

**GEOGRAPHIES OF WAITING: THE (IM)MOBILITIES OF VENEZUELAN
MIGRANT WOMEN IN COLOMBIA**

by

Jonas Pinzon Osorio

B.A., College of the Atlantic, 2019

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES

(Geography)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

(Vancouver)

August 2021

© Jonas Pinzon Osorio, 2021

The following individuals certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for acceptance, the thesis entitled:

Geographies of Waiting: The (Im)mobilities of Venezuelan Migrant Women in Colombia

submitted by Jonas Pinzon Osorio in partial fulfillment of the requirements for

the degree of Master of Arts

in Geography

Examining Committee:

Geraldine Pratt, Department of Geography, UBC

Supervisor

Juanita Sundberg, Department of Geography, UBC

Supervisory Committee Member

Abstract

Some Colombian media outlets have reproduced “on the move” narratives to portray the lives of some Venezuelan migrants in Colombia. These narratives have concealed some instances of waiting that some Venezuelan migrant women inhabit every day. These narratives have largely contributed to rendering their lives precarious, seeding a public urgency to securitize and immobilize their movement. Using semi-structured interviews, content analysis, and hashtag research, this thesis centers the voices of a number of Venezuelan women whose stories offer a nuanced understanding of the ways the Colombian and Venezuelan states have marginalized them by creating some policies that structure instances of waiting that they experience. My analysis contends that despite the efforts of the Colombian state to receive millions of Venezuelan migrants in Colombia, some migration policies have (im)mobilized some Venezuelan migrants, placing them on the margins of society. I explore the ways some Colombian migration policies have largely structured long periods of waiting and uncertainty that some Venezuelan women experience. I then put their migrant stories into circulation to document family separation (and its temporality of waiting) that some Venezuelan migrant mothers negotiate when they engage in the emotional work of transnational mothering. Finally, I draw on their stories to illustrate the ways some Venezuelan women (re)purpose instances of waiting into meaningful time, negotiating ambivalence, and thereby rejecting to wait patiently and docilely. This thesis then unsettles single-narrated “on the move” narratives by rendering visible the geography of waiting, which some Venezuelan migrant women endure, at times painfully, in pursuit of their migration aspirations.

Lay Summary

Since the beginning of the Venezuelan exodus, single-narrated “on the move” narratives, created and spread by some dominant Colombian media, have concealed the periods of waiting that some Venezuelan migrant women experience in Colombia. These narratives have securitized some Venezuelan women and have provided a limited account of their life experiences in Colombia and Venezuela. To produce a more nuanced understanding of some of their migrant experiences, I center their stories to illustrate the ways the Colombian and Venezuelan states have structured instances of waiting that they have endure and negotiate every day. Their stories illustrate the ways some Colombian state policy is inherently exclusive, structures family separation, as well as how Venezuelan women (re)purpose instances of waiting, often characterized as passive and unproductive, into meaningful time to craft and enact their migrant trajectories.

Preface

This thesis is the original, unpublished work of the author, Jonas Pinzon Osorio. The fieldwork conducted for this thesis was approved by the University of British Columbia's Research Ethics Board, Certificate number H20-01760, under the title "The Politics of Migration and Labor of the Venezuelan Exodus to Colombia."

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Abstract | iii |
| Lay Summary | iv |
| Preface | v |
| Table of Contents | vi |
| List of Abbreviations | viii |
| Acknowledgments | ix |
| Dedication | x |
| Chapter 1: Introduction | 1 |
| 1.1 On waiting and (im)mobility | 3 |
| 1.2 Methods | 5 |
| 1.2.1 Interviews | 6 |
| 1.2.2 Content analysis | 7 |
| 1.2.3 Hashtag research | 8 |
| 1.2.4 A reflection on limitations | 9 |
| 1.3 Chapter outline | 11 |
| 1.4 On positionality in the interviews | 13 |
| 1.5 On categorizing and some terminology | 14 |
| 1.6 Context | 16 |
| 1.7 Working with Gran Acuerdo Venezuela during COVID-19 | 18 |
| Chapter 2: Structuring (im)mobilities | 21 |
| 2.1 Inclusion by exclusion: Asylum seekers, refugees, and the right to work ... | 23 |
| 2.2 The deskilling of labor | 26 |

| | | |
|--|--|-----------|
| 2.3 | Working as live-in maids | 30 |
| 2.4 | Health care, medical spaces, and “undocumentedness” | 33 |
| 2.5 | Conclusion: Exclusive regularization | 39 |
| Chapter 3: Family Separation | | 42 |
| 3.1 | Transnational motherhood over the phone | 46 |
| 3.2 | Family separation and aspirations for a better education | 56 |
| 3.3 | Family separation and a different relationship to waiting | 61 |
| 3.4 | Conclusion: The challenges of inhabiting multiple temporalities..... | 64 |
| Chapter 4: Contesting waiting: emerging capacities for agency | | 68 |
| 4.1 | The ambivalence of escaping | 71 |
| 4.2 | Negotiating the border..... | 76 |
| 4.3 | Claiming refugee status and capacities for collective agency | 77 |
| 4.4 | Conclusion: Forging agency..... | 79 |
| Chapter 5: Conclusion: Exclusive policies | | 82 |
| References..... | | 86 |

List of Abbreviations

| | |
|----------|---|
| EPS | Entidad Promotora de Salud |
| ETPMV | Estatuto Temporal de Protección para Migrantes Venezolanos |
| GNB | Guardia Nacional Bolivariana |
| LCP | Live-in Caregiver Program |
| MPPRE | Ministerio del Poder Popular para Relaciones Exteriores |
| PEP | Permiso Especial de Permanencia |
| PEP-RAMV | Permiso Especial de Permanencia–Registro Administrativo de Migrantes Venezolanos. |
| RCTV | Radio Caracas Televisión |
| SISBEN | Sistema de Identificación de Potenciales Beneficiarios de Programas Sociales |
| TMF | Tarjeta de Movilidad Fronteriza |
| TPS | Temporary Protected Status |

Acknowledgments

I want to thank all the Venezuelan women who participated in this research project, which would not have been possible without their willingness to share their stories. I want to thank some people at Gran Acuerdo Venezuela, who offered me their help during my fieldwork and facilitated the interviews for this research project. I also want to thank my research advisors, Geraldine Pratt and Juanita Sundberg, for their guidance during my graduate studies. I am grateful for the support of Geraldine Pratt, who encouraged me and guided me throughout this research project. Your advice and wisdom have contributed to shaping my academic and personal aspirations. I am also grateful for the support of Juanita Sundberg during this research project. Thank you for listening to me, advising me, and showing me other possibilities to inhabit the world.

I also want to thank many other dear people who supported me during my graduate studies, especially Inari Sosa, Daniel Gámez, Fernanda Rojas, Bronwyn Bragg, Esperanza Salas, Dan Hiebert, and Davis Taylor. You have contributed to my academic growth and have made me a better human being. I am also grateful for the support of many staff members at UBC Geography, who offered me their help during my graduate studies.

Finally, I want to thank my parents, Cesar Pinzón and Maria Osorio, for their lifelong support, love, and engagement with my work. I especially want to thank my mother for always being there unconditionally and Cesar Pinzón, my brother, for his support and for seeding in me many important questions since our childhood.

For my parents Maria Osorio and Cesar Pinzón, and my brother Cesar Pinzón

Chapter 1: Introduction

Since the beginning of the Venezuelan exodus in 2015, narratives that depict Venezuelan women as being “on the move” have reflected the urgency of the Colombian state to “code [them] by a . . . masculinist and threat-orientated geopolitical agenda that controls and securitizes their movement” (Hyndman and Giles 2017, 15). These narratives have been reproduced by some state officials, who have criminalized some Venezuelan migrants. For instance, on November 20, 2020, Claudia López, the mayor of Bogota, tweeted that: “El 52% del hurto en Transmilenio lo comenten bandas criminales de colombianos y el 48% de inmigrantes venezolanos. Contra todas esas estructuras criminales seguiremos actuando para proteger a todos los ciudadanos de nuestros 2 países para que podamos vivir bien y en paz en Bogotá” (Lopez 2020). (52% of the robberies in Transmilenio [the transportation system in Bogota] are committed by Colombian criminal gangs and 48% by Venezuelan immigrants. We will continue to act against all these criminal structures to protect all citizens of our 2 countries so that we can live well and in peace in Bogotá; my translation).¹ In another instance, she tweeted: “No quiero estigmatizar a los venezolanos, pero hay unos que en serio nos están haciendo la vida de cuadritos. Aquí el que venga a trabajar bienvenido sea, pero el que venga a delinquir deberíamos deportarlos inmediatamente” (Alcaldía de Bogota 2020). (I do not want to stigmatize Venezuelans, but there are some who are seriously making our lives difficult. Whoever comes to work here is welcome, but whoever comes to commit crimes should be deported immediately). Similarly, the largest newspapers in Colombia, *El Espectador* and *El Tiempo*, as well as magazine *Semana* have also largely produced and spread these “on the move” narratives around

¹ Throughout this thesis, all translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

Venezuelan migrant women. For instance, headlines in media outlets like “Migración venezolana, cinco años huyendo hacia Colombia” (Ortiz 2020) (Venezuelan migration, five years fleeing to Colombia); “4.000 nuevos desplazados venezolanos llegaron a Arauquita, tras combates entre las disidencias de las Farc y la Guardia Bolivariana” (*Semana* 2021) (4,000 new displaced Venezuelans arrived in Arauquita, after clashes between the FARC and the Bolivarian Guard); and “Cientos de venezolanos regresan a casa en medio de la pandemia” (Carvajal 2020) (Hundreds of Venezuelans return to Venezuela amid the pandemic) use words such as displace, flee, and return—words that evoke a sense of movement—to portray some Venezuelan migrants.

Tweets and headlines of this nature have created a sense that Venezuelans are “on the move” and have served to engender a public urgency to create policies to securitize and immobilize them. In particular, because these narratives have focused on the mobility of Venezuelan migrants, they have concealed their (im)mobility and thereby the temporality of waiting that some Venezuelan women experience when they migrate to Colombia. When I started this research, stories about waiting were predominant in women’s accounts, which marked a constant state of limbo and stasis. Some waited days outside supermarkets and gas stations to buy food in Venezuela. Some waited for their family members to bring home medicines to alleviate the symptoms of their maladies. Some waited a long time to make the decision to leave their homes and migrate to faraway places. Some waited months to cross the Colombia-Venezuela borders. Some waited for someone to pick them up on roads after walking hundreds of kilometers. Some waited to get a job in the Colombian labor market. Some waited at emergency rooms only to be quickly discharged because they were undocumented. Some waited for the Venezuelan regime to collapse to return to Venezuela. Some waited for the day they could reunite with their children again.

1.1 On waiting and (im)mobility

The attention I give to waiting takes its cues from feminist and (im)mobility studies. In her work with Filipino migrant mothers who come to Canada under the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP), Geraldine Pratt (2012) documents the trauma that Filipino mothers living in Canada and their children in the Philippines experience while waiting for the time of family reunification. As Pratt (2012) work illustrates, the Canadian state largely structures the family separation that Filipino mothers and their children experience by “importing mostly university-trained mothers to care for Canadian children under labor conditions intolerable to Canadian citizens” (44). Alison Mountz’s (2011) work with asylum seekers illuminates the ways states—both sending and receiving—structure the liminality and limbo that asylum-seekers experience during their migration. She draws on Cindi Katz’s (2001) notion of “countertopographies” (1228), which “maps and challenges colonial, imperial power relations with which global capitalism is entangled, revealing material disparities operating across uneven terrain” (Mountz 2011, 383). In this sense, as Mountz (2011) notes, “a feminist counter-topography enables analysis rooted in a politics of location and differentiation that links global and local scales” (383) to understand the experiences of asylum-seekers while they endure instances of waiting. In his work with asylum-seekers in Canada, David Seitz (2017, 439) places “the *waiting room* as a both material and metaphorical site that renders asylum-seekers precarious and queer . . . through their quotidian experiences of space/time.” Seitz’s (2017) work echoes some of the ways the Colombian and Venezuelan states enact “slow violence” (Nixon, 2011, 2) that some Venezuelan women experience, rendering their lives precarious. As Rob Nixon (2011) has noted, “Slow violence . . . occurs gradually and out of sight, a violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space, an attritional violence that is typically not viewed as violence at all” (2).

Similar to Seitz's (2017) work, Bridget Haas's (2017) research with asylum seekers in the United States shows the ways US state policy creates a "dual positionality" (76) that asylum seekers inhabit at the time of applying for refugee status. As Haas (2017) notes, once asylum seekers apply for refugee status, they "are at once citizens-in-waiting and deportees-in-waiting" (76), which materializes in the uncertainty and "existential limbo" (81) that they experience while the state processes their application. Bailey et al. (2010) used "permanent temporariness" (139) to conceptualize the ways some immigration policies in the US marginalize the lives of Salvadoreans who are in the United States with a Temporary Protected Status (TPS). As Bailey et al. (2010) explain, this status makes Salvadoreans experience constant uncertainty about their future in the US, as their permanence in the US is contingent on the discretionary regulations of US immigration policy. "Permanent temporariness" (Bailey et al. 2010, 139) constitutes a useful framework to conceptualize the ways some Colombian state policy has structured a number of instances of waiting and thereby a state of uncertainty that some Venezuelan migrants endure. The work of Auyero (2012) in Argentina is particularly relevant here insofar as it renders visible different ways in which the state structures instances waiting. More specifically, his account shows us the ways some forms of governance structure instances of waiting and create individuals who become "patients of the state . . . manufactured in the ordinary encounters between welfare agents and the poor" [italics in original removed] (2012, 18). I build on (and somewhat depart from) Auyero's (2012) work to argue that, while Venezuelan women I spoke with tried to comply with the state in their encounters with state officials (e.g., in queues in administrative buildings to obtain documents that could seemingly improve their lives), they (re)purposed instances of waiting into meaningful time, to craft and enact their own migrant trajectories and thus refused to inhabit periods of waiting docilely and patiently (Chapter 4).

My overarching objective in this thesis is to decenter “on the move” narratives by centering the stories (most about instances of waiting) that some Venezuelan women experience every day. Because many of the difficulties that some Venezuelan women face are experienced during periods of waiting, it is important to center and make these periods of waiting visible. Attending to the temporality of waiting is an effort to disrupt singular narrated time, which narrows possibilities for political opposition and social change (Collins 2021). That is to say, centering the temporality of waiting is an effort to disrupt “on the move” narratives and “temporal closure [which] flattens the messy, crowded, heterotemporalities . . . into single, authoritative histories” (Collins 2021, 612). Perhaps, as Donna Haraway (2017, para. 5) notes, reflecting on these multiple temporalities “means aligning with the temporalities of the displaced, with the time in the camps, with the time trying to get visas, with the time of expulsion, and aligning with what people are already doing with and for each other.” This thesis is then an effort to unsettle the complacency around “on the move” narratives by illustrating instances of waiting and asking important questions: What/who structures these long waits? How does the state structure waiting to dominate some Venezuelan women? And what is at stake in these long waits? In other words, listening to some Venezuelan women’s stories about waiting highlights the fact that the largest migration in Latin America’s history is anything but fluid. It is rife with stops, uncertainty, and long waits.

1.2 Methods

Using a combination of virtual semi-structured interviews, content analysis, and hashtag research I was able to gather the stories of nineteen Venezuelan women, contextualize events occurring in various geographical locations in Colombia, and collaboratively work with Gran

Acuerdo Venezuela, an organization that does advocacy work and offer services to Venezuelan migrants living in Colombia. I worked in collaboration with them to recruit participants for this research project. Virtual semi-structured interviews and hashtag research were fundamental to contact organizations and access participants during the COVID-19 pandemic, which vastly restricted my ability to move around the material spaces that some Venezuelan migrants inhabit every day. I also participated in Webinars organized by some of my participants, where I had the chance to listen to conversations about the ways in which some migration policies have affected the lives of some Venezuelan migrant women in Colombia.

1.2.1 Interviews

From July 2020 to November 2021, I conducted nineteen semi-structured audio-recorded interviews with Venezuelan women and staff at Gran Acuerdo Venezuela in Bogota. All interviews were transcribed and coded several times. Some interview excerpts were translated into English. All participants migrated to Colombia between 2014 and 2020 and were residing in Bogota, Medellin, and Pasto at the time of the interviews. I spoke with all participants virtually, using online communication platforms. Interviews generally lasted sixty to ninety minutes and were conducted in Spanish, our mutual native language. I conducted several follow-up interviews with some participants to delve into certain aspects of their lives that they spoke about in the first interview. These shared stories helped to contextualize the various material ways some migration policies affected migrant lives in Colombia. Conducting interviews in virtual spaces was new to me; however, for some women virtual spaces were a substantial part of their everydayness, specially of those Venezuelan mothers doing the work of transnational motherhood through virtual spaces. In this sense, sharing virtual spaces with them was an

opportunity to inhabit similar challenges to the ones they face when they try to build rapport with their children and extended family in Venezuela.

1.2.2 Content analysis

Over the course of one year, I collected and closely examined the language and photographs that some media outlets, published by Colombian newspapers *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and the magazine *Semana*, used to largely build a singular “on the move” narrative around some Venezuelan migrants. These media outlets included news, video news, migrant stories, and commentaries both in written and audio form. While I did not conduct a systematic content analysis of how these media outlets portrayed some Venezuelan migrants, I analyzed the language that some of them used to portray some Venezuelan migrants in Colombia. The language of these media outlets often suggested a sense of movement, which was reinforced by the photographs that accompanied them. I took note of the language and tone used on several media outlets, noticing the ways narratives changed contingent upon the political and economic climate in Colombia. For instance, in the three months following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the language of movement and displacement to portray Venezuelan migrants predominated despite the fact that most people were confined in their homes. This is because, as some Venezuelan women explained to me, a substantial number of Venezuelan migrants decided to return to Venezuela during the first stages of the pandemic as some of them lost their jobs to COVID-19. Moreover, I closely followed the Twitter accounts of some government officials, which allowed me to see the role of the state in reproducing and mobilizing “on the move” narratives around Venezuelan migrants. I visited their Twitter accounts on a regular basis and read part of the conversation threads that their tweets precipitated.

