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Introduction
Global Fertility Chains and the Colonial Present of Assisted Reproductive Technologies

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Abstract
The introduction to the Special Section "Global Fertility Chains and the Colonial Present of Assisted Reproductive Technologies" (re)situates assisted reproductive technologies, infrastructures, and markets within older, yet ongoing, histories of colonialism, racial capitalism, and slavery. Engaging with the "colonial present" of a broad array of reproductive technologies, including surrogacy, adoption, seed saving, "slave breeding," and in vitro fertilization in different (post)colonial sites of inquiry, including India, Korea, Australia, the United States, and the borderlands between Mexico and Guatemala, the papers in this collection draw on the foundational work of materialist, STS, Black, Indigenous, and decolonial feminists to foreground three main "relational" themes: (1) between past and present colonial materializations and imaginaries of ARTs; (2) between colonialism's myriad, intraconnected reproductive grammars of slavery, genocide, conservation, exploitation, and extraction; (3) between ART's life and death functions and their mutually constitutive biopolitical and necropolitical logics.

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In July 2018 Israel's umbrella LGBTQ organization, The Aguda, announced on its website that, for the very first time, Israel's gay community would go on a national strike (Zieve 2018). Earlier, the Israeli Parliament had decided to extend surrogacy eligibility from heterosexual couples to single women. At the same time, it had also decided to exclude same-sex couples and single men—the group with the greatest expressed need for surrogacy, who, in their quest for a genetically related family, thus remained "forced" to look for available surrogates abroad, in countries such as Canada, the United States, Greece, or Colombia. In the midst of Israel's violent repression of Gaza's March of Return, in which 1,350 Palestinians were injured and nine killed, and just a few days before the implementation of the controversial Jewish Nation State Law that effected national self-determination for Jews but not the indigenous Palestinian population in Israel, hundreds of thousands of protesters blocked the streets of Central Tel Aviv to demand equal surrogacy rights for gay men.

More than forty Israeli companies and local branches of global multinationals including Facebook, IBM, and Microsoft supported the surrogacy strike, encouraging their employees to participate. Some companies even committed to financially support the international surrogacy arrangements of their gay employees. The Jewish Agency, one of world's most important Zionist organizations with quasi-state authority in Israel, in a landmark move, offered an $11,000 loan to their gay employees to cover the costs associated with seeking surrogacy services abroad. Isaac Herzog, now president of Israel, but then chairman of the Jewish Agency, stated in an interview, "The Jewish Agency is one big family, and all its members are equal" (Sharon 2019).

Such views clearly run counter to those of the many Palestinians who reside in the region. From their perspectives, the Jewish Agency's role in promoting settlement (*aliya*) in historic Palestine has resulted in their becoming a family-breaking institution that has facilitated violent dispossession into refugeehood for Palestinians. Despite this, the combined pressure applied by the surrogacy strike, financing of this kind, and continued lobbying from Israel's LGBTQ community ultimately proved successful, and in July 2021, the Israeli Supreme Court ordered the government to lift the ban on surrogacy for same-sex couples and single men within six months.

It is important to note that not all members of Israel's LGBTQ community were in favor of the surrogacy strike. Gays Against Surrogacy, a small anti-Zionist queer collective of Israeli Jews that opposes Israel's overarching pronatalist stance, have, for example, opposed the national and international surrogacy industry due to its dependence on the racialization and commodification of the reproductive labor power of surrogates and oocyte providers. While "religious" restrictions within Israel's national surrogacy law make it impossible for a Jewish Israeli surrogate to gestate a baby for a Muslim or Christian (read: Palestinian) couple, and vice versa, Israel's international surrogacy industry remains dependant on the outsourced reproductive labor power of racialized women in India, Thailand, Nepal, Georgia, Mexico, and the US who are rarely Jewish. In making their protests at the 2015 Gay Pride march in Be'er Sheva (Beer al-Sabe in Arabic), a city in the south of Israel, Gays Against Surrogacy led with a huge banner stating, "We fuck up the ass (which doesn't lead to the birth of soldiers)." With surrogacy and other ARTs increasingly weaponized by the state in what is viewed as a demographic race to guarantee a Jewish majority in a Jewish state, not reproducing is framed as a small but meaningful act of resistance for Gays Against Surrogacy. In critiquing the intimate (homo)normative relation between the nuclear family, the army, and the settler state in Israel, they actively promoted an anticolonial, antinatalist view of assisted reproduction—one explicitly correlated with queer sexuality (Vertommen, field notes, July 2,2017).

