

Bolivian Labor Immigrants'
Experiences in Argentina

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Chapter Five

Moving across Argentina

*Family, Work, and Gender Roles
in the Migration of Bolivian Women
to Córdoba and Ushuaia*

Ana Inés Mallimaci Barral and María José Magliano

From the study of the contemporary Bolivian migration to the cities of Córdoba and Ushuaia in Argentina, this chapter analyzes the implications of family migration on the itineraries of Bolivian women, focusing on their labor experiences in both destination places. It also explores how migration of Bolivian women is closely linked to finding job opportunities as a strategy of family reproduction. The relationship between Bolivian women and work continues through their lives, affecting their experiences and decisions, and becoming a key factor for their migration project. In addition, this chapter considers the economic logics associated with family migration in order to understand the specificities of Bolivian migration to Argentina.

We argue that the history of this social process can be expressed as a *migration expertise* accumulated and naturalized throughout generations of migrants, which influences the migration dynamics and repertoires available for men and women, especially when migration is a part of a family project. The vast, widespread historical migration experience is expressed in the direct knowledge migrants have of the life stories of people nearby (neighbors and family members) who have traveled and still travel to Argentina: they have *always* been socialized with images of people leaving for Argentina, coming back to Bolivia, and sometimes returning to Argentina.

Hence, coming to Argentina has become an accessible resource, practical and always on hand to support family reproduction. From this premise, it is essential to include gender as an explanatory category for Bolivian migration

movements and residence strategies in Argentina. In classic research on international migration, references to women are characterized by the public-private dichotomy.¹ In this particular context, women appear as social and private individuals, whereas men appear as economic and public ones (Gregorio 1998, 23), which strengthens the conception of women as dependent on husband or family when explaining their migration trajectories (Magliano 2009, 355). The study of Bolivian migration to Argentina provides tools to rethink and discuss those ideas. Thus, we analyze the migration processes of Bolivian women traveling to Córdoba and Ushuaia in order to understand how these women manage their own migration experiences and develop their own survival strategies in the destination place. This chapter examines the following questions: What similarities are there in the condition of women, migrants, and Bolivians that allows comparing similar processes in different local contexts? How do the migration history of the region and the local characteristics affect their labor experiences? Can significant differences be perceived between Bolivian women arriving and working in Córdoba and Ushuaia? Some answers to these questions are outlined by reconstructing the itineraries and labor trajectories of Bolivian women in both Córdoba and Ushuaia.

The methodology chosen to carry out this chapter is a qualitative strategy based on participant observation and unstructured interviews with Bolivian men and women residing in Córdoba and Ushuaia at the time of this research. We conducted fieldwork and data collection in both cities during the period 2005–2011. Regarding the interviews, the migrants, Bolivian men and women, were able to recreate their life stories from what they considered most significant. As far as observation is concerned, special attention was paid to the activities Bolivian men and women performed and gender roles associated with them both in Córdoba and Ushuaia. Moreover, there was a focus on how those roles were expressed in the areas of observation as, for instance, women's and men's roles in productive and reproductive spaces. This strategy was complemented with quantitative data, in particular, statistical information from the Argentine census.

The itineraries involved in Bolivian migration movements to Argentina are described in the first part of the chapter, with special emphasis on the incorporation of Córdoba and Ushuaia into the migratory circuits for Bolivian men and women. In the second part, the focus is on the presence of women in the migration process, analyzing, among other aspects, their labor trajectories in both cities, the impact of gender in labor market participation, and family arrangements between Bolivian migrants. The chapter ends with an empirically grounded premise that the relationship between productive and reproductive spheres is determinant to understanding the forms and meanings of the movements of Bolivian women. They are women for whom work, in its broad conception, structures their migration experiences.

ITINERARIES INVOLVED IN BOLIVIAN MIGRATION TO ARGENTINA: CÓRDOBA AND USHUAIA AS DESTINATION PLACES

In the long tradition of Bolivian migration to Argentina, Córdoba and Ushuaia have been incorporated as destination places at different times and in different ways. The movements of people born in countries neighboring Argentina have a long history. Balán (1985) has defined a migration system in the Southern Cone of which Argentina has traditionally been a destination country.² In particular, Bolivian migration has essentially been economic in nature: both women and men have traveled to Argentina to work in order to improve their standard of living (Bastia 2007, 658).

