hankivsky observes how the privatization of social services and rising female unemployment generated a severe pressure for women's migration as an economic strategy to fund social reproductive responsibilities back home. Hankivsky warns that it is possible to categorize these migration projects as driven by an aspiration for socio-economic gain, however, this economic aspiration is contextualized in the way "economic deprivation and poverty are experienced by individuals who are deeply embedded within human relations in which persons have a range of 'responsibilities and need for care'" (2011, p. 151). Dahinden makes a similar point, when reflecting on the transnational mobilities of cabaret dancers in Switzerland where "economic aspirations and affective reasons underlie the mobility project" (2010, p. 336).

As we shall see in subsequent chapters, the precarization of life has become normalized for poor Haitian women and women of Haitian descent moving through Haiti and DR, and conditions of living and social reproduction are structurally at risk. Berlant refers to this as "crisis ordinariness" (2011, p. 10), which refers to a condition of unexceptional precarity and constant vulnerability. In this context, human mobility

emerges as a manifestation of DSR, whereby individuals and families embark on journeys of internal and transnational human mobility in search for better conditions for living and survival in the face of significant constraints. Human mobility, in historical and cultural context, has been a survival strategy during colonial and postcolonial times, whereby fleeing, maronage, or *cimarroneo* were political strategies of active resistance by enslaved populations.⁸ Equivalent practices of fleeing, and a certain "ideology of travel" is "pervasive in Caribbean culture" today (Crichlow, 2009, p. 166).⁹ Chapter 5 of this dissertation presents three cases that illustrate, qualitatively, the tight interrelation between the intimacy, mobility, and DSR in the spatial and life trajectories women of three women through the island of Hispaniola.

Embodiment, mobilities and intimate labour

Based on her ethnographic work with Haitian women and Dominican women of Haitian ancestry in the DR, Shoaff shows how mobility has been central to the livelihood and social reproduction of Haitian women in the face of structural constraints: "[f]or women, informal and mobile livelihoods are not marginal to their own care work or to the wider transnational circuits of exchange in which they are immersed" (2017a, p. 81). Mobilities have been a significant aspect of black Caribbean women's livelihoods. Their mobilities are often linked to domestic labour and/or street trade, and central to their ability to sustain their own social reproduction and that of others in ways that are represented in "reproductive mobilities" (Sheller, 2019, p. 338).¹⁰ With this term, Sheller alludes to the intersection between intimate labour and human mobility, and how they influence each other. Social reproduction is a motivator of human mobility when individuals embark on migratory projects in order to improve their own living standards or those of their dependents, to be reunited with family, and even to survive.

⁸ *Cimarroneo* is the Spanish word for the rebellions carried out by enslaved populations in the Caribbean and Latin America, whereby men, women and children would escape (at the risk of death and physical punishment) their captivity and enslavement to live in autonomous communities. Mobility as politics is further discussed in section two of the current chapter. See Chapter 4 on Context for further details on the politics of mobility in a historical perspective of Hispaniola.

⁹ See chapters 4, 5 and 6.

¹⁰ See chapter 5.

Social reproductive needs and responsibilities also determine how people move: their speed, their means of transport, and their spatial trajectories. As Angulo-Pasel (2018) illustrates in her research about Central American migrants' passage through Mexico, intimate labour often functions as a survival strategy through migration journeys. Angulo-Pasel (2018) explains how intimate labour in the form of transactional sex is used as a token in exchange for protection against sexual harassment and sexual violence from other migrants, organized crime, and security forces.

Intimate labour and mobility rely on the body as a source of labour and movement. Hyndman highlighted the centrality of the body in human mobility when she argued that "[t]he migrant is an embodiment of movement" (2004, p. 174). In this context, the body acts as "a vital starting point from which to analyze the role of the state in an era of increasing (...) transnational flows" (ibid.). This argument can be extended to include the body as a central geopolitical space, the bodies on the receiving end of intimate labour, as well as those who provide that labour, not only among those who are moving, but also those who remain in place. Bodies, which are highly sexualized in the case of black women, are in themselves a site of what Angulo-Pasel describes as "the fine line between strategies and vulnerabilities" (2018, p. 12).

In as much as bodies can enable movement and labour, bodies can also be contained, immobilized and exploited. Bélanger and Silvey (2019) recently argued that it is necessary to emphasize the role of immobilities in the context of social reproductive labour. In as much as migrant domestic workers move transnationally in order to provide paid reproductive labour, their labour conditions, as well as the terms under which their migratory journeys occur, expose them to situations of immobility and containment. Immobilities also characterize the transnational intimate labour experience in occupational terms (i.e. workers' difficulty to change trade, socioeconomic and legal status). Intimate labours occur in the privacy of households, bedrooms, and other secluded spaces that facilitate immobility and containment, and enable the risky and harmful aspects of care and social reproduction exposed by Hanvinsky (2011), Raghuram (2019), Rai et al. (2014), Elias and Rai (2019), among others. In that way, like intimate labour, im/mobility is ambivalent in that it contains emancipatory potential in a similar measure than it contains elements of oppression and exploitation. They both are inherently (although not solely) risky in similar and interrelated ways.

Bélanger and Silvey acknowledge the contributions and trajectory of the Mobilities' Paradigm, as an interdisciplinary school focused on what Cresswell defines as a "fundamental geographical fact of life -moving" (2011, p. 551). Scholars within the paradigm consider mobility of all objects and subjects, material and immaterial (i.e. ideas, cars, asylum seekers) (Sheller and Urry, 2006) and of particular interest to this research, emphasize the entanglement between power and mobilities (p. 553). This entanglement produces what Cresswell and other mobility scholars (Suliman, 2018) refer to as kinetic hierarchies which determine who moves, where, and under what conditions (Cresswell, 2012, p. 651). As put forward by Sheller and Urry, the paradigm is not privileging a "'mobile subjectivity' but rather tracking the power of discourses and practices of mobility in creating both movement and stasis" (2006, p. 211).

The Mobilities' Paradigm has encountered the risk of overemphasizing 'newness' in terms of concepts as well as in terms of technology. More importantly, it has been prone to idealize a hypermobility that does not represent the kinetic hierarchies that shape the movements of different subjects (Cresswell, 2011, 2012; Lin, 2013). This concern explains, among others, Bélanger and Silvey's emphasis on immobility as a central aspect of the mobilities associated with intimate labour. They propose "an 'immobility turn'" that "pays primary attention to the constraints, regulations, and limits simultaneously placed on migration, everyday mobility, and border-crossings at multiple scales" (Bélanger and Silvey, 2019, p. 3). Their emphasis on immobility does not reflect a return to a form of methodological nationalism that relocates the political and social problematic within the fixed boundaries of the nation-state. Rather, Bélanger and Silvey are interested in highlighting the relational, embodied, and stratified aspects of im/mobilities that involve nation states as well as migrant intimate workers.

An understanding of politics and space from a perspective that privileges im/mobilities opens up the possibilities for a what Hyndman refers to as a "rich field of embodied politics" that enables a "geopolitics from below" (2012, p. 253). This politics of space approaches human mobility and migration "not just by the sovereign processes that govern displaced and mobile subject, but also by the (...) analyses that build upon close readings of specific groups from particular historicised places that create new grounds for 'doing geopolitics'" (Ibid.).

Hyndman calls for a feminist geopolitics that accounts for the experience of subjects that confront, negotiate, and attempt (sometimes successfully) to transverse political borders. Her "geopolitics from below" is compatible with Sharp's postcolonial "subaltern geopolitics," which "recognizes the possibility that political identities can be established through geographical representations that are neither fully 'inside' nor 'outside'," (2011b, p. 304), without thereby falling into the temptation of negating the weight of sovereign power. What a subaltern approach adds here, however, is its predisposition to account for experiences and practices that tend to be marginal to the study of geopolitics because of their postcolonial and subaltern conditions.

Figure 3: The intimate-mobility entanglement as a process

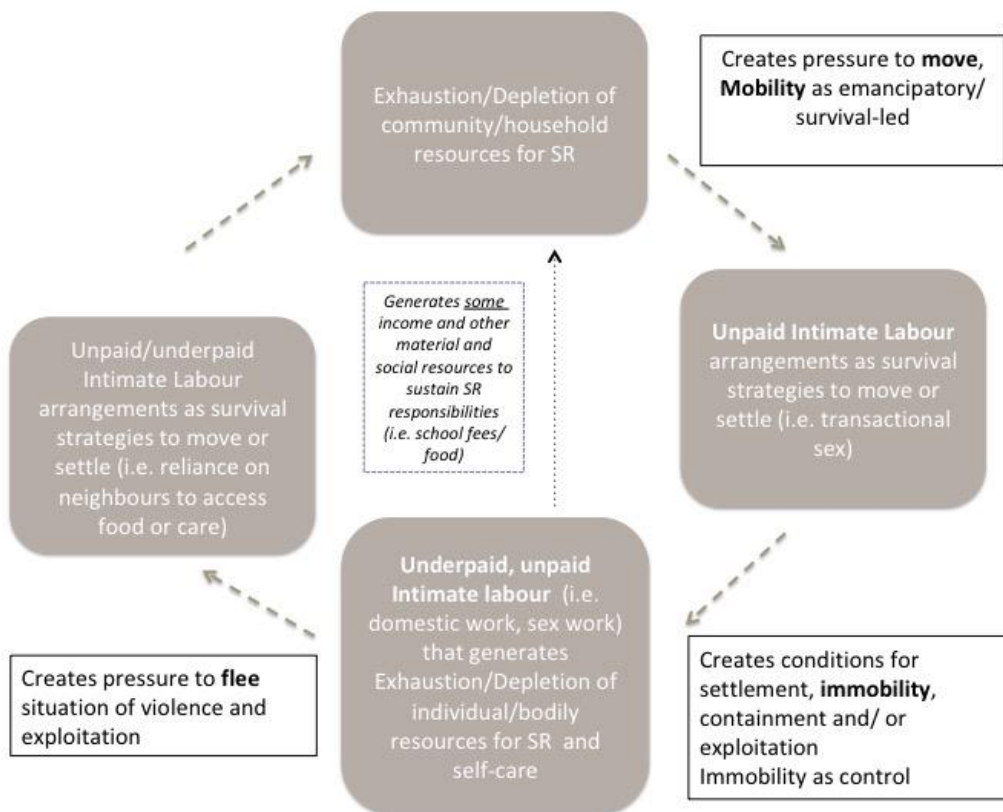


Figure by author.

A feminist geopolitics from below enables us to observe Sheller's reproductive micro mobilities as geopolitical processes that highlight the way intimacy and mobility are mutually embedded in a relationship that I call the intimate-mobility entanglement that plays out in everyday lives. In this context Rai et al.'s DSR (2014) and Hankivsky's "care deficits" (2011) act as central drivers of mobility processes that are often (but not always) transnational. At the same time, this mobility is often enabled

through unpaid intimate labour, used strategically to facilitate mobility in contexts of significant structural constraints (Angulo-Pasel 2018). The ambivalence of the intimate-mobility entanglement emerges when one considers them in their complexity. On the one hand, mobility and intimate labour are necessary (i.e. we all need social reproductive labour in order to exist, and function) and even emancipatory (i.e. surviving, fleeing or moving away from oppressive situations can be seen as an emancipatory act). On the other, they may imply further depletion and significant risk of oppression and violence. These contradictory aspects of the intimate-mobility entanglement can function as a cycle whereby DSR prompts mobility, which is sustained through intimate labour at the risk of intensifying DSR as illustrated in Figure 3 above.

A feminist geopolitics from below is enabled by two conceptual moves. The first is a prioritizing of the everyday as a relevant site of 'the international' using a subaltern lens (Elias and Rai, 2019; Guillaume and Huysmans, 2018). The second move is based on a contribution from feminist geography: the identification of 'the intimate' as a site of geopolitics that cuts across the personal and the global, in which bodies and embodiment are a central stage. Pain and others (Mountz, 2017b; Pratt and Rosner, 2012; Pain 2014) emphasize the trans-scalar nature of the intimate whereby the body and the personal are not seen as predecessors or secondary aspects of the global or international: "there is no spatial hierarchy between the global or geopolitical on the one hand, and the everyday or intimate on the other" (2015, p. 67). In this way feminist geopolitics' approach to 'the intimate' adds spatial substance to Enloe's palindrome "the personal is political and international." It is embodied and dynamized via a mobilities approach: mobility is central to women's intimate labour and intimate labour is in itself central to women's mobility. Both sides of the palindrome rely heavily on the body as a source of power and autonomy, as well as an element that can be controlled and contained. The elements of autonomy and control that constitute this palindrome are presented in chapter 6, which explains the ways transborder domestic workers negotiate border crossing through and despite of intimate labour.

The intimate-mobility entanglement encounters the state through borders, migration, and citizenship regimes that set many of the terms under which migration and intimate labour take place. These encounters are part of the transnational political economy of care that moves and is moved by subjects providing intimate labour as well as sustaining their own livelihoods in ways that constitute the global and often

involve more than one nation-state. These encounters occur in actual border crossings, detention centers, as well as in schools; in hospitals and National Registry offices; and ultimately play out in individual and collective aspirations and political imaginations.

The entanglement as part of the border regime: political possibilities and resistance

The last section of this chapter explores the ways the intimate-mobility entanglement interacts with migration and citizenship control and regulations. It examines the structural ambivalence between movement and control in relation to social reproduction and intimate labour, as well as the forms of politics and resistance that emerge from it. The encounter between the intimate-mobility entanglement and the Dominican state map out in the way Haitian women and their descendants fit into the Dominican social, economic and, political landscape. As explored in depth in chapters 4, 5 and 6, Haitian women's im/mobilities have been brokered, enabled, and also controlled and exploited through their intimate labour as well as through their own social reproductive needs, or "care deficits". Intimate labour and social reproduction have been central to their migratory journeys, spatial trajectories, and their migratory/citizenship status including that of their descendants. This complex set of interrelations generates scarce access to conventional political institutions and practices (i.e. electoral politics, and representative democracy) by excluding a growing portion of the population via legislation and other political tools and practices.

In his work on kinetic politics, Suliman describes the complex interaction between transnational mobilities and borders as one where movement is able to produce, establish and even transform political relations (2018, p. 285). He argues "[g]iven that 'flows' never completely obey borders' functions and logics, there is also a need to rethink the movement as a political dynamic that can both transgress and change borders and the social and political orders they reflect and sustain" (ibid.). This vision implies an understanding of the way borders work that include border crossers in their wide diversity as actors of what Casas-Cortés et al. (2015) and others refer to as the border regime. Relatedly, Tsianos and Karakayali refer to this as the "Migration Regime", where the concept of regime "implies a sense of negotiating

practices” that govern transnational borders (2010, p. 375). The practices of mobile subjects shape and are shaped by the border regime; "migration is a co-constituent of the border as a site of conflict and as a political space" (Casas-Cortes et al., 2015, p. 69).

This approach is in line with a subaltern geopolitics that acknowledges the relevance of the nation-state while also attending to political subjectivities that do not fit neatly within its institutional and spatial boundaries (Sharp, 2011a, p. 304). This subaltern interpretation of politics does not negate the sovereign power of the nation state, but instead recognizes the diversity of actors involved in international and transnational politics. From a perspective that highlights subaltern experiences, borders appear as processes of exclusion, selection, and management, that structure everyday life and may produce specific ways of existing politically. As argued by Mezzadra and Neilson, everyday "border struggles (...) invest more generally the field of political subjectivity, testing its intrinsic limits and reorganizing its internal divisions" (2013, p. 13).

There is an emancipatory aspect to transnational mobility. The Autonomy of Migration approach (AoM) proposes that human mobility "is independent from state authorization and regulation" (Rodríguez, 1996, p. 2). It precedes control, and states respond by (re)producing borders and control. From the AoC perspective there is the promise of new forms of politics inherent to the migratory process, which prioritizes the perspective of those on the move. Migration is characterized by what Papadopoulos and Tsianos call "extreme dependability" that "can only be managed through reciprocity, and reciprocity between migrants means the multiplication of access to mobility for others" (2013, p. 190). They describe the ways in which solidarity among migrants enables mobility and often circumvents the nation-state. These forms of solidarity may include information of migration routes, social relations, shelter and nourishment, for example. These relations of reciprocity are seen as facilitators of access, and propellers of mobility that foster different ways of acting politically that are not bounded by the institutional politics of the nation-state. For Papadopoulos and Tsianos, extreme dependability is constitutive of "the mobile commons": "a knowledge and affective reservoir that offers vital resources and energies to migrants of the road or when they arrive to a new place" (ibid.)

The Mobile Commons are experienced and exercised differently by the diversity of people on the move. As seen in the previous sections of this chapter,

intersectionality affects one's social reproductive needs and aspirations, and one's ways of articulating them. Similarly, the ways one confronts borders are affected by a multiplicity of social divisions that function relationally and contextually. The mobile commons is an important enabler of women's mobility: from crossing informal border crossings in groups in order to avoid robbery and sexual violence to identifying potential civil society allies when confronting the sovereign power. At the same time, these commons are traversed by sexual violence, which is gendered and racialized. This is why Angulo-Pasel proposes, that the mobile commons need to be "engendered" by "accounting for embodied differences, which allows scholars to see how gender is practiced on the ground through distinct survival strategies based on unique forms of knowledge" (2018, p. 24). Insisting on the relevance of the body to the migrant experience also informs our understanding of geopolitics (Hyndman, 2011). Most specifically, it suggests the role of bodies as territories caught up in geopolitical tensions, but also, as (re)producers of territories and territorialities (Smith, 2012). This (re)production of territories occurs in the form the biological labour of producing new bodies; and also, in the social reproductive labour of sustaining and contesting the practices that reify the cartographies of the state.

Recognizing the embodied nature of the commons requires also looking into the racialized experiences of border crossing. Price explained that racialization is a constitutive element of polities, used to identify and justify different forms of belonging and therefore shaping the polity (Price, 2010). Building on Fanon's work, Price argues that "[i]nhabiting racially marked skin renders an individual hyper-visible, and hyper-aware of that visibility" (2013, p. 582). Racialization, not skin colour per se but its interpretation, is a component of the way space and territory are politically constituted, and experienced (Saldanha 2006, p. 18). The trace of skin colour, which becomes a marker through racialization, is an unavoidable aspect of border crossing making some bodies move further, faster, slower, or not move at all. Commons are necessarily experienced, reproduced and articulated through this process of differentiation.

The mobile commons co-exists with sovereign power, which manages borders and belonging through laws and institutions. Sandro Mezzadra explains this tense coexistence as one where the nation-state produces legality in tandem with illegality, one being a necessary element of the other (2011, p. 131). This perspective illuminates the exclusionary nature of citizenship regimes, which necessarily set the terms of exclusion by determining those who belong in the polity and those who do

not. Citizenship regimes thus present a distinction between the inside and the outside, and migration policies and practices determine the terms and conditions under which the nation state is willing to negotiate them - the right to work, to vote, to run for office, to use social services as well as the simple right to stay, and for how long. These terms -- racialized, gendered and intersected by other social divisions such as class and religion, ethnicity or country of origin-- are constantly tested and recreated through the practices of a variety of actors, including different parts of the state, migrants, non-governmental organizations, smugglers, etc. In chapter 5, for example, Marie explains that a public servant negated their children's right to nationality because they did not have Dominican (and Catholic) godparents. As we shall also see in chapter 6, undocumented transborder workers manage to cross the border on an everyday basis by explaining that they work for Dominican households on the Dominican side. This border crossing is not without violence, as they are constantly exposed to sexual harassment, and physical and verbal violence from members of the Specialized Border Security Corps (CESFRONT for its name in Spanish).

The quotidian negotiations of the border carried out by Haitian migrants are part of what De Genova (2013) describes as inclusion through exclusion: the clandestine, temporary, and discretionary incorporation of those who do not meet the criteria of legality or are excluded by arbitrary practices and interpretations of the law (i.e. Marie's experience in the previous paragraph). These 'others' (that are foreign to the polis) are let in with a clear sense of deportability: the constant possibility of deportation translates into the disposability of their labour. This very deportability acts as a sort of comparative advantage in a highly exploitative labour market, where workers are willing to engage in hard labour for little reward (Tsianos and Karakayali, 2010). For De Genova, "this inclusion is itself, precisely, a form of subjugation" (2013, p. 1184), because it is conditioned upon one's inability to enter, or make claims to, the polity. De Genova describes this differential inclusion as "the obscene of inclusion" (2013), one that is mediated by exclusion.

Seeing inclusion/exclusion as a form of subjugation, is reminiscent of Hartman's analysis of enslaved women's biological reproduction as a form of subjection: "[p]lainly put, subjection was anchored in black women's reproductive capacities" (2016, p. 168) through sexual violence, forced reproduction, and the extreme commodification of labour through the reproduction of exploitable subjects. This ideational encounter of De Genova's and Hartman's different (and yet compatible)

analyses of subjection produce fertile grounds for understanding the partial exclusions experienced by migrant women who work as domestic workers, which involves their condition of Haitian migrant (or of Haitian descent), their labour condition, and their gender.

In the collective work on migration and borders Casas-Cortés et al. emphasize the conceptual promise of working with both the tension and the continuity inherent to the inclusion/exclusion process. This dynamic produces abjection, which Kristeva describes as "the rejection of something from which one does not part" (cited by De Genova, 2010, p. 104). Embracing the apparently contradictory nature of inclusion/exclusion sheds light on the link between migration control and labour. This tension results in "different degrees of precarity, vulnerability and freedom by closing access to resources and rights according to economic, individualizing, and racist rationales" (Casas-Cortés et al., 2015, p. 79).

Precarity is a structural product of the differential inclusions that later feeds into the process of inclusion/exclusion and reproduce it. Precarity is also a central aspect of any form of political organizing by and for migrants and other abject subjects, because it operationalizes the distinction between citizenship and non-citizenship, as well as the terms under which this distinction fluctuates. In their work about legal status of migrants in Canada, Goldring and Landolt argue that "[t]he boundaries between citizenship and noncitizenship are not fixed in time or space (...). People may cross boundaries through naturalization, regularization, and irregularization" (2013, p. 5).

The legal statuses of the women who participated in this research reflect the fluidity that Goldring and Landolt describe. Some had current visas, some had overstayed their visas; some were born in the DR and registered as Dominicans from birth but later became denationalized through a state policy of massive denationalization (see chapters 4 for a detailed description of these policies and chapter 7 to explore different ways in which women faced the denationalization process). Some never had a passport; and some had temporary permits that the state never fully implemented (see for example the temporary permit for transborder domestic workers in Dajabón, in chapter 6). The fluidity of their statuses illustrates Goldring et al.'s concept of precarious status, or the "the institutional production of multiple forms of "less-than-full-status" non-citizenship, including authorized and unauthorized forms," and taking into account "people's nonlinear trajectories" through these

processes (2013, pp. 14-15). In this context Goldring et al., emphasize the blurriness intrinsic to "irregularity" and "regularity," and how people often inhabit a sort of grey zone (Goldring, Berinstein, and Bernhard, 2009, p. 243). Relatedly, Basok and Rojas-Wiesner (2017) propose the term "precarious legality" in relation to the temporariness and instability that characterize migration statuses.

Precarity of status is closely related to Sigona's and De Genova's deportability. It implies a sense of disposability, as well as the conditionality of one's presence in a given territory. Banki elaborates on the spatial and political implications of this through the concept of precarity of place: "vulnerability to removal or deportation from one's physical location" due to one's possession of "inappropriate documentation" (2014, p. 453). The latter specification regarding appropriateness is a necessary nod to the arbitrariness that characterizes the production and application of migration and citizenship legislation as well as how these laws are interpreted by migrants themselves, given the fluidity inherent to precarity of status.¹¹ Banki's emphasis on place speaks of the experience of partial belonging that affect the ways social reproduction is carried out by precarious migrants, and is also a central aspect to their political landscapes: what claims they can enunciate, and how they enunciate them, is mediated by their deportability.

By design, citizenship legitimates one's voice and right to be heard by the state, and by others. This leaves migrants in a situation of structural exclusion by residing in territories where they have less formal and institutional capacity to elaborate their claims. This distinction is deepened in a context of precarity of status and place, where deportability is a constant factor. Mezzadra (2011) and De Genova (2002) would argue that this exclusion is purposefully crafted via the creation and application of laws and regulations, which is ultimately the production of illegality. The possibilities of elaborating formal political claims in the midst of deportability, and acute poverty are constrained. However, by virtue of moving and being present despite their precarity of place, migrants with irregular status and other abject subjects encounter the nation-state on a daily basis. Framing these encounters politically implies political imaginations that go beyond representation (without negating it). Here, Sharp's subaltern geopolitics enables us to give shape to this alternative.

¹¹ It was common to find ambivalent answers regarding status in interviews and focus groups. In many cases respondents would affirm that they have documents. However, when asked for further details about said documents, it would become clear that they were in many cases insufficient proof of migratory status. In the vast majority of cases, they did have documents, but not the right documents.

From a feminist geography perspective, especially one concerned with intimate labour and social reproduction, subaltern political identities necessarily include embodied politics (Mountz, 2017b, p. 7) and the intimate as a realm of geopolitics (Pratt and Rosner, 2012) that can be located as a set of practices, interactions, and spatial relations (Pain and Staeheli, 2014). In the case of the Haitian women who cross the border every day to work in the DR while residing in Haiti, their bodies are sites of contestation of the border (Chapter 6) through which they live at risk of normalized intimate violence at the hands of various actors of the border regime (i.e. smugglers and CESFRONT agents).

Suliman proposes that "migration is not just about changing political location. (...) [M]igration qua movement is also about producing, establishing and transforming political relations" (2018, p. 285). This resonates with a Haitian saying that Sheller identifies as a key description of Haitian resistance during the years of post-emancipation: "*Vous signè nom moi, mais vous pas signè pieds moi*" (you have signed my name, but not my feet) (2012, p. 166). This expression referred to signed contracts as formal arrangements set in the terms of the landowners; whereas the freedom and ultimate autonomy of the abject subject in this case was their capacity to flee, moving away from the plantation where their labour continued to be exploited despite the official end of slavery.

The political possibilities of embodied movement are not all emancipatory. As established by Squire (2011) and others, movement acts as a site of control and a site of contestation. I argue that this ambivalence is also inherent to a quotidian migrant politics where the time span considered throughout decision-making is often based on the immediacy of survival. In that context, migrant politics is not (only) about changing and negotiating the boundaries (physical and ideational) of the nation-state but it is significantly about getting through adversity. There are times, when survival is achieved through negotiating with the status quo; there are others when it is attained by challenging it. In that context, my understanding of political agency is closely aligned with Mainwaring's, who rejects "the idea of particular outcomes being a necessary condition for the existence of agency: people's actions may transform or reproduce structure" (2016, p. 294) and still be agency.

Among others, agency serves actions of everyday individual or affective resistance as well as collective and structured actions. Both forms of politics and contestation

exist simultaneously, sometimes even in the same space and involving the same bodies. Paret and Gleeson (2016, p. 282) elaborate different forms of agency among migrants, where they locate mobility as a primary form that precede other forms. Building on that notion in articulation with the mobilities literature, Chapter 7 explores everyday resistance and the struggle for survival in the commutes of women from a rural *batey* to work in a nearby town. Collective, national and transnational organizing through intimate labour is also explored in the same chapter, by looking at the role of intimate labour in the Movement of Dominican Haitian Women's (MUDHA) local and transnational activism, and the strategies of coping and resisting that three women applied, in the face of denationalization.

Mobility is entangled with family relations, violence, aspirations and survival inasmuch as it is entangled with citizenship and migration regulations. Its motivations are not always focused on the intention of altering world orders, but more often on the mundane aspects of life. Explaining the absence of women in the register of African-American history, Hartman argued that "[s]trategies of endurance and subsistence do not yield easily to the grand narrative of revolution, nor has a space been cleared for the sex worker, welfare mother, and domestic labourer in the annals of the black radical tradition (2016, p. 171).

Migrant politics runs the risk of reproducing this exclusion by remaining oblivious to the political urgency of survival. Exploring the entanglement between the intimate and human mobility is a significant way of bringing the personal into the political, and the international, which in turn can alter how we approach migration intellectually and in policy terms. This ontological move would also contribute to Guillaume and Huysmans' project (2018) of truly democratizing political analysis and our understanding of the world.

Conclusion

This chapter proposes three main arguments. First, it brings social reproduction to the fore of how we think about human mobility and argues that both processes are deeply interrelated in ambivalent ways: they have an emancipatory potential that coexists with the potential of reproducing depletion and violence. Thinking about this relationship as an ambivalent entanglement is productive in a number of ways: it sheds light on the intersectional inequalities and risks inherent to social reproduction;

it explains the mundane aspects of im/mobilities, the frictions and urgencies imposed by the sustenance of life on our ability to move. Most importantly perhaps, the entanglement constitutes a contribution to how we understand the border regime, which takes us to the second argument proposed in the chapter. Highlighting the labour aspects of intimacy and social reproduction while also following the idea that the border regime is a regulatory system of inclusion and exclusion enable us to see migrant struggles that play out everyday, and often remain unseen. It illuminates the livelihood implications of De Genova's reproduction of irregularity and demonstrates the way the intimate as a set of spatial relations, forms of interaction, and practices, is a mundane aspect of that constitutes geopolitics. This leads to the third main argument: placing the intimate within the border regime opens up the possibilities of what constitutes the political, and it does so in two ways. Embracing a regime approach, which recognizes the role of the state as well as the role of other actors including smugglers, civil society organizations, and migrants, allows us to think of a border politics that is not circumscribed to representative and institutional politics. By bringing the intimate in, this logic builds on Enloe's work by privileging the mundane sustenance of life as an economic process and a political prerogative, which takes a particular relevance in contexts of structural constraint.

These three propositions here are built with a multidisciplinary lens that brings together feminist approaches to IR, political economy, critical political geography, as well as critical citizenship and migration studies. It does not pretend to be emancipatory in and of itself, nor does it assume to be necessarily a radical political move for it is cognizant of the ambivalence inherent to the intimate, mobility, and control. It, however, hopes to illuminate mundane aspects of life that tend to remain unseen for their supposedly pre-political and ordinary nature.

Chapter 3: Methodological Notes

“[t]he Nepantlera knows there can be no definitive narrative and abandons the goal of closure. Rather, the point is the process itself, the always-precarious and continuing effort to stretch toward increasing inclusivity”

Alyson Cole (2017), *Precarious Politics: Anzaldúa’s Reparative Reworking*, in *WSQ Women Studies Quarterly*, p.86

This chapter has two fundamental objectives. It first aims to describe the dissertation’s inductive research process, which centres on multi-sited ethnographic methods. Second, the chapter discusses the iterations between theory and empirical research, and the way they are mutually embedded. These reflections are informed by feminist methodological discussions in IR, feminist geography, and anthropology. The chapter also incorporates a reflective approach to ethnography and social sciences whereby the research process is examined according to three criteria: positionality, exploitability, and representation.

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first focuses on explaining the use of an ethnographic approach as a methodological framework.¹² That section describes the use of interviews, focus groups, participant observation and mapping throughout this research process. The second section moves into a discussion about the iterations between theory and empirical work and the way they shape this study. This section delves into the use of testimonials as a central aspect of knowledge production and a less violent representation of ‘the other’; issues of positionality and inequality between researcher and research participants; and the risk of research’s exploitative potential, especially when working with vulnerable communities. The third section offers a brief summary and concluding remarks.

¹² I use the term ethnographic approach, because fieldwork was carried out during only 13 weeks on four different areas of DR and the Haiti-DR border. I also kept some of the research relations that emerged during the fieldwork and in some cases make reference to phone conversations held after my time in DR (see Chapter 5).

Multi-sited ethnographic methodologies and other forms of encountering the everyday

As it was argued in the previous chapters, there is an intrinsic relationship between social reproduction, everyday life, and global politics. This is not a top-down relationship by which the macro politics of nation-states pierce quotidian aspects of life. Rather it is an unequal and yet bidirectional and messy process through which everyday life and social reproduction also constitute and confront sovereign power with varying degrees of success. In this context, the concept of the “Global Intimate” is a functional category. In a recent article about the role of bodies as sites of Political Geography, Mountz defines the “Global Intimate” as a perspective that “positions the body as a location from which to understand the collapsing and constructed scale of the global and geopolitical as intimately lived” (2017b, p. 4). This dissertation locates the Global Intimate in the everyday lives of migrant women and women of migrant descent as a way of understanding IR from the ground up. Its focus on the everyday makes ethnographic approaches central to this research. Its immersive character enables the researcher to have a deeper understanding of how individuals and communities make sense of certain political, social and economic processes (Pacheco-Vega and Parizeau, 2018).

Brigden makes a strong case for the dialogue between IR and anthropology by way of welcoming an ethnographic lens into our understanding of geopolitics. In particular, she argues that “[b]y emphasizing lived experience, anthropology points to how everyday material practice shapes place, identity, and common sense understanding of the world around us” (2016, p. 343). Brigden argues that IR would benefit from such a focus on the quotidian especially when working with marginalized actors, as this sheds light on a politics centered on their survival. This approach ultimately informs our “understanding of the uncertain future of the nation-state” (op cit.344). Accordingly, Bridgen works with multi-sited ethnography that occurs along the different places that integrate the routes of migrants from Central America into the United States.

Marcus defines multi-sited ethnography as ethnography’s move “from its conventional single-site location, contextualized by macro-constructions of a larger social order;” and into “multiple sites of observation and participation that cross-cut dichotomies such as the ‘local’ and the ‘global’” (1995, p. 95). An ethnographic lens has been incorporated into diverse disciplines from media studies, to cultural studies,

and migration studies. Studies of migration and human mobility in particular can benefit from a diversity of research sites in order to understand the experiences of people on the move, paying particular attention to their sense of place and space. This latter aspect is crucial when working with unauthorized migrants and subjects of precarity of status and precarity of place (Banki, 2014; Goldring and Landolt, 2013). Marcus warns us that multi-sited ethnography does not aim at attaining a holistic representation of social processes. Instead, he conceives it as "an exercise in mapping terrains" (1995, p. 99); it functions as an epistemological device that can immerse the researcher in different ways in which space and geopolitics are lived.

The use of ethnographic methods in IR research is not without its critiques. Vraști (2008), for example, warns about ethnography's colonial legacy, which is reproduced when applied to research about subaltern groups. In particular, Vraști asserts that ethnography is used to study (and reify) a pre-political other, which reproduces colonial logics and exclusion. Moreover, they are concerned with the ethnographic approach to feminist IR, which runs the risk of being a narcissistic exercise overtly concentrated in the personal without questioning research categories such as women (2008, p. 288).

I share Vraști's concerns with reification of colonial exclusion and biased understandings of gender, as well as her concern about social science's tendency to orientalize 'the other' who does not represent and embody European and North American subjectivities. However, I believe that ethnography and other methods are necessary in order to register narratives and experiences that do not suit or fully match the narrative of the nation state, particularly in a postcolonial context. Furthermore, there are strategies to circumvent these limitations.

Sheller (2012) proposes that it is necessary to seek alternative understandings of politics and power in order to understand subaltern political subjectivities. In her historical study of post-emancipation subjectivities in Haiti and Jamaica, in particular, she argues that

the historian of freedom who seeks traces of subaltern agency must also look beneath conventional definitions of political agency and of citizenship and seek out the unexcavated field of embodied (material and spiritual) practices through which people exercise and envision freedom (2012, p. 6)

Ethnographic methods facilitate the unearthing of agency, meanings, and ways of being in the world that match Sheller's call. They produce opportunities to include "in the frame attachments, feelings, and emotions, and sensitive relationships to sites and people" (Neveu 2014. p. 92) that are necessary to understand subaltern and mundane subjectivities and experiences that are often at the margins of scholar and policy discussions.

The potential shortcomings related to the exoticization of subaltern subjects can be partially¹³ addressed by employing what Pacheco-Vega and Parizeau (2018) refer to as "Doubly Engaged Ethnography." Through this approach researchers periodically visit three aspects of the research process: the researchers' own positionality; research participants' engagement with the research versus their potential exploitation through the research process; and finally, the way they are represented by the research itself. In this way, ethnography is applied in self-reflective ways that, although imperfect, expect a certain accountability of the researcher through these three criteria.

This dissertation is based on a multi-sited ethnographic approach that emphasizes participant observation in the communities and organizations visited and consulted. Given the analytical weight of mobility in this research, participant observation involved paying particular attention to border-crossings, bus rides, motorcycle rides, and walks that often took place with research participants or on my way to visit them. Most importantly, I conducted semi-structured interviews and focus groups that allowed participants to elaborate their own narratives and choose the way they wanted to portray themselves.

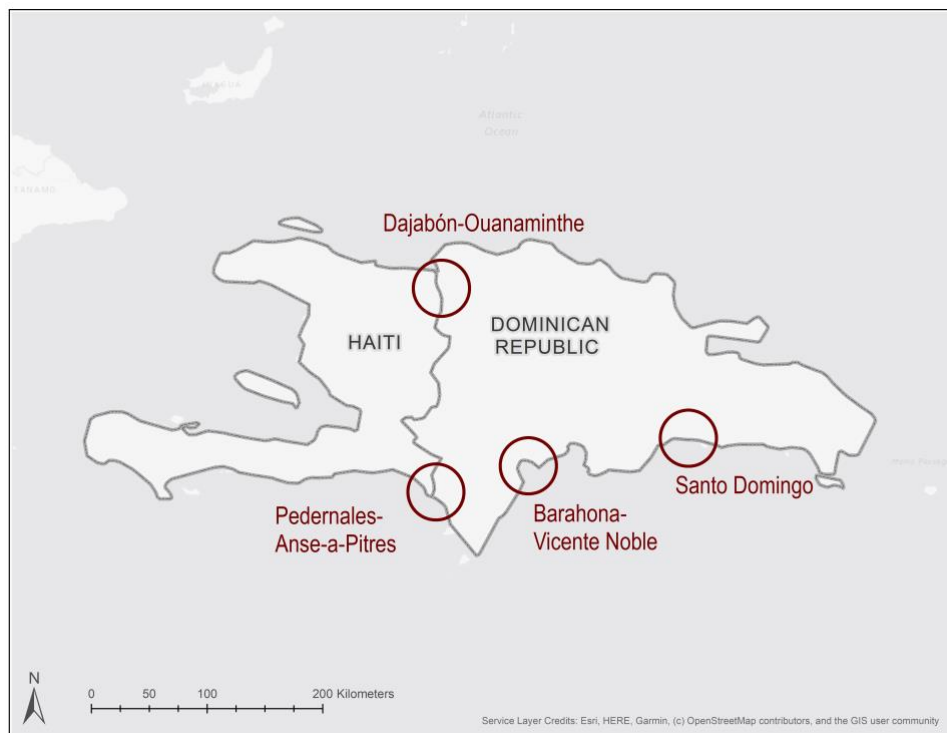
Research methods and research design

I was able to engage with 145 domestic workers who were either migrants (or transborder workers) in the DR (105), or of Haitian migrant descent (40). I conducted nine focus groups and forty semi-structured interviews. All focus groups and 80% of the interviews with domestic workers were carried out in the company of a Dominican-Haitian research assistant with extensive field research experience and

¹³ I describe reflexivity and attention to positionality as partial solutions to the inequalities of the field because I am aware of the complexities of knowledge and language translation, as well as the inequalities inherent to the production of academic knowledge. Smith describes this concern in relation to her own research in Leh, Ladakh, when she argues that "[r]eflexivity and attention to positionality has been a starting point for these navigations, but not a solution" (2014, p.4).

fluent in Spanish and Haitian Creole. Interviews and focus groups with domestic workers were carried out in several communities in four different geographical areas: Santo Domingo, Dajabón-Ouanaminthe, Pedernales-Anse-à-Pitres, and Barahona (See Map 2 below). These areas were selected with the purpose of including different trajectories, locations, and labour dynamics, as well as different levels of prosperity. Also, I only carried out research in areas where I had local partners with strong links to the communities involved (see subsection on Local Alliances below).

