The Spanish Network of Latin American and Caribbean women: a counter-hegemonic space for the female, migrant, domestic/care workers' political subjectivation

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ABSTRACT

The crisis of the Covid-19 pandemic has served as a magnifying glass for the already existing discriminations across race, gender, and class whilst it has increased the economic and social inequalities. It brought into light how current socioeconomic neoliberal structures are based on the chronic, invisible, and unpaid care work performed by women, most of them migrants. Thus, the Covid-19 crisis has manifested not only as a global health crisis but undoubtedly as a crisis in the field of care provision (Avlona, 2020)

Stemming from this, during the summer of 2020, a group of female, migrant, domestic, and care workers (FMDWs)[1] in Spain, members of the *Network of Latin American and Caribbean Women (Red de Mujeres Latinoamericanas y del Caribe en España)* came together to curate the political manifesto *To leave no one behind! Care and violence: what the Covid-19 crisis has revealed in the Spanish State*, which includes a thorough diagnosis and series of proposals aiming at improving the already precarious working conditions of domestic workers that the pandemic has unveiled.

Through the employment of feminist, post-Marxist discussions on care work, and critical migration studies standpoints of migrant subjectivities and citizenship, I intend to conduct a qualitative content analysis of the mentioned political manifesto complemented with a Network's meeting report. In this light, this thesis aims at understanding how this Network is serving as a counter-hegemonic space where migrant women are enacting exercises of heterogeneous migrant, political subjectivation.

Keywords:

domestic/care work, living labour, counter-hegemony, social struggles, political subjectivation, post-Marxism, transnational feminism, intersectionality, Spanish State

[1] Throughout this thesis, I will be using the acronym FMDWs when referring to female, migrant domestic, and care workers.

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1 Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic and its effects have revealed the vulnerability of humans and the undeniable truth of our interdependent nature. We are linked to each other, connected irretrievably, even though centuries of capitalist logics have strived to create an individualistic subject who, alienated from the social issues, has largely renounced to the cultivation of bonds of affection, community and the collective. In this context of the crisis of the capitalist system itself, we must remember, as the scholar Nancy Fraser (2020) argues in one of her last works, that care [which includes both affective and material work and is often carried out without remuneration], is indispensable for the maintenance of modern society.

This health crisis has aggravated the already vulnerable situation of domestic workers' rights in the Spanish State. For some, the workload has increased, and free Sundays are denied as the whole family is staying at home and is demanding more constant assistance. Other domestic workers have reported being abused by employers sending them for errands without adequate protective equipment or withholding salaries and documents (CREST, 2020).

Due to a systemic, gender division of labour, the Spanish welfare state can afford the lack of investment in public care policies at the level that most neighbouring countries do. Spain's model of care management depends entirely on their work, 28% of all EU domestic workers, are employed in the Spanish State. Although the average wage of domestic workers is the equivalent of less than half of the average wage, the real value of his work is incalculable.

In this sense, when it comes to the Spanish realm, more than half a million of these domestic workers have not been recognized with the same labour rights as the rest of the country's employees within the labour market. They are not entitled to any prevention of occupational risks, unemployment benefits, or protection against unjustified dismissal (Intermon Oxfam:2021). Before the Covid-19 pandemic, 32.5% of them lived below the poverty line; 1 in 6, in a severe poverty situation. Without an equitable sharing of household chores and care responsibilities [among men, women, businesses, and the state] they have made possible the massive incorporation of women into the Spanish labour market. Just over half of these women are migrants, from which 1 in 4 lives in an irregular situation. At a European level, 'over the last 20 years, caregiving in private households has developed into the largest employment sector for migrant women (…)' (Lutz, 2018:578). In this sense, throughout this thesis, I will assume autonomist Marxist postulates on labour and domestic work. More specifically, I will

align my discussions with Mezzadra's premise which argues that 'borders shape the lives and experiences of subjects who, due to the functioning of the border itself, are configured as bearers of labor power' (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013:20) From this perspective, female migrant, domestic workers are seen as one more representation of the 'heterogeneity and radical diversity of the composition of contemporary living labour (Mezzadra:2007).

During the last decade, various theories on international transfer of caretaking and 'global care chains' (see e.g., Hoschild, 2000, 2003; Lutz, 2006, 2012, Parreñas, 2005; Isaksen, 2010; Yeates, 2004, 2009, 2012) have aroused inquiries on different forms of social inequity and divisions among women. The mentioned theories have shown how migrant women from the global south are being increasingly employed by private households in the global north to perform what has been coined by the sociologist Bridget Anderson (2000) as the 'dirty work'. Several scholars have stressed the 'exploitative conditions of the work, the asymmetrical power relations between workers and employers and the racist stereotypes that underpin the employment of certain ethnic groups and nationalities' (Anderson & Phizacklea, 1997; Lutz, 2002; Malgesini Rey et al., 2004 as cited in Peterson, 2007). There is a predominant focus of mainstream research on 'the figure of the male migrant worker, mainly contested by feminist scholars, who have pointed out the relevance of subjective motives for women's migration' (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013:104). On the other hand, as already mentioned, literature on female migrants and domestic care work is a growing research field. However, few scholars have developed accounts on FMDW's political collective mobilisation focusing on the construction of the [female] migrant subject as an active, subversive, political figure. Literature about the social and political participation of migrants in Spain started emerging within the last decade (Martín-Pérez, 2004; Morell, 2005; Pont-Vidal, 2005). Despite its low projection, these approaches have managed to restore discussions around migration into novel frameworks that replace traditional ones. However, it is usually migrant males who are portrayed as the main representatives and spokespersons in the acts of political and social participation. In these approaches, migrant women do not have a leading role, and in many cases, there is a lack of gender perspective. In addition, the focus is usually on migrant associationism while analyses of political participation as such (in unions, political parties, or human rights movements) are virtually non-existent (Obelar, 2019). Thus, with this research I intend to make an original contribution of knowledge to the field of critical migration studies.

To this end, I will employ post-Marxist accounts as the main political and theoretical umbrella which will, in turn, guide further theoretical discussions within gender, feminist and critical migration studies. Furthermore, I will adopt the standpoint of a very lucid discussion on domestic work as affective labour, Encarna Gutiérrez Rodriguez argues how 'domestic work becomes a neuralgic point in order to understand how the logic of capital accumulation operates on the basis of feminization and the coloniality of labor' (Gutiérrez Rodríguez, 2011:1). Thus, inspired by her work and various ongoing discussions within autonomist Marxist accounts on migrant labour (De Genova, 2018; Mezzadra, 2011, 2013; Papadopoulos et.al, 2007), this thesis' main focus is on female, migrant, domestic care work as the embodiment of both 'the feminization of migration and the feminization of labour'(Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013:104). By employing taking Mezzadra's account, I consider how the configuration of the subjectivity of female, migrants (ibid:20) in the present case of study 'constitutes an essential moment within the more general processes of the production of labour power as a commodity'(ibid.). In addition, the theoretical lens of contentious politics of migrant protests (Ataç, Rygiel, & Stierl, 2016) will serve as a complementary analytical tool to examine this collective mobilisation of migrant women. Finally, I will complement the above discussions with a state-of-the-art review about the concept of *care work* and its position within the neoliberal logics of modern capitalism.

Thus, assuming the theoretical conceptualization of labour as a commodity, I will examine a network of FMDWs collective mobilisation to understand how this migrant, female associations in Spain is emerging as a subversive, counter-hegemonic political spaces and how are their members politically subjectifying themselves through labour.

To this extent, after exposing the case of FMDWs in Spain and introducing the Network of Latin American and Caribbean Women in Spain (whose political project I will analyse) the second chapter of this thesis will consist of an explanation of methodological considerations as well as my epistemological positioning throughout this thesis. The third chapter will engage in a contextual examination of the Spanish model of care management in relation to the Spanish migration regime. In chapter four, I will outline the main theoretical framework and scholarships that have been employed throughout the present thesis. Finally, the last chapter will present a conclusion of the thesis where I will answer the research question and present the main thesis' findings.

1.2 The case of political mobilisation of female, migrant, domestic workers in Spain

Stemming from this complex and precarious pandemic realm, the political manifesto *To leave no one behind! Care and violence: what the Covid-19 crisis has revealed in the Spanish State* emerges as an outcome of the participatory work of different women's associations and collectives. Initiated by the *Network of Latin American and Caribbean Women in Spain*, the mentioned political document makes a thorough diagnose of how Covid-19 has unveiled the structural ways of oppression that these migrant women go through. As they state in the manifesto: 'We are women crossed by multiple *violences*. We are not vulnerable, we are '*vulnerabilized'*. The Covid-19 pandemic has made manifest our precarious and socially excluded situation' (To leave no one behind! Care and violence: what the Covid-19 crisis has revealed in the Spanish State, 2020)

1.2.1 Introducing the Network of Latin American and Caribbean Women in Spain

This Network arises from and for migrant women. Is the result of a process of coordination and articulation between Latin American women's organizations in Spain, which took place the 18th of September 2010 at the first meeting of Latin American and Caribbean Women held in Madrid (Red Latinas, 2021). The Network, founded entirely by migrant women, is composed of thirteen organizations and Latin American human rights activists settled in the Spanish State. Among these organizations, more than half of them are defending female, migrant, domestic workers' rights.

As they state in their official website, their main purpose is to: '(…) be a place for encounters, a space in which sharing knowledge, building collective thought, a place for advocacy, mutual support and a political reference to advocate for our rights as Latin American and Caribbean migrant women in Spain. We want to enhance and make visible the leadership and advocacy capabilities of participating women's organizations and establish a political agenda among participating organizations' (ibid.).

It is through the examination of the political manifesto *To leave no one behind! Care and violence: what the Covid-19 crisis has revealed in the Spanish State* in combination with the analysis of a meeting report from the same association "*Citizenship and Participation of migrant and refugee women: Consolidating our political agenda*", that I will explore how this space might a counter-hegemonic political scenario where [female] migrant political subjectivities are emerging. Especial attention will be paid to the specific demands and claims

they advocate for through the mentioned political documents. Using Mezzadra's postulate, 'there is a tendency to conceive of politics in contemporary critical and radical debates exclusively in terms of rupture or in terms of the event' (Mezzadra & Nunes, 2010:137). Thus, by examining 'the temporality of the material practices that create the conditions of possibility of insurgence through clashes and solidarities' (a term that the author has coined as 'temporality of struggles') I intend to examine this Network composed by women with heterogeneous legal statuses, socio-economic, political backgrounds, and vital circumstances. Throughout the present research, it will be shown how these political common spaces open up 'the possibility of building heterogeneous coalitions and common grounds for an encounter between migrants and other subjects in struggle (...)' (Mezzadra & Nunes, 2010:137).

Thus, the thesis will be structured around the main research question:

- *How is this Network of Latin American and Caribbean Women a fertile space for the emergence of counter-hegemonic[2] [migrant] political subjectivities?*

Intending to shed light on this research question, I have also formulated three specific working questions which will guide the analysis of the empirical material.

- *Is the nature of their demands and claims (at both individual and collective terms) aligned within the normative prescriptions of the established status quo?*
- *Where are they positioning themselves within the political spectrum and to what extent is their political discourse a subversive one?*
- W*hat kind of strategic alliances with other civil society organizations [or other social struggles] has the network built?*

[2] When using the term 'counter-hegemonic' I refer here to Gramsci's notion of 'counter-hegemony' that defines 'the way people develop ideas and discourse to challenge dominant assumptions, beliefs and established patterns of behaviour. In the context of globalization, counterhegemony is employed to explain some of the criticism of, and mobilization against, globalization. It is the intellectual foundation for much of the anti-globalization movement' (Cox, R. H., & Schilthuis, A., 2012:1).

2. Methodological considerations

In the following chapter, I will present the methodological considerations that guide this research and the data that will be employed. I will start by presenting a justification of the epistemological positioning adopted in this research together with an explanation of its ontological implications. Following, I will briefly elaborate on the empirical focus of the thesis and the process that led me to the selection of the data collected. Finally, I will discuss the use of qualitative content analysis in the Analysis chapter, the three main sub-questions around which the Analysis will be structured together with a brief presentation of the data that composes the research.

2.1 Epistemological positioning

Regarding the epistemological position in which this thesis is emplaced, I will be aligning my research with the social constructivist perspective. By assuming this positioning, I also intend to show and unveil the figure of the researcher and how I, as a part of a social reality, engage with interpretations of the social phenomena object of analysis from a certain paradigm or worldview (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). By 'paradigm' I am referring here to a conceptual framework made of a certain system of beliefs that direct our actions and elucidations (being these conscious or unconscious). In this sense, all qualitative research is based on certain paradigms that intend to stress the potentiality and persuasiveness of the research rather than attestation or an absolute truth (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Therefore, this implies that any researcher's choice of epistemological paradigm is directly influenced by their system of beliefs and ontological assumptions [*ontology* here refers to assumptions about what the nature of reality is and what can I know about it (ibid.)] Thus, the beliefs and assumptions stemming from the constructivist social paradigm are based on ontological relativism. This, in turn, is based on the belief of the existence of multiple and diverse realities, in contrast with the 'ontological realism' which assumes the existence of an outside absolute truth (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Therefore, social realities are considered to be fluid and co-constructed through social interactions and life experiences. (Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2011). In this sense, realities can also be constructed and shared through community narratives which, in turn, are directly influenced by temporal and historical conditions (Lincoln et al., 2011). Consequently, the constructivist worldview here adopted consists of the researcher's assumptions about reality's

nature in general terms and, more specifically, of the FMDWs experiences of political subjectification in Spain.