Since 1930, migration from neighboring countries has increased as a response to a shortage of labor in the primary sector of border economies (Benencia 1999). Since then, Argentina has received a constant, stable, quantifiable supply of immigrants from the bordering countries, representing between 2 and 3 percent of the total Argentine population, and, according to the 2010 census, almost 80 percent of the foreign population comes from these neighboring countries (INDEC 2012). As a consequence, studying the contemporary migration in Argentina necessarily implies talking about immigration from neighboring countries (especially Bolivia, Paraguay, and Peru).

As regards Bolivia, migration processes, internal and abroad, have been a persistent social phenomenon throughout its history. They have been developed with varying intensity since the nineteenth century onward, becoming a structural constituent of Bolivian history (Cortes 2004, 168). Many Bolivian migrants who travel to Córdoba and Ushuaia have migrated within Bolivia before their arrival in Argentina, especially those from rural areas. These phenomena, together with the plurality of destinations, count as past experiences of migration mobility. These experiences, then, are part of an individual and collective cultural baggage, attached to the bodies and minds of migrants, men and women, which places them in a different relationship regarding space and permanence in comparison with those people that experience sedentarism as the norm. The migration movement is not lived as an exceptional moment within the context of residential settlements; on the contrary, everyday life is characterized by being territorially mobile. There is not a single migration but movements of different degrees of importance overlapping across a period of time. Migration and mobility are both experienced as ways of life more than singular life moments (Pries 2002).

Bolivian migration to Argentina has historically been a strategy of family reproduction, ancient and widespread, that has become a long-term process in which past, present, and future are linked (Mallimaci Barral 2012, 180). First, Bolivian men and women concentrated on the rural areas around the Argentine borders, Jujuy and Salta particularly. These migrants were mainly

occupied in seasonal rural jobs, with the sugarcane harvest (the *zafra*) being their most important activity. Reboratti (1983), in a research study about temporary migration, determines that circulation of Bolivian workers is different than that of temporary farm workers, who come and go from their destination places. During the period of migration, Bolivians were used to working in connected activities, not only in different harvests but also harvests and other temporary jobs. Bolivian women, principally young women, were also occupied in domestic work in those regions of the country.

According to official national statistics, since 1895 most Bolivian migrants, both men and women, have settled in Jujuy (55 percent) and Salta (40 percent). In 1914, Jujuy sheltered 73 percent of all men and women born in Bolivia, and Salta only 17 percent (Ceva 2006). In 1947, the Bolivian population living in Jujuy represented 15.8 percent of the total population and 85.3 percent of the total foreign population of that province. In Salta, 5.4 percent of the total population was Bolivian, which represented 63.6 percent of the total foreign population living in that province (INDEC 1998).

After that, and progressively since the mid-twentieth century, Bolivian migrants gathered in the main cities of the country, especially Buenos Aires and other important centers, such as Córdoba and Mendoza (Cortes 2004; Benencia and Karasik 1995; Benencia 1997; Domenach and Celton 1998; Magliano 2009 and 2013; Mallimaci Barral 2011 and 2012; and Pizarro 2012). Different studies agree that 1960 is a turning point in the history of Bolivian migration in Argentina. Temporary movements were gradually replaced by rural-urban migration, of both native and migrant populations, toward large cities. Internal migration to urban centers occurring at that time can be explained by the many socioeconomic transformations that took place in the country during those years. In other words, this phenomenon cannot be considered a specific case of Bolivian migration, but a consequence of the favorable conditions created by industrialization policies during the 1930s and 1940s in the Pampean region and of the crisis on regional economies (the fall of sugar prices, the tobacco crisis in Corrientes, and the cotton crash in Chaco). In response to those facts, the Bolivian population living in the northern region of the country moved to urban zones, increasingly reorienting their activities toward those related to construction, service, and agricultural work in peri-urban areas (Benencia 2003, 440). The spread of the Bolivian population to the central region of Argentina can also be explained by the elimination of temporary workers because of technological innovation, especially in activities such as sugarcane harvesting (Sassone 1988). However, it is not just a matter of simple linear passage, but of movements with different destinations and intensities within the Argentine territory, as well as some sporadic returns to Bolivia. Although it is not possible to deduce from the statistics, our interviews show that in the case of Bolivian migration to Ar-

gentina, men have made these first movements to urban regions as a part of itineraries for seasonal jobs within the country.