Map 2: Four geographical areas of research



Research in Santo Domingo sheds light on the urban dynamics of the city with the highest human development index in the country (PNUD/UNDP 2013). It involved Dominicans of Haitian ancestry, migrants that had lived in the area for decades, as well as a group of newly arrived migrants. Research in two border sites enabled me to engage with quotidian transborder mobilities that are scarcely accounted for.¹⁴ Also, the Ouanaminthe-Dajabón border strip is the largest commercial crossing, which makes the two towns relatively better off than the other three existing official crossings. Including the Pedernales-Anse-à-Pitres border balanced this by bringing into view the dynamics of the smallest official border crossing both in terms of

¹⁴ Petrozziello and Wooding (2011, 2013) are some of the few researchers focused on women's everyday transborder mobilities including Dajabón-Ouanaminthe, and Belladere-Comendador. I found no records of recent research on this in the Pedernales-Anse-à-Pitres border.

population and the size of the local economy (Dilla Alfonzo, 2011). Finally, working with communities around Barahona enabled me to include the labour and mobility experiences of Haitian women and of Haitian ancestry in a rural setting in what is often considered as DR's remotest region (PNUD/UNDP 2013). The four areas considered by this research does not pretend to be fully representative of the experiences of Haitian migrants and people of Haitian ancestry in all the DR. Yet, it was a deliberate action to be as inclusive as possible of varying labour and mobility dynamics in rural, urban and border sites.

Figure 4: Focus group site



Photo: Outside a community center where a focus group took place in a rural *batey* in DR. (Photo by author).

The focus groups and interviews concentrated on five main themes: family structure; labour experiences; migratory experiences; experiences of self-care and social reproduction of their families; and visions of their future and the systems of care and protection they envisioned for their old age (see Appendix 1 to see many themes and guiding questions). We would switch the order in which we addressed these themes according to context and how communities and participants responded to them. In most cases, it was useful to begin by addressing labour conditions as a way of breaking the ice and sharing relatable experiences. In about half of these cases the research assistant would conduct the interviews and focus groups in Haitian Creole. I would be part of the conversation, but she would lead these processes as I am not

fluent in Haitian Creole. We exchanged notes and impressions after interviews and focus groups. The majority of these exchanges were anonymously taped with permission of all participants (with the exception of one, in which the interviewee did not want to be taped and asked that I only take handwritten notes, which I did). The tapes were later transcribed and, when in Haitian Creole, they were translated by a Haitian graduate student and researcher and a young Dominican Haitian woman. All transcriptions and audio files were stored under pseudonyms in order to preserve the privacy of research participants.

I conducted 21 semi-structured interviews with 24 key informants that included migrant rights advocates, activists, union leaders, feminist academics and activists, as well as representatives of relevant multilateral organizations (see Appendix 2). I also held off-the-record conversations with other relevant stakeholders. All transcripts of interviews and focus groups with domestic workers were anonymized and coded using a qualitative analysis software.¹⁵ All interviews with key informants were stored with their full information (unless otherwise required) and some of it was coded. Using a qualitative research software for storage and coding facilitated the management of seventy-five transcript and audio files.

I kept a field journal where I registered impressions and doubts related to my time on the field. My field notes helped me reflect on my analysis of the transcripts and to keep track of a sense of the emotions expressed at various times. Journal notes became in and of themselves a source of data that I quote in a couple of occasions throughout this dissertation. The journal was also helpful during interviews and focus groups as a way of identifying what questions better facilitated 'breaking the ice' in particular exchanges, and what themes required extra care on the part of the researcher. Journaling also helped taking note of the different contexts where interviews were carried out, as well as the body language of research participants.

In the spirit of Marcus' multi-sited ethnography as a way of mapping terrain (1995, 99), I mapped the trajectories described by some research participants. Mapping proved a useful way to understand the spatiality of their mobility through time. This applied both to trajectories that took place during periods of 10 to 30 years such as Liset's, Lucie's, and Marie's (see chapter 5), as well as quotidian transborder trajectories that illustrate the proximity between two transnational communities

¹⁵ The software I used was NVivo

interrupted by the border (see maps in Chapter 5 and 6). Mapping these trajectories functioned as an approximation of the way women on the move experienced spatial politics.

Local alliances and access on the field

During a preliminary visit in August 2016, I was able to initiate what became fundamental relations and alliances with local migration researchers (such as the Observatory of Migration and Development in the Caribbean, OBMICA), and most importantly, with the Association of Household Workers (ATH), the Dominican domestic workers union with the longest trajectory on the island, and with the Movement of Dominican Haitian women (MUDHA). ATH was open to having me participate in its meetings, public events, and demonstrations, and it also helped me to gain access to different domestic workers, labour unions and feminist activists. However, reaching out to migrant domestic workers also required the establishment of new alliances with organizations dedicated to the rights of migrants and Dominican-Haitian women. In most cases, migrant rights organizations had some programs devoted to women (crafts, reproductive health, and others) but the vast majority were not specifically focused on women's organizing and women's rights. Most had no women in executive positions, nor had they given gender any prominence in their governance or *raison d'être*.¹⁶

It became imperative to expand my network of alliances with local organizations including religious and local development organizations. Once I established alliances with organizations and individuals, I utilized snowball sampling and made myself available in safe spaces during specific times where women could reach me. When carrying out focus groups hosting organizations were in charge of reaching out to potential participants among their members and others close to them. In this way the research relied on an organic network of alliances that included the following national, regional and local organizations (mostly in the DR, with one Haitian exception): The Caribbean Observatory of Migration and Development (OBMICA), The Association of Household Workers (ATH), The National Confederation of Union Unity (CNUS), The Haitian-Dominican Women's movement (MUDHA), Saint John's Sisters Home in Ouanaminthe (Haiti), Centre for Sustainable Development (CEDESO), and the Association of the Haitian Migrant Community (ACMH). Working

¹⁶ With the notable exception of the Movement of Dominican Haitian Women, (MUDHA, see chapter 7) and the work carried out by the Saint John's sisters with the *Fanm Pa Chita* network in Ouanaminthe. Both of these organizations are listed below and were key partners to this research.

with women-specific organizations with lasting presence at the community level such as MUDHA and the Saint's John's sisters proved to be the most effective strategy to build trust and facilitate access to research participants.

The kind of networking needed to facilitate access to migrant domestic workers or those of migrant descent often required my presence in each region of research, establishing relations that could not be fostered only through phone calls, texting or email. This was particularly clear when working in border towns, where the absence of any collective organization of migrant or Haitian-Dominican women was notable. Transborder domestic workers confront the possibility of being deported on a quotidian basis. Border towns are governed by specific border schedules (official border crossings open and close at specific times) and are visibly securitized (OBMICA, 2018). This is why most interviews carried out in border areas were held on the Haitian side of the border. Moving out of zones of deportability, and establishing formal and informal local alliances, was key to establishing rapport with research participants and providing safe spaces for interviews and focus groups. Moreover, establishing relations of trust with a transborder domestic worker, and with reliable migrant-friendly organizations, such as the St. John's Sisters, was also key in reaching out to research participants.

On how the field influenced the lens through which I approach intimate labour and social reproduction

The theoretical expansion from social reproduction to intimate labour had a number of methodological implications. First, interviews not only focused on paid domestic work but also on their intimate labour, more generally, including sex work and transactional sex. As argued previously, these were intertwined in the ways women thought about their own experiences. Second, social reproductive responsibilities and duties were commonly cited as a determinant of their mobility and spatial trajectories (the logic of *fanm pa chita*). This interrelation between social reproduction and human mobility came out as a central aspect of women's experiences in ways I had not foreseen (i.e. where and with whom they stayed during their journeys and trajectories). In that context I was interested in understanding women's perspectives with regards to their own spatial and labour trajectories. Methodologically, this meant that my analysis paid close attention to

women's own way of explaining their trajectories and decisions. This explains why women's testimonies are given primacy in this dissertation, as will be clear throughout the empirical chapters.

Testimony as knowledge and the issue of representation

In her work about autoethnography Dauphinee (2010, p. 806) refers to the irremediable and inherent violence of writing a representation of others in IR. This was particularly important to my research for many reasons. First, interviews and focus groups, as well as everyday interactions on the field, were conducted in Spanish and Creole, while the main results of this research are produced in English, hinting at the constant language translation of this work. Most importantly, there was a translation in terms of forms of knowledge, from lived experience to academic knowledge. In this context, it became a methodological imperative to protect the integrity of testimonials as a form of knowledge while still producing scholarship that is relevant to IR and world politics.

In this subsection I explain how and why testimonials were showcased during interviews and focus groups. I then move on to explain how these testimonies were presented by research participants and informed the dissertation's approach to survival strategies through experiences of im/mobility, intimate labour and violence. These arguments frame my epistemological position in terms of privileging testimonies as a way of conveying part of this dissertation's research findings.

Rakow (2011) argues that semi-structured interviews and focus groups are contextually grounded and enable researchers to pay attention to the way research participants feel most appropriate to explain a particular issue. These methods enabled me to pay attention to the issues that participants considered most pressing, and therefore to focus on those issues in terms that were relevant to them. The women often felt inclined to speak about their experiences in a specific chronological order, to explain the why of certain outcomes, such as their spatial trajectories, paid labour experiences, or childbearing. The way they remembered some of these milestones was central to the way they understood themselves, their spatial trajectories and other lived experiences.

In their discussion about focus groups, Mkandawire-Valhmu and Stevens (2010) argue that focus groups have a strong postcolonial feminist potential in building

alliances and support among women participants. According to them, sharing testimonies have the potential of building alliances or a sense of collective. This was reflected in many of the focus groups carried out throughout this research. On repeated occasions, these guided conversations turned into common labour grievances, as well as shared experiences with border crossing and/or migration and citizenship procedures. Several focus groups became a space of catharsis and mutual support. In the case of Ouanaminthe, focus groups also had an advocacy and consciousness-raising potential that opened the door for articulation with the St. John's Sisters as a local institutional ally already focused on women workers and children. These focus groups, as well as two carried out in Barahona region, reaffirm Mkandawire-Valhmu and Stevens' (2010) argument.

As elaborated by Johnson, I privileged women's perspectives and participation not in the hopes of gathering the most accurate or "authentic statements" but as a way of engaging with their "subjectivities within an ongoing dialogue of meaning-making" (2012, p. 77). In this context dialogue included personal and collective experiences of labour grievances, violence, and trauma. Interviews, and to a lesser extent focus groups, were also spaces where women shared very intimate and often painful memories. Their experiences of intimate labour and im/mobility, and the way they understood their own life trajectories were often intertwined with trauma related to sexual violence, loss, and abandonment. In some cases, these stories were shared half-jokingly to make them easier to talk about. Other times, interviews and focus groups turned really serious, producing a sense of shared mourning and sometimes rage. Mountz refers to these exchanges as "affective eruptions", "wherein past erupts into the present, rendering more visible the haunting of geopoliticized fields of power" (Mountz, 2017a, p. 75). The haunting of trauma would become ever-present in some testimonies, to the point that the trauma and the particular trajectory were hard to distinguish from each other. This is why it became a priority to approach trauma as indivisible from knowledge, and knowledge often indivisible from the trajectories. This also necessitated that I seek research practices that addressed the risk of instrumentalizing testimonies, while also maintaining a focus on the testimonies confided to me during the research process.

In her work, Bridgen places a central value on the way research participants retell their trajectories in their interactions with researchers. She argues that in this process, "researchers collaborate with migrants as they re-imagine the route, making sense of the violence and suffering during the journey. The sensitivity of

ethnographic method to performances, both inside and outside of the interview scene, reveals otherwise ignored survival strategies" (2018, p. 114). Thus, the centrality of testimonials rests not necessarily on their accuracy or objectivity, but rather on the reasoning and logics that they portray. Pratt approaches this aspect of qualitative research with Haraway's concept of "partial knowledge", or knowledges that are not overgeneralized. This form of knowing, Pratt argues, provides "opportunities to learn from other perspectives and ways of knowing, to engage in translation exercises across non-reducible knowledges" (2004, p. 179). In the case of this research, testimonies bring us closer to know the intimate-mobility entanglement in ways that were relevant to the experiences of research participants.

On positionality

My presence was a source of curiosity in most communities I visited. My interest in mundane activities like paid and unpaid domestic work, childrearing, and self-care was often met with initial disbelief, which later came down to a surprised "so you do really want to know about this...." Unsurprisingly these were themes that were taken for granted but not really part of conversations beyond the sense of urgency of getting things done --getting to work, doing the week's laundry, managing to pay school fees.

Race was also a feature that made me stand out. I have always considered myself a brown woman and this became a particularly important aspect of my identity through my years being a student and a migrant in Canada. Once I found myself in the DR and Haiti my race and ethnicity were re-signified in more ways than one. In Haiti I was pointed at and referred to as *blanc* or 'the white one'. In rural *bateyes* I was taken for a Dominican *india* or *mestiza*, which in at least one occasion made me look like a migration officer and made one research participant turn away from me until she realized I was there with a migrants' rights organization.

Having been brought up in another Hispanic Caribbean culture, however, gave me a particular outlook that worked in my favour. My accent in Spanish was close to Dominican Spanish. Also, in some cases, being Venezuelan made me easy to talk to because many Haitians and Dominicans had relatives that either lived or had lived in my country of origin. Further, as I carried on my research on the island, Venezuelans were becoming the second largest migrant community in the DR. All of these often

affected the way research participants perceived me.¹⁷ Moreover, in great measure, I was able to negotiate my position in the field by relying on the support and reputation of local allies in order to make any outreach to potential research participants.

Even though I was able to build rapport and some lasting relationships throughout my fieldwork, there were clear differences between most of my interlocutors and me. For example, I was able to move nationally and transnationally. I had financial resources to pay for buses and taxis. I had a passport; my presence was considered 'legal' in both countries and was never under suspicion by state authorities. I was never asked to show my passport or any other document in any of the military checkpoints that I encountered while traveling in the DR.

Privilege was an unavoidable marker of my presence in the field despite my efforts to be relatively unremarkable, and was often addressed in interviews, focus groups and informal conversations. The inequality between the research participants and me often emerged when I was asked if I knew of other middle-class women (like me) hiring domestic workers, or asking who was taking care of my children while I was there. When I crossed the border with Marie, for example (see chapter 5), she insisted in introducing me to border officers as one of her employers as a way of normalizing my presence and our relationship. There was no specific way to end these tensions in any definitive manner. Rather, I addressed all questions patiently, and repeatedly introduced myself as a researcher, explaining what my research was about. In order to avoid raising expectations that I could not meet I always emphasized that I had no political affiliation. Even though this probably came as a disappointment to some participants that showed up to meet me expecting to find a more influential visitor, some others would feel less inclined to impress me (as an obedient domestic worker or a lawful migrant), which fostered more enriching dialogues.

Unequal mobilities and exploitability

Pacheco and Parizeau (2018) emphasize the necessity to address the potential exploitative character of the relationship between researcher and research

¹⁷ Migrant advocacy groups often shared anecdotes of their own work with the Venezuelan migrant community; some other key informants spoke about Venezuelan professionals 'taking over' professional jobs in the DR; I also was occasionally harassed on the streets of Santo Domingo for "looking Venezuelan," which is an increasingly sexualized attribute on the island.

participants, particularly in the context of vulnerable communities. Marked by race, gender, class, and nationality, this research was no exception to this risk.

Part of this was explored above in terms of the researcher's positionality, which was constantly present during interviews and focus groups, and throughout all fieldwork. This inequality was acknowledged throughout the research process and (only partially) addressed in the form of verbal consent (and written consent in cases where activists who did not decide to remain anonymous), and appreciation in the form of small gifts.¹⁸ It was also addressed by acknowledging the responsibility of bearing witness as well as my assurance to research participants that I would express formally what they could not tell publicly about their own lives. In no way do I wish to argue that these measures were effective remedies to the inequality between researcher and researched subject, or much less to the structural inequality portrayed in this work. Rather, these were continuous and precarious efforts to address inequalities and provide some return to the communities involved without burdening with extra labour.

Figure 5: Presentation and discussion of policy paper on the rights of migrant domestic workers in DR



Photo: Rosalba Jean participated and discussed the paper's finding after a presentation in the offices of FES-Caribe in Santo Domingo. Victoria García, ATH founder, as well as other

¹⁸ I would show my appreciation to all research participants with a small gift that consisted of a small hair barrette. This choice of gift was suggested by research assistant Ylemis Jean, as something women would appreciate given the preminence of hair styling as a form of self-care. Any form of monetary payment to research participants was banned from the main research grant that sustained this research.

union leaders and policy makers attended the presentation and participated in the discussion of the report's findings. (Photo by author).

Another effort to remain accountable and relevant to research participants was to prepare a policy paper that focused on the situation of migrant domestic workers in the context of current legislative discussions about the regularization of domestic work in the DR. The report (Llavaneras Blanco, 2018) was produced pro-bono and published and distributed in alliance with OBMICA and the Dominican office of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. The preparation of the report involved frequent online and phone consultations with labour union leaders, as well as some migrant rights advocacy groups.

I was able to present the report in a public event that privileged the participation of domestic workers, and activists, as an effort to disseminate research results that could strengthen national efforts to protect migrant domestic workers' rights. At the same time, presenting research results with some research participants was also a good research practice that allowed me to hear feedback and continue to properly contextualize my findings. Printed copies of the report were brought to institutional allies in at least one of the border sites where this research was conducted. The report in itself should be a useful resource in current advocacy efforts directed at the improvement of the labour conditions of domestic workers in the DR.

Conclusion

This chapter had two main objectives. First, it describes the way I carried out empirical research in the field as well as how I approached the analysis of the research findings. Second, this chapter presented the most pressing methodological reflections that emerged throughout the making of this dissertation, paying close attention to the relationship between theory and research, as well as the complexities of positionality, representation and exploitability that are inherent to social science, particularly when it is concerned with the situation of vulnerable populations.

In terms of the first objective, it established that fieldwork was based on a multi-sited ethnographic approach that built on the work by Marcus (1995), Brigden (2016), and Pacheco-Vega and Parizeau (2018), among others, as an immersive approach that

was compatible with privileging the everyday and the intimate as centers of analysis. Within this framework, the chapter established the use of interviews, focus groups, and participant observation as key methods of enquiry. In this context alliances with migrant organizations, workers organizations, and especially women's community-based organizations proved key in terms of access to research participants through snowball sampling.

The chapter moved on into a conversation about how findings directly affect the theoretical direction of research when working with an inductive approach. This discussion built on the work of feminist IR scholars (Dauphinee, 2010) as well as feminist geographers that emphasize the importance of partial knowledges (Pratt, 2004), and participants' own telling of their experiences of intimate labour and im/mobility (Brigden, 2018; Mountz, 2017a). In this context, testimonies became a key aspect of the research process as well as the theoretical contributions of this research.

Finally, the chapter highlights that the iterative process between theory and empirical research have ripple effects in the way empirical research is carried out. In this context, the chapter followed Pacheco-Vega and Parizeau's (2018) proposal to foster a reflective approach to ethnographic work with vulnerable communities, by exploring issues of representation, positionality and exploitability and the way they were weaved into the research process.

Chapter 4: Gender and Race in the Dominican Border Regime

"Next to him was a crippled Dominican who could console him only in Spanish 'Cálmate, hombre,' mumbled the Dominican. He was black like the nun who came to re-dress his wounds. He'd been mistaken for one of us and had received a machete blow across the back of his neck for it. There were many like him in the room, I was told."

Edwidge Danticat (1998) *The Farming of Bones*, p. 247

"Vamos a tener que buscar la armonía de cómo vivir como isla."
"We have to find a way to live in harmony like an island"

Sirana Dolis, Interview with author, August 2016

In order to understand the role of intimate labour and mobility in the lives of Haitian migrant women and women of Haitian ancestry in the DR today, it is necessary to have a historical overview of their arrival to the eastern side of Hispaniola. Human mobility and labour dynamics are historically embedded in gendered and racialized logics that continue to sustain the political economy and the cartography of the island. Social reproductive labour was central to the reasons that brought Haitian women into the DR and was central also in how they developed a relative sense of belonging despite existing in a context of deeply engrained social, political and economic exclusion imposed on the part of the state.

This chapter develops an overview of the border politics of Hispaniola, from the perspectives of the Dominican state and Haitian labour migrants. Building on existing research, it argues that social reproduction and intimate labour are key aspects of the gendered and racialized migration and citizenship regimes that have been in place (Hintzen, 2017; Martínez, 2007; Petrozziello, 2017, 2018; Petrozziello and Wooding, 2013; A. Ramírez and Wooding, 2012; Wooding and Sangro, 2011). Moreover, these regimes are part of long-standing bordering processes with colonial and postcolonial roots. The chapter follows a critical Autonomy of Migration (AoM) approach according to which human mobility precedes borders (Rodríguez, 1996; De Genova, 2013) and is part and parcel of the regime that governs migration. At the same time, it foregrounds the gendered implications of human mobility, and thus adds complexity to the notion of autonomy. The chapter also draws from the Mobilities' turn, focusing on formal and informal (in)mobilities as political processes

(Suliman, 2018), and reproductive mobilities as a central aspect of migration (Sheller, 2019).

The first section addresses the risks of methodological nationalism when speaking about Hispaniola and the ever-present possibility of presenting the two nation-states as part of a fatal conflict model that ignores the everyday interactions between the two nations and the complex power relations at play (Martínez, 2003). Thus, the chapter, like the rest of the dissertation, contributes to offering a transnational perspective on the island and its peoples as proposed by Mayes et al. (2013), and others such as Ricourt (2016) and Fumagalli (2015). The second section delves into the history of the Dominican-Haitian border and its role as part of the Dominican nation-building process or the *dominicanización* of the east side of the island. It presents the bordering of the island as a globalized process that follows a colonial, and neocolonial legacy carried forward to the present by the Dominican and Haitian states. The third section zooms in on the gendered dynamics of human mobility between Haiti and the DR, underscoring the role of intimate labour in Haitian women's immigration. It demonstrates how women's reproductive work was part of the plantation system in ways that never fully recognized its value (and women's presence) and had implications in their ability to settle and acquire identity documents for generations. The fourth section takes a historical look at the racialized and gendered aspects of the migration and citizenship politics in DR and how they were instrumental for an economic model that relied on the exploitation of migrant labour. The section pays particular attention to the social and biological labour required to reproduce a spatially-contained labour force. The fifth section delves into the slow denationalization of Dominican-Haitians through procedural and later institutional means. This section explains that the process whereby 210,000 individuals were left de facto stateless had deep roots in the gendered and racialized model of legal and spatial exclusion of the plantation economy presented in the preceding sections. The chapter concludes with a discussion of three different ways bordering has taken place in the DR, and the role women and their intimate labour have had in the Dominican bordering effort.

A Transnational view of Hispaniola and not a fatal conflict model

The story of Hispaniola is one of deep-seated coloniality. In good measure, Haiti and the DR are the product of centuries of confrontation between colonial powers,

postcolonial nation-states, pirates, and neocolonial invasions; human trafficking and enslavement, and the first black anticolonial revolution. The way the island was divided, and how the two parts interact, was marked by their postcolonial condition. This has important implications both in terms of the island's geopolitics and its participation in the global political economy (Werner, 2011). Relatedly, Derby argued that the bordering of the DR brought the Dominican borderlands into the Dominican national project as much as it signaled its integration into the "the global economy, and into the arena of domination by the United States" (Derby, 1994, p. 489). Dominican-Haitian geopolitics are a binational issue inasmuch as they are a global issue, and reflect US hemispheric influence.

The relationship between Haiti and the DR largely shapes the way one understands Hispaniola. A stream of literature exalts a zero-sum dynamic where both countries are seen to be in constant confrontation, famously depicted as a cockfight by Wucker (1999). Cockfights are one of the main national sports in both Haiti and the DR. Wucker used them as a metaphor of the island, "a symbol of both division and community, opposite sides of the same coin" (p. 12) - two nation-states in constant conflict with each other (p. 13). Wucker's narrative highlights an incompatibility between the two nations that is prominent among Dominican nationalist groups, although it is not representative of the majorities. Elite nationalist forces have been influential in shaping the Dominican state since its early days. Referring to nationalist thinking of the early 1900s, for example, Capdevila (2004) cites Francisco Peynado¹⁹ commenting in 1909 about the "gradual Haitian invasion" and the need to find "effective solutions to the border conflict without the otherwise imperative need to resort to armed means" (p. 442) as examples of animosity and racial discrimination toward their Haitian neighbours.²⁰ Similar allusions to a 'silent invasion' and the eminent threat of massive Haitian immigration (Vásquez Frías, 2013) linked to negative security and racial consequences for the Dominican nation have been ever-present in Dominican political discourse (Derby, 1994; Fumagalli, 2015; A. Mayes et al., 2013; Valerio Jiminián, 2013). Although this perspective is not necessarily representative of the masses, which are often linked to Haiti by kin or trade, culture or coexistence, the nationalist Dominican elite has been instrumental in defining the migration and citizenship regime (Marsteintredet, 2016).

¹⁹ Influential politician during the *Trujillato*. Brokered the *Hughes-Peynado Agreement* that put an end date to the US occupation of DR in 1922.

²⁰ Capdevila cites Peynado, Francisco J., (1909) *Por la inmigración. Estudio de las reformas que es necesario emprender para atraer inmigrantes a la República Dominicana*, Santo Domingo, Imprenta y Librería de JR Viuda García, p. 5.

Approaching the relationship between the two states that inhabit Hispaniola as a “fatal conflict” obscures the significant commonalities between them and runs the risk of perpetuating a history of violence and disaffection between the two nations (Martínez, 2003). It also depicts it as a confrontation between two equal forces. Shared cultural traits are concealed by a narrative of confrontation, which is the case of the frequent loanwords from one language to another (Haitian Creole into Spanish, or vice versa), similar idioms and expressions, and shared spiritual and religious practices (Martínez, 2003; Ricourt, 2016). There is also a long history of political, commercial, cultural, and intellectual exchange between the two nations. For example, during colonial times and periods of independence struggles, freed ex-slaves moved through remote and inaccessible parts of the island, and often crossed borders, escaping authorities, and produced a common cultural and political imprint shared in maroon communities in current day Haiti and DR (Ricourt, 2016). More recently, the 1980s was a period when a significant community of Haitian political asylees settled in DR escaping from Jean Claude Duvalier’s dictatorship, many of whom were active participants in efforts to promote democracy in Haiti from Santo Domingo (A. J. Mayes, 2019; interview with Sirana Dolis, 2016, KI20; interview with Joseph Cherubim, 2017, KI11).

Imperialism, commerce and smuggling between Haiti and DR have been common between the two nations, most notably in the borderlands. Fumagalli cites José Martí’s description of the abundant informal trade between the two sides between 1892 and 1895: “celebrating the mutual advantage that the permeability of the border afforded to the locals” (2015, p. 135) in a context of US control over Dominican custom revenues. Today Haiti and DR are significant trade partners, only surpassed by the US for each country (UNCTAD, 2019, 2017)

Most importantly, human mobility has been a common thread bringing together families, communities and cities in and from both countries. Everyday cultural interactions were especially present in the Haitian-Dominican borderlands, in cities with rich binational commercial life such as Montecristi in the early twentieth century, and it continues in rural and urban communities throughout the DR (Turits, 2002, p. 147). Even historical figures as controversial, and closely related to *anti-haitianismo* as Dominican long-time dictator Rafael Trujillo were related to Haiti through family

relations²¹ (Fumagalli, 2015; García-Peña, 2016). Bordering the island, especially during the twentieth century, implied significant (and in some periods very violent) interruptions of this mobility and the severing of the porosity of the borderlands through its militarization. The interaction between the peoples of the two countries continued despite violent interventions on the part of the nation-state.

Bordering Hispaniola

A way in which Wucker's cockfight metaphor works effectively is by the fact that, as in the sport, the two birds whose skin and feathers are literally on the line, are often proxies of others who are confronting each other indirectly (and sometimes also directly) through them. In this case, the metaphor depicts how foreign interests have shaped the island's territoriality. External dynamics helped to determine the demarcation of the boundaries between the two colonies, ²² beginning with the repartition among the French and Spanish crowns in the aftermath of the War of the League of Augsburg in 1697, the genocide against the Taino population and the arrival of trafficked enslaved populations from Africa and Europe (Ricourt, 2016).

The establishment of a border dividing the island and regulating the mobility of people and goods was disputed as early as 1728 when Spanish soldiers killed French settlers in a massacre by the river that marks the northern border between the two countries. The river was later named Massacre in remembrance of this battle and has continued as a natural boundary since 1731. In that year, France and Spain signed an Intercolonial Protocol that determined that the rivers Massacre, in the north, and Pedernales, in the south, marked the official borders between the two colonies. This bordering was later part of the Aranjuez Treaty of 1771, which established the first official border according to these two rivers and leaving the middle part of the island without official demarcation. Despite these regulatory efforts, the border remained in flux. Territorial instability often reflected conflicts between (and within) the colonial powers such as the Spanish-French war and the French Revolution. With time, however, the island's inhabitants structurally altered the island's geopolitics, significantly with the Haitian Revolution of 1791, the ephemeral independence of the DR in 1821, and the unification of Haiti and DR

²¹ A maternal grandmother in the case of Trujillo

²² Consider the Intercolonial protocol of 1731, the Treaty of Aranjuez of 1777, and the Treaty of Basel in 1795, where the territorial demarcations of Hispaniola were defined Spain and France.

between 1822 and 1844. However, colonial powers would continue to be implicated in the island's future through the re-annexation of the Dominican side to Spain between 1861 and 1865, the high external debt imposed on Haiti in retaliation for its independence, and direct and indirect US interventions that took place well into the twentieth century (Eller, 2016; García, 2016; Ricourt, 2016; Wucker, 1999).

By the end of the nineteenth century, US private firms gradually took over Dominican finances through the Improvement Company, which had acquired the unsettled debt that Dominican President Hereaux had unlawfully obtained from Dutch Company Westerdorp. It was arduous for Dominicans to keep payments to the Improvement Company up to date, and smuggling soared as a way to resist US financial control. However, by 1905 the US had taken full control over the customs of both countries, consolidated (in the Dominican case) via de US-Dominican Convention of 1907. As Derby argues, "[t]he Dominican frontier effectively became a border" through this treaty "which brought the state into the daily lives of border residents for the first time" (1994, pp. 489-490). The treaty was the formalization of US controls over Dominican customs, which was a preamble to the US occupation of Haiti in 1914, and RD in 1915 (Capdevila, 2004; Fumagalli, 2015; Wucker, 1999).

Paradoxically, the Dominican state reached its frontiers through the US intervention. García-Peña argues that creating a "clear national frontier to separate Haiti and the Dominican Republic" was one of the missions of the US military regime on the island (2016, p. 77). The increased control of binational trade of 1905 emerged in tandem with new regulations on human mobility that were heavily racialized, targeting black and non-European travelers. In that year, Resolution No. 4627 established different periods of stay for travelers coming into the DR creating two groups: travelers from the US and Europe, who were entitled to 60 days; and travelers from the Antilles, who were entitled to 30. Each individual immigrant was expected to pay fees of "no less than 30 gold pesos", without which no entry would be granted, with the important exception of those coming under contract with some agricultural or industrial establishment or working for the government. This type of exception became a constant feature of the Dominican labour migration politics. Having a contract was the only viable legal venue for Haitian labourers coming into the DR, because 30 gold pesos was an impossibly high price (Capdevila, 2004).

Migration policy became a key institutional aspect of the plantation model that had been growing in the DR since the 1880s. Historically, the model was based on the

exploitation of racialized migrant labour. It initially relied on the inflows of labourers from the British Caribbean in the 1880s, who were replaced by a steady and readily available inflow of Haitian labourers in the early 1900s (Martínez, 2007). By 1905, the labour-migration link was already a central aspect of the geopolitics of Hispaniola. Controlling the border and human mobility became increasingly important and it would continue to be so in post-plantation times (Werner, 2011).

In 1912 a new Dominican Immigration Law (No. 5074) was legislated as a continuation of Resolution No. 4627, which included the policy of setting up offices devoted to attracting what was deemed desirable immigration from the US, Europe and the Hispanic Antilles while excluding individuals of African descent. This new law emerged the same year that Haiti and the DR established a clearer demarcation of the border with direct US support through the Modus Vivendi arrangement (Ricourt, 2016). Soon after, the US invaded Haiti (remaining from 1915 until 1933) and DR (from 1916 until 1924).

The racialization of migration policy in the DR continued to develop with close US oversight. This was clearly illustrated by Executive Order No. 372 in 1919, which regulated the migration of braceros. The new regulation, which linked the plantation economy and the migration regime, was to be enforced by the Secretary of State for Agriculture and Immigration. The new rule was especially punitive: it established fines of up to 100 USD as well as the possibility of prison and deportation for those that infringed it. The Executive Order, which was signed by the US Army Governor of Santo Domingo (and US military representative in Haiti) Thomas Snowden, was a notable example of the weight of the US military occupation in the development of the Dominican labour-migration regime. The US benefitted doubly from this model: it controlled Haitian and Dominican customs, and, Haitian labourers worked for US-based multinational sugar companies that were profiting from the model (Lozano and Báez Evertsz, 2007; Martínez, 2014; Ricourt, 2016; Vásquez Frías, 2013).

The racialized labour-migration blueprint established by Executive Order No. 372 was expanded in 1932 and 1933. Migration policy increasingly worked as a form of racial and eugenic technology to attempt to shape the outlook of the Dominican population. In 1932, Law No. 279 increased the fees assigned to the entry of immigrants of African descent and Asians to USD 300, adding extra USD 100 for their permanence in the country. In contrast, non-African and non-Asian immigrants were only charged USD 6 for entry and USD 6 for their permanence. One year later

Law No. 597 of 1933 set the tone to what became a constant paradox of the Dominican labour-migration regime: the new law established that 70 percent of all workers hired by commercial, industrial, and agricultural establishments had to be Dominicans. At the same time, the Law assigned exceptional powers to the President, which entitled him to give special permits to plantations (also called *Ingenios*) that exceeded the proportion of foreign braceros. This power of exception gave Trujillo a central power over the sugar industry. It also became a constant paradox of Dominican labour politics: public discourse aggressively called for the nationalization or *dominicanización* of the labour force while the president continued to foster the incoming of Haitian workers, who constituted the majority of sugar plantation workers (Bosch Carcuro, 2017; Capdevila, 2004; A. J. Mayes, 2019; Riveros, 2014).

Dominicanización went beyond the apparent nationalization of the labour market. It was a project of modernizing the Dominican nation and setting it apart from its African heritage (part of which was shared with Haiti), over-emphasizing its Hispanic and Catholic roots, and instrumentalizing the indigenous Taino legacy.²³ It was originally an ideational project focused on developing a sense of nation, which had been ongoing since the late nineteenth century at the hands of Dominican intellectuals such as Peña Batlle, Luperón, Espaillat, and Balaguer²⁴ (Sagás, 2000, pp. 38-40). Setting the DR apart from Haiti's blackness was a central aspect of this national project upheld by an influential minority close to the white and mulatto Dominican elites (García, 2016; Howard, 2001; Ricourt, 2016). Mayes explains that the labour practices intrinsic to the plantation model "transformed anti-Blackness and anti-Haitianism from the ideological fodder of a small group of elites based in Santo Domingo" to institutionalized systems of control, and a "state-driven project of national consolidation" (2019, pp. 142-143).

The consolidation was formalized through La Miel Protocol between the DR and Haiti. In 1936, three years after the end of the US occupation of Haiti, the Protocol established the current political border between the two countries. Presidents Rafael Trujillo and Stenio Vincént signed the bilateral protocol, with the promise of building

²³ Turits (2002) and García-Peña (2016) describe that early versions of the *dominicanización* of the borderlands included the fostering of immigration of European farmers who would help modernize Dominican agriculture forward. By 1920, there was disappointment about their agricultural performance and *dominicanización* of agriculture began to target Dominican *campesinos* as beneficiaries (Turits, 2002, p. 145, 152-153).

²⁴ Joaquín Balaguer later held an authoritarian rule as president for three separate periods, 1960-62, 1966-78, and 86-96.

an international highway between the two countries among other signs of peaceful and hopefully prosperous coexistence. Notwithstanding the brotherhood rhetoric, one year after La Miel was signed, Trujillo ordered one of the bloodiest acts of state terror carried out the history of the Americas. Dominican army men and armed civilians killed over twelve thousand²⁵ Haitian and Dominican-Haitian men, women, and children during ten days of October, and produced between six to ten thousand refugees who arrived to Haiti in very poor conditions (Turits, 2002, pp. 162, 167-168). The killings were staged to appear as the product of a confrontation among peasants. There were also repercussions of the massacre in the southern border in early 1938, when hundreds of Haitians were killed and thousands deported (Turits, 2002, 2003; Ricourt, 2016; Wucker, 1999; Vásquez Frías, 2013; García, 2016; Howard, 2001; Fumagalli, 2015).