1.2.3 Hashtag research

The World Health Organization's (WHO) decision to declare COVID-19 a pandemic in March 2020 posed an important question for this research: how was I going to conduct interviews with participants? Following the research of Latin American scholars Bonilla and Rosa (2015, 5) using "hashtag ethnography," I began to use social platforms, predominantly Instagram and Twitter, to follow the work that many organizations were doing on the ground in Colombia. I started following #JuntosPodemos, #GranAcuerdoVenezuela, and later on #HazlosVisibles hashtags. Following hashtags in virtual spaces and attending webinars allowed me to meet activists doing on-the-groundwork in Colombia. This is how I met Victoria, part of Gran Acuerdo Venezuela, who later became the liaison person of my research project. As Bonilla and Rosa (2015, 5) explain, the hashtag "allows the ordering and quick retrieval of information about a specific topic." For instance, a quick way to look at the requirements to obtain Permiso Especial de Permanencia (PEP) (Special Permit of Permanence) and read some of the questions of some Venezuelan women around it was to follow #PermisoEspecialDePermanencia, which led me to see some conversation threads on Instagram. "Hashtag ethnography" (Bonilla and Rosa 2015, 5) served me to better understand the material challenges that some Venezuelan women experienced on the ground by sharing a virtual temporality with them. Additionally, closely following hashtags allowed me to learn about the activism work that some Venezuelan women were doing on the ground and in virtual spaces. That is to say, hashtags were outlets that connected me to faraway geographies, providing me with a sense of how some Venezuelan women contested and negotiated the everyday challenges of being in Colombia. Some Venezuelan women do not have access to hashtags, as not all of them have access to the technology or time to navigate social platforms like Twitter or

Instagram. While some women I spoke with used these platforms to share their views and content relevant to other migrants, others were not familiar with these social media platforms. As Bonilla and Rosa (2015, 7) explain, “Recognizing that hashstags can only ever offer a limited, partial, and filtered view of a social world does not require abandoning them as sites of analysis.” Ultimately, as they contend, “Hashtags offer a window to peep through, but it is only by stepping through that window and ‘following’ (in both Twitter and non-Twitter terms) individual users that we can begin to place tweets within a broader context” (2015, 7). Inspired by the work of Bonilla and Rosa (2015), I started following individual people and organizations, which allowed me to better understand the challenges that some Venezuelan migrants experience in Colombia. Following individual people and participants also allowed me to attend Webinars and Instagram Live Streams facilitated by activist women where I learned about the work that some organizations were doing in Bogota and other places in Colombia. Attendance to Instagram live streams varied, but roughly ranged from fifteen to forty participants.

1.2.4 A reflection on limitations

Both methods—conducting semi-structured interviews and closely examining media outlets—validated each other. The stories in the interviews often offered a nuanced understanding of the challenges that some Venezuelan migrant women experience every day in Colombia, which were largely concealed by “on the move” narratives found in dominant Colombian media. In this sense, rather than invalidating “on the move” narratives, Venezuelan women’s stories provided a complementary and more nuanced narrative, telling us stories about idleness, stasis, and meaningful waiting. While conducting virtual interviews allowed me to inhabit the virtual spaces that some Venezuelan women inhabit every day to communicate with

their children and extended family members, my ability to spend time in other material spaces that they inhabit every day (e.g., their workspace and public spaces around the city) was limited. Some women (re)created these spaces through narrative, and animated them with sounds, colors, and emotions, all of which prompted me to imagine and recall public spaces that I frequently visited during my visit to Bogota in December 2019.

Closely examining only a few national media, I perhaps neglected some of the ways other media portrayed the lives of some Venezuelan women. However, the newspapers and the magazine that I chose to examine are widely read in Colombia and thereby were important material to analyze the ways dominant Colombia media produced narratives around the Venezuelan exodus that then were spread across the country. My reading of media outlets was interpretative and embedded in a political stance that reflected my own positionality. Donna Haraway (1988, 583) notes the importance of “situated and embodied knowledges” and pushes “against various forms of unlocatable, and so irresponsible, knowledge claims.” In this sense, my reading of these media outlets reflects my stance as a critical researcher and thereby offers a partial perspective and understanding of the media outlets that I read and the Venezuelan women I interviewed. I do not see this partial perspective as limiting; rather, I second Haraway’s (1988) words that “it is precisely in the politics and epistemology of partial perspectives that the possibility of sustained, rational, objective inquiry rests” (584).

Rather than limiting my research, hashtags opened a myriad of possibilities to my research project. Hashtags helped me to navigate virtual pandemic landscapes during a time where I had many questions about how to work with organizations and interview potential participants in virtual spaces. Moreover, hashtags enabled me to reach out to organizations and women activists, as well as attend virtual spaces where I gained a nuanced understanding of the

most pressing challenges that some Venezuelan migrant women face in Colombia. In other words, “hashtag ethnography” (Bonilla and Rosa 2015, 5) was reassuring during a time when doing research had an extra layer of complexity and opened up alternative routes to conduct research.

1.3 Chapter outline

The main objective of my research was to listen to the stories of a number of Venezuelan women. This thesis centers their stories, which render visible the ways the Colombian and Venezuelan states structure and articulate the temporality of waiting that some Venezuelan migrant women experience in Colombia. The second chapter centers the stories of some Venezuelan women to render visible the ways the Colombian state makes rights “available but not accessible” (Khosravi 2017, 4), structuring instances of waiting and uncertainty that some Venezuelan women have to endure. In doing so, the Colombian state creates precarious spaces, which maintain some Venezuelan women “alive but in a *state of injury*” (Mbembe 2003, 21), placing them in the margins of society. The third chapter illustrates stories of family separation. Here some Venezuelan women’s stories illustrate the ways the state (re)shapes and articulates their families by structuring experiences of time—particularly of waiting—that they endure while they are separated from their children. Attending to these instances of waiting reveals the ways poor communication infrastructure in Venezuela poses challenges to some Venezuelan mothers when they try to engage in the work of transnational mothering. The challenges of doing transnational mothering and working (and waiting) in Colombia illustrate the ways some Venezuelan mothers engage in multiple, at times discordant temporalities. By multiple temporalities, I mean that, in many instances, Venezuelan mothers inhabit life rhythms, at times

discordant, that demand them to wait and move at the same time. This idea of “waiting in motion” (Lagji 2018, 218) is fully developed in Chapter 4. Moreover, as some stories illustrate, after women separate from their children, they develop a particular relationship to waiting. For instance, at the time of reunification, they do not wait to build a future with their children, but rather wait for past times to return to the present time. As John Rundell notes (2009, 51), “We all wait for futures—yet not for the same ones, nor in the same way, nor at the same tempo.” Rundell further says that “Modernity, because of its multiple worlds and their temporal horizons, entails that waiting for the future has multiple, clashing and even overlapping effects, affects and modalities” (2009, 51). For some Venezuelan women I spoke with, waiting for the future means to wait for the time that they were away from their children to return to the present time. Some look forward to inhabiting the past, especially their children’s childhood, which they realize is impossible as some of their children are teenagers or adults at the time of family reunification. In this vein, their future aspirations are not found in the unfolding future but rather in the lost memories of the past. The fourth chapter draws on migrant stories to argue that making instances of waiting visible exposes not only the “slow violence” (Nixon 2011, 2) that some Venezuelan women encounter every day, but also the ways they (re)purpose instances of waiting into meaningful time, to craft and enact their own migrant trajectories. The stories in this chapter show us the ways some Venezuelan women experience waiting in non-passive ways, enacting different forms of agency, which are contingent on their past and future aspirations. In sum, the stories in the chapters that follow illustrate the geographies of waiting, structured and articulated by the Colombian and Venezuelan states, largely concealed by a singular and authoritative “on the move” narrative.

1.4 On positionality in the interviews

When I started to talk with Victoria about my research plans, I positioned myself as a graduate student from Colombia studying at a Canadian university and interested in understanding the experiences of Venezuelan migrant women living in Colombia. As the research progressed, Victoria became a participant, an advisor, and a friend, all categories which changed my positionality throughout my research project. For example, on several occasions, our phone conversations were not about my research but rather about the overwhelming emotions we experienced during the pandemic. Over time, it was difficult for me to inhabit only one positionality as our conversations often moved back and forth between my research and our personal lives, making the researcher/participant boundary fluid. My research questions and findings were informed by inhabiting these multiple positionalities with some participants. For instance, conversations about our daily lives with some participants helped to build trust between us. This trust made interviews achieve more depth, offering me the chance to closely engage with their stories and produce a nuanced analyses of the challenges that they experience every day in Colombia. My positionality as a male researcher from Colombia and doing research in an online setting perhaps delayed the process of building trust with participants. Even though my positionality posed a challenge in terms of accessing conversations with participants that perhaps would have otherwise been easier in person, I tried to find common ground with participants and managed to create spaces where we shared life experiences and aspirations, seeding in us some degree of trust. As some women's stories show us, participants in this research came from different regions of Venezuela and had different backgrounds.

I interviewed some participants several times, and in doing so, I realized that more engagement with them started to change the dynamics of the interviews. I stopped writing

questions before the interviews, which made interviews less structured. I also found myself posing fewer questions and sharing pieces of my life with my participants who often asked me about my life in Canada, my studies in geography, and my family in Colombia. I found that framing the interviews as a space to exchange pieces of our daily lives rather than as a set of questions was a more productive approach to learning about the lives of participants. In this sense, as James Spradley (1979, 58) notes, interviews became “a series of friendly conversations into which the researcher slowly [and thoughtfully] introduces new elements to assist informants to respond as informants.” I believe that an exchange approach to the interviews was essential to build trust between participants and me, particularly during a time when building in-person rapport was interrupted by constant lockdowns and social distancing.

1.5 On categorizing and some terminology

Some Colombian media indiscriminately used various terms to refer to Venezuelan women over the course of my research. In many of the media outlets published by *El Espectador*, *El Tiempo*, and *Semana* from June 2018 to May 2021, Venezuelans were sometimes labeled as refugees, oftentimes as migrants, and seldom as asylum seekers. These labels used by some media outlets to portray Venezuelan women heavily informed the understanding of many Colombian communities in terms of the reasons they decided to migrate to Colombia. As Tazreena Sajjad (2018, 45) suggests, “Labels, charged with the responsibility of constructing our world, allow for the kind of social categorisation in which suppression or annihilation become actual possibilities.” For instance, as Christina Oelgemöller (2011, 408) explains, “Current thinking constructs migrants as being invisible, illegitimate or in need of humanitarian aid; this leads to the assumption that they can be found, enumerated and categorised.” Some Colombian

media outlets and some Tweets like the ones from Claudia López, which tend to associate some Venezuelans with crime in the city, reproduce narratives that serve to justify anti-migrant movements and “generate a climate where verbal, physical and institutional violence become commonplace *and* legitimised” (Sajjad 2018, 47). Besides these terms, some Colombian communities have created colloquial terms to refer to Venezuelans residing in Colombia. For instance, a number of Venezuelan women said that some Colombians tended to use the term “Veneco,” a common and derogatory term to refer to Venezuelans living in Colombia. Ultimately, as Sajjad (2018, 56) notes, “a classification of the migrant . . . not only strips individuals of their narratives and negates the complex realities which compel many to move, but also highlights the extent to which the oversimplified conceptualisation of identity has consequential results.” Sajjad’s words are precise here and help us understand the ways “on the move” narratives have obscured the stories (some about waiting) of some Venezuelan migrant women in Colombia.

In this thesis, I attempt to refer to Venezuelan women in the same way they presented themselves during the interviews. When they do not categorize themselves, I refer to them as “Venezuelan woman.” Some Venezuelan women presented themselves as migrants even when they had submitted applications to obtain refugee status in Colombia. Some others presented themselves as migrants but expressed interest in applying to obtain refugee status. Others presented themselves as mothers who had come to Colombia escaping hunger and hoping to help their children back in Venezuela. In some instances, the ways they introduced themselves changed over the course of the interview. For instance, sometimes they started to present themselves by using the term migrant and then switched to irregular migrant, or some used the term migrant and refugee interchangeably. I realized that some of them used migrant as an

umbrella term to encompass refugee and asylum seeker. Ultimately, what remains important is to recognize the ways these classifications affect the lives of Venezuelan women, concealing their migrant stories and the temporalities within them, criminalizing and securitizing them, and raising questions about whether they are worthy of rights.

In this thesis, irregular and undocumented migrant refers to those Venezuelan migrants who do not meet the conditions to obtain a regular status in Colombia. Permiso Especial de Permanencia (PEP) (Special Permit of Permanence) and Permiso Especial de Permanencia—Registro Administrativo de Migrantes Venezolanos (PEP–RAMV) (Special Permit of Permanence—Administrative Registry of Venezuelan migrants) refer to temporary permits that allowed eligible Venezuelans to live and work in Colombia for up to two years under some conditions (Migración Colombia 2021a). According to Cancillería Colombia (2021), Estatuto Temporal de Protección para Migrantes Venezolanos (ETPMV) is a statute created by the Colombian state to issue temporary permits to eligible Venezuelans, which allow them to live and work in Colombia for ten years. Eligible irregular Venezuelans in Colombia can seek to obtain a regular status under this statute (Cancillería Colombia 2021); however, it remains unclear what some of them, who might not have access to documents, need to do to obtain this permit.

1.6 Context

Before going to Bogota in December 2019, my friends in Colombia told me that some Venezuelans were “on the move” around the city. I roamed around the city and realized that the city felt different: an increase in informal night markets, some Venezuelans waiting for people to buy their food in their food trucks, and longer than usual queues in administrative buildings in

Bogota. Some Venezuelan women I spoke with decided to migrate to Colombia after experiencing challenges around obtaining food and medicines in Venezuela. Others said that they decided to leave after years of receiving threats from the Venezuelan state due to their political views, and some others migrated to reunite with their families in Colombia. Some Venezuelan women talked about the times when they were able to achieve some of their goals in Venezuela in part, as they told me, thanks to the oil industry in Venezuela. For several years, the Venezuelan state used some oil revenues to import some materials and products to meet the demands of many Venezuelans, as domestic policies oriented to expropriating some private companies largely hindered the production of some products at the local level and thereby afflicted the economy (Santos, 2017). Viscidi (2016) and Santos (2017) explain that when the price of oil started to drop in 2014, the Venezuelan state started to lose its ability to sustain the same rate of imports, meaning that materials and products started to lack in the country. Moreover, as Rendon and Price (2019) explain, the US (and other countries) have opposed the government of Nicolas Maduro, some countries creating some sanctions against Venezuela.² As Weisbrot and Sachs (2019) have noted, some sanctions that may decrease the capacity of the Venezuelan state to import materials hamper the proper maintenance and operation of some of the utility infrastructure in Venezuela. In other words, poor management of oil revenues, expropriation of part of the private sector, and broken institutions have been some precursors of the current situation in Venezuela (Santos, 2017). For some of these reasons, some Venezuelan women I spoke to told me that they found it difficult to make a living in Venezuela. For instance,

² For a review of some of the sanctions that the US government has imposed on the Venezuelan state, refer to the work of Weisbrot and Sachs (2019) and Rendon and Price (2019).

some Venezuelan women expressed that some products were unavailable or expensive and that, in many instances, they had to queue for many hours before they could enter the supermarket to buy some products.

The reasons why some Venezuelan women decided to migrate are not only attributed to the challenges around obtaining food and medicines. A number of Venezuelan women said that because of their opposition to the government, they were threatened and persecuted, which prompted them to flee the country and migrate to other places. Susana, an acclaimed Venezuelan journalist who worked at Radio Caracas Television (RCTV) for many years, fled Venezuela after being threatened and persecuted by the Venezuelan state. In this sense, the shortage of food and medicines coupled with political unrest and persecution prompted some Venezuelans to leave the country. At the same time, as some Venezuelan women explained to me, the Venezuelan state made it difficult for some Venezuelans to migrate by not issuing passports in a timely manner. In other words, the Venezuelan state structured the conditions to marginalize some Venezuelans in place, starving them and refusing to provide them with the necessary documents to migrate to other countries.

1.7 Working with Gran Acuerdo Venezuela during COVID-19

The pandemic raised important questions for me. What are the ethics of interviewing marginalized communities during a pandemic? Are some modes of interviewing more or less problematic than others? How could I listen to some Venezuelan women's stories when many cities in Colombia were under lockdown and social distancing measures were implemented? How to build trust with participants without having the chance to engage with them in an in-person setting? And more importantly, how could I make my research relevant to the

communities being researched? I had the fortune to think through these questions with Victoria, with whom I talked extensively about the ethics of my research project. She gave me extended advice on how to approach potential participants. We agreed that she would diffuse my research in the office of Gran Acuerdo Venezuela in Bogota and would provide information about my research project to Venezuelan women interested in participating. We built a reciprocal relationship: Victoria served as the liaison person for my research project while I conducted research ensuring to make it relevant to some Venezuelan migrant women.

Relevant to some Venezuelan migrant women. What does my research reveal that makes it relevant to some Venezuelan migrant women? My research amplifies the voices of some Venezuelan women and uses feminist scholarship to create a nuanced understanding of the experiences that some Venezuelan women endure while they wait. As Kiluva-Ndunda (2005, 222) notes, “Reciprocity in research involves privileging the discourses of those in the margins and engaging in activities that aim at moving their issues toward the center.” My research is then an effort to amplify some Venezuelan women’s voices by centering their stories, which illustrate the ways the state subordinates some Venezuelan women by enacting “slow violence” (Nixon 2011, 2) in the form of endless instances of waiting and liminality, both of which places them at the margins of society. The choice to center some Venezuelan women’s voices is an effort to better understand some of the challenges that they experience around transnational motherhood when they migrate to Colombia.

My research joins the efforts of public activists and organizations whose objective is to contest “on the move” narratives and make migrant stories visible. It is a work that shows that, despite the Colombian state’s efforts to receive millions of Venezuelan migrants, some Venezuelan migrants continue to experience migration policies embedded in authoritative

narratives that dislocate their migrant stories. Such authoritative narratives end up criminalizing and securitizing Venezuelan women, marginalizing them while they wait.

The dearth of research on the (im)mobilities of some Venezuelan women in Colombia motivated me to amplify their voices by centering them in this research project. My research then joins the efforts of some activists to create spaces of solidarity by voicing the stories of some Venezuelan women and making them visible in public advocacy events and university departments. This research project captures the stories of a small number of Venezuelan women in a time where the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the pre-existing challenges that some of them experienced before the pandemic. Even though this research does not focus on analyzing the effects of the pandemic on the lives of some Venezuelan women, their stories are unequivocally embedded in a time of magnified political and economic instability in their lives.

Chapter 2: Structuring (im)mobilities

When I returned to Bogota in December 2019, I was constantly reminded that Venezuelans were everywhere and “on the move.” Wandering around the city, I saw newspapers on the streets that featured Venezuelan migrants crossing the border, walking along Colombian roads, and meandering around Colombian cities. I also heard local residents talking about Venezuelans. “*Andan por todos lados*” (They are everywhere), “*Nos están invadiendo*” (They are invading us), “*Son nómadas, van y vienen*” (They are nomads, they come and go) were some of the comments that I heard from Colombians. In Bogota, I walked around public spaces and encountered many Venezuelans everywhere, in public transportation, the night markets, administrative buildings, and refugee camps. However, they were not precisely “on the move.” On several occasions, I saw some Venezuelans enclosed, stuck, and waiting. I saw them living in refugee and makeshift camps that were sometimes fenced and securitized. In one instance, I went to La Registraduría Nacional de Colombia (The National Registry of Colombia) to get a duplicate of my Colombian ID. There, I saw Venezuelan women negotiating with, and waiting for, a guard to let them into the building as they needed to ask questions about the possibilities of obtaining a Colombian ID. In another instance, while riding the bus, I overheard mothers speaking on the phone with their children, telling them they could not wait to see them again.