As already explained, the present research makes use of a body of literature that includes, among others, autonomy of migration (AoM) scholarship (Casas-Cortes, 2015; De Genova, 2018; Mezzadra, 2011, 2013; Papadopoulos & Vassilis, 2007) which states that 'borders, far from serving simply to block or obstruct global flows, have become essential devices for their articulation' (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013:3). This line of thought agrees with the idea that nation-state still provides a relevant political reference from the viewpoint of power configurations and, especially, their articulation with the capital-labour interrelation (ibid.). However, even though it is embedded within the socio-political and historical context of the Spanish State, the present research intends to go beyond what has been coined 'methodological nationalism' (Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002), and its use of the nation-state as the primary unit of analysis. Indeed, within this same account on borders, I will assume the ongoing academic discussions that considers it 'not so much a research object as an epistemological viewpoint that allows an acute critical analysis not only of how relations of domination, dispossession, and exploitation are being redefined presently but also of the struggles that take shape around these changing relations' (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013:3).

2.2 Empirical focus and data collection

After this epistemological clarification, I will dive into the explanation of the thesis' empirical focus and the three main themes around which the content analysis will be structured. Thus, this research is empirically focused on the female, migrant domestic workers (FMDWs) employed in the Spanish State. More specifically, I am focusing on the different ways they navigate this socio-political realm in order to construct their political identities as FMDWs and how they present it to the Spanish public sphere. To achieve this, I will employ the already introduced literature on feminist and migration studies which will guide us throughout the qualitative content analysis of the two FMDWs' political documents selected.

As it has been mentioned, the political manifesto *To leave no one behind! Care and violence: what the Covid-19 crisis has revealed in the Spanish State* served as a starting point and initial contact with the reality that these women are experiencing and how the Covid-19 pandemic had highlighted existing structural issues which left them in an even more precarious and vulnerable situation.

During the process of contacting FMDWs, I found it difficult to engage in direct conversations with members belonging to these organizations [both formally, through emails, and other

informal channels such as social networks]. Thus, in the face of this disjunction, I decided to consider other sources of information that could likewise reflect how these women signify themselves politically. In this way, I realized that the same political document that served as the starting point for this research also contained extremely relevant information on how this group projects and signifies their different political subjectivities as FMDWs and, above all, how [through which registers] are they delivering this to the public sphere. For this reason, I consider that a qualitative analysis of the content of the above-mentioned manifest, supplemented with the analysis of the IV meeting report *Citizenship and Participation of migrant and refugee women: Consolidating our political agenda*", will conform a highly relevant representation of FMDWs political activism.

Interestingly, the latter report contained a very insightful sentence which also could partially explain the reason why none of the contacted women were willing to collaborate by giving their testimonies for this research. As part of the various conclusions stemming from a discussion panel called *Migration and feminisms: contributions to a political debate about citizenship and participation*, the very last one stated the following: 'We are no longer academic study objects, now, we are our own political subjects' (IV Meeting "Citizenship and Participation of migrant and refugee women: Consolidating our political agenda", 2018)

2.3 Qualitative content analysis

As mentioned above, I will conduct a qualitative content analysis of the mentioned political texts curated by the *Network of Latin American and Caribbean Women*. To shed light on this thesis' research question, the three research sub-questions will be employed as main themes around which the Analysis will be structured.

Firstly, with the question: *Is the nature of their demands and claims (at both individual and collective terms) aligned within the normative prescriptions of the established status quo?*

I intend to better understand the diagnose of the socio-political current reality that led to the proposals and demands these women claim for. Furthermore, claiming and denouncing is here being interpret as a genuine exercise through which these women are signifying themselves as active, political subjects. Thus, the examination of the content and nature in which these demands are being formulated will allow me to engage in an initial theoretical dialogue with the data collected.

Secondly, with the question: *Where are they positioning themselves within the political spectrum and, to what extent is their political discourse a subversive one?* I will shed light on

the prevailing type of socio-political language employed throughout the texts that may reflect the network's political culture. The latter term is understood here as 'composed of the attitudes, beliefs, emotions and values of society that relate to the political system and to political issues. These attitudes may not be consciously held but may be implicit in an individual or group relationship with the political system' (Ball A.R., 1988:1). Here, I aim at identifying particular ideologies which are not aligned with the current Establishment's mainstream ones and are, therefore, questioning the *status quo* and the hegemonic power structures.

Lastly, regarding the question: W*hat kind of strategic alliances with other civil society organizations [or other social struggles] has the network built?* I will focus on the importance given to the already existing alliances [or the desire to create new ones] with other migrants, feminist, civil society organizations, and social struggles. Also, I intend to examine to what extent this network is facilitating spaces where these women have 'the possibility of building heterogeneous coalitions and common grounds for an encounter' with other 'subjects in struggle (...)' (Mezzadra & Nunes, 2010:137) with whom they might be sharing some of their fundamental ideological positions and approaches.

As already noted, through the examination of these documents, I intend to comprehend in which terms are FMDWs positioning themselves and how their political subjectivities as migrants are being constructed.

In this regard, the first text to examine will be a report 'IV Meeting: "Citizenship and Participation of migrant and refugee women: Consolidating our political agenda."', an ideal vehicle through which I can have a first approach at the political standpoints and ideologies with which these FMDWs identify. Furthermore, this document will provide me with a clear picture about which are the main political discussions and debates currently taking place, in what terms the network's members portray themselves as political subjects, and which are their internal organizational dynamics and alliances with other actors. This network's IV meeting report is comprised of a brief description of the activities and discussion panels that took place throughout the meeting as well as a succinct presentation about the different grassroots and the participants involved in this 3-day encounter (from the 19th till the 21st of October 2018). Furthermore, it is also pertinent to stress the fact that the encounter was partially funded by a grant from the Open Society Foundation Institute in cooperation with the Human Rights Initiative of the Open Society Foundations. As per the organization's website, 'the Open Society Foundations, founded by George Soros, are the world's largest private funder of

independent groups working for justice, democratic governance, and human rights. We provide thousands of grants every year through a network of national and regional foundations and offices, funding a vast array of projects—many of them now shaped by the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic' (Open Society Foundations, 2021) Regardless of the various political implications that this might have, I want to focus on the fact that, since the event was partially funded by this institution, the official Networks' report documenting it had, therefore, to be written with a certain intentional register and discursive line with which the Network members wished to project themselves to the public sphere. Thus, the fact that it was funded by a philanthropic organization means that the Network had to be accountable to the latter and curate this document *ad hoc*.

I this sense, since it is the product of a three days event where feminist academics and activists participated in various discussion panels and workshops, the resulting text can be considered a highly relevant account of the Network's main ideological and political standpoints. Furthermore, the text's examination will also allow me to bring to light the ontological space[s] from which these women build their political subjectivities (both individual and collective level).

The second document I will analyse, '*Para no dejar a nadie atrás*! (*To leave no one behind! Care and violence: what the Covid-19 crisis has revealed in the Spanish State*)' is a relevant testimony that will allow me to grasp the actual and specific demands and claims that these women are asking for, stemming from the Covid-19 health and socio-political crisis.

As they point out: 'we are migrant women at a legal crossroad that prevents us from the full enjoyment of human rights, a condition that has worsen during the Covid-19 pandemic' (To leave no one behind! Care and violence: what the Covid-19 crisis has revealed in the Spanish State, 2020). Thus, the analysis of the diagnose they make about their current circumstances as migrant, female, domestic workers will enable me to therefore understand to what extent their political discourse and demands are aligned with the normative legislative framework or if, on the contrary, their claims involve any kind of critical observation regarding the existing socio-political *status quo*.

3 Migration and Care work in Spain

Before diving into theoretical discussions on domestic, care work, and migrant subject-making, I will shortly outline the main characteristics that compound migration care work in Spain.

As a starting point, it is important to stress how nearly half of the work permits granted to foreign women in 2020 went to those employed in domestic work. The poor regulation and control of household work, together with the absence of legal avenues of migration, lead to this being the labour sector with the most workers in irregular situations: an estimation of 70,000 women. (Intermon Oxfam: 2021). There is a clear racial segregation of low-paid and low-rights work. In the first 10 months of 2020, 47.8% of work permits granted to foreign women were associated with household work. The next sector with the most work permits (hospitality) accounted for only 6.7% of the total. On the male side, no sector has an equivalent weight (ibid.).

It is extremely difficult to know precisely how many migrants are currently working irregularly and undocumented. The most up-to-date data estimates that around 300,000 migrants are currently employed irregularly, of which 70,000 are female, domestic workers; that is, up to 23% of migrant workers employed in irregular situations are domestic workers.

3.1 The Spanish model of care management

Spain invests relatively less money in long-term care and attention to dependence than the rest of the EU countries, and that is noticeable in the occupational structure of women to the labour market. There is a correlation between social service workers and domestic workers; the more the former, due to greater public investment in care, the lesser the second. While in Finland 9% of its workers are engaged in social services and residential assistance, only 0.32% of their workforce is employed in household work. In Belgium, these figures are 7.8% and 0.08% respectively and in the Netherlands 8% and 0.13%.

Although the incorporation of women into employment has been a constant worldwide, especially in Western countries, not all of them have resulted in an increase in domestic workers in the proportion seen in the Spanish State. In other States, the care market has been occupied by companies providing these services; in Spain, direct recruitment by families has been overdeveloped. While household employment accounts for 0.9% of the EU's working population, in Spain this figure rises to 3.25% (Intermon Oxfam:2021)

In fact, from the 20 countries reporting to Eurostat the percentage of domestic workers and care employed by individuals, Italy and Spain figures sum up 61.5% of all EU percentage of domestic workers. The reason for this overrepresentation of household work is closely related to a *familiarist* model of Welfare States in which households and, fundamentally, women

within these, assume care work endeavours and absorb vital risks with less state support than in other European countries (ibid.).

4 Theoretical framework

> *Female experiences of labour migration intersect some of the most tumultuous moments of contemporary capitalist development (Mezzadra & Nielson, 2013:103).*

As I have emphasized, this thesis will engage with critical debates on migration which go beyond the dominating dichotomic, mainstream explanations: the first being the economic one, considering migration under the headline of 'exploitation' whereas a more positive view 'mainly proposed by cultural studies theorists', (Mezzadra & Nunes, 2010:123) that emphasis the undermining 'effect of migrant agency and hybridity on foundationalist metanarratives and 'simple binaries of Self and Other' (ibid.). Mezzadra argues how these mentioned 'culturalist' examinations also seem to be oblivious of the 'general economic framework within which migration takes place (and within which cultural dynamics themselves are increasingly a strategic stake)' (Mezzadra, 2011:156). At the same time, he argues, it induces to an 'economicistic' interpretation of exploitation 'in which social and cultural processes of subjectivation do not play any role' (ibid.). Following Mezzadra, a way out of this impasse may only be possible through a divergent interpretation of capital and capitalism [as well as the very concept of exploitation] (ibid.).

Thus, as a main theoretical broader context, I would like to situate this thesis' reflections within the recent literature on the mobility of labour in historical capitalism (Steinfeld:2001; Mezzadra:2006; Van der Linden:2008, Moulier Boutang 1998). These scholars have shown how capitalism is inflected by a structural tension between 'ensemble of subjective practices in which the mobility of labour expresses itself' (Mezzadra & Nunes, 2010:155) and how, at the same time, capital has been attempting to impose a rather 'despotic' control over this subject with the mediation of the nation-states. In this sense:

> 'Struggles over mobility criss-cross the whole history of capitalism, from the moment when the first enclosure in England mobilized the local rural population as well as from the moment when the first slave ship crossed the Atlantic. One could even say that the friction between a politics of migration and a politics of control lives at the very heart of capitalism's history' (Mezzadra & Nunes, 2010:155).

Understanding how autonomist-Marxist accounts approach current modern structures of power becomes imperative to understand the place that *migration regimes*[3] take in this thesis' theoretical discussion. In this regard, autonomists' views consider that mobility struggles 'go through the entire history of capitalism' and that 'it could even be said that the friction between a migration policy and a control policy is at the heart of the history of capitalism.' (Mezzadra & Nunes, 2010) . As a result of these tensions and struggles, a complex device based on both 'the valorisation and containment of labour mobility and on the specific form of subjectivity – life forms, desires, and heterogeneous habits – that corresponds to mobility practices' emerges. In this way, the primary aspect in migration policies and struggles would be the so-called 'surplus mobility in relation to this complex device' (ibid.). By doing so, capital aims at the reduction of the mentioned surplus mobility to its value code by using administrative and political mechanisms, as well as, as already pointed, the mediation of the state [which means that this surplus mobility is exploited] As a result, Mezzadra argues, 'struggles are often characterized by the transformation of this surplus moment into a material basis of resistance and organization' (Mezzadra & Nunes, 2010). Migration regimes, which are continuously pressured by labour movements and struggles, offer therefore a viewpoint by which intricated constructs of labour's subjection to capital are rebuild (ibid.). From this point of view, migration becomes a fundamental research field that allows social scientists to understand contemporary capitalism and the emergence of the migrant subject-making from a critical perspective (ibid.).

> '(…) migration constitutes an essential field of research that allows us to critically understand capitalism. There is no capitalism without migration, one could say, with the regime that attempts to control or tame the mobility of labour playing a strategic role in the constitution of capitalism and class relations. Always reshaped under the pressure of labour movements and struggles, migration regimes provide an angle by which complex forms of the subjection of labour to capital are reconstructed' (Mezzadra & Nunes, 2010:125).

[3] When referring to *migration regime(s)* I am aligning my discussions within a critical approach of the term that considers how '*regime* calls attention to the role both of individual states and of changing international regulatory and surveillance administrations that affect individual mobility. At the same time, the term reflects a notion of governmentality and hegemony in which there are constant struggles to understand, query, embody, celebrate and transform categories of similarity, difference, belonging and strangeness' (Glick-Schiller & Salazar, 2013:189)

And it is precisely within the temporality of these migrant practices and social struggles, exemplified by the FMDWs political network under examination, that I intend to examine the emergence of these [female] migrant political subjectivities. However, drawing on Papadopoulos, Stephenson, and Tsianos (2008), I am by no means reducing 'mobile subjectivities to a productionist subjectivity of capitalism' (2008:207) Instead, the main argument developed in this thesis is that a careful analysis of female, migrant, domestic workers' collective mobilisation will allow me to better understand the nature of [female] political migrant subjectivity under capitalism'(Mezzadra & Nunes, 2010:122).

