



“We have to separate so we can be together again”: Eritrean mothers’ gendered racialisation and family separation within the Israeli and UK asylum regimes

Laurie Lijnders

To cite this article: Laurie Lijnders (2022): “We have to separate so we can be together again”: Eritrean mothers’ gendered racialisation and family separation within the Israeli and UK asylum regimes, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, DOI: [10.1080/01419870.2022.2099748](https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2022.2099748)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2022.2099748>



© 2022 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group



Published online: 22 Jul 2022.



[Submit your article to this journal](#)



Article views: 107



[View related articles](#)



[View Crossmark data](#)



Citing articles: 1 [View citing articles](#)

SPECIAL ISSUE: MOTHERING PRACTICES IN TIMES OF LEGAL PRECARIETY: ACTIVISM, CARE, AND RESISTANCE ACROSS BORDERS



“We have to separate so we can be together again”: Eritrean mothers’ gendered racialisation and family separation within the Israeli and UK asylum regimes

Laurie Lijnders

Centre for Gender Studies, SOAS University of London, London, United Kingdom

ABSTRACT

This article explores how two asylum-seeking women from Eritrea attempt to secure safety and legal status for their children – born and unborn – and themselves by leaving them behind in the settler colonial state of Israel and taking on forged Ethiopian Israeli identities to travel to the UK to facilitate a process of family reunification. Situating the Israeli asylum regime in the settler colonial state and drawing on multi-sited ethnographic research collected between 2016–2018 in Israel and the UK, the article argues that by engaging in acts of refusing militarised border regimes, migration enforcement, and their racialised orderings, the women shape a future for themselves and their children. The article then sheds light on the women’s experience of waiting while faced with protracted uncertainty and separation from their children. It also analyses how gendered and racialised legal precarity and motherhood are experienced.

ARTICLE HISTORY Received 14 July 2021; Accepted 30 June 2022

KEYWORDS Gendered racialisation; forced migration; mothering practices; family separation; temporality; settler colonialism

Introduction: family separation as a strategy for togetherness

“My son is finally here”, Alem proclaimed proudly and joyfully over the phone. After several years of waiting for refugee status, which enabled her to apply for family reunification, her son finally joined her in the UK from Israel-occupied Palestine¹, and their physical separation ended. Her happiness radiated through the phone as she told me about their emotional reunion at the airport. Alem had left her son with her ex-husband in Tel Aviv in 2015,

CONTACT Laurie Lijnders 618850@soas.ac.uk SOAS, Gender Studies, London, WC1H 0XG, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

© 2022 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

after having lived in Israel for several years as an asylum seeker. Tired of waiting for policies to change for the asylum-seeking community in Israel, she took matters into her own hands. Alem, born in Eritrea to Eritrean parents, did not have any regular options to move across the borders of the racialised global migration regime. As her legal precarity included the absence of refugee status (Raijman 2017, 3) and a lack of access to a travel document or passport, Alem, like many asylum seekers and refugees around the world, recruited a people smuggler (Bloch, Sigona, and Zetter 2011, 1292; Khosravi 2010, 61; Zijlstra and van Liempt 2017, 182). Alem left for the UK with a forged identity document of a Jewish Ethiopian Israeli woman intending to apply for asylum and facilitate a family reunification process with her son. As such, Alem took on the gendered and racialised identity of an Ethiopian Israeli woman, close to her Eritrean nationality, and circumvented global migration regimes. This, in contrast with her legal identity as an Eritrean non-Jewish asylum seeker, emphasises the illogic of belonging and its effect on mobility. Authors have widely documented refugees' struggles over borders and the political orders these protect (Belloni 2019, 101; De Genova, Mezzadra, and Pickles 2015; Massa 2020, 264). Massa (2020, 262) argues that borders are not only obstacles but also can be used as resources for mobility. These uses, Massa shows, are not merely unlawful but activities entangled in complex social, emotional and political worlds and moral economies. Alem felt ethically and morally responsible for her son, not militarised borders and the governments protecting these. As Belloni (2019) argues, in the context of smuggler's services and transnational marriages, Eritrean refugees feel accountable to their families and the wider community rather than those managing the global apartheid structures (102). Alem was never concerned with breaking the laws of these regimes but rather with creating a stable and safe future for herself and her child. Once she entered the UK by air, Alem destroyed her forged identity document and applied for asylum – returning to her identity as an Eritrean asylum seeker – a process that took over two years to complete.

Alem explained her motivation to leave Israel from the perspective of her mothering responsibilities. She acted in the present by using irregular means and separating from her son to radically alter her possibilities for a shared and secure future. Alem believed that the UK would be a place with a supportive asylum system where she could find legal security and settlement for herself and her children. As has been documented by Madziva and Zontini (2012) in the context of Zimbabwean asylum-seeking mothers in the UK, Alem, too, had high hopes that it would not take long to be reunited with her son. In reality, Alem experienced additional legal precarity based on her gender and racial identity, insecurity, prolonged separation from her son, and exposure to the UK asylum regime. This enforced legal precarity impacted her mothering practices as her ability to reunite with her son was dependent

on receiving refugee status. Alem ended up struggling for refugee status in the UK and mothering her son transnationally for nearly three years. Her legal precarity was not only prolonged but “migrated” with her and took on a new shape in her changed context of asylum. Applying for refugee status can therefore be understood as a pursuit of and opportunity for, but also (a temporary) hindrance to familial closeness/togetherness.