As much as the Colombia state has created some migration policies that seemingly help Venezuelan migrants by offering regularization programs (e.g., PEP and PEP-RAMV), some of these policies have had counter-intuitive and traumatic effects on some Venezuelan migrant women, creating many instances of waiting that some of them constantly have to inhabit. In an effort to call into question the apparent efforts of the Colombia state, this chapter centers the voices of a number of Venezuelan women to illustrate the workings of the Colombian and

Venezuelan states to structure and articulate the (im)mobilities (e.g., long waits and stasis) that some Venezuelan women endure. These stories make visible how periods of waiting reproduce their marginalization, subordination, and “undocumentedness” in Colombia. A core argument of this chapter is that the Colombian state makes Venezuelan women’s lives precarious by making rights “available but not accessible” (Khosravi 2017, 4) to them. In doing so, the state subjects them to marginal spaces similar to “*death-worlds*” (Mbembe 2003, 40) (instances of waiting), which maintain them in precarious conditions. Firstly, Marta’s story illustrates the ways some Venezuelan asylum seekers and refugees are in limbo, waiting for the Colombian state to negotiate with financial institutions the provision of financial services so that they can access the labor market. Secondly, Elbia’s story illustrates the ways the Colombian and Venezuelan states structure periods of waiting around the validation of some Venezuelan women’s professional credentials. These long periods of waiting result in the deskilling of labor of highly educated Venezuelan women, and thus contribute to their marginalization and precarity. As the stories show us, the Venezuelan state has largely contributed to deskilling some Venezuelan women living in Colombia. For example, some stories show us that even though the Colombian state is responsible for validating professional credentials, the Venezuelan state has, in many instances, refused to issue documents to some Venezuelan migrants that are necessary for the validation of their credentials in Colombia. Lastly, Anita and Mariana’s stories illustrate the ways the Colombian state has used medical spaces to highlight the “undocumentedness” of some Venezuelan women by questioning them about their migration status and making them wait in medical spaces before they receive medical care. This chapter is an invitation to see the workings of the Colombian and Venezuelan states to make “rights available but not accessible” (Khosravi

2017, 4), enacting “slow violence” (Nixon 2011, 2) on some Venezuelan migrant women that reproduces their precarity and marginalization.

2.1 Inclusion by exclusion: Asylum seekers, refugees, and the right to work

When I interviewed Marta, she was at her house in Bogota. It was mid-July, and Bogota was going through a series of lockdowns implemented by the Colombian government to prevent the spread of COVID-19. When Marta picked up the phone, I could hear the sounds of a toddler demanding his mom’s attention and silverware being washed, then the sounds of toys being dropped and picked up, accompanied by noises a toddler would make when running around in circles while playing with his toys.

Marta grew up on the Venezuelan plains. Since she was young, she had a passion for serving her community and worked with missionaries doing social work projects around eastern Venezuela. She has a degree in administration from a university in Venezuela and a certificate in social work studies, the latter completed in Bogota. Besides being a political activist supporting the Venezuelan opposition, she worked at a public university in Venezuela. After the Venezuelan government approved the 1999 Constituent National Assembly, Marta was persecuted by the Venezuelan state because she was actively pushing against some of the policies imposed by the state. The Venezuelan state expropriated her house. Years later, she was fired from her job at the university because her Facebook cover photo was a picture of Henrique Capriles, the opposition candidate in the Venezuelan presidential elections of October 2012.

In the first ten minutes of the interview, Marta remembered events she had experienced a long time ago. Marta offered many details about these events and spoke passionately without interruptions, except when her toddler wanted to show her one of their tricks. When I asked her

about more recent life events in Venezuela before migrating to Colombia, Marta slowed down, paused, waited. In 2016, Marta's husband, a Colombian citizen, lost his job and decided to return to Colombia after seventeen years. He initially went for a family reunion but decided to stay because he got a job offer in Bogota. Marta stayed home, mainly because the Venezuelan state would not issue her passport due to Marta's political ties to the opposition. Marta remembered the time she was at home in Venezuela waiting for her passport:

They [the Venezuelan regime] tried to attack my house. One day, they threw a Molotov cocktail into my house, which landed close to my gas cylinder. There, we did not have gas lines in the house but a gas cylinder. They threw another Molotov cocktail that landed on the patio of my house. So, at that point, I decided to leave.

After these events, Marta stayed put in her house, waiting for her passport that never arrived. She left and entered Colombia using a Tarjeta de Movilidad Fronteriza (TMF) (Border Mobility Card), a card given to Venezuelans to enter Colombia and transit around the border zone between Colombia and Venezuela (Migración Colombia, 2021b). At the time, the TMF allowed holders to cross the border and move around the border zone for seven days (Migración Colombia 2021b). The Colombian state discontinued the TMF (Migración Colombia 2021b), after, as Marta explained to me, a number of Venezuelans used it to enter Colombia and never returned to Venezuela. Before the Colombian state discontinued the TMF, it was an option for some Venezuelan women I spoke with, who could not obtain their passport, to enter Colombia regularly.

Marta entered with a TMF and decided to stay in Colombia. Marta told me that she was ineligible to obtain a Permiso Especial de Permanencia (PEP) (Special Permit of Permanence), as she did not enter Colombia with a passport. Marta opted to apply for refugee status in Colombia. Ironically, despite being married to a Colombian citizen, she could not obtain a spouse visa as the Colombian consulate required her to have her passport to obtain it. At the time of our

interview, Marta had applied for refugee status more than one and a half years before and was still waiting for the Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores (The Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs) to follow up with her to do the necessary interviews to assess her case. She told me the Colombian state made it hard for Venezuelan asylum seekers to make a life in Colombia.

Well, I comply with the legal conditions to access refugee status. But holding refugee status affects me. First of all, when the first *salvoconductos* arrived, there was a condition saying I couldn't work because Colombian law stipulates that people in the process of applying for refugee status [asylum seekers] and refugees must not work. At the same time, the Colombian state doesn't guarantee any income or help [for asylum seekers and refugees] either. Before, people in the process of applying for refugee status could not access healthcare services in Colombia. Now, with the last two modifications, asylum seekers and refugees can access healthcare emergency services. So, it is complex because I am regular in quotes because I have a temporary status [SC-2 *salvoconducto*] while they evaluate my chances of being recognized as a refugee.

Despite her inability to work due to her migration status, Marta cleaned houses in Bogota before the COVID-19 lockdown went into effect. She was waiting for the lockdown to pass to continue working informal jobs.

At the time of the interview, Marta told me that refugees could work in Colombia. However, Marta told me that asylum seekers and refugees could not open a bank account in Colombia, which made it impossible for employers to hire them. Like Marta, some Venezuelan women asylum seekers and refugees cannot open a bank account and thus work in the informal sector of the labor market despite the Colombian state giving them the right to work. Marta explained to me that some banks in Colombia did not offer bank accounts to asylum seekers as they required them to have documents such as a valid passport or PEP. The unwillingness of financial institutions to provide services to asylum seekers reduced Marta's (and others in a similar situation) possibilities to exercise rights as an asylum seeker. As Shahram Khosravi (2017, 4) notes, "The withdrawal of rights or limiting access to citizenship rights—making rights available but not accessible—in migration theory, is identified as *denization*." As he explains,

“Denizens are neither citizens nor foreigners; they are included but not recognized as full members” (2017, 4). The Colombian state “includes” some Venezuelan asylum seekers and refugees by granting them refugee status, and the rights that come with it. However, like Marta, some Venezuelan asylum seekers, especially live-in domestic workers, are stuck and dubious about their job prospects in Colombia as their right to work has been inflicted by the unwillingness of financial institutions to provide them with financial services (e.g., open a bank account). It is a kind of inclusion by exclusion that keeps some Venezuelan women in a constant state of limbo, as including them means to grant them rights on paper that they cannot exercise in real life. Some continue to wait for the Colombian state to negotiate with financial institutions the provision of financial services to asylum seekers, which, as some Venezuelan women told me, has not been the case since the first phases of the Venezuelan exodus in 2015.

2.2 The deskilling of labor

Some of the Venezuelan women I spoke with were college-educated. This is because, as Marta told me, since 1870, the Venezuelan state has subsidized education for most Venezuelans. Marta’s degree in administration, certificate in social work, and many years of experience working for the education sector became worthless in Colombia. Like Marta, some Venezuelan women, including those who have PEP, have experienced the deskilling of their labor in Colombia.

El Ministerio de Educación Nacional de Colombia (The Ministry of National Education of Colombia) requires foreigners to have certain documents (e.g., citizenship card or passport, among others) to apply to have their professional credentials validated (Ministerio de Educación 2019a). This regulation around documents might exclude some professional Venezuelan

migrants who are unable to submit their application for consideration as some of them might not have the right documents. However, some Venezuelan women who had a passport and PEP told me that they were unable to submit their applications because El Ministerio del Poder Popular para Relaciones Exteriores (MPPRE) (The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela Ministry of Popular Power for Foreign Affairs) either refused to book appointments or overcharged some Venezuelans wanting to apostille their diplomas. This is the case of Elbia, a Venezuelan lawyer, who wanted to work as a lawyer in Colombia, but learned that she had to take some university courses to have her diploma validated in Colombia. She spent her savings going back to university to take the courses, but she found there were many more challenges to working as a lawyer in Colombia:

I encountered many challenges when I tried to validate my title before the Colombian Ministry of Education. It has been one and a half years since I finished taking the courses here, and I have not been able to submit all the documents to the Ministry of Education. They require me to certify and apostille my university transcripts from Venezuela, but that is very complex to do in Venezuela because they do not want to book an appointment for me and when they do, they want to overcharge me to do the paperwork and I do not have the money to pay for that. So, that has slowed down the process. However, I have friends who have managed to submit their documents, but they have not heard back from the Ministry of Education. They told me the Ministry of Education had many requests and they take a long time to verify all your information.

At the time of the interview, Elbia was still waiting for the MPPRE to book an appointment for her. She shared her experience in Colombia:

It was hard not being able to work despite all the experience I had. I believed that anyone would want to hire me, and that was not the case. They [employers] always told me that I was overqualified. They always told me that I had to validate my diploma. After six months in Bogota, I started making desserts and I would sell them in some restaurants and some fairs. However, that did not give me the necessary income to support my family in Venezuela and myself in Colombia.

As Collyer and King (2014, 196) note, “States . . . not only discipline populations of nationals and foreigners resident on their own territory but also exert a degree of control over populations

living elsewhere.” In the context of Venezuela, the influence that the Venezuelan state has on some Venezuelan women residing in Colombia transcends Venezuela’s physical borders. For example, the Venezuelan state has significantly contributed to deskilling some Venezuelan women in Colombia by inflating the prices of paperwork and making it almost impossible to apostille university transcripts in Venezuela. Moreover, as Elbia’s story shows us, the Venezuelan state has made it extremely challenging for some Venezuelans to obtain passports, which makes it difficult for some Venezuelan women to obtain PEP in Colombia and thereby diminishes their possibilities of validating their professional credentials in Colombia. As Collyer and King (2014, 199) have noted, “Attempts by state institutions to influence or coerce behaviour within spaces beyond recognized state boundaries alter the meanings of those spaces.” A number of Venezuelan women thought that migrating to Colombia was one way to escape from the repression of the Venezuelan state; however, some of them continued to be heavily repressed by it in Colombia. In many instances, they realized the long waits they had to endure in Colombia and their labor (im)mobility were significantly caused and maintained by the Venezuelan state, even when they were not in Venezuela anymore. In other words, the ever-presence of the Venezuelan state in their daily lives made them rework the hopes and expectations they had when they first migrated to Colombia. At the same time, the Colombian state has also contributed to the deskilling of labor of some Venezuelan women by being unwilling to amend the regulations around the validation of professional credentials. Therefore, both the Colombian and Venezuelan states have heavily contributed to structuring the long waits and challenges that some Venezuelan women experience around the validation of their professional credentials and thus their labor (im)mobility. As Marta’s story shows us, some Colombian and Venezuelan state regulations have heightened the challenges that some

Venezuelan women face as their status makes them ineligible to apply to validate their professional credentials in Colombia.

Aware of the structures created by the Venezuelan and Colombian states to make it almost impossible for some Venezuelan women to validate their credentials in Colombia, some Colombian employers take advantage of these structures to mistreat Venezuelan women workers. For example, before migrating to Bogota in 2018, Raquel was a head nurse in two hospitals in Merida, Venezuela. She entered Colombia with a passport and later applied to obtain a PEP. However, having PEP did not mean much for Raquel in terms of her ability to validate her professional credentials and thus work as a head nurse in Colombia:

I got a job at a nursing home here in Bogota. I worked there only for two months because I am a health professional, but I do not have the papers that are required to exercise [nursery]. Therefore, I had an illegal contract. So, they told me that I had to work at night and every night, and they only paid me 25,000 Colombian pesos [7.20 dollars]. I was in charge of fourteen elders. I had ten elders to bathe, and they were all bedridden. Then, there came a time when I got sick. I had high blood pressure and could not work at night and they fired me. They did not pay me for a month's work.

Unable to find another job and sickened by strenuous long night shifts, Raquel was in limbo for some time, waiting for the Colombian state to loosen the regulations around the validation of foreign professional credentials and for the Venezuelan state to book her an appointment to apostille her university transcripts. Raquel accepted an informal job caring for an elderly woman in Bogota because she knew that working as a head nurse in Colombia was going to be a long wait. As Javier Auyero (2012, 4) notes, "Domination works . . . through yielding to the power of others; and it is experienced as a waiting time: waiting hopefully and then frustratedly for others to make decisions, and in effect surrendering to the authority of others." Raquel's waiting for the Colombian state to change the regulations around the validation of foreign professional credentials renders visible this domination.

Raquel's constant waiting is a reminder of the place she occupies within the nation-state, one that is precarious and subordinated. For a long time, she remained hopeful that the regulations around the validation of credentials would change; however, it has been six months since our interview, and the Colombian state has not changed these regulations. As Bourdieu (2000, 228) writes, "The art of . . . delaying without destroying hope, of adjourning without totally disappointing, which would have the effect of killing the waiting itself, is an integral part of the exercise of power." Raquel continues to hope that regulations would change one day. Meanwhile, she continues to work informal jobs that offer little to no guarantees.

The long waits experienced by some Venezuelan women are sustained through, as Bourdieu (1998) writes, "the creation of a generalized and permanent state of insecurity" (85), which is reproduced by creating instances where they have to endure uncertainty and long waits. As Raquel told me, some Venezuelan women do not know their rights as migrants when they arrive in Colombia. Some women explained to me that this is largely because some Venezuelan women do not have access to information about their rights when they come to Colombia. Lack of access to information about migrant rights has created liminal spaces, characterized by much uncertainty, insecurity, and yearning as the next story illustrates.

2.3 Working as live-in maids

Before migrating to Bogota, Luisa worked for a diplomat in Merida, Venezuela. She decided to migrate to Bogota because she lost her job in Merida and could no longer support her family. Unlike some Venezuelan women, Luisa managed to obtain PEP and worked as a live-in maid in Bogota. When she accepted the job as a live-in maid, she did not know the domestic work laws in Colombian and trusted her employer. Luisa's employer deducted 50 percent of

Luisa's wage for some months. Luisa's employer told her that Colombian laws around domestic work allowed employers to take 50 percent of employee's wages to cover room and board expenses. Although Luisa had PEP, she earned significantly less than the minimum wage in Colombia. She stayed put in the house for three months despite her employer's maltreatment. Luisa obtained another job as a live-in maid and accepted it hoping that it would be different to her last experience. However, Luisa's employer also deducted her 50 percent from her wage. When I asked Luisa why she did not leave the house immediately, she told me that she did not have many options at that moment and preferred to wait a bit more to save more money to bring her children from Merida. Luisa's employer also threatened Luisa to deduct 30 percent more from her wage if she left the house to bring her daughters from Merida.

According to Daniela Cherubini et al. (2019, 240), "Around 681,000 people were employed as domestic workers in Colombia in 2017." Martha Morales (2014) wrote an article for *Portafolio* titled "Solo 1 de cada 100 empleadas domésticas tiene contrato" (Only 1 out of 100 domestic workers has a contract). As Luisa's story shows us, lacking formal contracts in the domestic work sector in Colombia put domestic workers in vulnerable positions and thereby more prompted to labor abuse. This is the case despite Ley 1595 de 2012³ and Decreto 2616 de

³ "Por medio de la cual se aprueba el 'Convenio sobre el Trabajo Decente para las Trabajadoras y los Trabajadores Domésticos, 2011 (número 189)', adoptado en Ginebra, Confederación Suiza, en la 100ª reunión de la Conferencia Internacional del Trabajo, el 16 de junio de 2011" (Ley 1595 de 2012, 2012). (Through Law 1595 of 2012, Convention on Decent Work for Domestic Workers, 2011 (number 189) is approved, adopted in Geneva, Swiss Confederation, at the 100th meeting of the International Labor Conference, on June 16, 2011).

2013⁴ around domestic workers in Colombia, which offer some degree of protection to domestic workers in Colombia. In his ethnographic work in Medellin, Peter Wade (2013, 187) noted that “‘Domestic service’ operates as an articulation of race, class, gender and age.” He found an “over-representation of black women in the domestic service sector of Medellin, which was mainly staffed by non-black women” (2013, 191). Like Luisa, a number of my participants decided to work in the domestic service in Colombia, but not having formal contracts and not knowing their rights as domestic workers made them more vulnerable to labor abuse.

I told her (Luisa’s second employer) that my goal was to bring my daughters because I heard rumors that they [the Venezuelan state] could take them away and those kinds of things. So, the lady told me that if I left the house, she would deduct 30 percent [more of her wage]. Even though I have PEP, my employer doesn’t pay me Christmas bonuses or vacation pay. I later found out that Colombian laws around domestic work are different. What happens is that Venezuelan women arrived in Colombia, right? They do not know Colombian laws around domestic work. They do not know how to defend themselves. So, many people [employers] take advantage of that.

As Shahram Khosravi (2017, 81, 82) notes, “When liminality is turned into a protracted waiting, the very structure of social life is temporarily suspended.” For Luisa, life was on hold in the sense that she had to stay put in her employer’s house despite knowing that her rights were being

⁴ “‘Por medio del cual se regula la cotización a seguridad social para trabajadores dependientes que laboran por períodos inferiores a un mes, se desarrolla el mecanismo financiero y operativo de que trata el artículo 172 de la Ley 1450 de 2011 y se dictan disposiciones tendientes a lograr la formalización laboral de los trabajadores informales’” (Decreto 2616 de 2013, 2013).

(Through Decree 2616 of 2013, the social security contribution for independent workers who work for periods of less than a month is regulated, the operational and financial mechanism in article 172 of Law 1450 of 2011 is developed and provisions are issued to formalize informal workers).

violated (e.g., her employer deducted large portions of her wage), which meant that she had to work and (wait) longer to save enough money to bring her children to Colombia, thus delaying the time of family reunification. Luisa experienced limbo and much uncertainty around when she was going to see her children again. Luisa used to communicate with her children a couple of times a week, but the constant power outages in Merida made it difficult for her to maintain uninterrupted conversations with her children. Luisa also felt lonely and impatient in Bogota, especially when she found out that her family members in Merida, Venezuela were not treating her children well. As Rachel Parreñas (2000, 575) notes, “Emotional strains of transnational family life include feelings of loss, guilt, and loneliness for the mothers and daughters working as domestics in other countries.” Luisa’s loneliness was exacerbated by the fact that taking care of her employer’s home occupied much of her time, and thus she did not have time to have a social life in Bogota. Despite knowing that Luisa’s work enabled her employer to have a life of their own, they did not include Luisa in their family. Luisa had to eat on her own because her employers never accepted her at the dinner table. Luisa’s challenges in her employer’s house were largely invisibilized by the frequent absence of the Colombian state, which largely contributed to structuring the waiting, abuse, and seclusion that she experienced while working as a live-in maid in Bogota.

