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Migration, Intersectionality and Social Justice – Guest Editors’ Introduction

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This special issue contributes to a growing paradigm shift among migration scholars seeking to unpack the complexity of power relations, inequities and forms of social oppression among migrants, and intrinsic to border and migration policies, through the deployment of intersectionality as an analytic tool (Abu-Laban, 1998; Anthias, 2012; Bastia, Piper & Carron, 2011; Carastathis, Kouri-Towe, Mahrouse, & Whitley, 2018, Grosfoguel, Oso & Christou, 2015; Truong, Gasper, Handmaker & Bergh, 2014). Both migration and intersectionality are inextricably linked to social justice. Both involve processes of categorization that are deeply embedded in social science and policy, providing an important means by which we construct and apprehend the social world. Both also serve political purposes and agendas, and are associated with hierarchical systems of “worthiness” and access to bounded systems of rights (Crawley & Skleparis, 2018, p. 51).

International migration involves authorized and unauthorized human crossings across borders of nation-states whose sovereignty is daily enacted through legally and (in accordance with international law) “legitimately” discriminating between those who are deemed to be desirable entrants and those defined as undesirable. In the latter category are migrants who defy border restrictions, rendering them prey to a host of risks and predations. This special issue explores the multiple pathways across state borders and the multiple jeopardies and experiences within the borders of “transit” and “destination” countries among migrants who embody the characteristics of those whom the late African-American poet and activist June Jordan (2005) describes as “the wrong people of the wrong skin on the wrong continent”

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and who also may be the “wrong sex” and the “wrong gender identity,” or the wrong religion, nationality or ethnicity.

Most of the papers gathered in this thematic issue were originally presented at a conference on intersectionality and migration held in Ottawa at Carleton University in the fall of 2016. This conference was conceptualized by the three guest editors as part of a broader research and teaching partnership between Carleton’s Migration and Diaspora Studies and the Institute of African Studies, and the African Centre for Migration and Society at Wits University, South Africa, to raise questions and explore opportunities on migration studies. It brought together scholars based in South Africa and Canada whose research on migration encompassed these two destination countries as well as South Korea, and where migrants originated from countries in southern and eastern Africa, south and east Asia, and Central and South America. It soon became apparent that the focus of most papers was trained on the most precarious of migrants produced by the intersection of their non-citizenship statuses with their location in low-wage work and “obfuscated employment relations” (Anderson, 2010, p. 300) or in state-designated categories that left them highly vulnerable to hyper-exploitation and oppression. Commonly, destination and transit states either reinforce such precarity or ignore its effects in producing highly insecure and inhumane conditions and high probabilities of violence. Other transecting relations of power deepen and define migrants’ exposure to structural insecurities *vis à vis* state authorities, employers, various mobility agents including traffickers, and hostile, xenophobic and fearful local populations.

The topics in this special issue range broadly – and include work in segmented labour markets and struggles for livelihood; the links between family, security and nation-building; border, migration, health and employment policies; inter-migrant relations, law and legal reform; crimmigration and deportation. Collectively, the articles in this issue suggest that despite the many characteristics of migrants deemed “undesirable” through their location in racialized, gendered, class and other power relations, states both tolerate and selectively recruit certain groups of such “wrong” migrants who are perceived to serve significant purposes for states, employers and families of better-resourced residents. These include providing household care of children and elders, a captive cheap and disposable labour force, or (as in South Korea) biological reproduction of a nation grappling with declining fertility rates. The categories in which states place such migrants draw upon, compound, and deepen subjugating processes of racialization and class oppression, that are also gendered, sexualized, and may be intertwined with other stigmatizing dynamics.

Rarely, a promise for more permanent status in destination countries is extended to low-wage or poor migrants, whose combined and intersecting characteristics may be regarded as producing a cultural or civilizational deficit or drain on state resources. Yet to the extent that such pathways to regularization or permanence exist, they are almost always contingent on the

fulfillment of several exacting conditions. These egregious conditions vary from country to country and also by the state-defined categories (temporary seasonal worker, migrant caregiver, marriage migrant, refugee, etc.) where migrants are placed. As elaborated below, migration categories entitle select migrants to some level of “protection, rights and resources whilst simultaneously disempowering others” (Crowley & Skleparis, 2018, p. 59). Among the many injustices experienced by migrants compelled to prove their worthiness for long-term legal residence or citizenship status is forced separation from family members and considerable loss of autonomy and ability to safeguard their person, health and livelihoods against a broad range of possible hazards. In other cases, such “wrong” migrants are placed in a purgatory of permanent impermanence. In all cases, through its migration management apparatus and several other agencies, the state plays an active role in perpetuating and ignoring the multiple sources of insecurity that migrants face.