Taking into account the national statistics, in 1980 the presence of Bolivian men and women in Buenos Aires exceeded that in the northern region of the country. From 1950 to 1980, the growth rate of Bolivian migrants in Buenos Aires was around 4000 percent; in the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires, 314.4 percent; and in Córdoba, 567.2 percent; while in Jujuy and Salta this percentage reached 22.2 and 17.3 respectively (INDEC 2002).

Specifically, it was during this period (second half of the twentieth century) that Córdoba was incorporated into the circuits of Bolivian migrants.³ The process of Bolivian labor migration to this city has been distinguished by a family movement, mainly dependent on men's jobs, mostly in the construction field, which has become one of the labor niches for Bolivian men. Urbanization also brought diversification of the labor activities for both Bolivian men and women. During this period, the migration of Bolivian men, as the pioneers of their families, and the movement of the whole family group was principally determined by male incorporation into the labor market. This particular situation did not mean that Bolivian women did not work or did not expect to work once they arrived in the city, but it generally was the man's job that oriented the migration within the country.

According to the migrants interviewed, most of the migrants who arrived in the 1960s and 1970s experienced internal movements within Bolivia before moving abroad, and they explain the choice of Córdoba as coming from certain ideas they had of the city, such as the prestige of the university or the growing demand for labor, which made it a land of possibilities.⁴ Furthermore, for those many families who migrated to Argentina to work during this period, Córdoba was not their first destination within the country, but only part of a broader migration circuit that included other places of Argentina. The demand for Bolivian workers in Córdoba in those decades was associated with the socioeconomic development of the province. Then, by mid-twentieth century, the settlement of automakers in Córdoba, such as Kaiser and Fiat, was a central issue in the industrialization process of the province (Domenach and Celton 1998). The settlement of industries in the city and in other areas of the province, such as military, aircraft, and transport industries, among others, meant a significant development for the region. This process also impacted other areas of the economy, increasing the labor demand for certain activities, especially in the cities, such as in the construction and service sectors, which were the main fields that incorporated Bolivian migrants into the labor market. Under this scenario, during the 1980s Bolivian migration to Córdoba was consolidated by the strengthening of social networks between origin and destination. Moreover, the social and economic effects of neoliberal policies in Bolivia since that decade gave new meanings

to the dynamics of migration both within and outside the country, establishing migration as a survival strategy for many Bolivian families.⁵

Migrants arriving in Córdoba in the 1980s and 1990s, although in another sociohistorical context, show similar characteristics to migrant workers of the previous decades, especially regarding the areas of labor insertion (for example, construction was still an important activity for Bolivian men) and forms of migration, mainly characterized by family movements, with the man usually going first, soon followed by the rest of the family. Julio describes this process during an interview:

I (Interviewer): Tell me, please, how you got to Córdoba.

J: I arrived at the end of the 80s, in 1988. Things were going bad in Bolivia, in Cochabamba, we didn't have work. I came to work in the construction. My brother, who had migrated first, asked me to come. He had got a job and was working here in the construction. After 2 years, my wife and my 2 kids also came. (Julio, Córdoba, 2005)

Elena, Julio's wife, also told us about her arrival in Córdoba:

I: When did you arrive in Córdoba?

E: In 1990. My husband was already here, working in the construction.

I: Why Córdoba?

E: I always say that we came with a bag full of illusion, full of projects too, to go ahead, with a lot of expectations to study at the university. According to what people said, what called a lot of our attention was the University of Córdoba. Then, with all these things we came. First, came my husband and then, I came with my little kids. After 1985, there was no work in Bolivia. My husband has a brother who was living here and he told us nice things about Córdoba. Then we decided to come and we didn't move again. (Elena, Córdoba, 2005)

Matching with the description given by Devoto (2004), when emigrating, respondents are necessarily linked, committed, or simply related to other people. Men's and women's decision to emigrate is influenced by their relationships—with society in general, their family, and friends—and in certain historical-economic contexts. More and more, the ways Bolivian men and women migrate show the relational structure of migration, visible in both its organization under migration networks and its strong influence on the migratory tradition in future movements.