The massacre of 1937 effectively installed a border that had been in the making for over 250 years. Also referred to as *El Corte* (the cut), it was a material manifestation of the dominicanization project of brutal dimensions. Up until then, the border had been relatively porous and the population of the borderlands was deeply interrelated via trade, kin and other relations of close proximity (Turits, 2002). As described by Fumagalli the close interaction between borderlands people was so prominent that "(ethnic) Haitians, *rayanos*,²⁶ and Dominicans were not so easy to tell apart" (2015, p. 157). After the Massacre, the border became deeply inscribed in the territory and the bodies that inhabited it through migration and citizenship politics. Thousands of Haitians that lived in the DR lost their families and their homes Thousands were forcibly returned to Haiti with injuries, life-long disabilities, and profound trauma. Communities like Montecristi that were markedly multicultural became desolated (Fumagalli, 2015; Ricourt, 2016). Trujillo's dictatorship took aggressive anti-Haitian measures to legitimize and re-signify the massacre through the public education system and the dominicanization of the border, which in certain measure continue until today (Bartlett, 2012; Derby, 1994; A. J. Mayes, 2014). In Turit's terms: "[d]ifference had been transformed into otherness and marginality" (2002, p. 172).

²⁵ There is not an official number of deaths from the Massacre of 1937. Many authors avoid citing any specific number because there has been much speculation about it. García (2016) cites Trujillo publicly saying that he had killed 18 thousand Haitians in a discourse from 1960. Howard (2001) cites the same number. Wooding and Mosely-Williams (2004) speak of 6 thousand. The lack of precise information about this is a product of Trujillo's orders to the press not to address the massacre, which lasted for weeks (with different degrees of intensity) and was staged so that it seemed as a confrontation among peasants from both countries.

²⁶ *Rayano* is a Dominican term employed to refer to people from the Borderlands of mixed Haitian and Dominican ancestry.

A new Immigration Law (No. 95) was published two years after the Massacre and became the main regulation of human mobility for sixty years. In the spirit of Snowden's Executive Order No, 372, Law No. 95 kept a close connection between labour migration and the agricultural sector. Significantly, it created two migration categories: "Migrants" and "Non-Migrants." All braceros and their families were grouped in the latter category. Their status was defined as temporary, and their presence in Dominican territory had to be brokered by plantation companies and controlled by the Ministry of Interior and the Police, which was also in charge of overseeing their eventual return to Haiti (Congreso Nacional de la República Dominicana, 1939), art. 3).

Dangerous and gendered mobilities

The fact that Law No. 95's article 3 referred to braceros and their families indicates that the Dominican state was well aware of the presence of women and children in the *bateyes*, which were the housing compounds assigned to braceros. *Bateyes* were located within the sugar cane plantations historically assigned to cane cutters, mostly comprised of Haitian labourers (A. J. Mayes, 2019, p. 142; Wooding and Moseley-Williams, 2004).²⁷ Despite the paucity of historical records, research indicates that Haitian women had been arriving to the DR for decades by the time Law No. 95 came into effect. Amelia Hintzen's archival research demonstrates that in 1920, 17 percent of the legally recognized Haitian migrant population in DR was female, and 7 percent were children (2017, p. 39).²⁸ It is clear that the US government at the time (and later the Dominican) were aware of the significant presence of Haitian women and children. These governments were, in fact, interested in monitoring and controlling this growing immigrant population: 40 percent of Haitian deportees from DR were women between 1930 and 1939 (ibid).

²⁷ With the help of an elder *batey* member, Mayes produced the following description of the spatial politics of a given *Ingenio* during the period of US management: "the best homes on one side of Consuelo's housing compound that also included houses for (White) Cuban and Puerto Rican upper-level employees. *Cocolo* (British West Indian) engineers, mechanics and administrators lived opposite their White counterparts in smaller, but decent homes. Cane cutters, comprised in the majority by Haitians, some *Cocolos*, and a few Dominicans, lived in the inadequate and neglected housing in the middle of the cane fields (*Bateyes*)" (2019, 142). Today the majority of inhabitants of *bateyes* no longer work in sugar plantation. Some *bateyes* have become urbanized and grown into larger villages or slums. Others remain rural and produce some sugar but sugar it is no longer the center of the communities' livelihoods.

²⁸ Hintzen considers that these are underestimations due to women's informal migration.

There were informal incentives for women's migration into the DR even though harvesting sugar cane was (and continues to be) considered a masculine job due to the physical duress of the task. Women were not part of the bilateral migration programs that were in place between 1952 and 1986 (Martínez, 2007; Riveros, 2014). However, there were incentives for their inflow, related in many cases to family unification, and also their own search for an income. Law No. 95's regulation (Bylaw No. 272) waived the costs of entry for braceros under 10 years of age therefore creating incentives for child labour migration, and another incentive for the migration of women following their children (Peynado, 1939). Also, plantations required social reproductive and intimate labour generally assigned to women, as well as a few exceptional plantation-related tasks.

Despite their exclusion from labour migration schemes, black women in Hispaniola count on a long legacy of mobility and presence in public spaces. Similar to the situation of other black women in the French and British Caribbean, black women's public presence contrasted with white and lighter-skin Dominican women who were expected to remain in the private sphere. Historically, enslaved black women were sent to markets to sell their women owners' merchandise and provided domestic services such as meal preparation and clothes washing for male travelers (Shoaff, 2017a, p. 29). This racialized and gendered order worked in contradictory ways. Shoaff explains that although black women (enslaved or free) were expected to be more present in public spaces, this did not imply that there was any form of increased safety for them. They were at risk of physical and sexual violence when they were seen to be 'out of place,' especially when moving from remote rural locations into urban centers (op cit).²⁹ Their gender and race, and overall situation of subalterity, added specific risks to their mobilities, placing them in structurally dangerous positions that continue to play out today (Sheller, 2017; J. L. Shoaff, 2017b).

As chapters five, six and seven will further explain, Afro-Caribbean women's legacy of dangerous mobilities³⁰ continues to be a significant aspect of the experiences of women of Haitian ancestry in DR. Historically there were three main alternatives for women to migrate into the DR: with male relatives, who were recruited to work in an *Ingenio*; autonomously with other women or in mixed groups; and through state-

²⁹ Domosh (2017) refers to similar experiences of violence against black women in colonial and current day US.

³⁰ Mimi Sheller recently referred used the term "dangerous mobilities" to refer to "the close relation between mobilities, danger, risk, and disaster" (2017, 112).

sanctioned trafficking schemes. Many entered the DR with male relatives and got through the border unregistered by the authorities. Those traveling without husbands, sons, or other male relatives migrated into DR through informal means, often pairing up with other women and traveling in groups. For decades the Dominican state coordinated with (private and public) *Ingenio* authorities to actively recruit women through buscones (smugglers) and brought them into the *bateyes* to provide sexual services either as sex workers, or as partners-to-be for workers who already lived there (Martínez, 2007; Riveros, 2014).

Those who came with their children, partners and parents were expected to carry out the unpaid social reproductive labour required to sustain their families, therefore guaranteeing the reproduction of the labour force. Many aspired to find work as market sellers, providing some form of paid reproductive labour, and in fewer cases also in plantation-related jobs, especially during the “dead season” after the harvest was done. In those cases, they worked weeding, fertilizing, and in some cases even cutting cane. These exceptions applied to Haitian women, and not Dominican women, because the tasks were considered degrading (Martínez, 2007; Riveros, 2014). Riveros estimates that these women were paid around a 75 percent of the already modest amount paid to a male labourer for the same task (op cit, 30).

In addition to the exception of women who accessed plantation-related jobs, women often sold small meals during lunchtime in the cane fields. They also did “odd jobs,” such as washing clothes and cooking, for limited pay and which were often extensions of the unpaid social reproductive labour they provided for their households. Even though there would be some monetary compensation for their labour, they did not necessarily consider it work but rather saw it more as part of their everyday (gendered) duties.³¹ When discussing women’s labour in the *bateyes* during Trujillismo, Hintzen concluded (2017, p.44) “[i]nstead of creating institutions in charge of nourishing the workers or provide domestic services within sugar companies, management allowed women to take over these tasks.”

A small but steady number of women came through state-sanctioned trafficking schemes, which remained active until the 1980.³² Martínez argues that keeping a steady inflow of women in the community acted as a control mechanism to keep

³¹ A similar logic endures in current day DR, when women of Haitian ancestry and poor Dominican women would explain to me during interviews that they “do not work but do some *chiripa* [small job]” which in some cases were sporadic but often were somewhat periodical.

³² Internal and cross border human trafficking schemes are still active in Haiti and DR. These schemes are not state-sanctioned but often rely on the informal support of some local authorities.

Haitian men workers in the plantation. In his ethnography of *Batey Monte Coca*, he cites one of the bosses of the plantation explaining that it was in the companies' best interest to have women in the *bateyes*: "A *batey* without women would soon be a *batey* without men" (Martínez, 2007, p. 80). The presence of Haitian women also served a fundamental purpose: it reproduced labour, both biologically and socially. Sirana Dolis, MUDHA coordinator and founding leader explained it as follows:

In those times they would buy braceros per head as if it was a commodity, so that they would come to work here [DR] (...) and this implied a cost (...). But, if women came, the braceros would multiply there [in the *batey*], and those would be the next braceritos [small braceros].

Interview with Sirana Dolis, August 2016. (KI20).

Having the intimate labour of Haitian migrant women in the *bateyes* was a state policy designed to keep the labour force contained in plantation grounds. Companies benefitted from the knowledge and abilities that workers accumulated through time. It also reduced the costs of 'importing' more labour, because labour was being biologically and socially reproduced in the *batey* via new *batey*-born generations.

Women's unpaid, underpaid, and mostly invisible labour was part of the plantation model. The reliance on their work was carried out informally, with a few exceptions. For example, in 1962 a report by the Sugar Company of La Romana recommended that "one of each ten [migrant workers] men, could bring their family with the objective of having one woman in charge of the kitchen for each group of ten men" (Fondo Presidencia, 1960-2001, cited in Hintzen, 2017, p. 47). Work, space and status assigned to women were determined discretionary by local logics framed within by a state that promoted anti-Haitian sentiments while importing Haitian labour. Martínez pointed at this discretionary aspect of life and power by describing *Batey Monte Coca* as a corrupt place where workers and their families "are often exploited in a highly personalistic rather than a rational bureaucratic or rigid, apartheid manner" (Martínez, 2007, p. 85)

Women's labour was seen as a necessary aspect to contain and reproduce labour, and yet *Ingenios* did not provide any housing facilities for women and children. The barracks were assigned to male workers. Haitian women had few options to find housing. Many migrated to communities where male relatives and acquaintances were living and could host them. These arrangements were often temporary, given the crowded barracks. Others arrived to the *bateyes* without relatives and had to

move in with a man in exchange for intimate labour, including sex. Those who arrived through trafficking schemes either lived in a set of barracks assigned to sex work or moved in with a man who would often act as their pimp. In exceptional cases, some women were able to find housing independently, and supported each other in the process of finding housing alternatives. Given the shortage of space, however, they were always at risk of losing their space during harvest periods when space grew scarcer. In this context, women often had to rely on transactional or survival sex in order to access some form of housing (Hintzen, 2017; Martínez, 2007; Riveros, 2014).

Historically, transactional sex and sex work have been normalized as valid means of survival for migrant Haitian women in a context of structural risk of homelessness. In some cases, these transactional unions went on to become stable households. In others, these exchanges were only temporary.³³ Sex services were also (and continue to be although to a lesser degree) a way to obtain income in the absence of alternative job opportunities for women. This means that different forms of sex labour have become acceptable (though not to the point of being openly celebrated) in many communities of Haitian ancestry in the DR (Hintzen, 2017; Riveros, 2014). As described by Martínez, "sex work is therefore not so much condoned as tactfully ignored if it is done in the quiet and understood to be done chiefly to provide better for children, under the extenuating circumstances of a disruption in household income or the chronic absence of a male wage earner" (2007, 84). Chapter 5 explores how sex and other forms of intimate labour are historically rooted strategies linked to im/mobility, and sustain survival livelihoods, among Haitian women on the move. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 illuminate the way that, sexual violence and sexual harassment are also intrinsic to these processes.

The precarious situation of Haitian migrant women is exemplified by the reliance on their unpaid or underpaid labour, which coexisted with the absence of housing for them. This precarity was intensified by their scarce access to identity and migration documents, which made them specifically disposable. The Dominican state, and sugar producing companies, which benefitted from women's constant state of disposability, increased the exploitability of women alongside the exploitation of Haitian male labour. The US and US-owned sugar companies were central actors in designing this labour scheme, which benefitted them directly. This power structure

³³ These are the cases of Lucie and Marie in chapter 5, for example.

began to change with Trujillo's arrival to power in 1930: first with his discretionary power over migrant labour quotas, and his eventual domination of all Dominican sugar production which he successfully acquired between 1948 and the late 1950s (Hintzen, 2017; Wucker, 1999). Given Trujillo's totalitarian rule, his private interests and those of the state became one and the same.

Racialized and gendered: The Dominican migration and citizenship regime

Throughout most of the twentieth century, migration status and access to nationality were managed according to the interests of those who profited from sugar production. In 1952, the governments of Haiti and DR signed the first Braceros' Recruitment and Migration Treaty. This was the first of a series of agreements whereby the Haitian state was committed to provide workers to harvest cane in the DR, in exchange for pay and would derive significant profits from it. The last of these agreements was signed in 1986. According to the first bilateral agreement, sugar companies were in charge of doing the paper work required for braceros, their wives, and children in order to obtain their temporary residence permit and *cédulas* (identity documents, see table 1 below) (Hintzen, 2017; Riveros, 2014, pp. 38-39). Registering all migrant labour, including women and children, would have increased labour costs for *Ingenios*, which therefore meant that they were not interested in applying this part of the treaty. After all, their economic model relied on the exploitation of a marginalized labour force. Patriarchal understandings of women's labour may have also helped authorities to rationalize this position, as Haitian women's labour was considered of lesser or no value. In addition, it was generally understood that women's status was dependent on that of their male partners, leaving them in a situation of dependence similar to the one they experience regarding housing. The documentation process was complicated and involved at least three different institutions: *Ingenios*, the General Directorate of Identity *Cédulas*, and the General Directorate of Migration.

Table 1: Identity documents required by the 1952 Binational Treaty

Document	Usage of the document	Institution providing it
Fichas	Internally provided by companies in order to	Each sugar company or <i>Ingenio</i> .

	identify workers, pay their and bonuses.	
<i>Cédulas</i>	General Identity document provided by Dominican government and required to obtain most legal documents (national middle school exams, birth and wedding registries, for example).	General Directorate of <i>Cédula</i> Identifications
Temporary Residence Permit	Formal migration document that would establish entries and exits for each bracero.	General Directorate of Migration

Table made by author based on Riveros, 2014

Ingenios provided all their labourers with a Bracero Identification, also referred to as Ficha. These were the most important for everyday life. Fichas were required to get paid, receive harvest bonuses and to demonstrate that the worker ‘belonged’ to a specific company. Due to their everyday usage, Fichas were the most relevant piece of documentation to migrant workers and they were assigned regardless of their legal status. Besides providing the Fichas, *Ingenios* also had to officially request workers’ (and their families’) *cédulas* to the General Directorate of *cédulas*. In turn, these *cédulas* were a prerequisite to obtain a Temporary Residence Permit provided by the General Migration Directorate of Migration. *Ingenios* were also in charge of requesting *cédulas* from the local government in the name of its workers (see table 1). Procedures were unclear, and *Ingenios* controlled workers’ access to documentation.³⁴

According to Riveros (2014), it was common to find Temporary Residence permits that did not include a *Cédula* number, which was a probable sign that the worker did not have one (despite it being a prerequisite). Moreover, the vast majority of workers were illiterate and generally unaware of their right to identity documents.

Government authorities were aware of the limitations that migrant labourers encountered in terms of accessing identity documents, and it is possible that this extended irregularity was in itself a government policy preventing Haitian workers to acquire civil rights and eventually give birth to children entitled to the Dominican nationality (González, 2017).

³⁴ Between 1952 and 1960 Trujillo privately controlled sugar production for his own profit, which further illustrates the disincentives in place for *Ingenios* to abide these regulations.

The politics of labour, migration and sugar production underwent important changes after Trujillo's death in 1961, with the arrival of Joaquín Balaguer to the Presidency in 1966. Balaguer nationalized Trujillo's sugar state and converted it into the Consejo Estatal Azucarero (CEA). This transition tightened the spatial politics of Haitian migrants in DR. Some of them moved out of *bateyes* and began working in other (mostly agricultural) activities. Among the first policies put forward by CEA in 1966 was to identify all the Haitian workers found outside *bateyes*. Those found with irregular status were sent back to *Ingenios*, or else they were deported (Hintzen, 2017, p. 48). Workers' irregular status was not seen as a problem as long as the workers were contained in the sugar plantations. This policy was descriptive of Balaguer's approach to labour and migration politics in two ways. First, it was the first instance of his government's recurrent use of deportations as a measure to control and coerce the migrant population, which was applied instrumentally well into the 1990s (Ferguson, 2003; Fletcher and Miller, 2004; Wooding and Moseley-Williams, 2004). Second, it demonstrated that the state was aware of the situation of the migrant population and managed it through its containment within the *bateyes* as exceptional spaces of transnational production. The bordering regime, in other words, was adapted to a political economic model in which sugar plantations had become spaces of exception.

The power of exception that resided in the president's prerogative to negotiate migrant labour quotas (Law No. 587, from 1933) extended to spatial and citizenship dynamics whereby *bateyes* had a different migration and citizenship practices than the rest of the Dominican territory. *Bateyes* were therefore spatial manifestations of Ong's "logic of exception in transnational production" that "permits the institutionalization of ethnic discipline and biopolitical technologies in the same lateral spaces" (2006, p. 121). According to Wooding and Moseley-Williams, *bateyes* existed relatively outside the power of the Dominican state until 1999, when they were integrated into already existing municipalities. Up until then, sugar companies were in charge of providing all services and infrastructure (2004, p. 41). There were periods when sugar companies had control over the *Ingenios'* territories as well as over the documentation process of the majority of Haitian workers and their families. In tandem, and until 1986, the *bateyes* were surveyed by *Ton Ton Macoutes*, the Haitian secret security forces notorious for their capacity for political violence inside and outside of Haiti (Wooding and Moseley-Williams, 2004, p. 42).

Between 1844 and 2010 the constitutions of the DR granted a birthright to nationality, which was in fact strengthened in the Constitution of 1929, which sought to promote European and white Caribbean immigration (Marsteintredet, Forthcoming). According to article 11 "all persons born in the Republic's territory" were entitled to the Dominican nationality "with the exception of the legitimate children of foreign diplomat representatives as well as the children of foreigners in transit through DR" (Gaceta Oficial, 1966).³⁵ The only legal definition of "foreigners in transit" at the time was part of Bylaw No. 279 which referred to foreigners in transit as *transeuntes* who were transiting through DR on their way to another country with a stay of maximum 10 days (Peynado, 1939, p. Section Vb).³⁶

For forty years, Haitian migrants were able to register their children born in the DR under the *ius soli* regime. However, *Ingenios* remained their main connection to the Dominican state for most of that time. By the time the constitution of 1966 came into effect, there had been decades of inconsistent access to identity documents (see table No. 1, for an example) that disproportionately excluded women. Many of them had limited or no access to identity documents, which increased their precarity and that of their children both in terms of place and labour (Riveros, 2014, p. 40). This precarity was also shared by their male counterparts, who had more, but still insufficient, access to documents. As Petrozziello has argued: "[i]f documentation practices for male migrant workers were ambiguous at best, female migrants had – and continue to have – even fewer and less formal ties that could facilitate their access to identity and migration documents" (2018, p. 217). This generalized precarity of status meant that Haitian parents of Dominican born children used their *Fichas*, and Haitian nationality documents, among others, to register the births of their Dominican born children. Local offices of the civil registry accepted these documents as proof of parental identity and their children were thus formally recognized as Dominican citizens.

Inconsistent access to identity and migration status documents remained a constant characteristic among Haitian migrants and Dominicans of Haitian ancestry. Politicians in power brought it up instrumentally during periods of political or economic crisis, describing Haitian migrants (regardless of their status) as part of a 'silent invasion,' evocating the historical language of *anti-haitianismo* of the early

³⁵ Article 11's section 2 went on to confirm the nationality of those who already held it by virtue of previous laws and constitutions.

³⁶ *Transeuntes* were assigned a temporary permit that lasted 10 days.

1900s (Hintzen, 2017; Petrozziello, 2018). The securitization of language around the issue did not match the political reality of the island. As argued by Marsteintredet, "[e]ven though in the twentieth century a Haitian invasion was highly unlikely, politicians such as Balaguer would coin the issue of Haiti in the language of national security" (2016, p. 80). The language of security was used to sustain the logics of exception required so that Haitian migration remained contained in the sugar plantations.

Bilateral treaties sending Haitian braceros to DR continued without significant alterations until 1986. Some improvements were made to the contracts during the 1970s and 1980s in an effort to appease international concerns regarding the labour conditions of Haitian labourers. However, these changes were generally only in letter and never effectively changed the situation of migrant workers and their families (Wooding and Moseley-Williams, 2004, p. 39). These changes were happening while Balaguer's government attempted, once again, to dominicanize the sugar labour force with no success. He tried to improve the conditions offered in the *bateyes* taking advantage of the exceptionally high international price of sugar during the 1970s. However, labour conditions continued to be strenuous and Dominican workers had the freedom to move and look for other options that Haitian braceros did not (Bosch Carcuro, 2017). Sectors of the Dominican military also began to profit from intercepting irregular Haitian migrants, as well as some CEA's braceros as part of a human trafficking scheme through which they provided new labour to private *Ingenios* (Riveros, 2014, p. 41). Informal smuggling networks had been growing since the 1960s and became the main source of Haitian labour when the bilateral treaties came to an end in 1986 (Wooding and Moseley-Williams, 2004).

The end of Bilateral bracero agreements coincided with the period of structural adjustments in the DR. This radical change in the Dominican economy significantly altered the role of sugar in the Dominican economy.³⁷ International market prices for sugar had decreased dramatically and they never recovered. The overall economic model transitioned into the creation of special trade zones to attract cheap male Dominican labour, while the situation of *batey*-bound communities of Haitian ancestry became uncertain. As explained by Werner, the trade zone model was coming into effect when "Haitian workers were incorporated massively as a largely undocumented workforce in cities and towns" (2011, p. 1579).

³⁷ Werner argues that the new model of export trade zones used a similar spatial logics than *bateyes*, applying what Ong (2006) refers to as logics of exception.

The implementation of the export trade zone model was part of the economic restructuring brought about by the wave of economic restructuring that impacted Latin America and the Caribbean. By the mid-1980s the DR underwent a significant devaluation and a wage freeze, which dropped wages to the lowest levels in the Caribbean (Derby and Werner, 2013, p. 299; Martin, Midgley, and Teitelbaum, 2002).

The new attempt to dominicanize the labour force worked as a scapegoat strategy during a heavy economic crisis, and the growing prominence of Enrique Peña Gómez,³⁸ a black political contender to Balaguer's authoritarian power. (Sagás, 2000, pp. 125-126). Anti-Haitian sentiments were instrumentalized by Balaguer to extent his hold to power through two national policies. First, Balaguer sanctioned the largest mass expulsion of Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian ancestry in 1991, which resulted in 35 thousand deportations and distracted the general public from the deep economic crisis that the country was enduring. Mass expulsions became a trait of Dominican politics in the 1990s, with massive deportation campaigns taking place again in 1996, 1997, and 1999, involving tens of thousands (Ferguson, 2003, pp. 17-18).³⁹ Second, Balaguer promoted a new Labour Code, which came into effect in 1992 (Law 16-92). The new law had a section devoted to the “nationalization of work”, which specified that at least 80 percent of workers had to be Dominican and that 80 percent of the total allocated to salaries had to be assigned to Dominican workers (Bosch Carcuro, 2017; Congreso de la RD, 1992).⁴⁰ Reducing unemployment among Dominican nationals had become an urgent priority among government representatives (Werner, 2011, p. 1579).

The transition from the reign of sugar into the age of export trade zones transformed the Dominican migration regime. This transformation first took place through spectacular practices such as the deportation campaigns of the 1990s (which continued on, in a smaller proportion well into the 2000s) that occurred in tandem with the systematic denial of birth certificates to infants and children born to Haitian

³⁸ Peña Gómez who was heavily attacked for his blackness and alleged Haitian heritage.

³⁹ The massive deportations of 1991 happened during Aristide's first presidency of Haiti. His government reacted first with tactful diplomacy that later became a "vociferous" protest in the United Nations (Wooding and Moseley Williams, 2004, p. 75). Aristide was shortly deposed with a coup that was part of the early stages of a significant political and economic crisis that has affected Haiti ever since (Lozano, 2014).

⁴⁰ It is important to point out that, among others, principles IV and VII of the Law benefitted migrant workers: the principles of non-discrimination and territoriality specified that the Law protected the right of all workers in DR, disregarding their nationality, sex, or migration status.

parent or to parents of Haitian ancestry. This exclusion was taking place at local civil registries throughout the country and was often experienced as isolated incidents by these families, who already struggled with generations of legal and economic exclusion.⁴¹

Table 2: Steps to register a child's birth in the DR

Step	Description
1. Obtain a certification of birth, Certificado de Nacimiento.	Birth certificates are provided at the time of the birth, in the hospital where the infant is born. If the child is born outside the hospital, midwives or others attending the birth need to attest to it.
2.a Obtain a birth certificate, Acta de nacimiento.	With the birth certificate at hand, as well as their own identity documents, parents proceed to register the birth in a local civil registry (to which they need to travel if they reside in a rural setting) within 60 days of the birth.
2.b Obtain a late birth certificate, Registro tardío.	If parents fail to register the birth of the infant within 60 days, they are required to make a late registry, hire a lawyer and go through a longer and more expensive process.

Table by author.

For years, Haitian parents had used their Fichas as proof of identity when registering their children and local registries discretionarily accepted them. However, this practice began to change in the 1990s when Fichas were increasingly not accepted. This was a decade of fear among the population of Haitian ancestry in the way of the massive deportations. Many chose to delay birth registrations out of fear of detention. This resulted in a frequent need for late registrations, or unregistered births among Haitian-Dominican communities. The denial of late birth certificates to Dilcia Yean and Violeta Bosico in 1997 was brought to the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights and later to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR) as a violation of the Inter-American Charter. The Court ruled against the Dominican state in 2005. It requested that the Dominican state restore the right to nationality to these children and eliminate discriminatory practices on the right to nationality⁴² (Marsteintredet, 2016; Petrozziello, 2018; J. L. Shoaff, 2016).

⁴¹ Marie, (in chapter 5) encountered these hurdles during her failed attempt to register the birth of her two first sons in the 1990s. She never attempted to register them again.

⁴² The case of Yean and Bosico is explained in some depth as part of MUDHA's political intimate and transnational activism in Chapter 7.

The denial of identity documents affected youth and adults. Informal discriminatory practices affected the renewal of birth registries as well as access to and renewals of *cédulas*. These identity documents are central to everyday life in the DR and need to be renewed periodically. *Cédulas*, for example, are required when registering at school, getting married, buying property, obtaining formal employment, opening a bank account, etc. Therefore, the absence of a *cédulas* poses a significant obstacle for participating in any form of formal institution. For example, it was common for Dominican-Haitian youth who had Dominican birth registries to be denied their first *cédulas*, which they required to be able to write their middle and high school exams. In this way, exclusion from nationality came together with their exclusion from the right to education (Bartlett, 2012, p. 31; Civolani Hischnjakow, 2011).⁴³

A long denationalization process and the institutionalization of exclusion

What had begun as an informal denationalizing process gradually became institutionalized through the modification of laws, regulations and the national constitution (see Table 3 below). The institutional shift began with the emergence of a new migration Law in 2004. Migration Law 285-04 emerged after 65 years governed under Immigration Law No. 95 (1939). The new legislation was the first of a series of legal and institutional procedures that transformed the Dominican citizenship regime (J. L. Shoaff, 2016; Vásquez Frías, 2013). It came one year before the IACtHR ruled against the Dominican state, in what Marsteintredet refers to as a "re-domestication" of the Dominican citizenship regime. The Dominican state used Law 285-04 as a protection against what it expected to be an unfavourable ruling by the regional body. Through it, the governing elites sought to "regain domestic control over the definition of who is a Dominican by countering the understanding and definition of the Dominican citizenship regime in the IACtHR" (Marsteintredet, 2016, p. 81). More than ever, the concept of citizenship had become the site of a battle over national sovereignty.

Table 3: Legal, institutional and Constitutional changes in the Dominican Citizenship regime 2004-2105

Year	Legal, institutional, or constitutional change
2004	Migration Law No. 285-04

⁴³ This was the experience of Elena and Rosalba, as explored in chapter 7.

2007	JCE Circular 17-2007
	JCE Resolution 12/2007
2010	New Constitution
2013	Sentence 168-13 of the Constitutional Court
2014	Regularization Plan for Foreigners, Decree 327-13
2015	Special Regime for persons born in National Territory and Irregularly registered in the Dominican Civil Registry and for Naturalization, Law 169-14

Table by author

Law 285-04⁴⁴ significantly modified the way *ius soli* was applied in the DR in two ways. First, it established new migration categories "Resident" and "Non-Resident" that substituted the "Migrant" and "Non-Migrant" categories of Law No. 95 of 1939. It expanded the definition of "transit" from the 10 days established in the Law of 1939 to be part of the category of Non-residents, which also included temporary workers, and undocumented migrants. From then on, all individuals under the non-migrant category were considered to be "in transit" regardless of the amount of time they had been in the DR. This had devastating consequences for the children of Haitian immigrants born after 2004 because, according to Article 11 of the Constitution that was current at the time, birthright citizenship was not granted to those categorized as "in transit" (Congreso de la RD, 2004; Vásquez Frías, 2013). This new interpretation of "in transit" status had been under discussion among government circles since the 1970s when army authorities were concerned with the permanence of Haitian labourers after sugar was harvested (González, 2017, p. 55).

Second, Law 285-04 established a "Book of Foreigners" whereby the birth of all children born to non-residents had to be registered, in lieu of the regular civil records. Parents whose children were registered in the Book of Foreigners had received a certification of birth of a different colour than regular birth certifications (see Table 2). In practice, these certifications of birth are pink, and are not accepted when registering a birth in Dominican civil registries. New parents are to take the pink slips to the consulate of their country of origin in order to obtain a birth certificate (Petrozziello, 2018; J. L. Shoaff, 2016; interview with William Charpentier, 2017). The way pink slips are distributed to families at public hospitals is often arbitrary and affects Haitian women the most, who are often unaccompanied by the (Dominican or Haitian) fathers of the newborn(s). Often, children of Dominican-Haitian parents were given pink slips even though their parents were Dominican because they "looked"

⁴⁴ Law 285-04 involves also other aspects relevant to all migrants. One of them was a special category called "Border Inhabitant" for Haitian individuals who live in Haitian border towns and work in Dominican border towns. The category required a specific bylaw in order to be applicable. The bylaw was legislated in 2011 but has not been effectively applied up until May 2019. See chapter 6.

Haitian, or because the family name 'sounded French'. In addition, the children of mixed couples, particularly of a Haitian mother and a Dominican father, confront frequent obstacles to obtain a birth certificate in the case the father tries to register the birth at a civil registry if the family was given a pink slip at the hospital (Petrozziello 2018, p. 222).

Law 285-04 modified the way *ius soli* applied to the generations born after the law came into effect. In 2007, two internal regulations within the Civil Registry made Law 285-04's *ius soli* interpretation retroactive. Circular JCE17-2007 and Resolution JCE12-2007 were applied within the civil registries. Circular JCE17-2007 required all civil registries to review all original birth certificates when issuing new ones. This had a widespread effect, considering that birth certificates are required for most legal and institutional procedures, and expire every three months. Following Circular JCE17-2007, Resolution JCE12-2007 suspended the issuing of new copies of the birth certificates of anyone whose original documents showed signs of any irregularity and ordered these birth registries to be purged from the civil registry. In other words, the Circular initiated a close examination of all births registered in the country, and the Resolution initiated a purge of all the registrations found to contain any mistake or irregularity. Thousands of births registered with *La Ficha*, or with Haitian documents instead of a Migratory permit and Dominican-issued *cédula*, for example, were considered illegitimate (Civolani Hirschjakow 2011; interview with Ruth Helen Paniagua 2017). The errors found in the registries did not come as a surprise given that there had been decades of inconsistent procedures in the provision of documents to Haitian migrant families and their descendants (see table 1), which affected women in specific ways. The Circular and Resolution that emerged within the civil registry in 2007 institutionalized the exclusionary practices that affected children like Jean and Bosico, whose case produced the IACtHR's sentence against the Dominican government (Belique Delba et al. 2015).

In 2010, a new Constitution locked in the modifications that had been introduced by Law 285-04. The new constitution definitively changed the terms of the right to nationality in the DR. Article 18, part 3, established, among others, that the *ius soli* principle did not apply to children of "foreigners in transit or that reside illegally in Dominican territory" (Congreso de la RD, 2010, p. 40). The same article confirmed Law 285-04's definition of 'in transit.'

MUDHA and other civil society organizations had had to accept the constitutional change; but they were taken aback when, in 2013 the Constitutional Court pronounced that the new citizenship regime was retroactive for all births as far back as 1929 (interview with Sirana Dolis, 2016). Talking about this time, MUDHA's coordinator, Sirana Dolis noted that "it never occurred to us that the law would become retroactive" (Interview with Sirana Dolis, 2016). The Constitutional Court, the highest court in DR, produced sentence 168-13 whereby it denationalized anyone born in the DR to irregular migrant parents since 1929 (Amnesty International, 2015, p. 17; Martínez and Wooding, 2017, p. 98; Wooding, 2016, p. 103).⁴⁵ The sentence ordered a careful audit of all birth registries as far back as 1929, identifying irregular registration of foreigners and initiating a massive purge from the registry. The names of those found to have been registered irregularly were to be included in a list to be sent to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Interior and the Police. Sentence 168-13 took Resolution JCE12-2007 to the extreme, affected several generations of Dominican-Haitians and left over two hundred thousand at risk of statelessness (Amnesty International, 2015, p. 17).

The Court and the Dominican government faced significant national and international criticism related to the Sentence. It was severely criticized for violating international human rights standards, weakening the rights of migrants, and fostering statelessness, as well as for discriminating against a specific ethnic group. Given the national and international pressure, as well as facing the risk of statelessness of two hundred and ten thousand Dominican-Haitian individuals, the Dominican state had to create swift policy responses (Amnesty International, 2015; Riveros, 2015; Rodríguez Grullón, 2014, pp. 138-144; Wooding, 2016) to a problem it had created.

In the midst of the Sentence controversy, the government framed the situation as a national opportunity to straighten the prolonged and widespread irregularity of status among migrants and their descendants. In that tone, it put forward a National Regularization Plan for Foreigners (NRPF) in 2013 (based on Law 285-04 and Decree 327-13) and a new Law addressing the situation of hundreds of thousands recently denationalized (Law 169-14). The NRPF was conceived as a process to test migrants' sense of belonging to DR, which took into account time of residence, links to society, and labour and socioeconomic conditions of the migrant. According to

⁴⁵ The sentence responded to a demand put forward by Juliana Deguis, a Dominican of Haitian-descent who was denied the renewal of her *cédula*, and had her birth certificate confiscated in 2008 as a consequence of Resolution 12-2007. Deguis' demand reached the highest court, which ruled against her, rejecting her request to have her Dominican documents reinstated.

Wooding and Riveros, only 53.3 percent of the Haitian population expected to participate took part, and 86.6 percent of those who participated were regularized (2017, pp. 5-6).

Fear of being deported by coming forward for regularization created some reservations for irregular migrants, even though the government halted deportations for the duration of the NRPF. After all, DR has a long history of arbitrary deportation (Fletcher and Miller, 2004; SJR, 2002). Moreover, due to their own irregularity of status, it was a challenge for migrants of any gender to have documents proving a sense of belonging (*arraigo*) in the way of contracts, invoices, etc. Unsurprisingly, inability to provide these documents in a timely manner was the main cause of rejection (ONE, 2018b). In part, this is a consequence of a protracted politics of neglect in the provision of passports and other documents to Haitian nationals in the DR on the part of the Haitian government. Even though it has been legal to provide identity documents at the Haitian Embassy in Santo Domingo for over two decades (Wooding and Mosely-Williams, 2004), in reality access has been scarce and cumbersome. This became an important hurdle for Haitian immigrants who were trying to register in the PNRE and led to the implementation of Haiti's Program of Documentation and Identification of Haitian Immigrants (PIDIH) in the DR (Paniagua, 2014; Redacción (El Nacional), 2014). The PIDIH⁴⁶ was costly and presented significant delays that affected migrants' ability to register in the NRPF. By 2017 PIDIH was still providing passports requested in 2014 (three years later) (OBMICA, 2018).

Haitian women had a particularly hard time to prove labour and socioeconomic conditions. According to the recent National Survey on Migrants, 41 percent of Haitian migrant women work in commerce and 21.7 percent work at the household level (ONE, 2018a). These statistics reflect their concentration in street vending and paid domestic work, as well as typically unregistered sex work. These trades are also carried out informally, without regulation, and sporadically, often without specific employers. In the case of migrant domestic workers, most research participants had a hard time obtaining proof of work from their employers, and those who worked as live-in workers had difficulties leaving their work places in order to participate in the *Plan* (Llavaneras Blanco, 2018).

⁴⁶ Rosalba and Marie's account in Chapter 7 refer to their experience accessing PIDIH.

Regarding the situation of denationalized Haitians, the government put forward Law 169-14. This law created two separate groups: descendants of Haitian migrants who had been registered as Dominican nationals and had been denationalized, which the Law categorized as “Group A”⁴⁷; and those descendants of Haitian migrants whose births had never been registered, whom the Law categorized as “Group B”. Group A was to have their nationality reinstated. Group B had a 90-day window to register in the Book of Foreigners and then take part of the NRPF (ONE, 2018b; Riveros, 2015; Wooding, 2016). In practice, those who were to benefit from Law 169-14 were often disoriented as to what Group they belonged to. They experienced frequent verbal mistreatments at the hands of government representatives, having to return several times to submit documents, as requirements were often unclear. Elena's experiences, explored in chapter 7, are examples of the sort of confusion and abuse Group A and B individuals experienced (Wooding, 2016; interview with Elena Lorac, 2017; Interview with Sirana Dolis, 2016).

Figure 6: Identification cards



Photo: A research participant insisted on showing her identification cards as part of her interview. She was born in the DR to Haitian parents and has been categorized as Group B by Registry Officials. (Photo by author).