States may actively seek to indefinitely sequester in deplorable conditions and deport migrants deemed unfit for settlement, integration or humanitarian assistance, or they may simply overlook their very existence, rendering invisible the gross violation of human rights that their treatment within these states represents. As U.S. Supreme Court Justice William Brennan wrote in a 1987 case, “[b]anished from everyday sight, they exist in a shadow world that only dimly enters our awareness” (quoted in Hernandez 2019, p. 15).¹

Formidable barriers exist to bringing meaningful social justice to undocumented, unauthorized, and even selected migrants with temporary status, who bear considerable risks but who nonetheless persist in crossing borders as a survival strategy, often fleeing unbearable perils as much as motivated at forging a better life in a relatively wealthier or more stable country. Neoliberalism, succinctly defined as market-based governance practices such as “the privatization, commodification and proliferation of difference,” accompanied by “authoritarian, national-security driven penal state practices” provides a global landscape that since the 1980s, has compelled and managed global migration (Mohanty, 2013, p. 970). Thus, as Mohanty elaborates, neoliberal states facilitate travel across borders and cosmopolitanism for some economically privileged communities, but such enhanced mobility occurs at the expense of a more halting or stalled mobility, a “holding in place” through conditionality, criminalization and incarceration of impoverished migrants with irregular or temporary statuses (Hernandez, 2019; Mohanty, 2013).

¹ Justice Brennan was here referring to prisoners in general, but his sentiment applies as well to vulnerable migrants, whose presence is hidden from view, forgotten or ignored.

De-Fetishizing Migrant Categories

Migrants may be forcibly displaced by deteriorating political, economic, military or climatic conditions or domestic or sexualized violence. Often when crises compound, protracted conflict in a country devastates its economic infrastructure, producing severe shortages and loss of homes and livelihoods. In such circumstances, movements across national borders may become the only survival strategy available. The UN's 2019 Global Trends report estimates that worldwide close to 71 million people were forcibly displaced from their homes by wars, violence, and deepening human rights, political and economic crises – about twice as many as 20 years previously – with roughly 26 million counted as refugees by the UNHCR (Edwards, 2019). These conditions have contributed to the ballooning in overall numbers of international migrants globally, reaching an estimated 272 million in 2019, comprising 3.5% of the global population, compared to 2.8% in 2000 (Edwards, 2019). Most international migration occurs within rather than across regions, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Central and southern Asia. Many migrants cross borders to contiguous states where conditions are scarcely better and a far cry from offering a safe haven, rights or secure livelihood (United Nations Department of Economic & Social Affairs, 2019).²

Migrants may also be actively recruited through temporary labour schemes, in sectors and jobs often rejected for their grim conditions by more settled workers, whom by virtue of being citizens, especially in wealthier countries, have relatively greater autonomy, work choices, and familial, community and state protection and support. International labour migration is rising with the International Labour Organization estimating that in 2017, there were about 164 million migrant workers worldwide – an increase of about nine percent since 2013, with about 42% female (International Labour Organization, 2018). As impressive as these official figures may be, they vastly undercount the numbers of migrants from countries in the global South who work in other countries, insofar as they are incapable of capturing the large numbers of “irregular” migrants (some of whom enter through having been smuggled or trafficked) who may wish to escape notice of state authorities for fear of punitive consequences, or whose employers may wish to hide their crimes from authorities. Many migrants who enter through irregular migration frequently engage in a variety of risky micro exchange transactions for survival, often with other migrants who live similarly perilous lives within the grey economy (see Rutherford, this issue). Regardless of whether the perceived risks of remaining in home countries or the lure of better

² By contrast, international migrants in North America, Oceania, Northern Africa and Western Asia, in the vast majority, were born outside their region of residence (United Nations Department of Economic & Social Affairs, 2019).

livelihoods in destination countries are stronger, the rise in increasingly restrictive immigration regimes and hostile environments towards distinctly racialized or otherwise “othered” migrants in migrant-receiving countries accentuates the extreme vulnerability of unauthorized border-crossers, low-wage migrants, and non-waged migrants.

Migration scholars, policy makers and international organizations have long distinguished between “forced” and “voluntary migration” (similar to the UN and ILO categories discussed above regarding forced/refugees and labour migrants). Yet the distinctions between these categories drawn in migration management policies, laws and conventions are not always clear-cut and the uses of such categories are deeply politicized. Thus, while the UN Refugee Convention offers a legal definition of a refugee, “its interpretation and application takes place at the national level reflecting national interests and priorities which change over time” as is apparent in shifting “safe country lists” which result in the production of “deportable failed asylum seekers” (Crawley & Skleparis, 2018, p. 51).

Crawley and Skleparis (2018) persuasively argue that binaries such as forced vs. voluntary migration fail to capture the nuanced complexities of mobile lives across space and time, reworked and re-categorized in new locations. As Schrover and Moloney (2013, p. 8) observe, many migrants who entered as “guest workers” during the 1970s to North-West Europe were fleeing politically repressive regimes, such as those of Salazar in Portugal, Franco in Spain, the Colonels in Greece, and King Hassan II in Morocco. Migrants categorized as guest workers were escaping *both* poverty and repression, and when the guest-worker schemes came to an end in the mid-1970s, applications for refugee status and family reunification swelled in number. As these authors suggest, “[c]ategories of migrants are like communicating vessels: migrants change categories, and the bureaucrats who decide on entry or residence might allocate them to different categories” (2013, p. 8). States that appear to offer shelter from constant human insecurity might also attempt to close off legal entry to all but the most select immigrants, thus creating novel irregular movements of “illegal” migrants.

