From private to public spaces: labor market and urban policies in peruvian domestic workers in Buenos Aires

Santiago Canevaro (CONICET/Argentina)
1. Introduction

2. Historical Context of Migration to Argentina

3. Social and epistemological transformations

4. Home as a paradigmatic space: Geographies of encounter/cartographies of Otherness

5. Policies that fragment and segregate: city and homes

6. Trajectories of migration, labor segmentation and urban policies

7. Final Considerations
Approach to the subject

• Relational Approach (“figurational process”, Norbert Elias: 1939)
• Relational Analysis (not “isolated studies”)
• Connected Spheres: Public/private, home/street; politic/private money/love (Zelizer, 2005)

- Qualitative data and ethographic analysis
Some information

- **Argentina:**
  - 17.8% of the women works at the domestic service (Economically Active population: 2009)
  - 27% of the labour force comes from regional countries
  - Mostly have low levels of education (57% incomplete secondary school)

- **Buenos Aires:**
  - 52% of the labour force comes from regional countries (Mostly from Perú and Paraguay; less from Chile and Bolivia)
  - Most works at the “live out” work (82%)
National, regional and local contexts

• Immigration: a historical phenomenon, constitutive of Argentina

• State Narrative (from public policies and discourses) of inclusion for European immigrants in Nationbuilding.

• European migration as beneficial for the country (ideas of “progress”, “modernity” linked with this kind of immigration)
1970-2010. Social and epistemological transformations

- Visibility and invisibilities: from the men (and Europeans) as a center to the women (and Latin American) as focus
- From the national borders to the “visible” cities
- From industrial jobs to “immaterial work” (services, care work)
- From “individual” to “collective” (networks, households, collective decisions)
Neoliberal context (1990-2001): ups and downs for the regional migrants in Buenos Aires

- Covertibility Regime (1 peso = 1U$S)
- Women and remittances for their families
- Residential concentration in the Metropolitan Area of Buenos Aires: Higher Visibility
- Paraguayan, bolivian and peruvian as a focus for the attacks by “porteñan society” (mass media)
- Discrimination that associates national origin, race and social class
- Phenotype that departs from the standard representation of “argentinian” people
- Imagery of a country without “blacks” and “indians”
Homes: physical proximity and social distance
Homes: Constructing differences and negotiating inequalities

• Ambivalent “Geographies of encounter” (Schuermans, 2012): public categories and private tensions (solidarities, micropolitics and reconfigurations)

• Frontiers of negotiations and classifications: reproducing or questioning the stereotypes

• “Inside” versus “Outside” : false dichotomy (the porous nature of classifications)

• Construction of stereotypes and and the negotiations around class, ethnic and racial identities.

• Preferences, stereotypes and negotiations of identity
Stereotypes, representations and identities during the 90´s

- How do Peruvians articulate their characteristics with the “middle classes” in Buenos Aires?
- Transform the historical pattern in domestic service (higher level of education and less experience in domestic service in Perú)
- “Peruvianity”: becoming a positive mark of distinction and used as a resource (against the negative view)
  “Morochitas”(derogatory categorie that means dark skinned) BUT Well Educated” → racial separation which is obscured and superceded by culture and education ↓
  Modern imagery versus the “barbarian” image that represents the rest of the employees
  → “Having a peruvian”: appears as a mark of distinction inside middle-class homes
Policies that fragmented: city and homes

Immigration Law:
- Restrictions to obtain papers and to access to fundamental rights (labour, health and education system)

2003-Present: New Law for Inmigrants

Urban and Local laws:
1- Restrictions to sell in the street
2- Absence of housing policy
3 moments that link migration trajectories, the type of domestic work and urban policies

• Objective: analyze the connection between the trajectories of migration, the type of work and urban policies (local and national)
• Labor segmentation and spatial segregation
• 3 interconnected issues: Housing, visibilities and uses of public space
• Stage in Life cycle at the moment of migrate
1. The “Entry”

- Mode of work (in general: “live in”) and the construction of a way of relating to the employers

- Women without family in the city of destination and far from their families (children) → “Transnational Motherhood” (Sotelo, 2001)

- Greater emotional involvement (reciprocities, loyalties, hopes)

- Emotional Availability/Openness when they arrive in the new country

- Ambivalent feelings: from the “public” stigmatization to the extended categorie of “well treated” in homes

- Majority: Irregular condition (undocumented)

- NETWORKS: provide contacts to housing

- Weekends: time to get in contact with other women in the same situation
Public reunions (squares)
Affective relationships and dependence
2. “Live out”

- Process of Family Reunion and changes in types of labor
- Find housing for children and the family: greater expenses, needs and uncertainties
- Networks from “paisanos” and from their employers
- New relationship with the public space

New Labor Strategies (greater labor movility, uncertainty and new challenges):
- Street Selling and other labour strategies (tension with policies from the City Government of Buenos Aires)
- Spatial segregation: Continuing to concentrate in one of the central locations of the city (Housing, restaurants, remittances agencies, cultural centers)
- Greater the participation in public life
3. Third moment

- Mostly domestic cleaner Jobs and intitutes for elderly care: Less emotional committment and more “contractual” relationships

- Lesser importance of social networks (less obligations): new contacts and different ways of constructing social mobility (vertical and horizontal movements in the labour market)

- Greater uncertainties and precarity in their jobs (quantitie and not fixed)

- Greater needs linked with a new life (housing for a long period, health care and continuing at the labor market)

- Obtain documents by the state (2003) or by *Ius Solis* (childs born)
CIMEI
ARPA ITINERANTE PARA MUJERES MIGRANTES EXTERNAS E INTERNAS SOBRE DERECHOS LABORALES
Y PREVENCION DEL TRABAJO ESCLAVO LA TRATA Y EL TRAFICO
¡MIGRAMOS PARA VIVIR!
¡TRABAJO DIGNO PARA LAS TRABAJADORAS DEL HOGAR MIGRANTES EXTERNAS E INTERNAS!
Public places: presences, uses and visibilities

Peruvians: concentrate in the one of the most commercial and central neighborhood in BA

1- Squares: place to meeting the weekends
2- Family hotels
3- Public Transport
4- Restaurants and cultural centers
Map of Neighborhoods in Buenos Aires
New policies that affected the life of migrants and domestic employees

- 2003: New Immigration Law → Inclusive perspective towards immigrants from the region
- Other possibilities in Buenos Aires (Argentina): cultural and economic possibilities
- Family Project in Argentina: children born and brought up in Argentina
- Limited: residential Segregation: *gentrification* of urban spaces
- Continuing difficulties in obtaining dwelling and access better jobs and better places in the social scale
Squats in Once neighborhood
Final Considerations

• “New” migrants question the “hegemonic” cultural identity
• Peruvian Women in homes: put in connection some axes of the “modern imagery” in an ambivalent way
• Uses of this “place” (home) to find new jobs and construct respect and a “career” inside and outside of the domestic service
• Overlap and porosity of spheres in daily life (private, public, politics at home; solidarity and public disputes in private)
• The relational construction of cultural diversity
• New social and symbolic space for “regional” migration in the imagery in Argentina (law, discourse and legitimacies)
• The socio-anthropological view of the process of migration: relational, connected and interpenetrative analysis