Bolivian migration to Córdoba is still prominently a labor migration involving the whole family, but, unlike the migration dynamics of the 1960s and 1970s, this city emerges as a first destination in Argentina, which does not necessarily imply that immigrants shall remain permanently in Córdoba. Thus, for migrants looking for labor opportunities, new destination choices seemed to be based on their potential for earning and saving money.

This situation can explain the arrival of Bolivian migrants in Ushuaia, in the far south of the country, at the beginning of the 1980s. Bolivian migration into Ushuaia is based on the arrival of Bolivian pioneers, mainly male construction workers, who were hired by building companies to work in the city. In general terms, pioneers reached the city as part of a collective project: first arrived men and then women did. These were family relocation projects associated with economic progress possibilities.

This process is not a first movement to Argentina but, on the contrary, is part of the Bolivian internal migration within the country. In most cases, the men had stable residence in some other city of Argentina, mainly Buenos Aires, Córdoba, and Mendoza, were married and generally had kids. This is how Oscar remembers his arrival in Ushuaia:

O: I came to Ushuaia hired by a company in Córdoba. It was a subsidiary of another. It was a contractor. I came because I was paid a good salary, as everybody In other words, it was good to come. The contract lasted one whole year with option to extend it.

I: Where did you live?

O: The company provided accommodation. It was a gamela but for machinists. (Oscar, Ushuaia, 2008)

And this is how Ema, his wife, remembers it:

I: When did you arrive in Ushuaia?

E: In 1981. My husband came first to work in a company we knew. We thought it was going to be good for him. (Ema, Ushuaia, 2006)

The central reasons for this movement were the state (referring to *Legislation on Industrial Promotion*) and the building companies. In the mid-1980, manufacturing activity replaced the petroleum industry and became the most important economic activity of the city, reaching its peak in 1988 (Mastrocello 2004). According to a report from the Secretary of Mining of Argentina, the settlement of industries in Ushuaia, together with the mechanisms included in the law to avoid overruns that could arise from the transport of materials from different parts of the country, was linked to a boom in public

and private construction. At that time, due to an awareness of the demand for labor in construction (both private and public) and to the existence of favorable wages, which were high in relation to other regions, the migration networks started to organize the arrival of Bolivian construction workers (along with Argentine and Chilean) coming from different parts of the country.

In terms of population, this period was characterized by a significant acceleration of the average annual growth rate for this region, reaching an exceptional 93 percent between 1980 and 1991. This growth rate dropped to 44 percent in the decade after that, but it remained the highest in the country compared with other jurisdictions. After thirty years, a hundred thousand people settled in Tierra del Fuego (Ushuaia is the main city of this province), which led to changes in its social structure.

State policies regarding economy and population encouraged the arrival of companies and individuals who would be employed as a labor force, Bolivian men among others. In all the cases, migration was not an immediate effect of the intention to move to the destination place but, on the contrary, it was conditioned by the link with the company that offers this kind of stays in different parts of the country, closely associated with the possibility of earning and saving money (housing and food during working hours were paid by the hiring companies). In other words, it was the relation with the company that determined the movement and arrival in Ushuaia.

It is important to notice that Bolivian pioneers were already immigrants as they had previously moved to and settled in an Argentine province, especially Buenos Aires, Córdoba, and Mendoza, before arriving in Ushuaia when they were hired by building companies. Those companies brought Bolivian workers to a city that they did not know, to a city of men, with few people and no Bolivians.

Not all Bolivian men hired by building companies decided to remain in the city. All pioneers settled as temporary workers lived in rented rooms and, after some time, they returned to their habitual residences in other provinces of Argentina. Only few of them decided to stay, becoming the first Bolivians to be part of Ushuaia's population. Therefore, in their testimonies, migrants who became *Fueguinos* (people who live in Tierra del Fuego) explain that their choice to stay made sense with the arrival of their wives and kids: their transition from temporary to long-term projects is reported in marital terms. The rest of the Bolivian women and men reached the city by activating migration networks and by using their relationships with people already established in Ushuaia. These migration networks start with the return to their home towns or to other labor locations, mainly those of the pioneers hired by building companies.