A significant problem flagged by Crawley and Skleparis (2018, p. 55) with the “dichotomous, location-based categorization which dominates much scholarly and policy-thinking is that it presupposes that people move between two fixed places.” The addition of a third location – such as “transit state” – is an effort to conceptually include the in-between origin and destination states, but “replicates the linear understanding of migration processes and experiences” (Crawley & Skleparis, 2018, pp. 57-59). As these authors suggest, many migrants considered at one time the country to which they initially moved to be a destination country where they intended to settle. Yet circumstances such as failure to secure a good livelihood, political factors, severe discrimination (e.g., based upon or targeting some combination of race, sexuality, or religion) or lack of access to citizenship or rights may

result in onward migration and the seeking out of another country in which to settle and live.

In their journey involving loss of homes, livelihoods, and members of families, displaced peoples might in one location be a refugee, in another a migrant, and in yet another may adopt or be designated some other status: “[p]eople can and do shift between and across categories both in their countries of origin and as they travel through space and time” (Crawley & Skleparis, 2018, p. 59). As Brenda Yeoh suggests in her characterization of migrations in and out of Asia, they are less likely to “take the form of permanent ruptures, uprooting and settlement [and] more likely to be transient and complex, ridden with disruptions, detours, multi-destinations, and are founded on interconnections and multiple chains of migration” (Yeoh, 2017, p. 144). Yet, in each space, mobile persons may have their rights and their interactions with others fenced in and severely restricted by a particular migrant or non-national category that defines their relation to the state within which they are (often) temporarily residing.

While expressing recognition of the risks of opening up categories such as “refugee” which provide protection under international law, Crawley and Skleparis suggest that scholars approach migration policy categories from a more critical perspective and question how it is that those placed in one category are somehow more deserving than others (2018, p. 60). Specifically, they advocate challenging “categorical fetishism,” which treats categories such as “‘refugee’ and ‘migrant’ as if they simply exist, out there, as empty vessels into which people can be placed in some neutral ordering process” (Crawley & Skleparis, 2018, p. 49). As discussed below, introducing an intersectionality lens may go some distance in comprehending why some mobile humans are placed in more or less deserving categories than others, exposing them to multiple forms of injustice. The articles in this special issue are informed by such a critical perspective, asking how it is that household migrant workers, seasonal agricultural workers, petty traders, migrants exploited by other migrants, unauthorized border-crossers, migrant sex workers, racialized migrant women and men, migrant women victimized by domestic violence – in other words, “the wrong people of the wrong skin on the wrong continent” (Jordan, 2005) – are categorized, rendered problematic or invisible in law and policy, and treated as abject, less deserving, deportable and even disposable.

Transnational and national networks of migrant activists, human rights INGOs (international non-governmental organizations) and trade unions have also been involved in a project of de-fetishizing migrant categories. Indeed a central goal of No-Border movements is abolishing the entire system of categorization in relation to national borders. They have sought a range of legal and extra-legal protections against violence, hyper-exploitation, imprisonment, deportation and even deaths among the most vulnerable among border crossers and migrants. As Zaheera Jinnah (this issue) outlines in her article on female migrant domestic workers (from Zimbabwe, Malawi

and Lesotho) in South Africa, post-apartheid gains have been made as part of sweeping reforms in employment standards in the 1990s that recognized, for instance, that care workers were “employees” rather than servants, and that non-citizen workers as “residents” deserved rights on par with citizen workers. In a sobering assessment of familiar patterns experienced by migrant domestic workers worldwide, Jinnah concludes that actual pay, working and living conditions have scarcely improved. In Canada, employment standards in some provinces boast equal coverage for temporary and citizen agricultural workers and offer some level of protection to migrant caregivers. Yet, as Daiva Stasiulis (this issue) argues in her paper on “migrant disposability,” lax administration of these provisions and the puny fines imposed on employers for often-gross breaches of standards suggest that such protections for migrant workers exist primarily on paper.

Underlining the willful neglect of human rights violations against migrants is the unwillingness of “host” countries (including *all* Western migrant-receiving states) to sign the 1990 United Nations International Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (ICMW), rendering the ICMW “one of the most neglected treaties in international human rights law” (Pécoud, 2017, p. 57). As Pécoud dryly observes, “the rights of migrants are difficult to reconcile with market logics in destination countries” and the under-ratification of the treaty reflects lack of support for migrant rights at both national and international levels (2017, p. 57). Compounding the absence of state protection of migrant rights is a reluctance of many migrant-producing countries to ratify the Convention for fear of alienating rich destination countries and the promise of bountiful remittances sent to migrant-origin countries earned from the blood, sweat and tears of poorly- or un-protected migrants (Pécoud, 2017, p. 65).

Often, as in South Africa, the expansion in international and state recognition of the human and worker rights of migrants appears to float above and scarcely touch the reality of deteriorating material conditions and increased risks faced by low-wage migrant workers. As Ndlovu’s poem “The Migrant Nurse Dilemma” (in this issue) expresses, state documentary practices in barring migrant access to fundamental rights such as health care poses a dilemma for front-line health care workers, who acknowledge that citizenship trumps human rights and international protocols bear little weight. States are constituted as the primary guardians of sovereignty (Cohen, 2018, p. 83), and an inter-state consensus dictates that state sovereignty is contingent upon state expansion of control and fortification of borders against unauthorized or non-selected migrants. The pre-eminence of national (state, employer, and citizen) interests prevails even when some state laws recognize certain rights of noncitizens, as other legislation and their enforcement may deny those rights. As Ndlovu notes in the explanatory text following her poem:

It [access to health care as a right for all] is protected in the South African constitution however this is not clearly outlined in the National Health Act or the Immigration Act (Ncumisa, 2018). This has created a grey area in which many migrants experience challenges accessing health care, while health workers may also experience frustration over a lack of guidelines on how to deal with non-South African patients.