The application of Law 169-14 brought mixed results. A list of 55 thousand of Group A members (43 thousand of whom were of Haitian descent) was published in major

⁴⁷ This was the case of Elena in chapter 7.

newspapers indicating that they needed to go to a local registry in order to have their documents reinstated. About twenty thousand of them had received new birth certificates by the end of 2015. These 55 thousand did not include all those expecting to have their documents reinstated (Randazzo, 2016; Wooding, 2016). Furthermore, those fortunate enough to have received documents found that they were given certificates with numbers different from the original and that they could not use them for all of the legal purposes which birth certificates are intended (Interview with Elena Lorac, 2017). Also, Group A beneficiaries were registered in a Special Registry Book, therefore creating a third registry: the civil registry available to Dominicans by birth, the Book of Foreigners (*El Libro de Extranjeros*), and the Special Book (*El Libro Especial*) where they were registered as foreigners that had been naturalized Dominican. In other words, the state never recognized its role in the birth registration of the thousands of persons who had had the Dominican nationality throughout their lives (Belique Delba, 2017).

The situation is even more discouraging for those categorized in Group B. A reduced 8,755 (11% of the total of expected beneficiaries) were registered out of the 79,923 individuals that were expected to enroll (Belique Delba, 2017, p. 7). The only right gained by those who enrolled was to be allowed to stay. Their new regularized status needs to be renewed periodically, and grants no access to employment or public education. If anything, their main gain was to reduce the risks of deportation, which was generalized and substantiated by the state's policy to deny them birthright citizenship (Ahmed and Villegas, 2015). Many who had tried to enroll had been unable to register in the 90-day window provided for them, since in many cases these were individuals that had never had any kind of documentation. Once the NRPF ended, it was unclear what was going to happen with them as they were left in the most vulnerable situation of irregularity and potentially statelessness (Randazzo, 2016, p. 156). By June 2017, the IOM (2017) had recorded that more than 202,525 Haitian migrants had spontaneously returned or had been deported to Haiti (2017). Among them, 37,942 were forcefully (and unofficially) deported. This period of deportations coincided with what Riveros describes as a media campaign that insisted on the idea that a growing number of Haitian migrants were crossing the borders irregularly (OBMICA 2018).⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Since the Sentence of 2013, the Haitian government showed a belligerent posture defending Dominican-Haitians against the denationalization process. This posture was not necessarily productive for Dominicans of Haitian ancestry in the DR because it was seen as bringing legitimacy to the Dominican claim that this people were indeed not Dominican but Haitian. Moreover, Lozano (2014)

Bordering the land, bordering the bodies, bordering the people

From the perspective of the Dominican state, the bordering of Hispaniola has played out in three main modalities throughout history. First, the Dominican state established a boundary that crudely split the historically porous borderlands with the massacre of 1937. Second, it managed what was left of this porosity as an asset to develop the Dominican sugar industry. Border porosity was an asset for the creation of territories of exception in each *Ingenio* where the politics of mobility and belonging were constantly negotiated to the detriment of the Haitian migrant labour and to the profit of US-based sugar companies, Trujillo's own coffers, as well as those of the Dominican state. And third, with the end of the reign of sugar, the exceptionality of *Ingenios* was transferred to the bodies of persons of Haitian ancestry, migrants or not, who then embodied, more than ever, the border regime. Martínez and Wooding refer to this transference as the “biopolitical turn that adapts to the demands of flexible labour of the neoliberal economy” (2017, p. 98). In this way, the logic of the *bateyes* as enclaves of extraction, exploitation and export production was individualized in each individual of Haitian descent who has been categorized through new legal and institutional bordering procedures such as Law 169-14, Sentence 168-13 and Circular JCE17-2007, among others. Accordingly, the border is not only reified via physical border crossings between the two sides of the island (as it is explored in Chapter 6), but through an ever more complex migration and citizenship regime that weights especially heavily on the backs of Haitian women.

The invisibility of Haitian women's labour and mobility has been a historical asset to the three phases of Dominican bordering of Hispaniola. Their mobility and labour were structurally invisible from the beginning of Haitian labour migration into Dominican *Ingenios*.⁴⁹ This invisibility provided cheap social and biological reproduction of a spatially and legally excluded, and therefore exploitable labour force. Women's intimate labour and gendered roles in social reproduction were central in their immigration (i.e. through family unification). It was also a fundamental survival strategy to find shelter and find a place for themselves. Their reproductive labour made them part of sugar production, and is what placed them at the centre of the politics of exclusion.

argues that Haiti's posture was more of a strategy to regain ground on the international stage and be in a stronger position to negotiate trade related matters with the DR.

⁴⁹ Wucker argues that by the late 1970s the Haitian government was receiving as much as 3 million USD per year through the most recent versions of the binational treaty (1999, 105).

Mayes argues that “since the 2000s, migration policy in the DR is a regime that manages access to nationality and citizenship through the regulation of race and sex” (2019, p. 155). Petrozziello develops a related argument by proposing that in the DR case statelessness is indirectly reproduced via gender discrimination through policies such as the provision of pink certifications of birth to foreign women (2018). Ethnic identity, race, and gender interact in complex ways that place Haitian black women at the centre of the exclusion of people of Haitian ancestry in the DR. Using a perspective that gives priority to human mobility as a constituent aspect of territoriality along side states' practices and regulations (Casas-Cortes et al., 2015; De Genova, 2013) this chapter has argued that race and gender were determinant in the Dominican border regime since the early 1900s. These gendered and racialized bordering practices are the result of a long history of dangerous mobilities driven by reproductive responsibilities, and navigated with intimate labour as a key strategy to survive and get by.

Today, women of Haitian ancestry are no longer secluded in rural *bateyes*. Many of these communities have become urban slums and have grown significantly although access to public services is significantly suboptimal if compared with other rural or urban poor communities. *Bateyes* have been multiethnic communities for several decades, and are not the only places where Haitians and Dominican-Haitian make lives for themselves (Martínez, 2007). They increasingly live in cities and towns, in touristic enclaves, etc.

At the time that field research for this dissertation was carried out in 2017, Haiti was still recuperating from a severe earthquake in 2010 that had internally displaced 1.5 million people, and from Hurricane Matthew in 2016. Both natural disasters generated new waves of transnational mobility into the DR looking for safety and better living conditions. However, despite the undeniable acuteness of the crises generated by these disasters, Haitians and people of Haitian descent in the DR have experienced crises in quotidian ways for decades. These have included significant droughts and political turmoil, as well as massive deportations from DR for at least the past thirty years.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Over 41 thousand people were categorized as internally displaced by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), which was also monitoring the situation of voluntary returns and deportations from the DR which had intensified in June 2015 with the end of the Foreigners Regularization Plan (Locke et al., 2013, p. 1888).

Birth registrations continue to be a problem among the newer generations of Dominicans for the population at large. As of 2013, the DR had an average birth registration coverage of 84 percent which particularly affects children under five of the lowest quintile, 35 percent of which are unregistered. Given the prolonged precarity of status of women of Haitian ancestry in DR, it is sensible to expect that many of these young children are children of Haitian descent (UNICEF and Tulane University, 2016). At the same time the Haitian state has maintained a politics of delay and negligence in the provision of passports and other documents to Haitian nationals in the DR. The cycle of gendered and racialized exclusion continues with them.

The cycle of exclusion has historically relied on a constant sense of temporariness imposed via a logic of transience -based on economic, as well as racialized and gendered logics- even among those who have been settled in one place for generations. This transience and disposability were reproduced through the uncertainty of those categorized as Groups A or B. Dolis describes this structural problem, by way of describing the temporality of status provided via the NPRF:

they were given a visa for two years, which means that already next year they have to renew it. And they will be kept like that [periodically having to renew their migratory status]. But this was not accidental. This was done so migrants here do not accumulate rights. This is why I say this is political and not merely legal.

Interview with Sirana Dolis, August. 2016 (KI20).

Space and time are central to the politics of mobility and control experienced by Haitian women and women of Haitian ancestry in their spatial and labour trajectories through the DR. The next chapter illustrates how this set of temporal and spatial exclusions is experienced everyday by three women of different ages and locations in the island.

Chapter 5: On the Entanglement Between Human Mobility and Intimate Labour

One goes out searching for ways to make a life for herself.
Transborder domestic worker in Anse-à-Pitre,
Interview with author, March 2017. (DWS4-1)

While the relationship between precarity and mobility is intuitive, it is not well theorised. ...Mobility is so crucial to mitigating precarity that it ought to be accorded the same status as political economists give to development.
Susan Banki (2014), "Precarity of place: a complement to the growing precariat literature", in *Global Discourse*, p. 459.

Intimate labour is deeply imbricated in the im/mobility of Haitian women, especially those who are migrant or of Haitian ancestry in the DR. The intimate-mobility entanglement brings an intersectional feminist lens to De Genova's "obscene inclusion" whereby migrant and abject women are made exploitable by invisibilizing their labour and presence in gendered and racialized ways. The chapter illuminates three aspects of the intimate-mobility entanglement: First, it focuses on the depletion through social reproduction (Rai et al., 2014) as a key motivator of human mobility. Second, it explains how intimate labour functions as a strategy to move or to stay. Third, it analyses the role of the body in the intimate-mobility entanglement and the risks associated with it.

The first section of the chapter elaborates on the intimate-mobility entanglement by reconstructing the spatial trajectories of three women of different ages and different locations in the DR during long periods of their lives. Their names for the purpose of this chapter are Liset, Lucie, and Marie. Liset is a Dominican-born woman of Haitian ancestry who lives in a remote rural *batey* in DR's southwest. Lucie is a Haitian migrant who lives in an urban *batey* near Santo Domingo. Marie is a Haitian woman who lived on the DR for two decades and currently resides in Haiti while working in a Dominican border town. All of them worked as domestic workers providing paid social reproductive services to families in the DR. All of them had moved to provide these services, sometimes crossing the border to do so, in response to the profound care deficits that they and their families experienced in their communities of origin. The second section develops the theoretical contribution of the chapter. It begins by explaining how emphasizing both unpaid and paid intimate work, which concentrates already unvalued and unrecognized forms of labour the intimate-mobility entanglement brings a feminist lens to De Genova's inclusion/exclusion. It then

proceeds to analyze three key elements to this entanglement that speak in general ways to the experiences of subaltern migrant women, and also in culturally and context-specific ways to the experiences of women who are Haitian or of Haitian ancestry in the DR.

The Intimate-mobility entanglement in the lives of Liset, Lucie, and Marie

Intimate labour has a double-faceted function. On the one hand, migrants need access to diverse forms of care and other types of intimate labour for their own sustenance and that of their dependents, and this need is often a driver of human mobility. On the other hand, intimate labour is a default labour alternative for women migrants. Providing this labour operates as a survival strategy to get by in situations of legal exclusion, poverty, and precarity. Migrant women's demand for intimate labour appears in the form of their need for shelter, nutrition, affect, and health care among others. On the supply side, intimate labour appears in the form of paid and unpaid domestic work, meal preparation, paid and unpaid childrearing and care for the elderly or infants, and sex.

Despite the fact that Haitian migrants and women of Haitian descent need intimate labour and care, their role as providers dominates their experience and trajectories. This is not because their needs are less than what they can offer, but because their needs are insufficiently attended to. In contrast, their ability to provide intimate labour is extensively relied upon through paid and unpaid arrangements such as domestic work, *restavek* or traditional fosterage systems in exchange for labour and transactional sex. Their national and transnational trajectories through the island of Hispaniola are often motivated by the weakening or break down of already fragile informal mechanisms of social protection. This DSR often implies situations of acute vulnerability and risk. It is also motivated by their need to find sources of income elsewhere in order to sustain the social reproduction of their dependents, or what Hankivsky refers to as “care deficits” Hankivsky (2011). Intimate Labour also operates as a strategy, a token of exchange for survival (Angulo-Pasel, 2018; Brigden, 2018; Vogt, 2016), as well as a means to sustain everyday life.

The spatial trajectories of Liset, Lucie and Marie were reconstructed by paying close attention to their testimonies. This included reviewing the transcription of interviews

and focus groups with them, reviewing field notes, as well as locating their spatial trajectories on a map of Hispaniola in order to observe how their experiences of mobility and intimate relate to the cartography of the nation state. This approach offers an approximation to a subaltern spatial politics that foregrounds survival and the sustenance of life. The reconstruction of these trajectories incorporates contextual and conceptual elements that illuminate the intimate-mobility entanglement as an important aspect of the geopolitics of the island. Similar to what Christopher Harker found in the everyday life practices of Palestinian families in occupied territories, Liset's, Lucie's and Marie's mobility experiences did "not cohere around the territorial spaces and practices of nation-states" (2011, p. 313) or when they did, they moved through the margins of sovereign power.

Liset: the violence of the entanglement

Liset is a Dominican woman of Haitian ancestry. She was born in the DR to Haitian parents in a rural *batey* between Barahona, a provincial capital, and Jimaní, the most transited border crossing between DR and Haiti. Haitian Creole is widely spoken as well as Spanish, and many community members, like Liset, are fluent in both languages. Her *batey* continues to be one of the most isolated sugar plantation communities in a region of the country notorious for its lack of economic development. In her *batey* most houses have no washroom or direct water access, and most roads are not paved (ONE, 2018).⁵¹ Only one bus route connects the community with other communities for a fare equivalent to a day's work for domestic workers that live in the community and work in nearby villages. Moving out and back from the *batey* is extremely expensive for locals. Liset and I met there, where she participated in a Focus Group with other community members who worked as domestic workers in a neighbouring village.⁵²

When we met, Liset was in her late 20s, and a single mother of three. At the time she lived in the same community where she was born, but she had also lived in the eastern side of DR, as well as in more central Santo Domingo. She was eleven years old the first time she moved out of her *batey*. A woman named Romelia had

⁵¹ According to the National Survey on Migration of 2017, 35% of households of individuals of Haitian descent have access to water through a pipe through a common pipe shared by several households (ONE 2018).

⁵² Chapter 7 presents further insights from this Focus Group, as well as into the everyday dangers that women confront to commute back and forward from the *batey* in order to work as paid domestic workers in a village over ten km away.

come looking for a girl that she could bring to live with her to La Romana, a tourist town 300 km to the east of the island. Similar to many *Rèstavek* and other fosterage-labour arrangements, the girl would be expected to provide domestic work in exchange for room and board, and it was possible for her to be enrolled in a local public school.⁵³ This was a demand for intimate labour that Liset, or any other girl in her circumstances could potentially provide. In tandem Liset was also promised a paid job grinding coconut in Romelia's small restaurant. Romelia had asked Liset's mother to take one of her six daughters, and her mother chose to send her. At the time her parents were arguing over her custody. Her mother did not want her to live with her father and preferred to have Liset go with Romelia. The move was framed as an opportunity to access better living conditions and a small paid job, in addition to doing unpaid domestic work: "In those times my mother and my father were separated and my dad wanted to take me to live with my stepmother. My mother did not want that, and she thought that since I am anemic this move was going to be a good opportunity [to get better nutrition]."

The weakness of Liset's informal systems of social reproduction was a fundamental driver for her first move away from her *batey*. In her case, as in most cases of fosterage and child work arrangements in Haiti (Sommerfelt, 2015), *restavek* was initially perceived as a legitimate alternative for care provision in a context of DSR that manifested at the household level (through parental disputes) and at the community level (due to severe poverty). Social reproduction - hers and that of others - was at the centre of Liset's first move away from the *batey* and would continue to be a fundamental driver in her consecutive trajectories.

Eleven-year-old Liset arrived to La Romana with Romelia. Once there, communication with her family was limited. She began doing unpaid domestic work and grinding coconut for pay. At the beginning, she regarded the move as an improvement because for the first time Liset had her own income. However, once she felt more settled she realized that the small restaurant she was working at also operated as a brothel. The venture was owned by Romelia, and two other individuals, who offered the sex labour of young girls while keeping most of their earnings. Liset, like the other girls, was expected to perform sex work. She explained: "Romelia wanted me to do as the other girls did to earn her a living. She would make me sit on the lap of older men" (FGDWB6).

⁵³ However, as it is common in other *restavek* arrangements, the promise of access to education during her time at La Romana were not kept (Hoffman, 2012; Pierre and Tardieu, 2009)

Liset refused to perform sex work. In retaliation, Romelia began to be physically and verbally abusive towards her. Her working conditions began to get worse. Her wages fell to the point she was not being paid at all. Basic social protection, like shelter, clothing and access to food became compromised. Liset continued to refuse until Romelia expelled her from the house. She recounted: "I did not want to do it [sex work], so she kicked me out of her house with nothing but the clothes I was wearing at 11 at night" (DWB6). What was first presented as a *restavek* arrangement was really a human and sexual trafficking scheme; it first acted as an enabler of movement and later turned into a source of captivity and stasis.

Liset found herself homeless, sleeping on public squares and parks. While she had escaped various forms of sexual violence while living with Romelia, she found herself the prey of at least one rape attempt once she took shelter. A woman who had found her on the street, had brought her to her home. The woman's partner came in late at night and attempted to rape her. Liset managed to cry for help and the woman that had brought her showed up and pleaded with her husband to leave the child alone. Once the attack stopped her hostess asked her to leave, because her partner was not willing to host her if she was unwilling to have sex with him. Once again, informal access to basic social protection was conditioned to her provision of forced intimate labour in the form of sex. Her situation of stasis continued, as she did not have the means to return to her community, nor she had any way to get in touch with her mother back in her *batey*.

Liset continued to live on the streets until a Haitian family offered to allow her to stay with them. By then Liset's mother heard rumours about the situation Liset was in. Nevertheless, getting to La Romana from the *batey* was costly so it took some time for her mother to travel to La Romana, find Liset, and bring her back to their community. By then Liset had turned 13 and she had already spent two years in a context of labour exploitation, sexual, verbal and physical violence, and homelessness. The same economic precarity that had made Romelia's initial arrangement seem positive made it difficult for Liset's mother to act swiftly to recover her child.

Eleven years later, Liset re-visited this experience in our Focus Group. She was visibly upset while sharing her story, crying and returning repeatedly to particular episodes, in ways that resonate with the research findings of feminist geographers

that explored the emergence of trauma through research processes with Filipina transnational domestic workers and their dependents (Pratt, Johnston, and Banta, 2017). Liset stated that she felt she had little choice in the initial arrangement between her mother and Romelia. She spoke about the isolation imposed by not having a way to communicate with her mother, the stasis imposed by having no way to leave, the physical abuse and the constant exposure to sexual and labour violence. As she shared the story, it became clear that it had been a theme of conversation among the focus group participants in the past as they helped her tell her story.

Various participants could relate to sexual abuse and labour exploitation and they were triggered by Liset's testimony to share their own experiences.⁵⁴ There was a sense of shared memory among them as women: they would comment on things such as "that woman is no longer living" conveying a sort of relief and vindication, or "with so much misery we go through, we need to scream," sharing a common sense of exhaustion (FGB6, 2017). Sexual violence emerged as a recurring form of violence. The interventions of the rest of the focus groups participants shed light on Berlant's (2011) crisis ordinariness: a constant state of living in crisis to the point crisis is no longer exceptional, but instead it is quotidian.

Liset became a mother when she was 16 a few years after she had return to her *batey*. Once she became a mother, Liset moved to the capital, about 200 km away from her community. She left her children under her mother's care in order to work as a domestic worker. Working in the capital meant higher wages,⁵⁵ and if work was "*con dormida*" as a live-in domestic worker she would have lower living expenses, which she thought increased her ability to send money to her mother back in the *batey*. Liset's livelihood strategy unveils how care networks, conceptualized as care chains (Parreñas, 2001; Yeates, 2009) or more horizontal and fragmented sets (Kofman and Raghuram, 2015; Vaittinen, 2014) occur not only transnationally, but that they also include internal mobilities among nationals, migrants and nationals of migrant descent.⁵⁶ Liset lived this way for approximately eight years during which she had two more children. Once the babies were born in Barahona she would leave

⁵⁴ Some of which are documented in chapter 7.

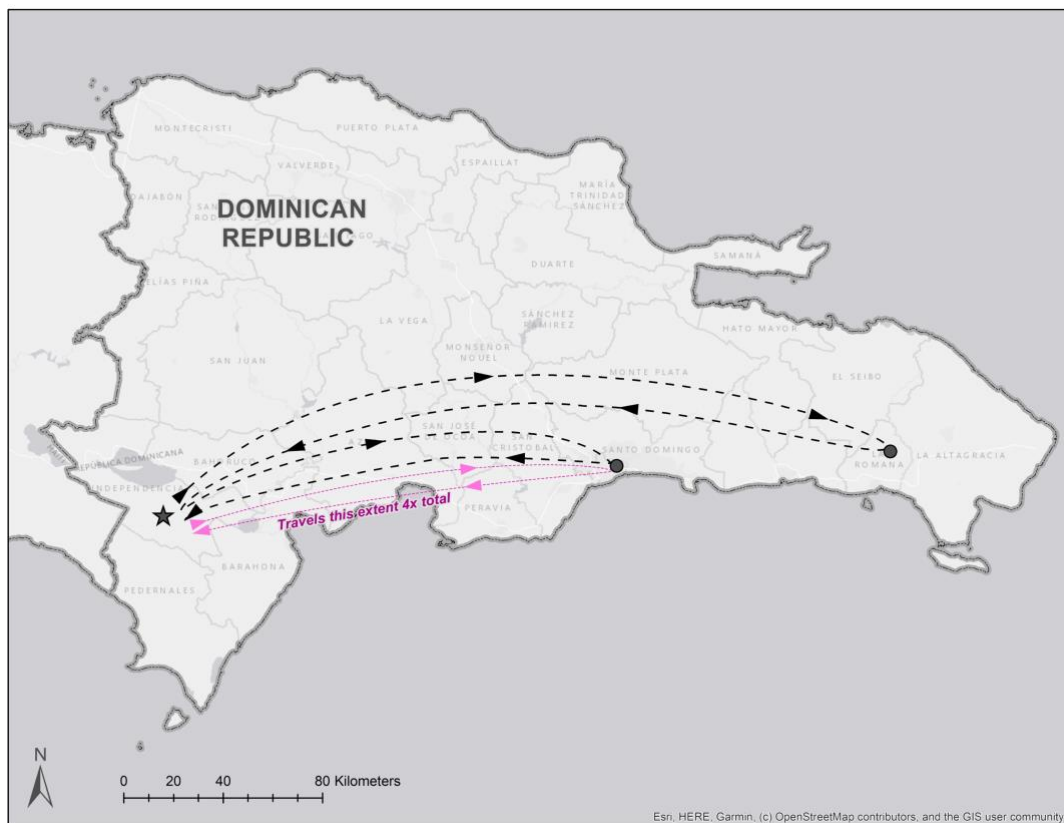
⁵⁵ On average, domestic workers in southwest DR said to have a wage of USD 2 dollars per workday, which meant an average of USD 48 per month. In contrast, most workers in the capital said to have monthly wages of approximately USD 160, more than 3.3 times the average wage registered in the southwest.

⁵⁶ Fernández Geara's 2015 documentary *Nana* presents a set of portraits that reflect these nationally-bounded trajectories. See also OIT and OIM's (2014) unpublished report.

them under her mother's care and return to the capital to work and send home part of her income.

Liset is one in eight siblings, six of whom live in the capital, with a similar care arrangement for the children. Liset's nephews and nieces are often under their grandmother's care. When her mother's health began to deteriorate, Liset returned to live in the *batey* and work closer to home. However, getting to work is physically arduous for Liset and the women in her community, one of the remotest in the area. Liset now travels every day to work in a town over 10 km away from her community. This normally would entail a 35 minute drive but takes her about two hours as she cannot afford the scarce public transport options available on her 2-dollar-a-day income. She walks and hitchhikes six days a week and earns less than a third of what she would have expected to earn in the capital.⁵⁷

Map 3: Liset's trajectories



Note: Dash lines indicate Liset's trajectories as she described them to me during a focus group. Each pointed end indicates the direction of her movement, as well as places where she settled. Liset came back to her *batey* from Santo Domingo each time she was going to give birth to each of her children.

⁵⁷ This precarious commute is routine among the women of the community, who often walk together, hoping to catch rides to work in households in a larger neighbouring village (see chapter 6).

Working conditions for domestic workers are particularly strenuous in the Dominican southwest, where Liset lives and works. Direct access to water can be irregular, which adds fetching water to the domestic work routine. Laundry is mostly done by hand. Corporeality is a central aspect of her labour, as well as to her mobility experiences. This is why im/mobilities in the intimate mobility-entanglement are necessarily framed within Hyndman's embodied mobility (2004). This embodiment speaks of the effects of racialization and the gendered sexualization that affect Liset's labour and spatial trajectories: the forms of paid and unpaid labour experiences she had, as well as the terms under which she has moved or has been made immobile.

Liset's spatial trajectories have always been brokered by intimate labour and social reproductive needs. DSR has been a central motivator for all her moves to and from the *batey*. Her household and community resources for social reproduction were weakened to a degree that her mother's initial *restavek* arrangement with Romelia seemed acceptable. A similar pattern in which depletion prompted mobility repeated when she had children of her own and had to live her community, now through her own constrained agency. Im/mobility acts as a strategy to mitigate the crisis ordinariness that manifests in DSR; paradoxically, im/mobility brings with it the constant potential of furthering depletion. In that context, Liset's trajectories through the island are attempts to mitigate depletion at the expense of deepening it in a process that became cyclical in Liset's life course (see figure 1 in chapter 3). A Dominican citizen of Haitian ancestry, Liset experiences the territorial politics of the DR in similar ways than those experienced by her Haitian mother. Life is contained in the *batey*, and her attempts at leaving it are still linked to a logic of containment that make mobility risky and costly.

Lucie: maternal and child mortality, the heaviest costs of DSR

Lucie is a Haitian migrant domestic worker in her forties. She has been separated from the father of her 3 teenage and young adult children for the last 10 years. I interviewed her at her small concrete house in a *batey* in the outskirts of Santo Domingo.⁵⁸ Lucie was born and raised in Haiti in a context of domestic violence and DSR. She remembers that her father became unreliable when he drank alcohol and grew increasingly violent. Her mother, who left the household to escape after a

⁵⁸ Present-day *Bateyes* located in the outskirts of Santo Domingo keep some of the structure of old sugar plantations, but mostly function as poor suburban communities.

particularly violent episode, was only able to take two of her four children. Lucie and her sister were the oldest and were left behind, living under their father's sole care for about two years. Those were years of neglect: "he drank a lot and never really sent either of us to school. That's why I did not get any schooling after my mother left" (DWC7). When Lucie was 12 years old a female relative that she scarcely knew came from the DR looking for a girl to help around the house. The agreement was that she would move to the DR as a *rèstavek* and carry out unpaid domestic work in exchange for room and board. She did not have a passport or other relevant documents at the time, and hence began her transnational journey as an undocumented minor migrant.

Lucie's journey was propelled by the depletion of the systems of social reproduction available to her. Her father took her to Santo Domingo; they crossed the border together through *el monte* (the bush), sometimes walking, sometimes by bus. Soon after Lucie arrived to the DR her mother returned to the household to take care of the other sister that had been left behind, who had poor health and eventually died. DSR had expelled Lucie from her home and also cost her sister's life. Lucie's (im)mobilities and that of her mother were deeply intertwined. Both were expelled by domestic violence and neglect. Both were also driven by their own need for survival, which came into tension with the care demand of others. Lucie's mother had returned to take care of her child; Lucie was pulled into the DR by her aunt's demand for intimate labour. Just as domestic violence and DSR acted as drivers of mobility, so did the demand for unpaid care work both in Haiti and transnationally.

Lucie rationalized her aunt's demand for unpaid domestic labour as a consequence of having no daughters of her own: she had been brought in to do a woman's work. However, she also resisted this gendered order in ways that she remembered with humour and self-confidence:

...I was a little bit of a brat... but not so much, I mean, people mistreat kids and kids have feelings too, you know? I would spend my days fetching water. It was back in 1987, there was no running water and all that were fields of guava and sugar cane [pointing at her surroundings that were filled by shacks and small houses] I was supposed to go [through the fields] with two empty gallons and fetch the water while the boys [her aunt's sons] would be just sitting there! I told my aunt to send her sons instead, that I was not the only one there! Other times I would just stroll around and suck on sugarcane by myself [instead of fetching the water]. (DWC7)

Taking time to rest, and eat the fruit and cane of the fields was a form of everyday resistance for Lucie. Even if only temporarily, she managed to reset the pace of life, reject forced labour and indulge eating fruits that were not hers to eat. Hintzen's work (2017) on the history of women in *bateyes* refers other cases when women would eat the plantation's sugar cane (not for them to use) to endure hunger and resist against sugar companies. She cites Isabella Joseph, a Haitian migrant elder who grew up in another *batey*, explaining: "Sometimes a group of women and girls would get together to go eat sugar cane [from the fields]; but you could not just go, you had to do it furtively. If the *campestre* [plantation guards] caught us they would even hit us with a whip" (2017, p. 50). Women and girls altered the routes that they were expected to follow, and took the fruit that they laboured for but were barred from having. These small rebellions carried out in the everyday life are what Moulin and Thomaz (2016, p. 606) referred to as "fleeting tactical interventions" that, in this case, challenged what was expected from them as exploited and exploitable labour. In carrying out these mundane transgressions Lucie and Isabella Joseph illustrated the forms of mundane politics embodied despite structural abjection, or the politics that Johnson describes as a politics that occurs within the state of exception created in camps and borderzones (2012).

Eating and resting were forms of resistance to a system of exploitation that drew on the depletion of racialized and gendered bodies. Lucie also remembers privately protesting to her aunt that she was fed last and less than the boys: "One day I told her that I was not a dog to be fed *cun-cun* [burnt rice], that she better fed it to her sons" (DWC7). Lucie would refuse certain meals, and tasks in an effort to subvert the relations of power in which her life unfolded. Her politics of refusal and complain continued, leading to further confrontation until Lucie was expelled from her aunt's home at the age of fourteen.

Various neighbours who found her on the streets hosted her. During this period Lucie encountered a man that was twenty-four years her senior, and eventually became the father of her four children. She explained their relationship:

I was living in other people's houses. One day in one, tomorrow in another... that is why I got married when I was 14 years old. I stayed there [at her partner's place] and began having babies, you know how it is. (DWC7)

Lucie was not referring to an official marriage. Haitian and Dominican women in *bateyes* and popular communities commonly refer to stable unions with male

partners as “marriage” although these are informal arrangements for the most part. This form of union was a common practice among Haitian migrant women who arrived clandestinely to the *bateyes* during the years of sugar labour migration. Because women were mostly outside the formal labour migration arrangements, these unions were one of the most common ways for them to access some sort of housing and safety from sexual violence. A Haitian elderly woman that lived in the same *batey* as Lucie explained that she had joined her first union with a man upon arrival from Haiti at age 14 “I got together [with a man] at once so that I would not have to sleep [on the floor] in a room full of people and I stood up at once because [I realized] there were too many men.”⁵⁹ Generally, these unions imply monogamy on the woman’s part, having children, and cohabiting in exchange for some safety. Entering a union acts as a survival strategy similar to so many trajectories of undocumented migrant women in contexts of acute risk (Angulo-Pasel, 2018; Brigden, 2018; Vogt, 2016). In Lucy's case, it facilitated her settlement in the same *batey* where she had arrived and where I met her thirty years later.

Lucie got pregnant with her first child soon after the union and became a parent at the age of fifteen. Birthing was a traumatizing experience for her. She underwent a severe postpartum haemorrhage caused by medical malpractice, which she survived at home in the *batey* with the help of her aunt. She felt physically unfit and described a long period of exhaustion and remembers that her deterioration was notorious to her neighbours. Her experience of near maternal death is an everyday illustration of Tanyag's argument that DSR becomes acute in crisis-prone contexts and translates into increased maternal mortality (2018, p. 663). As we will see in what follows, Lucie was displaced again, escaping massive deportations and her 2-year-old died of preventable causes during the process.

In 1991 Lucie and her small family returned to Haiti upon her partner's decision. They feared the growing rumours of migration raids happening throughout the country. Although their return to Haiti was voluntary, it was mainly driven by the Dominican state policy under the government of Joaquin Balaguer and later by Leonel Fernández. Around 25 thousand Haitians were expelled in 1991 alone as part of Balaguer's dominicanization of the labour force (Bosch Carcuro, 2017; Ferguson, 2003; Fletcher and Miller, 2004; Wooding and Moseley-Williams, 2004; interview

⁵⁹ See historical references that resemble and explain Lucie's experience in chapter 4.

KI12, 2017).⁶⁰ When the family returned to Haiti, Lucie and the child stayed at Lucie's mother's place for a few months while they waited for things to get calmer in the DR and return. The child became very ill with what they later realized was a digestive infection. Lucie remembers that she did not feel especially concerned. In hindsight she thinks that she was unprepared for this situation, and it is likely that she was still ongoing mental health consequences from her displacement and birthing experience. However, Lucie's mother realized the seriousness of the situation and took the child to a community doctor. Despite treatment, the child died shortly after. Her death came as a heavy cost of DSR.

Lucie returned to Santo Domingo with her partner once it seemed that deportation raids had decreased. They went back to live in the same *batey* as before. She gave birth to a son three years after the death of their first child, and to two other children afterwards. Lucie decided to seek paid work once the youngest turned two years old, and she began working as a live-in nanny and domestic worker. It was the first time that she had an income of her own after about twenty years of unpaid intimate labour. For a while the children's father was in charge of the children (especially the youngest) while she was at work for 6-days periods. She decided to quit that relationship soon after and her children were mostly under the care of a niece that had come from Haiti in a *restavek* arrangement.⁶¹

When we met, Lucie felt that at 13, 17 and 21 her children could take care of themselves. She has regularized her situation in the DR, and is working towards migrating to Panama. She has heard domestic work is better remunerated there and in the US. She is already in conversation with a smuggler as well as with a friend who is already in Panama, working as domestic worker. They plan to share housing once she reaches the country. DSR together with unpaid and paid intimate labour have been determinant to Lucie's mobility. Now in her forties, paid domestic work is yet again a driver for transnational mobility.

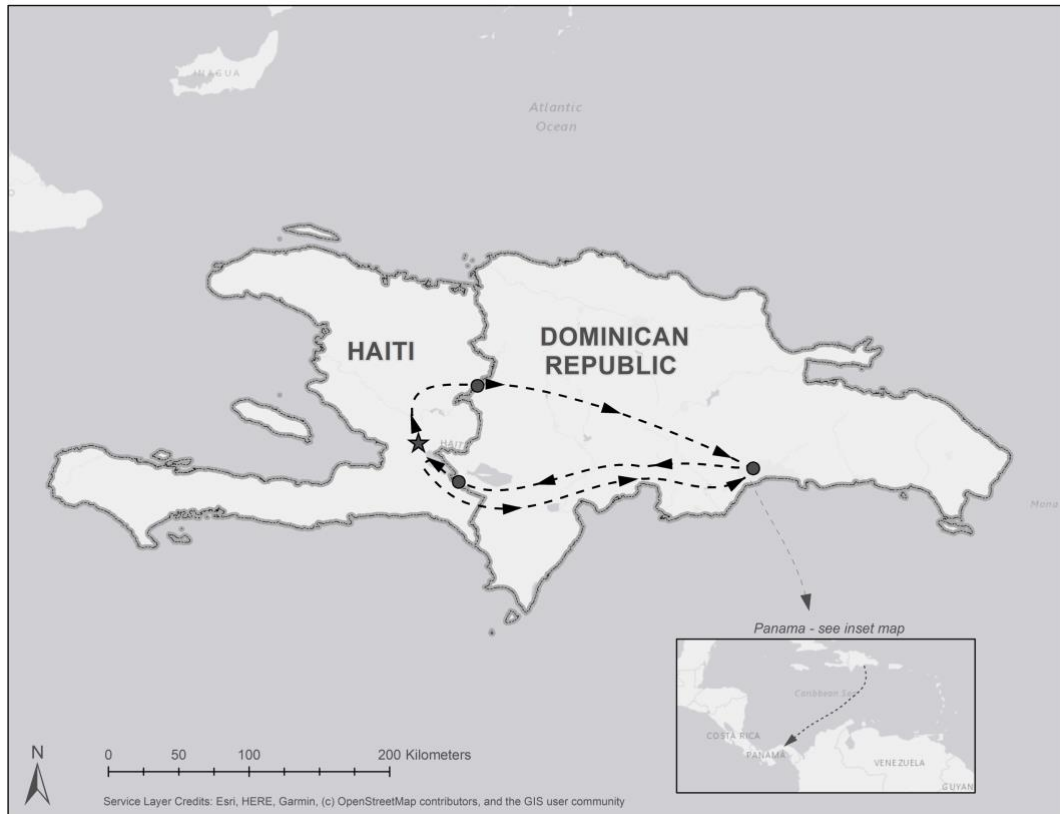
The map of Lucie's trajectory illustrates a circular period as well as a continuous journey despite long periods of stasis (see map 4 above). DSR motivated her first move, and unpaid intimate labour enabled it. More recently, paid intimate labour became the central strategy to enable transnational mobility, now beyond the island

⁶⁰ It is estimated that 85 thousand Haitians were massively deported without legal hearing between 1991 and 1999.

⁶¹ Pierre and Tardieu found that a significant minority of the families that host *restavek* children have also sent their own children in similar arrangements (Pierre and Tardieu, 2009).

of Hispaniola. This would be the first trajectory that she pursues independently. Withstanding the transition from unpaid to paid intimate labour, the intimate-mobility entanglement remained as a central element in her relationship with space.

Map 4: Lucie's trajectories



Note: Star indicates the beginning of the journey. Dash lines indicate Lucie's trajectories as she described them to me during our interview. Each pointed end indicates the direction of her mobility, as well as a place where she settled. The thinner arrow illustrates Lucie's future plans.

Marie: Gendered precarity of place

When I met Marie she was in her fifties. She worked cleaning and cooking six days a week in different houses in Dajabón, the wealthiest border town on the Dominican side. I interviewed her a couple of times in Dajabón, and we also spent time together crossing the border, and in her home in the Haitian town of Ouanaminthe where she lived, went to church, and where most of her children lived. Marie was keen to chat about her experiences as a Haitian migrant in the DR, as well as a transborder worker now that she was living in Haiti while working in the DR. She also thought that other women in similar conditions would be interested in participating and she soon became an active promoter of this research among her neighbours and

colleagues. Like many women in Ouanaminthe, Marie crossed the border back and forth most days in order to go to work. She has been doing this cross-border commute for the past ten years. However, her experiences of mobility began over thirty years ago when she moved to Port au Prince from Cerca La Source, the village where she was born.

