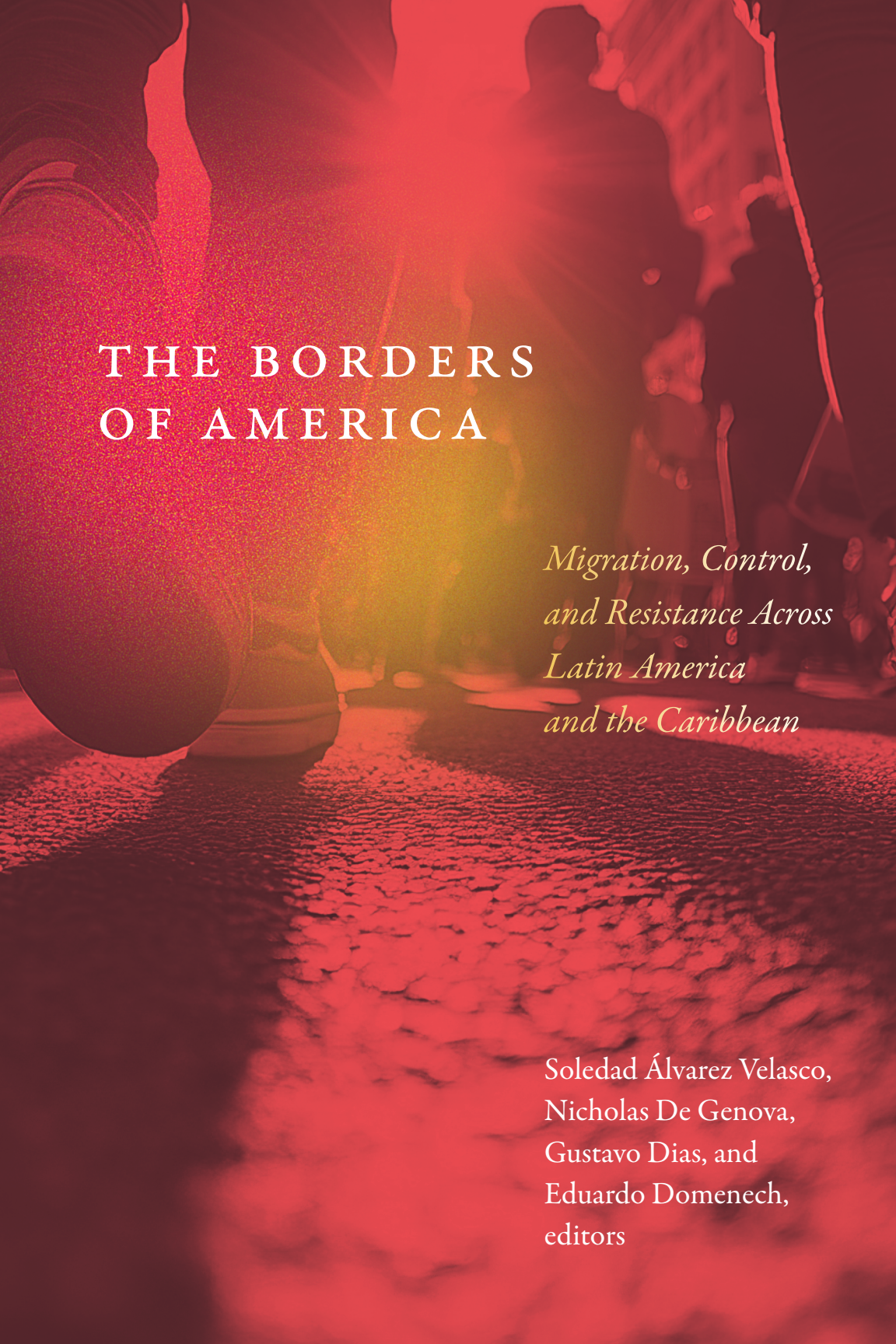




THE BORDERS OF AMERICA

*Migration, Control,
and Resistance Across
Latin America
and the Caribbean*

Soledad Álvarez Velasco,
Nicholas De Genova,
Gustavo Dias, and
Eduardo Domenech,
editors

The Borders of America



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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO
OUR DEAR COLLEAGUE, FRIEND, AND SISTER
VALENTINA GLOCKNER FAGETTI

Valentina passed away suddenly in December 2023. She was not only a contributor to this volume but also an esteemed Mexican anthropologist who dedicated her life to accompanying the everyday struggles of Central American and Mexican migrant children and their families.

We honor and celebrate her intellectual work and her ethical and political commitments, and we are confident that her legacy will continue to inspire and guide new generations of critical migration researchers across the Americas.

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Introduction

THE BORDERS OF (OUR) AMERICA

*Soledad Álvarez Velasco, Nicholas De Genova,
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In dedicating critical scrutiny to the borders of America, we are first confronted with the inherent ambiguity and equivocation surrounding the very notion of “America.” As is well known, “America” was originally the name that European colonizers ascribed to the entirety of what they imagined to be “the New World”—what we have since come to understand to be the Western Hemisphere. Since the nineteenth century, however, there has been a profound tension in and across the Americas between the global power and ambitions of the United States as an imperial formation and the (post)colonial provincialization of Latin America and the Caribbean. The veritable usurpation of the very words *America* and *American* as the presumptively exclusive property of US nationalism is perhaps the most perfect manifestation of this historic bifurcation between the wealth, power, prestige, and imperial ambitions of the United States and the derisive relegation of the rest of the hemisphere to its proverbial “backyard.” José Martí ([1891] 1979) famously depicted this sociopolitical

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divide as the difference between the “blond” colossus to the north (referring to the United States) and that other space that he called *Nuestra América* (Our America). Such a Pan-American, hemispheric perspective that repudiates the familiar and tired legacy of provincializing Latin America and the Caribbean has provided a long-standing counterpoint to the presumptuous imperial conceits of US “Americanism,” yet remains agonistic and overdue. This volume—and our inquiry into migration, borders, control, and resistance across the Americas—is therefore posited from the critical standpoint of *Nuestra América*, *Our America*: the research showcased here has been produced almost entirely by scholars in and of Latin America.

