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Reproductive justice and the institution of the family. Preliminary thoughts on non-monogamy, politics of care, and queer and trans existence

Rosa María García (rosamgarciagrecia@gmail.com)

Abstract: The interest of this article is exploring the concept of "reproductive justice" focusing on the relationships of care that make it possible. The argument we present is fourfold. First, we outline the foundations of the reproductive justice framework, emphasizing its focus on broader systems of control. Then, we examine the history of the family form by presenting a brief commentary on how a range of economical-political vectors have informed its constitution in modern Europe. Later, we argue that the family form can be better understood through the notion of a monogamous system, suggesting its relation to the capitalist social normality, such that practices that challenge it form what we call an immanent critique of the capitalist mode of production. Finally, we highlight the space that trans communities create in building this immanent critique.

Keywords: Care, Family Form, Reproductive Justice, Transgender

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Rosa María García

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Introduction

All politics have become reproductive politics, as Laura Briggs (2017) states. This assertion underscores the centrality of the reproductive sphere in political struggles. The Reproductive Justice (RJ) movement emerged precisely as a response to the limitations of liberal frameworks, which traditionally framed reproduction as an individual concern. By expanding the scope of what constitutes the reproductive sphere, RJ has illuminated the deep entanglements between reproduction, race, economy, and social structures. This extended framework is particularly relevant today, as a global reactionary political assemblage – typically called "reactionary internationale"[1] – has consolidated around the essentialist notion of a nation-state "centred on birth-cultural sovereignty" (Michelsen/De Orellana/Buranelli 2023; De Orellana/Michelsen 2019; Zhang 2024), in which the control of reproductive and sexual life is fundamental (Dietze/Roth 2020; Pereira 2022; Franklin 2022).

Central to this program is the institution of the family, which the reactionary internationale identifies as a key site of political dispute (Cooper 2017; Dietze/Roth 2020). Trump's United States of America Milei's Argentina, Meloni's Italy, Orbán's Hungary, or Putin's Russia are not far apart when considering the "traditional values" of the heterosexual, monogamous family and its gendered and racialized order (Bluhm/Varga 2018; Dietze/Roth 2020; Stégmayer 2020; Cabezas/Vega 2020). These values have also been introduced in colonised societies (Rao 2020), and are still being reinforced today – even while disguising themselves under an anti-colonial façade (Reactionary International 2024). The fixation over controlling gender and sexuality via a variety of vectors (economic, institutional, legal, social) is in itself an extension of Europe's colonialist history.

1 "A reactionary international compact is emerging between New Right populists in democracies like the USA, UK, France, Germany, Spain, Poland, Italy, Holland, India, Brazil and Hungary, and authoritarian regimes like Saudi Arabia, Russia and China. These actors share a commonly-articulated desire to dismantle Liberal international norms, particularly rights and rules-based multilateralism, and replace them with a distinct vision of sovereignty, prioritisation of transactional deal-making and spheres of exclusive competence." (Michelsen/De Orellana/Buranelli 2023, 4).

The "institution of the family", which this paper also refers to as the "family form" – to put it in a Marxian way –, is somewhat a disputed notion. Anthropology, historiography or sociology each posit a particular set of possible (analytical, normative) definitions. This text draws on the traditional materialist feminist analysis regarding its structural form and function, that is, it considers the family form as a "social unit" founded on the exploitation of women and their social-reproductive labour (Hennessy/Ingraham 1997) and the "privatization of procreativity", as Lewis (2019, 164) puts it. Of course, this presupposes and reproduces a certain (heterosexual, cissexual) normativity and its monogamous binding. Although the component of its normativity has been legally widened in certain territories, the family form still breeds on monogamy.

This essay leans on the notion that the institution of the family functions as a technology of governmentality, codifying onto the modern world a particular order of care patterns and flows. It is, therefore, a fundamental axis of reproductive politics, and one that may be, therefore, of utmost importance to the RJ framework. The questions this paper will be struggling with here would then be: In what senses is RJ theory open regarding to the institution of the family? How can an effective alternative to the structural injustices of such an institution be predicated? This paper can be considered a preliminary attempt to answer these questions.