Those migrants subjected to the greatest punitive controls are invariably marginalized and marked as unfit, uncivilized, or security risks through a variety of intersecting (e.g., racialized, class-based and gendered) discourses. States and major segments of populations in receiving countries have stepped up efforts, as detailed by all authors in this special issue, to exclude, criminalize and deport these migrants (Abji) and subject them to a variety of harms – including stigmatization as fraudulent (Lee-An), precaritization (Jinnah), gendered and racialized insecurities (Rutherford, Liu), and even disposability as human waste (Stasiulis).

The absence of perspectives or consultations with the most marginalized – migrant and immigrant women – in legal reforms in precarious work such as sex work silences the voices of those who experience the greatest risks and harm. As Jamie Liew argues, this silence reproduces epistemic violence against these migrants in employment sectors heavily populated by (im)migrants. The absence of intersectional analysis contributes to a failure to address many of the root causes that render racialized, migrant female workers prey to violence, hyper-exploitation, and rightlessness. Efforts to exclude, invisibilize, dehumanize, deport and dispose of vulnerable migrants occurs even while many of the economies and citizens of receiving states reap rich rewards from the employment and hyper-exploitation of migrants with precarious statuses in the form of business profits, cheaper food and more affordable privatized child and elder care.

Why Intersectionality for Migration Studies?

The promise of intersectionality for addressing justice concerns of migrants, and injustices created through the migration process, is rooted in its simultaneous engagement with multiple power relations that exclude and silence the most marginalized. Since its introduction into scholarly literature in the 1980s, intersectionality has been strongly linked to issues of social justice and has occupied a central position in analyses of global, national and localized inequalities as well as in feminist legal, political and policy discourses of international human rights (Cho, Crenshaw & McCall, 2013, p. 786).

Intersectionality as an analytic framework or conceptual tool made its initial appearance within feminist and anti-racist scholarship during the 1980s in several mainly global North countries, where women of colour and anti-racist feminist scholars and activists sought to bring issues of racism to the

fore and give epistemic privilege to the most marginalized communities of women.³ These writers began to name, analyze and interrogate the relationships among the distinct and multiple forms of discrimination, oppression and agency among women whose life experiences and identities defied single axis thinking. Intersectionality was designated in a variety of ways (including Black/Chicana/Mohawk/South Asian, etc., feminism, anti-racist feminism, triple oppression), with each designation often signaling the author's multi-layered and communal standpoint, epistemology, and intellectual and political affiliations. In the United States, African American women (many of whom self-identified as "Black feminists") and other racialized and colonized women provided theorization and significant empirical analyses that demonstrated their oppression could neither strictly be defined in terms of gender nor race. Key pioneering intersectionality scholars in the U.S. included Patricia Hill Collins (1991), Hazel Carby (1982), Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989, 1991), Bonnie Thornton Dill (1988), bell hooks (1981) and Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1986) who sought to "decolonize feminist scholarship." In Canada, authors who first began to explicitly theorize how race, ethnicity, gender, and class co-constituted experiences of subordination and resistance for immigrant, Black, Indigenous and other racialized women (and less commonly men) included Sedef Arat-Koc (1989), Abigail Bakan (Bakan & Stasiulis, 1997), Himani Bannerji (1987), Monica Boyd (1992), Dionne Brand (1984), Agnes Calliste (1989, 1993), Gillian Creese (Creese & Stasiulis, 1996), Tania das Gupta (1991), Marlee Kline (1989), Patricia Monture-Angus (1995), Roxana Ng (1986), and Daiva Stasiulis (1987, 1990, 1999; Stasiulis & Yuval-Davis, 1995).⁴ Significant early scholars of intersectionality working in Britain were Amina Mama (1982), Pratibha Parmar (1982), Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1983, 1992). In Australia, Gill Bottomley, Marie de Lepervanche and Jeannie Martin (Bottomley, de Lepervanche & Martin, 1991) were among the early scholars of intersectionality. This is a woefully very partial (and somewhat idiosyncratic) list of scholars who were involved in fashioning intersectionality as an analytic tool in these various contexts.⁵

³ Collins and Bilge (2016, pp. 3-4) contend that intellectuals and activists in the global South "have [long] used intersectionality as an analytic tool, often without naming it as such," simultaneously confronting several axes of social division such as (in India) caste, gender and class.

⁴ For an insightful analysis of this early Canadian anti-racist, feminist scholarship, see Dua (1999).

⁵ The idiosyncrasies here largely capture a partial list of the network of anti-racist feminists with whom Stasiulis interacted, read, or occasionally had the pleasure of collaborating with, in the 1980s and early 1990s. The references to relevant scholarship are also merely indicative. The building of a feminist intersectionality lens attentive to issues of race, racism and colonialism critically reflected upon the national specificities of intersecting relations of power, but was equally a collective, transnational endeavor, and has become even more so in its 21st century "renaissance."