For this purpose, I intend to dive into the study of these female 'migrant subjectivities' from a theoretical standpoint that goes beyond the *rancièrian* concept of 'political subjectivation' (Rancière:1998) In his book *Dis-agreement* (1998) he engages in a discussion about the meaning of politics in which he claims that:

> 'politics exists only as the subjectification of a part with 'no part', which reactivates 'the contingency of equality, neither arithmetical nor geometric, of any speaking beings whatsoever', and in so doing upsets the 'ac/count of the parts' (the distributive architecture), upon which rests what Rancière calls 'police'' (Mezzadra & Nunes, 2010:135).

Even if the above is an oversimplification of Rancière's main argument and while acknowledging that his accounts contribute with a fascinating line of reasoning, Mezzadra & Neilson, (2013) have stressed how Rancière's work may also contend some problematic instances. Firstly, they argue, the fact that 'the partial subject of politics seems to be deduced in a negative way from the concept of police'(ibid:255). And secondly, the way he emphasises on rupture when he interprets that politics 'only exists in the temporality of the event, of the singularity of a political moment that interrupts the temporality of consensus' (ibid.). Therefore, drawing on Mezzadra & Neilson critical stand on the *rancièran* concept of 'political subjectivation' (Rancière, 1999). I intend to conduct an analyses on FMDWs' collective mobilization that will foreground 'the materiality of the practices and struggles that produce the conditions for the emergence of the political subject and for its constituent action' (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013:255). In other words, what the authors have coined as the 'materiality of politics' and how neoliberal governmentality and rationality 'permeate bodies and souls of subjects in an absolutely material, physical way, to which multiple practices of

subjectivation correspond' (ibid:253). I will dive into a more elaborate theoretical discussion on this in the following sub-chapter.

4.1 Theorizing female, migrant *domestic care work* from the post-Marxist postulates

Capitalism has made, and continues to make money out of our cooking, smiling, fucking (Federici, 2012:19)

Throughout this sub-chapter I will briefly draw on feminist accounts that explain and analyse domestic and care work from a post-Marxist standpoint.

In this sense, one of the most renowned feminist scholars within the radical autonomist feminist Marxist is Silvia Federici. In her work *Calibán and the Witch. Women body and primitive accumulation* (2004), she shows how the establishment of capitalism meant a new patriarchal order supported by the sexual division of labour and the undervaluation and contempt of care work, which is in turn relegated to the private sphere and which had no social recognition whatsoever (2004:23). In Federici's words, capitalism meant the development of a new sexual division of work that submits female work and the reproductive role of women in the reproduction of the workforce. The building of a new patriarchal order, based on the exclusion of women from the wage labour and its subordination to men and the mechanization of the proletarian body and its transformation, in the case of women, into a production machine of new laborers (ibid.).

Other scholars within feminist economics point out how care work is a source of exploitation used by capitalism. They argue that capitalist neoliberal logics rest on care work carried out mainly by women within the households (see, e.g., Benería, 2003; Bosch, Carrasco, Grau, 2005; Carrasco, Borderías, Torns, 2011; Carrasco, 2001; Pérez Orozco, 2006; Picchio, 1999). Commercial work and capitalist production owe their existence to the work done in households, without which its continuity would be impossible. Indeed, it is this work that enables to sustain human life and is therefore essential for the reproduction of the workforce.

One of the foundations on which capitalism rests is the plundering or, using the words of David Harvey (2005), the 'accumulation by dispossession' (ibid:116). In the case of labour, this accumulation of dispossession involves the exploitation of a work mainly performed by women and intended to sustain people's lives. In this sense, it can be said that women are exploited by capital with the collusion of society and institutions, which enable and take advantage of this

exploitation. In this regard, capitalism not only relies on unpaid care work but makes use of the fact that it is belittled, invisibilized, and performed privately in households, mainly through the free work of women. Thus, as argued by Gutiérrez-Rodríguez (2011) 'the devaluation of domestic work as racialized and feminized labour emerges within a logic in which this labour is socially and culturally codified as 'non-productive labour'. Thus, she explains, the assigning of low salaries to domestic work is precisely due to 'the classification of this labour as 'less valued' and thus, 'tied to a social process of production meaning. The social value attached to domestic work is thus an outcome of hegemonic struggle' (Gutiérrez-Rodríguez, 2011:1).

At this point, it becomes imperative to briefly examine the origins of the structural invisibility of care work which has traditionally been associated with both women and private spheres, who have also historically been assigned the so-called 'ethics of care' (Gilligan, 1982; Medina-Vicent, 2016). The invisible and intrinsic structural nature of this work has been constructed economically and socially as less valuable. In this sense, 'reproduction work, includes activities aimed at caring for the household and family. It is therefore referred as 'reproduction work' to differentiate it from the productive work (of goods and services), since it is the only one recognized economically and socially as work in industrialized societies' (Carrasquer et al., 1998:96). It is generally considered to be an unsealed work, which is outside the flow of commercial work or employment, and which, for this reason, has been unsuitable and lessened. Its existence is a direct consequence of the separation between public and private spheres and the hierarchy of social spaces according to sex (Pateman, 1995), which I recall here from a quote from Zein-Elabdin (2003:327): 'In setting up the state moral, theorists (Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau) decoupled two spheres: the sphere of justice, a public arena where independent statesmen transacted; and the sphere of emotions, a private domain for love, kinship, and procreation, with which women became identified'. In this way, I will position this research within ongoing academic discussions that consider how current 'domestic work becomes a neuralgic point in order to understand how the logic of capital accumulation operates on the basis of feminization and the coloniality of labor' (Gutiérrez Rodríguez, 2011:1).

It should be noted here that the current care crisis (Dowling, 2021) has not occurred as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, but that it has only been aggravated by it and perhaps shown more clearly that is a very relevant structural social issue that needs to be addressed urgently. To paraphrase Fraser (2009), we must understand this crisis as an obvious expression of the socio-

reproductive contradictions of financialized capitalism. In Fraser's words, this formulation suggests two core ideas:

> 'First, the present strains on care are not accidental, but have deep systemic roots in the structure of our social order, which I characterize here as financialized capitalism. Nevertheless, and this is the second point, the present crisis of social reproduction indicates something rotten not only in capitalism's current, financialized form but in capitalist society per se' (Nancy Fraser, 2016:100).

Fraser considers that every form of capitalist society entails a social-reproductive 'crisis tendency' or contradiction (ibid.) Therefore, to raise a reflection on *care work* today involves rethinking the current economic models on which states are supported.

Regarding this thesis' empirical settings, most middle-class working women, in Spain as much as in many other countries in Europe, do not expect that the state helps them to combine paid employment and domestic care work. Instead, they usually prefer paying another person to perform tasks such as cleaning the house or caring for the elderly, the disabled, or the children. Simply put, they pay somebody a salary to do the otherwise unpaid work previously performed by them (Lutz, 2006) In this way, as Helma Lutz argues 'the majority of those to whom this work is delegated are female and migrants' (ibid:1). Migration scholars have been often suggesting for so long how migrant care work is just one more market relationship, a result of the so-called 'supply and demand' logic. However, this research is aligned with Lutz's accounts on the reasons for considering that domestic work is not just another market, but that it is impregnated with very specific socio-political and economic constraints such as: 'the intimate character of the social sphere where the work is performed; the social construction of this work as a female-gendered area; the special relationship between employer and employee which is highly emotional, personalized and characterized by mutual dependency; and the logic of care work which is clearly different from that of other employment areas' (ibid.).

The above-mentioned factors contribute to the asseveration that domestic and care work cannot be examined using mainstream migration theories that are aligned with the rationale of the global push-pull model in which the demand of living labour from the North leads to supply from the Global South countries.

Domestic Work as Affective Labour

As it has been pointed out throughout the previous sub-chapters, human social life is impossible to be sustained without *care* work. Yet care as an aspect intrinsic to social life has only recently emerged as a problem to investigate by social scientists (Hanlon, 2012). In Nakano Glenn's words (2010) care work involves three types of crisscrossing activities. First, there would be the *direct care* aimed at people, which includes physical care (food, bath, toilet), *emotional care* (listening, speaking, offering comfort) and *services* to help people cover their physical and emotional needs (i.e., buying food, hiking). Secondly, would be a kind of care work that refers to the physical maintenance of the surrounding area where people live (change bedding, wash clothes, clean the floor). And lastly, there would be one that relates to the work of fostering relations and social connections between people, a form of care that has been named as 'kinship work' (ibid.) All these activities, culturally and historically assigned to women and naturalized in them, make life possible.

In this relation, and regarding the production of affects related to care work, the concept of affective labour has served as a fruitful ground for anti-capitalist projects (Hardt, 1999). Thus, *affective labour* mainly refers to the relational and emotional work which becomes central to production and consumption (Gregg 2009:14). I find especially relevant, as Kathi Weeks points out, how it 'has been understood within certain feminist traditions as fundamental both to contemporary models of exploitation and to the possibility of their subversion' (Weeks, 2007:233). Related to the former, Weeks argues that care work can be a 'potential critical lever and site of agency' also stating how 'alternative knowledges, resistant subjectivities, and feminist collectivities,' inasmuch as it presents an alternative model of work outside the productivity-pay economy' (ibid:236). Related to this, one of this thesis' main goal will be to assess whether [migrant] domestic work understood as affective labour, may present the possibility for the emergence of subversive [if] migrant political identities or if, on the contrary, just perpetuates and obscures systemic inequalities in which it is embedded. Other scholars, such as Uhde with her take on distorted emancipation discussed above, stand that certain types of affective labour [care] do not seem to afford the biopolitical power and social recognition that others (such as production of knowledge or information) do in Hardt and Negri's frameworks (Altomonte, 2015).

One last theoretical perspective that will inform our research is Zuzan's Uhde feminist critical concept of 'distorted emancipation'. Focusing on the case of transnational care practices in

modern capitalism, she argues how the commodification of private life areas [formerly shielded from market relationships] produces the emancipation of certain groups of women at the expense of others. In this sense, she argues, the marketisation of care practices did not come together with a redefinition of the ways in which reproductive labour is perceived: rather, it resulted in an 'inferior' job, left to be performed by women [mainly, of racially and socially disadvantaged groups]. In this context, as Uhde points out, '(..) commodification of care thus comprises a paradox: by opening certain options of financial reward, it institutionalized double misrecognition of care as both non-productive work (1. layer of misrecognition) and paid work that cannot be a source of social recognition (2. layer of misrecognition)" (Uhde, 2016:398).

In this context, those presented as positive advancements towards achieving woman's emancipation in Western societies are exclusively available for a small and privileged segment of women. Thus, these 'positive moments are also dependent to a large degree on global inequalities and the continuing oppression of other intersectionally marginalized groups of women.' Meaning that, from this perspective, transnational care practices are a paradigmatic manifestation of distorted emancipation (Uhde, 2016:392). Thus, Uhde argues that global capitalism initiates processes in which the practice of emancipation is distorted. Distorted emancipation refers to the social consequences of the marketization and commodification of areas of social life that were previously excluded from market relationships. Care practices, which have been a fundamental issue in women's emancipatory struggles, are used as a reference point. In the following chapter, I will briefly outline the term *global care chains* and will summarize the main reasons for what has been called the feminization of labour and migration. Both theoretical discussions are fundamental to be able to conduct a comprehensive overall analysis on FMDW's collective mobilisation and their political subjectivities.

Global Care Chains

> *[no] production system operates without a reproduction system and it should not be surprising that the globalisation of production is accompanied by its intimate "Other" i.e. reproduction* (Truong 1996: 47)

In an article published in 2000, Arlie Hochschild coined the term *global care chains* to designate the relationships between people around the world based on the work of both paid and unpaid care. It refers to the recruitment of migrant household employees in the Northern countries, which, in turn, transfer apart of their responsibilities to care for other people in the

family at source, women, at the time of emigration. However, they continue to play their role as caregivers from abroad, maintaining links with their home countries and sending remittances. This is how transnational households are formed, in which the organization of well-being transcends national borders (Orozco, 2010a). Networks are formed where households transfer care from one to another, which is marked by inequalities of gender, ethnicity, class, and origin. However, as Lutz and Palenga-Mollenbeck (2012) point out, these migrant women are 'leaving behind a gap': the care responsibilities of the migrant themselves in their own households (ibid:16).

Thus, the fact that these migrants 'usually leave their families behind, and consequently a care gain in the receiving country implies a care drain in the sending country' (Hochschild 2003:186) leading to the continuation of social inequality on a global scale. One could argue, however, how Hochschild assumes a rather Eurocentric and normative interpretation of motherhood in her account since she underscores that both the migrants and the Western women suffer when leaving their children to other women to take care of them. This is perhaps, one more instance of the perverse logics of the global, capitalist commodification of living labour.

Aligning with Hochschild (2000) Parreñas (2001) accounts on migrant domestic care, Helma Lutz (2018) refers to the concept of care chains as encompassing 'commodification of care work, migrants' precarious working conditions, and transnational social asymmetry.' (Lutz, 2018:580) As Mezzadra argues, gender 'thus become a crucial lens for investigating the subjective dimension and the stakes of migration, challenging the rigidity of theoretical models constructed on the interplay of economic (or for that matter demographic) push and pull factors' (Mezzadra & Nielson, 2013:104).