Although Palestine/Israel does not appear as a geographic site of analysis in this Special Section, this particular incident provides an apt heuristic tool through which to begin the important political and intellectual work of unraveling the colonial dimensions, past and ongoing, of ARTs and their contested frontiers (Jabary et al. 2012). This special issue offers readers an invitation and opportunity to think critically about the (settler) colonial fault lines of technologically, financially, or culturally assisted modes of reproduction; of the role that states and markets play in actively cross-subsidising and promoting reproduction amongst certain favored constituencies; of who is, and is not, subsequently recruited as surrogates and egg cell providers to perform the outsourced work of reproduction; of how states deploy ARTs as a site of demographic control and management; of how ARTs are consequently reappropriated as sites of resistance and contestation by those in liberatory or countermovements whose desires for reproduction do not align with these ambitions. As such, the vignette also evokes some of the key themes and areas of concern that are foregrounded in this Special Section on the colonial lineages of reproductive technologies, practices, and markets, with their highly gendered and racialized regimes of labor, property, and population control, that prove life-generating for some and highly extractive or exploitative for others.

Building on foundational work by Indigenous, Black, decolonial, STS, and materialist feminist scholars on the "intimacies" of colonialism, capitalism, and reproduction, the papers in this Special Section look at various historical and contemporary racial capitalist formations through the lens of assisted reproduction (Robinson 1983; Stoler 2010; Lowe 2015; Bhattacharyya 2017). Concomitantly, they grapple with the afterlives of colonial conquest, empire, and slavery in the stratified development and distribution of supposedly "new" assisted reproductive science and technology since 1978 (Hartman 2007; Weinbaum 2019).

The year 1978 marks an important techno-scientific milestone in the history of ARTs, with the birth of Louise Brown, the first baby born through in vitro fertilization (IVF). The introduction of IVF has also fostered the fragmentation of the reproductive body into bodily tissues that can be mobilized within and across national borders, from one body and laboratory to another according to their reproductive potential (Strathern 1992; Franklin 1997; Inhorn 2012; Cooper and Waldby 2014; Twine 2015). In political economy terms, this has resulted in the development of what Sigrid Vertommen, Vincenzo Pavone, and Michal Nahman (2021) describe as *global fertility chains*—unevenly developed, highly gendered, multi-actor networks of globalized reproduction in which the reproductive capacities, skills, bodies, biologies, and labors of oocyte vendors, surrogate carriers, and tissue providers are increasingly deployed and marketized to fulfil the reproductive needs of intended parents and the capital accumulative needs of the fertility industry.

IVF has served as a platform technology in not only the medical and biotechnological sciences but also the social sciences. Here, the "IVF turn" has generated an important body of work that decenters or "queers" naturalized forms of family and kinship making (Edwards et al. 2005). In the existing feminist and STS literature, global fertility chains tend to be analyzed for their techno-scientific novelty, national specificity, and their neoliberal reconfigurations of the world economy. This work foregrounds how reproductive technologies have articulated or given rise to new forms of family and kinship structures, properties and markets, identities, socialities, and subjectivities, as well as how they reify long-standing religious and local understandings of personhood and relationality.

In *Dolly Mixtures*, Sarah Franklin rightly notes how the "hyperbole of radical novelty" that often accompanies discussions on reproductive biotechnology is "understandable but also unhelpful" as it obfuscates the longer histories of empire and industrialization that have co-produced these newer technologies (2007, 79). Meanwhile, anthropologists have examined the ways national cultures, religions, and local histories intermingle with reproduction producing complex intersections of so-called old and new thinking (Kahn 2000; Paxson 2004; Zanini 2011; E.

