

Migration Transiting between hotels, “*casas de seguridad*”, buses and *camiones*: The politics of (im)mobilities from the Andes to the U.S.

Soledad Álvarez Velasco, University of Illinois at Chicago

Abstract

Irregularized transit migration has intensified in the migratory corridors connecting the Americas. As an effect of reinforced anti-migrant policies, this type of migration unfolds between waiting places and transit infrastructures, in a permanent dispute with the multiple state, para-state and social actors comprising the heterogeneous border regimes shaping those corridors. By focusing on the dynamics of the Andean Region and Central America migratory corridor and by reconstructing the trajectories of Latin American, Caribbean, and African migrants in transit to the U.S., this paper will analyze the politics of (im) mobilities present in hotels, “*casas de seguridad*”, buses and *camiones*. The paper proposes two arguments. First, that those private places and transit infrastructures are socially built sites of power within heterogeneous strategies of migration and control. Second, that the waiting time or immobility produced there is not a passive phase of transit migration, but highly productive both for transit migrants – because it is when they strategize to sustain their mobilities–, and for border (illegalized economies built around the extraction of migrants’ time to produce exchange value. The paper contributes to shedding light on how mobilities/immobilizations and transit/waiting time-spaces are part of the political economy of the studied corridor, while being dialectically related in a repressive/productive tension as part of the continuum of contemporary transit migrations.

Biography

Soledad Álvarez Velasco is an Assistant Professor in Anthropology and Latin American and Latin Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Her research analyses the interrelationship between mobility, control and spatial transformations across the Americas. She is the author of the book *Frontera sur chiapaneca: El muro humano de la violencia*. Mexico: CIESAS-UIA, 2016. She founded and co-coordinated the transnational digital project (Im)Mobilities in the Americas and COVID-19 and she is member of *Colectiva Infancia*, an international research network specialized in children migration across the Americas.