In the long history of mobility, Ushuaia is perceived as an alternative to generate a turning point in the possibility of improving the welfare of individuals and families. However, Ushuaia expresses other virtues as well: the

jobs require less sacrifice, in comparison to those in Buenos Aires, Córdoba, and Mendoza, where people work in production and commercialization of vegetables and brick fabrication from dawn to dusk, or in garment workshops paid by piecework; in short, all those activities that require huge physical sacrifice.

Migration to Ushuaia as a result of the activation of migration networks has mainly been of two types: one directly related to the construction industry, in which intermediaries play a central role; and the other in which the main reason for migration is family relationships, regardless of employment agreements. Both types combine elements related to labor migration (that is, men and women aim to succeed in labor insertion) and those associated with emotional relationships of trust and closeness. The first is clearly male and the second applies to men and women. In both cases, migrants themselves are the ones who organize and structure the migration possibilities for newcomers, activating the mechanisms of opportunities and restrictions in the labor market.

The recognition of different itineraries of migration, always present as a family strategy, has allowed seeing this process as a permanent structure between Bolivia and Argentina. Each new group of immigrants that arrives in the country finds established communities of older migrants, to which they may be added.

The consolidation of Bolivian migration toward different cities in Argentina is strengthened by social networks between origin and destination. As for Córdoba and Ushuaia, male and female Bolivians do not move as autonomous migrants, if by that one means people who migrate alone and independent from relational and family structures. Migration classified as autonomous used to be considered as constituted by people who move alone, outside the structure of family relationships, paying no attention to gender specificities. Following the guidelines for this chapter, we wonder about the impact of these different contexts on the migration of Bolivian women arriving in both Córdoba and Ushuaia and on their labor strategies in their destination places.

THERE IS NO BOLIVIAN WOMAN WHO DOES NOT WORK: THE MIGRATION OF WOMEN AS LABOR MIGRATION

Bolivian women have been involved in migration to Argentina since the beginning of this social process. In traditional Bolivian migration to the country, the movements of women are closely linked to finding job opportunities as a strategy of family reproduction. The importance of the family in the migration project of Bolivian women, clearly evidenced in their testimo-

nies, is attached to their status as workers. According to Mallimaci Barral (2011, 765), productive work, in the narratives of Bolivian women themselves, is significantly related to being a good woman, mother, and wife. Losing the productive dimension of work does not only impact on the family finances, but also represents deterioration in the personal position of Bolivian women. They have not usually resigned the possibility to accumulate their own money through the migration process. Then, the decision of migrating as a family, considering women as both mothers and wives, has included the expectations (generally realized) of their labor insertion in the destination place.

During the last two decades of the twentieth century, Bolivian female migration (internal and abroad) intensified as a result of the neoliberal policies effects. The increase of poverty and unemployment transformed women's job in the cities, principally domestic work and informal trading, into a necessity for the survival of many Bolivian families. Since the structural adjustments implemented in 1985 in Bolivia, tens of thousands of workers have been gradually expelled from the state mining and manufacturing fields. This workforce, mostly male, encountered serious difficulties in finding new stable jobs to ensure their family incomes, and so they relied on the work of other family members, particularly women and older children (Rivera Cusicanqui 2004, 119). These situations, as they are economic and culturally deeply ingrained, explain abroad migration as a practice of everyday life for many Bolivian families in rural and urban areas (Cortes 2004, 168).

Gender, ethnicity, social class, and national origin have intertwined to promote specific trajectories in the Argentine labor market, especially characterized by informality, precariousness, feminization, and even invisibility. In the case of Córdoba, Bolivian women have historically been part of a family migration project. The link between migration and family is based on two main strategies: the first one, perhaps the oldest, is based on migration of male pioneers and the subsequent relocation of the rest of the family; the second one is based on the migration of the family as a whole and at once. For both strategies, generally women's migration involves the migration of their children (Magliano 2013). From the beginning of the Bolivian migration to Argentina, there have been gender differences in labor market insertion. In Córdoba, for example, the most important labor niches for Bolivian migrants have been construction, together with brick fabrication, for men; agricultural for both men and women (although men and women have different tasks within this activity); and domestic work and mobile markets (ferias) for women. Later, garment workshops became another important labor insertion for men and women. In the case of Ushuaia, there are different moments in the local history of Bolivian migration that have influenced the arrival of Bolivian women. First the pioneers came to the city with a kind of collective project where males migrated first—to work in the construction—and then

women did. It is a migratory strategy similar to the one that characterized arrivals in Córdoba; that is, a migration chain tied to the conjugal bond but with the effect of multiple social relations. Informal trading and paid domestic activities have been the main labor trajectories of Bolivian women in Ushuaia.