To speak of *the borders of America*, then, for us requires a single analytical framework that encompasses the United States and Canada along with the Caribbean and the full extent of Latin America. This hemispheric framework entails a critical inquiry into migratory processes and, consequently, also the reaction formations of border enforcement that traverse and encompass the greater global region that is the Americas—North, Central, and South and the Caribbean. Rather than a merely cumulative composite of diverse depictions of migration, control, and resistance across this variegated and expansive world region, however, we insist on the recognition of heterogeneous migratory movements and transnational corridors of human mobility that crisscross the Americas in multiple directions and that increasingly incorporate human mobilities that span the globe. Adopting such a hemispheric perspective on the processes of migration and border control in the Americas is not meant to minimize or disregard the central and defining significance of the United States border with Mexico, which has long been a premier space of encounter and mobility between the so-called developed countries and the vast so-called periphery of underdeveloped countries, and which has therefore been a truly iconic site of migrant struggles and border policing for more than a century. The US-Mexico border remains a crucial flashpoint for interrogating struggles over human mobility on a global/postcolonial scale—perhaps now more than ever, as migrations from across the globe increasingly converge in the Americas and inexorably seek routes over land toward the United States. Indeed, with the diversification of migratory movements across the Americas over recent decades, it is more evident now than ever before that the ostensible line partitioning the United States and Latin America is not reducible to a mere international boundary between the richest nation-state in the history of humankind and its poorer neighbor to the south. Instead, in the third decade of the twenty-first century, the US-Mexico border must be apprehended as a space of convergence for countless multifarious confrontations and transits, an ever-multiplying array

of postcolonial human mobilities and the infrastructures facilitating them that extend throughout the Americas and beyond. Simultaneously, as the US border, immigration, and asylum regime has become pronouncedly more restrictive and draconian over recent years, and as the US-Mexico border zone has become ever more violent and perilous, Canada has likewise increasingly emerged as a destination of choice. Migrant and refugee mobilities across the Americas at times have notably converted the United States into a global space of migratory “transit” from which to move onward into Canada, or have circumvented the United States altogether in favor of migration directly to Canada (Landolt and Goldring, this volume, ch. 1).

Amid the proliferation of new and unforeseen migratory routes and platforms across the Americas, there has thus been a concomitant diversification of migrant itineraries and destinations. As with many other areas of the world, Latin America and the Caribbean constitute a global region increasingly distinguished by numerous countries that are at once “sending,” “receiving,” and “transit” countries. Indeed, rather than a self-contained insular geographical region, within which migratory movements might be presumed to merely amplify and intensify *intra*regional dynamics of human mobility that thus appear to reinscribe Latin America and the Caribbean as a discrete world area, the Americas have become newly articulated through human mobilities with a diverse array of other areas of the globe. From Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, from Senegal and Nigeria to Ukraine, from Syria to China, from Sudan to Iraq, from Somalia to Pakistan, from the Congo to Bangladesh, intercontinental migrant and refugee movements increasingly arrive in destinations across Latin America and the Caribbean. Amid intermittent periods of temporary, sometimes indefinite waiting and ongoing or renewed mobility, migrants and refugees move through multiple countries and transgress numerous borders (Álvarez Velasco 2020; this volume, ch. 6). Consequently, while we focus our collective inquiry in this volume primarily on bordering and migration across the Americas, this hemispheric orientation exceeds the conventions and customary constraints of research in Latin American “area studies,” because we foreground the constitutive interrelations of Latin America and the Caribbean with the United States and Canada and, furthermore, because we highlight the repercussions of global migratory movements that are profoundly reconfiguring the Americas as a whole. This volume therefore showcases the dynamics of migration, control, and resistance across Latin America and the Caribbean to illuminate the existence and ongoing consolidation and entrenchment on a hemispheric scale of a *heterogenous trans-American border regime*.

Building on the insights of related work in critical migration and border studies, we deploy the concept of the *border regime* to signal an epistemological, conceptual, and methodological approach that conceives of borders not merely as physical demarcations between state territories and jurisdictions but rather as expansive uneven and heterogeneous spaces of constant encounter, exchange, dispute, tension, conflict, and contestation (Casas-Cortés et al. 2015; Mezzadra and Neilson 2013; Hess 2017; Hess and Kasparek 2017; Tazzioli 2014, 2015; Tsianos and Karakayali 2010). For some readers, the term *regime* may connote an integrated and comprehensive grid of unified sovereign power and may even imply an asphyxiatingly absolute or total form of domination, as in colloquial uses of the term to describe more or less dictatorial forms of state power. Here, however, we are deploying *regime* to signal precisely the opposite. Whereas other words, such as *assemblage*, might reasonably approximate what we aim to conceptualize, the enduring association of *regime* with state-sponsored violence supplies a critically important reminder and allows us to underscore that the variegated regime that we identify and describe in this volume nevertheless remains inextricable from the indisputable structural and infrastructural violence of borders and the commonplace and casual brutality of border enforcement. Adapting the concept from regime analysis in critical international relations scholarship, Vasilis Tsianos and Serhat Karakayali (2010) elaborate an understanding of *border regime* that emphasizes a multiplicity of actors engaged in a plurality of unstable sociopolitical relations, antagonisms, conflicts, and negotiations over norms, rules, and decision-making procedures, never reducible to any governmental or even intergovernmental process of sheer regulation. The analytical purchase of the concept of border or migration regime, therefore, is that it “rejects the primacy of control . . . in favor of the primacy of the practices of migration” and thereby “provides a framework wherein aspects of the autonomy of migration can be articulated” (375) and aims “to understand regulations of migration as effects, as condensations of social actions instead of taking regulations functionalistically for granted. . . . A multiplicity of political agents is supposed to deal with social processes, where the regulation capacities of nation states have failed” (376). As a mode of governmentality that exceeds any single sovereign power, this conception of the border regime highlights how, against all the brutal asymmetries of power that migrants and refugees confront, the subjective autonomy of migration nevertheless daily throws the government of human mobility and border control into question, instigating “the transformation of mobility into politics” (378).

An emphasis on the conflictual character of a border regime, unevenly constituted by rival contenders for sovereignty or prerogative, highlights how borders must be recognized as thoroughly political spaces. Rather than a unified, homogeneous, monolithic notion, here the concept of regime signals complexity and contradiction. From this perspective, as Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson (2013) argue, we are challenged to analyze the border regime as a heterogeneous assemblage of institutions, logistics, practices, discourses, and procedures that is configured in correspondence with the incessant production and circulation of capital (19–20). It is likewise always articulated to the subordination of labor, and to the role of the state and the law in the mediation of the capital-labor relation (De Genova 2016). A border regime thus entails a constellation of efforts to domesticate and regulate human life and mobility by subjecting people on the move across state borders to various operations of power and, commonly, multiple formations of violence. Thus bordered and branded as “migrants,” “asylum seekers,” “refugees,” and so forth, these mobile subjects may be alternately or simultaneously depicted as “victims” or “threats.” As “victims,” they may be subjected to the operations of humanitarian governance and rendered objects of “protection.” As “threats,” they are predictably subjected to more or less violent forms of policing, securitarian surveillance, and punishment. In both instances, they are subjected to the multifarious machinations of border “control.” However, control here is never simply a matter of “exclusion”; instead, “filtering, selecting, and channeling migratory movements—rather than simply excluding migrants and asylum seekers—seems to be the aim of contemporary border and migration regimes” (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013, 165). Pervasively subordinated to the operations of the law and various forms of law enforcement—whether illegalized or governed within the constrictions and conditionalities of immigration or asylum law—the capacity for labor embodied in these mobile subjects comes to be disciplined and rendered as eminently exploitable and ultimately disposable, and finally susceptible to deportation, in a process of subordinate (illegalized) inclusion (De Genova 2002, 2005, 2010a).