However, it is highly important to emphasize how the social devaluation of domestic work is deeply correlated with its cultural codification, and not that much with its concrete reproductive character. The sociologist Encarnación Gutiérrez-Rodríguez, with a postcolonial perspective on domestic work as affective labour, points out how 'the value assigned to this labour is compounded by gendered colonial legacies, expressed in a hierarchical epistemological system that favours rationality and discredits corporeal, emotional and sustainable qualities' (Gutierrez-Rodriguez, 2014:2). I will dive into more details regarding migration and the colonial legacy in the following sub-chapter. However, as I have been pointing out, the given value to domestic work is prescribed by a set of production of meaning 'based on historical

and socio-political systems of gender differences and racialized hierarchies. This correlates with its feminized labour force, particularly that of the racialized, feminized subaltern.' (ibid.) Therefore, she argues, 'the living labor extracted from an undocumented migrant worker, is culturally prescribed through the perceptions produced by migration regimes and their interplay with the feminization of labour' (ibid:2). This is deeply intertwined with the following subchapter theme when I will account for the autonomist Marxist discussions which draw on how labour is one more mechanism for the contemporary production of subjectivity.

4. 2 Labour as a mechanism of contemporary production of subjectivity

> *It is not only the subjective experience of migration that is important, but also the process of subjectification, of subject-making that comes when people move* (Mezzadra, 2004:271).

It is precisely the examination of the above process of [political] subjectification, which takes place when people move and how it is expressed within FMDWs collective mobilizations, one of the main inquiries that guide this thesis. For this reason, when analysing the empirical material, I will employ the following autonomy of migration accounts on how this group of migrants' labour power, in a Spanish setting, are commodified.

As a central consideration regarding current globalization logics is the fact that the world seems to have a tendency of openness towards capital and goods while being more closed to the mobility of human bodies. There is, however, one kind of commodity that is inseparable from the human body: labour. This, as Mezzadra and Nielson stress, creates 'a peculiar tension within the abstract commodity form inherent to labour' (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013:19). Indeed, 'because the commodity of labour power cannot be separated from its bearer, the living body of the worker, its production necessarily crosses the systems of discipline and control to which this body is subject' (Mezzadra & Nielson, 2013:102). Indeed, this can be seen in the figure of female, migrant, domestic workers when they embark in their migration processes in order to be employed in the Spanish care system.

Thus, considering female, migrant domestic workers as living labour, it is important to elaborate on this Marxist concept (Marx 1973: 272) which he uses to distinguish 'labour as subjectivity' from the 'past' and 'dead' labour that is objectified in machines, and indeed captures in a nice way how complex this subjective situation becomes (ibid.). As Dipesh

Chakrabarty argues, it also highlights the multiplicity and heterogeneity constitutive of a labour that, as living, can never be fully reduced to the code of 'abstract labour' employed by capital to measure and 'translate' it into the language of value (Chakrabarty 2000:60).

> 'These tensions and gaps between living and abstract labour have never been as intense and wide as under contemporary capitalism. Migrant domestic and care workers embody these tensions and gaps in a specific and nevertheless paradigmatic way. While the entire spectrum of their physical, affective, emotional attitudes is put to work, they experience the abstract nature of their labour only when they get paid' (Mezzadra & Nielson, 2013: 111).

In this sense, the production of subjectivity of migrants as a disputed and contradictory field appears to be a fruitful social phenomenon through which inquiries about contemporary capitalism and its logics can be raised.

4. 3 Female, migrant domestic workers and the coloniality of labour

As a point of departure, Anibal Quijano's (2000, 2005, 2008) identification of coloniality of labour brings some relevant conceptual correlations. As he argues, coloniality of labour would be one of the axes which, along with the coloniality of power, would 'establish a societal system of exploitation based on the correlation of 'race' and 'value' (Gutierrez-Rodriguez, 2014:48). As Quijano states (2000), labour was racially codified during colonial times. Thus, 'the labor extracted from those codified as "white" was considered productive and "superior," the labor power extracted from the indigenous and enslaved populations was seen as "inferior" and, as such, conceived as "free exploitable" labor' (Gutierrez-Rodriguez, 2014:48). These mentioned legacies of coloniality are still subtly found when FMDWs are been employed in the Spanish labour market. Indeed, following Gutiérrez Rodríguez discussion on domestic work as affective labour, when it comes right down to hiring an [undocumented] female, migrant domestic worker, a double prescription plays role in how domestic work is seen: migration policies [regimes] play along with gender logics of the sexual division of labour. In this regard, 'within the logic of the coloniality of power, migration control, and management policies enforce processes of subalternization and the dynamics of inferiorization are enforced.' (Gutierrez-Rodriguez, 2014:48). As the author argues, even though it might not be always operating in racial terms in explicit ways, the mentioned logic of subjugation is indeed inherent in the

establishment of a racially coded social system which is still very much alive and 'reverberates in the construction of the nation's Other in Western Europe' (ibid:48).

In this regard, when an 'irregular' migrant worker is being extracted of his/her living labour, the mentioned cultural prescriptions produced by the interplay of feminization of labour and migrant regimes are taking place (ibid.) Moreover, two temporalities [modernity and coloniality] conflate and articulate the paradox of the modern/colonial world system. (Gutierrez-Rodriguez, 2014:48) The mentioned system is thus expressed through the subjective experiences of undocumented, female migrant women and its feminization in modern capitalism. Thus, as I have been arguing, 'the coloniality of labor is inherent to the logic of capital accumulation. Modern forms of capital production have not replaced colonial forms of production, rather, they conflate articulating current forms of capital production' (ibid.) In her approach for a decolonial ethical framework of Human Rights regarding domestic work, Gutierrez-Rodriguez makes an interesting genealogical analysis of the discourse on Human Rights. Firstly, she highlights how the former is founded on a Eurocentric normative framework which ignores 'the intrinsic connection of European Enlightenment to European colonialism.' (Gutiérrez Rodríguez, 2011:7) Other scholars such as Boaventura de Sousa Santos urges for the development of a decolonial perspective on Human Rights that acknowledges the historical ambivalences in which these were proclaimed:

> 'When Human Rights were announced in France in 1879, colonialism and the slave trade were flourishing. While the European White male bourgeoisie was celebrating its autonomy as sovereign subjects, women, the peasantry, the emerging working class and the colonized and enslaved population were excluded from this right' (ibid.).

Today, we find reminiscences of this colonial logic in terms of who is considered a full citizen or is otherwise excluded from citizenship and relegated to the margins of the nation-sate. Following Boaventura de Sousa Santos 'the decolonization of the epistemological premises sustaining the Western discourse on Human Rights' (Gutiérrez Rodríguez, 2011:7) emerges as a necessary epistemological turn. Interestingly, along with this line of thought, anti-colonial, decolonial, feminist, LGBTIQ, and post-Marxist movements have developed counter-discourses, emphasizing workers', civil and social rights (…) introducing 'new conceptualizations of personhood, departing from critical border epistemology and decolonial queer theory, in which subjecthood is no longer defined by national boundaries or heterosexual gender frontiers, but as transborder, transgender and transexual ontologies' (ibid.). In relation

to this, the Network of Latin American and Caribbean women I investigate in appears to be a paradigmatic case of a counter-hegemonic, migrant, political movement. I will further elaborate on this in the following Analysis chapter.

In this sense, decolonial and postcolonial scholarship are fundamental in the exercise of questioning the dominant discourses and their implied assumptions through which we seek to interpret the world[s] we inhabit (Bhambra, 2014:117). This body of thought has also given the basis from which to reclaim 'a series of regulative political concepts', as Spivak argues, 'the supposedly authoritative narrative of whose production was written elsewhere' (Spavik, 1990:225). A position that allows to, following Spivak, reverse, displace, and seize the apparatus of value-coding (ibid: 228). In Spivak's book 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' (1988), the author 'sent a series of shock waves across the contested terrain of postcolonial, subaltern, and cultural studies'(Darder & Griffiths, 2018:82). She boldly problematized mainstream deconstructive conceptions of identity, representation, voice, and culture, contending that these had been functioning to both 'reproduce and co-opt elitist imperatives of political domination and exploitation, leading to the wholesale cultural erasure of subaltern sensibilities'(ibid.) Moreover, Spivak's challenges inquiries through her vigorous critique of imperialist connivances of leftist male intellectuals who, overlooking their privilege positions, freely proclaimed themselves as legitimate to speak for the subaltern, particularly women (ibid.). In this sense, she criticized patriarchal elites inclined to reproduce and project certain developmentalist and ethnocentric 'mythologies onto the Third world 'subalterns' they are ready to help develop' (Andreotti, 2007:70). Spivak referred to how both Deleuze and Foucault generalizations of workers, for instance, was actually 'essentializing emancipatory discourses that assumed a non-existent solidarity across wildly diverse populations' (Darder & Griffiths, 2018:82). Despite her critics, Spivak's theoretical insights and the issues she was contesting thirty years ago are still fundamental when engaging in contemporary politics of subalternity. It is therefore a highly relevant perspective when analysing how FMDW politically subjectify themselves through collective mobilisations in Spain. Thus, regarding the present research, her accounts along with the above discussions on new counter-discourses and decolonial new subjectivities will serve as a fundamental theoretical lens through which I will interpret the empirical data.

4.4 Citizenship and subjectivity: understanding FMDW collective mobilisation

As I have been stressing, the subject positions of the female, migrant domestic, and care worker are being shaped by complex assemblages of gender and race 'whose foreignness is often translated into a precarious or irregular legal status' (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013:258).

Indeed, as I will explain throughout the present chapter, the terrain of academic theorization around the figure of the migrant subjectivations in relation to the nation-state sovereignty and *dispositifs*[4] of migration control has been the subject of much critical debate (e.g. Anderson, 2011, 2012; Andrijasevic, 2013; Isin, 2008, 2009; Nyers, 2009; Papadopoulos and Tsianos, 2013). I am interested here in grasping the main conceptual features in which the mentioned accounts are embedded. This will allow me to avoid the implementation of constraining theoretical conceptualisations on the FMWDs network here examine which may not sufficiently account for the heterogeneity of their narratives.

4.4.1 After the *ràncieran* 'political subjectivation'

In this way, as I have shortly presented in the introduction chapter, Rancière's invigorating philosophical work (1992, 1995, 2004, 2006) on 'political subjectivation' has inspired the work of many scholars and activists engaged with migration. His effective description of the dramatic transformation produced by the crisis of Fordism and his reading of Western philosophy as a series of attempts to neutralize the subversive discovery of the 'ultimate equality on which any social order rests' (Rancière, 1998:16), are still a very valid contribution to modern political migrant subjectivation. For Rancière, 'politics' itself is guarded as an extraordinary and rare phenomenon. Interestingly, he refers to the arena where individuals pursue, compete and negotiate for their social interest and resources as 'the order,' 'the count, or most tellingly, 'the police' (de Genova, 2010:107). Thus, in *rancièran* terms, politics would not be the participation in this 'order'. Instead, he refers as politics to the disruption of this 'count' ['order', 'police'] by the interventions of those who do not have a recognized place within it. Those who, from the logics of the 'order' simply do not exist (ibid.) In other words: those who constitute 'a part that has no part' (Rancière, 2004:305).

[4] I will be employing this term coined by the philosopher Foucault to refer to 'the way complex links between elements as heterogeneous as knowledge, practices, techniques or even institutions, are established and reestablished in every age and the way power relations are structured through these links' (Larroche, 2019: 83).

As discussed by de Genova (2010), from this perspective 'genuine politics tends to be exceptional, extraordinary, and intrinsically unsettling. Politics, then, can only be about the queer and incorrigible incoherence that produces a crisis within the presumed normative 'order' of normal 'existence'' (de Genova, 2010:108). Coming back to the critical stand of Mezzadra and Neilson on the above *ràncieran* discussion is that, as they stress: the understanding of the relation between politics and the 'order' ['police'] is, indeed, that it is complicated to imagine the result of the rupture 'through which egalitarian logic comes and divides the police community from itself' (Rancière 1998: 137) as something different from yet another regime of 'order'. Put differently, Rancière's account seems to deny the profound transformations that the institutional structure of the state-nations is undergoing in the present time (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013:255).

My intention by bringing up the above critical stand on 'political subjectivation' in combination with the following theoretical takes on the concept of citizenship, is to embrace a theoretical standpoint that will allow me to conduct a more nuanced and epistemologically richer analysis on FMDWs collective mobilisation and political subjectivities.

In the following subchapters, I will briefly outline the main theoretical standpoint within autonomy of migration (AoM) proponents since it is one of the main ongoing scholarships on migration studies informing this research. Following, I will draw on two different theoretical proposals in relation to the concept of citizenship. The first one being a more exclusionary one, within autonomy of migration studies while the second one, being a sympathetic critique to AoM take on the concept.

4.4.2 Autonomy of migration

As stated at the beginning of this research, autonomy of migration (AoM) scholarship will be one of the two main theoretical approaches which will inform our thesis and assist me with answering the main research question. Considered to be embedded within critical migration studies, 'autonomy of migration is at once a research program with its own distinct analytical tools and conceptual frameworks, and also a political project that is connected to anti-racist social movements for refugee and migrant rights' (Nyers, 2015:26). The phrase itself has also been described by some of its scholars as a "dazzling term, slogan, and program all at once" (Bojadžijev and Karakayali 2010). Originally, it was thought to counteract normative, mainstream lines of thought within migration studies and to liberate it from some of its

prevailing conceptual frameworks (e.g., securitization, humanitarianism, migration management, labour market, etc.) Developed primarily in Europe, is considered to be an activist-research nexus that intends to cross and connect activist and scholarly worlds (ibid.). Because of the mentioned link to migrant rights, movements, and networks, AoM also arose as a remedy to counter 'some of the pessimism for thinking about the political agency of abject migrants that has come from working with the conceptual tools and frames of Giorgio Agamben' (Nyers, 2015:27).