In both scenarios, labor incorporation of Bolivian women does not activate with migration. On the contrary, they have participated previously in the Bolivian labor market, even at early ages, assuming a central role in the family reproduction (Balán 1990; Dandler and Medeiros 1991; Rivera Cusicanqui 2004). The productive activities migrant women perform differ from one another depending on their age, marital status, social class, ways of migrating, and the time they have spent in the cities of arrival. Also, job opportunities for Bolivian women are influenced by local contexts.

Traditionally, domestic work has been an important insertion for Bolivian women in Argentina. By analyzing life stories of migrants dedicated to this job, it is possible to deduce that domestic work principally occupies single women, whereas self-employment is the main aspiration of a significant percentage of Bolivian families. This tendency is also part of the process of incorporating women into the labor market in Bolivia where, according to Rivera Cusicanqui (2004) and Bastia (2007), domestic work is considered a temporary job mainly associated with a time in the life cycle (being single), and a way of *supporting* the family subsistence and reproduction, carried out by young, unmarried women, frequently girls in their early teens or younger. Nevertheless, looking for new job opportunities is not easy for young Bolivian women, both in Bolivia and in Argentina: for many of them domestic work has been their first and exclusive incorporation in the labor market. If abandoning this occupation is possible, it usually coincides with marriage. That is the case of Andrea, whose first employment when she arrived in Córdoba was domestic work, which she left immediately after she got married, starting a family project (a kiosk):

I: How did you get to Córdoba?

A: Well, I came here after my mother died; I had a brother living in Jujuy. I came with a cousin, first to Jujuy, because I wanted to see him and then to Córdoba.

I: How was your life when you arrived in Córdoba?

A: When I came to Córdoba, I first worked with a family because I did not have studies. I had nothing. Then, I started studying at a night school. By then I worked and lived in the home of my employers because I had

nobody else. While working, I did many crafts, also sewing, because I took dressmaking classes

I: Did you continue working in family homes when you got married?

A: No, when I got married I stopped working as a domestic. My husband and I wanted to start a little own business to improve our life, so we came to live here and open a kiosk. (Andrea, Oruro, Córdoba, 2007)

Although domestic work has become a traditional occupation for South American female migrants in Argentina, above all Bolivians, Paraguayans, and Peruvians (Jelin 1976; Maguid 2011; Marshall 1979), an important percentage of Bolivian women have carried out other labor trajectories, especially those who arrived from rural areas. In order to explain this situation, it is necessary to consider that this activity requires a kind of knowledge, a type of labor relationship management that could have not been performed in the origin country. In some way, their incorporation in the informal labor market in the destination place reproduces some knowledge Bolivian women already have. As we argue, age, urban/rural origin of the migration process, and local contexts in Argentina affect the labor itineraries of Bolivian women within the country.

Self-employment opportunities such as, for instance, trading in fruits and vegetables in mobile markets, kiosks, and garment workshops, can be understood as a strategy to leave domestic work (as in the case of Andrea, mentioned earlier), as well as to develop a job that is perceived as a better option for earning and saving money compared to other traditional labor market occupations (such as domestic work). Many self-employment ventures involving Bolivian women need the support of their husbands and the rest of their family, even though it is women who carry it forward.

Although it has been mainly the work of men that has oriented the Bolivian migration to Córdoba and Ushuaia, women's productive contribution to that process is recognized as central in the success and consolidation of the migration project, though it was not a determining factor at the beginning:

M: There is no Bolivian woman who does not work. We all work. Most of us do. Some compatriots work in mobile markets; some have opened a little store at home and in this way we all contribute to our own economy. I think that it's genetic in us to help our household economy while taking care of our families, our children and their education. (María, Córdoba, 2006)

J: Well, right now I do not finish asking myself why I stayed here. People came only in itineraries of seasonal jobs, and after six months of working

they left the city but I remained here because I already had my little house, my work, and my children. (Juana, Ushuaia, 2006)

Talking about work involves considering its multiple dimensions. However, when Bolivian women (and also men) talk about work, they refer primarily to its productive dimension. That is, work includes all those activities for which they receive some kind of remuneration. Reproductive work, meanwhile, appears invisible, as part of women's tasks based on their gender status (Magliano 2013). In their testimonies, Bolivian women and men highlight the relationship (historical) between paid and unpaid work (referring to those activities related to care, home management, and organization), and the strategies used by migrants in pursuing a combination of productive and reproductive spheres.