Despite the customarily one-sided association of borders with control, human mobility—in all its discrepant manifestations as the subjective projects of “migrants” and “refugees,” inevitably diverse in nationality, race, gender, age, and social class but all seeking to cross borders in order to remake their lives—is a co-constitutive element of any border regime. Affirming the autonomy-of-migration thesis (Moulier-Boutang [1998] 2006; see also De Genova 2010b, 2016, 2017; Mezzadra 2011; Hess 2017; Papadopolous and Tsianos 2013; Papadopoulos, Stephenson, and Tsianos 2008), we understand migration as the active autonomous social force at the very center of the complex, heterogeneous border

enforcement projects that respond to and aim to control and govern such unruly mobilities. “We should see movement before capital—but not independent from it—and mobility before control—but not disconnected from it” (Martignoni and Papadopoulos 2014, 38). Thus, the border regime is both actual (already existing) and nevertheless always contingent: as yet incomplete, unresolved, and riddled with contradictions and conflicts, which themselves arise as the effect of the struggles of migrants and refugees to appropriate mobility and realize their diverse migratory projects.

Responding in sometimes discrepant and divergent ways to the subjective force and autonomy of transnational migration and refugee movements, a convulsive constellation of multifarious bordering practices emerges that both produce and enforce borders but also must repeatedly revise and reassemble them. These bordering practices and the borders that they produce (and reproduce) are the work of multiple state powers, but also a variety of non-state actors (such as migrant smuggling operations, international and local humanitarian organizations, drug cartels, religious charities, criminal syndicates, migrant solidarity movements, paramilitary militias, and insurgent guerrilla movements), which likewise contend to varying extents for sovereign power and aspire to produce and intervene in the governance of these transnational spaces of human mobility. The ever uneven and unequal relations among these numerous contenders for sovereignty, which *together* constitute a heterogeneous border *regime*, may at times be fractious or even hostile and yet also entail significant degrees of complicity, harmonization, cooperation, and coordination. In all cases, nevertheless, they respond to the primacy of human mobility and migrants’ and refugees’ exercise of their elementary freedom of movement (De Genova 2010a).

The Trans-American Border Regime

Indisputably, the United States has played a preponderant role in the creation and consolidation of the border regime across the Americas. As we have already suggested, the consolidation of this hemispheric border regime must also be apprehended in relation to the complex geopolitical and geo-economic processes that articulate the countries of the Americas, and the United States above all, in relation to the rest of the world. In this regard, while we focus in this volume on migratory movements and border formations across the hemisphere, mainly during the two first decades of the twenty-first century, these are never separable from the multifarious ways US imperial power on a global scale has long sought to consolidate the full extent of the Western Hemisphere as its exclusive “sphere

of influence,” and thus to reinstate virtual borders around the Americas as a greater whole in relation to its global geopolitical and geo-economic rivals and competitors (see De Genova et al., this volume, ch. 12). Borders, after all, serve multiple purposes in the political partitioning of the geographies of the capitalist world economy, purposes not exclusively restricted to regulating the transnational mobility of people. Yet, in their mediation of the unequal exchange of value, not least the potential value to be realized from the human labor power embodied in migrants who traverse them, borders have become inseparable from state power’s service to capital in the global-scale subordination of labor (De Genova 2016; Mezzadra and Neilson 2013). That is to say, borders have become inextricably involved in the work of modulating and governing human mobilities.

Alongside measures implemented to extend US borders inward through unprecedented forms of “interior” immigration policing, the United States has *externalized* its southern border through various deployments of its economic, political, and military power and influence. In a prolonged campaign to outsource border policing, the United States has increasingly come to rely on junior-partner states (so-called “third countries”), subcontracted to serve as de facto US border guards across the Americas. These junior partners violently intercept and interdict migratory mobilities long before they ever reach US territory, and not uncommonly develop and deploy detention and deportation powers to receive, immobilize, contain, decelerate, sometimes block, and even reverse the momentum of migrants’ and refugees’ autonomous movements. The heterogenous trans-American border regime that we examine in this book owes much to the concerted efforts of the United States to materially and practically transpose the US-Mexico border and its enforcement across an ever greater expanse of the American hemisphere.

Far from being a monolithic or homogeneous process, the United States’ efforts at “remote control” have operated unevenly and heterogeneously across the hemisphere: the intensity and form of those efforts vary according to the geographic proximity of the “third countries” and their respective histories of shared migration and security cooperation with the United States (Winters and Mora Izaguirre 2019; see also De Genova et al., this volume, ch. 12). As demonstrated by several of our contributors (Velasco Ortiz; Basok and Rojas Wiesner; and Núñez Chaim, Varela Huerta, and Glockner Fagetti, this volume, chs. 2–4), the United States’ externalized border control has thus been more intense and violent in Mexico than elsewhere. This “hard” version of the externalization of the US border has materialized in reinforced restrictive visa schemes targeting “unwanted” migrants, militarized borders, criminalizing policies, and coordinated programs and practices of detention and expulsion that have made the full

extent of the Mexican territory an extremely dangerous extended border zone (Vogt 2017; Varela Huerta and McLean 2021). This “hard” version of border externalization has likewise been extended to Central American countries, particularly Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala (Miller 2019). For instance, during the first Trump administration, the United States introduced the cynical contrivance whereby the same Central American countries from which most asylum seekers arriving at the US-Mexico border had fled would be designated “safe third countries” for the purpose of deporting asylum seekers who had fled violence or persecution in neighboring Central American countries.¹ Hence, the plan was that Guatemalans and Salvadorans would be dumped in Honduras, while Hondurans and Salvadorans would similarly be dumped in Guatemala, and so forth. Thus, the United States imposed on its junior partners in the region to accept and detain the asylum seekers who could not otherwise be refouled to neighboring states, from which they often claimed to be fleeing for their lives; but they would thereafter be deported from the United States and indefinitely imprisoned in other countries disingenuously labeled as “safe” but repudiated as unsafe by many of their own ostensible citizens. The second Trump administration has gone further, deporting migrants to various “third countries,” including Panama and Costa Rica (and, prospectively, Guatemala, Ecuador, and even Libya and Rwanda), and most infamously, deporting others to El Salvador to be imprisoned indefinitely as “criminals”—with no formal charges, incriminating evidence, or any semblance of due process of law—in that country’s notorious maximum-security so-called Terrorism Confinement Center (De Genova 2025).