At the centre of this article are the biographical narratives and lived experiences of two non-Jewish, asylum-seeking women from Eritrea: Alem and Fatima², and their mothering practices and family reunification strategies. Alem and Fatima decided to separate from their children for unknown periods to secure refugee status in the UK and enable a family reunification process.³ The article outlines the women’s gendered and racialised experiences and strategies of engaging in irregular movement with forged Ethiopian Israeli documents and identities to circumvent hostile border regimes (cf. Grabska 2020, 31). To gain a deeper understanding of the racist border regimes women evaded, I contextualise the Israeli asylum regime within the settler colonial state and its accompanying racialisation, violence, and elimination processes. The adoption of Jewish Ethiopian Israeli identities by Eritrean non-Jewish asylum seekers exposes hierarchies of racialisation in the settler colonial state at the intersection of religion, ethnicity, and asylum status; a complex, intersectional approach to develop an understanding of the gendered racialised legal precarity Eritrean women, who are mothers, experience in Israel and the UK.

The article focuses on the women’s dreams, hopes, and struggles for “*mewtsie mangedi*” or “getting out” of Israel. The women and their children show what Madziva and Zontini (2012) and others have called “family resilience”. Despite their separation, they continued their relationship with their children and (ex)spouse by focusing on the common purpose of being reunited. I mobilise academic debates on (transnational) motherhood, legal precarity, temporality and gendered racialisation to analyse the women’s resourcefulness, creativity, imagination, and agency. Without losing sight of how the women and their children were aggressed and harmed by these national and global asylum and border regimes, I explore the women’s search for alternatives to the restrictive and violent asylum systems in which their mothering practices, movements, and choices were monitored and controlled. Ultimately, the article is concerned with resilience, human creativity, and women’s ability to navigate oppressing structures. The mothering practices of asylum seekers are a multi-layered and insightful phenomenon to explore legal precarity and the present and future contradictions and possibilities. Mothers focus not only on their own but also on their children’s future and their search to manoeuvre themselves towards an envisioned trajectory (Vigh 2009) of a stable future and a reunion with their children and/or spouse. I hope to contribute to a growing body of literature

understanding transnational motherhood in contexts of forced migration and asylum regimes (Kofman 2004; Madziva and Zontini 2012; Shobiye and Parker 2022). Raising children transnationally – after decades of colonialism, war, and an ongoing dictatorial regime – is common for Eritrean mothers in the wider Eritrean diaspora. Many left children behind with grandparents when fleeing Eritrea. Numerous mothers in Israel maintain familial relations with their children transnationally. Family reunification is not an option due to legal precarity in Israel and Eritrea's heavily policed citizenship and border regime. Therefore, women only have the opportunity to reunite with their children through irregular means, resettlement, and sponsorship programs (Belloni 2019). However, resettlement, family reunification and sponsorship processes often take time, are capped, and are only available to a lucky few. Rather than waiting for official opportunities, Alem and Fatima used irregular means of movement. The experiences of Alem and Fatima are a particular context through which to understand transnational mothering, as their children were born in one context of asylum in Israel. The women then separated from their children to obtain a better future for their families by applying for asylum in the UK.

The article first sets out the ethnographic methodology used. It then explores hierarchies of racialisation in the settler colonial state of Israel, followed by a brief overview of the Israeli asylum regime and the manifold ways Eritrean mothers engage with it. Then, through the narratives and experiences of Alem and Fatima, the article explores how living with legal precarity affects women's intimate bonds to the children they care for, transforms how women do family, and motivates women to engage in various forms of resistance. By doing so, the article sheds light on the experience of waiting while faced with protracted uncertainty and separation from their children. It analyses how gendered and racialised legal precarity and motherhood are experienced.

Tracing migration over time, place and legal status: A multi-sited Ethnography of motherhood

The women shared their life stories and experiences with me during my part-time PhD studies at SOAS, for which I engaged in multi-sited ethnography in Israel, the UK and Canada between September 2016 and September 2018. The narratives of Alem and Fatima are part of broader research comprised of 40 interviews with Eritrean and Sudanese asylum-seeking women and ten staff members of refugee support organisations in Israel, the UK, and Canada. By following the lives of these two women over an extended period and in several locations – Israel and the UK – their gendered and racialised experiences of motherhood can be analysed in their temporal and spatial dimensions (Grabska 2020). The article zooms in on Alem and

Fatima to offer a nuanced, intimate, and in-depth insight into the women's experiences and predicaments of legal precarity, militarised border regimes, and how these influence their mothering practices.