The success of the migration project depends largely on the articulation between both spheres, not only because labor availability depends on it (Torns 2008, 59), but also because it provides benefits, in emotional terms, to migrants' daily lives. Then, it is important to recognize the role of family as a space for reproducing traditional models in terms of sexual division of labor and guiding women's activities (De la O and Guadarrama 2006, 167).

For those migrant women who are mothers, their concerns about their children and their future, especially education, affect their migration trajectories. Maternity becomes a central issue of gender specificity in international migration (Lipszyc and Zurutuza 2011, 118). In fact, in Bolivian migration to Córdoba and Ushuaia, women's migration means the movement of the whole family, principally the children.

The case of Bolivian women who move into Argentina and, in general, for female migration from perspectives that do not problematize gender dimensions, family migration, and therefore women's migration, is usually thought of as a second migration, which is a consequence of a first migration, headed by men. This is frequently interpreted as a migration under family reunification. The low importance given to the analysis of movements of women with family projects reinforces the idea that family reunification reveals the motivations for their movements and, at the same time, that male migrants can evade family logics and relationships when migrating. Family migration is often explained by the apparent passivity of women and the subjective assumption that their movements are based on traditional family roles: being a wife and a mother.

At this point, it is essential to mention the economic logic associated with family migration. For a long time, this type of migration referred only to the role of women within the family structure, absolutely excluded from economic and productive spaces. Women's movements in this context were not understood as migration, in the canonical sense, since they occurred in the private sphere, and to explicate those movements it was just enough to con-

sider men's mobility, configured as the only true migration because of their role as the main providers.

In contrast to this perspective, through the analysis of Bolivian women's migration to Argentina, it is possible to foresee economic logics that accompany these movements, which are legitimized by their condition as mother or/and wife. For Bolivian women arriving in Córdoba and Ushuaia, pursuing personal and family welfare is fundamental to their own definition as workers. Thus, we find women who delay their decision to migrate to ensure that they will get some kind of productive incorporation, formal or informal, in the labor market (especially in trade, farms, or garment workshops). Information about other migrant women in the social networks constitutes security clauses that enable migration movements. As a result, certainties and uncertainties about migration itself (and, therefore, migration of the entire family) are not exclusively associated with domestic or emotional issues. They can also take productive and economic meanings. Uncertainties around Bolivian women's migration occur when they cannot anticipate their own productive roles within and outside the family, roles they already know and perform in their hometowns. In general, these are women for whom the productive sphere, associated with the public space, represents a central issue of their subjectivity.

However, the emphasis on the productive dimension as central to female subjectivity should not hide the importance of reproductive work. For a Bolivian woman, working in the productive sector, which according to their life stories is a sign of distinction among other women, includes extradomestic activities that are developed in conjunction with housework. When analyzing the different conceptions of work in the narratives of Bolivian women and men, the relationship between the monetary income and productive field becomes clear. Then, reproductive work is not perceived as work but as part of the natural role of a mother, a wife, and, indeed, a woman.

According to migrant testimonies, while Bolivian men are recognized as mainly producers, in both material and symbolic terms, being relieved of reproductive functions, Bolivian women are valued for their presence in both fields. That is, besides appreciating their economic contribution, considered as assistance to the domestic economy, their roles in reproduction associated with family stability and care constitute a central issue in the migration project. The fact that women's productive work is often understood in terms of support can be related to the perspective, present in most narratives, of considering the Bolivian male as head of household and, as such, mainly responsible at symbolic level for family reproduction. In practice, however, this has not necessarily occurred. Women's economic contributions have sometimes been more important than men's for the family subsistence, both in Bolivia (premigration) and Argentina (postmigration). Thus, besides being the ones in charge of reproduction, they have not only participated in the

productive field, but also been responsible, in some circumstances, for the main family income. Subsequently, in the case of Bolivian women's migration to Argentina, the relationship between productive and reproductive spheres is vital to understanding the forms and meanings of their movements and migration itineraries.