In countries located farther south of the United States, “soft” modes of migration control have been implemented. These are modes of externalized control that are less explicit, less policed, and more rooted in the production of knowledge and the management of data, working through formats such as mobility policy frameworks and technical innovations for harmonizing the government of migration and asylum (Hess 2010, 97–98). According to the hegemonic narratives regarding “safe, orderly, and regular” migration, examples of such soft forms of US remote control border governance include anti-(migrant) smuggling and antitrafficking campaigns; restrictive visa schemes targeting select “Global South” nationalities whose presence in the United States is massive yet purportedly “unwanted” or who are branded as a potential “national security risk”; and programs for training immigration and border agents in partner countries and providing technical assistance for their border control operations (Hess 2010; Mansur 2015). Examples include Costa Rica, Panama, and Colombia (Winters and Mora Izaguirre 2019; Gómez Johnson and González Gil 2022), and Ecuador (Álvarez Velasco 2024). These dynamics are also examined in this

book in chapters that analyze the Colombian-Panama borderlands (Ordóñez and Echeverri Zuluaga, this volume, ch. 5) and migration policies in Ecuador (Álvarez Velasco, this volume, ch. 6).

The externalized trans-American border regime, extending across multiple state territories and jurisdictions, is an uneven and contradictory assemblage of disparate and sometimes competing sovereignties. These state powers' respective investments in their own projects of border making and border control coexist and sometimes collude with an eclectic array of nonstate competitors for what is seldom exclusively the state's monopoly on violence or, indeed, on the government of mobility—an array including not only “smugglers” (*coyotes*, *enganchadores*, *guías*), drug cartels and other organized crime syndicates, local gangs, paramilitaries, and insurgent guerrillas but also a diversity of humanitarian border actors. Thus, the heterogenous border regime that the contributors to this book depict through various empirically grounded and descriptively rich inquiries emerges not as a simple apparatus for smooth and efficient migration governance and control imposed and operated unilaterally by the United States but as a transnational formation of migration governmentality, replete with competing and contradictory imperatives, impulses, and interests, rife with discord and conflict, and permanently bedeviled by open-ended and unresolved border struggles. And, again, these discrepant and often convulsive gambits for border control never cease to be reaction formations responding to the primacy and incorrigibility of the autonomy of human mobility and migrant and refugee resistances that supply the inextricable and irrepressible ghost in the machine (De Genova 2009, 2010b).

Ungovernable Subjects on the Move

The current configuration of the trans-American border regime as a heterogeneous and contradictory composite of tactics and technologies of bordering would be truly inexplicable without training our critical focus on the unruly social force that is migration. Human mobilities have shaped the Americas from the outset, and intercontinental and transregional migrations have been in ample evidence since at least the colonial era. Whereas the United States alone hosts roughly one-fifth of the global migrant population (nearly 46 million people), Canada hosts another 8.3 million migrants, and the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean together host another 11 million migrants (IOM 2022). Those numerical differentials will come as no surprise to anyone and merely confirm what is well known: that the United States, long the wealthiest country in the world and the nation-state with a singularly outsized political, economic,

cultural, and military influence in other countries across the globe, has likewise long been a premier destination for migrants. Historically, Latin American and Caribbean countries, long marginalized in the world economy by the (post)colonial heritage of perpetuated impoverishment and inordinate inequalities, have primarily been places from which migrants and refugees have departed, either deserting social conditions that have been deemed inadequate to support a decent life or fleeing from violence and oppression.

In spite of the securitization of migration and the externalization of the US border across the region, Latin American and Caribbean migrants and refugees have not ceased to move northward. This is why the region is crisscrossed with multiple land, sea, river, and air routes of migration, intensifying and dramatically expanding those pathways used during much of the twentieth century by multiple generations of migrants to reach the United States. In the face of the continuous illegalization of migration to the United States from other parts of the Western Hemisphere (De Genova 2004, 2005), these movements have inevitably been compelled to increasingly depend on smuggling networks (*coyoterismo*) (Achilli and Kyle 2023; Dias et al. 2020; Sánchez 2017). Although Mexicans have long been the predominant migrant group in the United States, far outnumbering newcomers from every other country in the world, they have been joined since the 1970s by ever larger and more visible migratory flows from Central and South America and the Caribbean (Budiman 2020).

Nevertheless, what is also increasingly evident is that Latin America and the Caribbean today constitute a region in which migrant and refugee mobilities have proliferated, with movement in all directions and lasting social repercussions across the hemisphere. Although it has become increasingly significant, so-called South–South migration within the region is in fact a well-worn and long-standing practice. Some notable historical cases include the migrations of Nicaraguans to Costa Rica; Haitians to the Dominican Republic; and various movements within South America, such as Bolivians migrating to Argentina, Brazil, or Chile; Peruvians migrating to Chile or Ecuador; Ecuadorians migrating to Chile, Argentina, or Colombia; and Brazilians migrating to Paraguay. Due to its decades-long and ongoing internal political conflicts, Colombia has the second-largest number globally of internally displaced persons (an estimated 3.5 million people) and is the country of origin of one of the highest numbers of refugees internationally, with substantial numbers residing in Ecuador, Canada, and Chile (UNHCR 2020), while also more recently becoming the single largest host country for millions of Venezuelan refugees and migrants. So-called transit migration—with the ultimate aim of arriving in the United States—has also increasingly made its mark across the hemisphere: since the early 1980s,

migrants from across the Americas as well as from Asia and Africa have sought to appropriate mobility toward the United States through the migratory corridors of Latin America and the Caribbean, but have found themselves stalled or stranded en route for greater or lesser periods of time in various stopover countries, with increasing numbers settling long-term and forming increasingly visible, enduring communities (Álvarez Velasco 2020; Miranda 2021; Méndez Barquero 2021; Winters and Reiffen 2019; Boatcă and Santos 2023). Given the high proportion of refugees among these mobile subjects, states across the region have consequently also been challenged in new ways to institute processes for adjudicating asylum (Clavijo 2018; Gómez Martín 2022; Ortega Velázquez 2022; París Pombo 2022; see also Velasco Ortiz; Álvarez Velasco; Clavijo; and Moulin, all this volume, chs. 2, 6, 9, and 10). Meanwhile, some South American countries, including Ecuador, Chile, Argentina, and Brazil, have emerged on the global map of asylum seeking as new destinations (Álvarez Velasco 2020; Winters and Mora Izaguirre 2019; Espiro 2021).