Interviews were part of broader research under which I also collected ethnographic observations in the three countries in both English and Tigrinya. I conducted research in different public and private contexts in all three research contexts, including a creative and therapeutic refugee women collective in Tel Aviv, two grassroots Eritrean women-led organisations, one in Tel Aviv and the other in the UK, and the women's homes. All except one of the women interviewed were biological mothers from diverse ethnic, religious, educational and class backgrounds. Being present in everyday aspects of the women's lives allowed me to get a deep sense of their emotions, worries, and aspirations and how they were directly and indirectly forged by their contact with Israeli government authorities and host communities. Many of the insights and knowledge I gained were not obtained in formal interviews but rather in everyday encounters with these women as they went about their lives and tasks, cooking food, caring for their children, dropping their children off at nursery or school, attending community centres and while engaging in religious and celebratory activities such as baptisms and weddings and protests.

As Erel, Reynolds, and Kaptani (2018, 60) argue, as researchers, we are also positioned within the "social realities of racialised citizenship". I am a non-Jewish migrant in Israel and a Dutch-European migrant in the UK. I experienced immigration processes through my husband's quest to secure status as an Eritrean asylum seeker and for myself and my daughter going through the EU settlement process to obtain legal status in the UK in the light of Brexit. However, my experiences with migration bureaucracies were very different as a White European migrant with a stable country to return to. As a white researcher holding a higher education degree, I am positioned as advantaged in social class and educational terms. At the same time, I shared motherhood with the interlocutors of my research. Not only did being a mother influence my interactions with my interlocutors, but more explicitly, being the mother of a mixed Eritrean-Dutch heritage daughter and the wife of a former Eritrean asylum seeker in Tel Aviv brought us closer. My daughter was present for all the interviews, and so was the daughter of Fatima.

Hierarchies of racialisation: using Ethiopian Israeli identity documents

Pretending to be Ethiopian Israeli women, Alem and Fatima had to take on a different identity or change parts of their identity to increase the chances of their irregular migration succeeding (cf. Khosravi 2010, 63). Literature in

forced migration studies has exposed how papers are adapted, changed and creatively redefined (Khosravi 2010). In the case of Eritrean refugees in the Northern region of Ethiopia, despite being in a different context, Massa (2020, 262) has shown how the social and cultural similarities between Northern Ethiopia and Southern Eritrea provide people with the opportunity to play around with legal categories. Eritrea gained independence from Ethiopia in 1991 after a three-decade war for independence (Kibreab 2013), resulting in historical cultural, familial, and ethnic connections between Eritreans and Ethiopians (Treiber 2013; Massa 2020). The women used these similarities, relationships, and physical likeness to Ethiopian Israeli women to their advantage when being questioned by migration officials at Israel's Ben Gurion Airport. The women also used their knowledge of Hebrew, often acquired through the interaction with Israeli colleagues at work or language courses offered by Refugee support organisations.

The women all dressed differently from how they would typically dress to create a likeness to Ethiopian Israeli women; this included one of the women piercing and tattooing her body. Grabska (2020, 28) has documented how young Eritrean girls alter their dress to fit into predominantly Muslim society in Sudan to remain invisible and avoid arrest. Fatima, a practising Muslim woman who typically covered her hair in public, arrived at the airport uncovered as she understood that this would increase her chances of succeeding. Adopting the identity of a Jewish Ethiopian Israeli woman, she had to hide her religious identity. How racialised migration control intersects with gender becomes clear through Fatima's experience of having to hide the fact that she was six months pregnant. She feared that her forged identity would be uncovered if migration authorities at the airport found out that she was pregnant, and to avoid this dressed in clothes that covered up her growing belly.

Understanding Gendered Racialisation of Non-Jewish Asylum Seekers within the Settler Colonial State

Despite widespread scholarly framing of Israel as a settler colonial state (Zinngrabe 2019; Sabbagh-Khoury 2015) and increasing scholarly attention directed towards the experiences of asylum seekers in Israel (Ravid 2021; Paz 2011; Kritzman-Amir 2009), there is an absence of situating the Israeli asylum regime in connection to the settler colonial state (but see Ravid 2022; Brown 2017 in the context of migrants). To fill this niche, the article seeks to develop an understanding of the gendered and racialised experiences of Eritrean asylum-seeking women contextualised in the settler colonial state of Israel. Scholars have focused on the Jewish history of persecution on ethnic and religious grounds (Kalir 2015, 580; Yaron, Hashimshony-Yaffe, and Campbell 2013, 145) and the "we were all once refugees" narrative, erasing

that during and after the Nakba, 750,000 Palestinians were both expelled and internally displaced (Pappe 2006; Lentin and Moreo 2015, 897), with more than 7.5 million Palestinian refugees around the world (Sayej 2018). Anteby-Yemini (2017, 7) argues that the increasing visibility of non-Jewish asylum seekers from East and West Africa “challenges both the territorial borders and the political boundaries of the ethnocratic Israeli regime and raises new issues concerning identity, race, and migrant categories”. Black, non-Jewish people, especially women, seeking asylum are seen as a threat to the Jewish identity and character of the settler colonial state (Paz 2011, 9; Yaron, Hashimshony-Yaffe, and Campbell 2013, 147; Kalir 2015, 582), not only due to their religion – Muslim or Christian – but also because of their ethnic background and the colour of their skin. In addition, as women with childbearing capacities, the fertility and reproduction of women seeking asylum pose a demographic threat to the nation (Luibhéid 2002, 137; Khosravi 2010, 119 in other contexts). As Kanaaneh (2002) has argued, in the context of Palestinians in Israel, the state fears a demographic “time-bomb”, where its lower birth rate will result in a lower Jewish to Palestinian ratio. Non-Jewish Black asylum seekers are similarly a threat to the demographics of Israel. For this reason, Eritrean children are not counted in the number of asylum seekers in Israel; legally, they do not exist until they reach the age of 18, when they receive the same status and temporary protection visa as their parents.