2.4 Health care, medical spaces, and “undocumentedness”

“La salud no tiene pasaporte, todos los migrantes tienen derecho a ella” (*Semana* 2018). (Access to health care does not have a passport, all migrants have the right to it) reads an article published by *Semana*, one of the most widely read magazines in Colombia. By looking at the title of the article, the reader can infer that Venezuelan migrants without passport can rest

assured that they will have access to health care if needed. However, as Anita and Raquel's stories illustrate, in many instances, access to health care is discretionary for some Venezuelan women. Moreover, their stories illustrate the ways the Colombian state has, at times, transformed medical spaces into spaces of waiting, which highlight the "undocumentedness" of some Venezuelan women.

When I interviewed Anita, she and her husband, Jose, waited for a long time to access health care in Maracay, Venezuela before they migrated to Bogota. Anita shared memories from their lives in Venezuela:

My husband was retired. We had our minibus, some money, everything. My husband had an unexpected hypertensive crisis [high blood pressure]. It [the hypertensive crisis] took its toll on his brain, causing him to develop Parkinson's disease. He experienced a micro stroke, which caused him Parkinson's disease. When that happened, the situation in the country was not that complicated. We could visit the neurologist; we could buy the medicines to treat his disease and so on. By 2018, the medicines to treat his disease had run out. They were no longer available. Jose reached a critical state: he couldn't do anything, he couldn't sleep, he couldn't eat, he couldn't go to the washroom on his own.

For several months, Anita would venture around pharmacies in Maracay, stand in line for several hours and return home with empty hands. Moreover, as Anita told me, the Venezuelan state promised to provide medicines for those who needed them the most, which made Anita hopeful about Jose's Parkinson's disease. She remembered:

As you can imagine, back then [in Maracay], I couldn't find any medicines, nothing. The medicine that my husband takes for his Parkinson's disease, carbidopa-levodopa, is imported. They always brought it from overseas to Venezuela. And then, you know that the United States cut ties with Venezuela. The treatment no longer arrived in [Maracay], those pills no longer arrived. The government [Venezuelan government] said it was going to provide medicines to people who needed the most. But the medicines came every four to five months, and patients [like Jose] need medicines every day and several times a day. So, we couldn't wait for that, we couldn't. And if we got something [medicines], they were priced in dollars. And we no longer had enough money, not even spending all the money that was deposited on my husband's bank account for his military pension. Suppose that we could have bought a box of pills, but what about the other expenses like food? So, we couldn't, we couldn't. My husband takes four boxes of that medicines per month.

Anita and Jose stayed put for several months waiting for the Venezuelan state to bring the medicine. However, Ana, their daughter, could not wait longer and migrated to Bogota. Even though I did not speak with Ana about her life the first days after she arrived in Bogota, Anita told me that she never imagined that her daughter would have to sleep in the street for some time. Despite being college-educated in Venezuela, Ana could not find work in the formal sector of the economy and resorted to selling candy on public transportation. Over several months of selling candy, Ana managed to save \$200.000 Colombia pesos (54 dollars) to buy two bus tickets to bring her parents to Bogota.

Anita and Jose arrived in Bogota on December 22, 2019. They took several buses over thousands of kilometers, from Maracay to Bogota; not an easy task. Anita described their journey as an odyssey:

You can imagine, my husband was sick, he couldn't move so that I had to carry him, help him move from one side to the other so he could rest his body. I also had to take care of my nephew, who was four or five back then. He sat on my lap all the journey. I could feel the heat coming from underneath the bus [the engine]. It was horrible. When we bought the bus tickets to come to Bogota, the bus company lied to us. When we left [for Bogota], we were on a good bus, and hours later, they parked the bus at a terminal and made us wait the whole night inside the bus. The next morning, they transferred us to another bus, simpler and uncomfortable.

Upon their arrival to Bogota, Anita learned that the medicine to treat Jose was available but was extremely expensive. She could not get a job despite having more than eight years of experience working in the transportation sector; hence she decided to join Ana selling candy on public transportation.

Unlike some Venezuelan border crossers, Anita and Jose crossed the Simon Bolivar International Bridge with passports and thus were eligible to apply to obtain PEP. Some of my participants said that PEP holders can work in the formal sector of the labor market, open a bank

account, and access health care services. However, Anita and Jose told me that they did not have access to health care as most workers in Colombia get health care benefits through their employers or purchase private health care plans. Anita and Jose did not have jobs in the formal sector of the labor market and thereby could only access emergency care. Buying a private health care plan was impossible for Anita and Jose, as they did not have stable jobs and health care plans can be expensive in Colombia.

Some Venezuelan women I spoke to tried to access health care benefits through a social program called Sistema de Selección de Beneficiarios Para Programas Sociales (SISBEN) (Selection System for Beneficiaries of Social Programs). Anita explained that after applying for SISBEN, a government official visited her house and decided whether she deserved to become a beneficiary of SISBEN based on what they saw around her house. Although there is little information about the criteria to become a SISBEN beneficiary, I learned from her that a higher level of education diminishes the chances of applicants to become beneficiaries. Some women I spoke to said they previously had professional careers. Unaware of the criteria set by the Colombian state to become a SISBEN beneficiary, some Venezuelans are honest about their level of education during these visits despite the fact that their professional credentials are invalid in Colombia unless they go through the long and elaborate process of validating them. Moreover, among some Colombians, SISBEN has long had a reputation of being a discretionary system. For example, I met people whose economic condition was precarious enough to become SISBEN beneficiaries; however, they were denied the benefits because government officials deemed that having a TV and a washing machine in their homes made them ineligible to obtain SISBEN benefits. At the time, Anita told me that having a PEP allowed her family to visit the emergency room if needed, but Jose could not make an appointment to have a neurologist check

on his Parkinson's disease. For other Venezuelan women, access to health care services in Colombia was discretionary, as the next story illustrates.

Before coming to Bogota, Mariana lived in Caracas and had a small food business, which she had to close down. She dwelt on the past for some time:

My business was successful and what happened is that my partner never wanted to buy a payment terminal so that people could pay with card. Then, the bolívar soberano [the local currency] was so scarce. So, I couldn't sell the food because there was no cash available. I had to have a payment terminal so that they [clients] could pay me using their cards. That is what bankrupted the business. Many times, I kept all the merchandise because people did not have cash.

Mariana explained that when she came to Colombia, she was ineligible to obtain PEP as she entered Colombia via "*la trocha*" (irregular crossings). She tried to obtain a passport before coming to Bogota but learned that she had to pay about 200 dollars to get one, the equivalent of several monthly wages in Venezuela. She narrated the story of when she became sick in Bogota and could not access health care services, mainly because she was undocumented:

"I am illegal here. I entered [Colombia] via "*la trocha*." I do not have PEP or EPS [Entidad Promotora de Salud], nothing. Here, I worked at a nightclub, but I lost my job because of the pandemic. One day, I was selling coffee in Corabastos [the biggest food market in Bogota], I started to feel pain. I thought it was cystitis due to holding the urge to pee. The pain did not cease in the days after, and I decided to go to the hospital, but they did not give me medical assistance because I did not have PEP. I returned home, but I could not endure more pain. So, a friend of mine lent me some money to see a private doctor. When I went to see the doctor, he told me that my condition would not be healed with antibiotics or painkillers. He told me that I needed surgery right away and gave me a requisition to the Kennedy Hospital for surgery.

Mariana's friend took her to the hospital. There, Mariana had to wait for two days for a social worker to assess her case before surgery. The social worker questioned Mariana about her migration status for a long time and finally figured out her situation. After surgery, the doctor told Mariana to follow-up with some exams to make sure her kidney function was re-established,

but Mariana's inability to access health care services made her recovery challenging. She could not afford to pay for the follow-up exams as she had lost her job at the nightclub to COVID-19.

Like Mariana, for some undocumented Venezuelans, access to health care is discretionary despite a law (Ley 1751 de 2015)⁵ that grants access to health care to everyone in Colombia. Mariana's rejection at the hospital the first time she tried to get medical assistance and waiting two days to get surgery illustrates the ways the Colombian state has, in some instances, used medical spaces to exclude some Venezuelan women. Medical spaces are then revelatory of the ways the Colombian state largely structures the subordination and precarity around health care that some Venezuelan women endure in Colombia. These medical spaces, as Mariana's story illustrates, often highlight the "undocumentedness" of some Venezuelan women in Colombia as they need to wait for extended periods of time before they receive medical care and are extensively questioned by social workers about their irregular status in Colombia.

Mariana told me that she was hoping to apply for refugee status to increase her chances of gaining access to health care services and thus treat her condition. However, she felt torn about filling out the application for refugee status. She explained to me that while applying for a refugee status would increase her chances of gaining some welfare benefits, it would also prevent her for some time from returning to Venezuela to be with her child.

The current pandemic is a site where the workings of the Colombian state to make some Venezuelan women precarious and sick are quite visible. In December 2020, I read an article

⁵ "Por medio de la cual se regula el derecho fundamental a la salud y se dictan otras disposiciones" (Ley 1751 de 2015, 2015). (Through Law 1751 of 2015, the fundamental right to health is regulated and other provisions are dictated).

titled “Iván Duque: migrantes que no estén regularizados no tendrán vacuna contra coronavirus” (*El Espectador* 2020). (Iván Duque: irregular migrants will not have access to the vaccine against coronavirus). This announcement by Colombian President Iván Duque is expected to exacerbate many of the challenges that some irregular Venezuelan women endure every day, including their ability to make a living in the informal sector of the economy without experiencing discrimination and social stigma, their ability to visit their children and family in Venezuela without the risk of falling ill during their journeys, and the distress that some of them might experience in the face of contracting COVID-19 with a somewhat discretionary health care system. In this vein, the discrimination that some Venezuelan women experience while waiting is likely to increase (without access to the COVID-19 vaccine), thereby precipitating more insecurity and uncertainty in their lives. Ultimately, excluding undocumented Venezuelans from the COVID-19 vaccine renders visible the workings of the Colombian state to racialize some migrant Venezuelan women, exacerbating their precarity, subordination, and uncertainty.

2.5 Conclusion: Exclusive regularization

These stories illustrate the ways the Colombian and Venezuelan states structure the marginalization and precarity that some Venezuelan migrants experience, and points to the flaws of some Colombian migration policies that seemingly pretend to help Venezuelan migrants in Colombia. In particular, these stories point to the exclusive and performative nature of some Colombian migration policies, which structure the precarity and insecurity that some undocumented Venezuelans, who cannot access documents in their country, endure in Colombia. As some of the previous stories illustrated, this insecurity and precarity are lived during periods of waiting, which constitute a form of “slow violence” (Nixon 2011, 2) that comes from some

exclusive migration policies. Because a number of Venezuelan women with whom I spoke experienced this insecurity and precarity in private places—employer’s home in Luisa’s case—the periods of waiting they endure every day are typically unseen by society. Moreover, as a number of domestic workers commented, the frequent absence of the Colombian state from these private places in terms of ensuring that the rights of domestic workers are protected enables employees to take advantage of some domestic workers who often do not know their employee rights. For some Venezuelan women, this absence of the state also means that their lives are put on hold or suspended as they are confined to places where it is difficult to exercise their rights.

As much as the Colombian state has purportedly facilitated the regularization of some Venezuelan migrants, some Venezuelan women who decide to work as domestic workers encounter many challenges around domestic work. Like Luisa, some Venezuelan women domestic workers do not know their employee rights, which heightens the precarity that some of them experience in their workplaces in Colombia. The stories in this chapter make visible three important aspects that some Venezuelan migrant women experience. Firstly, while Venezuelan refugee women have the right to work in the formal sector of the labor market, their inability to access financial services—imperative to work in the formal economy—make their prospects of working in the formal sector of the labor market null. Secondly, because it is difficult for some Venezuelan women to validate their professional credentials, the deskilling of their labor is ineluctable, which further makes their labor prospects bleak and precarious. And thirdly, the Colombian state uses medical spaces to enact forms of governance that enhance the “undocumentedness” of some Venezuelan women while making them sick. This “undocumentedness” is evoked by making those without the required documents underserving of

medical care and medical benefits (e.g., negating access to the COVID-19 vaccine) and thus rendering them more precarious in the labor market and subject to state subordination.

While Raquel and Mariana may manage to obtain a regular legal status and aspire to exercise their profession in the formal sector of the economy, such aspirations are deeply disrupted by the long and expensive process of validating their professional credentials in Colombia. They continue to work informal jobs, waiting hopefully for the state to change the regulations around the validation of their professional credentials. Raquel and Mariana's stories invite us to observe the ways the Colombian state has made "waiting into a social system" (Hage 2009, 2) to exercise domination over some Venezuelan migrant workers' (im)mobilities and aspirations, making their everyday lives precarious and invisible.

Those who shared their stories make clear that in order to understand the precarity of some Venezuelan women's lives, it is necessary to pause and contemplate the temporality of waiting that they experience every day. Overlooking this temporality of waiting and focusing on a temporality that portrays some Venezuelan women as being "on the move" not only overshadows the everyday "slow violence" (Nixon 2011, 2) enacted on them but also keeps invisible the non-conventional relationships to waiting that they develop when their lives are put on hold, which will be explored in the next chapter in the context of family separation.

Chapter 3: Family Separation

In their last two days together, Bernarda woke up to the sobbing of her children, Daniela and Valeria. They would cling to Bernarda's arms and would ask her not to leave them alone. 17-year-old Angel was in shock and would not communicate much with Bernarda. He thought that Bernarda was abandoning the family forever. During our interview, Bernarda remembered the time when she decided to migrate to Colombia and leave her children at home:

It was a very hard decision because I was leaving four underage girls and a 17-year-old boy home alone. We had never separated, and it was very difficult. The days before my departure, I talked to my children, and told them that I wanted them to behave well and to support each other. I specially asked the older one to take care of his sisters. The day I left [March 17, 2018], I woke up early, went downstairs with my children. It was 4:00 AM in the morning. I was scared because I didn't know where I was going because it was the first time in my life that I was going to migrate, and I didn't know what awaited me in Colombia. We hugged. We cried together. Then, a friend picked me up and drove me to the border, where I crossed to Colombia. I later found a job as a live-in domestic worker in Bogota.

In summer 2020, I read some media outlets about the effects of COVID-19 on the Venezuelan exodus. In these media outlets, I saw photographs that captured some Venezuelan mothers with their children walking back to Venezuela in the middle of city lockdowns. These photographs seemed to continue reproducing "on the move" narratives around the migration of some Venezuelan women. While these photographs accurately represented the reality of some Venezuelan mothers, they focused on representing their (im)mobilities spatially rather than temporally. In this sense, directing all our attention to them precludes us from seeing the trauma of family separation and other than "on the move" experiences, which some other Venezuelan mothers and their children endure when they are separated from each other for many years. Perhaps expanding the analysis beyond the spatial and including the temporal dimensions of their (im)mobilities is one way to begin the work of making visible what "on the move" narratives largely conceal. That is to say, including the temporal dimensions reveals the

complexities of family separation and other often unnoticed temporalities that some Venezuelan women inhabit, ones filled with several stories and other “embodied experiences of time” (Collins 2021, 622). Excavating other than “on the move” narratives reveals that the Venezuelan and Colombian states contribute to structuring some of the temporalities that some Venezuelan mothers and their children inhabit. In this sense, thinking about the ways family relations are reorganized after family separation within and beyond spatial frames of analysis shows us that “the temporal dynamics of the family are also reconstituted, as members rework and reimagine their familial relationships across different temporalities, negotiating the rhythms and tempo of everyday family life from afar” (Acedera and Yeoh 2019, 252). In other words, the stories in this chapter show us that “the disciplining nature of the state constructs and constrains migrant biographies and trajectories of belonging” (Robertson 2014, 1929) by creating instances of waiting that some Venezuelan families experience. Ultimately, the Venezuelan and Colombian states largely (re)structure family by structuring experiences of time: disrupting transnational communication, structuring difficulties around education for some undocumented Venezuelan children in Colombia, and thereby delaying the time of reunification.

This chapter is an invitation to observe the ways the state largely structures family separation, which prompts some Venezuelan women to engage in multiple temporalities at once and reconstitute their relationship to the temporality of waiting. By multiple temporalities, I mean that, in many instances, Venezuelan women attend discrepant life rhythms, in Colombia and Venezuela. They wait and move at the same time. For instance, those women working in Colombia and with children in Venezuela wait for the time of reunification with their children at the same time they creatively “move” to find jobs to support their children. The first section of this chapter illustrates to how the challenges of inhabiting multiple temporalities (e.g., working

in Colombia while doing transnational mothering) are exacerbated by power-laden transnational communication between mothers and their children. The main argument of this chapter is that transnational communication between Venezuelan mothers and their children is embedded in relations of power largely dominated by the Venezuelan state and Venezuelan mothers' extended family in Venezuela. As the stories show us, during the time of family separation, Venezuelan mothers use the phone, at times readily (in)accessible to their children, to inhabit multiple temporalities both in Colombia and Venezuela. The phone reveals that transnational communication between Venezuelan mothers and their children is power-laden and is revelatory of the ways the state and the extended family make mothers inhabit multiple temporalities. In this sense, as the stories show us, while communication through the phone enables "time-space compression" (Harvey 1990, 284), it is largely controlled by the Venezuelan state, which disrupts communication and thus exacerbates the challenges of doing transnational motherhood.

My argument builds on the work of feminist geographer Geraldine Pratt (2012), whose work with Filipino women who come to Canada through the Live-In Care Program (LCP) reveals the geographies of family separation, largely structured by the Canadian state. More specifically, her work centers the voices of Filipino women whose stories render visible the challenges that some Filipino women and their children experience around transnational communication, which "is often infrequent, and inevitably fragmented and stripped of the sensuality of day-to-day, face-to-face, embodied contact" (2012, 70).

The use of the phone to continue nurturing their children from a distance shows us that even though some Venezuelan mothers are constantly waiting for the time of reunification, they continue to assume their mothering roles while waiting. Put differently, they use the phone to do the work of transnational mothering while they wait. Transnational mothering is then a form of

active waiting: while Venezuelan women wait for the time of reunification, they actively “move” to overcome the obstacles to work in Colombia to financially and affectively support their children in Venezuela. In this sense, the substantial control of the Venezuelan state over the communications infrastructure disrupts the attempts of some Venezuelan mothers to recreate intimate relations with their children and their possibilities to inhabit the temporality of transnational mothering without constant ruptures. The second section centers the stories of two Venezuelan women to highlight the ways their aspirations for a better education for their children delay the time of family reunification and thus lengthen the time they have to inhabit multiple temporalities. As their stories show, policies around education for migrant children in Colombia make some Venezuelan mothers’ lives precarious, who find that reuniting with their children and wanting a better education for them are, at times, discrepant aspirations. Moreover, as some of the stories show us, some regulations around education for undocumented children in Colombia not only delay the time of reunification, but also diminish some Venezuelan children’s aspirations to study at the university level after they graduate from high school in Colombia. Ultimately, their stories show us the ways some regulations around education for undocumented Venezuelan children exacerbate the challenges that some Venezuelan women endure while inhabiting multiple temporalities.