The DSR of the household where she was born in Cerca La Source materialized with Marie's mother's death when she was barely over a month old. Her father decided to give the child to his sister to raise. Marie's aunt became her substitute mother. Marie described her time with her adoptive mother as one of care and training: her aunt nursed her as an infant and taught her how to do domestic work, which she did as part of her everyday life at her aunt's place. Marie's intimate labour later became central to her next move to Port au Prince to work as a paid domestic worker. At the age of eighteen, Marie moved to the Haitian capital where a cousin had found a job for her as a domestic worker. She moved from one town to another, and in the process shifted from unpaid to paid intimate work.

Marie's first transnational trajectory was prompted by sexual violence. While living in Port au Prince, Marie fell pregnant by a *chêf*⁶². She was afraid of him and decided to cross the border into the DR to escape. She entered the DR through the southern border and arrived at the town of Pedernales. From there she went to Barahona where her baby was born. She perceived the border, which she crossed without documents, as a protection against her aggressor. Marie did not settle in Barahona but kept on moving on to the northeast of the island with her newborn. She stopped when they reached a village in the northeast. Once there, she met an older Dominican man who offered shelter in exchange of her bearing a child of his. He was fifty years her senior and had not had any children: "I gave him his first son. He had said that if I had his child his house would also be mine, and that he would help me." Marie was aware of the terms of the relationship she had embarked on. It was an informal exchange where she expected that her and her children would receive some basic social protection and she would provide unpaid intimate labour. She tended to his house, became his sexual partner, and the mother of his child. Through this transaction she mitigated the risk of remaining homeless with the risk of embarking on a relationship with a man whom she scarcely knew.

⁶² *Chêf* is a term commonly used in reference to migration officers, army men, and policemen. These subjects are seen as powerful and often mistreat women.

Marie's new partner tried to register the birth of her first child, as well as that of the child they had together. However he was quickly discouraged at the local registry. Marie explained, "he was told that the boys also needed Dominican godmothers and godfathers. He was supposed to [get them baptized with Dominican godparents] and try to register them again" (DWN1M2). Catholic baptism to Dominican godparents has never been a legal requirement to opt for Dominican nationality. However, it has been common to find similar hurdles imposed by bureaucrats in different sites of the country, especially in rural areas (Hintzen, 2017; Petrozziello, 2017; Wooding, 2016; Interview with Sirana Solis, August 2016). In this case, the hurdles represented two common informal practices through which Dominicans of Haitian ancestry were excluded from the *ius soli* regime. First, Marie's partner was told that they needed to have more than one Dominican relation, which was untrue. Second, they were made to believe that being Catholic was another legal requisite to obtain the Dominican nationality. These practices acted as ways to dominicanize the population and make nationality hard to reach (Ricourt, 2016). In Marie's case, this first refusal was enough to keep her and her children away from Dominican state institutions.

The legal marginalization experienced by Marie was not exceptional. Haitian migrant women are historically more likely to travel with scarce documentation due to the informality and gendered nature of their connections to the Dominican labour market, as well as due to the difficulty they encounter when trying to access Haitian documentation of any kind (Hintzen, 2017; Shoaff, 2017a; Wooding and Sangro, 2012). Despite being well inside Dominican territory, Marie remained at the margins of the Dominican state for decades. Her presence was not recognized by the state, and her labour there remained invisible, as part of what De Genova (2013) describes as *obscene inclusion*, one in which irregularity and deportability become qualifications for paid and unpaid labour (2013).

Marie relied on her intimate labour as a strategy to settle down for over two years. At the same time, mobility continued to be a strategy that she was willing to use to mitigate poverty and violence. The intimate-mobility entanglement was visible in her strategy to settle down and her determination to leave violent relationships. She decided to move again when the relationship with the father of her second child turned physically violent and she felt that he had not fulfilled his promise of economic improvement: "Our son turned two and he still had not bought us a bed, a chair, nothing other than food." This time the entanglement also produced specific frictions whereby Marie's social reproductive responsibilities toward her children affected her

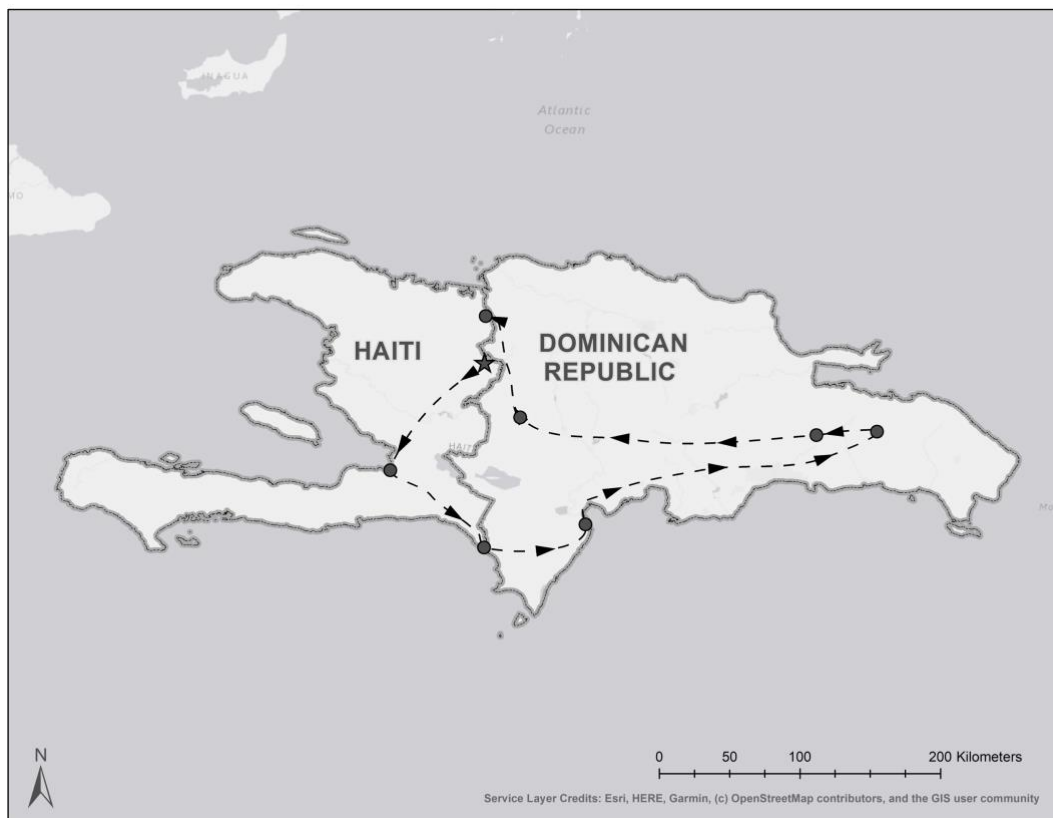
ability to move. It took two attempts before she could finally leave the relationship and move to another town. The first time she could not go very far and decided to return because she feared that her ex-partner would find her and kill her, as he had threatened to do. She had not manage to take her two children and feared for their safety. She was able to leave with the two of them in a second attempt. Like in the case of Lucie's mother, their parenting responsibilities (a form of unpaid intimate labour) challenged Marie's mobility. Both, Lucie's mother and Marie, returned to a place and relationship they had fled for the sake of their children. Unlike Lucie's mother, Marie was able to leave a second time, when she succeeded. Marie moved to a nearby village where she embarked in a new union with a man who was also a Haitian migrant who she felt treated her well. They got together and had five children together a set of twins born in the DR, and later three more that were born in Haiti. The birth of none of her Dominican-born children was registered fearing new rejections on the part of local registries.

Precarity of place was a constant experience for Marie during the twenty years she lived in the DR and ultimately became her rationale to return to Haiti with her children: "We had too many [unregistered] children to live in the DR" (DWN1M1). The average birth registration coverage for the DR is 84 percent, and for Haiti it is 80 percent, and the registration gaps increase significantly among the poorest quintiles (UNICEF and University, 2016). In both cases access to documentation is mostly expensive, geographically inaccessible for impoverished populations, historically tainted by arbitrary practices on the part of bureaucrats and country of origin (ONE, 2018a; Riveros, 2014, 2015) (Interviews with Helen Paniagua [KI6], William Charpentier [KI16] and Sirana Dolis and Cristiana Luís Francisca [KI12], 2017).

Once in Haiti, Marie acquired Haitian documents and registered her children's births. However, precarity of place continued to impact her life due to her gender and her transborder livelihood. During the first years, Marie and the rest of the family had managed to work in Dajabón while living in Ouanaminthe. Marie and her husband both had paid jobs, which enabled them to build a house for the family. However, their relationship deteriorated, and Marie realized that her husband had infected her with a sexually transmitted disease. She confronted him about it but he remained unwilling to change his risky sexual behaviour. After extensive pleading, he agreed to cover the costs of her treatments, which was vital to Marie because she had become so sick that she could not work for five months. Once she healed, she decided to leave him, filed for divorce and moved into a smaller room she could rent.

She began working as a paid transborder domestic worker then. Once back in her country of origin, Marie's precarity of place was no longer related to her precarity of status but to gendered patrimonial and physical violence.

Map 5: Marie's trajectories



Note: Star indicates point of origin. Dash lines indicate Marie's trajectories as she described them to me during our interviews. Each pointed end indicates the direction of her mobility, as well as a place where she settled.

Marie's transnational mobility continues to be shaped by paid and unpaid intimate labour even though most of her children are adults. She currently rents a small bedroom she furnished with the belongings she could bring from her old home. She is now a grandmother of two infants and shares her bedroom with three of her children and a grandchild. During my time in Dajabón Marie would cross the border not only for paid domestic but also to help the young mothers that lived on both sides. She would spend nights at her son's place in Dajabón when he had work at night so that her daughter in law would not be left alone with the newborn. The rest of the nights she would make sure she was back in Ouanaminthe to take care of her youngest daughters and her other grandchild.

The intimate-mobility entanglement: Trauma and the geopolitics of the sustenance of life

In their research on transnational trauma among Filipina migrant workers and their families, Pratt, Johnston and Banta (2017) "suggest the relevance of an approach that locates the wounds of trauma in structured and systematic processes" (p.85). Pratt et al.'s perspective on trauma helps to make sense of the stories recounted above. Liset's, Lucie's and Marie's testimonies were filled with traumatic experiences related to social reproduction and the role of the intimate in their lives, their mobility, and their labour. Trauma was clearly ingrained in their experiences and the way they shared them. Their testimonies and those of several other research participants showed that trauma was an ordinary aspect of their lives and how they understood them. This not meant that they all perceived themselves as only victims, after all when Marie described herself, she emphasized that she was someone that wanted to me happy, and not sad. Perhaps that is why she kept on moving despite significant structural constraints.

The common occurrence of traumatic experiences of neglect, sexual and physical abuse, labour exploitation and loss in the testimonials shared by research participants suggested that it was ethically necessary for me to address them as trauma. The apparent ordinariness did not make experiences any less brutal, but it simply normalized them. Violence was lived as a constant aspect of quotidian life, shaping relations that affect and are affected by the spatial politics of the border, national and international institutions as well as individuals in different positions of power. Taking account of these quotidian experiences constitutes a central aspect of a subaltern geopolitics that recognizes the agency of marginalized subjects while paying attention to power inequalities vis-à-vis nation states (Sharp, 2011b) in ways that denote how intimate violence is reproduced by individuals and state institutions via precarity of status (Goldring et al., 2009), precarity of place (Banki, 2014), ultimately creating systems of obscene inclusion (De Genova, 2013). Incorporating the intimate-mobility entanglement brings a feminist lens to how we understand De Genova's inclusion/exclusion (2013) as experienced by subaltern women. Marie's, Lucie's, and Liset's demonstrate that deportability and exploitation of irregularized migrant women makes their (paid and unpaid, intimate and otherwise) labour invisible in ways that are gendered and racialized. Moreover, their gendered obscene inclusion places them in situations of acute risk. The intimate-mobility

entanglement brings to the fore the centrality of survival and the sustenance of life in human mobility and geopolitics. It sheds light on the structural aspects of intimate violence inflicted and reproduced by individuals and state institutions such as registries, security officials (*chêfs*), and lack of community and institutional responses to DSR whereby human mobility under significant duress would not need to be an option. The next section explains three different aspects of the intimate-mobility entanglement evidenced in the trajectories of Liset, Lucie, and Marie: 1) DSR and intimate labour (re)produces im/mobility; 2) intimate labour acts as a strategy to move; 3) corporeality is central to the interdependence between intimate labour and human mobility in ways that illuminate the risks associated with care provision.

DSR prompts im/mobility

As noted in chapter 1, Rai, Hoskyns and Thomas define DSR as “the level at which the resource outflows exceed resource inflows in carrying out social reproductive work over a threshold of sustainability, making it harmful for those engaged in this unvalued work” (2014, pp. 3,4). Social reproductive labour can become a harmful process, especially when occurring without replenishment. Their definition of social reproductive labour is close to Boris and Parreñas’ (2010) definition of intimate labour in that it is inclusive of sexual, emotional, and affective services, as well as domestic work.

DSR and intimate labour have significant implications in geopolitics. As elaborated upon in chapter 3, DSR appears at individual, household and community levels. At the individual level, depletion appears in the form of the deterioration of the conditions of living, poor health, and exhaustion. At the household level, depletion is manifested through decreasing household resources, and reduced support structures, among others. At the community level, depletion appears through the weakening of community spaces, lack of mobilization, and the individualization of social processes that were otherwise collectivized (Rai et al., 2014). These levels are interrelated in many ways. For example, maternal mortality is a sign of depletion through social reproduction that has obvious individual repercussions, but also immediate consequences in terms of household, community, as well as national indicators (Tanyag, 2017). The trajectories presented in this chapter illustrate how maternal and child mortality often reflect the breakdown of systems of social

reproduction, and have the potential of exacerbating their deterioration, and prompt human mobility under significant strain.

Depletion is a recurrent trigger of mobility, especially among children and youth. It was an evident motivator for Marie, when she was given to her aunt in a relationship of fosterage once her mother died of birth complications. It was also a motivator for mobility in Lucie's experience in a two-pronged way: depletion through intimate violence triggered Lucie's mother's mobility, which in turn aggravated the household's depletion that prompted Lucie's transnational move. Lucie's individual depletion was eventually illustrated by her near-death experience during postpartum and the eventual death of her first child. Depletion also drove Liset's move and fall into a trafficking scheme. In the absence of institutional systems that support social reproduction, and weakening informal practices and bodies, exploitative and risky fosterage arrangements are perceived as reasonable alternatives.

Intimate labour as a strategy to move

The close interrelation between (im)mobility and intimate labour can begin at an early age, especially in contexts of precarity of place and status, as well the depletion of community systems of support for social reproduction. For example, Lucie's spatial trajectories were prompted by DSR and brokered through a *restavek* arrangement. Tone Sommerfelt contends that children's mobility and frequent relocation "is a longstanding feature of Haitian sociality," and that so is the expectation that all children (living with their parents or not) provide some domestic labour, which is considered part of their education (2015, p. 6). Girls in particular⁶³ learn to perform it as a central aspect of their personhood, which they expect to apply throughout their lives.⁶⁴ Translating into "staying with" *restavek* originally functioned as a social protection strategy within the widespread practice of collective parenting (especially mothering) in which kin and neighbours are implicated in the care of all children in the community (Edmond et al., 2007; Hoffman, 2012). Although not all relationships of fosterage are necessarily exploitative, there is an assumed expectation that children above five years old would provide domestic labour of

⁶³ Girls represent two thirds of child domestic workers or servants in urban households in Haiti. The proportion of boys in similar fosterage-labour arrangements is about the same as girls in rural contexts (see Hoffman, 2012).

⁶⁴ As discussed in chapter 4, paid domestic work is the second most registered trade among Dominican born women of Haitian ancestry in the DR, and the third among Haitian migrants (ONE, 2018b).

some kind. There are different words to refer to these fosterage relationships that imply more or less levels of servitude. Today, *restavèk* is a mostly pejorative term.

There is a clear relationship between mobility to receive care and mobility to provide intimate labour. Both aspects (to provide and demand) are often condensed in the same relations and produce ambivalent results; they sustain social reproduction while they also exacerbate risk and vulnerability. Marie grew up in a relationship of fosterage with her aunt. She described two main aspects of that relation: “the mother that nursed me,” and also the one with whom she learnt to do domestic work.

Although that relationship was no longer part of Marie’s life as a 50-year-old, it was an important relation of intimate care, labour, and also informal training for paid work, resembling what Hoffman refers to as informal training, or *formasion* (2012, p. 159).

In contrast, the arrangement that led to Lucie’s transnational mobility had clearer signs of labour exploitation, closer to relations of servitude commonly associated with *restavek*. Lucie resisted what she felt as excessive hard labour for over two years. She was eventually expelled by her aunt but sought to continue living in the same *batey*. A year later, as a teen mother, Lucie faced serious postpartum complications while under the informal care of the same aunt. She remembered that support with gratitude, which pointed toward affective aspects of what was described as an otherwise exploitative relation. Ambivalence emerges in this relation and many other aspects of the intimate-mobility entanglement. The intimate functions as a spatial relation and form of labour and interaction, and a strategy to move and get by.

Liset’s experience demonstrated the risks associated with children’s mobility and intimate labour. The conditions of her mobility involved intense labour exploitation within a sex trafficking scheme that indicate the acute vulnerability in which children on the move may find themselves. Liset’s expectations and those of her mother, were that the *restavèk* arrangement had the potential to improve her life. Instead, Liset found herself isolated, in a situation of labour exploitation and verbal, physical, and sexual violence. Similar to Hankivsky’s analysis of the factors that push adult Ukrainian women toward situations of risk and sex trafficking, Liset’s testimony illustrates how “economic deprivation and poverty are experienced by individuals who are deeply embedded within human relations” (2011, p. 151).

Intimate ambivalence, embodied risks

Liset's, Lucie's, and Marie's experiences confirm the call from many feminist geographers to investigate the role of intimacy and embodiment in spatial politics. (Hyndman, 2004, 2012; Mountz, 2017b; Pain and Staeheli, 2014; Parreñas, Thai, and Silvey, 2016). Bodies, girls' and women's bodies in particular, are a fundamental aspect of mobility and intimate labour. Bodies are the fundamental means of transport, the centre of much of individual's perception of self as well as of the way others perceive them. Gendered and racialized bodies are also assumed to be containers of particular labour power and faculties related to intimate and hard labour. Black bodies of women and girls are particularly perceived as capable of hard labour and sexually available, and are governed as such. Shoaff contextualizes this process of subjectification in the colonial plantation heritage of the island: "While the socioeconomic conditions born out of plantation societies produced enduring restraints to freedom for black women, their prevalent mobility in nonnormative public spheres heightened their visibility within a larger field of gender relations and class/color categories" (Shoaff, 2017b, p. 440). Black women's mobility, visibility, sexuality, and labour made them a cause of "modern anxiety" that transcended colonial eras.

As black women who are Haitian or of Haitian ancestry, Marie, Liset and Lucie relied heavily on their bodies as sources of intimate labour as well as means of transport across different sites of the island. In all cases, paid and unpaid intimate labour acted as ways to get by while living in precarity of status and place living in conditions of poverty and depletion. The corporeal aspects of intimate labour highlight the ambivalence expressed in the frequent transition between domestic work, transactional sex, sex work, and sexual violence. As observed in the testimonies of Lucie and Marie, sexual unions are often sought as a survival strategy to access shelter, safety, and nutrition. This is a frequent strategy applied by women on the move in similar conditions of precarity elsewhere (Angulo-Pasel, 2018; Brigden, 2018; Vogt, 2016) and historically was a strategy to settle down by Haitian migrant women in Dominican *bateyes* (Riveros, 2014).⁶⁵ This was Lucie's way out of homelessness after her aunt expelled her from her home. Transactional sex was also a strategy for Marie to settle down for part of the first three years in the DR.

⁶⁵ See chapters 3 and 4.

Transactional sex was a constant element in most experiences shared by all research participants. It is frequently cited in relation with occasional or regular sex work in other studies with migrant women on the island as a livelihood strategy in border towns and tourist sites (Brennan, 2004a, 2004b; Petrozziello and Wooding, 2011b, 2013). Located within the continuum of intimate labour, sexual violence is a recurrent aspect of all experiences shared by research participants. It appeared in the form of forced sex work, sexual harassment, groping, and rape as a trigger to move, as a precondition in order to be allowed to move, as well as part of experiences of immobility and further marginalization. In Marie's trajectory, for example, sexual violence was a significant motivator to move despite her precarity of status.

The intimate mobility-entanglement exposes the gendered ways in which the cartographies of the nation-state unfolds in the everyday. The next chapter is based on the experiences of Haitian women like Marie who cross the border everyday to go to work in Dominican towns while residing in Haiti. Their quotidian trajectories through border crossings illustrate how intimacy functions ambivalently as a means entry, as well as a site of violence and risk.

Chapter 6: Borders Crossed; Borders Stuck: Intimate Labour as Part of the Border Regime

"They say we are the burnt crud at the bottom of the pot. They say some people don't belong anywhere and that's us. I say we are a group of vwayajè, wayfarers.

This is why you had to travel this far to meet me, because that is what we are."

Edwidge Danticat, 1998, *The Farming of Bones*, p. 74.

This chapter looks at the ways the intimate-mobility entanglement interacts with the border regime at play between Haiti and the DR. Based on the notions that "migration is a co-constituent of the border"⁶⁶ (Casas-Cortes et al., 2015, p. 69) and that "borders' permeability is part of the way they work" (Tsianos and Karakayali, 2010, p. 373), the chapter zooms in on the pendular trajectories of Haitian women who work as domestic workers in Dominican border towns while residing on the Haitian side of the border. Building on the work of Pain and Staeheli (2014), Pratt and Rosner (2012) and Mountz (2017) the chapter explains how intimacy and intimate labour are part of the border. Seeing social reproduction as part of the border regime, this chapter unveils mundane aspects of geopolitics as well as the ambivalence inherent to intimate labour. Using social reproduction as the main lens of analysis sheds light on the fact that forced returns are experienced as the interruption of transnational livelihoods; working schedules are geopolitical matters; ad hoc regularization attempts re-enact colonial logics of control; and ultimately, irregularity reproduces and deepens the invisibility of intimate labour and its marginalization from representative politics.

Shedding light on intimate labour's role in the border regime, the chapter builds on Elias and Rai's argument that social reproductive labour and the depletion it generates stretch and shift across multiple sites that go beyond the household (2019, p. 208). Even though the border regime expands well beyond actual border strips and into Dominican (or Haitian) national territories, this chapter looks at quotidian and pendular micro-trajectories of Haitian Domestic workers that occur in

⁶⁶ The notion of mobility as co-constitutive of the border was proposed by Ursula Biemann's video works on the transnational mobilities of women in the Mexican-US borderlands. Biemann analyzes "the border as a gendered space, focusing on the circulation of female bodies in the transnational zone and on the regulation of gender relations" (2002, p.2).

two official border-crossings: Dajabón-Ouanaminthe, and Pedernales-Anse-à-Pitres. By focusing on these transnational micro-trajectories we are able to look directly at the physical border as a site of encounter between migrants and sovereign power (Mainwaring, 2016). Such a close look reveals how the border intervenes in the social reproduction of the borderlands, and how intimacy is integral to the way the border works.

The chapter develops as follows. First, it elaborates on some of the theoretical implications of looking at intimacy as an aspect of geopolitics. Second, it briefly sets the context of the Ouanaminthe-Dajabón and Anse-à-Pitres-Pedernales corridors, where the primary research for this chapter was carried out. Next, it examines quotidian border crossings of transborder Haitian domestic workers in the two Dominican towns. Once the theory, places and trajectories are set out, the chapter explains four ways the global intimate and the border regime interact to produce mobility and control, shedding light on both enabling and constraining potentials that coexist within the realm of intimate labour and intimacy. The chapter concludes that the intimate-mobility entanglement works in ambivalent ways that are integral to the border regime.

Intimate labour grants some entryways across the border that facilitate, not without friction and delays, the transit of transborder women through the border. Being known as the domestic worker of this or that family, functions as an informal and temporary source of legitimacy to the presence of transborder domestic workers. In this way, intimate labour permeates the geopolitical demarcation of the island under the premise of clandestinity, invisibility, servitude, and the common notion of domestic workers often being portrayed by employers as “part of the family”. De Genova refers to the inclusion of unauthorized migrants through the US-Mexico border as a spectacle of “[i]nvisibility in plain sight” (2002; 2013). His description suits transborder domestic workers’ coming and going through the Haitian-Dominican border on their ways to and from work. Invisibility is intensified by the nature of paid domestic work, which occurs in the privacy of homes, bedrooms, and kitchens, spaces that are “hidden away from the larger world” (Pratt and Rosner, 2012, p. 4). Invisibility and exploitation make intimate labour an unstable and costly means of entry, as it exists on the premise that workers are devoid of formal political personhood in the eyes of the state and the receiving community: not only are migrant workers made clandestine through their obscene inclusion, but the nature of their paid (and unpaid) social reproductive work is specifically unvalued and

unrecognized. I maintain, however, that despite this systematic abjection, the embodied mobility and presence of transborder domestic workers constitute political relations that engage with the state and co-constitute the territorial order on a quotidian basis, beyond their intentionality (De Genova, 2010; Hyndman, 2004, 2012; Squire, 2017).

Locating the intimate and agency at the border

Pain and Staeheli (2014) suggest a framework through which intimacy can be located in geopolitics: in the form of spatial relations, as a form of interaction, and as a set of practices. Relatedly, Mountz develops the intimate as an analytical tool to locate the body as a site of global geopolitics (2017b). Building on their frameworks it is possible to observe the way geopolitics is enacted and negotiated through the embodied mobilities and the agency of irregularized transborder workers as they negotiate their entry into the Dominican Republic for a day's work.

As it was explained in chapter 4, the relationship between irregularity and the intimate-mobility entanglement has deep historical roots in the Haiti-DR context, and continues to be reproduced by state policy. That is the case of Law 285-04 and subsidiary Regulation 631-11,⁶⁷ which include a new migratory category that regularizes everyday circulation of transborder labour, albeit excluding domestic workers from its potential beneficiaries. As of writing (July 2019) there is no specific visa for transborder domestic workers. In terms of legality, the only formal document that transborder workers could aspire to have in order to regulate their situation is a one-year visa that is extremely expensive, cumbersome, and requires having a passport, which is in and of itself costly and cumbersome. Legal procedures have been designed in ways that are exclusionary from the very beginning and have no relation with the everyday life of Haitians and Dominicans in the borderlands. In this context of production of irregularity, there are three specific ways in which the intimate is observable in the border regime.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Regulation 631-11 of Law 285-04 includes the legal category of "border inhabitant," which regulates the transborder commutes carried out by Haitians who work in the DR. This regulation is studied in more detail in the last sections of this chapter.

⁶⁸ To explore other cases that expose the role of the state in the production of irregularity and precarity of status see De Genova's work on the US-Mexico border (2002), Goldring et al.'s work on precarity of status in Canada (2009) as well as Mezzadra's (2011) conceptual discussion on the production of irregularity.

First, as a practice (and socially assigned responsibility), intimate labour acts as a driver of transborder mobility: women cross the border to work looking for income that would enable them to satisfy the social expectation of covering for the costs of everyday social reproduction of their dependents and themselves. This expectation pushes them to embark on dangerous routes and enter into precarious (and often harmful) labour arrangements (Hankivsky, 2011). Second, also as a practice, paid intimate labour and the role of domestic worker act as means of entry that, although irregular, is generally accepted and widely known. For example, the employers' narrative of treating workers as if they were part of the family has worked in favour of some transborder workers in contexts of border closure. The "disciplined domestic worker" identity functions as a non-threatening and non-political label that facilitates transborder mobility. Third, as an embodied spatial relation, the intimate acts as a site of friction and control that conditions mobility and slows it down through quotidian forms of violence experienced at the hands of migration authorities, army men, and informal brokers, smugglers or buscones. In this context, the bodies of transborder women, which are central to their mobility and labour, are also sites of violence and control in ways that reproduce the border.

The transborder mobility of Haitian women is a quotidian renegotiation of the border, and a manifestation of migrants' agency. Agency here is not limited to the ability to choose, it includes strategies of getting by, despite the outcomes this may have in the micro or macro aspects of life. In this sense, the chapter agrees with Paret and Gleeson in that "agency should not be mistaken for transformation, or even a radical politics" (2016). This approach follows Mainwaring's rejection of "the idea of particular outcomes being a necessary condition for the existence of agency: people's actions may transform or reproduce structure" (emphasis in the original) (2016, p. 294). Notwithstanding their lack of legal documents, most days women show up at the border and try to cross it, often successfully. They do so not because they intend to transform border dynamics but because they need to go to work. However, in doing this, transborder domestic workers confront, alter, and negotiate the terms of the border regime.

Transborder domestic workers rely on their identities as domestic labour that belongs to Dominican households as a means to cross the border. This reliance is not emancipatory but pragmatic. The value of reproductive work in the DR is low (for national and foreign workers) and has been historically associated with slavery and

servitude, although not so overtly in recent decades⁶⁹ (Ricourt, 2016). Reproductive labour is highly gendered and racialized in Hispaniola. Being black and being women are significant aspects of the labour and mobility of Haitian women in the DR, and transborder women in particular. Transborder women's encounters with the border are mediated by an understanding of them as transient subjects, or Danticat's (1998) *vwayajè* or wayfarers (as cited at the beginning of this chapter). Their labour and mobility are irremediably linked to their race and gender, which determine the way they are perceived by border authorities (Shoaff, 2017a, 2017b). In this context, their partial inclusion into Dominican territory does not imply that the state legitimizes their presence or recognizes their political personhoods. Instead, it is part of De Genova's "obscure of inclusion" (2013, p. 1185). Their presence is constantly brought into question via quotidian deportations, and even more so via their deportability (or the constant possibility of deportation). Their inclusion as clandestine subjects creates the conditions for their exploitation (Mezzadra, 2011; Tsianos and Karakayali, 2010).

A border that can "heat up" any time

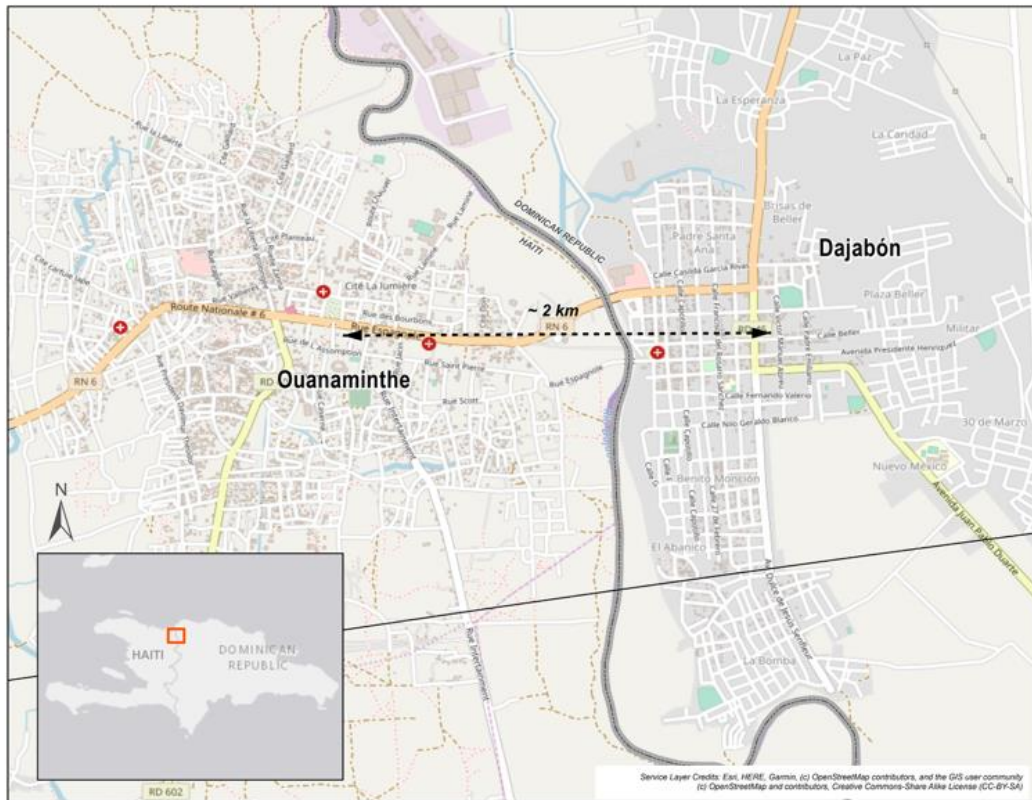
Ouanaminthe-Dajabón is the largest commercial corridor between the two sides of the island and an important one because Haiti is the DR's second trading partner after the US. It is located in the north of the DR and is the most urban town in the Dominican border strip. In contrast, Anse-à-Pitres-Pedernales is the of the four official border crossings between the two countries. It is the smallest in terms of both the volume of goods and numbers of people that transit through it. Located in what Dominicans refer to as *el sur profundo* (the deep south), Pedernales' province human development index is 0.145 the second lowest of all Dominican provinces (UNDP, 2013), compared to 0.421 in Dajabón province, and 0.734 in the National District of Santo Domingo.

These two otherwise contrasting border-crossings share one important feature: they experience the most pendular transit of Haitians who reside in Haiti but work in the DR during the day. Estimates for 2010 indicate that 500 and 200 people crossed these corridors back and forth to go to work in Dajabón and Pedernales respectively, mostly to work in construction, farming, domestic work, and street commerce. This

⁶⁹ According to the Census carried out by Spanish Governor Osorio in 1606, domestic service was the second most prominent occupation of the enslaved population in the Spanish side of Hispaniola. The first most common occupation was agriculture and farming. See Ricourt, 2016.

daily transit is due to the close proximity between the towns and the border strip (Dilla Alfonso, 2011). Moreover, 27.3 percent of the population of Pedernales and 14.9 percent of the population of Dajabón is migrant or migrant origins, in contrast to the national average of 8.1 (ONE, 2018b). The marked presence of migrants is a common feature throughout the whole border strip.

Map 6: Ouanaminthe-Dajabón border crossing commute



Note: The dotted line represents a small commute between the two central areas of the two towns.

The borderlands are sites of everyday coexistence marked by a painful and violent history as much as by routine. These border crossings have been sites of spectacular deployments of sovereignty, such as the massacre of 1937 and the periods of massive deportations of the 1990s and early 2000s (Ferguson, 2003; J. Shoaff, 2009; Turits, 2002; Wooding and Moseley-Williams, 2004). They have also been sites of significant commercial relations and the development of their binational markets, historically shaped by the US control over their customs during the first decades of the twentieth century (García-Peña, 2016; Vega, 2018).

Map 7: The Anse-à-Pitres border crossing commute



Note: The dotted line indicates a small commute between the central areas of the two border towns.

The Ouanaminthe-Dajabón and Anse-à-Pitres-Pedernales corridors are also marked by daily commutes. Sometimes crossing the border is simple. I happened to be in the Dajabón-Ouanaminthe corridor when transiting through the border was relatively smooth and uneventful. Then, Marie (see Chapter 4) insisted on coming with me. She came from Ouanaminthe to Dajabón on a Sunday morning to pick us up. We met at Dominican side and then walked across the border. She introduced me as her boss⁷⁰ to a migration official as he checked my passport, and then waited for me while I paid for my visa. We then walked to the other side where the three of us took two *moto conchos* (motorcycles for hire) to Marie's neighbourhood. Marie was our border guide as well as our guide into Ouanaminthe.

About four months after my visit, while chatting over the phone with Marie, she talked about a border that was very different from that which I had experienced. She was

⁷⁰ Marie introduced me as a homeowner that hired her as a domestic worker, as a way of conveying familiarity between us to the officer. She was never, however, my employee. This way of introducing me is descriptive of the positionality tensions described in chapter 3.

spending the nights in Dajabón during the week in order to cross the border as few times as possible. She was staying in the home of a relative who was a regularized migrant. She only left the place where she was staying in order to get to her jobs every morning and would return furtively. In Marie's terms, the border had "heated up" (*se calentó*). Crossing through the official or unofficial paths had become very difficult, expensive and violent. Migration raids were happening most days and were being widely covered by the Dominican media (OBMICA 2018). This also meant disruptions in the social reproduction of her own household, especially with her youngest child, who was left in Ouanaminthe under the supervision of older siblings. Marie explained that this change was the result of the arrival of a new Army authority assigned to the border crossing. The border often becomes more violent whenever there is a change of local army or migration authorities. They act to reinstate the impermeability of the border --albeit temporarily-- as a way of imposing their power. This new authority appeared in national TV reporting to have about doubled the number of deportations during his first days in charge (Medina, 2017).

The border is thus turned on and off with varying degrees of intensity depending on local or national and transnational developments. Natural disasters such as the earthquake of 2010 in Haiti, electoral politics on both sides, and the arrival of new local authorities to represent the National Directorate of Migration all influence the everyday management of the border in general, as well as each of the four official border-crossings. For example, the recent murder of a well-known Dominican couple in Pedernales, allegedly committed by two Haitian men, degenerated into widespread violence and the expulsion of all Haitians from the town, instigated by nationalist groups.⁷¹ The border was closed for about a month, which had devastating consequences for the local economy. Businesses registered losses of about 20% and the local binational tax-exempt processing zone closed its doors for 10 days, affecting the livelihoods of Dominican and Haitian workers. Toward the end of the border closure Dominican business owners and traders were among the most vocal groups calling for the reinstatement of transborder mobility (Acosta, 2018; Báez, 2018; Redacción 2018b; J. M. Ramírez, 2018).

The variability and underlying violence of the border is well known by migrants, employers, and traders, and is a central concern for civil society groups. Arcadio

⁷¹ Similar violent outbursts have been registered in different parts of the border strip, some of them carried out by state forces. See for example Shoaff's description of deportation raids carried out in Batey Sol in 2005 (2009, 2017).

Sosa, director of a Haitian Migrant Rights' NGO, Centro Puente, refers to tensions related to border crossing as a "lifelong problem" that often leads to serious confrontations (interview with author, February 22, 2017). Gustavo Toribio, director of another Migrant Rights' NGO called Solidaridad Fronteriza explained: "right now [border crossing] is fluid, but it is possible that anytime a new authority comes [is assigned to the post] with a different vision and things change, because there is not clear mandate on how the border should be managed" (interview with author, February 24, 2017).