This book focuses on the first two decades of the twenty-first century, the period when the trans-American border regime was consolidated even as its entrenchment assured that it has simultaneously grown ever more heterogeneous and convulsive. These contradictions and convulsions arise to a great extent because this regime's mandate has been to govern what are ultimately ungovernable mobilities, which have only continued to multiply and diversify. Irregularized mobilities across the numerous borders of Our America—originating in Latin American and Caribbean countries and heading not only north but also south, or not only from but also to the Caribbean—have proliferated without historic precedent. Among the by now best-known mass movements are the Salvadoran, Honduran, Guatemalan, and Nicaraguan migrations through Mexico to reach the United States, often assuming the remarkable form of self-organized migrant caravans (Gandini, Prieto, and Lozano Ascencio 2020; Álvarez Velasco and De Genova 2023; Varela Huerta and McLean 2021; Velasco Ortiz and Hernández López 2021; see also Velasco Ortiz; and Núñez Chaim, Varela Huerta, and Glockner Fagetti, this volume, chs. 2 and 4). From the Caribbean, well-established large-scale migrations, particularly from Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic, have shown themselves to be increasingly oriented not only toward the United States but also southward (Correa 2020; Miranda 2021; Trabalón 2019, 2020; see also Quinteros, Ramos, and Dufraix-Tapia; Clavijo; and Moulin, this volume, chs. 7, 9, and 10). Moreover, the massive exodus of several million Venezuelans in all directions has profoundly unsettled conventional assumptions regarding migratory dynamics across the hemisphere (Ordóñez and Echeverri Zuluaga; Quinteros, Ramos, and Dufraix-Tapia; Clavijo;

Moulin, this volume, chs. 5, 7, 9, and 10). While the majority of Venezuelan migrants have moved to neighboring Colombia, and some have been able to relocate to the United States or Canada, many others have settled in Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, or one of the Caribbean island countries. Having been a pole of attraction for intraregional migrations from the late 1970s until the 1990s, Venezuela's multifaceted political, economic, and social collapse has rendered it one of the world's top countries of origin of migrants and refugees, and has indisputably emerged as the leading source of migration across the Western Hemisphere (Herrera and Cabezas 2019). These Venezuelan mobilities, moreover, have only continued to become more complex and diversified over time in terms of class, race, gender, and age (Gandini, Lozano Ascencio, and Prieto 2019). The contributors to this volume not only provide detailed empirical research on these contemporary intraregional and transcontinental mobilities across the borders of Our America, but also critically analyze and interpret them in light of a paradoxical geopolitical scenario whereby an ostensible "openness" characterizing many Latin American and Caribbean legal regimes of immigration has ambiguously and problematically coexisted with an overall "punitive turn" (Domenech 2017). This co-constitution of the conditions of possibility for human mobilities that are partly facilitated while also increasingly irregularized (or outright illegalized) is one of the premier distinguishing features of the heterogeneous trans-American border regime.

Mobility/Control

During the first decade of the twenty-first century, Latin America experienced its so-called Pink Tide. Beginning with Venezuela (1998), Brazil (2003), Argentina (2003), Bolivia (2006), Ecuador (2006), and Uruguay (2008), among others, electoral victories brought to power ostensibly leftist or left-of-center governments promoting social democratic reforms and, to varying degrees, an explicit repudiation of neoliberalism. Among other reforms—in some cases, including altogether new constitutions—these governments often adopted relatively "progressive" legal frameworks around migration that appeared to constitutionally recognize "the right to migrate" and "the right to refuge" (Domenech 2017). Even before the rise of these left-populist and social democratic governments, however, following the demise of long-standing Latin American dictatorships and the return of democratic elections, states had already instituted various intraregional agreements facilitating cross-border mobility and residence (Domenech 2008; Romano 2009; Stang 2009).² In 1984, delegates from ten Latin American countries signed the nonbinding Cartagena Declaration on Refugees, which

proposed a much more extensive legal definition of “refugee,” paving the way toward more inclusive national legal frameworks. Thus, the region has long been associated with a semblance of comparative “openness” in the legal regulation of migration and refugee movements.

As the contributors to this volume demonstrate, one consequence of these early-twenty-first century reforms in South America was the relative facilitation of travel from African, Asian, and Caribbean countries, particularly Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti. In the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, mobility and settlement in South America were further facilitated with the granting of humanitarian visas in some countries, such as Ecuador and Brazil (Dias et al. 2020; Domenech and Dias 2020; Miranda 2021; Trabalón 2018). With relatively liberal visa programs, Ecuador and Brazil thus emerged as gateways to the Americas. Some migrants arrived in those countries with the intention of staying. For many others, however, these openings converted the countries into platforms for onward movement toward the United States through the established but rapidly expanding migratory corridor that begins in the Andean region and traverses Central America and Mexico (Álvarez Velasco 2019, 2020). Still others moved southward, attracted by impressions of Chile, Argentina, and Brazil as promising migratory destinations (Canales 2018; Espiro 2019; Tapia and Liberona 2018; Vammen 2019; Zubrzycki 2018; Espiro 2021), many of them crossing Peru or Bolivia to reach those countries (Berganza 2017; Ceja 2015; Pacecca, Liguori, and Carril 2016; Vásquez, Busse, and Izaguirre 2015). In almost all of these examples, these new, protracted mobility projects were confronted with the challenge of circumventing multiple borders and prevailing against the enforcement authorities of multiple states.

Faced with the rising numbers of ungovernable subjects on the move, particularly from Venezuela, Central America, and the Caribbean but also increasingly from Africa and Asia, governments across the region hardened various migratory policies during and since the first decade of the twenty-first century, complementing the apparent openness and liberalizing reforms of the Pink Tide with a concomitant reaction formation, including renewed visa requirements and travel restrictions according to selective criteria. In the following chapters, our contributors demonstrate clearly that regional border control mechanisms were repeatedly hardened, even in direct contradiction of the ostensibly “progressive” new constitutions and immigration laws. Examining evidence from Mexico, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Brazil, and Argentina, respectively, contributors to this book demonstrate how the region’s liberalizing pretensions around migration have commonly not been realized in practice or, in other instances, when purportedly put into practice, have been interpreted

and implemented by street-level bureaucrats and law enforcement agents in ways diametrically opposed to the putative spirit of the law. Thus, the purportedly “progressive” legal frameworks have tended to be dead letters for the actual migrants struggling to remake their lives within those jurisdictional domains.

The real effect of increasingly restrictive Latin American and Caribbean visa programs, moreover, has not been to halt intraregional and transcontinental mobilities but to divert and decelerate them, often containing and confining them to ever more violent routes, putting migrants at risk of predation, mutilation, and death. The iconic example of this phenomenon is the recent intensification of northward migratory crossings of the Darién Gap, the rugged jungle passage at Panama’s southern border with Colombia: as a direct effect of the reimposition of visa restrictions, this deadly land crossing connecting South and Central America has turned into a space of global transit where migrants and refugees must navigate a treacherous terrain at the mercy of *coyotes*, gang members, guerrillas, and corrupt border police, all seeking to profit from the precarity of these human mobilities (Ordóñez and Echeverri Zuluaga, this volume, ch. 5; see also Amnesty International 2000). The Darién Gap has thus become yet another cruel and unforgiving extension of the violent migratory corridor of externalized border control through Mexico and across Central America.