How settler colonialism links in with infrastructures of apartheid and occupation are used for the asylum regime becomes particularly pertinent when looking at how asylum-seeking women (and men) are referred to as and criminalised under the Anti-Infiltration law as “infiltrators” (*mistanením*) (Yaron, Hashimshony-Yaffe, and Campbell 2013, 145). The term “infiltrators” and the Anti-Infiltration law were used in the 1950s to describe and criminalise Palestinians attempting to return to the lands they had been expelled from in the 1948 Nakba (Lentin 2018, 115; Willen 2018, 20). Racialisation, legal exclusion, and state violence have long shaped Israel’s treatment of Palestinians (Willen 2018, 119). This article argues that the settler colonial state of Israel does not only operate through the elimination of Palestinians but also the subordination of “racialised outsiders, like asylum seekers from East and West Africa, and migrant labourers based on their phenotypical distinctiveness from the European Jewish population” (Brown 2017, 45). In addition, there is a complex intra-Jewish racial order, with Ethiopian Jewish people at the bottom of the hierarchy due to racism, followed by Mizrahi Jews from the Middle East. Ethiopian Jewish migrants arrived in Israel – starting with the 1984–5 migration (Anteby-Yemini 2017, 15; Mizrahi and Zawdu 2012). Ethiopian Israelis are often portrayed as a poor, illiterate, and marginalised group subject to discrimination and racism (Anteby-Yemini 2017, 15). Despite passing as Ethiopian Israeli citizens, the women faced interrogation,

control, and racism at the border in Israel and the UK due to racist border control processes. Within this racialised hierarchy, Israel excludes non-Jewish asylum seekers like Alem and Fatima, who are racialised as the “other,” or new “national abjects” (Willen 2018, 20), with the Palestinians and other enemy nationals facing maximum exclusion” (Kritzman-Amir 2009, 603) as the country’s “real” Others (Willen 2018, 20).

The Israeli asylum regime

In Israel’s racialised hierarchy of settler colonial othering (cf. Willen 2018), non-Jewish asylum seekers, such as Alem, experienced intersectional oppression and violence based on gender, race, class and social and legal status. As an asylum seeker, Alem lived with legal and social precarity, faced institutional and everyday racism, and had no hope for acquiring security, stability and legal status for herself and her son. Her legal precarity structured not only her own experience but also set in motion “a concatenation of shared vulnerabilities and intimate interdependencies between family members” (cf. Horton 2009), profoundly affecting her child, care work, relationship with her partner, and the wider community. These racialised and gendered harms in Israel should be understood within broader trajectories of violence, starting from her experiences in the authoritarian state of Eritrea before fleeing the country, along the migration route – in refugee camps and urban areas – and experiences in Sudan and Egypt of torture, sexual violence, extortion and imprisonment in the Sinai desert (Gebreyesus et al. 2017; Ghebrezghiabher and Motzafi-Haller 2015, 584; van Reisen, Rijken, and Estefanos 2012).

Despite asylum seekers arriving via the border with Egypt from Sudan and Eritrea since the early 2000s, up to date, Israel has not put in place coherent national asylum policies that address the rights of asylum seekers and refugees residing inside its borders, and nor are there gender-sensitive guidelines (Ghebrezghiabher and Motzafi-Haller 2015, 573). Instead, asylum seekers from Eritrea (and Sudan) are regulated under a collective non-removal policy. Despite being lived and felt differently by every individual, the asylum policy described below – as seen through the eyes of Alem – applies to asylum seekers for Eritrea and Sudan all the same. Alem could not imagine creating a different reality for herself and her son under the collective non-removal policy, which offered them only temporary protection from deportation and little hope of regularising her and her son’s status from asylum seeker to recognised refugee. Like other Eritrean asylum seekers, Alem experienced limited access to state services and received no formal institutional support during and after her arrival (Eritrean Women’s Community Centre 2013; Gebreyesus, Sultan, and Ghebrezghiabher 2018, 2). Alem’s legal precariousness in her employment impacted her access to