As Crenshaw's (1989, 1991) foundational analysis of legal redress of violence against Black women in the United States illuminated, intersectional analysis was required to ensure that African American women would not fall between the cracks of laws and policies that implicitly assumed that women were generically white or Black people were generically male. No longer would a race-free analysis of women's oppression, or race-, gender- and colonialism-free analysis of class exploitation suffice to account for the specific mutually constituted and layered forms of oppression experienced by Black women, Indigenous women, or other women of colour in the United States, Britain, Canada, Australia, and several other countries. As virtually all of the initial intersectionality writers were women, the subjects of analyses were almost exclusively oppressed women or more infrequently women privileged through their respective locations in relations and discourses of race/whiteness, class, sexuality, colonialism and imperialism (Amos & Parmar, 1984; Ware, 1992). While the original trinity of "gender, race and class" (GRC) became by far the most significant constellation of social relations explored in intersectional analysis of marginalized people, its application to study complexity and power across a variety of disciplines, national and local spaces, and communities of people, has seen an efflorescence of various combinations of power and identity including sexuality, ethnicity, Indigeneity, religion, age, generation, ability, and citizenship status, as well as the original GRC trinity. At the same time, simply adding more intersections does not, we would argue, strengthen the critical potential of intersectionality to advance the social justice claims of migrants (Carastathis et al., 2018, p. 9). Rather, specific choices of (a manageable number of) axes of power permit deeper understandings of their genealogy through time and space, and are more likely to offer insightful analyses of migrant experiences, and law, policy, resistance and solidarity. There are historical lessons here to be learned from the foundations of feminist and critical race intersectional thinking in praxis.

The rootedness of theorizing about intersectionality in activism among those excluded from or subordinated in progressive social movements and rights- and equality-enhancing social welfare policies, assured a close relationship between scholarship advancing analyses of multiple, simultaneous and intersecting sources of oppression, and praxis aimed at transforming systemic forms of discrimination, exclusion and oppression. Social justice was foregrounded as well in intersectional analyses that sought to comprehend and address structural forms of inequality, such as the links among capitalism, colonialism, racism and hetero-patriarchy. In contrast, social justice concerns began to fade in a type of identity-focused scholarship when intersectional thinking became unmoored from concrete struggles and analyses of structural power. Filtered through a post-structural and postmodern (proliferation of differences) lens, much intersectional analysis engaged in a more playful and often creative consideration of the complexity of overlapping individual identities, ignoring, however, the embeddedness of

identity in material bases of intersectional injustice, violence and oppression (Cho, Crenshaw & McCall, 2013, p. 797). The focus on inequality, oppression and social (in)justice dimmed in cultural analysis that sought to study and theorize the infinite complexity, hybridity and transnational fluidity of identities.

At the same time, intersectionality scholars have cautioned against the adoption of too rigid an opposition between identity and power, arguing that recognition of marginalized identities is essential for addressing the exclusions of subjugated communities (Cho, Crenshaw & McCall, 2013, pp. 797-800). Here intersectional identities are what produce embodied, situated knowledge, and perspectives that have traditionally been marginalized and erased in many disciplines and interdisciplinary scholarship such as migration studies (Dhamoon, 2011, pp. 232-233). Demarginalizing such knowledge is in turn critical to resistance strategies that focus on “dismantling the violent capacities of racialized-gendered systems that operate under the pretense of neutrality” (Dean Spade, quoted in Cho, Crenshaw & McCall, 2013, p. 798). As Tungohan (2016, p. 353) suggests, many of the migrant grassroots organizations base their mobilization of members on the anti-essentialist premise that intersectional identities are derived from grassroots politics rather than politics being derived from identities.

For example, a decades-long tradition of dissident diasporic Filipino theatre has migrants as active creators of scripts reflecting their struggles, painful separation from children and family and indignities of migrant caregiver life. Equal parts politics, therapy and socializing, such artistic expressions are empowering for the most subjugated of migrants. They are also one strand of resistance within multi-scalar grassroots networks such as *Migrante* and *Gabriela* where activists view their struggles as ranged in opposition to interlocking structures of power (Tungohan, 2016). Such creative interventions also attest to the situated character of such knowledge and forms of resistance. The article by Geraldine Pratt, Sarah Zell, Caleb Johnston and Hazel Venzon (this issue) sharply demonstrates such potentialities as they analyse the “testimonial play” *Nanay* about the interactions among Filipino domestic workers with their children, nanny agents, government officials and Canadian employers. Different patterns of Filipino migration to different Canadian cities are regulated by diverse temporary worker and provincial migration programs, producing distinctive micro-geographies of intersectionality, power, marginalization and solidarity.

There are other contributions that insightfully examine as well as illustrate creative interventions that seek to challenge the layering of injustices facing different migrants. The multiple methods in this special issue speak both to how knowledge is being created and how social justice issues such as migration are being represented in both academic and popular domains.