The argument presented here is fourfold.

It first begins by outlining the foundations of the RJ framework, emphasizing its departure from liberal notions of individual choice. RJ foregrounds the structural conditions that shape reproductive autonomy, shifting the focus from legal access to broader systems of control. This perspective allows for a broader understanding of the reproductive politics not merely as a question of rights but as a site where social reproduction, care, and state power intersect.

Secondly, a brief history of the European family as an institution is presented, mapping how religion, the state, and capitalism have jointly shaped its modern (colonial) form. Rather than providing an exhaustive genealogy, the argument focuses on key historical configurations that inform contemporary politics of care and reproduction with the aim of uncovering how the traditional family form remains structurally linked to gender, sexuality, and racial formations.

Third, the essay argues that the historical institution of the family operates within what Brigitte Vasallo calls "the monogamous system" (Vasallo 2019), suggesting that contemporary monogamy is a care-structuring force that aligns with capitalist social normality. In this sense, practices that challenge the politics of the monogamous system can be understood as an immanent critique of the capitalist mode of production.

Finally, the article highlights the spaces that trans communities create as sites of resistance, where the reconfiguration of care relationships – often born out of necessity – articulates a practical critique of capitalism itself. These modes of relationality, is argued, offer a glimpse into alternative configurations of social reproduction beyond the structures of the state and capital.

Some limitations here are, of course, implicit, but the most notable are the geographical and overall contextual limits of this paper. For convenience, the study will focus on "the European family", since Europe's construction has been the cradle of both modern colonialism and the capitalist mode of production. Later on, the essay suggests that non-monogamy predicates an alternative to the flows of care that crystallizes in the family. Taken literally, this alternative is very much limited. The suggestion is *not* that non-monogamy should make up an institution analogous to monogamy, nor that it could be seen as an immediate path to a post-capitalist society – rather, that non-monogamy encapsulates a range of alternatives to our narrow present conditions in the very heart of our social being.

The Reproductive Justice framework and the family form

The foundations of reproductive justice as a theoretical and practical approach were laid in 1994 by the Women of African Descent for Reproductive Justice collective. They coined the term "reproductive justice" by combining the notions of "reproductive rights" and "social justice" (Ross 2017a, 67). The intent was "to end the artificial isolation of abortion from other social justice issues," as "both the pro-choice and the pro-life movements incompletely addressed the complexity of Black women's lives and decisionmaking" (Ross 2017a, 67). Indeed, "institutional forces such as racism, sexism, colonialism, and poverty influence people's individual freedoms in societies" (Ross 2017b). In considering RJ, then, we are tasked with thinking in terms of economical, legal, and institutional access to (reproductive) health, bodily autonomy, or systemic injustice (be it, for instance, systems of policing or politics of confinement), rather than in more abstract terms like "choice" and "equality."

The very nature of the RJ framework requires an intersectional approach. The "right to choose" cannot be properly formulated if one does not first consider how their ability to "make a choice" is itself shaped by their life possibilities, opportunities, and experiences. These are greatly informed by the class and broader social status within which a person moves through their life, conferred, in no little part, by their race, sex/gender, ability, and sexuality, among other

socially significant forms of human classification (see Crenshaw 1991; Erevelles 2012; Kafer 2013). "For each individual and each community, the effects of these impacts will be different, but they share some of the basic characteristics of intersectionality: universality, simultaneity, and interdependence" (Ross/Solinger 2017, 74pp.).