a stable income and insurance for herself and her son and exposed her to exploitation and abuse (Gebreyesus, Sultan, and Ghebrezghiabher 2018, 5). Women, like Alem, often work in informal economies within racialised sectors, are paid low pay, and are exploited. Alem did not have the resources to secure consistent food and housing for herself and her son. As a result, she was pushed into state-induced poverty, including poor housing. Alem was excluded from public health insurance and had restricted access to health and welfare services, except in an emergency, like the birth of her child. As her child was born premature and needed extra care and time in the hospital, she was left with a high medical bill that she could not pay. Alem and her son relied on humanitarian and government-run clinics, like Physicians for Human Rights, based in Tel Aviv only (Gebreyesus et al. 2017, 257). Like other asylum-seeking children in Tel Aviv, Alem's son was educated in a segregated school in South Tel Aviv, where only children of asylum seekers and migrants are educated away from Israeli children living in the neighbourhood. Alem's refugee status was precarious under a non-transparent, biased and arbitrary Refugee Status Determination (RSD) system. Since it has made it possible to apply for refugee status at the end of 2013, 19 Eritreans and one Sudanese have been granted refugee status; this equals a recognition rate of 0.06 per cent. Over 99 per cent of claims have been rejected, terminated or undecided (HIAS 2020). Israel's motivation to safeguard its Jewish majority population saw the erection of a high-security fence in 2012 along the Egyptian border; since then, few asylum seekers have been able to cross into Israel (Rajjman 2017, 2). At the end of 2020, Eritreans made up 71 per cent of Israel's approximately 31,000 asylum seekers (Ravid 2021), children not included. Of this group, around 15 per cent are women (EWCC 2013).

Through the experiences of Alem, how can we then understand legal precarity in the context of Israel's asylum regime? In the context of forced migration, Georgina Ramsay (2020, 17) understands precarity as a general state of protracted instability that captures the politico-economic forces that create uncertainty (16–17). In the case of Alem, the Israeli asylum regime. Alem's experiences of temporality in the settler colonial state situated her "perpetually in crisis, indefinite indeterminacy, unable to project themselves into a certain or stable future" (13). Under the Israeli asylum regime, Alem could not "project action into a predictable future and sense of stability" (16). The lack of coherent and constantly changing policies took away Alem's capacity to plan her life long-term and caused great distress. Yet, as anthropologists have pointed out, refugees and asylum seekers attempt to forge futures of possibility despite their often-depleted present (Fassin 2012; Feldman 2018; Ramsay 2020, 7). I will now zoom in on Alem and Fatima's strategies for mothering transnationally.

Alem: “Let me not be selfish” – negotiating family separations

Alem is a woman in her twenties from Eritrea. She has an eight-year-old son who was born in Israel. She married soon after arriving in Israel to ensure a form of support and protection she did not receive through the Israeli asylum regime (see also Ghebrezghiabher and Motzafi-Haller 2015, 19). Alem explained this to me:

“I met my husband there. I wasn’t ready to marry him, but I didn’t have a choice. I needed somewhere to stay. So, I married him, and we had a baby together. Like, I was a child by myself, and suddenly I had a child. I was 19. [...] I will never choose anything that is going on in my life except my son. He came without my choice, but I am happy about that one. [...] The only good thing that happened to me was my son. But I am sad that he has the same life I had. I feel I am not a good mother. I did not provide him what every child needs.”

Intimate relations, marriage, and motherhood – arising from gendered expectations of marriage – became a strategy for survival for many newly arrived asylum-seeking women from Eritrea in Israel (cf. Gebreyesus, Sultan, and Ghebrezghiabher 2018, 4). Engaging in marriage was not without risk and exposed Alem to intimate partner violence (cf. Ghebrezghiabher and Motzafi-Haller 2015, 588; EWCC 2013). As such, Alem struggled not only against the asylum policies that caused legal precarity in the settler colonial state but also the patriarchal Eritrean society. When Alem’s son was nine months old, they fled her abusive husband after he threatened to kill her. She feared losing her life at his hands when femicide was widespread among Eritrean women in Israel.⁴

When Alem had the opportunity to leave for the UK, she left her son with her abusive ex-husband as she did not have the financial means for her son to accompany her. She also feared the risks of taking him, worried this would decrease their chance of passing airport security. Again, Alem had to choose between two future-limiting situations: raising her son in Israel or temporarily separating from him to raise him in the UK. By the time Alem left Israel, her son was three years old:

“I just made a calculation. Is it ok being there without papers and working these hours and not seeing my son for years, and he will be a teenager, 18 years, and he would not know who I am? He will say: I don’t know you; who are you? And I don’t know what person he will become if he doesn’t grow up with the love and passion of his parents. Maybe the life could lead him in the wrong way, and he will blame me for not being there for him. That is, if we would have stayed in Israel. And then I said, if I risk my life, for one-two years I will not be with him and come here, but after I will be with him, provide him with a good life, teach him how to be a good man. So, I was thinking, let me not be selfish.”