In their piece in this issue, “We the People” by the Mestizo Arts & Activism (MAA) Collective, young people of colour living on the West Side of Salt Lake City, Utah (USA), provocatively center issues of social justice.

They question notions of power in whiteness, class, race, gender and sexual identities by repurposing the preamble of the US constitution. Through a performance in the State of Utah Legislature, the group assume roles of what they call “corporates,” those representing political and economic power, and residents of a neighborhood challenging ideas of who belongs, who gains, and who controls access to economic and political power. In their dialogue, they write, “[w]e own your labor and know that you need the money... So, go ahead and quit if you don’t like the health plan.... There’s a person behind you, waiting to replace you! Not to worry – we got your interest in mind – so sit back, relax and let us take control.”

Elsa Oliveira and Rebecca Walker (this issue) draw on their experience in a participatory arts-based project with migrant women in Johannesburg, most of whom were still waiting for a decision on their refugee applications. Reflexively examining the process of research and the creation of quilts by the women, they engage in important deliberations concerning the ethics and politics of power and relationships in research, while showing through their analysis and images how these women challenged hegemonic discourses of gender and citizenship as their “creative works weave through many strands of their lives, from being accused of witchcraft, to watching loved ones murdered, and the difficulties of raising a child with disabilities.”

The screenprints by Moozhan Ahmadzadegan invite the readership of this special issue into a conversation about current debates in Canada and elsewhere concerning migration and refugees. The overlay of queries over stock pictures very familiar to, say, those who are conversant with mediated discussions about European immigration to settle the Americas and Australia or about war in the Middle East this century, arrests the viewer, prompting one to (further) rethink how xenophobia permeates so much of the public discourse in one’s communities.

Intersectionality in Migration Studies

Intersectionality is an analytic approach that understands “the social reality of women, [men and non-binary genders] and the dynamics of their social, cultural, economic and political contexts to be *multiply, simultaneously, and interactively* determined by various significant *axes of social organization*” (Stasiulis, 1999, p. 347, emphasis in original). The implicit or explicit adoption of intersectional frameworks in migration studies has stemmed from the realization that migrants are not undifferentiated human subjects, nor can migrant movements be defined only along one parameter of difference: thus, neither “women” nor “migrant women” are unitary groups with common experience, with the latter highly differentiated through the intersection of their lived circumstances in their home, transit and destination countries and their mode and status of entry, racial and ethno-religious differences, skill level, age, and education, among others (Anthias, 2012, pp. 102, 106).

The connection between migration and intersectionality was often implicit in much of the early intersectionality scholarship of the 1980s and 1990s. This seemed inevitable in high immigrant-receiving countries such as Canada (and Australia) where the official state narrative taken up by many migration scholars is that Canada (or Australia) is a multicultural nation built on successive waves of immigration (Kaushik & Walsh, 2018, p. 28). Some of the authors of such pioneering scholarship (such as feminist historians and social scientists of various minority ethnicities) were immigrants from less favoured countries themselves or had grown up in immigrant households and thus experienced first-hand distinctive forms of othering (see, for Canada, Iacovetta, 1992; Lindström, 1988). Black Caribbean female scholars documented the devastating impact of punishing racialized routes to migration in Canada for Black immigrant women offered by foreign domestic worker policies (Calliste, 1989; Silvera, 1989). Colonialism and fading European empires had established pathways of international migration leading these scholars to discern just how enmeshed migrants and immigrants were in (settler) colonial logics that also were intertwined with relations of race, class, gender and sexuality.

More recently, it has been less the multiplicities of relations of power that constituted the construct of “immigrant women” (see Ng, 1986) and more, as Salina Abji argues in this issue, how “race, gender and other axes of difference are mobilized in the enactment of punitive immigration controls.” Such controls can have devastating and deadly consequences as migrants deemed “illegal” may be imprisoned and denied a modicum of rights or care. Perhaps more astonishingly, despite their legal and highly regulated presence in Canada, low skill temporary labour migrants can also be subjected to technologies of disposability in sites such as immigration law and provincial/territorial employment legislation, the workplace, transport, living conditions, access to health care and the practice of medical repatriation of injured and ill migrant workers (see Stasiulis, this issue).

Whether an intersectional lens is still in its infancy or well-established as a key analytic lens within contemporary migration studies is a matter of debate, and likely also reflects the prevailing paradigms within different branches of migration studies. Thus, Carasthesis et al. (2018, p. 6) observe that “the majority of (forced) migration [and refugee] scholarship continues to approach the subject without attending to the simultaneity of experiences and co-implications of positionalities shaped by gendered, racialized, class, and sexuality-based power relations.” Indeed, they argue that the “question of gender” in migration remains a marginal focus and when deployed, gender has been included as an “essentially demographic category” rather than understood as produced “through both nationalized and transnational heteropatriarchal power relations” (2018, p. 7). Similarly, Kaushik and Walsh (2018, pp. 34-35) argue that the significant body of research focused on settlement and integration (in Canada) “has almost entirely refrained from using intersectionality as a main analytical framework.”