In needing such an intersectional approach, RJ also calls for a radical perspective. It does not aim "for simple inclusiveness but for changing the rules of the game" (Ross/Solinger 2017, 117). Control and policing systems are a key topic of the RJ framework, as they are needed to keep in place a certain societal ordering of the body (for example Tanyag, 2024, 35–60). These apparatuses are closely linked to the political and economic project of neoliberalism, which defines their uses (Ross/Solinger 2017, 96, 106pp.). After listing a series of political issues that impact a broad range of marginalized, vulnerable populations, Loretta Ross (2017b, 292) concludes: "Nearly every field of human endeavor affects and is affected by reproductive politics because empires need bodies."

Indeed, disabled, racialized and trans* persons and communities, being produced as otherized bodies, share a common history of victimhood associated to sexual/reproductive control, that is, eugenics (for example Turda/Weindling 2007; Herzog 2018). Traditionally, this form of state control over otherized bodies has been overt, a constellation of practices such as compulsory sterilization or child removal (Karkazis 2008; Oprea 2017; Ladd-Taylor 2017). The role that psychiatry played in institutionalizing marginalized persons, effectively articulating a notion of *mental hygiene* that would crystallize the "degeneracy" they were seen to possess, is well understood (Foucault 2005; Dufaud/Henckes/Scarfone,2024). Such practices of classification, policing and punishment over the sexual-reproductive life of otherized populations were established and enforced as a broader form of statecraft (Chitty 2020).

More recently, these forms of violence have been addressed in certain territories, at least formally. Some expressions of it have been virtually erased by an apparently 'liberal', less harmful state (for a critique, see Wacquant 2009). However, there are still significant hurdles and hardships accessing a version of reproductive justice. The multiple barriers to accessing abortion, even its criminalization, are but one of the sides of the broader problem at hand (for a detailed RJ perspective on the USA, see Silliman/Bhattacharjee 2002; Jones 2024).

For instance, considering sexual-reproductive health access for trans* people means also dealing with control in psychiatric and medical settings (Lowik 2017; Pearce 2018; Radi 2020; García 2022). It would be pointless thinking about access for migrant people without pointing out the border control and policing enforced by the colonial state, as well as the politics of care it allows for, or, less

abstractly so, which jobs migrant people have access to and whether they are criminalized or not (Luibhéid 2002, 55, 76pp.; Walia 2013; Pérez/López 2016; Bhattacharyya 2018, 135, 141pp.; Smith/Mac 2020). Today, Imperialism, colonialism, and necropolitics are more efficiently understood as "regimes" of bordering, debt, debility, and (reproductive) work (Nkrumah 1966; Mbembe 2003; Haritaworn/Kuntsman/Posocco 2014; Puar 2017; Walia 2021; Cavallero/Gago 2021; Snorton/Haritaworn 2022).

Our interests here, however, lay in care patterns and flows, as crystallised in the family form. Inasmuch as the RJ movement elaborates a broadened understanding of the reproductive and its theorisation is able to point to the political conditions through which it is shaped, the family form – both as an institution and as a particular articulation of exclusions – is nuclear to it. It could be said that this essay begin where Candace Bond-Theriault's "Queering Reproductive Justice" (2024) doesn't reach. Sex/gender, race and disability shape the institution of the family and its modes of liminality. As sovereign of the "legitimate use of force" (Waters/Waters, 2015, 136), the state affects its institutionality (for example Grillo, 2008); and the capitalist mode of production feeds off it, as it requires a differential in unpaid care labour and paid work (Vogel 2013; Oran 2017). As Lise Vogel (2013, 162) points out, "The domestic component of necessary labour cannot be completely socialised in a capitalist society".

As a node of social reproduction, the "traditional" family functions as a patriarchal strategy for dominating feminised persons – through care and love, sex and, of course, biological reproduction (for example Federici 2012). By virtue of the heterosexual matrix and the sexual division of (paid and unpaid) labour, two particular gender roles are enforced, that of the father and the mother, meaning child rearing – an enormous investment of socially reproductive labour (Fraser 2013; Carter 2014). It is not surprising, considering its structure, that the family form behaves as a key vector of social normativity. Therefore, the RJ framework would seem particularly open and suitable to evaluate and challenge the role that the institution of the family plays in reproductive politics.