Alem's words show the different layers that motivated her decision to leave her son behind. She referred to her decision "as making a calculation". Alem exchanged waiting for the asylum regime in Israel to change for her benefit, waiting for refugee status to be reunited with her child. "Temporal stuckness" (Khosravi 2021, 10) or waiting is a part of legal precarity and an instrument used by asylum regimes through a hierarchical interwoven complex of gender, race, and class". Alem prioritised her child's needs to grow up with security and her wish to give him a life of love and passion over her need to be with him. Yet, the decision left her with ever-present feelings of guilt, anxiety, and stress (see also Suerbaum 2022; Chakkour and de Koning 2022; Tschalaer 2022). Waiting to mother her child physically again was an emotional state filled with "boredom, despair, anxiety and restlessness, but also anticipation and hope" (Khosravi 2021, 10). Alem pointed out that women like her, who have left their children in Israel to find a more secure life, are seen as "bad mothers". She said: "*I know the first thing people will say is she threw her son.*" Kirmayer (2003 in Horton 2009) calls this a "failure of imagination".

By leaving their children in the care of their (ex)husbands, the women also challenged traditional morals of motherhood and gendered roles (see also Madziva and Zontini 2012). Whereas children left behind in Eritrea are often cared for by grandmothers and other female relatives, the women did not have female relatives in Israel, and as such, they had no choice but to leave their children in the care of their (ex)husbands. Alem stood firm in her decision and believed it would be best for her son in the long run, and she tried not to be influenced by other people's opinions. To minimise this, she did not tell her friends and colleagues in the UK that she had a son – until he joined her – as she believed they would not understand her decision. During their separation, Alem also stayed away from the Eritrean community in the UK to avoid their negative opinions and judgmental gaze, avoid certain relationships and spaces, and anticipated the gendered social pressures and control linked to them.

When interviewing Alem in 2018 in the UK, her son was six years old. While waiting to be reunited, their mother and son bond was developed and maintained via phone or laptop. This is what Lutz and Palenga-Mollenbeck (2012) have called "Skype mothering", allowing transnational mothers a greater involvement in their families' day-to-day communications and decision-making (in Madziva and Zontini 2012, 432) by using social media. Alem says:

"I left him when he was three, yet he remembers every detail of our time together. He speaks with me every day. We call, and he speaks to me about his day, and then he says: bye, I love you, mum. We have this weird connection. Imagine he has been two years without me, he could have forgotten me, but he has not; he always gives me credit; he is the only one that gives me power."

Horton (2009) argues that transnational separations cannot be viewed solely as affecting mothers and children as isolated individuals but rather as impacting the intimately experienced bond. Family separations are lived and negotiated within the intersubjective space (Horton 2009). For Alem, this did include not only her relationship with her son but also her ex-husband. When Alem started the family reunification process, her ex-husband threatened that if she ever wanted to see her son again, she needed to include him in the application. He also regulated her access to her son and Alem's ability to mother in absentia. She was forced to pretend to be a family unit and could not expose his violence as this would endanger her reunion with her son. As such, the reunion with her son was synonymous with the reunion with her abusive ex-husband. Again, Alem had to make a lot of calculations – she had to navigate this terrain carefully and accept and overcome many challenges to reach the ultimate goal of providing a future for herself and her son in the UK. Horton (2009) has pointed out the moral ambiguity inherent in the difficult choices presented to migrant parents. As Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco (2001) have argued, migrant mothers' challenges are "Faustian bargains" that are an inherent part of the ultimate aim to provide children with better futures and opportunities. Alem's life as a mother has been fraught with making decisions to maintain her life and the security of herself and her son.

Fatima: Birthing in Detention and the temporality of mothering practices

Fatima is married and has one son born in Israel, seven years old and a daughter born in the UK. Fatima left her son in the care of her husband when she used a forged identity document belonging to an Ethiopian Israel woman to migrate to the UK in July 2016, after having lived in Israel for nearly five years. Many years later, she has been reunited with her husband and son, but when I interviewed her in 2018, she was deep in the process of enabling the reunification. Fatima was six months pregnant with her second child when she left Israel. Fatima's daughter, born in the UK, never met her father and brother in person; all their contact has been via her mother's mobile phone. Fatima says: *"It is tough to be away from my son. I speak to him on the phone, but sometimes he refuses to speak to me because he misses me so much. It is hard to imagine that my son doesn't even know his sister."*

After successfully arriving in the UK and gathering information from the asylum community, Fatima decided to attempt to travel to Canada with the same forged document. Fatima believed this would reduce the waiting time to reunite with her son and husband. Despite explaining that she was an asylum seeker, she was arrested at Heathrow airport and sentenced to one year and six months in prison for holding forged identity documents.

Fatima spent five months in an adult and young offender female prison. It was in jail that Fatima gave birth to her daughter: *"I was six months pregnant when I came from Israel [to the UK]. The rest of the pregnancy was spent in prison. We were in the mother and baby prison ward for the first month of my daughter's life. It was such a hard experience for both of us. You cannot imagine how hard it was. It was very, very difficult."* Having to give birth to her daughter in prison deeply impacted her pregnancy, delivery, and postpartum period. One month after her daughter was born, they were released on probation into National Asylum Support Service (NASS) accommodation.