Figure 7: Dajabón-Ouanaminthe border crossing bridge



Photo: The Dajabon-Ouanaminthe border bridge over the Massacre River. (Photo by author).

Opacity and unpredictability have been constant characteristics of the Haitian-DR borderlands, creating a perfect setting for everyday extortion of irregular migrants, as well as significant smuggling of goods and persons (Vega, 2018). Bribery, smuggling of persons and goods, and human trafficking are a well-known activities on the island. Human trafficking and the extortion of migrants involve different nationalities and all levels of state power. Dominican and Haitian news sources have widely covered cases of human smuggling of Haitians, Chinese, and Dominicans (Méndez, 2005; Redacción 2018a; News, 2018; Pérez Reyes, 2017; Redacción, 2017,

2018b).⁷² These larger and more spectacular schemes coexist with everyday practices of extortion and violence that affect migrants and transborder dwellers directly. Transborder workers are expected to pay "something" when crossing the border gate and are expected to pay even more when crossing through irregular paths. Either way, domestic workers know they are expected to pay between 50 and 100 pesos of *pasaje* (or fare)⁷³ to the officials at the door (interviews with G. Toribio, 2018 and Sosa, 2018; DWN2, DWN4-3M DWN7).

Crossing the border to go to work

I was leaving the corner store in a very hot day in Dajabón. I bought a cold bottle of malt, the best drink I could think of to confront a heat like this. It was about 3:30 pm. I saw a heavily pregnant Haitian lady holding a basket full of socks and children's underwear for sale on her head. She seemed exhausted. I asked her if she would like a malt like mine and she nodded in agreement. I got her a malt and checked out her merchandise. I chose socks for my partner and some underwear for my 3-year-old. She was happy to make a sale and said that it was her first sale of the day. She had to cross the door into Haiti soon enough, before it closed for the day at 4pm.

Field Journal Notes, Dajabón.

February, 2017

It is common to see Haitian women walking in Dominican border towns. They are often holding large baskets and buckets on their heads, filled with merchandise for sale that they bring into the DR during the border hours. The woman I describe above had spent part of her day walking around Dajabón, hoping to make a sale before returning to Haiti before the border's closing time. She had probably had to pay something at the door to be let in, so the failure to make a sale would mean that the day had ended with a loss. For her, and for many Haitians that live in the Haitian

⁷² There are notorious cases of state representatives deeply involved in human trafficking schemes. Radhamés Ramos García, and Andrés Boció Fortune are well known cases. Ramos García is a current legislator in the Dominican Congress who was convicted for the trafficking of Chinese individuals from Haiti into the DR in 2003, which he had committed while representing the DR as a Consul in Cap Haitien, in Haiti. Andrés Boció Fortuna, the current Dominican Consul in Anse-à-Pitres was accused (but never convicted) of human trafficking in 2009.

⁷³ Pettrozziello and Wooding (2011) found that the word used to refer to these everyday extortions in the Belladere-Elías Piña corridor is *peaje* or toll.

border towns, going to work means crossing international borders on a quotidian basis. Women often alternate between street vending and domestic work, depending on their savings, their ability to access and repay the merchandise they sell, and their access to households that employ domestic workers.⁷⁴ No matter what activity they engage in, the border intersects directly with their livelihoods as they negotiate their entry every day.

Domestic work in Dominican border towns is one of the most frequent default sources of income for Haitian women living in Haiti⁷⁵ (Petrozziello and Wooding, 2011a; A. Ramírez and Wooding, 2012; WIEGO, N/A). When asked why they work as domestic workers in the DR, all research participants argued that pay in the DR is significantly higher than in Haiti.⁷⁶ Moreover, most perceived that working conditions in Haiti were harsher than in the DR, especially because employers expect workers to work longer hours despite the lower pay. Significantly, all emphasized that they prefer not to perform the same work in the Haitian side, because they perceived it as humiliating. One interviewee explained it as follows: "they [Haitian employers] are the same than me but they look at me in a [bad] way" (DWS1). In most cases they considered domestic work in the DR as a default alternative. Some described it as a way to save money to buy some merchandise to sell, or to repay debts acquired by buying merchandise they were trying to resell.⁷⁷ Others had lost money when working as street sellers or repairing secondhand clothes for resale. Some had built a relatively stable number of employers, which secured them a modest but stable income.

Despite having scarce or no valid documents of any kind (passports, visas or Haitian identity documents), transborder domestic workers cross the border between one and six times per week for work. Because of the routine nature of their border crossings, border guards, migration, and army officials from both countries often know them, sometimes even by name. They would frequently know who their employers are, and in some cases higher-rank officials and border bureaucrats hire

⁷⁴ Sex work and transactional sex are also part of the intimate labour carried out in the borderlands although it is under-registered given the stigma associated with it. Moreover, its volume changes with external factors such as the increased presence of MINUSTAH and other armed forces, and can be carried out as a side source of income.

⁷⁵ Although there are no official statistics disaggregated at the town level, Haitian domestic workers seem to be more than the 10% to 16% of domestic workers who are Haitian in the DR as a whole country (WIEGO, N/A; Ramírez and Wooding, 2012).

⁷⁶ According to the amounts they said they were getting paid, one could estimate that the difference ranges between 20 and 40 percent.

⁷⁷ This is reminiscent of the 'perpetual itinerancy' that Bélanger and Silvey (2019) describe how transnational care migration reproduces precarity of status and labour market immobility.

them. Most importantly, each day these authorities decide whether or not, and how, to let the workers cross the border.

Crossing *amba fil*⁷⁸

At the beginning of most interviews and the focus group meetings, research participants said that they only get into the DR through official border gates. Once they realized they were in a safe space (and that I did not represent a government authority) they would confide that they also crossed through irregular channels such as the river in Dajabón, or through the bush (*el monte*), in Pedernales. However, all made it clear that official border gates were preferable, because they are less risky and less costly than informal paths.

Focus Group Participant: I always wait for customs to open, if they let me in, I cross [the border], if not I do not like to cross through the river.

Researcher: Why?

Focus Group Participant: Whenever we cross through the river they ask for money, and also [the men] take advantage [sexually] of us. When one crosses through the river one can undergo different attacks.

Focus Group Participant, Ouanaminthe, DWN2

Sexual violence is a constant threat, especially when using irregular crossings. Rape is something all transborder workers had heard of.⁷⁹ Many explained that, if they had to cross *amba fil* or under the wire, they preferred to do it together with other women to reduce the likelihood of rape and other attacks.

Research Participant: I do not go alone. I wait for someone to walk with because people say it is dangerous [to cross through the bushes]. They say there are robbers; people have been hit.

Researcher: Have there been rapes?

Research Participant: Yes. When women cross through the bushes they are robbed and raped.

Interviewee, Anse-à-Pitres, DWS2

Robberies are also common on the way to work and on the way back when workers are carrying the money made during the day. They are seen as one of the costs involved in quotidian border-crossing. Those crossing through the Massacre River into Dajabón also fear drowning. When the river levels are high, they hire men to

⁷⁸ Creole for “under the wire.”

⁷⁹ It is possible that many research participants had experienced it but were ashamed to share in a group or interview setting. Pettozziolo and Wooding (2011) registered several similar accounts of sexual violence in the Bellaredere-Elías Piña corridor.

help them get across the river, increasing the economic costs of going to work as well as the precarity of the move.

Research Participant 1: If one does not know how to swim one has to pay [someone to carry them to the other side].

Research Participant 2: If the river has too much water I do not enter, but if it does not too much water, I pay someone to carry me across.

Research Participant 3: I fear the water. I fear being carried on someone's back [while crossing the river]. I simply do not cross and stay at the border gate.

Focus Group Participants, Ouanaminthe, DWN4-3

After paying between 25 and 50 pesos to cross, they are also expected to pay another 25 to 100 pesos of *pasaje* to guards they are likely to encounter along the way. It is also common to have to pay more than once in order to be let in. As explained by an interviewee, "[i]f after crossing they [buscones, or border guards] do not let you through, then you have to pay a little more" (DWN4-3). Costs add up to anywhere between 0.75 USD to 3 USD per crossing, which is a significant amount considering that a day of domestic work is paid between USD 9 and USD 14 in Dajabón.

Crossing through official gates

Crossing through official gates is a way to avoid risks and reduce the costs of going to work. The minority of border crossers with valid documents, including a passport, are not expected to pay anything for a daylong trip into DR as long as they adhere to the official border schedule. However, crossing through the official gate does not exempt irregular transborder dwellers from paying *pasaje*, although there seem to be slightly more room for negotiation. An interviewee in Anse-à-Pitres explained the process as follows: "[s]ome [guards] are difficult and make you return [to Haiti] if you do not have the money to pay. But some are good and let you in" (DWS5). It was clear to all research participants that there is a shared understanding that in these cases the worker will resume paying for her passage once she has got money.

Transborder domestic workers understand that border guards and migration officials hold significant control over their ability to get to their jobs. The longer guards are assigned to the same post the more likely they are to be familiar with transborder workers and more amenable to letting them through, mostly through bribery, or on

the promise of later payment. *Pasaje* is so widely practiced that some transborder domestic workers have tried to negotiate with employers to include an extra amount in their pay to cover the cost of border crossing. However, most households are not willing, or able to do so.

Sexual harassment and physical violence continue to be concerns even for those crossing through official gates. All research participants said they experienced groping repeatedly during their daily passage. Here is how two focus group participants explained it:

Participant 1: They [guards] have even touched my breasts.

Participant 3: When we are passing through they push us.

Researcher: And what do you do?

Participant 3: If we are going to work when they touch us then we just resign ourselves. We are patient and move on.

Researcher: So they make sure to touch you before you are let in?

Participant 1: Mhmm [nodding].

Focus Group Participants, Ouanaminthe, DWN4-3

Sexual harassment and groping are thus perceived as another cost associated with crossing the border, and like extortion, it is quotidian and widespread. Physical violence towards women and all border crossers, however, is more notorious when the border “heats up” due to changes in migration authorities, and local or national political climate. The guards may not let people in or make people wait in humiliating conditions with uncertainty as to whether or not they will get in.

Sometimes we are humiliated. They make us line up and the next thing you know is that the guard is hitting someone. We just take it, because what can you do? Sometimes you see people pushing and running towards you, so you move out of the way not to be crushed. I mean, I do not like the way the guards are hitting people (...). They insult us, they say we are a bunch of dogs (...). If they see a woman looking clean [looking well] they ask her if she has a lover. All of that is humiliating. If there was work in my country, I would not go [to work in the DR].

Focus Group Participant, Ouanaminthe, February 2017. (DWN3)

Most research participants put up with the violence of official border crossing because these gates are considered safer than illegal paths. Crossing through official border gates brings the possibility of paying less for *pasaje* (and in some cases not paying them at all) and being less exposed to robberies and rape. In any case, however, crossing the border is perceived as a means of survival in the absence of other sources of income.

I work in in domestic work because the situation gets difficult when one has children and needs to pay for schooling. I had an aunt that was working and she took me along [to her work place]. I stayed working there, but I always have something on a side [a small side business]⁸⁰ in my home.

Interviewee, Ouanaminthe, DWN5

Quotidian transborder journeys constitute a central aspect of the livelihoods of domestic workers. The economic pressure to cover some of the costs associated to the DSR of their households and communities makes them return to the border day after day.

Bordering social reproduction

Everyday forced returns as the interruption of livelihoods

The border does not end once one has crossed into the DR. There is a latent and constant possibility of being deported that extends well into Dominican territory (Ricourt, 2016; Shoaff, 2017a). Trucks of the Migration Directorate periodically make rounds in Dajabón and Pedernales, searching for irregular migrants that may be dwelling on the streets. Once a transborder worker has made it across the border, therefore she needs to remain on guard. A focus group participant in Ouanaminthe explained this with sarcasm:

The best part is that if you are lucky to get in [the DR], you can be walking away from the border [already in Dominican territory] when migration gets you, they keep you and then they push you away, not even through the bridge [official gate] but they leave you on the river bank and [they tell you] to go away.

Focus Group Participant, Ouanaminthe February 2017. (DWN2)

Similar to the violence experienced while crossing the border, deportability is a daily aspect of life in the borderlands. There are periods when deportation raids are rare and others when they are very frequent. An integral part of the border regime, migration raids are activated and deactivated according to local and national contexts. The way everyday deportations (or 'returns') are carried out also varies.

⁸⁰ This often means that the person sells some small items from their homes (e.g. beauty supplies, food times, etc.).

Once transborder workers are taken by Migration authorities, they are held in the Directorate's truck while it tours the town looking for more border trespassers. They never know for how many hours they will be held until they are returned to the border.

If they find you, they take you prisoner. One day in January I had arranged to come to work for a woman in Dajabón. I left my home early. They took me prisoner together with one or two more. They sat me there [in the truck], they took photos, they did so many things... And whenever I thought they would let us out they would not. They took us in around 8 am and let us go around 12 or 1 in the afternoon.

Interviewee, Dajabón, February, 2017. (DWN1)

For transborder domestic workers, the most concerning aspect of everyday forced returns relate not to legality, but to their ability to sustain their social reproduction and that of their dependents. Being returned often means that they lose access to basic elements of their livelihoods like income and food items. Those that recounted having been detained at the office of the Specialized Body in Land Border Security (CESFRONT in Spanish) remember being detained more than once, for periods of 5 or more hours. One of the most common memories they shared about detention was hunger and thirst, as they had no access to water or food while retained.⁸¹ The most frequent feeling was dreading to return home empty-handed. For them, the worst part of everyday forced returns was not legal, it was losing a day of work. Most recount being picked up by the migration truck on their way to work, which means that they miss the pay for that day, sometimes all there would have been to buy food for a meal (DWS 2, 3,4-1, DWN7). When asked about what she has felt during the times she has been detained, an interviewee in Anse-à-pitres explained: "I feel that I have problems. Sometimes I leave the kids without food. So, I am thinking about the misery they are going through" (DWS5). Her transnational (im)mobility is directly linked to the livelihood and social reproduction of her family.⁸²

Even though they are framed as a way of sealing the border, everyday deportations are known to be a poor deterrent for all migrants and especially for transborder

⁸¹ It is common to have no water and no meals available to migrants held in detention in Dajabón. Centro Puente was part of a group of civil society organizations that visited the detention centre during a peak period of detentions related to the Regularization Plan of 2014. This civil society coalition verified that there was no drinking water or food provided to detainees at the time. This coalition organized donations in order to provide some sustenance to detainees during this peak period (interview with Arcadio Sosa, February 2017).

⁸² Research participants that combined domestic work with street vending selling fresh beans on the Dominican side experienced detention and devaluations in a similar way to domestic workers. Their day's work would be lost, and her merchandise decomposed while in detention.

workers. The quotidian nature of their border crossing makes authorities and dwellers familiar to each other. The transborder workers who are detained and the officials that detain them know that they will see each other again. The workers will come back and are likely to find the same CESFRONT guards or migration officials at the border gate, around town, or perhaps in the same truck. These everyday deportations are similar to the "revolving door" that De Genova describes in the U.S.-Mexico border where the "spectacle of apprehensions" coexists "with the banality of a continuous importation of undocumented migrant labor" (2002, p. 437). The mundane nature of a similar revolving door is tangible in many of the testimonies of everyday returns of transborder workers in the Haitian-Dominican borderlands.

Researcher: Have you ever had to get into the Migration truck?

FG Participant: Yes, sometimes, but it has been a long time since I have had to get into the truck. If I see it, I do not move in that direction [she avoids the truck].

Researcher: But, you have had to go into the truck?

FG Participant: Yes I had to, some time, but my boss always calls me, and gets me out, because he works at CESFRONT.

Focus Group Participant, Ouanaminthe, February 2017.
(DWN7)

In this case, the transborder domestic worker was detained by CESFRONT and was later freed by her employer, who worked at the very agency that had her in custody. Her detainment and release through her employer's influence illustrates the Border Spectacle, which "supplies a scene of ostensible 'exclusion,'" and "conceals (in plain view, as it were) the public secret of a sustained recruitment of 'illegal' migrants as undocumented labour" (De Genova, 2013, p. 1185).

Everyday deportations and deportability produce a structure where "the possibility of being removed from the space of the nation-state" (De Genova, 2002, p. 439) is a constant aspect of transborder workers' livelihoods. It is a reminder of the transient nature of their presence and the temporality and dispensability of their labour. The workers particularly feel this dispensability in that deportations interrupt their livelihoods and sharpen their labour precarity and exploitability.

Scheduling and other mundane aspects of the border regime

Forced returns and other manifestations of the border regime also affect the scheduling of paid domestic work. This makes it difficult to schedule paid work. In normal days, all border crossings that take place through the official gate need to happen according a strict schedule: Monday to Saturday from 8 am to 4 pm, or 9 am to 5 pm. The schedule is also subject to time zone differences, as the island is arbitrarily divided in two. The way the border functions on a given day often determines whether or not transborder workers use official gates, as well as the ability to reach their jobs on time. The latter, of course, is particularly sensitive in domestic work, because in some households, workers are expected to arrive at work before their employers have to leave to work.

When workers need to begin the working day early in Dajabón, the only way they can get to their jobs is crossing by informal means, which requires them to cross the Massacre River. One worker explained that she crosses through the river so that she can get to work at 7 am (DWN7). The way she strategizes border crossing is determined by her work and her willingness to increase her risks in order to get to work on time. Scheduling is subject to the dynamics of the household domestic workers are working for. If there are several household members to cook for, or children to watch, the working schedule adapts to the household's needs, especially if workers only work a few days a week in one or few households. In those cases, they try to be as adaptable as possible in order to keep those jobs and relations. For example:

You know, I do not work every day. When I do, I work at Pedro's⁸³, and four people live there. Besides, if I get there late, or if there is a blackout one no longer knows at what time one gets out of work.

Focus Group Participant, Ouanamithe, DWN3

Some research participants said they have lost their jobs because they refused to cross *amba fil* in order to meet their employer's expectations (DWN4-3).

Together with the border's schedule, unreliability of public services also shapes the working day of transborder domestic workers and compounds the unpredictability of the border regime. These mundane aspects are part of a subaltern geopolitics of the everyday, which in turn affects (albeit in different ways and levels of intensity) the social reproduction of those on both sides of the border. If the official border gate

⁸³ Not his real name.

slows down access or turns down entrance into the DR, workers often miss a working day or get there late.

Sometimes we arrive at the gate at 8 am and it gets to be 10 am and we are still unable to cross. [Those days] we are left there waiting, feeling miserable under the sun. But we do not want to return to our homes because the [economic] situation is not good (...). Sometimes we get to work late and the Dominican [employer] asks you why we are so late and we need to explain that sometimes they let you in and sometimes they do not because we do not have documents or any permit to get in.

Focus Group participant, Ouanaminthe, DWN2

When they have been lucky and manage to get through, they were often expected (or felt obliged) to work longer hours despite the border's official closing time. When they do so, they cannot return through the official gate, but have to take informal means, crossing through the river (DWN5), and often having to pay *pasaje* again. Transborder domestic workers expect to lose the day's pay when they are returned or do not make it past the gate. Like deportability, the loss of a job due to the unpredictability of the border is an ever-present possibility.

Confronted by their own irregularity and the consequent precarity of their work arrangements, transborder domestic workers are constantly in need of negotiating time and space through their mobility and labour. They understand the precarity of their labour, and the risks associated with their transnational mobility as consequence of their lack of legal documents in the DR. Having documents is perceived as a way of increasing their mobility and safety, which is also readily associated with a better economic situation. Take for example this reflection from a focus group participant:

FG participant: If you do not have papers to cross through the [official] gate, you cross *amba fil*. But then you are always rushing, feeling fear.

Researcher: But is there a way to cross *amba fil* without fear?

FG participant: No, there isn't. You only feel comfortable through the gate with your documents. You [cross], then catch a taxi and leave.

Focus Group Participant, Anse-à-Pitres. (DWS3)

Migrant and national domestic workers chuckled a bit when I shared this quote during a presentation of preliminary research results in Santo Domingo in November 2018. From their experience, having documents that regularize the presence of Haitian workers in the DR does not translate into having a higher level of consumption as the image of hiring a taxi upon arrival hints at. However, the taxi also

works as a metaphor of faster, safer and more comfortable mobility in stark contrast to the everyday tensions of crossing the border to go to work experienced by irregular transborder workers.

Figure 8: Pedernales-Anse-à-Pitres border official crossing



Photo: Pedestrian border crossing bridge over a dried-up river in the Pedernales-Anse-a-Pitres border. (Photo by author).

***Esa es la mía* (that one is mine) and other colonial schemes**

There have been a number of attempts at regularizing the mobility of transborder Haitian workers. In 2007, the Directorate of Migration implemented an identification card for transborder workers in Dajabón, which included domestic workers (Dilla Alfonso, 2011; Wooding and Sangro, 2012). These ID cards allowed the workers to cross the border back and forth on a daily basis. Centro Puente had been working with transborder domestic workers and binational market vendors since 2006, identifying their main concerns and challenges, as well as observing their working conditions. Centro Puente later collaborated with the Migration Directorate in identifying potential bearers of these identification cards. They developed a registry that included the names and addresses of the transborder domestic workers and

also identified the households that employed them (Interview with Arcadio Sosa, February 2018).

Initially, the transborder workers that opted for the ID were expected to pay 1200 Dominican pesos, and have a Dominican employer who would vouch for them. Centro Puente and Solidaridad Fronteriza pointed out however that this was an excessive amount for workers - at the time, likely more than two months of salary. Moreover, it was problematic that workers would be required to have a Dominican citizen certify their presence in order to access this identification (interviews with Arcadio Sosa and Gustavo Toribio, February 2017). For Sosa, "it was inhumane. It was like they were telling Dominicans that they could be owners of that person" (interview with Arcadio Sosa, February 2017). This also proved not to be a viable option. Domestic workers often work for more than one household, and employers did not want to take responsibility over the workers for the days when they would be working at another household. In many of these cases the Directorate allowed Centro Puente to be the Dominican Representative of the workers opting for the ID. The Directorate also reduced the fee to 600 pesos, but at the same time lowered its period of validity to 6 months. In other words, the cost remained the same. The new ID system was applied for two more periods of one year each and costs increased to approximately 1500 pesos. Sosa recounts that in some cases, employers agreed to cover the costs and workers would repay with work.

When consulted about these IDs in 2017 only some transborder domestic workers remember having had it.

The Dominicans made it [the identification card]. I paid 1000 gourds. But it has been a long time since that. I lost it. I had it in my wallet and one day I was robbed crossing the bridge [official border gate].

Interviewee, Ouanamithe, DWN8

The domestic workers that remember the IDs think of them as something of the past. After the ID cards expired the registry of transborder domestic workers produced by Centro Puente became their unofficial substitute. The registry kept being used at the official gates as a way to identify workers that had an employer expecting them in Dajabón. During periods of increased restriction, workers and employers would often try to make use of the list to ease the mobility of transborder domestic workers. In those cases, however, it was expected that employers would arrive at the official gate, identify and point at the worker in question and tell the officer that she worked

with them. This mechanism, which Sosa described as an agony, translated into Dominican employers shouting "esa es la mía" (that one is mine) so that border officials would let each specific worker that was being picked up cross the border (interviews with Father Guillermo Perdomo, February 2017; Sosa, 2017; Toribio, 2017).

Using the list as a regulatory system of transborder workers was problematic in many ways. It was clearly a worst version of Sosa's concern regarding a potential sense of ownership over domestic workers on the part of Dominican employers. The list was also a highly dysfunctional system. Not all employers were able to go and pick up "their" worker at the border, and when they went, there was no guarantee that the worker would be let in. The process could take a long time and was disorganized and chaotic (Interview with Sosa, 2018). A focus group participant explained:

My employers are old. They went to pick me up [at the gate] but it did not work. Apparently, what they need to do is to make a phone call to the boss at the gate telling her: 'Let my *Haitiana* (Haitian woman) in...' But they still have not managed to make it work.

Focus Group Participant, Ouanaminthe, DWN3.

The idea of going to find "one's own worker", *su haitiana*, functions as an extension of the logics of treating the worker as "a member of the family" which is very persistent in Dominican mainstream perspectives about domestic work. What is often portrayed in affective terms or as a form of solidarity is also part of a complex set of worker-employer relations that are reminiscent of colonial logics, that in some cases may also reflect genuine relations of affect.

The identity cards and the registry were only implemented in the Ouanaminthe-Dajabón corridor roughly between 2007 and 2010. Apparently (I did not find official records of this), the lists are still in use from time to time, but they are no longer up to date, with more women working as domestic workers than those that were initially registered back in 2007 and 2008. Furthermore, there is legislation that incorporates a migration category specifically assigned to transborder workers that is similar to the way the identification card for transborder workers in Dajabón was carried out.

The Reproduction of Irregularity

Law on Migration number 285-04 and its subsidiary Regulation 631-11 contain and seek to manage a migration category called "Border Inhabitant." Law 285-04 was legislated in 2004, replacing the 1939 Law on Immigration. The standard protocol is that a Regulation is published no more than one hundred days after the law to which it is subsidiary has been approved. However, Regulation 631-11 took seven years to come into effect, which left the new migration law without an effective framework of application for all that time (Vásquez Frías, 2013). Even after the Regulation was in place, the application of Law 285-08 was still lacking in many aspects in 2017 (Fernández, 2011). The law established the category of "Border Inhabitant" for Haitians that live in the Haitian side and work in the DR. However, fourteen years after the law was legislated and seven after the Regulation came out, the category has not been brought into practice despite civil society pressure (Pérez, 2016; Redacción, 2016a, 2016b; Sosa and Toribio, 2016).

Law 285-04 and Regulation 631-11 specify that the Border Inhabitant Category require a biometric Identification Card produced by the Migration Directorate. This biometric ID would enable the border crossing of Haitian nationals and their transit within Dominican territory (limited to the border area). The category is also specifically limited to individuals conducting small commercial activities (Congreso de la RD, 2004; Fernández, 2011). Its emphasis on commerce does not come as a surprise, considering that Haiti is the DR's second export destination (UNCTAD, 2017). However, it is problematic that there are no references to other economic or social activities carried out by Haitians in Dominican borderlands such as domestic work, as well as work in agriculture and construction.

The idea of establishing a category of "Border Inhabitant" was seen as a possible improvement by migrant advocates' groups in an otherwise problematic piece of legislation. Civil society groups and local Chambers of Commerce mobilized in 2016 and 2017 asking the national government to apply Law 285-04 asking specifically for the implementation of the category (Pérez, 2016; Redacción, 2016a, 2016b). These organizations include transborder domestic workers among the groups that would benefit (Sosa and Toribio, 2016). Nevertheless, it is clear to government authorities, civil society organizations and international organization representatives that the

category, as established by Law 285-04, excludes transborder domestic workers (Interview with G. Toribio, February 2017; Interview with IOM Representatives María Paredes and Alicia Sangro, 2017).

There are other problems associated with the Border Inhabitant category as currently designed. Similar to the first Identity Cards circulated between 2007 and 2009, application for a biometric Border Inhabitant ID requires a letter from legal resident in the DR to vouch for the cardholder. The signatory of the letter is specifically responsible over the border inhabitant's "behaviour and his (sic.) daily return to the country of origin" (Dirección Nacional de Migración, N/A). The costs associated with obtaining the ID remain elevated (they can go up to 6500 pesos, between one and one and a half monthly wage for a transborder domestic worker). It requires translation and notarisation of copies of the applicant's Haitian national ID and Certification of non-criminal record. These documents are not easily accessible, and often require transport to major cities to get the documents as well as the costs of translation and legalization services. This migration category, which has yet to be effectively applied, is designed in a highly exclusionary way that resembles the proliferation of legal categories in the DR (see, for example, chapter 4's reference to the denationalization and renationalization process through differentiated books of registration) and elsewhere⁸⁴.

Seeing the intimate-mobility entanglement as part of the border regime

The exclusionary nature of the Border Inhabitant category was clear from its inception. Transborder domestic workers were part of what seemed to be unofficial early test-trials of this category between 2007 and 2009. However, they were not included in Regulation 631-11, introduced at least two years after these tests. Perhaps more concerning is that the red flags elevated by civil society organizations during these trials - namely the high costs and the problematic sense of ownership that could stem from the letters of guarantee - were ignored.

⁸⁴ Consider for example the Humanitarian Migrant visas provided in Brazil to Haitians (see Moulin and Thomaz, 2016) or the new humanitarian visa regimes implemented in Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, and Ecuador for Venezuelan newcomers (Consulado del Perú, 2019; Ministerio de Relaciones Internacionales y Movilidad Humana, 2019; Mohan 2019).

As explored in chapter 4, the transnational mobility of Haitian women has historically been de facto legitimated by a demand for paid reproductive and intimate labour, first in sugar plantations (Hintzen, 2017; Riveros, 2014) and today in households in the DR. The same labour that has historically and informally legitimated their presence on Dominican soil was systematically ignored in the attempt to regularize circular migration in the borderlands between the two countries. Even if migration legislation took almost seventy years to be updated, it continued to render invisible a large portion of migrant women and their labour. For Lozano (2014), the invisibilization and differentiated inclusion of Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent, however, is an intrinsic characteristic of the Dominican citizenship and migration. Through this regimes, his argues, the state has created a system of labour subordination (2014, p.11).

Informally, paid intimate labour functions as means of entry into the DR. Transborder workers often become familiar with border officials and buscones and negotiate their passage through bribery, constantly facing the risk of physical and sexual violence, groping and harassment. In the Ouanaminthe-Dajabón corridor, employers have had to go to the border gate and request border officials to let “their domestic worker” cross. The nature of this relation of dependence is produced and reproduced through official requirements that confront the autonomy and mobility of the workers on a daily basis.

As a means of entry, intimate labour reinforces the obscurity of inclusion of transborder domestic workers. It emphasizes their “invisibility in plain sight” and reproduces what Belanger and Silvey (2019) refer as “perpetual itinerancy” that transnational care workers experience as part of a cycle of socioeconomic and labour marker immobility. The same labour is excluded from the only legal mechanism in place that seeks to formally regularize transborder mobility. This normative exclusion comes after the state instrumentalized the presence of transborder domestic workers in early trials of this policy. Paradoxically, reproductive labour represents a means of cross-border mobility as well as a point of invisibility and exclusion. The migration category that could become a tool for the regularization of transborder workers excludes transborder domestic workers by design. In this case, the state reproduces irregularity, which is a key aspect of their exploitability (Tsianos and Karakayali, 2010; Mezzadra and Nielsen, 2014).

Their irregularity, however central, is only a part of the precarity of their situation. Their dire economic need, the gendered responsibilities over the social reproduction of their dependents, and the also gendered and racialized devaluation of the value of reproductive labour, increases their exploitability. It is their unpaid reproductive responsibilities that brings them to the border every time. It is their paid reproductive labour that gets them across the gate, only as long as they remain outside of legal categories that would formally recognize their presence in the polity.

As a product of necessity, transborder domestic workers confront the border every day. Their embodied mobility implies a quotidian negotiation over the terms of the cartographies of nation-states. These very cartographies intersect with the social reproduction of those who live in the borderlands, interjecting livelihoods and conditioning social reproduction. In such contexts, Haitian transborder domestic workers find themselves pressed by migration regulations that render them invisible, and that exploit them through their labour relations. Women's mobility and survival in the face of such structural constraints are quotidian geopolitical negotiations.

For Tsianos and Karakayali "migration regimes produce the transformation of mobility into politics" (2010, p. 378). By keeping transborder domestic workers outside of the regulatory schemes, the Dominican state pretends to keep them at the margins of the polity [this read before as keep them at a prepolitical state]. However, survival is a political claim to life, and mobility a foundational political action in ways that illuminate a growing tension between the border regime and the sustenance of life. The terms on which this tension unfolds become an urgent matter in times of increasingly obscene inclusion and precarity of place that we see not only in the Caribbean but also in the US Mexico border, and the mortal frontiers of Europe. Intimate labour conditions the terms of mobility in the Haitian Dominican borderlands. It triggers mobility, generates friction and serves as means of entry across the border. Mobility in turn is central to the provision of unpaid and paid social reproduction on both sides of the border. The entanglement between the two implies a quotidian revisiting of the terms of sovereignty of the nation-state. In this context, intimate labour and the sustainability of life become radically political.

Chapter 7: Being Political at the Intersection Between Irregularity and the Intimate-Mobility Entanglement

Because we survived, and survival breeds desire for more self.

Audre Lorde, "Eye to eye: Black women, Hatred and Anger"
in *Sister Outsider*, 291

In the preface to her book on globalization and creole identities in post-plantation Caribbean, Crichlow asks "[w]hich citizenship, what memories, what subjectivity, what 'space,' 'place,' 'mode of dwelling,' or 'homing' is being vaguely situated in this liminal state?" (2009, p. xi). Thinking of political subjectivities in the Caribbean is an enquiry into the politics of the peripheries of globalization, and even more so when this is approached from the perspective of subaltern black women in the interstices of the Haitian and Dominican states. Already located peripherally, these women's agencies are intersected by the intimate-mobility entanglement as well as by the exclusionary logics of the border regime. This chapter interrogates the forms of agency and political subjectivities that surface in the context of this multiple intersection.

This chapter argues that the political subjectivities that emerge in the context include but are not bounded by discursive claim-making. It argues that survival and the struggle over bodily integrity is a fundamental claim that precedes all others. This entitlement to life is followed by mobility as a form of claim-making, as well as by different forms of migrants' public discursive claims in a context of precarity of labour and statuses. These political subjectivities are traversed by a constant tension between contestation and control in ways that beg a discussion about what constitutes agency in the context of structural constraints.

The chapter represents an effort to imagine a politics that makes visible the subaltern struggles that are often unregistered by the logics of representative politics without necessarily relinquishing it. In other words, the chapter aims to expand the notion of political subjectivities to also be able to account for the corporeal logics intrinsic to the Haitian saying of "*Vous signè nom moi, mais vous pas signè pieds moi*" (see Chapter 2). The chapter builds on Neveu's (2014) invitation to take "some distance with citizenship conceived as a view from afar", narrowing down our gaze into moments of contestation that occur in the ordinariness of everyday life. In order

to pursue this argument, the chapter builds on work related to embodied mobilities that has emerged from feminist geography and mobilities scholarship. It also builds on the work of critical citizenship studies in order to discuss claim-making in ways that engage with the nation-state from the positions of those who live under conditions of irregularity and deportability.

The following section briefly explores the theoretical implications of identifying the political subjectivities related to embodied mobilities and claim-making in the context of the intimate-mobility entanglement. In particular, it pays attention to the ambivalence inherent to the intimate, as well as the constant tensions between constrained agency, mobility, and control. Next, the chapter shifts attention to the way this interaction plays out in empirical cases. The analysis is carried forward through four empirical discussions that illuminate the different forms of claims making that emerge in the intersection of intimate labour and human mobility in the midst of a politics of contestation and control. Lastly, the chapter concludes by proposing that survival and bodily struggles are claims to an entitlement to life and integrity that precede other forms of agency and claim-making. Survival despite historical structural constraints, is hence a foundational political claim that precedes embodied mobility, as well as different forms of discursive claim-making that engage with sovereign power. Aware of the constrained forms of agency in a context of intersectional oppressions, the chapter looks into the generative potential of ambivalence in migrant politics and the possibility of extending the boundaries of what constitutes “the political”.

Gradations of agency and claim-making

As established in Chapter 6, paid social reproductive labour and intimate violence function as means of entry through which the Haitian-Dominican border is negotiated and revisited on a daily basis by transborder domestic workers. In most cases, their entry takes place through obscene inclusion, whereby they are incorporated in the labour market but in conditions of extreme disposability and precarity of status. Hundreds of migrants are let in through clandestine arrangements that often involve intimate labour, intimate violence, bribery, and human smuggling, among others. It is also common to find individuals who arrive on tourist visas and overstay, moving from status to status, navigating different forms of regularity and irregularity that are reproduced by the state (Squire, 2011). In this context, the mobility and presence of

Haitian women and women of Haitian descent are framed in a relation of abjection, which is historically interrelated to their paid and unpaid intimate labour. Their abjection and labour precarity are deeply gendered, and shape the way politics is imagined and enacted.

In her work about citizenships in post-emancipation Jamaica and Haiti, Sheller proposes, “understandings of citizenship must encompass not only discursive practices, but also full sexual, sensual and erotic agency of an embodied freedom” (2012, p. 17). Sheller suggests opening up the concept of “the political” to include terms, spaces, and actions that are part of the repertoire of freedom and contestation of postcolonial subjects. This is particularly important given that the terms of the conversation on citizenship are conventionally set up in ways that privilege the structural exclusion determined by the nation-state. In this case, if one is to recognize the political character of subjects considered “pre-political” by the logics of the post-colonial nation state, one needs to look further than the politics of representation, and manage to circumvent or negotiate (even if only ephemerally) postcolonial structures of the nation state.

The notion of movement as the production and transformation of political relations becomes particularly relevant when thinking of about Sheller's embodied freedom. From a critical geography perspective, mobilities necessarily encounter what Massey called "power-geometry": the notion that the production of space and one's mobility within it are not neutral but reflective of power relations (Hyndman, 2004, p. 170), citing Massey 1992:61). Among others, the body acts as a marker that facilitates or complicates mobility and access (through racialization, appearance, and ability to move). Mobility then becomes a form of contestation and control through which bodies challenge the territorial order while they also concentrate the power of the state and other agents that sustain the official cartography of the nation.

Mobilities are political but not intrinsically emancipatory; they may well reproduce or alter the status quo, which reflects the complexities of human agency (Mainwaring, 2016). Marcel Paret and Shannon Gleeson identify human mobility as one primary form of migrants' agency. In their analysis, this primary form of agency is often "tied to family obligations or long-standing community expectations" (2016, p. 282), which is illustrative of the intimate-mobility entanglement, and contextualizes agency within a complex set of social relations: choices are made in relation to one's self and others. Paret and Gleeson see the decision to move as one of four primary forms of

migrant workers' agency that also include migrants' decision to summon their rights, organize collectively through labour organizations and other organizations beyond the world of work.