Religion, capital, state, and the family: towards a *longue dureé* history of repro-politics

The institution of the family being central to reproductive politics, its historical formation must be understood within a broader field of power. The structures that regulate kinship operate not as discrete forces but as interwoven agents that have historically shaped the family form. A *longue durée* perspective allows

us to trace how these forces, far from being static, have continuously adapted to shifting modes of governance, economic production, and social control. In doing so, we approach the family as a site of both historical sedimentation and political contestation, where social reproduction is structured, regulated, and at times resisted.

Among these forces, religion has played a foundational role in defining the modern family as a key social unit. Christianity, in particular, was instrumental in consolidating the modern colonial state (Hastings 1997; Elliot 2006) and in shaping racial categories, both in European and colonial contexts (Allen 1997; Eilav-Feldon/Isaac/Ziegler 2009; Heng 2018). While Christian efforts to spread "the word of God" through colonization imposed a specific meaning and order onto family, sex/gender, and sexuality on colonised societies (Stoler 2010; Markowitz 2024), these processes of dispossession fostered responses of colonial resistance that also came to arise as religious, both in reactionary and liberating terms (for example Said 1972; Gutiérrez 1973; Badran 2009).

The deployment of Christian dogmas and values by the Catholic Church has been historically central to the "social unit" of the family (Goody 1983; Dabhoiwala 2012). But, while their control over noble families in some respects was indisputable, they struggled to impose themselves onto the popular classes. Christian institutions dealt differently with marriage/ sexuality depending on the costums of each region (Burguière/Segalen/Zonabend 1996, 95, 158pp.). The Reformation and Counter-Reformation intensified struggles over the regulation of kinship (Goody 2000, 68, 85pp.; Wiesner-Hanks 2008, 207, 251pp.), and the Enlightened era later came to challenge religious authority and, unwittingly, the sexual order itself. It is worth pointing out that "free unions of various kinds were to be found in many late 18th and 19th century working-class communities" (Dabhoiwala 2012, 118). In this era, however, two significant sociohistorical processes began to take over, drastically changing the family form: the industrialization, and the nation-state it cemented.

Historically, the contemporary nation-state has been constructed through a plethora of technologies of sexual-reproductive control. In colonial contexts, the governance of family and reproduction became a crucial mechanism of imperial control (for example Ballantyne/Burton 2005). As Ann Laura Stoler (2010, 41, 67pp.) argues, "the very categories 'colonizer' and 'colonized' were secured through forms of sexual control that defined the domestic arrangements of Europeans". These forms of attentive control predate the "seventeenth century [...] biopolitics of the population" that Michel Foucault (1978, 139) describes, but can certainly be considered inspirations for the latter (see also Hastings 1997,

168). One crucial transformation was the transfer of authority over marriage from the Church to the State, consolidating the latter's ability to regulate social reproduction (Ehmer 2002). This was part of a broader process of state formation that depended on bureaucratic consolidation and economic centralization (O'Neil 1986).

Rather than a singular institutionalization of the modern state (Mann 1993), the *longue durée* approach suggests that the formation of the state was an evolving process, shaped by capitalist expansion, colonial governance, and the reorganization of social reproduction (Arrighi 2010). It is important to mention that the advancing of the core development of the capitalist market and institutions was already the task of early forms of state, with its colonial control and the expropriation of communal lands (Marx 1996, 736). It was also contingent on the transformation and thorough control of sex/gender, as Maria Mies and Silvia Federici (2014, 76) point out. The social category "woman" was not only reified as a reproducing body through the processes of reproduction of structural powers (Stevens 1999, 210) – Thomas Laqueur (1987; 1990) further emphasizes that the invention of "the bio-logical sexes" constituted a new "politics of reproductive biology." In this context, women frequently served as the symbolic representation of the nation-state itself (Yuval-Davis/Anthias 1989).