Fatima was then forced to sign at an Immigration office every week with her daughter, a practice which O'Neill (2018, 85) terms "racialised practices of subjection and exclusion" in the context of female asylum seekers in the UK who must sign as part of their refugee claim. For Fatima, this process was made more problematic and dehumanising as she had to bring her daughter along as she queued – often for hours – was mistreated by Home Office officials, and feared the outcome of each visit: would she be detained again or would she be given a deportation notice? These visits interrupted Fatima and her daughter's daily lives, and rhythms made it hard to maintain a balanced structure to their week, which can cause instability and stress. Her encounter with bureaucracy left a clear mark on her day-to-day life as a mother. Fatima said: *"After I passed all these difficulties, these horrendous migration experiences, I still experience the hardship of it, to sign every week, with my child, with no help, it is ridiculous. You passed all these bad things, for nine years I did not get any rest, not back home, not when you got out, every day is difficult. When I came to the UK, I said now I will have a good life and rest, but I still don't have any."* For Fatima, the queuing and signing at the Immigration Office triggered memories of the asylum regime in Israel, where as part of her legal precarity, she had to renew her temporary protection visa every one or two months (arbitrary) without any security of being able to continue her and her husband and son's status. Fatima's quote may suggest that the asylum regime in the UK is worse than in Israel. There are comparisons; however, in Israel, the women had no prospect of being recognised as refugees. In the UK, despite having to wait for a decision on their asylum request, Fatima and Alem eventually received refugee status. In addition, they received housing and financial support and access to health services – however much this is lacking, and insufficient – which is more than the state of Israel provided them with. Yet, the separation from her child and husband made being in the UK more unbearable than living with legal precarity in Israel.

Fatima applied for refugee status while she was imprisoned. At the time of our interview in the summer of 2018, Fatima had already waited for two years to receive a response to her asylum claim. Her lawyer explained that her claim

was likely complicated by her attempt to leave the UK for Canada.⁵ What is most disturbing for Fatima about the wait is her separation from her son:

“The worst thing I am experiencing is I am separate from my son. The situation in Israel is very hard, and the separation aspect is so hard. Life in Israel isn’t easy. His dad must work long hours and has no one to look after the child when he goes to work, and it is so hard for me to have that experience, knowing how life for my son and husband is. Also, with my daughter alone is very difficult; no one is offering me any help, so life here is tough for me. [...] It is tough. I experience more stress now. You have one kid there and one kid here. Life is suffering. It is very hard to be separated”.

When I interviewed her in the summer of 2018, Fatima felt that it would be too late for her family to have a future; she could not see beyond the time/season of separation. Khosravi (2021, 14) argues that long waiting makes “life unpredictable and engenders uncertainties, generating the feeling that one is not fully in command of one’s life”. He calls this a “race against time, with a sense of being “left behind” of what is assumed to be the natural rhythm of modern life” (Khosravi 2021, 14). Waiting is a gendered process and affected Fatima’s sense and practice of care work as an essential aspect of her life. Grabska (2020, 26), in the context of Eritrean refugee women in Sudan, argues that “highlighting the gendered aspect of waiting and waitthood nuances our understanding of these concepts and underscores the association of waitthood with dominant gender norms”. Berlant (2011) developed the idea that “people commit themselves to situations of great suffering [...] only to have their time and energy extracted and to find that the promise of a future of stability is, despite their efforts, out of reach”. Waiting engendered great suffering for Fatima. Staying in the asylum process, waiting to be allowed to work and study, is combined with protracted separation and mothering.

The process of waiting, whether active or passive, is not linear and comprises sub-processes: from waiting to be released from prison, waiting to receive refugee status, waiting to have her application for family reunification approved, to waiting for her son and husband to join them. Ramsay (2020, 18) calls this the “dispossession of time and anticipated futures”. For Fatima, as a mother, this meant not only losing her own time: time to work, study and contribute to her family financially – as she was not allowed to work while awaiting refugee status. She also lost precious time with her son, seeing him grow and develop from a toddler into a child. Fatima and her daughter lost out on family time with their son/brother and husband/father. Fatima’s life during the time of separation was dominated by external forces: such as signing at the Immigration Office, living in shared refugee accommodation, and waiting for refugee status. The uncertainty of not knowing when she would be reunited with her son tore Fatima apart. Returning to Ramsay’s (2020) lens on temporality, the protracted instability that situates

Fatima in indefinite indeterminacy – by forces outside of her control – makes her unable to project herself into a particular or stable future. Grabska describes, in the context of young Eritrean adults in Sudan, how girls act upon their perceived social immobility while waiting and, in addition to that, “contribute to changing gender relations and identities by challenging established trajectories into adulthood for girls” (Grabska 2020, 33). By leaving her son in the care of her husband and travelling ahead of them, Fatima challenged gendered roles in her community. Bendixsen and Eriksen (2018) point to a transition or distinction between indeterminate, empty waiting time and focused, activity-driven waiting time in the context of irregular Palestinians in Norway. They remind us to notice that in waiting positions, when it feels like life has come to a standstill, Fatima birthed and raised her daughter and parented her son transnationally. While waiting, Fatima was actively doing things. Fatima balanced raising her daughter without the support of her husband and her community network in Israel. She sustained a strong bond with her son and husband, she got out of prison, applied for refugee status, found a lawyer to represent her, recruited her local member of parliament to intervene on her behalf with the Home Office, and connected with a refugee-led women’s organisation for support.