Sexsmith comes to an understanding of migrants' agency that also incorporates the inner constraints of precarity of labour, and precarity of status and place. Using Hirschman's framework of exit, voice and loyalty, she proposes a gradation of agency that goes from entrapment (or containment) to "the highest level of agency (...) exhibited when voice is used publicly" (2016, pp. 317, 323). There are different gradations in between two sides of the spectrum that include mobility out of situations of containment and ultimately, different forms of claim-making that reach the public arena. Intentionality goes in different directions from individual survival to direct commitment to transform state institutions. In all of these cases, actions remain political beyond their intention, and beyond their effects (Mainwaring, 2016). The gradations of migrants' agency, as well as that of irregularized subjects (migrants, denationalized subjects and other kinds of "others"), speak of a wide spectrum of political actions where a diversity of subjects exist politically in ways that are contextually determined. Their claims and actions are part of what Squire (2011) refers to as "a politics of mobility" and exist in tension with a "politics of control" that emerges from the nation-state in the form of regularization and criminalization of migration.

In the experiences of Haitian migrant women, and women of Haitian descent involved in this research, intimate labour functions as an ambivalent broker in subject formation in ways that resemble in some way the experiences of migrants involved in other forms of work, with the addition that intimate labour permeates most aspects of life. The entanglement between intimate labour and mobility explains how presence and survival are in and of themselves political actions in contexts of deep adversity. Survival as a political claim to life coexists with conventional forms of claim making that engage with nation-state institutions, and international bodies.

Intimate labour has been central in the trajectories of Haitian migrant women and women of Haitian ancestry in DR. The presence of migrant women in sugar plantations was a way of fostering the reproduction of the labour force, in biological and social terms (interview with Sirana Dolis, 2016). It was also a way of keeping the labour "in place" (Martínez, 2007) while exacerbating women's precarity of status via their formal and informal exclusion from labour migration schemes (Hintzen, 2017).

Initially, women were contained in plantation communities until the demise of the sugar industry and their increased mobility in search for income in the 1980s and 1990s. The centrality of intimate labour attributed to them followed their spatial and social trajectories through the island, not only in the case of migrant women, but also in the case of second, third and fourth generation Dominican born women of Haitian descent (Petrozziello, 2017).

The intimate is a fundamental geopolitical realm in the everyday lives of Haitian women and women of Haitian ancestry, especially among those engaged in paid and unpaid intimate labour in the DR. The centrality of intimate labour in their lives has been transmitted intergenerationally, and continues to be entangled with their im/mobility and political subjectivities. This form of labour functions as an enabler (through unpaid intimate labour) and as a form of control over their mobility through the island (via sexual harassment); and it circumscribes their work alternatives to domestic work and other highly precarious jobs. Throughout generations, the centrality of the intimate-mobility entanglement has been intertwined with the exclusionary policies of the Dominican state, leaving thousands of new generation Dominican-Haitians in a position of legal uncertainty. This policy was first enacted informally and was gradually formalized through piecemeal denationalization of the 1990s and 2000s, which eventually restricted the *ius sanguinis* regime in the constitution of 2010. This was followed by the denationalization of over 230,000 Dominicans of Haitian ancestry in 2013.

Embodied mobility and survival as a claim to life

I was in *Batey X* trying to hitchhike to [the town where she worked]. A man stopped and told me to get in the car. When I got in, I realized that he had a gun. He began to touch my thigh as we were driving by the dumpster. I was so nervous, I couldn't stand it. I had a Gillete [razor blade] in my purse. His hands were going crazy [the groping was getting worse] so I did this [she motions as if she was pushing a razor into her own neck, implying she did the same to the driver]. I told him, 'drop me off here, my friend. You kill me or I kill you.' (...) I held the back of his shirt; he had to let me go. (...) [He dropped me off] and then told me, 'don't worry *morena*, I now know who you are.'

Karina, Focus Group Participant, *Batey 0*, Barahona, March 2017. (FGDWB6)

The women in *Batey 0* need to commute about 15 km in order to work as domestic workers in the nearest town. The scarce public transport connecting their community

to town is unaffordable on their US\$ 2-a-day incomes. Thus, they resort to hitchhiking and walking in small groups, often patching together different rides to arrive to work every day. Women have been moving in and out the limits of the *bateyes* for over two decades now. However, their mobility is costly in many ways, one of which is the sexual violence they are often exposed to while on the move. This is reflected in Karina's testimony, which she shared with her neighbours and friends in a focus group. All nine participants nodded, indicating they had confronted similar situations several times on their way to work. In fact, Karina took out the razor from a small purse she carries with her everywhere she goes. For Karina, this refusal was a primary political assertion of her bodily integrity, and her right to space. Reminiscent of what Johnson refers to as "fleeting interruptions and flashes of resistance" (2013, 88) these moments of violence and struggle are political in that they imply a contestation over the status quo that seeks, through informal means, to circumscribe the autonomy, presence, and personhood of women of Haitian ancestry. Karina's mobility and refusals are quotidian forms of contestation against the place assigned to her by sovereign power.

Sometimes drivers offer money for sex, assuming that the women are sex workers by virtue of their being black, 'Haitian looking,' and hitchhiking. Thus as Yuli, another focus group participant recounted:

I hitched a ride and the man told me, 'look *morena* I am in love with you. I am going to give you two thousand pesos.'
And I told him 'oh no, I am not looking for a man.'
[He insisted]: 'Come on *morena* let's go to *Batey X*.'
I had to tell him 'let go of me'.
'Oh *morena* why are you so mad'? [he said]
Yuli, Focus Group Participant, *Batey 0*, Barahona, March 2017.
(FGDWB6)

Yuli's harasser eventually let her go. In her account, like Karina's and many others, Yuli is addressed as *morena*, which is a Spanish word for a dark-skinned female, which in the DR is used to refer to women of African descent. Yuli's account resonated with all focus group participants who had experienced similar situations in which drivers had tried to coerce them into having sexual intercourse under promises of some form of reward. In Yuli's case, DOM\$ 2000 Dominican pesos was a significant offer, considering that she makes DOM\$ 3000 a month working 6 days a week. However, it is never clear whether the men would fulfill their promises of payment. It is also unclear whether or not women chose to embark on these arrangements because it is often a source of shame. Yuli's and Karina's accounts

resemble the quotidian border crossing experiences of transborder domestic workers, several of whom deal with verbal and physical advances by drivers who offer to drive them across the border on their way to or from work in exchange for sexual services. All faced sexualized verbal violence, groping, rape, and coercion into sex work on their way to work notwithstanding their migratory or citizenship status. Women necessarily strategize around these forms of everyday violence which coexist with conditions of dire poverty and labour exploitation.

Figure 9: Sporadic bus outside rural batey



Photo: Sometimes buses like this connect the rural *bateyes* to the towns where most women work. Bus fares are unaffordable, hence women rely on hitchhiking in order to go to work. (Photo by author).

When analyzing the deaths of migrants and refugees on European borders Rygiel argues that human mobilities trying to reach European lands are motivated by a search for survival that paradoxically encounter death in the process. In that context, the phrase "migrants are dying to live" is making it "glaringly visible that first and foremost citizenship is inherently a politics of life and death" (2016, p. 548). In the context of Karina, a Dominican born woman of Haitian parents, mobility and survival are assertions of her existence and presence. Moreover, asserting her bodily integrity connects with Rygiel's conception of politics and challenges sovereign power.

The struggles for survival and bodily integrity go hand-in-hand within a post-colonial Caribbean. It takes place in what Pain and Staeheli (2014) identify as the intersection between intimacy and geopolitics. For them, the intimate as a geopolitical space functions as a) a spatial relation, b) a form of interaction, and c) as a set of practices (which incorporate intimate labour, for example) (2014, p. 345). In the case of Karina's and Yuli's experiences, the intimate plays out as sexual violence, which is a mode of interaction that reflects and reproduces wider power relations. It also functions as a spatial relation, and a set of practices that motivates their mobility in the first place (ibid.). At the same time, the intimate functions as a site of control over mobility, one that reproduces and reifies the border regime.

The presence and mobility of women from *Batey 0* becomes highly visible when they attempt to move outside their community of origin (and containment). The diverse forms of violence they experience are informal practices of control at the hands of other subjects (mostly men) who inhabit the ambivalent roles of victimizer and enabler. In the case of *Batey 0*, these are mostly drivers and other more mobile subjects. In the case of border strips, these are buscones, CESFRONT and migration officials. Women in the *batey* also experience formal forms of control. They are routinely asked for their identity documents by police when they are in more urban communities where they usually work. Karina, like many, said she always had her documents on her "just in case." In this context, embodied mobility necessarily functions as a form of confrontation to the spatial status quo⁸⁵ and a site of control.

For Price "[t]he unchecked mobility of the racialized body is anxiety-provoking and raises alarms precisely because it challenges the dictates as well as the habits of bordering and distancing" (2013, pp. 582-583). The presence of subjects that "appear Haitian" by virtue of the colour of their skin (and also accent, or French-sounding names) challenges the border regime as soon as they step out of their places of containment (and belonging). Their mobility, their stepping beyond (explicit and implicit) boundaries, is in and of itself a political act that contests space and sovereignty. In this context, moving constitutes political action that produces a reaction on the part of the nation-state in defense of its cartography. Human mobility, as a form of political subjectivity, encounters a politics of control in the shape of military checkpoints, intimate violence and racial profiling. While control is exercised directly by the state in the form of military checkpoints, it is perhaps more commonly

⁸⁵ J. Shoaff (2017b) elaborates on the ways the presence of Haitian and Haitian-Dominican women in Dominican urban spaces is presented as a threat to the nation in Dominican media.

manifested through the sexual violence of those who offer rides. In other words, the state does not always require its direct presence through officials or bureaucrats in order to sustain its territoriality, but it can rely on gendered and racialized everyday practices of violence and control in the hands of civilians. Movement and control, both intrinsic to a politics of mobility, are in daily contention in the lives of women of Haitian descent that leave the *batey* for a day of work (Shoaff, 2017a).

Collective claim-making

Paret and Gleeson (2016) identify collective claim-making as the most advanced of their primary forms of migrant agency. Collective organizing in the midst of precarity of labour and precarity of status is particularly challenging, which feeds into a further precarization of the labour force. This exclusion is manufactured through citizenship and migration regimes and reproduces a particular kind of abject subject that is expected to remain silent by virtue of existing in the realm outside citizenship. Therefore, existing politically, and collectively in that space of abjection is in itself a challenge and a form of questioning of the sovereign order that Peter Nyers refers to as "abject cosmopolitanism," which he uses "to describe the emerging political practices and enduring political problematics associated with refugee and immigrant groups resisting their targeted exclusion" (2010, p. 417).

In the case of Haitian women and women of Haitian descent in the DR, whose lives center on paid and unpaid intimate labour, political organizing is further complicated by gendered dynamics of exclusion and violence. This is caused, among others, by the reproduction of a public-private binary divide that secludes social reproduction from the realm of politics. This exclusion is accentuated by what Bèlanger and Silvey describe as the "relative spatial confinement" (2019, p. 4) that characterizes paid and unpaid intimate labour. In this context, it did not come as a surprise that it was challenging to find organizations devoted to the rights of migrant women, women of migrant descent, and migrant domestic workers in the DR. With two notable exceptions, most organizations did not have a clear orientation toward gender equality or a women-specific agenda. In fact, most had no women in executive positions. Despite this lack of representation and participation, migrant rights' organizations had (and continue to have) women beneficiaries, and through them I had direct access to migrant women, often facilitated by male leadership.

This section discusses three different forms of collective organizing that have emerged from the intimate-mobility entanglement. First, the section looks at the work of MUDHA, which has operated as an independent organization since the working with a vision that privileges the intimate as a geopolitical realm that has implications in terms of political and reproductive rights. Second, the section reflects on the personal experiences of activist Elena Lorac and how it interweaves with the collective organizing carried out through Reconoci.do, an advocacy group made of Dominican Haitians that were denationalized through Sentence 168-13. Third, the section looks into Rosalba Jean's personal experiences of precarity of status and labour organizing, as a union leader in the Association of Household Workers (ATH).

MUDHA's claim making from the midwife's gloves to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights

Lack of representation and effective forms of participation were the key drivers that brought life to MUDHA as an independent organization in the early 1990s:

MUDHA emerges from the necessity to give visibility to Haitian women and their descendants. Because in the 70s and 80s there was a lot of talk about the exploitation of labour among *braseros* [seasonal cane sugar workers], but never anyone really spoke of ... how women arrived with the *braseros* and how the [Dominican] state did not take them into account as beholders of rights under the excuse that the Dominican state did not hire women... There was no talk about women even though they were incrustated in the *bateyes*.

Interview with Liliana (Sirana) Dolis , August 2016. (KI20)

MUDHA was formed in 1983 as the women's section of the Dominican-Haitian Cultural Centre (CCDH for its name in Spanish), an organization of Haitian migrants and exiled Haitians in the DR, which was organized in resistance to the Dictatorship of Jean Claude Duvalier. The women's section was founded by Solange Pie (Sonia Pierre), along with other founding members such as Sirana Dolis. It functioned as one of four branches within the CCDH, with each dealing with a specific group such as workers, students, culture, and women. Framed within the discourse of leftist movements of Latin America and the Caribbean at the time, the organization had a universal agenda in which women-specific issues were isolated and postponed until "grander" political objectives were attained (interview with Dolis, August 2016, KI20).

Traditional gender roles affected women's participation in the political organizing of Haitian migrants, who were mostly seen as beneficiaries, and care providers, whose

political priorities were unaccounted for. In 1995, MUDHA became an independent organization with the objective of giving visibility to Haitian and Dominican-Haitian women and making their specific issues central (A. J. Mayes, 2019). This newly acquired independence did not mean that MUDHA was stepping away from the larger Haitian migrant-rights movement in the DR, but it did change the power dynamics between women's agenda and that of the rest of the movement (Interview with Dolis, KI20, August 2016) (Adamson, 2007; Martínez, 2011; A. J. Mayes, 2019; MUDHA, N/A).

Figure 10: MUDHA's community school



Photo: This community school provides schooling up to grade 4 and, at the time of writing it also provided 2 meals per month. The school served as an interview site. In the picture is a portrait of Sonia Pierre, MUDHA's founder. (Photo by author).

Intimate labour was at the heart of MUDHA's work from its inception. For MUDHA, there was a clear link between social reproductive labour and the political rights of migrant women and their descendants. First, the irregular status of most Haitian women and women of Haitian descent meant that they and their children remained outside the social security system to which, despite being deficient, Haitian male workers had access. Second, and clearly linked to the first point, the scarce access to identity documents and status among Haitian migrant women translated into a

high risk of intergenerational transmission of irregularity of status or statelessness (Petrozziello, 2017, 2018; Riveros, 2014)

As detailed above, in the vast majority of cases, the Dominican state did not officially contract migrant women's labour, which automatically excluded them and their offspring from the weak social security available in the plantation communities such as community pharmacies (interview with Sirana Dolis, 2016). This invisibility continues to have consequences in today's *bateyes* and Dominican-Haitian communities at large. Women with precarious status "seek medical help only in extremis" (Sangro, interview with Alicia Sangro and María Paredes, OIM, March 2017). Public hospitals have a longstanding reputation of receiving patients whatever their legal status when dealing with medical emergencies and childbirth. However, primary as well as non-emergency health services are scarce and depend on specific projects and funding sources run by non-governmental organizations (interview with Joseph Cherubin, Director of MOTSCHA, January 2017; Minn, 2010; Riveros, 2014).

MUDHA's first actions as an independent organization were directed towards promoting community health initiatives that addressed women's gendered role as community care providers, while also addressing their own self-care needs. Sonia Pierre and the rest of the Dominican-Haitian women running the organization had a clear sense of the coexistence of their gendered responsibility to provide care, with their own care needs, which was accentuated by the generalized situation of irregularity and acute poverty in their communities. Tanyag argues that "[i]n times of crisis, the continued provision of care is increasingly divested unto women and girls to mitigate on their own or as individuals" (2018, p. 659). In the context of irregularity and economic exclusion, the threshold between everyday life and crisis becomes exceptionally thin, reflecting Berlant's crisis ordinariness (2011).

In this context, MUDHA emphasized sexual and reproductive health practices that women in *bateyes* could carry out to improve their living conditions despite their exclusion from social security and preventive health services. These often related to hygiene practices in absence of sanitation. For example, MUDHA's first actions included teaching women self-cleansing techniques to manage (and when possible overcome) sexually transmitted infections under conditions of lack of access to running water. Some of their early work also included the provision of some on-site antenatal and maternal health care, through coordination with other national and

international organizations, as well as supporting the role of community-based midwives (Interview Dolis 2016 KI20, and Sirana Dolis and Cristiana Luís Francisca, KI12, January 2017).

We tried to recover the role of the community midwife, but there were challenges (...) if there were any problems [with the birth] it was the midwife who got all the blame. Many of the women did not want to have a midwife, but if the birth occurred at midnight or later, they had no way to get to the hospital.

(...)

There was also the HIV situation (...) that was also a risk. So, we would also talk about this [with the community midwives], and what needed to be done [to manage births when the mother is HIV positive]. If you are a community midwife, you know you can be infected (...) you need to use gloves.

Sirana Dolis, Interview with Dolis and Cristiana Luís Francisca, January 2017. (KI12)

MUDHA trained local midwives to improve their capacities but also to improve their working conditions. In tandem, the organization advocated for local midwives to be recognized by the state as community health providers. This was important not only because midwives provided a safeguard for those expectant mothers who did not make it to the hospital to give birth, but also because it was (and continues to be) necessary to recognize their function in order to account for the births they assisted. Recognizing the midwives' role and presence often implied navigating the way their labour was perceived at the community level and in society at large. Sometimes it also entailed confronting midwives' own precarity of status and place due to their scarce access to documents, which could hinder their ability to certify the births they assisted (Interview with Dolis and Luís, KI12, 2017).

To this day, hospital personnel are likely to refuse to provide new parents with the birth certificate required to obtain a birth registry. Since 2007, they are also likely to provide parents with birth declarations that identify infants as children of non-resident migrants (even in cases when the forms did not apply). Already in 1995, when MUDHA began to work as an independent organization, a big part of its work went into identifying all expecting mothers in the *bateyes* and paying attention to their legal statuses, and those of their partners, in order to prepare them as best as possible for accessing a *declaración de nacimiento* (birth declaration) from the hospital. This often implied helping them regularize their statuses as a way of increasing the chances of regularity and nationality of the children about to be born.

We began by identifying all pregnant women. How many there were in each specific community, which one of them had documents and which did not, and when they were due. We needed to begin the process [of collecting all the documents] before the birth because here [in the DR] if you leave the hospital [after birth] without the hospital's birth record you will have even more difficulty to register the birth of your child.

Interview with Dolis, August 2016. (KI20).

MUDHA thus functioned as a broker between this population and the state, with the objective of improving their chances at not reproducing irregularity from one generation to another. The preparation of these files often required MUDHA to communicate with the Haitian Consulates in Santo Domingo and Santiago, as well as with local authorities and witnesses with regard to the status of both parents. MUDHA's support in this process has been vital to many because preparing these documents is particularly cumbersome. There are implicit costs such as transport to and from different government offices and payment of notary services, including in some cases bribery. The processes are lengthy and often geographically dispersed, sometimes requiring travel between different locations and missing days of work. They are also not straightforward and hard to understand. Each visit to a public institution is likely to require several follow up visits and persons of Haitian descent may confront racial profiling. There is also a sense (based on lived experiences and hear-say) that it is necessary to have a contact person inside each institution in order to successfully access documents. All these factors discourage those living in irregularity to regularize their statuses (Bartlett, 2012).

Much of MUDHA's work also involved identifying older children of Haitian descent that had not been registered upon birth. These cases often surfaced when lack of documentation became an obstacle for children's access to schooling. In some cases this affected primary school-aged children but most commonly affected secondary school students who are required to hold a Dominican *cédula* (which in turn can only be obtained if one has a birth certificate) in order to write national standardized tests (Bartlett, 2012; Bartlett, Jayaram, and Bonhomme, 2011; Amnesty International, 2015; Marsteintredet, 2016)

The process of filing late birth registrations is even more cumbersome than registering newborns. For example, through their work supporting late registrations, MUDHA came across the cases of Dilcia Yean and Violeta Bosico in 1997. Dilcia and Violeta were two 4th generation Dominican-born children of Haitian ancestry who had never been registered. MUDHA prepared their cases, together with that of

eight other unregistered children and requested their late birth registration in a town in Northern DR. However, the request was rejected and Dilcia and Violeta remained without documents, making them de facto stateless (interview with Dolis, 2016). MUDHA received an official visit from a group of representatives from the Organization of American States (OAS) in the same year, and they presented the Yean and Bosico's case, as well as others with having similar outcomes. In 1998 Yean and Bosico's case was introduced to the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights and elevated to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in 2003. MUDHA represented this case, together with the lawyers from the International Human Rights Law Clinic of the University of California-Berkeley, against the Dominican State (Marsteintredet, 2016; Martínez, 2014). The Dominican State was sentenced by the Court in 2005, and among others, the ruling required that Dilcia and Violeta be granted Dominican citizenship.

In addition to dealing with government offices and regional organizations MUDHA's work included the private experience of intimate hygiene and assisting births in a rural poor community setting. From the midwife's gloves to the Inter-American court, MUDHA's work wove together the global-intimate in its struggle for political rights, addressing the quotidian experiences of legal and economic struggles in both material and normative ways, at community, national, and regional arenas. Through its practice grounded at the level of *batey* communities, MUDHA has sustained a clear vision of the interconnection between social reproduction and the right to nationality; and what Petrozziello (2017, 2018) refers to as the indirect reproduction of statelessness via gender discrimination.

Elena: collective organizing to claim a return to citizenship

“we could not understand how we could be foreigners in our own land.”
Interview with Elena Lorac, 2017

Elena Lorac, co-founder and coordinator of Reconoci.do, had her birth certificate revoked by the time she was aspiring to begin her university studies in 2009. She had been trying to fix her situation for over a year when she mentioned her struggle to an old school teacher and to the director of the school where she had studied. They helped her identify the government office to approach in the capital, and they drove her there. Elena felt hopeful when she reached the Office of the National Registry in Santo Domingo in late 2011. After almost two years of trying, she had

finally found a government office where she was able to explain her situation and revalidate her birth certificate and *cédula*. Elena explained her case to a government officer:

I was hopeful, but all of a sudden, I do not understand what happened: that lady [public servant at the Central Electoral Board] was transformed. She yelled to my face that the Dominican nationality did not belong to me. It was very harsh. She said that my two last names were not from here [DR], that how come did I pretend to have a Dominican nationality if my parents were Haitian.

Interview with Elena Lorac, January 2017. (KI3)

Lorac recounts that the office at the National Registry was cold and somewhat removed from the rest of the building. She felt that she had been treated as a criminal and told to go to the "Haitian Embassy and tell them that I wanted to be Haitian." She could then apply to a Dominican university with a Haitian passport, but that she had to pay, like any other foreigner. Elena did not have the means to fund a private education. Just to get to the capital had represented a financial strain (KI3).

At the time of her visit to the National Registry, Elena still believed her case was unusual and she expected that the state would respond to her claim. Her expectation was that of a citizen in the conventional sense, someone who could, as suggested by Nyers "expect that their vocal acts will be heard by governing authorities (even if they are not acted upon)" (2017, p. 120). However, Elena had been denationalized and she soon learnt that hers was a situation experienced by thousands of Dominicans of Haitian descent. Under Law 169-14, Lorac became part of Group A or those whose births had been registered under Dominican Law in the past and had had documents granting their Dominican nationality, but whose documents were suspended through discriminatory practices that were gradually legalized.⁸⁶ According to this Law, those in Group A "would obtain nationality because the State recognized its own administrative mistake, not because they were born on Dominican soil" (Centro Bonó and Dominicanos por Derecho, 2016).

For Elena, the suspension of her documents became a driver for political organizing around the right to nationality. She became one of the founders and active members

⁸⁶ These practices were gradually legalized practices that were gradually legalized through Law 285-04, internal regulations of the Electoral Board (Circular 17-07 and Resolution 12-07), the new Constitution of 2010, and finally with Sentence 168-13 and Law 169-14. Paradoxically, these legal changes that eventually affected all population of Haitian ancestry in the DR born since 1929 until the current day, took shape in reaction to the international pressure applied by the Inter American Court of Human Rights' sentences against the Dominican state in the cases of Yean and Bosico in 2005 (see subsection on MUDHA above) and Expelled Dominicans and Haitians in 2014. See Chapter 4 for further details.

of one of the main organizations of Dominican-born persons of Haitian descent who were denationalized through state policies. Even though she had had documents that certified her Dominican nationality, the state invalidated them after pointing out that her parents had registered her birth with a *ficha*.⁸⁷ Regaining her citizenship as a Dominican citizen became a central part of her life: “I highlight the fact that we mobilized politically. We demanded respect for our Human Rights” (KI3). Together with others in a similar position, she founded Reconoci.do, which she continues to coordinate together with other leaders.

For Elena and other civil society leaders, the struggle centers on gaining the set of rights attached to holding a Dominican nationality, to which they were entitled. A group of 55 thousand persons that had been categorized as part of group A got a new set of documents that were meant to reinstate their nationality. However, there remain serious concerns about the legal validity of this measure, which was also executed in a way that compromised their privacy. The names of all those whose rights were reinstated (at least in principle) were published, including their registration number, in a national newspaper (JCE, 2015). The list was not exhaustive as it left several thousands of people without any clear answers as to what was going to happen to their statuses. Those that received their documents were often unable to use them to register their children, or get married, to name a few of the common legal processes that continued to elude them.⁸⁸

For Reconoci.do, the new birth registrations felt like a “bounced cheque”, because those affected could not do anything with it (Interview with Lorac, 2017KI3). From their standpoint, the revalidation of their nationality translated at best into a degraded set of rights, a “second category of citizenship” (Wooding, 2016). The organization opposes what they perceive as a system of gradations of citizenship that were initially imposed through informal practices and later through laws and regulations that finally led to Sentence 168-13 and Law 169-14. While officially framed as the Dominican state’s effort to respect human rights, the law has been only partially applied, with over 100,000 potential beneficiaries left with denationalization, lack of

⁸⁷ This was a widely accepted informal practice under the discretion of each local registrar. For more details see Chapter 4 on context.

⁸⁸ Moreover, their old documents were not re-validated, but instead most beneficiaries were provided with Actas de Registro de Inscripción, that functioned as a proof of nationality. Not all of them were provided with a *cédula*. Their data was transcribed into new registry books under different numbers from those they were registered new birth registries with new numbers, generating confusion in their documents. This generated a number of problems that have continue until today (see Wooding, 2016, and Belique 2017, for further details).

any birth record and in some cases statelessness⁸⁹ (interview with Elena Lorac, KI3). This has resulted in a de facto system of gradations of citizenship that leave Dominicans of Haitian descent in a position of political, social, and economic subordination. As argued by Belique, another of Reconoci.do's founders, the new citizenship regime executed through Law 169-14 had created a system of "racial segregation implemented through the national registry, where Dominicans of Haitian ancestry are separated from the rest of Dominicans that were born in the same space and time" (2017, p. 1).

Through Reconoci.do, Dominicans of Haitian ancestry reject the terms of the new citizenship regime and aim to reclaim their right to nationality. They contest the reproduction of irregularity, which in this case is deeply gendered and rooted at the intimate bond between mothers and their progeny. With the support of Centro Bonó, a Jesuit migrants' advocacy NGO, Reconoci.do has deployed a diverse set of political claims. They have carried out peaceful demonstrations since 2011, often using performance in public spaces as a form of protest, and also as a way of explaining to the general public what they describe as a civic death or *muerte civil*, whereby their identity and nationality had been suspended. They also participated in the production of a documentary that exposed the plight of three of its members (Civolani Hischnjakow, 2011; González Díaz and Patio Común production company, 2018). In 2015 Reconoci.do also introduced a petition to the Inter American Court demanding to have nationality rights reinstated (Belique et al., 2015). The organization continues to have presence in the six provinces of the DR that concentrate the majority of the population of Haitian descent (interview with Elena Lorac, KI3).

Although Reconoci.do does not address intimate and reproductive labour in their struggle, the intimate-mobility entanglement is in the origin story of their exclusion. The centrality of mothers in the reproduction of precarity of status remains a source of strain within several families of Dominicans of Haitian descent. MUDHA's Sirana Dolis described these tensions by recounting some of the comments that some

⁸⁹ The use of the term statelessness is cause of heated debate in DR, especially after the implementation of Law 169-14, after which many national and international allies of the denationalized population became under the impression that the problem of statelessness had been solved in the DR. Official data on statelessness by UNHCR, for example, went from 211,545 persons of concern (99.3% of which were considered stateless) in 2013, after Sentence 168-13 to 1,388 at the end of 2016 after Law 169-14 had been implemented (UNHCR). Sources will contradict each other over this. However, Belique (2017) speaks of 133,770 stateless persons in the DR.

Haitian or Dominican Haitian mothers resent hearing from their children, which made them responsible for deportability of their children:

'You [legally] declared this one [child] because he was your favourite', 'you did not register me because this or that'... all these [discussions] occurred within families (...) and it is us, women, who suffer the consequences, because this [children's legal exclusion] is because of us.

Interview with Sirana Dolis, August 2016. (KI20)

In some families, access to documents became a contentious aspect that brought the law into the intimacy of filial relations, as well as brought the intimacy of a politics of affect directly into the politics of the nation. Other families dealt with this intersection between the intimate and the law with a sense of humour. That is how Rosalba and her siblings dealt with it.

Rosalba (and Marie): union politics as transnational claim making

Like Elena, Rosalba was born in the DR to Haitian parents. She is the first of five children. Her mother Marie arrived from rural Haiti to the Dominican side of the borderlands as an 8-year-old. When 17, Marie migrated internally to Santo Domingo, where she began working as a live-in domestic worker, which continues to be her job thirty years later. Marie was an irregular migrant until 2006, when she obtained legal residence (DWC21). Once she had regularized her status, she began the processes of late registration of her five children, all born in Dominican territory before the implementation of Migration Law 285-04. Marie hoped that all would obtain a Dominican nationality. However, only three succeeded. Rosalba explains that they were born in different hospitals, each with its own registration office. The registry office located in the hospital where she and one of her brothers were born did not register their births, while the registry office in the hospital where the rest of her siblings were born did (DWC20). Three of them became Dominican, while the other two were rendered de facto stateless. When asked about whether or not this affected the relationship among the siblings, Rosalba speaks humorously about the way they tease each other:

They tell me like 'watch out for when the [migration] trucks come' [laughter], and I tell them that the truck would also take them... but they say 'me? No way, I have Dominican documents, it is you who doesn't'...

Interview with Rosalba, August 2016. (DWC20)

This humorous take is descriptive of the quotidian nature of precarity of place among Haitian and Dominican-Haitian communities in the DR. There is a long history of

arbitrary deportations that historically included Dominican-Haitians despite their possession of a Dominican *cédula*, which indicated that they were Dominican nationals (Ferguson, 2003; Shoaff, 2017a; SJR, 2002).

Like Elena, Rosalba had aspirations to embark on university studies. She had to drop out of high school for a few years due to her lack of documents. However, through the relations of her mother's employers at the time she was able to use her set of temporary documents as proof that she was in the process of regularizing in order to enroll in school and write the national exams. Nevertheless, once she finished high school, it was clear that the National Electoral Board would not admit her registration as a Dominican national so she remained without migratory status or nationality, which impeded her access to any university. She was running out of options and she needed an income. Rosalba had been working as a nannie during weekends, as well as during the years that she had dropped out of school. At that point, she began working full time as a live-in domestic worker in a job her mother helped her find.

Marie had been working as a domestic worker with foreign diplomats for over a decade. This gave her access to better working conditions and better wages. Through one of her old employers, Marie learned about a growing domestic workers' union called the Association of Household Workers' (ATH), which was trying to organize on a larger scale. One of the ways it was expanding was through the incorporation of migrant workers. Marie participated in the process of recruiting new members and educated herself about labour rights. She eventually testified about the working conditions of domestic workers in the Dominican Republic in front of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Geneva, Switzerland, in 2010, as part of the process that led to the creation of the Domestic Workers' Convention 189 in 2011. Marie remembers this opportunity gave her a new sense of confidence.

I did not know how to read or write my name. And when I was in the meetings [in the ILO] I wanted to say something, but I did not dare to because I would be ashamed if I said something wrong... so I registered myself in a school as soon as I came back. Now I know how to sign my name and read a few things. After that [participating in the ILO discussions] nobody will commit any abuse against me at work.

Marie, Interview with Marie and Rosalba, 2017. (DWC21b)

Marie remained active in the union for a while and insisted that Rosalba join, but Rosalba was not interested. After the ordeal with her regularization, she was tired: "I

always said no. She invited me to join them on Sundays and I would say 'no *mami*, leave me, Sundays are the only day I have to rest. I am not going to go [to any meeting].'" One of the main challenges organizing domestic workers is the working schedule, especially those who are live-in workers. Moreover, being mostly women, domestic workers tend to accumulate unpaid care responsibilities with their own dependents that they can only fulfill during their weekly breaks. In the case of Rosalba, losing access to the nationality to the country where she was born and where she felt a deep sense of belonging had deeply affected her. She had no interest in political organizing and her paid work left her with very little free time. However, Rosalba began having troubles at work:

When December came, I told the lady [employer] that I already had worked for a year with her and that she ought to give me vacation time so that I could rest. And that she also needed to pay me double salary.⁹⁰ But she said no... I had been talking about this with her for about a month when *mami* said 'Come to the organization [ATH] because they will help you with this'.

Interview with Rosalba Jean, August 2016. (DWC20)

Rosalba went to a meeting a following Sunday where they were discussing labour rights with other domestic workers. She found a flyer that contained all the rights she was entitled to as a domestic worker and said to herself: "this is what I need!" Rosalba brought the flyer to her employer to support her claims, and after much negotiating obtained her vacation time and Christmas bonus but when she returned to her job after the holidays her employer laid her off. Through this experience, Rosalba exercised her voice first privately, by trying to address her employer individually, and later by approaching her with the backing of a collective labour organization.

Rosalba's agency had a financial cost. She has had a hard time finding employers willing to agree to the legal set of rights to which she is entitled, as this is one of the first things she speaks about when she meets potential employers. In the meantime, she became more active with the union: "I first became an organizer, then a labour rights educator and those experiences gave me confidence. I can understand what is happening to a [domestic] worker because it is something that I have experienced, I became more empowered" (Interview with Rosalba, 2016 DWC21). Rosalba became a coordinator of the ATH's network of migrant workers. As a coordinator her role is to reach out to Haitian domestic workers who do not feel comfortable speaking in

⁹⁰ Dominican Labour Law 16-92 requires employers to pay double salary on Christmas as well as to provide vacation time.

Spanish or are not confident talking with someone who does not have Haitian heritage.

Rosalba had become a labour leader, and was capable of exercising her voice privately and publicly, as well as she was capable of organizing other migrant workers. At the same time Rosalba remained without any citizenship or migratory status. There was a general climate of uncertainty and fear among Haitians and Dominican-Haitians once Sentence 168-13 came out which became more acute as the regularization process was coming to an end.⁹¹ Rosalba's mobility was increasingly curtailed by her lack of documentation, which was affecting her participation in labour politics. She was frequently invited to join international meetings of labour unions but was never able to join them because of this. When Marie's employer heard of Rosalba's situation, she insisted that she register her children at the Haitian Consulate. Marie remembers him saying:

Doña [Ms.], get the kids a passport, sign them up in the program [PIDIH, Haitian-run Program for the Identification and Documentation of Haitian Immigrants] and get them a passport. It does not matter if they are Haitian or Dominicans, what matters is that they have documents.

Marie Jean, Interview with Marie and Rosalba Jean, 2017
(DWC21b)

Marie had already tried to sign them up in PIDIH before but nothing had come of it, even though all her children were legally entitled to Haitian nationality. She wanted Rosalba to get a passport so she could accept the international travel invitations she was getting through her union. She mentioned this to her boss, and they managed to begin the process of acquiring Haitian nationality through his personal contacts. Marie's employer lent her the money she required to cover the fees for all four passports that amounted to two months worth of her wages. Fifteen days later four of her children had a Haitian passport and Rosalba could begin her travels with the union of domestic workers and youth of the National Confederation of Workers Union (CNUS in Spanish). Rosalba had formally become a migrant in her country of birth.

With the help of her mother (and the influence of her mother's employers), Rosalba gained transnational mobility and overcame the de facto statelessness she had experienced since the time of the Dominican National Registry failing to admit her late registration and the delay by Haitian institutions in allowing her to access Haitian

⁹¹ These concerns were confirmed when more than 202,525 Haitian migrants had spontaneously returned or were deported to Haiti in June 2015, when the registration process of National Regularization Plan of Foreigners expired (OIM 2015)

nationality. Rosalba took on a migrant condition and made it part of her way of doing politics. Being a migrant domestic worker had become her entry point into national and transnational labour politics. This was possible due to the solidarity that the Dominican union movement showed in relation to migrants' rights (Interviews with Elena Perez KI2a 2016, KIb 2017; Eulogia Familia KI4a, 2016, KI4b 2017; Fine and Petrozziello, 2017).⁹²

When discussing her trajectories through (ir)regularity, Rosalba is pragmatic. Acquiring a Haitian passport enabled her to have what was an otherwise restricted transnational mobility. This enabled her to participate in diverse ILO training sessions as well as youth and domestic worker meetings beyond the DR and union work, both of which are now at the center of her professional and political life. She is interested in keeping her regular migration status, and considers naturalization as a path forward in the future. Keeping a regular status and eventually naturalizing are expensive endeavours, however, which are not always financially feasible for union activists and domestic workers. Her university aspirations have been postponed because Rosalba would have had to pay international fees to study in a public university. Instead, labour unionism provided an alternative route to education and a new vocation.

I got to know the Association of Home Workers through unexpected turns in my life [to be refused the Dominican nationality]. I have learnt a lot through the organization and I have been able to defend the rights of domestic workers whose rights have been trumped.

Interview with Rosalba, August 2016.(DWC20)

For Rosalba, labour activism became a path to overcome part of the exclusion that she has experienced throughout her life as a migrant domestic worker, as well as the daughter of one. In her experience, and contrary to the logical expectation that intimate labour is mostly relegated to the private sphere, paid intimate labour became an entry into the public and transnational space of labour politics in a context in which her political rights had been structurally constrained by the nation-state.

⁹² Two of the largest labour unions in the DR Autonomus Classist Union Confederation (CASC) and CNUS became increasingly favourable to migrant rights during this period.

