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The Pasanaku in Europe: Creative and Communitarian Strategies in the context of precarious life.

Research question:

How do communitarian practices among Latin American immigrants constitute strategies of solidarity to cope with precarious conditions in the context of Europe?

Abstract:

The project aims to analyze *Pasanaku*, a communitarian practice from Bolivia, based on principles of the Andean cosmology: solidarity, reciprocity and cooperation; and the life stories of its members. The *Pasanaku* has been adapted and used by undocumented and/or precarious immigrant women living in diverse locations in Europe: Amsterdam, Madrid or Barcelona, and Frankfurt or Heilbronn.

The practice serves multiple purposes: initially, it serves as an alternative to banks as a money lending system or a pool to collect money, as undocumented migrants, do not have access to the banking system; or on the other hand, in scenarios of crisis and precarity, the practice functions as a mechanism to have a 'loan' without interests. However, on a deeper level, its purpose is to create a network to cope with the diverse dynamics embedded with being a precarized immigrant living in Europe.

In the context of global labor migration to global cities, the practice of *Pasanaku* becomes a coping mechanism but also a space that possibilities to address broader theoretical concepts. This comparative study through its diverse methods will contribute to problematize the practice, its achievements and limits; but also, to expand into broader concepts related to female migration and precarity.



Central Issues and Aims

The aim of this study consists on a comparative analysis of different *Pasanakus* and the life stories of its members to perceive how they cope with diverse levels of precarity, anonymity and exclusion in the context of migration. By combining empirical methods and data collection from fieldwork, I will show how the practices and its members tie together and allow to map the following concepts: Castles' notions of contemporary migration (2002, 2003), Sandro Mezzadra's and Brett Neilson's 'Border as Method' (2013) and Nicholas de Genova's 'The Deportation Regime' (2010); Saskia Sassen's (2007, 2012) and David Harvey's (2000, 2012) work on 'global cities', Judith Butler's work on precarity (2004, 2009, 2011) Isabel Lorey's (2015) 'Three dimensions of the precarious, Silvia Federici (2004; 2012) to expand on house and care work and the Spanish collective 'Precarias a la deriva' as an example of politics and agency within gendered migration.

Subsequently, precarity and gender constitute another spearhead of this research. The conjunction of diverse factors such as: the labor market, the ageing population of the European countries and the policies of public institutions regarding the care of the dependents, has developed a niche of precarized work to be assumed by female immigrants (Gil Araujo and González-Fernández 2014, 18). How have those factors been experienced in Spain, The Netherlands and Germany?

To tackle the 'feminization of survival', it is pertinent to delve in the meaning of precarity. In this light, I propose to consider precarity from a non-western and female perspective, as for immigrants, precarity has another dimension and implication. By analyzing the trajectories of migration and life stories of *Pasanaku's* women, I will trace how 'the border struggles' and 'the diverse dimensions of precarity' had affected them and how the proliferation of borders cross the life and mind setting up a complex and precarious scenario. As Millar, K. (2017) suggests, theorizing precarity could constitute a way to explore the 'political work that this concept performs'. Therefore, this study offers two interesting and pertinent approaches: 1) understanding the context through the lens of diverse layers of precarity and 2) understanding how in this context, informal strategies of solidarity -as *Pasanaku* or any other- have helped these women as mechanism to cope precarity or any other need while migrating.



Finally, by analyzing these solidarity and creative networks, with its achievements and limits, I will show how these strategies help to negotiate -yet in a private sphere- the border struggle. Therefore, I want to dig into the possibilities of creating political subjectivities and spaces of counter-power which allow to think about the richness of their own experiences as female immigrants.

Methodology

I propose to work by combining Qualitative methodology coming from the Social Sciences and close reading and concepts from Cultural Analysis. The main empirical methods for fieldwork and data collection will be in depth interviews and participant and non-participant observations. In order to understand the *Pasanaku* practices and its women's life stories, this study offers an inductive perspective, with a non-linear process through the grounded theory as the objects of study are in constant dialogue with the theory; being built from each another interaction.

The sample of every *Pasanaku* will depend on the number of its members; however, in general every group has been formed by 10-12 people in average. The analysis of the data will be made by transcriptions and Atlas.ti.

Keywords

Migration, global cities, precarity, feminized labor, solidarity networks, counter-power, decolonial theory

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