The last section shows the ways the “lost time” between the time of separation and the time of reunification makes some Venezuelan mothers develop a particular relationship to the temporality of waiting. As I will explain, at the time of the reunification, some Venezuelan women wait to travel to the past to recover and recreate the time that they lost with their children during their childhood. However, as some stories will show us, their hopes—which translate to waiting—to travel to past times end up bringing to the present the traumas that their children

experienced as a result of the separation, which causes many conflicts and, in many instances, dislocates their families. In other words, their aspiration to travel to past times at the time of reunification seldom brings the “good” moments of their children’s childhood but rather brings about traumatic episodes that their children experienced during the time of separation.

3.1 Transnational motherhood over the phone

When Bernarda left for Colombia, she got a job as a live-in domestic worker. There, she encountered different life rhythms to the ones she was used to in Venezuela. She was no longer waking up to help her children get ready for school. Instead, she would wake up at 5:30 AM to make breakfast for the host family and then would spend almost all-day doing chores around the house. It was hard to get a hold of her children when they were available in the afternoon because she would have to take care of the host family after they returned from work. Sometimes she had some time to chat late in the evening, but it would be too late for her children. This meant that she sporadically communicated with her children in Caracas. Another complication around communication with her children was that she had a phone and internet connection in Bogota, but her children had neither a phone nor a stable internet connection in Caracas. As she remembered:

I used to ask my neighbor [in Caracas] if my children could use her phone for some time. I used to buy her [neighbor] data because Wi-Fi in Venezuela is not as common as it is here [in Bogota]; only people with money can afford it. We could not video call because video calls consumed more data. We made voice calls for fifteen or twenty minutes, but the [internet] connection was not good. So, we communicated via voice clips. They’d ask me when I was going to return. They’d also tell me that they didn’t want to be alone in the house and that the money I sent them wasn’t enough to buy what they needed. They’d tell me how much they missed me. Communication [with them] also depended on the mood of my neighbor. If she was having a good day, then she would agree to lend her phone to my children, otherwise I could not communicate with them at all.

After two months of working as a live-in domestic worker in Bogota, Bernarda managed to buy her children a phone in Venezuela, which she could not have done before leaving Caracas as the cheapest phone cost several times the minimum wage in Venezuela at the time of the interview.

Bernarda's investment in a phone allowed her to talk to her children more frequently. As Valentine (2006, 369) has noted, "the Internet provides a new space for maintaining intimacy." However, the work of feminist geographer Geraldine Pratt (2012) is helpful here as it cautions us against romanticizing transitional mothering as "to do so would be to ignore the economic constraints of the women who migrate . . . and gloss the fact of separation" (49). This is the case of some Venezuelan women I spoke to, who did not have the financial means to buy their children a phone and an internet plan before migrating to Colombia. Bernarda's investment in a phone improved the communication with her children; however, she told me that the constant electric and internet interruptions in Venezuela made it complicated to have uninterrupted conversations with her children. As I learned from Bernarda, some Venezuelan women experience these interruptions because the Venezuelan state has not update the communications infrastructure in the country in many years and only a small part of the population can afford to pay the high price of a fast speed internet connection. These interruptions decontextualized and dislocated Bernarda's conversations with their children.

For example, unable to make video calls with their children, Bernarda would send voice clips to them, hoping to learn about their daily lives in Venezuela, but her children would rarely address her questions. Instead, her children would share pieces of their lives at different times during the day, which made it hard to have an uninterrupted conversation with them. In fact, Bernarda did not realize that her children were having a hard time in school until two months into her contract when they told her that they had failed the school year. 17-year-old Angel told

Bernarda that it was pointless to keep studying as having a high school diploma in Venezuela was worthless. Ultimately, a few months later, Bernarda's children dropped out of school. When I asked Bernarda what she thought went wrong, she stopped and sighed.

Their [Bernarda's children] behaviour changed because they didn't have a maternal figure at home. The girls started to feel lonely and started to leave the house more often, being more rebellious. Also, there were people in the building who told them that I had abandoned them, and they thought that it was actually true. They felt lonely and we lost a lot of time together. The girls failed the school year. Bernarda's oldest child, Angel, failed the school year too as he couldn't go to school because he needed to stay home to take care of his sisters. There came a time when I'd call them, before the Venezuelan state took them away, but they didn't care about my calls anymore. Do you get me? They didn't want to talk to me. They didn't know what to say to me. I mean, the connection we had was lost. Then, I realized that the situation was getting worse.

As Pratt (2012, 54) explains in the context of communication between Filipino women and their children, "Phone calls are always finite in time, and they do a poor job of communicating context and producing nonlinguistic, sensate, bodily forms of meaning." Interrupted calls led Bernarda and her children to have decontextualized conversations, ultimately causing her children to lose interest in talking to her. Even though Bernarda's neighbors blamed her for her children's loss of motivation, their loss cannot be attributed to Bernarda's decision to migrate. Rather, as Geraldine Pratt (2012, 55) suggests, "The forms of communication available to most mothers who attempt to care at a distance . . . are all of necessity disembodied, decontextualized, and partial." In other words, the communication disruptions Bernarda was already experiencing due to the outdated communication infrastructure in Venezuela were exacerbated by the lack of face-to-face conversations.

The work of Eva Illouz (2007) around virtual communication provides insights into some of the challenges that some Venezuelan mothers experience when they do the work of transnational motherhood. As Illouz (2007) notes, "The internet provides the kind of knowledge which, because it is disembedded and disconnected from a contextual and practical knowledge of

the other person, cannot be used to make sense of the person as a whole” (2007, 104). Rather than live or create experiences together, the internet provided a space for Bernarda and her children to “catch up.” In other words, the disconnection that Bernarda’s children manifested might have come from their dissatisfaction with “retelling” their lives over the phone rather than having face-to-face experiences.

Bernarda’s children started to leave their home more often, and their neighbors alerted the authorities in Venezuela about their suspicion that Bernarda’s children were living alone in their home. The Venezuelan state came to Bernarda’s home in Caracas and took custody of her children as they deemed Bernarda’s absence an act of abandonment because all her children were underage. They were put in a state children’s home, which caused Bernarda to develop much anxiety in Bogota. She could not communicate with them for many days and was unable to make it back to Venezuela right away. She developed anxiety around her ability to regain the custody of her children and barely managed to attend to her Colombian employers’ daily demands. Moreover, Bernarda’s employers threatened to deduct eighty percent of her salary if she left the house to bring her children to Bogota. She ended up leaving her employer’s home and managed to return to Caracas within days and regained custody of her children after being interviewed by a state psychologist.

Since Bernarda’s husband had abandoned the family before she migrated to Colombia, she was constantly preoccupied with mothering from a distance while being the breadwinner of the house. As Rhacel Parreñas (2008) suggests, “Women’s migration has not reconstituted the division of labor in the family in favor of a more equitable distribution of care work between men and women” (62, 63). Bernarda then had to face the criticisms of her mother and neighbors for leaving her children unattended at home, accusing her of abandonment. However, Bernarda’s

migration to Colombia was far from being an act of abandonment. Rather than being an act of abandonment, her decision to migrate to Colombia meant that she had to inhabit multiple temporalities at once: breadwinning and mothering her children from a distance, waiting for the time of reunification, and attending to the daily rhythms of being a live-in domestic worker in Colombia. For Bernarda, mothering from a distance was about waiting and moving at the same time.

As Parreñas (2005, 323) notes, Filipino migrant women “not only reconstitute mothering by providing acts of care from afar, but also often do so by overcompensating for their physical absence.” Bernarda expressed that being a live-in domestic worker in Colombia created a discrepancy with the temporality of her children in Venezuela, which she tried to inhabit by calling them frequently but encountered many challenges due to the reluctance of the Venezuelan state to update the communication infrastructure.

After some Venezuelan mothers migrate to Colombia, older siblings and grandmothers tend to take care of the young children in Venezuela, which unleashes conflict in their families. Unlike some Venezuelan mothers, the first time Bernarda migrated to Colombia, she decided not to leave her children with family members because she was afraid that they would retaliate against them. However, when Bernarda regained custody of her children, she decided to take them to Merida and commissioned her mother to take care of them. However, Bernarda’s mother ended up abandoning them in place.

I returned to Bogota to continue working. However, after one and half months, my sister-in-law called me on my phone and told me that my children were having a hard time and were barely being fed. There [Bernarda’s mother’s house], my mother didn’t love them. She left them outside on the street. She cut their hair so she wouldn’t have to comb their hair. She only fed them plantains with butter. They [Bernarda’s children] had to wash their clothes by hand and without soap. They experienced much psychological maltreatment; they were called names and were even beaten.

Before moving to Merida, Bernarda's children bought what they needed with the remittances that Bernarda send them from Colombia. However, after they moved to Merida, these remittances were administered by Bernarda's mother, who mismanaged them. By then, Bernarda's children had lost interest in chatting with her; thus they communicated even less than before. Bernarda's communication with her children weakened so much that it took two months for her to learn from her sister-in-law that her children were not being fed appropriately and mistreated by Bernarda's mother. Moreover, Bernarda's family members played a significant role in disrupting the communication between Bernarda and her children by obliging the children to hide important aspects of their daily lives in Venezuela.

I learned that some Venezuelan mothers would prefer to leave their children home alone than with family members. Some said that when their children were around family members, they were less communicative about their lives in Venezuela. Bernarda mentioned that past family conflicts prompted her to leave her children home alone. Like Bernarda, other Venezuelan women expressed that when their children were around family members, they communicated less about their lives in Venezuela and, in many instances, could not communicate at all. Carla, another Venezuelan mother, sometimes had a difficult time reaching out to her children, as they could not call her because family members hid the phone charger. Family members would interrupt Carla's communication with her children because they wanted to retaliate against her children for past family conflicts.

Another way that family members retaliated against Bernarda and Carla's children was to mismanage their remittances, which were often used for the family members' own benefit. In other words, as much as the phone allowed some Venezuelan mothers to inhabit the temporality of transnational motherhood, poor communication infrastructure in Venezuela and extended

family members taking care of children interrupted their communication, causing delays and desperation to some Venezuelan mothers waiting to speak with their children. The phone is then a disembodied object that channels communication between some Venezuelan mothers and their children, but it also is an object that represents delay, despair, and waiting for some Venezuelan women. For Bernarda, there would be weeks where she would (im)patiently wait for her children to call her, but when they did so the communication would constantly be interrupted, rushed, and emotionally loaded.

Poor transnational communication between mothers and children is also exacerbated by the geographical location of the mothers. For instance, even though some Venezuelan mothers living in cities like Bogota and Medellin often had stable internet connection, they struggled to communicate with their children in Venezuela because they had unstable internet connection. Moreover, some Venezuelan mothers living in rural areas in Colombia often had to struggle to find stable internet service and then hope that their children would find a stable internet connection in Venezuela too. The difficulties around transnational communication that mothers located in rural areas face indicate, as Parreñas (2005, 318) argues, “that transnational families do not exist in a vacuum; social and geographical inequalities shape the quality of intimacy in transnational family life.”

The challenges that some Venezuelan mothers experienced around communicating with their children points to the complexities of the “power-geometry” (Massey 1993, 62) of transnational communication. As Doreen Massey (1993, 62) explains:

For different social groups and different individuals are placed in very distinct ways in relation to these flows and interconnections. This point concerns not merely the issue of who moves and who doesn't, although that is an important element of it; it is also about power in relation *to* the flows and the movement. Different social groups have distinct relationships to this anyway-differentiated mobility: some are more in charge of it than

others; some initiate flows and movement, others don't; some are more on the receiving end of it than others; some are effectively imprisoned by it. (Massey 1993, 62)

At first, it might seem that a stable internet service and access to capital in Colombia enable some Venezuelan women to initiate communication with their children in Venezuela. However, transnational communication and its power-geometry (Massey 1993, 62) is largely structured by the Venezuelan state, as well as by extended family members in Venezuela. In other words, as much as some Venezuelan mothers may have the ability to initiate conversations with their children over the phone, the condition of the internet infrastructure in Venezuela and family members play a significant role in enabling these conversations. Some mothers complained to family members about being unable to establish contact with their children, but their family members attributed it to constant electric blackouts in some Venezuelan cities, poor internet infrastructure, and children not wanting to communicate with their mothers, even when children wanted to exchange messages with their mothers. Some Venezuelan mothers then wait for weeks and even months before they can establish contact with their children. Put differently, for some Venezuelan mothers, the phone constitutes a way to attend to the temporality of transitional motherhood, which is embedded in long waits and thereby makes some Venezuelan mother's lives precarious.

Some Venezuelan mothers expressed that while communication with their children was full of interruptions and they could not give physical affection to them from afar, they managed to send them remittances. Parreñas (2005) has documented the importance of remittances in sustaining intimate relations between Filipino women and their children. As Parreñas (2005, 323) notes, "Mothers maintain intimate relations across borders by sending remittances to their families at least once a month." Similarly, Deirdre McKay (2007, 176) also notes that Filipino

women “distribute their remittances through extended family networks in order to sustain emotional intimacy and share opportunity and security across a wider field.” In the context of Venezuelan mothers and their children, mother’s remittances not always reached their children, which seeded in children doubts about whether their mothers care for them and come to surface at the time of reunification when they complain to their mothers for not having made efforts to nurture them from a distance.

Bernarda and Carla inhabited multiple temporalities during the time of separation. As Bernarda and Carla’s stories show us, the challenges of attending to the temporality of transnational motherhood are exacerbated by family members and poor communication infrastructure in Venezuela.⁶ The waiting, at times, alleviated by interrupted phone calls that mothers and children experience from the time of separation to the time of reunification reveals that some Venezuelan women’s migration to Colombia does not free them from their nurturing responsibilities. Rather, migrating to Colombia means that they have to attend to multiple temporalities: nurturing their relationship with their children despite constant internet interruptions, negotiating the management of remittances with their families, and becoming the breadwinner of their families, all while overcoming the obstacles to work in Colombia. As the stories show, the phone enables some Venezuelan women to attend to the temporality of

⁶ Less capacity of the Venezuelan state to buy imports (Santos 2017) and some sanctions on the Venezuelan economy have largely disrupted some of the utility infrastructure in Venezuela (Weisbrot and Sachs 2019), which, as some of the stories show us, has contributed to disrupting the communication between some Venezuelan mothers and their children.

transnational motherhood; however, the constant internet interruptions caused by poor internet infrastructure and family members make the phone a source of anxiety, despair, and waiting.

Family separation is not always about a mother leaving their children at home in Venezuela. In many instances, it is the other way around: adult children leaving their mothers home alone in Venezuela. For instance, Rosa, who migrated to Bogota to help buy the medicines her mother needed to alleviate the symptoms of diabetes, shared with me other challenges around communication with her mother.

You can tell your family that you are doing well. You tell them that you are eating well and that you have a place to stay at night. And that you are stable in some ways. But that is a lie. It is completely fake. You cannot be stable in a place where you have no sense of belonging, or in a place where you do not feel stable or happy. You cannot feel well in a place where you do not have anyone's support.

Rosa missed the communication that came with face-to-face interactions. Even though she was grateful to be able to send some money home, she only earned one dollar per hour of work and had one free day per week. She felt ambivalent about being in Bogota. On the one hand, she was able to work and support her mother with medicines, but on the other hand, she felt that she was losing time with her mother. She dwelled on how difficult her free days were.

On my free day, I clean my house and go to the supermarket. There is a moment in which I sit down, and I say to myself, how nice it would be to be in the house [in Venezuela] with my mother, maybe talking to her. How nice it would be to say to my mother, let's go have a Malta [Venezuelan drink] or let's go for a walk. Those kinds of things. Time does not come back. Time is valuable, and I do not know how we put a price on time.

For Rosa, her phone became the object through which she could communicate with her mother. However, her phone was a constant reminder that she was putting a price on time, a source of anxiety and guilt over leaving her mother in Venezuela. Since migrating to Colombia, Rosa developed a particular relationship to the phone. Her phone was everywhere in her life. She used a phone working at a call center in Medellin; she used her phone to navigate social media and to

create a sense of belonging with other Venezuelan migrants in Medellin; and she also used it to call her mother in Venezuela. In other words, she experienced various feelings through the phone: exhaustion from working over eight hours at a call center, excitement from connecting with other Venezuelan migrants in Medellin over social media, and anxiety when speaking with her mother as her phone was always a reminder that she put a price on time.

3.2 Family separation and aspirations for a better education

For some Venezuelan women, aspirations for a better education were intimately tied to family separation. The first time I talked to Vanesa, a mother and political activist, she told me that she had decided to send her son, Benjamin, to Panama after he was persecuted by *colectivos chavistas* on municipal elections day.

Well, the day of the municipal elections came and that day the *colectivos chavistas* persecuted my son on his way to school. He was thirteen years old back then, and they persecuted him on motorcycles. The school watchman hid him in the school parking lot. The school called me and asked me to send someone to pick him up. That day was really hard. I decided to send my son to Panama. That [the persecution] happened on December 5, and on December 8, my son was leaving for Panama with a backpack and an unaccompanied minor permit to exit the country.

Vanesa's mother and sister were in Panama at the time and agreed to take care of Benjamin.

Vanesa told me that she stayed put in Caracas, working and coordinating the regional elections.

However, too much political persecution prompted her to leave for Panama in 2019, after two and half years of being separated from Benjamin. Vanesa did not migrate with Benjamin the first time because she had a job in Caracas and was committed to working with municipal collectives in Venezuela.

I worked in the Ministry of People's Power for Food in Caracas and was the Consejo Comunal [Communal Council] representative for my municipality in Caracas. I was one of the founders of the Voluntad Popular (Popular Will) political party. We actively worked on incorporating people from the opposition into communal councils because

the opposition had little participation in these communal councils. Their incorporation was important because members of communal councils handle very sensitive information such as census data, which includes the location of people and who they live with. As a result of that, I had many problems with the collective 5 de Marzo and the Chavista Battle Units in the electoral centers. They were the ones who persecuted my child on municipal election day.

Vanesa did not stay with Benjamin in Panama for a long time because she had entered Panama with a tourist visa that allowed her to stay in the country for a limited time. Unable to return to Venezuela because of imminent political persecution, she decided to migrate to Colombia, where she knew she had the chance to obtain a Permiso Especial de Permanencia (PEP), and thereby more opportunities to find a job to financially support Benjamin in Panama.