Roberts 2012; Gürtin, Inhorn, and Tremayne 2015). Notwithstanding the wide array of socio-technical and cultural changes the IVF turn has invoked, this Special Section thus seeks to illuminate *ART's colonial present*—drawing on Derek Gregory's (2004) capacious term—by (re)situating reproductive technologies, infrastructures, and markets within the *longue durée* of ongoing and intertwined histories and geographies of colonialism, racial capitalism, and slavery that have shaped and continue to shape these new reproductive markets and infrastructures. This means opening up our analytical and political understanding of ARTs by pushing back their epistemic genesis from 1978 to 1492 (through the conquest of the Americas and the expulsion of Jews and Muslims from Spain, the first transatlantic slave voyage of 1526, or, in the case of our opening story, with the Balfour Declaration of 1917 that provided British imperial backing for the eventual creation of the State of Israel in 1948) to consider the variegated (settler) colonial, racial capitalist, and heteropatriarchal genealogies of global fertility chains.

The concept of global fertility chains, which frame this Special Section and the international workshop that inspired this volume, has evolved and transmutated. Sigrid Vertommen introduced the term as a shorthand way to center women's paid and unpaid labor within discussions of the bioeconomy, during her Marie Curie postdoctoral fellowship at King's College London, and in discussions with her supervisor, Barbara Prainsack, and mentors Michal Nahman and Bronwyn Parry. At that time, several scholars were working on re-emphasizing reproduction as "labor," something that might be more productively thought through alongside the *longue durée* of literatures on gendered social reproduction (Barbagallo and Federici 2012; Bhattacharyya 2017; Ferguson 2019; Mezzadri Newman, and Stevano 2021). The concept soon developed, however, through discussions with other ART scholars (including Adi Moreno, Verena Namberger, Polina Vlasenko, and Vincenzo Pavone), from its initial focus on gendered labor, to an examination of how gendered reproductive labor intersects with processes of uneven global development, and the state's facilitative role within these processes.

This extended idea of global fertility chains in Vertommen, Pavone, and Nahman (2021) gains new articulation here through our collective work bringing together a set of papers that explore such issues through the lenses of historicism and colonialism. While much work looking at IVF takes as its starting moment 1978 and post-Fordism, in this volume we encouraged work that identified lineages of coloniality in the past and present. While feminists and anthropologists have unpacked kinship theory for its centeredness in thinking from the Global North, the focus on colonialism has yet received little attention within studies of IVF and reproductive technologies, apart from some exceptions (Franklin 2007; Vora 2015; Vertommen 2017). By prioritizing, as we do in this volume, a view of the colonial

past and present of distributed reproduction (Murphy 2011), we seek to further nuance the concept of global fertility chains. As with all such concepts it is hoped, and anticipated, that its robustness will be enhanced through its application in a range of different articulations and contexts.

Our initial explorations were further nurtured by a Wellcome Trust–funded workshop on Colonial Lineages of Global Fertility Chains held at King's College London in May 2019. During this two-day workshop, fifteen junior and more senior experts in the field of ARTs gathered to critically discuss the ongoing histories of settler and extractive colonialism, slavery, and empire in and through assisted reproductive technologies, practices, and infrastructures. A number of pertinent questions were raised: How have infrastructures, technologies, and practices of reproduction, fertility, and mothering traveled from the Caribbean sugar plantations to British and American kitchens and bedrooms? How are Indian surrogates and Korean "campwomen" made "available" as cheap sources of reproductive labor and bodily extraction? What is the impact of settler colonial imaginaries or practices of demographic settlement in shaping the "pronatalist" demand side in global fertility chains? Are reproductive technologies developed and governed through imperial or sub-imperial logics? What are the legacies and afterlives of slavery and genocide in shaping the racialized and gendered division of labor in global fertility chains?