For AoM theorists, referring to migration as 'autonomous' means that it 'it has the capacity to develop its own logics, its own motivation, its own trajectories' (Papadopoulos & Tsianos 2013:184). Thus, it also implies that people on the move poses the ability to proactively create new realms, new social realities, and possibilities. A human force that is very capable of making political and social transformations. However, far from proposing 'individualistic' solutions, AoM:

> 'involves forms of self-rule that are not disconnected to larger collectivities (...) becomes a principle of organization that keeps alive the tension between the desires of the individual and collective, without abandoning either to the telos of the citizen and the state, respectively. (..) becomes a principle of organization that keeps alive the tension between the desires of the individual and collective, without abandoning either to the telos of the citizen and the state, respectively (ibid.).

In this sense, AoM perspectives provide this research with a theoretical framework that enables me to understand migrant subjectivities from non-normative interpretations. Especially relevant for this research is their take on the commodification of domestic, living labour as well as their analysis of the border as an epistemic space for the emergence of new political subjectivities. (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013) As Mezzadra argues, 'liberating political imagination from the burden of the citizen-worker and the state is particularly urgent to open up spaces within which the organization of new forms of political subjectivity becomes possible' (ibid:3).

In the next theoretical chapter, I will present two different theoretical proposals in relation to the concept of *citizenship* within the context of migration studies. In this way, I will consider both perspectives when performing the analysis of our data to discern which of the two

approaches is most appropriate to better grasp and understand the network's FMWs political subjectivation.

4.4.3 Beyond citizenship or towards 'migrant citizenships'?

As already discussed, I will now elaborate on two different takes on citizenship which, even though both pertain to non-mainstream scholarship on migration studies, will inform this thesis with a richer standpoint on the social phenomenon object of study. I will first engage with AoM's critical discussion on mainstream accounts on *citizenship* in relation to migration (Bojadžijev and Karakayali 2007; Mezzadra 2010, 2011, 2013) followed by Peter Nyers (2015) sympathetic critique to AoM take on the concept, framed within the field of Critical Citizenship Studies (CCS) These, as mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, will be complementing the critical take on the *rancièran* concept of political subjectivation brought by Mezzadra and Nielsen (2013).

Firstly, it is important to stress that autonomists' main critic on mainstream scholarship regarding migration and citizenship is linked to what they consider to be a 'failure to sufficiently link the analysis of citizenship and democracy with a critical understanding of contemporary capitalism' (Mezzadra & Nunes, 2010;123). AoM scholars consider problematic how mainstream accounts of migrant movements and struggles frequently employ the lens of citizenship to contend that migrants want to become citizens (Bojadžijev and Karakayali 2007: 205). Instead, what autonomist propose is to look 'at the fact that migrants – documented and undocumented – act as citizens and insist that they are already citizens' (ibid.). This calls for a conceptualization of citizenship that is different from the one that is currently being used by mainstream studies, where 'the latter is centred upon a concern for the integration of migrants within an already existing legal and political framework' (ibid:205). On the contrary, AoM theorists highlight the relevance of claims and practices of those migrants who are not recognized as citizens in juridical terms for the development of an understanding of the [potential] transformation of the legal framework of citizenship itself (ibid.) and 'conceptualizing the movements and struggles of irregular migrants as central to the construction and transformation of citizenship as an 'institution in flux' (Balibar 2001; Isin 2002 and 2009; Mezzadra 2004).

Bringing a very insightful take by using Tyler and Marciniak accounts (2013) Ataç et al. point at how 'immigrant protests are 'acts' against the exclusionary technologies of citizenship,

which aim to make visible the violence of citizenship as regimes of control. However, in order to effect material changes, protesters are compelled to make their demands in the idiom of the regime of citizenship they are contesting' (Ataç, Rygiel, & Stierl, 2016:531). To summarize AoM main line of thought regarding citizenship, it's important to point at how autonomists encourage to not only engage in a thorough analysis of how neoliberalism has disarticulated [or disaggregated, for that matter] social citizenship, but also 'to carefully examine the contested field of subjectivity that corresponds to it. This demands a focus on the heterogeneous subjective positions, figures, and conditions that make up the composition of contemporary living labour' (Hardt and Negri 2009: 134). Migration thus plays, for AoM scholars, 'a key role in this composition, and it should be investigated from this point of view' (Mezzadra & Nunes, 2010).

On the other hand, as Nyers argues, while acknowledging that the above AoM accounts on migration are making vital contributions to the field, its rejection of citizenship as a merely exclusionary concept could benefit from a more nuanced interpretation since 'how autonomists approach the concept of citizenship has not been the subject of much critical debate. Indeed, there has been a wide agreement with the negative portrayal of citizenship' (Nyers, 2015:30).
On the other hand, Nyers' critique on the above AoM take on citizenship is mainly based on the way it 'is seen as being a bordered concept, responsible for the ongoing exclusions at the local, national, and global levels of politics. Citizenship is envisioned as almost entirely aligned with the forces of control' (ibid:24). The same scholar raises some very controversial questions on regards to political, migrant subjectivity: 'what counts as political activity? who is a member of the political community? who can be considered a political subject?' (ibid) However, Nyers argues how, due to the inability of the ontology of sovereignty and state to adequately explain the political lives of migrants, some creative thinking is needed to answer these questions. For this reason, he continues, 'a new citizenships' which he coins as 'migrant citizenships' need to be theorized and explored (ibid:24).
Related to the above, Isin and Neilsen (2008) literature on what they call 'acts of citizenship' 'works through the political paradoxes that arise when people constitute themselves as political subjects, citizens, prior to being legally or discursively recognized as such by state authorities' (Nyers, 2015:25). As Nyers argues, this resonates with AoMs viewpoint regarding 'the power of movement over the power of controls' (ibid.).
However, Acts of citizenship approaches citizenship with a different set of questions. Instead of asking 'who is a citizen?' this perspective asks how subjects constitute themselves as citizens

(...) (Andrijasevic 2013:50). How do subjects constitute themselves as citizens regardless of their formal status?' As Nyers highlights, the change of shift when approaching these questions is important because it opens possible inquiries of citizenship to a wide array of political struggles, dynamics, and processes. Using his own words: 'In place of the emphasis on status, institutions, and state authority emphasized (...) , with acts of citizenship the focus is on process (not status), constitutive politics (not institutional politics), and everyday struggles of claimants (not representational politics)' (Nyers, 2015:33). However, he also acknowledges how there are some scholars within AoM perspective (mainly Mezzadra) who are also taking into consideration more critically constructive engagements with the concept of citizenship, therefore recognizing 'how citizenship is simultaneously a means of governance and exclusionary rule, and also an important identity through which progressive struggles get enacted and performed' (Nyers, 2015:34).

By bringing together two kinds of literature that are usually being considered as irreconcilable ('AoM' and 'migrant citizenships') Peter Nyers manages to come up with 'a reformulation of citizenship from a purely legal category to one that emphasizes acts and other performative forms of citizenship' (Nyers, 2015:34). In this sense, Nyers's account, together with the critical take on *rancièran* political subjectivation will inform this thesis with a very rich and nuanced perspective on migrant citizenship, which will be required when analysing the political texts from the FMDWs network under study.

4.4.4 Contentious Politics

As a result of bringing into conversation AoM and CCS perspectives Ataç, Rygiel and Stierl (2016) study protest activities of migrants and solidarity networks as forms of contentious politics (Ataç et al., 2016:536). As the authors argue, 'the contentious politics approach aims to reduce the gaps that social movement theory cannot fill' (ibid.). Using Leitner, Sheppard, and Sziarto words, contentious politics might be considered as a 'concerted, counter-hegemonic social and political action, in which differently positioned participants come together to challenge dominant systems of authority, in order to promote and enact alternative imaginaries' (2008:157).

The term refers to those interactions through which certain social actors make claims and demands that 'bear on their own or another actor's interests' (ibid.) thus, bringing together three key features of social life: politics, collective actions and contention (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015:7). Furthermore, by employing the contentious politics perspective into this research, I will be able to move beyond more traditional positivistic tendencies within the field of social

movements by ‘focusing on the micro-dynamics, mechanisms, and processes of movement politics’ (McAdam & Tarrow 2011).

Moreover, as Ataç et al. argue, this analytical approach is a more appropriate one when analysing migrant protests since it does not segregate the multiple dynamics of movements (namely ‘organizational aspects, resource mobilization, and framing strategies of actors, from contextual factors’) (Ataç et al., 2016:536). This is extremely important for this research social phenomena under examination since, when it comes to migrant collective mobilization, factors such as border, rights and, migration regimes ‘have an impact on the political and social context of migrants and refugees and at the same time represent significant targets of their activism’ (ibid.).

In this sense, resulting from the already explained theoretical and conceptual antagonism of AoM and CCS perspectives, a rather ‘productive tension’ emerges which enables to come with highly insightful analytical accounts such as contentious politics. When engaging with FMDWs collective mobilization, this analytical perspective will allow me to examine to what extent participants are politically subjectifying themselves through counter-hegemonic practices and discourses.

5 Analysis

As I have previously explained, through a content analysis of two different political documents: the manifesto *To leave no one behind! Care and violence: what the Covid-19 crisis has revealed in the Spanish State* and a report of the Network's *IV Meeting: "Citizenship and Participation of migrant and refugee women: Consolidating our political agenda."* I intend to answer this thesis' research question: *How is this Network of Latin American and Caribbean Women a fertile space for the emergence of counter-hegemonic [migrant] political subjectivities?*

The content analysis will be guided by the three sub-research questions above explained. These will allow me to answer my research question and guide the reader throughout the analysis. Before diving into it, I consider it rather important to start with a brief disclaimer, since it might help the reader to better comprehend the epistemic intentions of the following analysis of FMDWs political subjectivities. An important part of the theoretical body and lines of thought with which I am positioning this research is the autonomy of migration (AoM) scholarship, mainly criticized, among other aspects, for its emphasis and romanticization of 'mobility and the figure of the migrant as being found beyond the script of citizenship and the state' (Ataç, Rygiel, & Stierl, 2016:534) Thus, I want to state that I do not in any way contend that female, migrant, domestic workers might be thought of as a kind of 'avant-garde or as revolutionary subjects' (Mezzadra & Nunes, 2010:137). Rather, AoM approach allows me to analyse FMDWs within a wider analytical umbrella that employs the examination of living [migrant] labour as a point of view from which understanding the transformations of modern capitalism (ibid.). Thus, in relation to this thesis' research question, AoM postulates enable me to foreground migrants' experiences and performativity while taking into consideration the dynamics of modern capitalism and power structures in which FMDWs are, undoubtedly entrenched as mobile, commodified living labour.

5.1 The political subjectivization of FMDWs

The aim of this sub-chapter is to understand the ways in which female, migrant domestic workers are politically signifying themselves through the collective mobilization of the Network and its different associations. Thus, for this purpose, I am aligning this analysis with the Italian 'autonomist' Marxist tradition that considers labour as a mechanism of contemporary production of subjectivity. Here, this autonomists' central *motif* on the production of subjectivity is understood as 'the way in which human beings are constituted

through structures of language and power' (ibid.). It is not nevertheless, the only force that this tradition considers as having the ability to shape subjects [e.g., history, capital, class, gender, or race, among others, forge contemporary subjectivities as well] (Keulen, 2020:1). In this regard, autonomists' postulates consider how the meanings given to the traditional political subject have been exhausted or assimilated within the concepts of militant, citizen, worker, etc. (ibid.) and, therefore, it is important to question the ways in which contemporary subjectivities are 'produced' (ibid.) For this reason, I examine how the political subjectivities of the FMDWs emerge through their social struggles against the capital's exploitative logics that extract value from their living labour (capital accumulation by dispossession) Using the Network as their political space for encounters, I intend to explore how the subjectivities are both formed but also able to traverse the heterogeneity and diversity (gender, race, working and legal statuses, etc.) of other social struggles and subjects. How, without suppressing their particularity, they come together in a common cause against this process of extraction and commodification of their labour power.

In the following sections, I analyse specific fragments from the documents already presented that shed light on specific instances through which these diverse group of FMDWs subjectify themselves in political terms.

Citizenship

A central theme in the Network's reflections and debates is the concept of citizenship: and exclusionary *dispositif* of the nation-states sovereignty for some (AoM) or a fertile terrain for its resignification for others (CCS).

Within this section, I will take both standpoints into consideration in order to identify which one gives a better account of the ways in which these FMDWs employ it and understand it.

As a starting point, I will start by highlighting the two principal Network's meeting goals. As already noted, the 3-days encounter consisted of a series of three thematical workshops and panel discussions. Therefore, most of the instances found are infused with a more reflective and theoretical character. In this sense, the starting brief description of the main meeting's goals shed slight on the more general agenda within which the rest of the panel discussions are embedded.

> **'**- To analyse the situation of citizenship rights of migrant and refugee women in Spain, in order to describe the starting point from which to argue our demands related to this issue.

- To analyse the intersection between the right of citizenship and other basic rights for migrant and refugee women in Spain, such as the right to a life free of violence, the right to a decent job, the right to health, among others'

(IV Meeting "Citizenship and Participation of migrant and refugee women: Consolidating our political agenda", 2018)

The above reflect an account of how the Network's members consider 'citizenship' as an inalienable right to which migrants are also entitled. In addition, it is also shown how they theorize about 'the right to citizenship' and its intersections and equate it with other 'basic rights' such as 'the right to a life free of violence, the right to a decent job, the right to health' Thus, it is particularly relevant their conceptualization of citizenship as 'any other basic right' to which migrants are entitled since it is the foundation from which the Network will further argue their demands in relation to citizenship.