Even though Vanesa obtained a PEP, she told me that she could not bring Benjamin under her PEP. Vanesa did not bring Benjamin with her because she believed that Benjamin's chances of graduating from high school and continuing studying at the university level in Colombia were low. As I learned from some Venezuelan women, the Colombian state, through Circular Conjunta N°16 de 2018,⁷ made education accessible to Venezuelan children regardless of their migration status in Colombia. However, the Colombian state requires Venezuelan children to have a regular status before they can receive their high school diploma (Circular Conjunta N°16 de 2018, 2018). According to the Ministerio de Educación (2019b), people applying to study at the undergraduate level in Colombian universities need to have their high

⁷ Circular Conjunta N°16 de 2018 is an "Instructivo para la atención de niños, niñas y adolescentes procedentes de Venezuela en los establecimientos educativos colombianos" (Circular Conjunta N°16 de 2018, 2018). (Instructions around education for children from Venezuela in Colombian educational schools).

school diploma. This condition is paradoxical because, as some Venezuelan women said, the Colombian state has not created a clear path for undocumented Venezuelan children to obtain a regular status in Colombia. Vanesa told me that Benjamin aspired to continue studying after graduating from high school, but it did not make sense to bring him to Colombia as his chances of continuing his studies at the university level in Colombia were low. Since one of the reasons some Venezuelan mothers migrate to Colombia is to offer better education prospects to their children, mothers whose children cannot access a regular status in Colombia prefer to delay the time of reunification with their children.

Unlike Vanesa, other Venezuelan mothers decide to bring their children to Colombia via “*la trocha*” (irregular crossing), hoping that the Colombian state would offer them a path to obtain a regular status before they graduate from high school. However, Vanesa told me that the aspirations of some undocumented Venezuelan children to study at the university level in Colombia are diminished in the absence of a clear path to obtain a regular status. As Vanesa told me, some children give up their aspirations and opt to find a job in the informal sector of the labor market hoping to increase their household income.

For those Venezuelan mothers who decide to bring their children to Colombia via “*la trocha*,” finding a place in a school in Colombia is challenging. A number of Venezuelan mothers told me that the Colombian state has made it possible for their children to attend school, but some have to wait long periods of time before the state gives them a place in a school. At the time of the interview, Vanesa had been waiting for nearly a year for the Colombian state to assign Olivia, her daughter, a place in a school. Moreover, Vanesa told me that some schools require children to have a health care plan before they can start classes, which makes it almost impossible for undocumented children to start classes as only people

with a regular status can access health care plans in Colombia. Carla, whose children were undocumented in Colombia, told me that the school threatened her many times, and every time, she would have to show them that she was doing her best to regularize their children.

I received many warnings from the school, especially during their first year of school. Last year was not as bad because of the pandemic, but they [the school] posed many challenges to my children around graduation and health care coverage. If you do not have a migration status, you do not have EPS. They [the school] threatened me that they were going to send me to [Bienestar Familiar] because I had failed to affiliate them to an EPS. When I went to Bienestar Familiar, they realized that I had health care, and I had to explain them that I couldn't have them under my health care plan as they didn't have passport and were undocumented in Colombia. So, it was a frustrating process because they [Bienestar familiar] would look me up on the system and realize that I was enrolled in a health care plan, and I had to insist that my health care provider wouldn't let me add my children under my plan because they were undocumented. The [Colombian] law doesn't allow that. And I can't transfer my PEP to them.

Carla's story reveals some of the contradictions around education for some undocumented Venezuelan children in Colombia. Her story shows that access to education is difficult for some Venezuelan children. Moreover, regulations around education render children's school performance precarious as many schools delay their start date until they have the right documentation. School delays are long waits for mothers and children. For example, in some instances, the failed school years in Venezuela add to the years that children have to wait before the state gives them a place in a school in Colombia, delaying their studies for several months and, at times, for years. Moreover, these school requirements make mothers' lives precarious too as they sometimes make dangerous trips to Venezuela hoping to get passports for their children (one way to regularize them in Colombia), but they often find that the Venezuelan state further marginalizes their lives by charging them large amounts of money for each passport, which they cannot pay. Trips to Venezuela and frequent visits to their children's school to explain their extenuating circumstances make some Venezuelan mothers miss work, thereby disrupting their attempts to make ends meet.

The desire of Carla's children to contribute to improving the financial situation of their family came to the surface when she told me about their aspirations after finishing high school.

Well . . . in the middle of the pandemic and everything else, my daughter wants to work. It has been difficult for us and now that they are adults, they have the expectation to make money to not be as [financially] tight as we are right now.

Like Carla's children, some Venezuelan children make it to their last year of school and realize that their chances to continue studying at the university level are low. The difficulties around getting their high school diploma without a regular status deeply marginalize their lives, to the point that some, as Carlos's children, want to get jobs in the informal sector of the economy where they may experience labor abuse and have little social protection from the state.

The current policies around education for Venezuelan undocumented children disrupt their aspirations to pursue professional careers in the long term too. For example, if some children cannot obtain proof of their school years in Colombia, they cannot demonstrate that they in fact made progress towards their education in Colombia, thereby making it challenging for them to retake their studies in the future in other places. Carla's story shows us that the ways the Colombian state has structured education for undocumented Venezuelan children has prompted some mothers to leave their children studying in other countries. Here I want to (re)emphasize that some Venezuelan women migrate to Colombia hoping to create better education prospects for their children. However, given the difficulties around studying in Colombia that undocumented children experience, some mothers decide to migrate without them, which separates them for many years and, in many instances, dislocates their families.

Vanessa and Carla's stories show us that the difficulties around education that undocumented children experience in Colombia delay the time of family reunification, thereby lengthening the time that some Venezuelan mothers spend attending to multiple temporalities.

Some Venezuelan mothers expressed that they continued to attend to the rhythms of transnational motherhood because it was difficult to secure education for their children in Colombia. For some mothers I spoke to, bringing their children to Colombia with so much uncertainty around their education defeated the purpose of their migration. Vanesa and Carla's stories render visible that the structure in place to offer education to undocumented Venezuelan children in some instances delay the time of family reunification, lengthens the time that some women engage in transnational motherhood, and makes women's lives more precarious by making them miss work to attend to the complaints of schools about the status of their children in Colombia.

In sum, as the stories show us, the difficulties that some undocumented Venezuelan children experience to access education in Colombia make some Venezuelan mothers and their children's lives precarious. Ultimately, aspirations for a better education lengthens the time of family separation and forces some Venezuelan women to continue waiting for the time of reunification while they negotiate and inhabit multiple temporalities, in Colombia and Venezuela.

3.3 Family separation and a different relationship to waiting

During our conversations, some Venezuelan mothers dwelled on the time "lost" with their children. Some told me that they waited to reunite with their children and recover the time lost since they were separated. At the time of reunification, however, some mothers found that their children were in different stages of their lives (sometimes they were past their childhood), making it difficult to travel back in time and recreate important episodes of their childhood. Carla reflected on the time when she reunited with her children in Bogota.

When they came [to Bogota], they felt good. They saw food and were surprised like any other [Venezuelan] who leaves the country. For them, it was crazy, something exorbitant. But I couldn't be home because I was working from morning to afternoon seven days a week to pay off my debt. They arrived in September and in December, I started to realize that they were not kids anymore, they were more like teenagers. I realized that the little girl wasn't a girl anymore, but a woman that had her own conflicts, her own choices, and her thoughts. They weren't the children I remembered. I think each one [of my children] in their self-defence, so to speak, changed personality traits to deal with the conflicts and trauma they had lived [in Venezuela]. Simon was surly and indifferent. Lizeth was cheeky and indifferent too. Daniel had become grandma's best friend so that she would always spoil him. I didn't remember them like that. I didn't expect them to be like that. Here, they feel great, and they feel autonomous. I mistakenly treat them like children, telling them what to do, telling them you don't do this . . . or you're not like that. And well, we had to face reality in that sense. We had to get to know each other again.

In other words, some Venezuelan mothers unexpectedly found that their children had different lifestyles and personalities at the time of family reunification. New personalities caused mothers and children to have confrontations in which children reproached their mothers for having left them in Venezuela.

Geraldine Pratt (2012) documents similar issues that emerged between Filipino mothers and their children after the time of reunification. As Pratt (2012) notes, "For some mothers and children, they were never able to enter into the emotional space . . . that divided them" (68). Some of the misunderstandings that created some distance between some Venezuelan mothers and children were largely created by some mothers' expectations to find their children unchanged and *recuperar el tiempo* [recover the time] that they missed during their childhood. However, as Carla's story shows us, she found that her children had already moved past their childhood.

Like Carla, other Venezuelan mothers I spoke with expressed a desire to travel back in time. Mothers' desire to travel to the past is constructed during periods of waiting prior to the time of reunification. While they wait for reunification, women develop a different relationship to waiting. They wait for past times to return to the present, a process that some mourn after they

realize that the time they lost with their children remains in the past and thereby is inaccessible to them. Here I want to note that while some Venezuelan mothers cannot travel to past times to see episodes of their children's childhood, some of their children's traumas caused by the separation come to surface at the time of family reunification. In other words, what returns from past times to present times are rarely the good moments of children's childhood but rather the traumas engendered by years of family separation.

Even though Carla managed to see some aspects of her children's childhood by engaging in transnational motherhood, there were many "lost" fragments she missed as a result of the constant interruptions caused by poor internet infrastructure and family members. At the time of reunification, she started to notice the traumas that her children had developed as a result of some years of family separation. She wished to return to the past to see her children growing up in Venezuela, but some of what emerged from her children's past was trauma and their complaints for having been left alone in Venezuela. As Carla's story shows us, for some Venezuelan women, the waiting does not cease after the time of family reunification. In fact, some continue to wait to return to the past to see the "lost" fragments of their children's childhood after the time of reunification, a process in which they experience guilt and repurpose their relationship with their children and to the temporality of waiting. The second time I interviewed Carla, almost a year after she reunited with her children, she continued to hope to return to the past to see those moments from her children's childhood. When I asked Carla about her aspirations for the future, she told me that she would like to put the puzzle of her children's childhood together to understand how their new personalities came to be. In other words, Carla's aspirations for the future were to be found in episodes that remained in the past.

3.4 Conclusion: The challenges of inhabiting multiple temporalities

These stories illustrate how the challenges of inhabiting multiple temporalities are exacerbated by poor communication infrastructure and extended family members in Venezuela. As the stories show us, poor communication infrastructure in Venezuela constantly disrupts some Venezuelan mothers' attempts to do the work of transnational motherhood: to recreate meaningful and intimate relations with their children from a distance. These constant interruptions rupture their work and life rhythms in Colombia and thus make it challenging to synchronize their own temporalities with those of their children. That is to say, looking at the ways the Venezuelan state disrupts transnational communication between some Venezuelan mothers and their children renders visible the role of the state in restructuring the structure of the family: the Venezuelan state largely structures experiences of delay that some Venezuelan mothers experience while they wait to establish communication with their children. In this sense, the Venezuelan state largely structures interrupted communication between mothers and children, constructing some of the temporalities and boundaries around which some Venezuelan women operate to recreate family from a distance. Poor communication infrastructure affects the ways some Venezuelan women do the work of transnational motherhood and constitutes one way of making their lives precarious. Disrupted communication exacerbates the challenges of inhabiting multiple temporalities at once and marginalizes their lives by making them anxious and experience anguish due to the lack of communication with their children.

Undocumented Venezuelan children continue to experience difficulties around studying in Colombia, as the requirements to obtain a place in a school are unattainable for some children. As some of the stories show us, one difficult requirement for some Venezuelan children is to obtain a health care plan, which some schools request but they can only access by having a

regular status in Colombia. As Vanesa's story shows us, some Venezuelan mothers' aspirations for a better education for their children are closely tied to family separation. Like Vanesa, some Venezuelan women fear that their children cannot access education or obtain their high school diploma without a regular status in Colombia and thus decide to leave them at home in Venezuela while they finish their high school studies. In this sense, difficulties around accessing education for undocumented Venezuelan children delay the time of reunification by some years, exacerbating and lengthening the time that some Venezuelan mothers engage in multiple temporalities at once, mainly in transnational mothering and work rhythms in Colombia. Requesting undocumented Venezuelan children to obtain a regular status before they can access their school diploma and not offering them a clear path to obtain a regular status demonstrates the ways some of the current policies around education for undocumented Venezuelan children indeed offers them education, but also marginalize them by diminishing their chances to continue their studies at the university level. Moreover, as Carla's story shows us, the life rhythms of those Venezuelan mothers who bring their children to Colombia are constantly interrupted by school principals who require them to attend meetings to discuss the "undocumentedness" of their children in Colombia. This further marginalizes their lives by making them miss work and sometimes dangerously venture into Venezuela to obtain passports for their children, a way to get a regular status for their children in Colombia. In other words, aspirations for a better education and the difficulties that some undocumented children experience around studying in Colombia delay the time of family reunification and force some Venezuelan mothers to continue inhabiting, at times discordant, multiple temporalities.

During the time of separation from their children, some Venezuelan mothers like Carla, developed a particular relationship to waiting. Some mothers aspire to reunite with their children

but also to recreate the “lost” moments of their children’s childhood, which they could not see as a result of the separation. In this sense, the aspiration to recreate the past leads some mothers to wait for the “good” episodes of the past to return to the present time. When this does not happen, they experience feelings of denial, grief, and guilt for having left their children at home in Venezuela. Longing for their children’s childhood also demonstrates that waiting does not cease after the time of family reunification. In fact, some mothers continue *la espera* [the wait] for the past to come to the present. As Carla’s story shows, *la espera* eventually brought episodes from her children’s past; however, such episodes were often traumatic experiences that they experienced under the care of extended family members.

This relationship to waiting disrupts conventional, at times linear, understandings of the ways some Venezuelan women migrants aspire for the future. These dominant understandings, among some Colombians, seem to evoke a forward trajectory in the way migrants create their aspirations for the future: their aspirations are found in the future that is yet to come rather than in the episodes of the past. In this vein, some Venezuelan women’s stories, particularly about their relation to the temporality of waiting, invite us to (re)conceptualize linear understandings about how their future aspirations are produced. Ultimately, separating from their children makes some Venezuelan women inhabit multiple and, at times, discordant temporalities, which heavily structure the way they do transnational mothering and inhabit their own work and life rhythms in Colombia. Moreover, separation from their children makes them develop a particular relationship to waiting, one that makes them imagine alternative visions to inhabit the future by dwelling on past experiences. In other words, their stories show us that “past futures,” inhabiting the past to live the future, is central to understanding subjective experiences of time that are

structured during the time of separation and reunification. Such experiences provide us with a more nuanced understanding of the ways some Venezuelan women experience time.

Chapter 4: Contesting waiting: emerging capacities for agency

Some Colombian media have used a language of “displacement” and “escaping” to conceptualize the Venezuelan exodus. This language has evoked a sense of movement and has continued to (re)inforce “on the move” narratives around some Venezuelan migrants. One of the dangers of using this language to conceptualize the Venezuelan exodus is that it has largely victimized some Venezuelan migrants. Even though some Venezuelans have migrated to Colombia, some of them have contested the Venezuelan state before making the decision to migrate. Simply portraying some Venezuelan women as “escaping” from a crisis obscures the ways in which they have attempted to craft and enact their own migrant trajectories. Moreover, labelling some Venezuelan migrants as “displaced” evokes an image of forced migration, one that largely removes agency from some Venezuelan women. This chapter centers the voices of a number of Venezuelan women whose stories render visible their capacities for agency. Doing so is imperative since, as Mainwaring (2016, 291) suggests, “ignoring this agency reifies the power of the state to ‘secure’ borders and control migration, and conceals the contested politics of mobility and security evident in negotiations between migrants . . . and other actors.”

The issue of migrant women’s agency has been acute in debates surrounding human trafficking. Some authors contend that victimizing migrants removes migrants’ capacities for agency and advocate for the autonomy of women who “choose” to take part in sex labor (e.g., Bandyopadhyay et al., 2006; Jayasree, 2004). Other authors contend that human trafficking leaves no room for migrant women agency and portray migrants as victims (e.g., Hodge, 2014; Monroe, 2008). Some neoclassical scholars believe that migrants are “drawn” into other places by the forces of the economy (e.g., Harris and Todaro, 1970), implying that migrants have little choice in building their migrant trajectories. Other scholars see the importance of considering

migration as simultaneously voluntary and forced (e.g., Erdal and Oeppen, 2018; Carling and Collins, 2018; Piguet, 2018).

As Feminist scholar Lieba Faier (2009) suggests, “Most social theory today focuses on questions of structure and agency by exploring how cultural discourses, ideologies, and political-economic logics inform the ways members of a group move through the world, and by considering how people manage . . . formations of power” (2009, 10). Faier (2009) explores the ways encounters between Japanese men and Filipino women in Central Kiso produce new forms of capacity for agency, a kind of “*runaway agency*” (194). In doing so, her work offers a different perspective on the voluntary/forced migration dichotomy and instead illustrates the ways other capacities for agency can emerge from “cultural encounters” (Faier 2009, 1). As Faier’s (2009) ethnography illustrates, such capacities for agency are not always anticipated, but rather emerge as they are constantly remade by Filipino women negotiating unanticipated mundane situations in Central Kiso and Tokyo.

Similarly, the work of Alexia Bloch (2017) with Russian-speaking migrant women in Turkey illustrates that narratives focusing on victimization and exploitation obscure the ways women’s capacities for agency are shaped by their aspirations to explore other worlds in Turkey, different from the ones they experienced during the Soviet Union years. Bloch’s work invites us to (re)think narratives that victimize women and opens a space to engage with the different kinds of agency that Russian-speaking women enact to create their migrant trajectories, cope with the work of building transnational families, and contrive plans to negotiate the shifting environment at the Russia-Turkey border.

As the stories in this chapter show us, some Venezuelan women have enacted different kinds of agency, before and after they decide to migrate to Colombia. Their stories show us the

ways they crafted and enacted their agency while inhabiting instances of waiting. Contrary to neoliberal narratives that attribute powerlessness and sedentariness to the temporality of waiting, their stories show that waiting constitutes an active time during which some Venezuelan women weigh their alternatives to make their next move and, in doing so, craft their own migrant trajectories. Instead of reducing agency to the ability to choose, I understand agency in terms of the “room for manoeuvre” (Mainwaring 2016, 291) and the ability that some Venezuelan migrant women have to contrive and contest the expulsive forces structured by the Venezuelan state.

The main argument of this chapter is that although some Venezuelan women are “drawn” into instances of waiting, they (re)purpose these instances of waiting into meaningful time and reclaim their agency. My argument is embedded in “new mobilities studies . . . which incorporate experiences of *immobility* into prior emphases on movement, viewing mobility and immobility as overlapping and dependent states” (Lagji 2018, 220). The work of Bissell (2007, 279) is helpful here insofar as it illustrates the ways “waiting is not the immobile being-in-the-world that it has perhaps traditionally been characterised as.” Instead, Bissell (2007, 277) invites us to think about waiting as embedded in the “fabric of the mobile everyday.” As he notes, “Mobilities are constituted as much through the *inactivity*, the pauses and various suspensions experienced as part of the journey through time/space through the necessarily hybrid event of waiting” (2007, 294).

Moreover, scholar Amanda Lagji (2018, 221) contends, “waiting must be decoupled from stasis – or that by stasis, we must mean something in excess of immobility or empty time.” Similar to the ways some Venezuelan women asylum seekers experience the temporality of waiting, the work of Rebecca Rotter (2015, 86) with asylum seekers in the United Kingdom

“reveals that waiting is a complex dialectical process, involving both a sense of empty, idle, suspended time and a kind of emotionally and cognitively demanding, active, productive time.”