The ensuing empirical and theoretical exchanges on various types of global fertility chains, including surrogacy, egg cell provision, IVF, sperm smuggling, transnational adoption, slavery, and mothering, in various geographic locations including India, Mexico, Guatemala, Spain, Korea, the Caribbean, the United States, and Palestine all afforded productive entry points to work on ongoing colonial relations between capital accumulation, extraction, and ARTs that have found their full realization here. We are indebted to everyone who took part and to the Wellcome Trust for supporting this important dialogue.[1]

The themes and concerns addressed in the workshop and this Special Section particularly draw on insights first generated by materialist feminists, techno-feminists, and Black and Indigenous feminists. What connects these analytically distinct, yet often overlapping perspectives, is an insistence on using the sphere of (assisted) reproduction and the labors, molecules, bodies, seeds, science, and technologies it encompasses, as a lens through which to understand broader political-economic forces and socio-historical formations.

Materialist feminists have long insisted on complicating mainstream political economy accounts of capitalism as a mode of production by laying bare the "hidden abode of reproduction" as an essential yet routinely devalued realm where that "peculiar" commodity, labor power, is (re)generated. By

foregrounding the analytical and political domain of reproductive labor in the 1970s, they made visible all the paid and unpaid work of cleaning, caring, nurturing, cooking, and life-making that women perform under capitalism to reproduce people as wage workers on a daily and intergenerational basis (Mies 1998; Federici 2004; Bhattacharyya 2017). Some of the papers in this collection critically engage with the feminist scholarship on social reproduction by underlining the colonial genealogies of the international divisions of reproductive labor that were violently introduced through colonial conquest.

These racialized divisions of social reproduction proscribed European women as mothers and housewives, while colonized women were de-kinned into slaves or indentured workers. Silvia Posocco helpfully develops the concept of biolabor in her paper on the bio-necropolitics of the adoption-surrogacy nexus in the globalized borderlands between Guatemala and Mexico, to explicate all the extractive practices that are tied together and collectively inform practices of adoption, reproductive medicine, and forensics. Alys Eve Weinbaum, in her paper on the afterlives of reproductive slavery, similarly argues that the "slave episteme," the thought system which crystallized around four hundred years of slavery and "slave breeding," continues to frame the racialized organization of reproductive labor in the "biocapitalist" present. Finally, Johanna Gondouin and Suruchi Thapar-Björkert use the lens of reproductive labor to provide a lucid comparative analysis of the colonial histories of surrogacy in India and adoption in Korea, which pulls together and brings to view the commonalities in their approach to global fertility chains.

Feminist STS scholars have also broken down the false dichotomy between social constructivist and technological determinist perspectives by demonstrating that (assisted) reproductive knowledge, science, and technologies are, at once, products of social work and constitutive of forms of social life. Particularly in relation to (post)colonial forms of social life, the scholarship on new "pioneering" reproductive technologies and practices such as cloning (Franklin 2007), commercial surrogacy in India (Pande 2014; Rudrappa 2015; Vora 2015; Deomampo 2016; Majumdar 2017; Parry 2018) and Mexico (Schurr 2017), IVF in Ecuador (E. Roberts 2012), transnational egg donation and ARTs in Israel/Palestine (Nahman 2013; Moreno 2016; Vertommen 2017) and South Africa (Namberger 2019; Moll 2019), transnational adoption in the United States and Central America (Briggs 2012; Posocco 2014) stands out for its attention to the material and discursive (dis)continuities with colonial modes of reproduction. Further STS scholarship on race and ARTs has addressed the impact of imperial and colonial regimes of power on shifting notions of race that are threaded in and through the production, distribution, and consumption of ARTs, for example, in the marketized selection of egg cell providers and surrogates in the fertility industry, and the racialized imaginaries of national belonging, racial purity, and

whiteness this often entails (Nahman 2006; Cromer 2019; Newman 2019; Valdez and Deomampo 2019; Falu 2021).