Liberal and classical feminists accounts tend to view the significance of this epoch as it gave birth to the "public/private spheres" (for example Pateman 1988; Arnei 2001). While noblewomen were relegated to the private sphere (Joris 2007) and ruling classes continued "marriage as an alliance strategy" (Ehmer 2002, 292, 297pp.), the industrialization produced the "dissolution of the family" of the new *proletariat* (Engels 1975). The working conditions, the striking poverty, and the dependence on the factory shaped its form. "The onset of capitalism necessitated low wages and an unqualified workforce..., the recourse to female and child employment" (Burguière/Segalen/Zonabend 1996, 386). However, labor remained deeply segregated by gender: "The majority of working women performed jobs [...] similar to those that had characterized women's work for centuries" (Tilly/Scott 1978, 77). In the industrial capitalism, "The family lay at the heart of the bourgeois pattern and was defined as the place of order, the conveyor of a powerful normative model, every discrepancy from which was considered a dangerous form of social deviance [...]" (Burguière/Segalen/Zonabend 1996, 393).

Here, Foucault (1978, 120, 122pp.) offers a concrete periodization of how "the family" came into existence in its current formation through a new deployment of "sexuality", "elaborated [...] by and for the privileged classes, spread through the entire social body." His explanation famously links a range of di-

sciplinary discourses with a broader technology of power. As Christopher Chitty (2020, 151, 156pp.) notes, however, Foucault's argument is not particularly strong, and overall has a number of significant problems. Indeed, the considerations around "sexual hegemony" and "particular relations of force [...] [have] more to do with uneven processes of development in which dominant groups, who viewed sexual regulation and repression as in their own best interests, intervened in these relations of force to effect such transformations" (Chitty 2020, 172).

These complex processes forward a paradoxical situation. The family was redefined to serve national and economic priorities in the first place. For instance, the "calls for reform" that emerged during the industrialization invoked "stories of an increase in free unions [...] to illustrate the prevalence of immorality and to distinguish working-class morals from those of the upper classes" (Tilly/Scott 1978, 97); motherhood was to be imagined through a bourgeois lens, and "child rearing was becoming a national duty, not just a moral one" (Davin 1997). This era also marked the end of the "transition from a formerly homosocial world to a modern heterosexual culture" (Tin 2012). However, the institution of the family has been, at times, extensively weakened – an "uneven process of development" (Chitty 2020) connected to the emergence of modern feminism or queer communities (D'Emilio 1983; Offen 2000).

The modern state has always been a sexual state. Chitty (2020, 172) shows that at "certain points in history, such transformations of the [sexuality of the] human nature were central to the forces of production and to certain objectives of statecraft." As early industrial capitalism needed low wages and expropriation in order to bloom from blood, so capitalism supported by the modern state and its nationalism needed heterosexism to shape the family, its patterns of care and labour, and racial symbolic figuration (Sremac/Ganzevoort 2015; Fraser 2017; Nguyen 2023). "The conjuncture of heterosexist ideology and practice is inextricable from the centralization of political authority/coercive power that we call state-making" (Peterson 1999).

The modern state has always been a colonial state. As Harsha Walia (2013) points out, "The constant imagining of the nation-state [...] is best understood within the context of border imperialism and its linkages to the incessant violences of both global racialized empire and the transnational circulation of capital." As the origins of the modern capitalism and state were dependent on the exploitation of indigenous populations and the institutionalization of slavery and race, so its contemporary versions in the Global North are dependent on the continual production of bordering, race, and illegality in order to reproduce both its imaginary existence and its "cheap labour" (Drucilla 2012; Giametta 2017). The

modern state has always fed off the precarity produced by feminisation and coloniality (Gutiérrez-Rodríguez 2014).

The monogamous system: a theoretical excess, and the politics of care

Up until this point, we have delved into the RJ framework and the family form as key points in understanding political projects regarding both the current reactionary internationale and its nationalist and religious anchoring. We have also highlighted some significant associations between the institution of the family, the formation of sex/gender patterns and the colonialist program. In this section, we turn our attention to the logic of this family – that is, its ordering and defining limits.