In my own reading, this “dialectical process” (Rotter 2015, 86) has been captured by Tim Cresswell’s (2014) notion of “friction” (114), which “slows and stops the mobility of people, things and ideas, and sometimes it enables them” (114). The notion of friction better captures the ways some Venezuelan women push back against the relative idleness, structured by the state, that they experience when inhabiting instances of waiting. I build on Cresswell’s (2014) notion of friction to evoke a sense of resistance, which is active, at times meaningful, and, most importantly, shows the many ways new capacities for agency can emerge from instances of waiting.

The notion of friction draws our attention to points of collision between some Venezuelan women and state power—instances of waiting—where contestation and ambivalence prevail. This chapter then draws on the work of feminist scholars to illustrate the ways capacities for agency—both individual and collective—emerge from instances of waiting, countering conventional narratives that characterize waiting as idle and sedentary.

4.1 The ambivalence of escaping

The first time I interviewed Susana, she told me about her daily show broadcasted on Radio Caracas Television (RTVC), which reached the homes of millions of Venezuelans for several years. She remembered her time as a journalist, before escaping Venezuela after receiving threats from the Venezuelan regime.

I challenged the Venezuelan regime for over twenty-one years. I had my TV show that was transmitted every day from 6:00 AM to 9:00 AM and that reached over 16 million homes in Venezuela. The Venezuelan government closed the TV channel [in 2007]. They persecuted me a lot. People said that they [the Venezuelan government] were going to

kill me. I would not have missed one of those days [as a journalist]. I escaped when they almost grabbed me by the hair, to kill me, to torture me. They were going to raid my mom's home. I escaped.

The criticisms and threats that Susana received because of her opposition to the Venezuelan state seeded in her anxiety and uncertainty. Both anxiety and uncertainty, as well as the prospects of building another future in the Netherlands, her final destination after going to Colombia, took the form of a “*runaway agency*” (Faier, 2009, 194) that prompted her to escape Venezuela.

However, Susana was ambivalent about escaping Venezuela. On the one hand, escaping Venezuela liberated her from receiving threats from the Venezuelan state and allowed her to express her political views without being afraid of being tortured and ultimately murdered. On the other hand, escaping from Venezuela seeded in her many uncertainties about the future and separated her from most of her family members in Venezuela, particularly from her mother who died while she was living in Bogota. In this sense, similar to what Faier (2009) documents in her research with Filipino women in Central Kiso, for some Venezuelan women “running away occupied an important but ambivalent place in [their] lives and imaginations . . . because it reflected at once the dreams and the instabilities of their lives and futures abroad” (194).

Susana had planned the Netherlands as her final destination. However, migrating to Colombia precipitated many unanticipated events in her life, which exacerbated the emotional instability that she had already started experiencing in Venezuela.

When I left Venezuela, the depression that I experienced was so severe that it caused me to develop cancer. I never wanted to leave, never ever. My family never wanted to leave either. We are Venezuelans! We are deeply rooted in Venezuela. No one wants to leave. My sister, one of my sisters, left Venezuela for a month to take care of me [in Colombia] because I have cancer. But she returned after a month. She is now in Venezuela. My cousins are there. I did not want to come. I have traveled the world as a journalist, but always had the return ticket inside my purse. This is the first trip of my life that does not have a return ticket. The depression was horrifying. I'll tell you more. My life was always planned and this trip taught me that there is a thing called *los talveces, los quizaces, y los alomejores* [different ways to say maybe]. I did not know that existed.

When I asked Susana about the “maybes” (life uncertainties) that the trip had taught her, she stopped and sighed. Susana had never intended to stay in Colombia after escaping from Venezuela.

I came to see my best friend, who is a political consultant and lived there. And I came to spend fifteen days with him, to spend fifteen days crying on his shoulder. And then, I intended to go to the United States where my brother lives. He lives in a forest in Virginia. And then after that, I wanted to go to the Netherlands where my older nephew is and wanted to stay in the Netherlands. It turns out that I stayed a little longer at the request of my friend and his wife. It was then when they [doctors in Colombia] diagnosed me with cancer.

Susana’s story shows us that some Venezuelan women are not simply “expelled” from Venezuela. Rather, like Susana, some Venezuelan women have contested the Venezuelan regime for many years. In this vein, while it seems that some Venezuelan women are “drawn” into Colombia by the forces of the Venezuelan state, mainly due to the shortage of food and incessant political turmoil, some Venezuelan women have contested their “expulsion” from Venezuela by actively resisting the state for many years, which brings on uncertainty that seed in them ambivalence about leaving Venezuela. It is precisely by weighing their ambivalence about leaving that some Venezuelan women make it clear that their migration to Colombia is not simply driven by the structural forces of the Venezuelan state. Rather, periods of incessant contestation often preceded some women’s decision to leave their families behind in Venezuela. In other words, contrary to narratives that evoke a sense of forceful movement, which largely remove agency from some Venezuelan women, Susana’s story shows us that she contested her “expulsion” from Venezuela for several years and actively engaged in negotiating her own migrant trajectory.

The second time I interviewed Bernarda, mother and political activist, she said the ambivalence that some Venezuelan mothers experience before leaving was exacerbated by the

criticism of family members who accused them of abandoning their children in Venezuela.

However, as the stories in chapter three illustrate, some Venezuelan mothers' decision to migrate was far from being an act of abandonment. In fact, their decision to migrate was driven by the prospects of finding better opportunities to support their children in Venezuela. For some Venezuelan women, migrating to Colombia involved engaging in multiple, at times precarious and uncertain, temporalities, which show us the different capacities to enact agency that they enacted both in Colombia and Venezuela. For instance, a number of Venezuelan women I spoke with enacted a kind of "waiting in motion" (Lagji 2018, 218) agency, as the next story illustrates.

For Patricia, losing her job as a domestic worker in Venezuela and the shortage of food there prompted her to look for better opportunities in Colombia, mainly to support her children in Venezuela. Patricia remembered the time when she wanted to leave but she had to wait in Venezuela because she lacked the financial means to do it:

Due to the situation in the country [Venezuela], I did not have money to make a trip or to plan a trip or anything. I was waiting for the right time to leave there. There was a Colombian there in Venezuela who told me that if I had someone to help me out here in Bogota, maybe to find me a job, he could drive me to the border. He ended up driving me to the border one morning. When I got to the border, they gave me 100.000 Colombian Pesos (30 dollars) and I used that money to come to Bogota.

Before leaving Venezuela, Patricia imagined more opportunities for her in Bogota. However, although she managed to obtain a PEP, many companies rejected her job applications. Some employers were not familiar with the paperwork to hire Venezuelans and others believed that she was not skilled enough. Patricia's choice to migrate to Bogota brought unexpected events in her life. For instance, although she intended to go to Bogota for a short period of time, make money, and return to Venezuela to continue raising her children, she ended up staying in Bogota longer than she expected. In fact, when I spoke with her, she had been living in Bogota for over two years and was planning on bringing her children to live with her.

The second time I spoke with her, she had obtained a job as a live-in domestic worker, but her employers inexplicably deducted money from her wage. Patricia stayed at her employer's house for over four months, mainly because it was difficult for her to find another job during the pandemic when residents of Bogota experienced a number of lockdowns for several months and the state was largely inactive in terms of ensuring the rights of domestic workers. Even though Patricia waited for several months before leaving the house, she continued to take care of her children during that time, calling them as much as possible, sending them remittances, and planning her next move. For Patricia, escaping from her employer's house brought more uncertainties and preoccupations, but it was imperative to disrupt her disappointments and dream about better opportunities.

Like Patricia, some Venezuelan domestic workers experienced feelings of ambivalence around leaving their employer's home because their chances of obtaining a job somewhere else in the city were extremely low during the pandemic. However, despite being enclosed in homes and feeling powerless when enduring periods of waiting, they managed to (re)imagine other alternative futures for them and their families. For instance, after facing wage deductions and exclusion, Patricia left her employer's house and returned to Venezuela to see her children for a while. Other domestic workers left their employer's homes and found other jobs in the city, not without first experiencing uncertainty, exclusion, and anxiety about their prospects for the future. In this sense, Patricia's story counters conventional understandings of waiting as being sedentary and. Patricia managed to attend to her children's affective and financial needs in Venezuela, planned her departure from her employer's home, and found another job in the city all the while she was enclosed in her employer's home. In other words, she (re)purposed instances of waiting into meaningful time, empowering herself and crafting her agency.

4.2 Negotiating the border

While Fernanda worked at a care home in Bogota, she sent remittances to Amanda, her mother in Venezuela, so she could buy food. However, the high demand for food and incessant hyperinflation in Venezuela made it difficult for Amanda to buy food in Venezuela.

I used to call my mother four to five times a week, but the constant power outages and poor internet connection in Venezuela made it hard to communicate with my mother. I used to send her remittances so that she could buy food, but she could only receive the money in bolivares soberanos and most food items were advertised in dollars and colombian pesos. So, I would send the money to Cucuta [Colombian city located near to the Colombia-Venezuela border]. That meant that my mother had to ride a bus for nearly 250 kilometers from Merida to Cucuta to pick up the money. For several months, my mother [Amanda] would take the bus to Cucuta, claim the money in Colombian pesos, buy food staples in Colombia [where they were cheaper] and then would ride back to Merida for seven hours. It was an odyssey.

Fernanda told me that her mother had difficulties entering Venezuela with products because La Guardia Nacional Bolivariana (GNB) [The Bolivarian National Guard] started to extort Venezuelans crossing the border with food and medicine supplies. She remembered:

From the Colombian border [Cucuta] to Merida, where my mother used to live, there were six military checkpoints. At every checkpoint, they stop cars and check them. So, if they see that you're bringing food, they start extorting you. So, imagine that you spend 200.000 Colombian pesos [60 dollars] on food, and they ask you for 15.000 Colombia pesos [15 dollars] at each military checkpoint, otherwise they seize your food and medicines. So, my mother had to *ingeniarselas* [contrive] to bring her food and medicines, but eventually had to stop making trips to Cucuta.

Amanda, like some other Venezuelan women, resorted to re-entering the country via “*la trocha*” (irregular crossings), where she had to negotiate with paramilitares to cross the Tachira River. The difficulties that Amanda experienced around crossing the border with food and medicines prompted her to stop making trips to Colombia and exacerbated the challenges that she experienced to obtain products in Venezuela.

Even though the tight regulations around bringing food and medicines to Venezuela ended up prompting Amanda to migrate to Colombia, she only decided to migrate to Colombia

when she had exhausted many possibilities. For instance, when she could not continue traveling to Cucuta, her daughter, Fernanda, asked extended family members to help her mother obtain food in Venezuela. In other words, Amanda's story shows us how she managed to create room for contestation despite the pushing forces of the Venezuelan state that ultimately prompted her to leave Venezuela.

4.3 Claiming refugee status and capacities for collective agency

Some of the Venezuelan women I spoke with were ambivalent about claiming refugee status in Colombia. In particular, as Marta (the same woman from chapter 2) told me, some mothers were afraid of applying for a refugee status, since this could prevent them from returning to Venezuela to see their children for some time. This is the case of Marta, a mother and political activist, who contested the Venezuelan state for many years. The constant threats from the Venezuelan state and the political turmoil in Venezuela prompted Marta to escape from Venezuela. Marta managed to escape without a passport, as the Venezuelan state refused to issue her passport for political reasons, presumably because of her opposition to the state. Marta's inability to obtain a passport made her ineligible to apply to obtain a PEP in Colombia and prompted her to consider filing an application to obtain a refugee status, a decision that she felt ambivalent about for some time. At the time of the interview, Marta told me that while a refugee status would allow her to stay in Colombia and benefit from some state welfare, the application process would restrict her from visiting her children in Venezuela for some time. Even though she had the choice to apply for refugee status or remain undocumented, she knew that choosing to apply for refugee status would delay the time of reunification with her children by some time.

My husband is Colombian, but because I do not have a passport, the Colombian state does not grant me a family visa, which I have the right to have. But because the

Venezuelan state denied me the possibility of having a passport, they [the Colombian state] have nowhere to stamp it. So, I filed the application for refugee status, and I am waiting for the Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to do the interviews and everything else that is missing so they can approve my application.

As I learned from Marta, when she applied for a refugee status, she could not work in the formal labor market or access some health care benefits while she waited for their application to be processed, a process that can take several months. Marta's decision to claim refugee status put her in a place of in-betweenness.

When you apply for refugee status, you have some degree of regularity [in Colombia] because you have temporary status, which means that you have the possibility to be recognized as a refugee. That [temporary] status does not allow the police to remove you from the country, but you cannot work or access health care. So, you become a social burden to those who support you. It is very complex to have a temporary status like me right now, it is like being in limbo.

Similar to what Haas (2017) noted in the context of asylum seekers in the United States, the decision to claim refugee status forces Venezuelan women into a process in which “they would be produced as a ‘true refugee’ (citizen-in-waiting) or ‘bogus’ or failed asylum seeker (deportee-in-waiting),” clearly defining the “contours of their positionality” (77). Haas (2017, 91) further argues that for asylum seekers, “The future seemed always marked by the possibility of denial and expulsion, as much as the possibility of security.” Even though Marta was restricted by these two categories, which placed her in a liminal place, she managed to (re)purpose the limitations of inhabiting this “dual positionality” (Haas 2017, 76). Marta continued to pursue her intellectual aspirations and completed a diploma in international relations at a university in Bogota, nurtured her family in Venezuela, and worked as a domestic worker in family homes around Bogota. Marta also funded her organization, through which she did advocacy work around issues that some Venezuelan migrants experience in Colombia. For example, she hosted online webinars, where she raised and discussed important issues about unnoticed challenges that some

Venezuelan migrants face in Colombia (e.g., employment and migration status) and spread information about some migration policies that were pertinent to some Venezuelan migrants. Marta's work with her organization then allowed her to (re)purpose the uncertainty brought by the process of applying for a refugee status and cultivate hope among other Venezuelan migrant women.

Marta created virtual spaces that brought some Venezuelan women together to share their migrant stories and exchange advice. Often, participants of these virtual spaces were going through a period of waiting in their lives and hearing other migrants' stories helped them to better understand the migration system in Colombia and draw roadmaps to follow their future aspirations. In particular, some live-in domestic workers who were isolated in the homes of their employers deployed these virtual spaces to engage in larger collective conversations, empower themselves to (re)claim their agency, and disrupt the private spaces that they inhabited by making their stories public. Some Venezuelan women then enacted a kind of collective agency. It is a kind of collective agency that was created by women who supported and listened to one another. In other words, virtual spaces enabled some women to create spaces of solidarity, in which they shared information to better navigate the Colombian immigration system, exchanged their migrant stories, and encouraged each other to (re)claim their agency and be active authors of their migrant trajectories.

4.4 Conclusion: Forging agency

As Mainwaring (2016, 303) notes, "Constructing migrants as victims or villains ignores how states create vulnerability through immigration controls, and disregards the agency of migrants negotiated at the margins." The temporality of waiting, often conceptualized as idle and

sedentary, is a portal to see the ways different capacities for resistance and agency—both individual and collective—may emerge while some Venezuelan women inhabit instances of waiting. Some Venezuelan women’s stories show us how they managed to enact their agency in spite of inhabiting places of in-betweenness. For instance, even though Marta occupied a place of “citizen-in-waiting/deportee-in-waiting” (Haas 2017, 76) for some time, she unsettled the trajectory that both the Venezuelan and Colombian states structured for her. Marta managed to work informal jobs, completed a diploma in international relations at a university in Bogota, and created virtual spaces of solidarity, where some Venezuelan women came to together to exchange their migrant stories and support each other, creating a kind of collective agency. Here I want to emphasize that, as Mainwaring (2016, 303) notes, “this room for manoeuvre, where migrants are sometimes able to negotiate for their own interests, does not make them scheming villains or rational actors who exploit any opportunity, and should not undermine their claims to international protection.”

Tim Cresswell’s (2014) notion of friction evokes an image of resistance, one that, in my own reading, captures some Venezuelan women’s painful struggles. This image of resistance is better captured by some Venezuelan women’s future aspirations, which prompt them to contest state power regulations that (im)mobilize them by imposing complex instances of waiting that they have to experience. It is a friction that limits some Venezuelan women’s possibilities, but that they manage to contest by crafting their own migrant trajectories.

Virtual spaces enabled some Venezuelan women to share their migrant stories, which empowered other women to escape from their jobs as live-in domestic workers. Some Venezuelan women shared information that helped other women to navigate the ever-changing immigration policy in Colombia, creating room for other women to contest some regulations, in

particular around the border and their regularization in Colombia. This sharing in virtual spaces created a kind of collective agency. In other words, some Venezuelan women created spaces of solidarity, in which they found alternatives to negotiate and contest some instances of waiting and liminality that they inhabited in Colombia.

The stories in this chapter invite us to start engaging with the temporality of waiting, often conceptualized as idle and sedentary, in different ways. It is a kind of engagement that enables us to imagine the different capacities for agency, both individual and collective, that can emerge from instances of waiting. In other words, a nuanced understanding of how some Venezuelan women managed to craft and enact their agency while they endured instances of waiting points to their capacities to build their own migrant trajectories. Of course, these women's capacity to build individual and collective agency "should not undermine their claims to international protection" (Mainwaring 2016, 303). I want to linger with the idea that some Venezuelan women's migrant trajectories may be largely shaped by the "forces" of the Venezuelan and Colombian states, and yet they actively, though painfully, contest their (im)mobilities and thereby work towards forging their own migrant aspirations.

Chapter 5: Conclusion: Exclusive policies

This thesis endeavors to disrupt “on the move” narratives, largely circulated by some Colombia media, that criminalize and marginalize some Venezuelan migrant women living in Colombia. To do so, this thesis centers the stories of some Venezuelan migrant women, which show us the ways the Colombian and Venezuelan states have, in some instances, made their lives precarious by creating and articulating instances of waiting that they endure. To disrupt “on the move” narratives means to look beyond them and see some of the experiences of those who inhabit instances of waiting in Colombia and Venezuela.

Even though the Colombian state has been “willing” to receive millions of Venezuelan migrants since the early stages of the Venezuelan exodus by creating routes (e.g., Permiso Especial de Permanencia (PEP) and Estatuto Temporal de Protección para Migrantes Venezolanos (ETPMV)) to regularize them, these efforts are not enough, as thousands of Venezuelan migrants have been excluded from these routes and thereby remain irregular. In February 2021, the Colombian state announced the implementation of Estatuto Temporal de Protección para Migrantes Venezolanos (ETPMV) (Temporal Statute of Protection for Venezuelan Migrants), a program that intends to both extend the time that eligible Venezuelan migrants can stay in Colombia and offer a regular status to hundreds of thousands undocumented Venezuelans in Colombia (Cancillería de Colombia, 2021). However, this new policy continues to require some Venezuelan migrants to submit documents (e.g., passport or citizenship cards), which some of them cannot access due to their high prices and, in some instances, because the Venezuelan state refuses to issue them. In this sense, in ways similar to PEP, ETPMV continues to privilege those who can access identification documents and largely excludes those for whom accessing passports and citizenship cards is difficult. In short, this policy may benefit some

Venezuelan migrants, but it continues to be somewhat exclusive. A policy that intends to offer a regular status to undocumented Venezuelans must take into account that they are undocumented precisely because they are not able to gather the necessary documents to obtain a regular status in Colombia. In this sense, for this policy to be inclusive, the Colombian state should offer alternative routes to those migrants who cannot access documents in Venezuela.