This Special Section includes papers that productively draw on this STS scholarship by critically engaging with the nonhuman in divergent ways, notably through a focus on legal, chemical, and botanical technologies. Sonja Van Wichelen, for instance, offers a compelling postcolonial STS account of the current legal debates on cross-border surrogacy. By conceptualizing private international law as a reproductive technology that imposes neoliberal forms of kinship on non-Western contexts, she critically questions the liberal narrative of regulation to minimize risk and call out abuse in the disruptive surrogacy market. In contrast, Bronwyn Parry and Rakhi Ghoshal argue in their paper on India's expanding reproductive empire that the relative lack of effective regulatory oversight has played a key role in enabling ambitious Indian IVF providers to colonize the reproductive landscape with a superabundance of qualitatively inadequate "ART" clinics in rural India and the Global South.

In a fascinating molecular feminist account of the emerging surrogacy industry in Bhopal, Deboleena Roy frontstages the chemical compound methyl isocyanate (MIC) and its ongoing historical involvement since the 1984 Bhopal gas tragedy. In so doing, she creates a sociotechnical map of the imperial legacies of MIC by tracing its "transplacental migrations" between fetal and surrogate bodies. With a similar STS focus on nonhuman actors and actants in global fertility chains, Xan Sarah Chacko's paper on botanic fertility chains in Australia showcases what comes into clear relief when trees, plant, and seeds, rather than humans, are made central in the narrative of reproductive extraction, commodification, alienation, and neoliberal control. By analyzing the development of both colonial botanic gardens and neoliberal seed banks, she exposes the enduring logics of settler colonialism that pervade the historiography of plant extraction in Australia.

The third and final epistemic lineage in this special issue is *Black and Indigenous feminist accounts* on kinship and reproduction. Black feminist scholarship on the gendered genealogies of Atlantic slavery and "slave breeding" has been indispensable in demonstrating the constitutive role of racialized and anti-Black reproduction in generating profits for the plantation economies (Davis 1972; Reddock 1985; Spillers 1987; D. Roberts 1997; Morgan 2004). Engaging with the, at times, unidimensional understandings of slavery as a (pre)capitalist system of production, these scholars have emphasized the agonizing position of enslaved women as (re)producers of the next generation of embodied property and forced labor power. *Feminist scholars in Native, Indigenous, and settler colonial studies* (Yuval-Davis and Stasiulis 1995; Kanaaneh 2002; Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2012; TallBear 2013; Smith 2015; Anderson 2016), conducting research on themes including genes, motherhood, and sexual violence, have complicated land-

focused analyses of colonial conquest and settlement by foregrounding Indigenous women's bodies and their reproductive capacities as a "gendered territory" (*cuerpo-territorio*) in birthing/unbirthing the next generation of enslaved or Indigenous Peoples (Cabnal 2015).

Rather than epistemically separating the past and present colonial histories of conquest and slavery, as Weinbaum cautions against in her insightful contribution to this collection, this Special Section insists on looking for the intimate connections between different racial capitalist formations, including settler colonialism, extractive colonialism, empire, slavery, and biocapitalism, and their intertwined reproductive grammars of genocide, slavery, exploitation, and conservation. Drawing on Lisa Lowe's (2015) generative understanding of the "intimacies of four continents" and the intricate ways in which Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas were, and are, connected through ongoing colonial relationships of dispossession and exploitation, we propose a relational approach to the myriad colonial lineages of assisted reproduction.