We are not the first to make this point, of course, and we have already cited some of the most recognized accounts. Since the first modern protofeminists accounts, the sexual hierarchies and injustices crystallized in institutions as marriage have been the target of thorough criticism (Groag Bell/Offen 1983; Offen 2000). In the 20th century, socialist feminists engaged in sustained debates over domestic labor and household work, particularly in discussions on the intersections between Marxism and feminism (for example Benston 1969; Dalla Costa/James 1975; Power of Women Collective 1975); more recent contributions include Jacquilyn Weeks' (2011) or Kristin Munro's (2019). These debates are significant to our research interests insofar as they acknowledge the links between feminisation and care, capitalism and social reproduction, and oppression.

However, while these analyses effectively problematize the economic and gendered dimensions of the family, they rarely address heterosexism or monogamy. Similarly, most contemporary discussions on non-monogamy tend to frame it as an individual choice or an alternative relationship model (for example Fern 2020; Arter/Bunge 2023). On the other hand, recent accounts of the politics of care tend to engage with capitalism and the family, but are typically oblivious to monogamy (Nishida 2022; Care Collective 2020; Lynch 2021; Lewis 2022). Only a few exceptions seem to examine how the Western family is shaped by structurally defined relations of race, sex/gender and capitalism (Willey 2016; Schippers 2016; Vasallo 2019; O'Brien 2019; Hybris 2023).

Indeed, from the point of view of the monogamous framework, monogamy is but a model of exclusivity. Individualists´ accounts can easily frame it as a collection of cases. What started as an effort in building a scientific description – or, as Willey (2016) put it, its "naturalization" – gets adapted into an exercise in depolitization, a mere possibility of the reality. Instead, we propose, along with the

authors cited above, a political account of "monogamy" – a conceptualization through which we can begin to make sense of it as a structuring element that organizes affective economies and social hierarchies.

In addressing this theoretical shift, Mimi Schippers (2016, 5) points out the similarities to Adrienne Rich's account of compulsory heterosexuality. Instead, we find ourselves more interested in Monique Wittig's concept of system, which inspired Brigitte Vasallo's (2019) paper. Monogamy is not merely a "compulsory" feature. "Monogamy has its own police, its own judicial and legal systems, and its own propaganda mechanisms" (Vasallo 2019). Indeed, the power of the monogamous system lays in its structuring capabilities. In this sense, we welcome Vasallo's notion of a *monogamous system* as a mode of organizing social reproduction, distributing care, and legitimazing particular relational configurations. In other words, shifting from the theoretical object of monogamy to the notion of a monogamous system allows us to understand it as its own modality of politics of care.

The monogamous system's power lies in its capacity to define both the possibilities of relational life and the ideological frameworks that sanction these possibilities. It operates through two primary mechanisms: (1) structuring relational norms and (2) enforcing these norms through ideological and institutional means. While these processes are often conflated with the institution of the family, we suggest that the monogamous system extends beyond the analytical concept of the family unit, effectively functioning as a theoretical-practical excess that generates a broader socialepistemological order.

The family has historically been the epicenter of European colonial and imperialist monogamy – a formation predicated on whiteness, heteronormativity, and able-bodied reproductive futurism. However, the seismic waves of monogamy break across all human spheres, permeating their very nature. Amorous exclusivity, for instance, is a social norm *and also* a collective mystique, which prescribes and absolutizes the relational hierarchy that structures the flows of care and intimacy – turning sexuality and love into regulated and mandatory forms of exchange and helping immediatize specific gender relations. This logic also informs homosocial bonds, prescribing acceptable forms of affection while excluding others.