Some Colombian migration policies thus continue to largely structure and articulate instances of waiting that some Venezuelan migrant women inhabit every day. As the stories show us, even beneficiaries of PEP were not exempt from inhabiting the painful instances of waiting and the trauma of family separation. Instead, some migrant women with PEP struggled to bring their children to Colombia and find a job in the formal labor market. This is mainly (but not limited to) employers' unfamiliarity with the process of hiring some Venezuelan migrants, the increasing xenophobia against some Venezuelan migrants, as well as the difficulties that some Venezuelan migrants face when they try to validate their professional credentials in Colombia.

The situation for asylum seekers who aspire to obtain ETPMV is not promising either. This policy overlooks many of the challenges that asylum seekers experience when they apply for a refugee status. For instance, some Venezuelan women told me they decided to apply for a refugee status but would have preferred to obtain PEP if they have had access to their Venezuelan passport or citizenship card. In this sense, it is unlikely that this new policy would benefit asylum seekers as their decision to apply for refugee status (and not for PEP in the first place) likely indicates that they do not have the required documents to apply for ETPMV either. In this vein, while ETPMV might benefit some Venezuelans, those who do not have access to documents, might remain undocumented and marginalized. In order for ETPMV to meaningfully

benefit a larger population of Venezuelan asylum seekers, it is necessary for Colombian state policymakers to gain a nuanced understanding of the challenges and decisions of some Venezuelan migrants living in Colombia.

While some Colombian and Venezuelan state policies continue to structure many instances of waiting that some Venezuelan women endure, we should be cautious about labeling Venezuelan women as victims of these policies. Doing so contributes to obscuring the many ways some of them manage to enact their agency—individual and collective—and shape their own migrant trajectories. As their stories illustrate, some Venezuelan women managed to (re)purpose instances of waiting into meaningful time. Some contested their expulsion from Venezuela by actively engaging in activist work that benefited other migrant women living in Colombia. Other migrant women contrived plans to escape from their jobs as live-in domestic workers at the same time they continued to do the emotional work of transnational motherhood. In other words, despite some public policy that marginalizes some Venezuelan women by making them wait, their stories invite us to see the ways their waiting was not idle, but rather a kind of “waiting in motion” (Lagji 2018, 218). Ultimately, “waiting in motion” points to the ways some Venezuelan women attempted to create their own migrant trajectories by contesting state-induced (im)mobility and the conventional narratives that victimize them and that attribute docility and passivity to the temporality of waiting.

I return to the issue that animated this research project: the concealment of the temporality of waiting that some Venezuelan migrant women inhabit in Colombia. I hope that the stories in this thesis not only add a nuanced understanding of the complex geographies and temporalities of waiting that some Venezuelan migrant women experience, but also make

visceral the trauma and pain that waiting brings to their lives in their quest to achieve their migrant aspirations.

References

- Acedera, Kristel Anne, and Brenda SA Yeoh. 2019. "'Making Time': Long-Distance Marriages and the Temporalities of the Transnational Family." *Current Sociology* 67, no. 2: 250-272.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392118792927>.
- Alcaldía de Bogotá (@Bogota). 2020. "No quiero estigmatizar a los venezolanos, pero hay unos que en serio nos están haciendo la vida de cuadritos. Aquí el que venga a trabajar bienvenido sea, pero el que venga a delinquir deberíamos deportarlos inmediatamente: alcaldesa: @ClaudiaLopez." Twitter, October 29, 2020, 8:42 pm.
<https://twitter.com/Bogota/status/1321975798170062850>.
- Auyero, Javier. 2012. *Patients of the State: The Politics of Waiting in Argentina*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Bailey, Adrian J., Richard A. Wright, Alison Mountz, and Ines M. Miyares. 2010. "(Re) producing Salvadoran Transnational Geographies." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 92, no. 1: 125-144.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8306.00283>.
- Bandyopadhyay, Nandinee, Swapna Gayen, Rama Debnath, Kajol Bose, Sikha Das, Geeta Das, M. Das, et al. 2006. "Streetwalkers Show the Way: Reframing the Global Debate on Trafficking from Sex Workers' Perspectives." *IDS Bulletin* 37, 4: 102-109.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1759-5436.2006.tb00292.x>.
- Bissell, David. 2007. "Animating Suspension: Waiting for Mobilities." *Mobilities* 2, no. 2: 277-298.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17450100701381581>.

- Bloch, Alexia. 2017. *Sex, Love, and Migration: Postsocialism, Modernity, and Intimacy from Istanbul to the Arctic*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Bonilla, Yarimar, and Jonathan Rosa. 2015. “# Ferguson: Digital Protest, Hashtag Ethnography, and the Racial Politics of Social Media in the United States.” *American Ethnologist* 42, no. 1: 4-17.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/amet.12112>.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1998. *Acts of Resistance: Against the New Myths of Our Time*. New York, NY: The New Press.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 2000. *Pascalian Meditations*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Cancillería Colombia. 2021. “ABC Temporary Protection Status for Venezuelans Migrants.” Migración Colombia, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Cancillería de Colombia.
https://www.cancilleria.gov.co/sites/default/files/FOTOS2020/abc_estatuto_al_migrante-ingles-ok.pdf.
- Carling, Jørgen, and Francis Collins. 2018. “Aspiration, Desire and Drivers of Migration.” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 44, 6:909-926.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2017.1384134>.
- Carvajal, Andrés. 2020. “Cientos de venezolanos regresan a casa en medio de la pandemia.” *El Tiempo*, April 4, 2020.
<https://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/otras-ciudades/venezolanos-regresan-a-su-pais-en-medio-de-pandemia-por-el-coronavirus-480914>.
- Cherubini, Daniela, Giulia Garofalo Geymonat, and Sabrina Marchetti. 2019. “Intersectional Politics on Domestic Workers’ Rights: The Cases of Ecuador and Colombia.” In

Intersectionality in Feminist and Queer Movements, edited by Elizabeth Evans and Éléonore Lépinard, 236-254. London: Routledge.

<https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/39907>.

Circular Conjunta N°16 de 2018, abril de 2018 de 2018, instructivo para la atención de niños, niñas y adolescentes procedentes de Venezuela en los establecimientos educativos colombianos.

https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/1759/articles-368675_recurso_1.pdf.

Collins, Erin. 2021. "Of Crowded Histories and Urban Theory: A Feminist Critique of Temporal Closure and Patrimonial Claims to the Urban." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 45, no. 4: 612-629.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.13026>.

Collyer, Michael, and Russell King. 2014. "Producing Transnational Space: International Migration and the Extra-Territorial Reach of State Power." *Progress in Human Geography* 39, no. 2: 185-204.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132514521479>.

Cresswell, Tim. 2014. "Friction." In *The Routledge Handbook of Mobilities*, edited by Peter Adey, David Bissell, Kevin Hannam, Peter Merriman, Mimi Sheller, 107-115. London: Routledge.

<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315857572>.

Decreto 2616 de 2013, noviembre 20 del 2013, "por medio del cual se regula la cotización a seguridad social para trabajadores dependientes que laboran por períodos inferiores a un mes, se desarrolla el mecanismo financiero y operativo de que trata el artículo 172 de la

Ley 1450 de 2011 y se dictan disposiciones tendientes a lograr la formalización laboral de los trabajadores informales.” *Diario Oficial* 48.980.

<https://www.funcionpublica.gov.co/eva/gestornormativo/norma.php?i=65326>.

El Espectador. 2020. “Iván Duque: migrantes que no estén regularizados no tendrán vacuna contra coronavirus.” *El Espectador*, December 21, 2020.

<https://www.elespectador.com/mundo/america/ivan-duque-migrantes-que-no-esten-regularizados-no-tendran-vacuna-contr-coronavirus-article/>.

Erdal, Marta Bivand, and Ceri Oeppen. 2018. “Forced to Leave? The Discursive and Analytical Significance of Describing Migration as Forced and Voluntary.” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 44, no. 6: 981-998.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2017.1384149>.

Faier, Lieba. 2009. *Intimate Encounters: Filipina Women and the Remaking of Rural Japan*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Haas, Bridget M. 2017. “Citizens-in-Waiting, Deportees-in-Waiting: Power, Temporality, and Suffering in the US Asylum System.” *Ethos* 45, no. 1: 75-97.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/etho.12150>.

Hage, Ghassan. 2009. *Waiting*. Carlton, VIC: Melbourne University Press.

Haraway, Donna. 1988. “Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective.” *Feminist Studies* 14, no. 3: 575-599.

<https://doi.org/10.2307/3178066>.

Haraway, Donna. 2017. “Donna Haraway: Statements on ‘Decolonizing Time’ [Excerpts from a Video Interview with Berno Odo Polzer].” *On Occasion of Thinking Together* 2017 – Decolonizing Time.

<https://time-issues.org/haraway-statements-on-decolonizing-time/>.

Harris, John R., and Michael P. Todaro. 1970. "Migration, Unemployment and Development: A Two-sector Analysis." *The American Economic Review* 60, no. 1: 126-142.

https://www.jstor.org/stable/1807860?pqorigsite=summon&seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents.

Harvey, David. 1990. *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers.

Hodge, David R. 2014. "Assisting Victims of Human Trafficking: Strategies to Facilitate Identification, Exit from Trafficking, and the Restoration of Wellness." *Social work* 59, no. 2: 111-118.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/swu002>.

Hyndman, Jennifer, and Wenona Giles. 2017. *Refugees in Extended Exile: Living on the Edge*. London: Routledge.

Illouz, Eva. 2007. *Cold intimacies: The Making of Emotional Capitalism*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Jayasree, Arun Kumar. 2004. "Searching for Justice for Body and Self in a Coercive Environment: Sex Work in Kerala, India." *Reproductive Health Matters* 12, no. 23: 58-67.

[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0968-8080\(04\)23111-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0968-8080(04)23111-1).

Katz, Cindi. 2001. "On the Grounds of Globalization: A Topography for Feminist Political Engagement." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 26, no. 4: 1213-1234.

<https://doi.org/10.1086/495653>.

Khosravi, Shahram. 2017. *Precarious Lives: Waiting and Hope in Iran*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

- Kiluva-Ndunda, Mutindi Mumbua. 2005. "Reciprocity in Research: A Retrospective Look at My Work with Kilome Women." *Counterpoints* 275: 221-233.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/42978787>.
- Lagji, Amanda. 2018. "Waiting in Motion: Mapping Postcolonial Fiction, New Mobilities, and Migration Through Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West*." *Mobilities* 14, no. 2: 218-232.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17450101.2018.1533684>.
- Ley 1751 de 2015, febrero 16 de 2015, por medio de la cual se regula el derecho a la salud y se dictan otras disposiciones. *Diario Oficial* 49427.
<https://www.funcionpublica.gov.co/eva/gestornormativo/norma.php?i=60733>.
- Ley 1595 de 2012, diciembre 21 de 2012, por medio de la cual se aprueba el "Convenio sobre el Trabajo Decente para las Trabajadoras y los Trabajadores Domésticos, 2011 (número 189)", adoptado en Ginebra, Confederación Suiza, en la 100ª reunión de la Conferencia Internacional del Trabajo, el 16 de junio de 2011. *Diario Oficial* 48651.
<https://www.funcionpublica.gov.co/eva/gestornormativo/norma.php?i=51009>.
- Lopez, Claudia (@ClaudiaLopez). 2020. "El 52% del hurto en Transmilenio lo comenten bandas criminales de colombianos y el 48% de inmigrantes venezolanos. Contra todas esas estructuras criminales seguiremos actuando para proteger a todos los ciudadanos de nuestros 2 países para que podamos vivir bien y en paz en Bogotá." Twitter, November 8, 2020, 11:48 am.
<https://twitter.com/claudialopez/status/1325480218421813251?lang=en>.
- Mainwaring, Cetta. 2016. "Migrant Agency: Negotiating Borders and Migration Controls." *Migration Studies* 4, no. 3: 289-308.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/migration/mnw013>.

- Massey, Doreen. 1993. "Power-Geometry and a Progressive Sense of Place." In *Mapping the Futures: Local Cultures, Global Change*, edited by John Bird, Barry Curtis, Tim Putnam, Lisa Tickner, 59-69. London: Routledge.
- <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203977781-12>.
- Mbembe, Joseph-Achille. 2003. "Necropolitics." Translated by Libby Meintjes. *Public Culture* 15, no. 1:11-40.
- <https://doi.org/10.1215/08992363-15-1-11>.
- McKay, Deirdre. 2007. "'Sending Dollars Shows Feeling'—Emotions and Economies in Filipino Migration." *Mobilities* 2, no. 2: 175-194.
- <https://doi.org/10.1080/17450100701381532>.
- Migración Colombia. 2021a. "Frequently Asked Questions PEP." Migración Colombia, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores. Last update June 2021.
- <https://www.migracioncolombia.gov.co/venezuela/pep/preguntas-frecuentes-pep#:~:text=El%20PEP%20DRAMV%2C%20dada%20su,de%20Residencia%20Tipo%20%E2%80%9CR%E2%80%9D>.
- Migración Colombia. 2021b. "Frequently Asked Questions TMF." Migración Colombia, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores. Last update June 2021.
- <https://www.migracioncolombia.gov.co/venezuela/tmf/preguntas-frecuentes-tmf>.
- Ministerio de Educación Nacional de Colombia. 2019a. "Validations." Ministerio de Educación Nacional de Colombia.
- https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/1759/w3-article-355508.html?_noredirect=1.

Ministerio de Educación Nacional de Colombia. 2019b. “Requisitos para ingresar a la educación superior.” Ministerio de Educación Nacional de Colombia.

https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/1759/w3-article-235581.html?_noredirect=1.

Monroe, Jacquelyn. 2008. “Women in Street Prostitution: The Result of Poverty and the Brunt of Inequity.” *Journal of Poverty* 9, no. 3: 69-88.

https://doi.org/10.1300/J134v09n03_04.

Morales, Martha. 2014. “Solo 1 de cada 100 empleadas domésticas tiene contrato laboral.” *Portafolio*. July 23, 2014.

<https://www.portafolio.co/economia/finanzas/100-empleadas-domesticas-contrato-50016>.

Mountz, Alison. 2011. “Where Asylum-Seekers Wait: Feminist Counter-Topographies of Sites Between States.” *Gender, Place & Culture* 18, no. 3: 381-399.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2011.566370>.

Nixon, Rob. 2011. *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Oelgemöller, Christina. 2011. “‘Transit’ and ‘Suspension’: Migration Management or the Metamorphosis of Asylum-Seekers into ‘Illegal’ Immigrants.” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 37, no. 3: 407-424.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2011.526782>.

Ortiz, Alejandra. 2020. “Migración venezolana, cinco años huyendo hacia Colombia.” *El Espectador*, August 18, 2020. Video, 5:16.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DluEI8Wb-fQ&ab_channel=ElEspectador.

- Parreñas, Rhacel Salazar. 2000. "Migrant Filipina Domestic Workers and the International Division of Reproductive Labor." *Gender and Society* 14, no. 4: 560-580.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/190302>.
- Parreñas, Rhacel Salazar. 2005. "Long Distance Intimacy: Class, Gender and Intergenerational Relations Between Mothers and Children in Filipino Transnational Families." *Global Networks* 5, no. 4: 317-336.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-0374.2005.00122.x>.
- Parreñas, Rhacel Salazar. 2008. *The Force of Domesticity: Filipina Migrants and Globalization*. New York: New York University Press.
- Piguet, Etienne. 2018. "Theories of Voluntary and Forced Migration." In *Routledge Handbook of Environmental Displacement and Migration*, edited by Robert McLeman and François Gemenne, 1st edn, 17-28. London: Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315638843-2>.
- Pratt, Geraldine. 2012. *Families Apart: Migrant Mothers and the Conflicts of Labor and Love*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Rendon, Moises, and Max Price. 2019. "Are Sanctions Working in Venezuela." CSIS Briefs. Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS).
https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/190903_RendonPrice_VenezuelaSanctions_layout_v2.pdf.
- Robertson, Shanthi. 2014. "Time and Temporary Migration: The Case of Temporary Graduate Workers and Working Holiday Makers in Australia." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 40, no. 12: 1915-1933.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2013.876896>.

- Rotter, Rebecca. 2015. "Waiting in the Asylum Determination Process: Just an Empty Interlude?." *Time & Society* 25, no. 1: 80-101.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0961463X15613654>.
- Rundell, John. 2009. "Temporal Horizons of Modernity and Modalities of Waiting." In *Waiting*, edited by Ghassan Hage, 39-53. Carlton, VIC: Melbourne University Press.
- Sajjad, Tazreena. 2018. "What's in a Name? 'Refugees', 'Migrants' and the Politics of Labelling." *Race & Class* 60, no. 2: 40-62.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0306396818793582>.
- Santos, Miguel A. 2017. "Venezuela: Running on Empty." *LASA Forum* 48, no. 1: 58-62.
<https://forum.lasaweb.org/files/vol48-issue1/Debates-Venezuela-6.pdf>.
- Seitz, David K. 2017. "Limbo Life in Canada's Waiting Room: Asylum-Seeker as Queer Subject." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 35, no. 3: 438-456.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0263775816667074>.
- Semana*. 2018. "La salud no tiene pasaporte, todos los migrantes tienen derecho a ella." *Semana*, September 24, 2018.
<https://www.semana.com/contenidos-editoriales/inclusion-los-otros-somos-todos/articulo/la-salud-no-tiene-pasaporte-todos-los-migrantes-tienen-derecho-a-ella/584604/>.
- Semana*. 2021. "4.000 nuevos desplazados venezolanos llegaron a Arauquita, tras combates entre las disidencias de las Farc y la Guardia Bolivariana." *Semana*, March 25, 2021.
<https://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/4000-nuevos-desplazados-venezolanos-llegaron->

[a-arauquita-tras-combates-entre-las-disidencias-de-las-farc-y-la-guardia-bolivariana/202137/](#).

Spradley, James P. 1979. *The Ethnographic Interview*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Valentine, Gill. 2006. "Globalizing Intimacy: The Role of Information and Communication Technologies in Maintaining and Creating Relationships." *Women's Studies Quarterly* 34, no. 1/2: 365-393.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/40004765>.

Viscidi, Lisa. 2016. "Venezuela on the Brink: How the State Wrecked the Oil Sector-and How to Save It." *Foreign Affairs* 95, no. 5: 133-140.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/43946964>.

Wade, Peter. 2013. "Articulations of Eroticism and Race: Domestic Service in Latin America." *Feminist Theory* 14, no. 2:187-202.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1464700113483248>.

Weisbrot, Mark, and Jeffrey Sachs. 2019. "Punishing Civilians: U.S. Sanctions on Venezuela." *Challenge* 62, no. 5: 299-321.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/05775132.2019.1638094>.