The more punitive dimension of these enforcement policies has also manifested in summary rejections of select categories of travelers on arrival at land borders and in airports, as has been the case for Cuban or African migrants when landing in Ecuador (see Álvarez Velasco, this volume, ch. 6); for Haitians and Dominicans when arriving in Chile (Rojas Pedemonte et al. 2015; Tijoux and Córdova Rivera 2015); and for Haitians, Dominicans, and certain other “sensitive nationalities” when reaching Argentina (Domenech 2017; Trabalón 2018, 2020; see also Domenech, this volume, ch. 8), to note only some of the better-documented examples. As this research suggests, Caribbean, Venezuelan, and African migrants have frequently encountered social hostility and discriminatory treatment by state authorities, driven by racism and racial nativism. Selective rejections at borders and the selective reimposition of visa requirements, furthermore, serve as a reminder of how selectivity and racism have provided the historical foundation of immigration law and border enforcement policies since the colonial era (see Santos; and De Genova et al., this volume, chs. 11 and 12), and verify the enduring and systemic workings of state racism and racialized criminalization.

Alongside the multiplication of obstacles and modes for rejecting select categories of migrants outright, the immigration regimes of various states have also enacted programs of migrant “regularization,” which are also always selective

and inherently operate to revise the terms and conditions of the “legalization” of some in return for the renewed or refortified illegalization of others (Álvarez Velasco 2020; Berganza 2017; Domenech and Dias 2020; Dufraix-Tapia, Ramos Rodríguez, and Quinteros 2020; Trbalón 2018). Thus, these sorts of “regularization” procedures are intrinsically entangled with the multiplication of migrant “illegality,” deportability, and exploitability (De Genova 2002, 2010a). Similarly, limitations on refugee recognition and the persistent erosion of the right to asylum (Gómez Martín and Malo 2019; Mountz 2020) have exacerbated the confinement of asylum seekers to conditions of legal limbo (Menjívar 2014), subjecting them to protracted waiting (Jacobsen, Karlsen, and Khosravi 2021) while they are effectively trapped in nation-state territories and indefinitely subject to eventual rejection and prospective illegalization. This was the case of Haitian migrants stuck between Ecuador and Colombia in 2016 (Constante 2016), of Venezuelan migrants trapped at Ecuador’s borders with Peru and Colombia in 2019 (Rivadeneira 2019), and of African and Haitian migrants contained in Tapachula, at the Mexico-Guatemala border (Miranda 2023). The cases of Mexico’s northern and southern borders are iconic in this regard: those borderlands have turned into open-air detention camps for migrants where protracted waiting and uncertainty serve to convert the interruption and deceleration of their mobilities into spaces of degradation and peril for migrants’ lives and well-being (De Genova 2022; Miranda 2023; París Pombo, Buenrostro Mercado, and Pérez Duperou 2017; see also Velasco Ortiz; Basok and Rojas Wiesner; and Núñez Chaim, Varela Huerta, and Glockner Fagetti, all this volume, chs. 2–4).

Deportations, though comparatively low in number, have also been selectively deployed (Domenech 2017; this volume, ch. 8), enhancing the precarity of all who remain susceptible to such punitive repercussions (De Genova 2002, 2010b). Examples include the deportations of Cubans from Ecuador (Correa 2020; see also Álvarez Velasco, this volume, ch. 6), Venezuelans from Colombia (*Infobae* 2022), and Haitians and Venezuelans from Chile (France 24 2021). Meanwhile, the number of border police across the hemisphere has doubled, and on numerous occasions, particularly since 2016, various states have deployed their military forces to bolster border and immigration enforcement in the name of upholding public order and enforcing the “orderly control of [migratory] flows” (IOM 2015). Thus, the Latin American and Caribbean region has turned into an increasingly hostile space for migrants and refugees. The state violence and racism of the border regime, enmeshed with social hostility and racial nativism and the unrelenting generalized deterioration of living conditions across the hemisphere, have converged.

Against the violence of the border regime, however, migrants and refugees persist in the pursuit of realizing their mobility projects. Reducible neither to passive subjects satisfying the demands of capital for “orderly” (regulated, tractable, docile) labor-power, nor to helpless “victims” trafficked by smugglers, migrants and refugees exude their own heterogeneous subjectivities and embody an autonomous social force on the move, defying the sociopolitical regimes that perpetuate the oppressive conditions from which they flee as well as those that seek to obstruct their freedom of movement with barricaded borders and detention and deportation dragnets. Perhaps the best evidence is the caravans that have emerged as collective formations of self-organization, self-protection, and mutual aid, and that have become increasingly politicized (see Núñez Chaim, Varela Huerta, and Glockner Fagetti, this volume, ch. 4). Moreover, migrants’ mobile ethics of care and their politics of solidarity are enacted, however tenuously, by strategically pooling resources (sometimes sharing food, housing, living costs, and migratory knowledge); caring for one another through illness, injury, and debility; caring for one another’s children; and protecting one another during police raids, border crossings, encounters with corrupt officials, or predatory smugglers or when confronted with racism and anti-immigrant hostility. Such practices of solidarity en route marks a radical contrast with the organized hostility, violent control, and callous negligence of state powers toward migrants and refugees in transit. These forms of everyday solidarity and care among migrants (sometimes also enacted by local residents in support of migrants) serve to affirm a diminutive politics of life that rejects and refuses the larger necropolitics of the border regime (Varela Huerta 2017).

Either actively deserting or violently expelled from various unviable social, political, and economic conditions, the unruly subjectivities of migrant and refugee mobilities have further consolidated the migratory corridors that traverse the Americas, such as those connecting Mexico and the United States (París Pombo and Montes 2020); Central America and Mexico (Alba Villalever and Schütze 2021; Varela Huerta and McLean 2021); the Caribbean, South America, and Central America (Miranda 2021); the Caribbean and the Southern Cone (Trabalón 2021); and the Andean region and destinations northward, southward, and into the Caribbean (Álvarez Velasco 2020, 2022; Álvarez Velasco, Pedone, and Miranda 2021). Within these corridors, irregularized mobilities are subjected to diverse forms of control exerted not only by state agents but also by paramilitaries, guerrillas, gang members, smugglers, and others who operate within dense entanglements of legal and illegal economic and social practices to either facilitate or obstruct migratory projects (Van Schendel and Abraham 2005). Such practices are embedded in border economies, which manifest an

important facet of the larger complex of informalized Latin American and Caribbean economies that employ more than half of the region's population (ECLAC 2022). In fact, those informalized economies are not “marginal” but rather must be recognized as a central and constitutive element of “actually existing” neoliberalism (Gago 2017). While the mobilities of migrants and refugees abide by their own autonomous subjective logics, they nonetheless remain thoroughly ensnared by the violence of border enforcement and the power of immigration law, as well as embedded in the contradictory textures of social life. The trans-American border regime, therefore, entails not only a top-down logic of the control presumed to be the exclusive domain of states exercising their sovereign power, but also the multifarious logics of both people on the move aspiring to cross borders and the heterogeneous spectrum of others who seek to sustain their own endeavors and enterprises through the informalized economic and political logics of engaging with the autonomy and subjectivity of migration.