The "monogamous framework," Vasallo (2018, 80) claims, "is based on an ethics of justice rather than an ethics of care." Non-monogamous relationships, she points out, "are sometimes thought of in terms of a justice of equivalence," of "symmetry" of care, even if there can't be any "symmetry of needs." To reconceptualize this idea, focus should be put on *care itself* – its ordering, flows and

patterns: the monogamous system's logic itself predicates a certain *distribution of care* structurally defined by social class, gender, race, sexuality or ability.
Note that we don't confront the concept of the monogamous system with the notion of "polyamory", as other authors do (Richards 2010; Song 2012). This would, in our view, constrain it to little more than a superficial definition ("having more than one intimate relationship simultaneously") and suspend its political potential. We propose that non-monogamy is not a matter of analytical definition, as Zachary Biondi (2023) suggests. Rather, we follow our exploration of monogamy by understanding non-monogamies as a political question regarding care: non-monogamies codify the care flows that run through the centre of the forms of social reproduction that reach beyond the institution of the family.

If gender, as Gabriel (2020) adds to Haraway and Harvey's comments (Nature, Politics… 1995), is a strategy of capital accumulation, we would add that nonmonogamies formulate strategies of redistribution of care, yet a form of organized resistance; and, insofar as they emerge from relational and existential spaces produced and constrained by our class positions within the capitalist mode of production, they make up an immanent exercise in a practical critique, a bet for a dignified daily life that is neither definitive nor perfectly definable. An *adage* against ableism and a debilitating capitalism: "From each according to their ability, to each according to their needs" (Marx/Engels 1976, 87).

Trans and queer non-monomgamous care as an alternate reproductive politics

Non-monogamies' politics of care takes its shape and meaning in a specific social *milieu*. Kathleen Lynch (2021) describes the role that capitalism and gender play in this context; we have emphasized the role of the family form as a vector of social normativity, as well as its ordering in terms of race and sexuality. Although in other words, the RJ movement points out the significance of social reproduction processes, as noted in our introduction. In this context, queer and trans lives, excluded from normative accounts of life, have blossomed as reproducers of "alternative economies of social belonging" (Willey 2016, 74), or strategies of redistribution of care (Santana/Galdino/Araújo 2024; Closson et al. 2024).

While Easton and Hardy (1997, 51) list transgender communities as an "ancestor and antecedent" to non-monogamy, trans Marxist authors such as Jules Joanne Gleeson, Nat Raha or Kay Gabriel highlight the locus of social reproduc-

tion from a queer and transsexual perspective. In this regard, Nat Raha (2020) points out that "to formulate a queer and trans social reproduction requires expanding the concept of social reproduction to make legible the caring labour that enables and maintains queer and trans people and lives." We would add that, when conceptualizing RJ, social reproduction cannot be set aside (Laslett/Brenner, 1989) – that any form of reproduction has to make for itself an account of the possible terms of the economy of distribution and redistribution of care it allows for and fosters.

These forms of communication *do not* constitute an absolute futurity, a paradigm of an ideal economy of social mediation. Certainly, because they are built within the narrow constrains of capital, gender, race, and ability, meaning that they are a product of this marginalised status – and not least because transgender and queer communities, being a social product, also face important disparities and informal forms of segregation. But, as precarious as they may be, queer and trans non-monogamous formations offer an exercise in affirmation of life through the redistribution of care. While capitalism requires for everything to be a commodifiable and privatizable resource, it nonetheless "depends on social-reproductive activities external to it" (Fraser 2017, 23). Queer and trans networks of care illuminate and alternate possibility by enacting forms of mutual aid and collective survival.

Thus, considering RJ without engaging with the politics of care beyond the family form, limits its transformative potential. If a broadened understanding of RJ accounts for the material conditions under which care circulates, is organized, and is distributed, then it should account for non-monogamous efforts of redistributing care. These do not simply pose an alternative ethics of intimacy. In shaping alternate politics of care, they also challenge the structural logic that ties it to property and the state. To take them seriously means to take seriously the question of who can access care, how, and on what terms.

Data Availability Statement

All research material collected is publicly available under the restrictions that the pertinent Copyright holders have seen fit to make use of. No additional data was gathered or created aside from this very article.

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