At this point, it is worth mentioning the work panel 'Citizenship Right and migrant women participation' in which the Network's participants dive into citizenship issues and a 'collective reflection of the political argumentation of the Network related to citizenship right and migrant women participation in Spain'(ibid.) Here, the participants based their discussions on the premise that 'there is legal discrimination, and some rights are excluded for migrants. Therefore, we are not citizens with full rights. Political participation right is deficient for migrant people even when they have all the documentation'(ibid.). Thus, in this account, the panel of participants stress how migrants must be considered legitimate bearers of rights and how they are currently not 'citizens with full rights' (ibid.). This could plausibly be considered an example of an 'act of citizenship' (Isin & Neilsen, 2008) since they are constituting themselves as citizens with full rights regardless of their legal status and the fact that, as they claim, the totality of those rights to which they should be entitled as *citizens* are not being fully guaranteed. In this sense, they formulate two specific demands in relation to citizenship:

'We ask for residential citizenship that allows us a full access to passive and active suffrage' as well as 'To re-conceptualise the actual citizenship model for migrant people' (IV Meeting "Citizenship and Participation of migrant and refugee women: Consolidating our political agenda", 2018).

The latter claim for the urgent need of rethinking the current citizenship model for migrants is directly related to AoM accounts that refer to how the concept of citizenship should be taken as an 'institution in flux' (Balibar 2001; Isin 2002 and 2009; Mezzadra 2004). Regarding the Spanish legislation, migrants can apply for a permanent residency after living five consecutive years in the country. However, it is not a requirement to have been legally employed during

that period of time, which creates situations where migrants are willing to work irregularly in order to be able to finance their stay in the country. Likewise, migrants can apply for temporary residency only through a legal job contract which, in many cases, the employer is not willing to expedite. In the meantime, many long-term (*de facto*) migrant residents who are economically contributing to the social fabric of the country are not entitled to basic political rights. Indeed, this heterogeneous group of FMDWs is composed by so-called 'regular migrants', refugees, 'ilegalized' women with different socio-economic and political backgrounds. In turn, the rights to which these women have access is, as well, significantly different. In the light of this dilemma, it is urgent to question state-centered perspectives and traditional scripts about citizenship and include in this process the perspectives of those who are excluded from it. Therefore, these FMDWs intersectional work on a broader conceptualization of the 'political' enables a more horizontal, non-state cantered conceptualisation of citizenship. Thus, through their engagement with other social groups in struggle and human rights movements in the country, the concept might gradually stretch ontologically and have an impact on the institutional and legislative current interpretations.

Furthermore, it might also be stressed how the examination of the claims and practices of these are central for understanding the current transformation that the legal framework of *citizenship* itself is experimenting.

Likewise, as part of the final conclusions on the Work Panel 'Political participation and incidence for decent work conditions for house and care workers', the participants ask for direct representation in the negotiation boards when issues around domestic and care work are being discussed:

> 'The organisations here present stand collectively in favour of the agreement between the political parties PSOE and PODEMOS, concerning the budget for 2019, that includes the Ratification of the Convention 189 of the International Labour Organisation, these parties committed also to include housework in the Social Security General Scheme, for 2021. We celebrate this agreement, but we demand the incorporation of House Workers Associations speakers in the negotiation boards to guarantee that these agreements are truly representative and beneficial for house-workers'
>
> (IV Meeting "Citizenship and Participation of migrant and refugee women: Consolidating our political agenda", 2018)

Again, considering that this Network is constituted by a heterogeneous myriad of women from different parts of the world and with diverse legal statuses, this claim brings up how these

FMDWs are not waiting to be juridically recognised as citizens and thus legitimate bearers of rights in order to act as such. On the contrary, they call upon the need for a representative of the network in the negotiation boards who will advocate and ensure that their interests and concerns are being taken into consideration by policymakers. In this regard, this may be interpreted as an instance of how 'the political subjectivity of citizenship precedes the legal recognition of citizen-subjects'(Nyers, 2015:25). Thus, migrant workers become political subjects, making claims on the state 'for rights and recognition, and at the same time they are capable of evading legal capture and, indeed, transforming the legal regimes and institutions of state citizenship' (ibid.).

Furthermore, in the work panel: "Citizenship Right and migrant women participation", the participants engaged in a collective reflection of the political argumentation of the Network related to 'the right to citizenship'(ibid.) and migrant women participation. Throughout the several conclusions they come up with, there is an especially insightful one revolving around the concept of citizenship:

> '- We pay our taxes, consume, and spend our money in Spain, therefore, we exercise an economic participation, we consider that the Spanish authorities should extend the citizenship concept, to a broader one that involves the residents, since every decision they make affects us'
>
> (IV Meeting "Citizenship and Participation of migrant and refugee women: Consolidating our political agenda", 2018)

The above quote is an example of the inability of the ontology of sovereignty and state's citizenship concept to adequately explain the political lives of migrants (Nyers, 2015) Within AoM accounts, the above can be read as a claim from migrant women who are not necessarily citizens in juridical terms but whose claims and practices on the issue possess the capacity 'for the development of an understanding of the transformation of the legal framework of citizenship itself' (Mezzadra & Nunes, 2010:122). It also relates to the possibility of conceptualizing migrants' struggles as essential for the transformation of citizenship as an 'institution in flux' (Balibar 2001; Isin 2002 and 2009; Mezzadra 2004).

As I have shown in this section, this group of FMDWs are engaged in discussions and practical proposals for the creation of new forms of conceptualizations of citizenship, which in turn, one could argue, is a result of new migrant labour forms of political subjectivity. A kind of transnational labour struggle that, as it will be shown in the following sections, is mainly based in a subversive, counter-hegemonic activism that contests to global, neoliberal mechanisms of power and oppression.

Embodying violence[s]

When engaging in discussions regarding their migration processes and experiences after settling down, many accounts include references and women's testimonies of the diverse types of violence they have been subjected to. Indeed, their individual processes of politicisation and political subjectivations happen across a series of social positions and identities that these FMDWs embody. In this sense, throughout the following section, I will analyse accounts that reflect this explicit correlation between various modalities of 'violences' (structural, institutional and/or physical) and the socio-political position that they embody as migrant (racialised) women and domestic workers.

In this regard, a relevant account extracted from the discussion panel 'Migration and feminisms: contributions to a political debate about citizenship and participation' includes the following conclusion on regards to the migration process:

> '- Violence against migrant women is all over the migration process, in the start point, during the way and in the destination point. We should openly talk about "violences" in Europe, make visible how violent the immigration law is, how racist European society is, and discuss how this inequity affects us'
>
> (IV Meeting "Citizenship and Participation of migrant and refugee women: Consolidating our political agenda", 2018)

The above direct reference to the 'violences' that Europe inflects on migrant women throughout the 'migration process', one could argue, refers to a systemic type of violence that criss-crosses border and migration regimes. This use of the plural when referring to the different types of violence[s] shows a critical positioning not only regarding the violence that is exercised on their bodies but on the collusion of the different actors involved within the migration process and how this violence is prolonged and chronicled along with these women's lives once they settle in Spain. Using Mezzadra's accounts on living labour, the above fragment exemplifies how, due to the fact that commodified labour cannot be separated from the living body of its bearer (here, migrant women) the production of this commodification necessarily implies that these bodies are subjected to the *dispositifs* of discipline and control of migrant mobility [migration and border regimes] employed by the nation-states in order to comply with the logics of capital accumulation (Mezzadra & Nielson, 2013).

Furthermore, another related account regarding different variants of violence against FMDWs can be found within the participant's conclusions of the above mentioned:

> 'Our experience of *violence* is criss-crossed by our foreignness, social class and racism. Gender-based violence is combined with institutional violence. Sexism violates our bodies and our sons', and daughters' Institutional racism serves as a system that leaves us out. From that peripheral place it is very difficult for the Spanish society to be able to recognize the contribution we make to its own well-being'
>
> (To leave no one behind! Care and violence: what the Covid-19 crisis has revealed in the Spanish State, 2020)

In the above fragment, we can see again how the Network points out the complex and multidimensional nature of the violence[s] they are subject to. As they argue, FMDWs embody various sorts of institutional[ized] violence (that leave migrant women in a sort of administrative limbo) overlapped with physical forms of gender-based violence. However, the above denouncement is followed by an insightful disclaimer that aims at deconstructing the stereotyped idea of the migrant man (in this case, Latin-American) as a 'savage', 'ignorant' or perpetrator of violence.

> 'Our aggressor are Spanish and foreign men. We reject speeches that directly point foreign men as sexists, violent and rapists. We denounce that these discourses are racist and xenophobic and are promoted by those who do not defend democratic values or women's rights. The figures are clear in this regard: gender-based violence that many suffer is perpetrated by men of very different nationality, including Spanish ones; it is not just about men who are or have been our partners in the past, but also strangers and employers'
>
> (To leave no one behind! Care and violence: what the Covid-19 crisis has revealed in the Spanish State, 2020)

The above fragment shows how the new forms of political subjectivities emerging within the Network's fold, are extremely critical of the perpetuation of certain stereotyped characterisation of migrants. Following Maldonado-Torres (2007) the above example highlights the risks of falling into discourses that perpetuate what the author has coined as 'coloniality of being' (Maldonado-Torres, 2007:242). This term was based on the idea that 'colonial relations of power left profound marked not only in the areas of authority, sexuality, knowledge and the economy, but on the general understanding of being as well'(ibid.). As the Network's participants point out, normalising a generalized categorization of migrant man as 'violent' due to the mere fact of not being a 'native' prevents these man from being recognised

as individuals outside certain stereotypical ascriptions. Moreover, it also risks a lack of recognition of gender-based violence of non-migrant men inflected on their migrant partners. Thus, the network here is adopting a decolonial standpoint that responds to the need to thematize the question of the effects of coloniality in lived experience and not only in the mind. The above exploration of the FMDWs' embodiment of violences due to their various social identities and positions, one could argue, is one more dimension through which these women are building new [migrant], transnational political subjectivities. With this purpose, it has been shown how the Network is employing discussions and lines of thought that challenge mainstream, hegemonic understandings of their common labour struggles [but not only].

The subalternization of FMDWs

Furthermore, an idea that is repeatedly stressed is the one related to practices and instances of *subalternization* of these female, migrant domestic workers. As already mentioned, the social [in]significance given to domestic work is intertwined with the historical, colonial legacy along with a series of contemporary socio-political structures based in a heteronormative social order (Gutierrez-Rodriguez, 2014:48). In this sense, these migrant women express certain concerns regarding the position from which their new political subjectivities within the Network are being constructed.

In their own words:

> '- We also have to be able to detect the paternalistic look to avoid being placed in subaltern places' (IV Meeting "Citizenship and Participation of migrant and refugee women: Consolidating our political agenda", 2018)

Bringing up Spivak's work (1988), it can be argued how the above fragment is a general call to action and self-awareness regarding the common practice of 'being placed' in positions of subordination. This mention of paternalistic and patronising external glances is also related to Spivak's critique of the tendency to 'essentialize subalternity' (Darder & Griffiths, 2018:86). In this sense, the report is continuously referring to the heterogeneous nature of female migrants' experiences and how, as they state: '- We are no longer academic study objects, now, we are our own political subjects' (IV Meeting "Citizenship and Participation of migrant and refugee women: Consolidating our political agenda", 2018).

Similarly, the above statement connects with Spivak's critique of intellectuals' representation of the subaltern. However, within the statement 'we are our own political subjects' it is extremely important to raise an inquiry regarding these tensions of representation. In other

words: is this attempt of migrant, women collective mobilisation homogenizing the multiplicity of female, migrant voices? Are the Network's 'expert voices' leading the discussion panels adopting the figure of a sort of 'postcolonial subaltern intellectual'? In this sense, Spivak's accounts would consider this a hugely problematic exteriorized attempt to contend with subaltern voicelessness (Darder & Griffiths, 2018:83) since 'in that, such efforts perpetuate a logocentric assumption of cultural identity and solidarity within populations that are overwhelmingly heterogeneous' (ibid.) However, coming back to the present thesis's research question, Spivak's argument may inevitably lead politics of subalternity towards an untenable closure where no one would be able to speak with any legitimacy about the conditions of the subaltern (Eagleton, 1999). Thus, for the present research, the effort of this Network of female, migrant women to create their own political counter-discourses highlighting current intersectionalities of oppression can be considered a fruitful venue for social change.

In relation to this, the participants of this thematic work panel also actively ask for the abolition of the live-in domestic work since, as they claim, slavery-like practices such as restriction of freedom of movement or not allocating sufficient hours of rest, are taking place. Here, the participants are also pointing at these highly asymmetrical relations of subordination and domination to which most of these women are being subjected. As they clearly argue:

> 'We stand against internal housework and we demand the abolition of it, as actually it is tolerated by the normative. We consider that the acceptance of internal housework is the normalisation of slavery practices, that deny internal house-workers the possibility to enjoy decent living conditions. This regime does not include a defined workday and supposes the total disposition of the worker to her employees, this situation affects the worker's emotional, physical, and mental health'
>
> (IV Meeting "Citizenship and Participation of migrant and refugee women: Consolidating our political agenda", 2018)

Here, one could argue how there is a clear reference to the colonial Spanish legacies to which these Latin American and Caribbean women are historically tied. Following Gutierrez-Rodriguez (2014) the subjective experiences of these FMDWs are also accounting for the current modern/colonial world-system and how the coloniality of labour is inherent to the logic of capital accumulation. Moreover, the above-mentioned slavery-like practices are also a paradigmatic example of how migrant regimes and the feminization of labour interplay and enable the *subalternalization* of FMDW when extracting their living labour.

Irregular[ized] migrants

The contemporary conceptualizations of citizenship (above explained) come along with what can be considered as its dichotomic nature: irregularity.

In this regard, using Mezadra's words 'irregularity is an ambiguous condition that forms a key political stake in contemporary social struggles around capital and migration' (Mezzadra & Nunes, 2010:122). By examining these FMDWs experiences of mobility in contemporary capitalism from (highlighting the tensions between and politics of control and migration), this 'ambivalent' character of irregularity emerges as an strategic analytical standpoint from which to explore the 'production of new migrant, political subjectivities (ibid.). Furthermore, this legal status of 'irregularity' brings together different migrant, social forms of activism that are left outside the nation-state legal consideration.