In contrast, scholarship on the globalization of reproductive labour, examining female-dominated migration from (and within) the global South to the global North, especially domestic, household or care workers, but also migrant sex workers and nurses, has at least since the late 1980s been keenly focused on global North-South divisions, and dynamics of racialized, gendered, class-based power relations (Arat-Koc 1989; Bakan & Stasiulis, 1997; Calliste, 1989; Parreñas, 2001; Romero, 1992; Silvera, 1989; Stasiulis & Bakan, 2003). An intersectionality lens has been utilized to inform the structural dynamics of colonialism/imperialism, capitalism and patriarchy that have given rise to unfree labour systems and reinforced the citizenship divide in receiving countries between employers and employees (Bakan & Stasiulis, 2003). In many countries, options for even highly educated women to migrate from the global South have narrowed to temporary state-authorized migrant programs or through undocumented and irregular migration directed to address the care gap in middle and upper class private family households. This is clearly a vast, though often invisible globalized sector of employment where the entry of the migrant woman analytically altered the thinking of many feminist scholars in exposing the limitations of single axis thinking. Not merely the position of migrant women in hierarchies of race, class, gender and citizenship, but their relationship with employers positioned in more privileged positions within these intersecting dynamics abruptly erased notions of “shared sisterhood” in feminist discourse. Such analyses applied intersectionality to various levels of scale and spatiality – from exploring the devastating dislocations among local populations stemming from the imposition of IMF and World Bank structural adjustment policies in home countries such as the Philippines, to the replication of these globalized racialized, gendered and class-based dynamics of privilege and oppression played out at the micro level in private family households in destination countries (Stasiulis & Bakan, 2003).

As migration studies have tended to reproduce northern-centric social science, we are less aware of how the concept of intersectionality has traveled or how an intersectional sensibility has informed scholarship on gendered patterns of migration circulating within the global South (Grosfoguel, Oso & Christou, 2015; Oishi, 2005; Truong et al., 2014). This does not mean that migration studies have ignored the South but rather that this scholarship has placed the emphasis on the South as migrant producing rather than migrant receiving or as regional sites where migration circulates (Yeoh, 2014). Many scholars working within or writing about the exploitation of female migrant household workers in the southern as well as northern hemispheres have for some time incorporated intersectional approaches that give “attention to class, race, gender, citizenship, language and other forms of social difference” (Yeoh, 2014, p. 143). As Jinnah (this issue) observes, despite such research conducted through an intersectional lens, there is limited scholarship on the “heterogeneity of global care chains, the perspectives of employers and

workers, and the dynamics and patterns in [different regions] of the global south.”

Further, in the case of South Africa, a protracted history of colonialism and apartheid has strongly informed migration studies scholarship in the country. Concepts of race, class, and masculinity are inherent in much of the germinal work in this field (see for instance Crush, Williams & Peberdy, 2005; Dodson & Crush, 2004; Moodie & Ndatshe, 1994; Moodie, 1988; Wolpe, 1972). However, an explicit intersectional analysis was only introduced in the late 1990s and 2000s, following the transition to democracy, and a new migration regime, which heralded diverse and rapid flows of migration. Ally (2006) and Dodson (2000) raised questions of how multiple identities such as gender, race, migrant status and class shape migratory experiences. Their work illustrates the difficulties and importance of developing a layered analytical framework that is both responsive to the gendered and racialised context of the country (Collins 1998), but also able to transcend these approaches to raise broader questions that speak to a global scholarship on precarity and resilience (Dodson, 2000).

In the last two decades, South African migration studies have broadened in scope and analysis. Ongoing scholarship on migration policies (Segatti, 2011), gender (Kihato, 2013), regional migration, (Schierup, 2016) xenophobia (Nyamnjoh, 2006), sexuality (Caminga, 2017) and labour (Barchiesi, 2011; Jinnah, 2010; Munakamwe, 2017; Rutherford, 2008) attempts to understand the diversity and complexity of migration from multiple approaches. New questions of nationality, ethnicity, migratory status, sexuality and gender identity, and class, alongside longer-standing issues of governance and citizenship, show how migration studies might be enriched by intersectional approaches.

Migration policies in “settler society” countries in the global North, as well as more developed hubs in the global South, have been shifting towards temporariness and conditionality, with narrowing and more complex pathways to permanence and citizenship. In the global South, transient migration has long been prevalent giving rise to hierarchies of citizenship and non-citizenship, often constructed through intertwining assets or “deficits” based on class, race, nationality, language, religion, and disability (among others) (Yeoh, 2014). At the same time, more affluent Asian countries, confronting their own demographic fertility and household care challenges, are defining the characteristics of new distinctions between settler and temporary migration. Jiyoung Lee-An’s analysis (this issue) of marriage migration to South Korea powerfully conveys how the combined characteristics of migrants from Asian developing countries are constructed through state and popular discourses as alternatively desirable or risky for the nation-building and fertility projects of that state. Specifically, women from southeast Asia of child-bearing age who marry older South Korean men are provided pathways to permanent status if they fulfill their reproductive promise, whereas unions between South Asian migrant men and older Korean

women are treated with suspicion and assumed to constitute “fraudulent marriage.”