The Trans-American Border Regime in the Postpandemic Era

The beginning of the third decade of the twenty-first century is indelibly distinguished by the unforeseen advent of a world historical landmark: the COVID-19 pandemic. With the declaration of a global public health emergency in March 2020, unprecedented control measures were taken across the world to immobilize populations and close borders in the name of containing the spread of the virus. These exceptional measures severely exacerbated an anti-immigrant climate that was already directly impacting the lives of irregularized migrants and refugees (De Genova 2022).

The Americas were no exception. The findings of the transnational, trilingual, digital collaborative research project COVID-19 and (Im)Mobilities Across the Americas provide evidence of six intertwined dynamics that took shape during the peak of the pandemic:³ (1) border closures in all Latin American and Caribbean countries, the militarization of borders, and increased internal policing; (2) the suspension or limitation of the right to refuge; (3) limitations on regularization processes; (4) the immobilization and confinement of migrants to border zones and indefinite waiting in migrant camps and zones of abandonment; (5) forced mobilities via deportation, including, as some of the most prominent examples, deportations from the United States to Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean; deportations of Haitians and Venezuelans from Chile; deportations of Venezuelans from Colombia and Brazil; deportations of Bolivians and Paraguayans from Brazil; and (6) the adoption or expansion of anti-immigrant legal architectures in the United States, Chile, Ecuador, Brazil,

and Peru. All these measures confirm that during the first two years of the pandemic (2020–22), a *de facto* state of exception in migration matters was enacted, intensifying an anti-immigrant and racist turn directed against asylum seekers and irregularized migrants across the region (Inmovilidad Americas 2024). Several of our contributors analyze how border policies were transformed during the COVID-19 pandemic in ways that directly impacted migrants' lives in various border zones (see Velasco Ortiz; Núñez Chaim, Varela Huerta, and Glocker Fagetti; Ordóñez and Echeverri Zuluaga; Quinteros, Ramos, and Dufraix-Tapia; and Moulin, this volume, chs. 2, 4, 5, 7, and 10).

As the risks posed by COVID-19 decreased considerably across the globe, many of those border control measures nonetheless remained in effect. Undoubtedly, the most iconic was Title 42, an obscure 1944 statute imposed by the United States under the first Trump administration to prohibit entry of asylum seekers on public health grounds, which remained in force until May 2023, directly affecting the border-crossing prospects of hundreds of thousands of migrants and refugees at the Mexico-US border (Torres et al. 2022).⁴ The enduring postpandemic crisis has pressed migrants and refugees to redouble their efforts to pursue irregularized means to transit to the United States or onward from there to Canada or, in other instances, has served to divert these mobilities toward the Southern Cone countries of South America. By the end of October 2021, for instance, a total of 1.7 million migrants coming from more than 160 countries were detained at the US-Mexico border (Sullivan and Jordan 2021); that figure reached 2.4 million by October 2022 (Melhado 2022). Though much lower in numbers, analogous dynamics were simultaneously at play to the south. In Chile, quickly emerging as the preferred South American destination for migrants, approximately 17,000 migrants were documented to have crossed its northern border in 2020, but that figure had tripled to 56,000 by the end of 2021 (Plataforma R4V 2022). Although most of those migrants were Venezuelans, others came from Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru (INE 2022).

Predictably, we have witnessed numerous state powers across the trans-American border regime refortify their efforts at control. Under the reflexive justification of containing “illegal” migration and combating smuggling networks, Latin American and Caribbean nation-states have resorted to newly restrictive immigration policies and enhanced border controls. For example, in the immediate aftermath of the pandemic, Mexico and Guatemala reimposed travel visa requirements to deter Venezuelan, Ecuadorian, and Brazilian migrations heading to the United States (CNN 2022), and Costa Rica did the same to slow down the arrival of Venezuelans (Murillo 2022), while Mexico, Chile, and Panama

accelerated deportations (MMC 2022). These restrictions on air travel have predictably provoked a rise in migration over land, instigating several “crises” at multiple borders, including at both Mexico’s southern and its northern borders; the land borders between Peru and Chile, Ecuador and Colombia, and Honduras and Guatemala; and in the complex and hyperperilous Darién Gap between Panama and Colombia (MMC 2022). Migrants and refugees have consequently found themselves increasingly “stuck” in “transit,” indefinitely stranded in these border zones in makeshift self-organized camps, as state repression has intensified, alongside heavily fortified border crossings that inevitably drive migrants into more perilous crossings and force them to navigate more remote or treacherous geographies, escalating the risk of death. Between 2014 and 2022, thousands of migrants disappeared or died across the Americas, with roughly half of the documented deaths recorded for the period 2020–22 alone (IOM 2022; see also De Genova 2021; De León 2015). While these tactics of border control generally do not reverse or halt migratory mobilities, they do nonetheless obstruct and decelerate them, multiplying the impediments and risks that migrants and refugees must circumvent in their efforts to prevail against borders converted into prolonged and lethal obstacle courses (De Genova 2013).

The chapters of this book contribute to understanding the history of our present. By providing empirical evidence and analysis from several critical sites of border struggles across the Americas, the authors of the following chapters demonstrate that the reinforcement of borders across the region during the initial COVID-19 shutdown and during the pandemic’s protracted aftermath can be adequately comprehended only in light of the more extended consolidation of the heterogenous trans-American border regime that has arisen as a reaction formation in the face of the multiplication of diverse migrant mobilities.

Contributions to this Book

The contributions to this volume scrutinize an array of critical nodes in the larger heterogenous and uneven configuration that we have here designated to be the trans-American border regime. The chapters arise from historical and ethnographic work located in diverse nation-state bordering contexts and local realities. They also have been produced by a diverse group of researchers working in numerous disciplines and interdisciplinary fields of inquiry. While the diverse scholarly orientations of the authors inevitably shape their respective approaches and emphases, all nonetheless adopt a migrant-centered approach, starting from the perspective of the movements and trajectories of migration to advance the larger analysis of multidimensional and multiscale border zone

spaces of conflict and negotiation constituted by the ever-shifting constellation of opposed forces that is the border regime. Thus, even the chapters that focus on the legal and political regimes governing migration and borders in a single nation-state provide evidence of how an ethnographic approach to border regime analysis can unsettle and repudiate the sort of methodological nationalism that for decades has hampered the study of migration. Across these chapters' respective contributions, then, we begin to discern a composite of the borders of Our America.