The implications that this lack of legal or juridical recognition have on the lives of these migrant [women] are well reflected in the following fragment:

> 'The situation of irregularity means the invisibility of people, who once expelled from the system see their human rights vanish like a castle of cards. Many of us have no right to have rights, and we are also criminalized for having crossed a border looking for a better future. The Aliens Act is unable to respond to the various realities of human mobility, and thus becomes a regulator of discrimination. It is in this sense that we say that this law applies institutional violence, the effects of which fall directly on our bodies. Thus, we stand with the campaign: 'no person is illegal''
>
> (To leave no one behind! Care and violence: what the Covid-19 crisis has revealed in the Spanish State, 2020)

As it is clearly manifested above, the subject positions of the female, migrant domestic, and care worker are being shaped by complex assemblages of gender and race 'whose foreignness is often translated into a precarious or irregular legal status' (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013:258). Likewise, Anne McNevin employs the term 'immanent outsiders' (2006) to suggest how irregular[ized] migrants, even though are *de facto* incorporated within the political community as economic actors (workers) are denied of the status of 'insider' (2006: 141). By employing very similar terms, one of the manifesto's main claims argues that: '- We are included in the labour market but excluded from citizenship'. Residential citizenship will allow allows us full access to the right of active and passive suffrage, reconceptualizing the current model of citizenship for the persons migrate' (To leave no one behind! Care and violence: what the Covid-19 crisis has revealed in the Spanish State, 2020).

Likewise, the emphasis on the current legislation's inability to properly respond to the heterogeneous realities of the FMDWs community is contested with the ongoing 'no person is illegal' political campaign. The latter, one could argue, can be interpreted as an actual political exercise that questions the idea of defining citizenship in a definitive way' (Isin, Nyers, and Turner, 2009:1). Indeed, it assumes *citizenship* as a 'contested site of social struggles' (ibid.) In this regard, this network of FMDWs is an example of how migrants with irregular legal statuses can have access to and actively participate in the socio-political sphere. Likewise, it is shown how this widening of the concept of citizenship as a contested site enables political subjectivity 'or even becomes political subjectivity, through social struggle over 'the right to have rights and obligations' (Isin, Nyers, and Turner, 2009:1).

Consequently, it has been shown how through the examination of the everyday level of [irregular] migrants' experiences and social struggles (what Engin F. Isin (2008) calls 'acts of citizenship') FMDWs are currently playing a central role within the labour market and the whole fabric of social cooperation in the Spanish State (Mezzadra & Nunes, 2010:136).

5.2 The Network's political culture, alliances, and claims

A *condicio sine qua non* for the emergence of any sort of individual political sensibility is the existence of a community within which the individuals may be able to construct a certain system of beliefs, common ontological terms, and worldviews. Related to this, within the present subchapter, I intend to identify the main political and ideological positioning with which the Network's members are aligned. In this way. This will allow me to determine to what extent these FMDWs are politically subjectifying themselves along with counter-hegemonic political discourses. Likewise, these FMDWs collective efforts and mobilisations for the resistance of capitalist forms of exploitation come along with strategic alliances. Indeed, the Network's organizational philosophy is based on the belief that only through synergic cooperation it is possible to 'establish alliances and form a broader social fabric. In this way, we complement each other to multiply our capabilities' (Red Latinas, 2021).

Furthermore, it is through the exercise of reclaiming and denouncing that these migrant women do effectively and discursively materialize their particular social struggles and cause. Therefore, the analysis of the nature of these claims and demands will allow me to better understand the political terrain in which these new migrant political subjectivities are emerging.

Network's political culture

As noted above, understanding where the Network is positioned within the political spectrum will enable me to assess to what extent are their members challenging the institutional discourses and *status quo*.

During the meeting's first discussion panel 'Migration and feminisms: contributions to a political debate about citizenship and participation', one of the main goals was to: '- Debate and analyse the connection among the migratory and the feminist experience, how migrant women we can build our own narratives and constitute a migrant feminism' (IV Meeting "Citizenship and Participation of migrant and refugee women: Consolidating our political agenda", 2018).

The above quote regarding the need to articulate autonomous narratives about their own subjective experiences as female migrants in Spain stresses that these discursive accounts must be positioned within a 'migrant feminist' perspective. Moreover, when being asked 'what is our understanding of participation?' (ibid.), one revealing answer states:

> - The personal is political. / We, as migrant feminists believe that the personal is political and therefore everything that goes through our bodies and life experiences is political. From this wide perspective, we are planning our agenda, one that considers the individual and the collective aspects of our struggles'
>
> (IV Meeting "Citizenship and Participation of migrant and refugee women: Consolidating our political agenda", 2018)

In this specific case, the aforementioned reference to the late 1960s rallying slogan from the second-wave feminism 'the personal is political' underscores the connections between the personal [embodied] experiences of these women and the socio-political structures. In this sense, it can be argued how this mention of the subjectivation of politics as embodied quotidian everyday experiences is linked with AoM critique to the *rancièran* 'political subjectivation' term. Rancière, with his conceptualization of genuine political subjects as those who constitute 'a part that has no part' (Rancière, 1988) [the disruption of the 'order' by the interventions of those who have not been recognized a place within it] fails to explain the political realities of the women members of the Network. Indeed, Rancière's argument leads the interpretation of the 'political subjectivation' to an immitigable closure where only those individuals who produce a crisis within the presumed normative order can be considered as such (de Genova, 2010:108). As Mezzadra and Neilson (2013) argue, his understanding of the relation between politics and the 'order' ['police'] makes it complicated to imagine the result of the rupture 'through which egalitarian logic comes and divides the police community from itself'

(Rancière 1998: 137) as something different from yet another regime of 'order' (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013:255). Furthermore, his understanding of 'genuine' politics as an extraordinary and exceptional phenomenon (1988) contrasts with the Network's locus of 'the personal is political' with which these women align their movement. In this sense, Rancière's account does not consider the important transfiguration that the institutional structure of the nation-state is experiencing and, therefore, does not give the possibility to theorize about this heterogeneous group of migrant women as subjects already acting in political terms.

Moreover, one of the main conclusions during the second panel debate: "Political participation experiences from migrant women", was focused on issues around the logics of coloniality:

> - The colonisation of our territories supposed the colonisation of our bodies too, therefore, it is interesting for migrant feminism to recover the memory of our ancestors; questioning the idea of "being a woman" leads us to re-think the process of colonisation behind this concept and all the violence within it. We have to learn from our ancestors' struggles and see how we can apply this knowledge in our actual fights'
>
> (IV Meeting "Citizenship and Participation of migrant and refugee women: Consolidating our political agenda", 2018)

Here, the parallelism made between territorial and embodied colonisation enables them to raise a critical account of the historical legacies of colonialism and the 'violence within' its logics. In this sense, they refer to how 'the idea of being a woman' has been founded on colonial knowledge brought by imperial forces that diminished indigenous pre-existing knowledge and cosmologies. Thus, one could argue that this is a call for a decolonization (Dussel:2013; Quijano: 2016; Mignolo: 2002, 2012), not only of the economic and political oppressive current structures, but also an epistemic one [of modern thought and knowledge]. In this sense, in his account on 'coloniality of gender' (where she fills a theoretical gap not sufficiently covered by Quijano's 'coloniality of power') Maria Lugonés raises the need for a deconstruction and genealogical examination of the Eurocentric and patriarchal 'modern/colonial gender system' (Lugones, 2008:2). Therefore, this call to reappropriate their ancestors' knowledge to implement it in their current social struggles can be interpreted as one more example of counter-discoursive ideological standpoint. In this sense, the Network's participants challenge mainstream ways of organisation when reflecting on the most appropriate approach for them:

> '- We have to break with patriarchal organisation logics, that do not consider women needs and the reproduction of life. We should provide self-care spaces within our organisations, where we can take care of ourselves including the women that have more

people in charge (sons, daughters, elder people). These carrying spaces have to be a priority in our agendas'

(IV Meeting "Citizenship and Participation of migrant and refugee women: Consolidating our political agenda", 2018)

As they claim, in order to dispute these heteropatriarchal mechanisms and reclaim a dignified life it is imperative to include in the political discussions those women whose caretaking responsibilities may deter to do so. Again, the above fragment can be considered one more example of a discursive attempt to challenge the dominant societal patriarchal logics and institutionalized epistemic frontiers.

Furthermore, they stress the importance of not perpetuating these systemic logics of oppression: '- We should not only be aware of our oppressions but also of our privileges, so we do not reproduce power dynamics upon other comrades' (IV Meeting "Citizenship and Participation of migrant and refugee women: Consolidating our political agenda", 2018).

Overall, these heterogenous group of migrant women are denouncing how certain structural hegemonic power is systematically oppressing and excluding them for reasons of class, race, and gender, in other words: the deepening intersectionalities of oppression in the world today.

Stemming from the first discussion panel 'Migration and feminisms: contributions to a political debate about citizenship and participation' some of the main conclusions were related to the Spanish State's care management system:

'With this way of understanding Public Policies, the Spanish State perpetuates patriarchal stereotypes of feminization, precariousness of the sector, social devaluation and invisibility. This has direct consequences on our working conditions because they reinforce the patriarchal – capitalist – classist and racist idea of the historical and philosophical social configuration of the construction of Europe (and in the Spanish society) by revalidating from the public institutions that:

1. care is a women's thing,
2. the employer, from his position of power, can control the life of the domestic worker as they usually do with their wives and all family members because they consider them part of their property.
3. this work, and under these conditions, are "only" for poor immigrant women, as in the eighteenth century only black people were enslaved. Most domestic workers in Spain are immigrant women, and that should tell us something as a society'

(To leave no one behind! Care and violence: what the Covid-19 crisis has revealed in the Spanish State, 2020)

The above diagnosis points out again issues like the feminization of migration and domestic work as well as the intersection of class, race, and capitalist logics within European colonial legacies. Moreover, there is a direct reference to the Spanish Welfare State described as perpetuating the above systems of oppression throughout their deficient public management of care. Therefore, it can be argued how there is a continuation of counter-hegemonic, critical standpoints already presented in the previous IV network's meeting report.

Building intersectional alliances

As will be shown throughout the present section when engaging with discussions about the creation of alliances with other social groups and actors, the Network's members highlight the importance of adopting an intersectional and critical perspective.

Right from the formulation of the main IV meeting objectives, they stress the importance of creating fruitful inter-alliances:

> '- To reflect on the practices aimed at the achievement of strategic alliances between the different organizations of our Network and other feminist, migrants, refugees' organizations or key actors in the field of the rights of migrants in Spain'
>
> (IV Meeting "Citizenship and Participation of migrant and refugee women: Consolidating our political agenda", 2018)

Furthermore, framed within the main objectives of the first discussion panel 'Migration and feminisms: contributions to a political debate about citizenship and participation', the participants refer to the need to:

> '- Generate a dialogue among migrant and refugee women, about the link between the migration experience and the political participation (with a specific emphasise on feminist practices). Reflecting on the incardination of the personal and the political in the execution of citizenship, in contexts where this exercise is blocked or where the narratives are still prioritizing the victimization over the agency' (ibid.).

Regarding the above, the fact that they encourage both migrant and refugee women to engage in a dialogue deserves a more detailed examination. Here, by combining the literature of CCS with a contentious politics, it can be argued how the network's members encourage migrant women for the 'execution of citizenship in contexts where this exercise is blocked' being this one more example of 'migrants demanding rights as a form of 'enacting' themselves as citizens. In this sense, this enables discussions where less 'essentialist' and rather insurrectional

concepts of citizenship may take place. Following Isin (2008), feminist and other civil rights movements in the past achieved the transformation of subjects into rights' claimants through acts that were 'were symbolically and materially constitutive of citizenship' (Ataç et al., 2016:537) such as protests, occupations performances or demonstrations. In this sense, these migrant women's political mobilisation may be interpreted as a similar example of political subjectivation through the network's project for the exercise of collective claims and practices. However, they argue, when building alliances is equally important to make sure that:

> '- These alliances should not make us forget that the migrant women group is diverse, we are not a homogeneous group. Our social class, origins, sexual orientation, age, migratory project, motivations, make us different we are a plural group; therefore, we have to think in non-exclusive alliances'
>
> (IV Meeting "Citizenship and Participation of migrant and refugee women: Consolidating our political agenda", 2018)

The above reference to these migrant women's multiple realities emphasises how the network's members consider particularly central the adoption of an intersectional approach when engaging with other women or women associations. This call for the implementation of a self-reflexive approach comes along with the need for deconstructing how Northern or Euro-centric knowledge is being produced and disseminated (Canetto, 2019; Yakushko, 2020). As previously mentioned, the Network's members encourage to constantly implement a reflexive observation of their practices in order to make sure that they are not [consciously or unconsciously, individually or collectively] supporting patriarchal [among others] systems of oppression.

Likewise, during the second panel debate discussion 'Political participation experiences from migrant women' they make the following insightful statements:

> '-We are activists from the moment we decide to migrate and how we deal with our transit process, in this respect we have to be aware that we all are women of action.
>
> - As migrant women we are always interpellated by the situation in our native countries, therefore, we need a transnational activism'
>
> (IV Meeting "Citizenship and Participation of migrant and refugee women: Consolidating our political agenda", 2018)

Lastly, one could argue how the above reference to transnational activism, along with the numerous mentions of migrant feminism and intersectionality found within this report, are common features of one specific scholarship [and movement]: transnational feminism. In this sense, the project of transnational feminism is 'understood as a feminist paradigm and plural

field of feminist thought, research and practice' (Hundle, Szeman, & Hoare, 2019:3) that emphasizes interdisciplinarity, intersectionality, justice, social activism and collaboration (ibid.). Furthermore, this feminist project seeks to deconstruct notions that 'women around the world share the same types of experiences, oppressions, forms of exploitation, and privileges' (Zerbe Enns et al., 2020:12). Likewise, it also highlights oppressing social structural factors that intensify social inequalities, with an especial focus on modern capitalism, colonialism and neo-colonialism (ibid.). Therefore, coming back to the present thesis research question, it can be argued how the network's existing alliances and the potential ones to be created will be framed within alternative, counter-hegemonic ideological perspectives.