The centrality of a critical intersectionality lens is thus, however unevenly, implicitly or explicitly informing a growing body of migration research. The absence of intersectional analysis is much more glaring in legal reform of sectors of work, living conditions and health policies, where there is notable representation if not domination by vulnerable migrants. Thus, Jamie Liew’s (this issue) analysis in the Canadian context of the mountains of text produced by parliament and the courts in legal reform of sex work contains scant mention of the multiplication of risks among racialized migrant women with irregular status, thus adding epistemic violence to their everyday experiences of risk, uncertainty and violence. Migrants deemed illegal are rendered invisible and thus left to deteriorate. State sovereignty and national border security are prioritized over the ontological security and autonomy of vulnerable migrants. The proliferation in types of migration and categories of conditional, temporary and unauthorized statuses, many without a pathway to permanence, produced or abetted by restrictive neoliberal and security-conscious immigration policies, has broadened the focus of justice-minded intersectional writing in migration scholarship. Moreover, the fact that violence and risk permeate the livelihood of migrants *within* (non-safe) borders of states necessitates adopting an intersectional analysis of “not only ‘irregular’ migration, but also the strategies of survivorship that racialized and migrant women [and men] have developed to address the multiple forms of violence in their lives” (Abji, this issue; see also Rutherford, this issue).

The promise of analytic gains in deploying an intersectional lens in answering questions such as why specific migrant groups face discrimination, oppression, violence and dehumanization – or alternatively, relative privilege – becomes apparent in rich, insightful ethnographic work that illuminates the hazards and opportunities of crossing borders, and being forever marked as not belonging in specific national or local spaces (e.g., Rutherford, 2017). Thus, in this issue, anthropologist Blair Rutherford illuminates how an intersectional lens can inform the ways in which the survival of Zimbabwean female migrants in South Africa is continuously rendered insecure by risks of violence, not merely at the border but also in various sites and by various actors in work, shelter, and unexpectedly, in their interaction with humanitarian organizations. Similarly, Ying-Ying Tiffany Liu’s (this issue) ethnographic and participatory fieldwork in Johannesburg, spent in kitchens of restaurants owned by Chinese petty capitalist migrants, who employ but also hyper-exploit other (Zimbabwean) migrants, reveals how intersectionality can be fruitfully deployed as a flexible analytical tool attentive to not only larger structural forces but also highly localized economic and sociopolitical conditions. Liu’s finely textured ethnographic research reflects that differences among distinct national and racialized migrants are not merely hierarchical but also result in patterned

interdependencies among migrants who possess various types of social and economic capital.

Intersectionality, less a theory than an analytic sensibility (Cho, Crenshaw & McCall, 2013, p. 795), assists in making sense of the complexity and diversity of migration, discriminatory state (im)migration and a host of other exclusionary policies and laws, and migrant experiences, agency and politics. Insofar as each concept named within specific intersectional frameworks (race, gender, class, sexuality, colonialism, etc.) is itself the subject of intense debates and lack of consensus, intersectionality is helpful in only marking out certain ground for analysis rather than actually performing that analysis. For instance, with the global rise in discrimination against Muslim immigrants, intersectionality theorists debate whether or not Islamophobia is a form of racism and whether religious identities, differences, clothing and symbols have been racialized (Grosfoguel, Oso & Christou, 2014, p. 635). Certainly the prominence of various concepts in academic and popular discourses in different national contexts to signal similar forms of fear and hatred, exclusion, violence and discrimination (such as xenophobia against migrants in the South African context) reflects the situatedness in place and time of knowledge and understanding of specific social relations of power in intersectional analyses. Such place- and historically-situated analysis inhibits essentializing type of thinking and indeed the production of any universalizing intersectional *theory*. It is the rigidity (such as the essentialism, categorical fetishism and imposed stability of the RCG trinity) of intersectional frameworks that is often the subject of harshest critiques among theorists.

As the papers and creative interventions in this special issue illuminate, it is often more productive to examine what intersectionality *does* to enrich our understanding of the complexities of migration, the vulnerabilities of migrants, and the oppressions built within migration policies, rather than to dwell on the question of what intersectionality *is* (Cho, Crenshaw & McCall, 2013, p. 788). The augmenting embrace of intersectionality by migration scholars directs attention to the intertwining dynamics of key structures of power pertaining to the relationship between migration and social (in)justice. It is an important analytic sensibility to confront and redress the epistemological and social erasure within state policies, laws and citizens' consciousness of entire mobile networks, distinctive social communities and groups of migrants who are demonized for their "wrong" presence within state borders, and who like poet June Jordan (2005; emphasis in original) declare: "*I am not wrong: Wrong is not my name. My name is my own my own my own.*" In this vein, the Mestizo Arts & Activism Collective created *Caution* (this issue) in response to on-line racism in a local Salt Lake City newspaper. This is a striking photographic image of solidarity "by us and for us" that subverts misleading narratives about the Latinx community. *Caution* offers one glimpse into how the creative capacities of the community can be harnessed to serve research and education purposes about the community's

criminalization and exploitation through the “school-to-sweatshop pipeline.” It offers a defiant refusal to be defined by denigrating images and discourses of racialized undocumented migrants and residents by offering an alternative vision of how a much maligned immigrant community demands recognition and justice. Not surprisingly, as several of the contributors suggest, intersectionality has become a key analytic and political sensibility in the tool box of activists who seek not merely to understand the interlinking sources for the injustices and insecurities of border and migration policies, but to transform and abolish them.

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