Conclusions

The intimate-mobility entanglement plays an ambivalent role in the spatial and political trajectories of Haitian women and women on Haitian descent in the DR. Their intimate work was invisible and scarcely accounted for (if at all), and yet it was often through and because of it that they initiated their migratory journeys. Relying on Pain and Staeheli's framework, the intimate, as a set of practices where I locate intimate labour, served as a strategy to get by in a context of structural exclusion. As a set of spatial relations, the intimate was an ambivalent and risky realm that often increased their stasis and precarity, first during the times of the sugar economy, and then through the era of export trade zones. The intimate is at the heart of their historical precarity of place and precarity of labour.

Survival and struggle over bodily integrity are realms of quotidian struggle in postcolonial contexts where the bodies of black women have been historically abused through labour exploitation, sexual violence and forced sexual reproduction. This fundamental claim to survival and integrity is, in itself, political and precedes Paret and Gleeson's mobility and other three types of primary agency. Women may turn to mobility as a strategy in order to survive and sustain the lives of others (as it was conveyed in chapter 5) and even before that, one may literally stop the car and threaten the life of an attacker in order to keep one's bodily integrity. This primary political assertion, the right to live and protect one's integrity highlights the ambivalence inherent to im/mobilities and the global intimate that result in the violence inherent in heavily gendered and racialized postcolonial politics. This ambivalence speaks to the tension between freedom and control, which Sheller argues are achieved through the relation between bodies and spatial forms. She asks: "who can define spatial form in the first place? (...) How is space controlled and structured and by whom?" (2012, p. 14). Sheller's questions speak to Squire's (2011) politics of mobility, where contestation and control coexist in the same bodies, spaces, and often processes. Embodied im/mobilities and survival are interrelated forms of acting politically, placing bodies and movement as forms of contention and claiming one's entitlement to life and integrity in the midst of racialized and gendered spatial politics that produce the depletion of women's bodies.

Discursive and more conventional forms of claim-making, involving the state and other institutions, represent specific challenges to women who live with precarity of status and place. This precarity often leads to labour precarity, which then feeds into

further obstacles to enunciate and carry forward political claims. However, the experiences of MUDHA, as well as that of activists such as Elena and Rosalba and organizations like Reconoci.do and the ATH demonstrate that there are alternative venues of political claim-making that seek to engage with the state from alternative perspectives. For example, MUDHA has engaged the Dominican state through its registry offices, and the Inter American System of Human Rights; while it has also addressed the connection between sexual and reproductive rights with the right to nationality in the everyday lives of *batey* community members.

Organizations such as Reconoci.do, as well as individuals like Rosalba Jean and Elena Lorac, illustrate Nyers' 'abject cosmopolitans': those that exist politically on the margins of "the purity of citizenship" and yet refuse the expectation that they, as manufactured outsiders, be "speechless victims, invisible, and apolitical" (2010, p. 419). Rosalba and Elena refused that expectation and chose to confront the state, whether directly or indirectly, through citizenship and labour politics. Rosalba became a migrant in her country of birth, making labour politics her space of claim-making in the Dominican State through advocacy processes, but also through multilateral and transnational realms fostered by transnational labour unions and the ILO. In this way Rosalba is enacting a political subjectivity that bypasses some of the hurdles imposed by the citizenship regime, while remaining subaltern to it.

One of the leaders of Reconoci.do, Elena upholds a degraded form of citizenship that she and her peers perceive as a returned cheque and they, figuratively and literally, have returned to the state to reclaim what they had originally been granted. However, engaging with the state is not without contradictions, particularly in a context in which the state has proactively rejected access to formal citizenship mechanisms to those who are (re)claiming and enacting them. Sheller warns of this paradox: "subaltern claims for political inclusion and attempts to exercise their rights are a double-edge sword, since the expression of political subjectivity is also always a further inscription into the state order" (2012, p. 9). Reconoci.do's claims legitimize the state by engaging with it.⁹³

⁹³ As observed MUDHA's experience, transnational and international political bodies may work as a productive realm of claim making. Marsteinstredet (2016) and Martínez (2014) develop important arguments about the complexities and risks inherent to international and transnational campaigning in the cases of Haitian workers and Dominican Haitians in the DR. Although relevant, their discussions are beyond the scope of this chapter.

Critical citizenship scholars see promise in these encounters between abject cosmopolitans and the state. Their actions, beyond the sovereign script, are what constitute them politically (McNevin, 2013; Nyers, 2015; Squire, 2017; Johnson, 2012). From this perspective, confronting the state in its own terms does not necessarily translate into the reproduction of the status quo. In McNevin's terms, we cannot assume that to make a claim for human rights in a context in which their abuse is systematic can only offer more of the same injustice. To do so is to assume a fixity around the limits of humanity as they currently stand – a position that in fact reaffirms the very power relations that allow sovereign agents to have the last word on who can realise the rights-bearing part of their humanity (2016, p. 197). For McNevin (2016), there is productive potential in the ambivalence inherent to the activism enacted by those that live in precarity of status. This ambivalence implies engaging the state through claim-making processes that negotiate the rules of what is to be political, who gets to be political, and through what means and processes. This openness is then an opportunity to engage with subaltern political subjectivities from a place that acknowledges but is not sealed by sovereign power, a way of understanding and seeing politics that is attentive to processes beyond the presence or absence of specific political scripts.

Racialized and gendered intimate violence continue to be everyday forms of control over the movement of Haitian women and of women of Haitian ancestry. In this context the bodies are sites of contestation manifested in the mobility of women, and the control imposed by the state. Women's sexual and reproductive health and autonomy encounter legal exclusion, becoming a strategic site of political contestation. Women's bodies, their mobility, and their labour interact closely and become central aspects of their political subjectivity which manifests quotidianly in complex interactions between the global intimate and the nation-state. Despite the structural precarity of status and precarity of labour, women find spaces of claim making that exist in a wide spectrum that go from survival, to mobility, and to collective organizing engaging with the Dominican state.

Chapter 8: Conclusions

This dissertation introduces the intimate-mobility entanglement as a concept that emphasizes the intricate relationship between human im/mobility and social reproduction. The concept underlines the experiences of subaltern women whose lives are deeply embedded in processes of social reproduction that they sustain through their labour. In tandem, the concept highlights processes of spatial mobility (national and transnational) that have significant political implications in terms of survival, and also in terms of the (re)production and governance of borders. Building on Enloe's palindrome (see Chapter 2), the entanglement suggests that intimate labour motivates im/mobility, while im/mobility requires intimate labour in order to occur. In other words, intimacy (in the form of labour practices, but also of violent interactions) causes and sets many of the conditions under which im/mobility occurs, while at the same time, im/mobility dictates many of the ways in which intimate practices and interactions occur (see Chapter 5).

The intimate-mobility entanglement is integral to the way borders function and are (re)produced. Life and social reproduction continue to be transnational processes despite the assembling of physical and legal borders: like mobility, they precede sovereign power. The sustenance of life, as well as the intimate relations that it requires, interacts with border regimes in ambivalent ways that enable and control mobility. In this context, I argue that paid and unpaid intimate labour, and intimate violence are key aspects of a feminist and anti-racist understanding of processes of differentiated and obscene inclusion (see Chapter 6).

Mbembe argues that sovereign power ultimately defines "who has significance and who does not have any, is devoid of value and is easily replaceable" (2006, p. 43). This dissertation argues that the entanglement between mobility and intimacy is inherently geopolitical for it meddles with the cartography of the nation-state in at least two ways. First, it is co-constitutive of the spatial politics of the nation-state system. Second, I argue that in this context, the sustenance of life, especially among those deemed of less value, is intrinsically political and emancipatory. Survival, and struggles over bodily integrity are forms of political claim-making that exist with

discursive forms, which are sustained and intersected by social reproduction and intimate labour.

Research overview

The intimate-mobility entanglement

The dissertation's main research question is: how does intimate labour interact with the mobility and political subjectivities of Haitian migrant women and women of Haitian descent in the Dominican Republic? In order to address this general question, this research addressed three subsidiary questions: 1) How does intimate labour influence the mobility of Haitian women who work or have worked as domestic workers in the Dominican Republic? 2) How does intimate labour interact with the border regime as experienced by Haitian women and women of Haitian ancestry who work or have worked as domestic workers in the Dominican Republic? And, 3) How does intimate labour interact with the ways in which Haitian women and women of Haitian ancestry in the Dominican Republic exercise their agency and exist as political subjects? In order to answer these questions the study employed multi-sited ethnographic methods, including participant observation in community organizations, demonstrations, border crossings, and other commutes, which I recorded in a research journal. These observations were carried out alongside semi-structured interviews and focus groups with Haitian women or of Haitian ancestry who carried out paid reproductive work in the Dominican Republic, as well as migrants' rights advocates, researchers, union leaders, and Dominican-Haitian activists.

From the early stages of fieldwork, it became clear that there was a close relationship between human mobility, social reproduction, and survival. The proximity between the two often made them difficult to discern in linear terms, which is why I propose the concept of intimate-mobility entanglement. The entanglement is explained through the logic of *Fanm Pa Chita* (see chapter 1) that I explain here. Care deficits and DSR (Elias and Rai, 2015; Rai, Hoskins, and Thomas, 2014; Tanyag, 2018) were central drivers of mobility, which in many cases began during childhood through variations of traditional fosterage arrangements such as *Restavek*. The spatial trajectories of Liset, Lucie, and Marie, analyzed in chapter 5, were mostly determined by DSR and enabled through intimate labour. These trajectories often produced further care deficits, which caused further im/mobility (Bélanger and Silvey,

2019), thus entering a complex vicious cycle that led to significant costs in terms of their bodily integrity, their health and that of their relatives (see figure 1). Against a backdrop of sustained DSR and precarity of place, the chapter explains how Lucie almost lost her life to postpartum causes, and eventually lost her first child who was still a toddler. Lucie's experience shed light on the fine line between intimate labour and intimate violence in the context of precarity of place and depletion via social reproduction at the individual, household and community level. Their experiences of mobility were always affected in significant ways by care deficits, care responsibilities, and precarity of space. The effects of deportability are manifested in maternal and child mortality where women access health services only "*in extremis*" (Sangro, Author interview with Sangro and Paredes, OIM, March 2017) due to their irregularity of status, but also, to colonial notions of who needs and is deserving of care (Raghuram, 2019).

The entanglement and the border regime

The intimate-mobility entanglement is an integral part of the way borders function. The border is conceptualized as a set of formal and informal practices enacted by diverse actors that include a non-homogenous nation-state represented by different institutions and individuals, civil society organizations, smugglers, organized crime, as well as migrants and other border crossers. Using this analytical lens has enabled me to frame forced returns and deportations as interruptions of transnational livelihoods that are reproduced by the regime's inclusion/exclusion dynamics. In this sense, this dissertation provides a feminist contribution to De Genova's (2013) "obscene inclusion", by bringing it in conversation with feminist geography scholarship on the im/mobility and isolation, articulated with precarity of place and labour that are experienced by transnational domestic workers (Bélanger and Silvey, 2019; Silvey et al., 2008). In particular, chapter 6 explained how border schedules, as well as the temperament of changing border authorities affect reproductive labour schedules; the everyday enforcement of the border is also manifest in intimate violence and harassment experienced by transborder workers in their daily commute to work. Furthermore, and building on the notion of intimate labour as strategy/enabler of mobility in chapter 5, the experiences of transborder domestic workers demonstrate how their labour identity as belonging to a home enables their border passage whilst also reduces their political subjectivity in the eyes of the nation-state. In this context, the intimate functions as a geopolitical realm of

contestation and control that co-constitutes the governance of borders. Researchers in critical and feminist geopolitics such as Hyndman (2001), Biemann (2002), Price (2013) and Smith (2011, 2012) have illuminated how bodies, embodied mobilities, and racialized and gendered relations are co-constitutive of borders. This dissertation contributes to this literature by highlighting the labour implications of these embodiments and their close interrelation with survival and colonial relations of power.

Imagining a feminist migrant politics: Opening the spectrum of what constitutes politics

Opening up the spectrum of what constitutes politics is becoming a necessity as we witness the expansion and growing sophistication of the reproduction of irregularity. The termination of the regularization process carried out in the DR in 2015 excluded approximately 155,000 individuals (Wooding, 2016). Migrant women in general found gender-specific hurdles due to their historically unequal access to documentation (Llavaneras-Blanco, 2018) (see chapter 4). Among them, migrant domestic workers found specific challenges to participate due to the nature of their employment, which is highly informalized and not easy to prove as form of labour affiliation in the regularization process. The processes of de-nationalization and partial re-nationalization systematically produced new gradations of citizenship for some, and new cases of obscene inclusion of others through legislations such as Law 169-14 (Belique Delba, 2017; Centro Bonó and Dominicanos por Derecho, 2016; Wooding, 2016). Women and men are caught up in the geopolitics of nation-states that (re) produce the terms of belonging through shifting migration and citizenship regimes that affect everyday lives. This also has significant implications for how each nation-state (as a territorial process) portrays itself and their relationship with each other. In this context, Lozano (2014) argues that migration becomes a strategic topic used by the Haitian government in international negotiations, whereby it uses it as a form of leverage when negotiating trade and other topics that are strategic to the Dominican government. In this context migration and human mobility seem to be instrumental to the way the Dominican and Haitian states understand themselves and (re)produce each other.

Addressing the political subjectivities and agency of individuals that experience precarity of status is a challenging intellectual and political conundrum, not least

because the terms of belonging of these subjects are structurally conditioned in relation to the nation-state. This question is further complicated by colonial structures of racialized and gendered exclusion that affect black women, as well as an economic system that devalues the economic and social contributions of paid and unpaid reproductive work. Precarity of labour and precarity of status and place affect the positionality of Haitian women and women of Haitian ancestry in the DR and affect the ways through which they make political claims in relation to representative and institutional politics. This is the case in the context of state-led systematic denationalization and risk of statelessness that Haitians experience in the DR. Based on four case studies, chapter 6 proposes two forms of political subjectivities intersected by the intimate-mobility entanglement: embodied mobility and survival as a political claim to life, and collective claim-making processes. In the first case, survival becomes a political achievement for Dominican-Haitian domestic workers who assert their right to life and bodily integrity in their daily commute to work in rural communities of the Dominican south. In this context, embodied mobilities are forms of contestation against systemic control over racialized and gendered persons. Before this mobility, which Paret and Gleeson (2016) define as a primary form of migrant agency, comes the claim to life and integrity as one that precedes all others. The last three case studies presented in the same chapter demonstrate forms of collective claim-making, through which migrant Haitian women and Dominican-Haitian women manage to engage the nation-state through local, national and inter-regional institutional and informal channels despite their systematic abjection.

Recognizing embodied mobilities as political subjectivities does not imply a negation of sovereign power. Rather, these forms of subaltern agency coexist with discursive forms of claim-making that engage the state despite the reproduction of irregularity. This is the case of the struggles carried out by Reconoci.do and MUDHA, which collectively engage the nation-state by reclaiming a fair share within the citizenship regime. It is possible and very likely that subjects navigate more than one form of claim-making throughout their lifetimes. The forms of claim-making one employs depend on a multiplicity of factors that involve sovereign power and state institutions, and the formal and informal terms of access to citizenship and regularity. What form of claim-making a person enacts also affects and is significantly affected by social reproduction: whose children access the right to nationality and why; whose livelihoods depend on transnational reproductive labour; and ultimately whose lives and bodies are exposed to quotidian threats.

Critics of the use of ethnography in International Relations research warn us about the risks implicit in proposing struggles over survival and bodily integrity as forms of political claim-making. For them, suggesting survival as a form of political agency runs the risk of exoticizing certain groups, deeming them pre-political (Vrasti, 2008) and reproducing or even romanticizing their inclusion-exclusion. However, I propose that there is no pre-political sphere. Rather, I am concerned with expanding the terms of what constitutes the political, in ways that, as argued by Neveu (2014, p. 90) "include in the frame that which usually does not have access to visibility, neither for policies nor often from researchers, those 'feeble signals' of citizenship" or politics that escape our purview. This is particularly significant in (but not limited to) postcolonial contexts where the state was developed on the basis of systemic exclusion and violence (Noxolo, Raghuram, and Madge, 2012). Struggles over survival, and what Sheller (2012) calls Embodied Freedom, precede any other form of agency, and have been a historical response to state violence. Sheller locates this practice of resistance, for example, as an everyday response of Haitian peasants to the new post-independence Haitian state where "[m]oving beyond the reach of the state [was] one of the few means of resistance in situations in which freedom [was] seemingly won, yet self-determination remain[ed] elusive" (2012, pp. 185-186). Presence and mobility are in themselves political relations that establish terms of belonging whereby embodied freedom acquires a foundational character. This approach coincides with the Autonomy of Migration's emphasis on mobility preceding control (Rodríguez 1996, De Genova, 2013). However, as argued by Hyndman (2004, 2012), Angulo-Pasel (2018) and others, mobility is not a neutral process, but rather it is imbued in gendered and racialized spatial power relations. These power relations affect access to mobility, as well as the speed, frictions, and other conditions under which it takes place. By bringing the intimate-mobility entanglement to the fore, this research built on Hyndman's concept of embodied mobilities (2004, 2012), and on Bélanger and Silvey's (2019) im/mobility turn. These works provided an analytical lens to mobility that emphasizes the relational aspects that are irremediably attached to im/mobility. These relational aspects are ambivalent, they can sustain individuals through care and nourishment or expel them through depletion (Rai et al., 2014); they can enable mobility and also constrain it. This research brought Sheller's (2019) recent invitation to examine the micromobilities linked to reproduction, into conversation with these works, and brought them in dialogue with the postcolonial state.

Further research: The intimate-mobility entanglement and the reproduction of irregularity

My concept of intimate-mobility entanglement can offer insight into the ongoing immigration of Venezuelans into Colombia. At the time of writing, Colombia has received over 1.3 million Venezuelans due to the ongoing complex humanitarian crisis in the country (UNHCR and IOM, 2019). Social reproduction is playing a central role in the migration trajectories and settlement processes of Venezuelan women, and the births of children to Venezuelan women, especially those who live in precarity of status. DSR at the level of institutions, communities, and households appears as one of the main drivers of migration among Venezuelans in Colombia. A recent qualitative study shows that 63% of migrants said to have left Venezuela due to hunger and 56.3% because they could not find prescription medications (Bermúdez et al., 2018). Emigration is also occurring in the midst of an alarming increase of 65 and 35 percent in maternal and newborn mortality rates respectively between 2015 and 2016 according to the most recent available official statistics (AVESA et al., 2018).

The difficulty in gaining access to regularity and the right to nationality is by no means exclusive to Haitians in the DR. Building on the theoretical framework advanced in this dissertation, I am interested in further developing the relationship between the intimate-mobility entanglement and the reproduction of irregularity in the case of the growing Venezuelan immigration to Colombia. Colombia's citizenship regime is similar to that of DR's 2010 Constitution. In the Colombian case, access to nationality is conditioned to children of Colombian citizens, or to children of foreigners who have proven to reside in Colombia, which has been interpreted in registries as synonym of regular migratory status (DeJusticia et al., 2019). It is estimated that at least 40 percent of Venezuelans in Colombia live in conditions of irregularity and that between 5,000 and 20,000 newborns are experiencing de facto statelessness (Madrid Vergara and García Garzón, 2019; Radio, 2019). There have been four regularization processes, and there are different proposals under discussion within the legislative and executive bodies of government in Colombia to produce different paths to regularization and yet they are mostly framed as temporary solutions (Betts, 2019; Madrid Vergara and García Garzón, 2019; Redacción, 2018a). Applying the concept of intimate-mobility entanglement to the Venezuelan-Colombian case has the potential of shedding light on DSR as one of

the structural causes of the crisis of mobility experienced by Venezuelans, and the growing concerns over the de facto statelessness. The framework would bring to the fore the weight of access to sexual and reproductive health services in the context of precarity of place and status.

Policy reflections

This dissertation sought to privilege voices and experiences not often heard in the world of policy debates. In fact, it was the gap between policy in the case of what defines a domestic worker according to ILO Conv. 189, and everyday experiences of migrants that motivated me to move away from the perspective of policy and explore the lived experiences of migrant women who provide paid and unpaid intimate labour. Despite its vital contributions to the lives of many domestic workers worldwide, the Convention has important limitations as a framework to understand the realities of Haitian migrant women or women of Haitian ancestry who carry out paid domestic work in the DR. What is more, in my discussions with union leaders and feminist activists, I realized that migration and precarity of status was a complex topic that many were not ready to fully address. Many activists feared that a nationalist backlash might negatively affect the domestic workers' struggle and seriously risk the possibility of improving the labour regulations that would benefit the majority of them. In this case, both policy circles and activist circles had limitations in the way they addressed and related to part of the women who carry out paid domestic work in the DR. In that context, I found that my position as a foreign researcher enabled me to address aspects that remained unsaid and unseen, while still being a supportive ally of the domestic workers' struggle for the implementation of ILO convention 189. Centering women's voices was therefore key to my research, in an attempt to expand the frame through which we understand labour rights and also political rights.

Despite my critical analysis of the limitations of policy, I see value in research informing policy processes. In particular, I see it as part of my commitment as a researcher to offer some of my findings to policy processes because, among other reasons, the women I talked with showed interest in having their experiences heard and considered. Despite their systematic abjection, they did not have a position against conventional politics or the nation-state and often made it clear that they

would welcome the formalities of a passport and other forms of formal citizenship that were often perceived as unattainable privileges. In light of their disposition, and my own commitment to inclusion and social justice, I propose five main policy-relevant aspects of the experiences shared by women: the responsibility of the state to provide the conditions for social reproduction, labour rights, categories of belonging, voice, and sexual and reproductive rights. These themes are interrelated and in no way pretend to be exhaustive.

The Responsibility of the state to provide the conditions for social reproduction

DSR was a central motivation of women's spatial trajectories. The journeys shared by research participants were prompted by the fact that they, their communities, and their families did not count on adequate social protection systems and other means to sustain social reproduction. The exhaustion of women's bodies and the precarity of their mobilities is, among others, a consequence of the failure of the nation-state (including countries of birth, and of residence) to provide the conditions for the sustenance of life. In that context, the absence of public services and the privatization of health and education, as well as the limited access to water and electricity and poor labour conditions in Haiti acted as prompters to embark on dangerous mobilities at the risk of further exacerbating the depletion of their own bodies, households, and communities. This structural precarity sheds light on the responsibility of the nation-state in guaranteeing the conditions for social reproduction. If conditions for social reproduction were provided human mobility would not be prompted by the need to survive. By bringing up this discussion I do not seek to argue against human mobility, but rather, I argue for people to have the opportunity to stay and lead safe lives in dignity without having to embark on dangerous mobilities prompted by the urgency of survival.

Labour rights

Feminists have argued for the recognition and valuing of unpaid and paid reproductive work for over five decades. After much technical and political effort this claim reached global policy circles at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. The so-called Beijing Platform for Action called upon all governments to recognize the economic value of unpaid reproductive work (UN, 1995). This recommendation was not followed up on in the Millennium Declaration, but was then

picked up and expanded upon as an important part of the Sustainable Development Goals (UN General Assembly, 2015). Moreover, concerns over paid reproductive work reached the ILO and translated into Convention 189 concerning decent work for domestic workers and its accompanying Recommendation 201 (ILO, 2011). This convention is a landmark for providing a blueprint for the regulation and protection of paid domestic work at the national level. It is also brought domestic workers into the international system, and created a space where structurally marginalized workers could participate. Dominican union leaders, including migrant and non migrant domestic workers actively participated and have a sense of ownership over the result, which translates into their sustained efforts to produce national legislation that effectively protects domestic workers, regardless their migration and citizenship status (Mesa Intersectorial, 2018; Redacción-Acento, 2018; Redacción-Hoy, 2018).

Being a global blueprint, the Convention requires important adjustments in order to be applicable in specific contexts. One of the by-products of this dissertation was a policy paper focused on the specific struggles endured by migrant domestic workers in DR (Llavaneras Blanco, 2018). Based on the perspectives shared and contributions made by union leaders, migrant advocates, and especially by Haitian migrant domestic workers in four different geographical areas of the DR, the policy paper specified necessary legislative modifications required in order to provide protections specific to the situations endured by transborder and migrant domestic workers in the DR. For example, it recommends the use of written contracts (most domestic workers in the DR establish labour relations based on verbal agreements) as well as enabling migrants' access to systems of social security and social protection. However, these and other recommendations necessarily reach beyond labour legislation due to the severe precarity of status experienced by Haitian women and women of Haitian ancestry in the DR. In this sense, the document proposes the extension of the regularization process, as well as the implementation of measures that would facilitate the participation of domestic workers in terms of scheduling and documentation required. Moreover, it proposes the expansion of the "Border Inhabitant" (see chapter 6) category in ways that explicitly include domestic work as a productive activity so that it is a viable option for the regularization of transborder domestic workers who confront the violence of the border everyday. However, there is a concern with this and other regularizing mechanisms: they remain unaffordable and make cumbersome requirements that increase the implicit costs. If migration categories are to protect people on the move, they have to be made accessible and desirable. Many of the labour-related recommendations made

by the Policy Paper are part of the advocacy agendas of labour and feminist organizations. However, migrant-specific concerns related to legal statuses are a prickly issue, which is harder for non-migrant organizations to enunciate and support publicly due to the political costs of mixing labour and migration policy discussions in the DR. At the same time, migrants and people that live in precarity of status face their own precarity of place when considering bringing these concerns into the public sphere. In that context I had a privileged position as a an 'academic outsider' which I chose to bring a migrant focus into the public conversation on domestic workers' rights.

Categories of belonging

Time and again, research participants demonstrated how categories of political belonging (i.e. migrant, citizen, regularized, undocumented) did not clearly map into the way they saw themselves, or how others perceived them. This generalized confusion of terms relates, among others, to the temporary and contingent nature of migration categories associated to regularization processes, which is not limited to the DR but has been increasing elsewhere in the region (Basok and Rojas-Weiner, 2017; Moulin and Thomaz, 2016; Mohan, 2019). Legal categories of belonging are vague, and partial, feeding into a system of differentiated inclusion.

As the citizenship regime becomes increasingly fragmented with different gradations such as Groups A and B produced by Law 169-14 (Congreso de la RD, 2014), access to rights and protection becomes more cumbersome and confusing in the everyday lives of those who live in precarity of status. This dissertation explains several ways through which precarity of status and gradations of citizenship interrupt livelihoods and reproduce violence at many levels. For example, it reproduces intimate violence at border crossings (see chapter 6), excludes Dominican-Haitians from the education and health systems (see chapter 7), and reduces labour opportunities to highly informalized and exploitative forms of labour. Furthermore, growing gradations of belonging are often exploited (and reproduced) by neo-nationalist forces, which in the Dominican case, conflate Haitian migrants with Dominicans of Haitian ancestry as a way to marginalize Dominicans of Haitian descent (Taveras Blanco, 2013; Thomas, 2015; Wooding, 2016).

Gradations of citizenship and the reproduction of irregularity are significant obstacles for ILO Convention 189 and other important rights-protecting conventions to be

meaningful to the wide diversity of subjects in need of protection. This is a significant concern that is reflected in global governance systems that are witnessing an expanding division between migrants and refugees in ways that run the risk of being exclusionary and blind to the complexities involved in current transnational mobility. This growing divide has translated, for example, in the deepening separation between the global governance mechanisms in charge of offering protection to people on the move (the Global Compact on Migration, and the Global Compact on Refugees). Despite being based on a humanitarian concern with the experiences of refugees, the reductionist division between the two obscures the often overlapping and shared experiences among people on the move (Carling, 2017; Siegfried, 2015). Categories of protection and belonging are being fragmented, freeing nation states of their responsibility over the wellbeing of a growing portion of the population. At the same time, sovereign power remains a central tenet of global governance systems running the risk of further marginalizing those that are being denationalized, or expelled by political and/or political reasons.

When discussing this structural hurdle for the protection of migrants' labour rights union at the national level leaders such as Eulogia Familia and Elena Pérez hold on to the principles of universality and non-discrimination of the Dominican Labour Law (Congreso de la RD, 1992). Universality is also a value present in other ILO conventions that are set to protect workers regardless of their status in the countries where they work. The increasing fragmentation and the universalist approaches contest each other in the claim-making processes carried out by migrants, denationalized subjects, Dominicans of Haitian ancestry and their allies. I do not think that those of us concerned with the rights of workers and of those who live in precarity of status of space need to choose one or the other approach. For example, there is room for improvement in the regularization process carried out in the DR, which implies, for example emphasizing migrant domestic workers' access to status regularization mechanisms, which has been particularly difficult for them due to the informality of their labour agreements and their working hours.

Voice

One of the main challenges throughout my fieldwork was finding organizations that centered on the situation of migrant women, migrant domestic workers, and Dominican-Haitian women. With the exceptions of the St John's Sister's home, MUDHA and the ATH's migrant workers' leadership, there are no organizations led

by and/or focusing on the situation of migrant women in the DR. This highlighted for me all sorts of new problems, shedding light on a complex political economy of access to subaltern women that paradoxically relied on male leaderships in organizations in a context of research fatigue on the part of communities exposed to visits from international humanitarian organizations, governmental organizations, and university researchers, some of which were sporadic or somewhat frequent depending on the region.⁹⁴ There are obvious ethical considerations raised by this reality. One is the practice of offering stipends for people's participation in research studies in communities of acute deprivation, where international organizations were known for paying CAD \$25 for short participation when a domestic worker would make the same amount in a week.

Finding spaces where migrant women can participate freely and at ease has a clear impact on the way they choose to interact with researchers, hosts, and other fellow migrants or Dominican-Haitians. Centro Puente held a program specifically with transborder domestic workers and artisans in Dajabon and Ouanaminthe during the 2000s, which led them to support these workers and artisans throughout the pilot programs of regularization of passage of transborder workers (see chapter 6). However, due to funding constraints, their work with transborder domestic workers came to an end and has not been funded again removing what was probably the only safe space transborder domestic workers had in Dajabón.

It is vital to promote social, political and physical spaces where women can feel safe and organize, elaborating and emphasizing migrant women-specific agendas, with a spirit similar to that described by Sirana Dolis regarding the creation of MUDHA as an independent organization (see chapter 7). This comes as a challenge in a time when so many have been denationalized and precarity of place is affecting their living conditions and sense of belonging. Fostering safe spaces among women who experience precarity of status should be a central political and policy action. These spaces need not be limited to specific economic or legislative projects but to be sustained through time.

⁹⁴ The northern border, for example, was heavily exposed to international organizations due to the UN presence in Haiti. However, the southern border and the southern batey area had scarce presence of international organizations.

Sexual and reproductive health

MUDHA's work demonstrates the presence of the intimate in a diversity of political realms. From midwives' working gloves to local registries, and the Inter-American system, their trajectory illuminates the ways the everyday is connected to global politics and, in Enloe's palindrome fashion, the quotidian is in many ways co-constitutive with the global. Feminist scholars in a diversity of disciplines have put forward this argument for decades and with limited successes. Important pieces of global and national policy now embrace the value of unpaid work (i.e. the Beijing Declaration of 1995 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals of 2015), the labour rights of domestic workers (ILO Convention 189, i.e.), and consider sexual and reproductive rights as a human right (i.e. the Cairo Programme of Action of 1992, UN Sustainable Development Goals of 2015). Much of this global rights-based agenda was also re-emphasized recently in the Declaration of the 63rd Commission on the Status of Women, which, among many other issues, called upon governments to subscribe and implement ILO Convention 189, and attend to the concerning high levels of maternal and infant mortality (CSW, 2019).

However, infant and maternal mortality rates continue to increase as a sign of depletion of their bodies, their households and their communities. Conflict situations exacerbate a cost that women are paying everyday in contexts of crisis ordinariness. When addressing the costs of this normalized structural violence Tanyag argues that "[t]he promotion of women's participation and protection in times of crisis is contradicted by the prevailing neglect of social reproduction and especially SRHR in the global economy" (Tanyag, 2018, p. 661). In order for subaltern women's participation and voice to be effectively heard, social reproduction and sexual and reproductive health need to be effectively at the centre of development and humanitarian policies.

MUDHA's work demonstrates how policy and political work can address the connection between the right to reproductive health and the right to nationality among Haitian-Dominican communities in DR (see chapter 7). Their experience demonstrates the importance to remain locally relevant while also addressing structural problems in a multiplicity of spheres. This, however, is in itself costly. Not only in terms of the constant chase for funding that most feminist and women-centered organizations are undergoing worldwide, but also because it is an extension of hard affective labours that confront them, and all of us involved in

related research and activism, to the extensive reach of historical struggles and inter-generational traumas.

Ambivalence, survival, and hope

Describing the early stages of her career, Enloe argued that in order to make sense of international politics, she needed to "devote careful, sustained attention to women's factory workers' everyday lives" (2011, p. 450). This research follows those steps and opens up the spectrum of workers, beyond the factory, into the intimacy of households and plantation barracks. Understanding the mundane aspects of world politics opens windows into forms of resistance that sustain lives despite historical structural constraints. By the same token, these very forms of resistance and getting by have the potential of reproducing or maintaining the status quo for the sake of survival and sustenance. However, I sustain that in a context in which sovereign power insists on determining the right to live, the survival of subaltern subjects is in and of itself a political feat.

My research in the DR and Haiti exposed me to everyday forms of resistance such as Lucie's childhood memories of sucking on sugar cane while she was supposed to be working. This resistance might be a disposition and determination that, often on participants' initiative, showed up when focus groups began and closed with song, and prayer. Or it could be a certain sense of humour and irreverence revealed when women, while embroidering each other's hair with sophisticated styles, confided with me that they always told their employers that they do not know how to do that, implying that there are some parts of their intimate labour that they reserve for themselves or those they care about. There is a hopeful part of the intimate-mobility entanglement, that appears in moments of everyday resistance and intimate labour among each other, and at times when im/mobility shows a certain unconformity with the state of affairs. There was Lucie as a child refusing to be fed burnt rice, or Marie deciding to start over again building a house for herself. There were also intimate struggles that led to collective claim-making processes such as Elena confronting the state institutions that insisted on limiting her access to education, and Rosalba reclaiming her rights to an exploitative employer.

Situated in a feminist and subaltern geopolitics tradition, this research was set out to look at a politics from below that spoke to women that lived in economic and legal

precarity. While I recognize the weight of the state and its institutions in everyday life, I chose not to prioritize its perspective. My approach is not an invitation to romanticize that which is, after all, a very violent and complex set of realities. Rather, this dissertation highlights moments that transpire at the core of structures of economic, racial, and patriarchal inequalities, where women insist on renegotiating, surviving, and resisting the status quo while providing the labour necessary to sustain life. We know, however, that such labour needs to be replenished in order to not turn harmful for those who provide it and to those who rely on it. Such is the ambivalence where life and contestation lay.

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Appendices

Appendix 1:

Interview structure for migrants/stateless individuals who work or have worked as domestic workers (these questions were adapted/personalized and translated to Spanish/Creole as needed):

1) The household and family structure of migrant/stateless individuals who work or have worked as domestic workers

- Where did you grow up? Did you grow up with parents/ siblings? Where are they? Do they expect you to care for them or send them money/goods?
- Do you have children? Where do they live? How often do you get to see them? Do they expect you to care for them or send them money/goods? Can you tell me about your family?
- What are your hopes for the future? Where would you like to live/work in the future?

2) The labour trajectories of migrant/stateless individuals who work or have worked as domestic workers

- When did you start working as a domestic worker? When did you start your current job? How did you find out about it?
- At what time do you have to get to work and at what time do you leave? How is a regular day at work? What tasks do you have to do?
- Do you feel you are treated well by your employer?
- Have you had other jobs? What other jobs could you do, or would you like to do?
- Are you in touch with a domestic workers union or with other organizations that could provide support if problems arise at your job? [In the DR: Are you aware that the DR ratified ILO convention 189 on the rights of domestic workers? Has this helped you in anyway?]
- Do you know other domestic workers? Where are they from? Do you participate in activities with them?

3) The migrant journeys of migrant/stateless individuals who work or have worked as domestic workers

- When did you decide to come to the DR/NY? What made you decide to migrate?
- How did you come? [This question will change depending on whether I am in NY or in the DR] Did you fly, did you take a boat? Did you walk? Did you hire someone to help you cross the border? How much did it cost to come here?
- Did you plan to end your travels here [city/town in which interview is done]? or do you plan to continue traveling/migrating?
- [In case I am speaking with stateless individuals, I would ask: When did your parent(s) come to the DR? Where were you born?] When you or your parents came, what way did you chose? How much did it cost? How did you or your parents cover the expenses?]

4) Self-care, access to care, welfare, and coping strategies of migrant (or children of migrants) who work or have worked as domestic workers

- Where and when do you to eat while at work? Where do you eat when you are not working? Who prepares your meals?
- Where do you go when you are sick? Do you get free time to get better? Do you have friends/family that take care of you when you are unwell? What do you do when you are not feeling well?
- Where do you sleep? Do you get time off? What do you do in your free time?
- What do you think you will do to provide for yourself when you reach old age?

Appendix 2:

Interview themes and general questions for NGO/civil society/ government representatives (these questions were only used as a guide, and were adapted to each interlocutor and translated to Spanish/Creole as needed):

3) The Organization, origins, and work with migrant/stateless/ domestic workers

- What is the main area of work of the organization. When was it founded and with what purpose?
- Does the organization have activities/programs specifically directed to women? If so, what are those?

4) The labour trajectories of migrant/stateless individuals who work or have worked as domestic workers

- What are employers' expectations toward domestic workers? What are the workers' expectations? Are they any different if they are migrant/stateless individuals?
- Are there unions/social networks effectively supporting migrant domestic workers with labour-related issues?
- Is there solidarity among domestic workers across nationality? How does the migration/ stateless experience intersect with the labour experience?
- Is there solidarity among domestic workers across nationality?
- In your opinion, has DR's ratification of ILO Convention 189 helped improve the lives of domestic workers in general and migrant domestic workers in particular? If the answer is yes, how has it improved their lives? If not, what have been the main obstacles?
- How does the migration/undocumented experience intersect with the labour experience?

5) The migrant journeys of migrant/stateless individuals who work or have worked as domestic workers

- When does migration become a desirable alternative for Haitian/Dominican women? When does it become viable?
- Through what means do Dominican/Haitian women get to Dominican Republic?
- What is the opinion of [organization] in relation to the execution of the Regularization Plan?
- What is the opinion of [organization] in relation to the application of Sentence 168-13? What are the most pressing concerns and challenges for the Dominican State/Haitian Dominican population?

6) Self-care, access to care, welfare, and coping strategies of migrant (or children of migrants) who work or have worked as domestic workers

- Do migrant domestic workers access health care? How are their specific health needs addressed (birth, age-related, illness-related, accidents)?

- How is access to education for Haitian migrants and people of Haitian ancestry?