CONCLUSION

Bolivian migration to Argentina seems to be an ever-present structural feature of the horizon of possibilities for Bolivian men and women. In such a context, we highlighted the predictable dimension of movements toward Argentina, which have made migration a part of everyday life.

Reconstructing the migration trajectories of Bolivian men and women reveals important continuities in the development of itineraries of migration in diverse sociohistorical moments and local contexts. Among them, labor and family migration appeared as a central issue for this process. Following this premise, although men have often been the pioneers, the migration decision is not an individual decision, but on the contrary, it involves the entire family. In the context of family migration, women have always been present, playing a key role in the migration process, both during the premigration stages (migration decision and family strategies) and the postmigration period (stability and consolidation of the migration project from their roles in the productive and reproductive fields).

Furthermore, when we examined the itineraries and trajectories of Bolivian migration to Argentina, the primary role of social networks, understood as relationships established between migrants and potential migrants, became apparent. The fact that this migration process is conditioned by social networks undermines the common representation of autonomous migrants as those who move individually. The strong dependence on social networks is usually related to describing female migration, especially in those studies that use autonomy as classification criteria of migration patterns (the autonomy pattern as distinct from the associative pattern), which has had prescriptive consequences, particularly concerning migrant women, of ignoring the gender dimension, since the notion of autonomy is crystallized in the image of an adult male worker, whereas women are supposed to be more affected by associative patterns and their decisions usually involve and affect the entire household.

Through analyzing the migration itineraries of Bolivian women in different cities (Córdoba and Ushuaia), it is possible to notice that the coincidences exceed the differences. Restrictions on women's mobility as pioneers within the family (as it was reported in contemporary cases of feminization of migration and in transnational studies⁶) should be understood from a dual

logic: on the one hand, gender constrictions make it difficult for them to be absent from home for a long time; but also, and especially, family strategies structured according to the job opportunities of both the Bolivian labor market, which enables women's labor insertion, mainly in those activities associated with the mobile markets (ferias) not normally affected by local economic crises, and also Argentine labor market, segmented depending on gender, ethnicity, and social class. To sum up, the migration of Bolivian women to Argentina argues the idea, present in a wide range of studies on female migration, that family migration takes place through dependence on women as rather than based on men's autonomy. The low importance given to the experiences of women's migration with family projects continues to reinforce the idea that family reunification explains women's motivations to move and that male migration does not rest on family logics. The analysis of Bolivian women migrating to Argentina in general, and particularly into Córdoba and Ushuaia, discusses the premise that migration within family contexts emphasizes the dependency and passivity status of women. By contrast, the study of this social process, which is part of a family strategy, expresses the relevance of Bolivian women in the decisions and forms of migration and the active role they play in the family subsistence throughout the articulation between productive and reproductive spheres.

NOTES

1. The dichotomies of public-private, productive-reproductive, domestic-extradomestic have been classic discussions in gender studies. From these studies, it was established that the boundaries between public and private, productive and reproductive, domestic and extradomestic spheres are not natural or given but social constructions that match specific political and ideological projects. For further information on this topic, see: Carrasquer et al. (1998); Jelin (2010); Maquiara (2001); and Torns (2008).

2. For the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC) of Argentina, the definition of *immigrant* depends on the origin country of the population.

3. Córdoba, located in the center of the country, is part of the so called *pampa húmeda*, which constitutes the center of agricultural, livestock, and industrial development in Argentina.

4. The National University of Córdoba is the oldest university in Argentina (1613) and has great academic prestige and tradition in Argentina and Latin America.

5. Though historically Bolivian society has been characterized by deep social inequalities, in 1985, the Revolutionary National Movement (RNM) implemented a structural adjustment plan, adopting predominantly neoliberal policies. This adjustment plan caused significant socio-economic tensions (the privatization of the national mines was one of the main parts of that plan), and the acceleration of internal and external migration was one of the consequences.

6. There are several studies about this topic. Among others: Anthias (2006), Ariza (2000) Herrera (2012), Parella (2012), Pedone (2006), Pessar and Mahler (2003).

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