Colonialism is thus invoked here as a *unifying* frame to emphasize the *intraconnectedness* of different historical and contemporary racial formations and the shared reproductive hardships and struggles of formerly colonized and enslaved peoples against exploitation, dispossession, elimination, and dehumanization (Byrd 2011; King 2019; King, Navarro and Smith 2020). Rather than strictly viewing them as historically separate and distinct racial formations that—at most—intersect with each other, our integrative understanding of colonialism insists on looking for the analytical intraconnectivities within global racial capitalist formations. As already suggested in the opening vignette, there is a settler colonial grammar at play in Israel's "selective pronatalist" (Kanaaneh 2002) fertility regime that is partially rooted in a demographic zero-sum game vis-à-vis Palestinians, which continues to shape the racialized divisions of reproductive labor within national and international surrogacy arrangements in the fertility industry. Gondouin and Thapar-Björkert, in their paper on the colonial continuities between transnational adoption and surrogacy, map the reproductive intimacies between US imperialism in post-WWII Korea and British colonialism in India and the distinct yet intraconnected ways in which this required the exploitation of native women's reproductive labor power. Parry and Ghoshal, in their historicizing account of the "perverse" market expansion of Indian ART provision in rural India and the Global South, also analyze the intricately connected imperial and sub-imperial dynamics at play in this commercialization of in/fertility treatment. Navigating these different epistemic traditions and their myriad articulations of (assisted) reproduction is not always an easy or comfortable endeavor, but one worth pursuing in the feminist spirit of careful critique. Weinbaum, for example, remarks on the conspicuous silence in the existing ART literature on slavery and slave "breeding." She insists that "the

history of Atlantic slavery and the practice of slave breeding ought to be accounted for alongside the history of colonialism in scholarship on transnational reproduction and the global fertility chains that secure it, and too, in work on contemporary forms of racial capitalism including biocapitalism. In this we found productive disciplinary frictions that opened up conversations regarding what each scholarly tradition sees as being included and omitted from the others' accounts. Silvia Posocco engages with Weinbaum's conceptualization of the slave episteme by introducing the *finca episteme* to make sense of the mid- and late twentieth-century transnational adoption flows in Guatemala. She argues that as gendered and racialized spaces of indentured labor, capillary exploitation, and death, the "*estado finca*"—the export-oriented coffee plantations in Guatemala—constituted the epistemic condition of possibility for the development of the transnational adoption industry.

Not all the papers in this collection necessarily foreground the ongoing relationality between different colonial iterations of ARTs. Some articles carefully hone in on one specific colonial genealogy of reproductive science and technology. John Gillespie, for instance, provides a provocative critique of STS understandings of expertise through an Afro-pessimist account of the central, and not peripheral role of slavery-induced anti-Black violence in the development of gynaecological expertise and science through a rereading of the well-cited examples of Lucy, Betsy, and Anarcha,three enslaved ~~women~~, as he calls them. Chacko focuses on settler colonial histories of seed and plant conservation in Australia, from nineteenth-century botanical gardens to present-day seed banks to poignantly argue that conservation is a reproductive technology of colonial extraction. Yet, as a collection of papers that can be read through each other, the Special Section aims to highlight the long-standing relationalities in these ongoing constructions of colonialism, empire, and slavery in the world today and the reproductive logics, grammars, or epistemes through which they operate.

Apart from an insistence on the ongoingness and intraconnectedness of ART's variegated colonial lineages, another theme that draws together the different interventions in this volume is an attentiveness to ARTs' *mutually constitutive necropolitical and biopolitical logics*. While much of the existing scholarship on assisted reproduction understandably focuses on the enabling side of reproductive technologies and the ways in which they (re)make, enhance, optimize, and (re)produce life, healthy babies, and families, all of the papers in this Special Section insist on shedding light on the violent histories of slavery, genocide, and extraction, of the breaking up of families and the unmaking of life, that this simultaneously requires, as the opening story on the regulation and operationalization of surrogacy in Israel/Palestine demonstrates (Haritaworn, Kuntsman, and Posocco 2014). Gillespie, for instance, introduces the concept of "primitive accreditation" to argue that "progress" and "knowledge credit" in

reproductive science could only materialize through the spectre of Black death and anti-Black violence. By bringing in the agonizing experiments performed by the renowned physician J. Marion Sims on three enslaved ~~women~~ he offers, by drawing on the work of Sylvia Wynter, Hortense Spillers, and Frank Wilderson, a trenchant Afro-pessimist critique of canonical reproductive science as a science of the "ungendered" flesh.

