

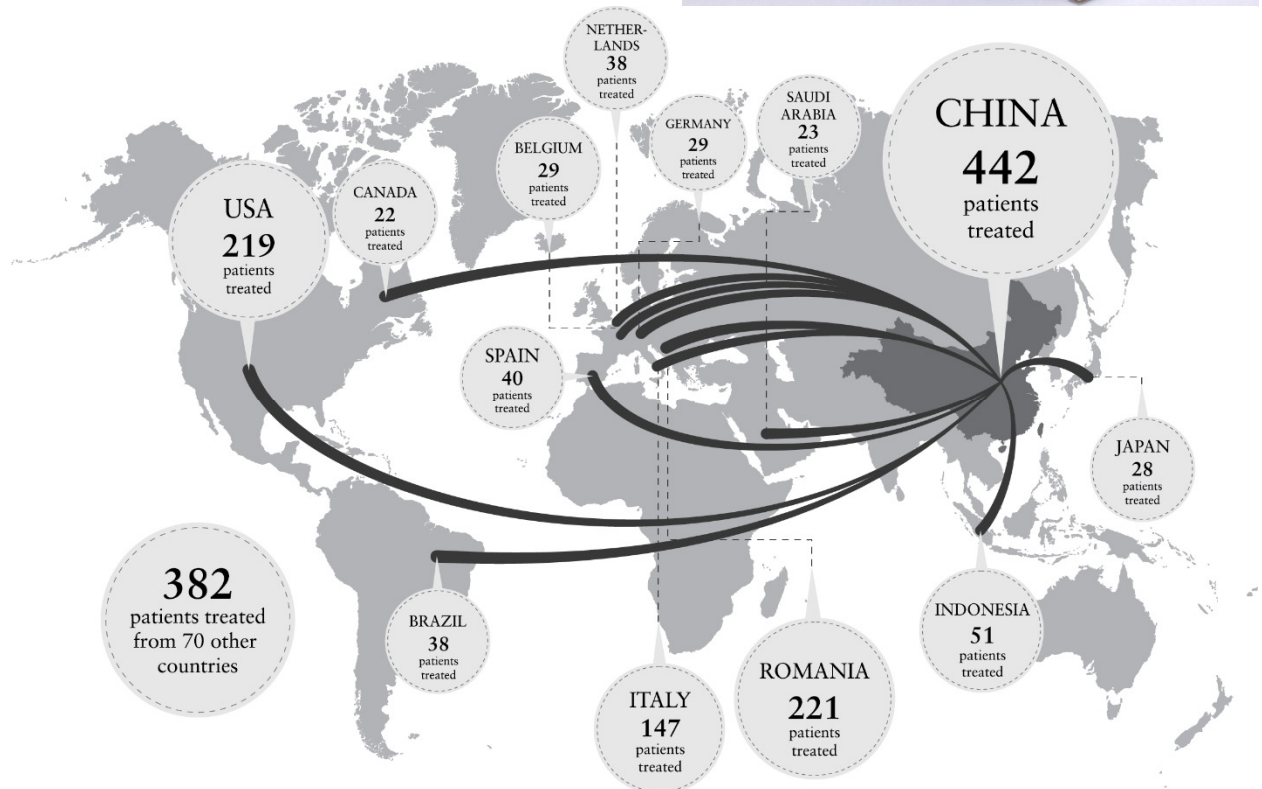
BIOMEDICAL ODYSSEYS

Fetal Cell Experiments from Cyberspace to China

by PRISCILLA SONG

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Thousands of people from more than eighty countries have journeyed to China since 2001 to undergo fetal cell transplantation. In a world in which technologies and risks are moving faster than our ethics and laws can keep pace, people grappling with paralysis and neurodegenerative disorders have ignored the warnings of doctors and scientists back home to stake their futures on a Chinese experiment. *Biomedical Odysseys* is an ethnographic account of why and how they have entrusted their lives to Chinese neurosurgeons operating at the cutting edge of regenerative medicine. Priscilla Song shows how cutting edge medicine is not just about the latest advances in biomedical science, but also encompasses virtual transformations in online patient activism, embodied experiences of surgical intervention, and borderline experiments in health care bureaucracy occurring at the limits of ethics and legality. Based on a decade of ethnographic research in transnational hospital wards, laboratories, and online patient discussion forums, *Biomedical Odysseys* illuminates how poignant journeys for fetal cell cures become entangled in complex circuits of digital mediation, entrepreneurial frameworks of post-socialist medicine, and fraught debates about the ethics and epistemology of clinical experimentation.



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