The intellectual work and research of the contributors to this volume are politically positioned as diverse expressions of a collective project of activist scholarship dedicated to approaching migration from the standpoint of a radical critique of the enduring legacies of colonialism, racism, patriarchy, capitalism, and the global regime of border control. Their multidisciplinary perspectives contribute to an interdisciplinary dialogue showcasing how Latin America and the Caribbean have become a pivotal spatial conjuncture within a violent global system for governing migrant and refugee mobilities that largely originate in formerly colonized, impoverished, and conflict-ridden countries, and the ways in which the autonomy and subjectivity of migration supply the motive force behind an unceasing proliferation of postcolonial border struggles.

This book proceeds from the understanding that migrants are historical subjects whose mobility is "a political act in itself" (Mitropoulos 2007; see also De Genova 2010b; Hess 2017; Mezzadra 2011; New Keywords Collective 2016; Papadopoulos, Stephenson, and Tsianos 2008) that consequently has spatial (and potentially world-making) effects. It is this autonomous mobility that regimes of border control pursue and seek to domesticate under the neoliberal regime of "migration management." As a contribution to the wider literature on the autonomy of migration, this volume thus intervenes in a transnational dialogue with critical migration and border studies. Much of the critical literature, however, has focused on the analysis of migration and borders in the so-called Global North—investigating primarily the European, Australian, and North American contexts. *The Borders of America* instead foregrounds migratory dynamics and the tactics of bordering in Latin America and the Caribbean.

This book arises in a moment of renewed intellectual ferment in this field of study. From deeply historicized and postcolonial perspectives, Latin American and Caribbean migration scholarship has been striving to understand the new configurations of migration across the region, the collapse of former legal systems governing migration and refugee movements, and the multiple spatial, economic, and political transformations triggered by the incessant human mobilities that shape the hemisphere. The various chapters address specific

nation-state legal and political contexts while underscoring their relations with regional and global processes.

This volume has been conceived to showcase research produced almost entirely by scholars originating from the region, nearly all of whom continue to be professionally based in academic institutions in the region. Their work is presented here in English translation with the deliberate intention of generating and expanding this transnational and transdisciplinary dialogue. The book therefore also seeks to initiate a wider dialogue with the emerging critical literature in Latin America and the Caribbean, published largely in languages other than English, that has historicized and problematized the developments of immigration policies and practices of border control, as well as foregrounding migrant struggles and resistances, over the past two decades in the region (Cordero, Mezzadra, and Varela Huerta 2019; Domenech, Herrera, and Rivera Sánchez 2022; Feldmann et al. 2022; Feldmann, Bada, and Schütze 2019; Herrera and Gómez Martín 2022). As the contributions to this book show, an ample body of scholarship is arising from the region and being published in Spanish, Portuguese, and other languages, devoted to critically analyzing transformations in national and regional migration policies. Indeed, some of the most significant research and analysis in this body of scholarship has often been generated by many of our contributors to this volume. In 2020, notably, the Brazilian sociological journal *Sociologias* published a special issue, “*Sociologia e fronteiras: A produção da ilegalidade migrante na América Latina e no Caribe*” (Sociology and borders: The production of migrant illegality in Latin America and the Caribbean), coedited by Gustavo Dias and Eduardo Domenech (2020), which sought to reflect critically on the production of migratory “illegality” at various Latin American and Caribbean borders. This volume builds on those insights for an English-speaking readership and includes chapters by some of the researchers who contributed to that project.

Given the brutal effects of “cannibal capitalism,” to use Nancy Fraser’s (2022) memorable phrase, the recent intensification of irregularized migrant movements by land and maritime routes is likely only to increase. In response, an exacerbation of anti-immigrant policies and overt border violence involving a consequently inevitable rise of disappearances and deaths will proliferate in tandem. This is a grim scenario, indeed, but one in which migrant struggles must be recognized alongside the escalation of countless other audacious social movements across the Americas and the globe as manifestations and modalities of resistance that repudiate the merciless patterns of colonial and postcolonial dispossession and capital accumulation that have prevailed for the past five hundred years across the hemisphere. In the face of the urgent certainty that ever



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more migrants and refugees will brave the violent and often deadly migratory corridors of the Americas, critical research and activist scholarship are more vital than ever.

Millions of migrants and refugees—adults, youth, children, and families—unceasingly mobilize themselves to defy borders in the effort to remake their lives. They thereby also remake Our America. In so doing, these human mobilities compel us to comprehend that the irrepressible character of migration, and thus its intrinsic tendencies toward ungovernability, implicitly asserts a radical challenge to statist systems of sovereignty and rule. Over the past century and a half, state powers have ever increasingly reacted to the primacy of human mobilities by resorting to exclusionary tactics of border violence, accompanied by subtle but durable forms of subordinate inclusion through the illegalization or highly conditional accommodation of impoverished labor migrants or refugees. By exercising their elementary freedom of movement, migrants and refugees nonetheless constantly struggle to appropriate mobility and space in order to remake life and enact alternative possible futures. Today, more than ever, theirs is a struggle that is reshaping Our America.

NOTES

1. Asylum cooperative agreements (ACAs), also known as “safe third country” agreements, were initiated unilaterally by executive fiat by the first Trump administration in July 2018, beginning with Guatemala. After Trump threatened to ban Guatemalans with valid US visas and to tax migrant remittances, Guatemala complied. In the following weeks, El Salvador and Honduras signed similar agreements.

2. Among the most noteworthy regional integration agreements adopted since 1990 to facilitate intraregional mobility are the Andean Community of Nations (CAN), the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), and the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR). The Agreement on Residence for Nationals of the States Party to MERCOSUR and Associated States provided a tool for accessing legal residence in South America. Similarly, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua signed the Central America–4 Free Mobility Agreement (CA-4) in 2006.

3. COVID-19 and (Im)Mobilities Across the Americas was a transnational, trilingual (English, Spanish, and Portuguese), collective digital research project initiated by Soledad Álvarez Velasco and developed collaboratively during the first two years of the pandemic. When the public health crisis was declared, forty-five migration scholars from nineteen countries in North, Central, and South America and the Caribbean

MAP 1.1. The borders of the Americas borderlands, national and transnational spaces studied in this book. Map produced by Gabriel Moss.

came together online to inquire into the situations of thousands of migrants and asylum seekers across the hemisphere, focusing on: (1) migration and border measures adopted by states, (2) risks faced by migrant populations, and (3) social responses by migrants or by solidarity movements supporting migrant struggles. Based on this research, a digital archive was created which accounted for the changing tensions between mobility and control during the pandemic from a hemispheric perspective. The authors of this introduction and some of the contributors to this volume took part in this project. See <https://www.inmovilidadamericas.org>.

4. Title 42 of the US Code is a public health provision. It gives the surgeon general the authority to prohibit noncitizens from entering the United States from a country where the surgeon general determines there is a danger of communicable disease being introduced into the United States. This practice can be implemented for as long as deemed “necessary for such purpose.” Someone expelled under Title 42 cannot apply for asylum.

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