Similarly, another panel's final conclusions stressed the importance of working on solid coalitions among different collective mobilisations:

> '- All the participants from this table agree on the necessity to make alliances between migrant women and migrant women social movements, to build a solid group. We have to politicise our common points.
>
> - We have to reinforce our alliances with feminist organisations, and women rights organisations such as Women's Link, Femicidio.net, Calala, AIETI, etc. and European organisations as well'
>
> (IV Meeting "Citizenship and Participation of migrant and refugee women: Consolidating our political agenda", 2018)

Likewise, it is explicit throughout the manifesto the imperative need to generate and strengthen alliances that allow them to spread their political struggles to other segments of the Spanish society:

> 'Thus, we stand with the campaign: 'no person is illegal''. We are part of the campaign for the regularization of migrants in the Spanish State, making this demand together with other networks of migrant organizations and the anti-racist movement'
>
> (To leave no one behind! Care and violence: what the Covid-19 crisis has revealed in the Spanish State, 2020)

In this regard, employing Mezzadra's concept of 'temporality of struggles'(Mezzadra & Nunes, 2010:137) it can be argued how, indeed, the Network might be found to be a space where 'the possibility of building heterogeneous coalitions and common grounds for an encounter between migrants and other subjects in struggle (...)' (ibid.) materializes. It has been shown how this shared 'temporality of the material practices' has created the conditions of various collective mobilisations propitiates the conditions of 'insurgence through solidarities' (ibid.) and social

struggles. Conclusively, the *Network of Latin American and Caribbean Women* might indeed be considered a paradigmatic example of that.

Following Mezzadra (2010) it has been shown how this shared 'temporality of the material practices' has created the conditions of various collective mobilisations propitiates the conditions of 'insurgence through solidarities' (ibid.) and social struggles (ibid.) Conclusively, the *Network of Latin American and Caribbean Women* might indeed be considered a paradigmatic example of that. In the following section, I intend to explore the nature of the claims and demands around which these migrant women are building their new [heterogeneous] political subjectivities.

In the following section, I intend to better grasp the nature of the claims and demands these women present as well as briefly outline the prescriptive notions for carrying out the social changes they reclaim.

FMDWs' political claims-making

The main Network's purpose with the publication of the political manifesto *To leave no one behind! Care and violence: what the Covid-19 crisis has revealed in the Spanish State*, was to evaluate and suggest solutions to the current Covid-19 pandemic impact on FMDWs' life conditions. Furthermore, they were aiming: 'To be recognized as valid interlocutors in political decision-making spaces, especially when they address issues that affect us directly' (To leave no one behind! Care and violence: what the Covid-19 crisis has revealed in the Spanish State, 2020) This recognition by the state's institutions is here shown as one more mechanism through which these FMDWs have produced their political subjectivities as female, migrant, domestic workers in the Spanish State. Thus, even though they are stemming from the particularly fragile situation that the Covid-19 pandemic has propitiated, I will exclusively make use of this political manifesto throughout the present analysis' section. I consider that the claims here made are reflection of the structural issues that the Spanish welfare care model presents and how FMDWs experience it.

As it is widely known, n the 14th of March 2020, amid the global COVID-19 pandemic, the Spanish prime minister Pedro Sánchez, announced in an institutional statement the declaration of the state of alarm as an exceptional measure to prevent the spread of the virus. The prohibition of citizens' movement throughout the national territory and mandatory home confinement was established. The exceptions were commuting between home and work as well

as the purchase of basic necessities, such as food and medicines. Framed within this state of alarm, it can be argued how the pandemic made an impact not only on FMDWs' working conditions, but it also served as an opportunity to rethink their role within the social structures of the Spanish State's social fabric. The following fragment adequately illustrates it:

> 'The COVID-19 crisis has put in the centre the importance of life care and sustainability. During the state of alarm and in all this time of crisis, not only health workers have been fundamental, but also all professions that focus their work on cleaning and care. Professions in which a large majority of migrants residing in Spain are inserted. Therefore, we feel as an integral part of this society, whether we are in a regular or irregular legal situation. The pandemic crisis is an opportunity to address conjunctural and structural problems of our global system of care and the sustainability of life'
>
> (To leave no one behind! Care and violence: what the Covid-19 crisis has revealed in the Spanish State, 2020)

Before diving into it, it is important to stress the fact that the present manifesto was published in October of 2020, therefore, what they refer to as the 'new normality' can be interpreted as the slow reopening of society after the 9th of May 2021, when the state of alarm will be officially over.

'Our demands for the 'new normality' after Covid-19:

1. Accelerate the review of all applications, and the immediate payment of the Extraordinary Grant for domestic workers, as well as the extension of it, as has been done with ERTES (*Record of Temporary Employment Regulation).*
2. Ensure access to free and quality universal health care for migrants without the packing wheel. It is necessary to adopt a regulation that unifies the criteria guaranteeing the protection of minors, pregnant women, and persons migrated in an emergency or in all Autonomous Communities.
3. Approve - without further extension - a real emergency decree for the administrative regularization of foreign people in Spain which ensures that no human being is left behind.
4. Ratification of ILO Convention 189 on Decent Work at Home'

> (To leave no one behind! Care and violence: what the Covid-19 crisis has revealed in the Spanish State, 2020)

From the above list, it can be elucidated that the main claims and demands for this 'new normality' are related to a rather deficient legislative framework that does not consider FMDWs necessities or even deliberately neglects them. According to a recent Intermon Oxfam's report about the Covid-19 impact on domestic workers in Spain (2021) it has been almost a decade since the Spanish government announced a new legislation that would equate the rights and obligations of domestic workers to other employees (OXFAM,2021:4) However, although several dates have been set for full integration of domestic workers' rights into the General Social Security Scheme, each time the date arrives it ends up being postponed. They are excluded from rights to make their work affordable to the rest of the population (ibid.). Therefore, a large group of people (mainly women) in precarious working conditions are kept *sine die* in order to keep their salaries low and make their services affordable for the rest of the population. The current Spanish Government has expressed its willingness to ratify the ILO Convention concerning decent work for domestic workers (Domestic Workers. Convention, No. 189) However, Spain's adherence to this international instrument needs to come along with a correspondent amendment of public policies of the Welfare State such as dependent people care policies as well as the Spanish Aliens Law.

Lastly, it can be argued how through these practices of rights claiming (in many instances, beyond their legal status), these FMDWs are engaging in processes of political articulation where their demands are being delivered to the public sphere. The position of these migrant women as [domestic] living labour, within capital logics of extraction and accumulation, comes along with its intrinsically embodied mechanisms used by the politics of migration and control that manage this 'workforce surplus'. As a result, a particular subjectivity of the living labour is being produced. Thus, this position enables them to constitute themselves as new political [migrant] subjects in counter-hegemonic ways that denounce this exploitative systemic of oppression and, at the same time, creates networks of feminist, migrant activists working towards the construction of a collective 'politics of liberation' (Keulen, 2020) project.

6 Discussion and conclusions

The present thesis has aligned from its beginning with the autonomist interpretations of [practices of] mobility as an integral part of the contemporary 'heterogeneity of living labour' which is, in turn, exploited and managed by capital. (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013:85) By assuming the theoretical conceptualization of the commodification of living labour, this research aimed to examine how this Network of FMDWs is emerging as a subversive, counter-hegemonic political space where these female, migrant, domestic workers are subjectifying themselves politically (and how this is performed). As I have previously clarified, labour is not the only mechanism through which individuals construct their subjectivities. However, the examination of the peculiar labour market position that these FMDWs occupy within the contemporary capitalist logics (production and reproduction of labour power) facilitated an analysis that intends to foreground systemic global structures in which, as living labour, these FMDWs are embedded.

While acknowledging the plural and different female migrant experiences, crisscrossed by their class, gender, race, or labour conditions, it has been shown throughout this thesis how these FMDWs are indeed part of the contemporary [highly heterogeneous] global working-class. And it is precisely through this aspect that several organizations within the Network raised their voices and curated a political manifesto denouncing their current working conditions and preformed an exercise of political claim-making. Thus, as has been shown in the analysis, this group of FMDWs has indeed developed a political project based on this commonality ([care] work) without losing sight of their individual identity aspects, legal statuses, and heterogeneous migrant experiences. Understanding, among other aspects, the Network's main lines of thought behind their social struggles, their socio-political analysis of reality, and their current political agenda allowed me to understand the main discourses, practices, and mechanisms through which these migrant women are constructing their political subjectivities as such. Indeed, the mere fact that the Network itself is composed of non-migrant, human rights movements indicates that its foundations are based on encounters with other social struggles fighting for universal, social justice.

Returning to the initial research question*: How is this Network of Latin American and Caribbean Women a fertile space for the emergence of counter-hegemonic [migrant] political subjectivities?*

It has been demonstrated throughout this thesis's analysis how the Network appears as a fertile, collective space of counter-hegemonic political activism. The examination of their political documents reflects how the network's political agenda is aligned with a transnational feminist project at both an activist and scholarship level. As has been noted, the Covid-19 pandemic is just one more example of the current, unprecedented — and increasingly visible – capitalist crisis and its logics of production-consumption that today undermine life itself.

Taking the pandemic outbreak as an opportunity for social change, it appears how the Network's project reflects an intergenerational movement of women that comes from diverse sociocultural contexts who are developing an 'anti-systemic' agenda and practicing a form of intersectional political project. By 'anti-systemic', I refer here to the network's critical standpoints towards several, current systemic structures: capitalism, colonialism, racism, patriarchy, imperialism, extractivism. The network's political project is also crossed by something that is common to all of them and that resides in their own flesh in many ways: gender-based violence. Thus, an interdisciplinary group of scholar-activists within the Network contributes to the dissemination [democratisation, one could argue] of the main critical, decolonial feminist postulates. In this way, the production of political subjectivities happens along collective practices of knowledge production. Avoiding, therefore, that these migrant women's stories and political struggles are being written by an 'intellectual subaltern' group of academics (Spivak: 1988), isolated from and parallel to the movement itself. In this way, they argue, they prevent the perpetuation of practices of epistemological colonisation.

Based on the above, the network's transnational, decolonial feminist activist community has served as a safe and prolific space where these migrant women can engage in self-reflexive articulations of their own political subjectivities. In fact, one could not exist without the other. As it has been seen, the reflective exercise these FMDWs engage with is inseparable from a collective counterpart that facilitates and embraces them. Throughout the analysis of the documents, it has been highlighted how various aspects influence and/or condition the production of these migrant women's political subjectification by challenging normative notions of what is considered a 'political community'.

Regardless of the connotations given by CCS or AoM postulates, it has been shown how *citizenship* appears to be a contested field through which these migrant women articulate a big part of their political right-claiming exercises. In this sense, it appears to be rather difficult to elude the fact that *citizenship* has traditionally and historically been based on the insider/outsider differentiation (Mezzadra, 2011:124) which, in practice, fails to be all-

encompassing. Equal possibilities to right claiming appear to be as grounded in this limited notion of citizenship identity, unveiling as well 'mechanism of exclusion within human rights' (Petterson, 2011:259). However, the Network's political practices on these regard challenge static positions from which particular legal statuses (regular/irregular, citizen/non-citizen) are assigned to them, based on undisclosed notions of sameness within the sovereignty of nation-states. Rather, it has been demonstrated how these migrant women's activism is performed through acts of disagreement towards a legislation (the Spanish one) that systematically denies them any political legitimacy as social agents or, in some cases, any legal recognition whatsoever. Thus, if the latter becomes a *condito sine qua non* for having access to the 'legitimate' political community within which decisions are made, participation to it is systematically denied to those migrant [women] who are juridically considered to be 'irregular' (or they are only part of this community as economic participants). Here, through the Network's adhesion to the campaign 'no person is illegal', they include and embrace the struggles of those female, migrant domestic workers who are not juridically recognized as such but 'exercise their rights as 'illegal citizens' or as 'unauthorized yet recognized' citizens who mobilize politically around their status as workers' (Mezzadra, 2010:136).

In this light, instead of accepting being left voiceless and on the margins of the political decision-making spaces, these FMDWs have built an inclusive and intersectional space that is challenging traditional and static conceptions of the political community as merely delimited by and bounded to the nation-state. Indeed, they are reinventing and broadening 'the common conditions of social cooperation and production' (ibid:137) that sets the basis of the political community as understood in contemporary politics today. The Network is aligned with conceptions that conceive as an 'activist project' by itself every single phase of these FMDWs' migration process since the day they decided to migrate to Spain. Their political subjectivities are being produced and shaped within a space that welcomes and embraces as equal every migrant woman, regardless of their particular legal status, working condition, race, educational background, etc. Thus, they contribute to a universal, inclusionary, radical conception of democracy in which the ongoing constitution of the *common* is based in terms of social struggles' encounters.

In the present thesis, I have intended to overcome a certain tendency within radical debates that conceive politics in terms of the 'singularity of the particular moment' (Mezzadra, 2010) or a certain rupture with the 'police' (in *rancièran* terms). Focusing on the 'materiality of migrant politics' and how neoliberalism produces subjectivities in relation to labour has allowed me to

understand how labour within contemporary capitalism can act as a fundamental axe for political articulation. However, it has been demonstrated how the Network's migrant political project appears as a space that has facilitated the material practices for the of encounter of various contemporary social struggles (not only labour ones), embracing the intersectionality of different subject positions.

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8 Appendix