Posocco similarly centers the (queer) necropolitics of transnational surrogacy and adoption in the war- and conflict-ridden borderlands between Mexico and Guatemala, bringing in the provocative term "genocide kinning" to describe family-making practices that are predicated on the exertion of genocidal violence against Indigenous communities and individuals, and the forced removal and abduction of children. Roy, in her analysis of the unexpected reproductive trajectories of the chemical compound methyl isocyanate from the 1984 gas explosion in the Union Carbide pesticide plant to the emerging surrogacy industry, uses Michelle Murphy's generative concept of distributed reproduction to make legible the larger infrastructures of life and death that support the physical and physiological transmission of toxicities.

This method of *reproductive relationality* is employed throughout this Special Section to signal points of connection between past and present colonial materializations and imaginaries of ARTs, between colonialism's different reproductive grammars, between ART's life and death function, and the relationalities between different (assisted) reproductive technologies, including cross-border surrogacy, intercountry adoption, seed conservation, IVF, and slave breeding. Three papers in this collection, by Van Wichelen, Posocco, and Gondouin and Thapar-Björkert, explicitly scrutinize the colonial dis/continuities between adoption and surrogacy, albeit from different perspectives. Weinbaum and Gillespie both conceive of "slave breeding" as the reproductive technology *avant la lettre* that made possible other ARTs and their racializing forms of reproductive labor. It is through these inspirational cross-pollinations between materialist, STS, Black, Indigenous, and decolonial feminist scholarship that the ideas and subsequent contributions of this Special Section emerged. There is an analytical and political urgency in understanding how reproduction is used, misused, and weaponized against women, workers, and people of color, as much as there is political urgency in understanding how reproduction is, and can be, a crucial and fertile sphere of resistance against oppressive regimes and formations. Thanks to the Wellcome Trust, we were able to spend two intellectually stimulating days discussing each other's work, developing theoretical concepts, and sharpening our analyses. Meanwhile, Brexit was unfolding, the last remnants of the UK welfare state were being dismantled, the Amazon was burning, Palestine was once again being attacked, and the far right was raising its destructive head across the globe, separating families at borders, telling Black and

brown people to "go back from where they came from" while urging "their" women to make more babies. Analyzing historical and contemporary fertility chains from a (de/anti)colonial or abolitionist perspective allows us to discern (dis)continuities in the inextricable and often oppressive ways in which productive and reproductive systems coexist. Hopefully it can also trigger collective analytical and political understandings of the social/biological reproductive realm as a crucial sphere of resistance against racial capitalist socio-historical formations, as was also demonstrated in the opening story. We hope that this Special Section might also be conceived as a reproductive technology, one that can assist us in developing and sharpening the analytical repro-tools needed to help secure wide-ranging reproductive justice for all.

Postscript: Cover Image by Sanaz Haghani

"A Child is Born" is the title of the cover image, based on a lithography print series titled "Trace" (2015). In the series, I confront themes of immigration, known and unknown, familiar and frightening through visual representations of a cocoon. I borrow natural motifs and geometric forms from Islamic tiles, broken down to invent new forms for their inspiring complex patterns and the repetition and generativity that offers the possibility of infinite growth. I hid the female figure and the form of the womb within floral and geometric patterns, given the historically taboo nature of these subjects in my culture. The invitation to design the cover for this special section marked the moment of another birth for me, the occasion to reveal the secret, to move beyond taboo and censorship. The cover pictures the female form poetically with fluid lines and interconnected patterns. Meandrous designs and complex relationships become birth. Forms and twists move in and out of the body. It is as if a butterfly gradually breaks free of her cocoon, pulling and pushing, stretching and contracting for an eternity before she finally emerges. A child is born.

For more about Sanaz Haghani's work, please visit https://sanazhaghani.com/.

Notes

[1] Not all workshop participants contributed to the Special Section, and two of the Special Section contributions—by John Gillespie and Xan Sarah Chacko—were included in the collection after an open call for papers via the *Catalyst* website.

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