

Transnational adoption and surrogacy make explicit the relations between war, structural violence and crisis, and global shifts in the organisation and governance of reproduction. This paper focuses on the interrelatedness of vitality and death, living and dying, and the nexus between biopolitics and necropolitics, as they are foregrounded through an analysis of adoption and surrogacy as acquisitive family-making practices. More specifically, I re-inscribe the transnational movement, circulation and exchange of persons, substance and bodily capacities within the logics of multiple genealogies of war, violence, and extraction, as these have manifested in the globalised borderlands between Guatemala and Mexico. First, the paper tracks the traffic in substance and bodily capacities across Guatemala and Mexico. It charts the simultaneous demise of transnational adoptions in Guatemala and concomitant growth in surrogacy arrangements in the southern Mexican state of Tabasco, as well as the inception of the practice of ova harvesting for IVF in newly established reproductive medicine providers in Guatemala City. Second, the paper tracks forms of expertise and technical infrastructure not only across national borders, but also across domains of knowledge and practice. It shows the proximity between reproductive medicine and forensic science evident in DNA analysis. DNA analysis is used in forensic anthropology to document human rights violations and resolve cases of forced disappearance. Forensic laboratories increasingly offer commercial services, including paternity tests, catering to the expanding reproductive medicine sector. This new configuration of biolabour encompasses the extractive practices tied to reproductive medicine and forensics. It connects to the production and uneven distribution of liveliness and deadliness, privilege and dispossession, accumulation and alienation, as persons, bodily substance, and, increasingly, bioinformation transverse contexts, jurisdictions and social and racial formations.

Keywords: adoption, surrogacy, forensics, borders, biolabour, biopolitics, necropolitics