However, what initially was a decision to be reunited with her family sooner – the onward journey to Canada – had turned into something that would keep them separated longer:

“My life has been from prison to prison; I feel like I am in prison. Because I don’t do anything I want to do here, I am still in prison. [...] In Israel, even if you do not have a paper or are recognised by the immigration system, you can still do a lot, but without papers, you are in prison. [...] If I knew that I would experience the way I exist here, I wouldn’t even imagine or come up with the decision to come here in the first place.”

Fatima used the prison metaphor to refer to her life, again a reference to temporality. She was not just referring to her experiences of imprisonment in Israel– after crossing the border with Egypt irregularly – and the UK after being found with a forged identity document, but also the constant monitoring of her life by having to report to an Immigration Office every week. Reminiscent of the monthly renewal of her temporary protection visa in Israel, but also to life in the prison state of Eritrea (cf. Grabska 2020, 26). In addition, she referred to a feeling of being stuck – in a temporal space and time – not only in life but also in her ability to change things and mother her children the way she had imagined and experienced as a child herself. Despite successfully circumventing restrictive and racialised borders, she had not achieved the freedoms she longed for; for herself and her children. At the same time, Fatima talked about her inability to expand her family; another way time was

ticking away as she aged was her inability to have another child with her husband. This greatly concerned Fatima as she wanted three children: two boys and one girl. Yet, as long as her husband could not join her in the UK, her reproductive freedoms were restricted. What was ultimately a decision to enable a new future felt like one she should not have made at all. These feelings passed quickly after she gained refugee status, started the family reunification process, and ultimately was reunited with her family. However, at the time of the interview, Fatima wondered if it would have been better to stay in Israel.

Conclusion: circumventing global apartheid

Borders are widely understood as a method for (re)producing racialised distinctions (Holzberg, Madörin, and Pfeifer 2021). As Alem and Fatima have shown, asylum laws and regimes structure and shape (transnational) mothering practices, play a role in the choice and decision-making processes and family separations (Horton 2009) and structure the ability of people to migrate as a family and bring family members once they have received refugee status in the new country (Madziva and Zontini 2012). Belloni has framed smuggling “as a mechanism that facilitates “autonomous migration” in violation of state regulations” as a resistance practice (Belloni 2019, 104). Transforming from Eritrean asylum seeker to Ethiopian Israeli back to Eritrean asylum seeker shows us how legal precarity and borders can be circumvented by adopting legal categories different from the women’s own. Focusing on these irregular practices uncovers their radical political dimension (102) and the fiction of borders.

“We have to separate so we can be together again” is how Fatima explained her motivations for leaving her son in the care of his father for unknown periods. I have explored the gendered racialisation of the Israeli asylum regime within the racialised hierarchy of the settler colonial state, the hostile environment in the UK, and the global border regimes that regulate mobility for racialised and gendered women and restrict their rights to family life. The women created “infrastructures of possibility” for themselves and their children by circumventing border regimes with forged identity documents to make their way into spaces associated with a stable future for themselves and their children (Ramsay 2020, 18). Alem’s narrative provides an insight into her decision-making processes and the impacts these have on her intersubjective space by leaving her son behind with her ex-husband. It zooms in on the many times she had to make challenging decisions to keep him and herself safe. Leaving her son behind impacted how she was seen as a mother by family members and people in her community and, consequentially, how she saw herself. Her experience also highlighted how gendered violence in intimate relationships intersects with the

violence inherent in asylum regimes and how this impacted her ability to mother her son. Fatima's narrative explores how immigration detention is a symptom of gendered and racialised legal precarity and how family separation affected her, the daughter growing in her womb, and her son and husband left behind in Israel. Through Fatima's narrative and the conceptualisation of her life as a prison, I explored how a feeling of being stuck challenged her notion of time/temporality, especially as a mother being unable to see her son grow but also expand her family. Through the irregular onward migration strategies of two Eritrea mothers, Alem and Fatima, I have shown that by engaging in acts of refusing and subverting the global border regime, the women exposed the gendered racialisation processes of migration systems and borders, which restricted their rights to mobility and family life.

Notes

1. Throughout the article, when I write Israel, I understand it as a settler colonial state. To honour a call by academic Eman Ghanayem, I refrain from discursively coupling Palestine with Israel as it, as she argues, "connotes a relationship of power where Israel dominates the discourse".
2. At the women's request, and to protect their identities and ongoing claims for refugee status in the UK, I use fictitious names and have reduced all identifying factors to a minimum.
3. Fast forward, when writing this article, four years later, Alem and Fatima have now reunited with their children and (ex-)husband in the UK.
4. The Women's Community Centre estimated that between 2010 and 2015, 11 women were murdered by their husbands or boyfriends (Ghebrezghiabher and Motzafi-Haller 2015, 19).
5. Communication with Fatima's lawyer in July 2018.

Acknowledgements

I gratefully acknowledge the Eritrean mothers and their families in Israel and the UK, whose narratives are at the centre of this article, for sharing their experiences and helping me gain a deeper understanding of the workings of the asylum regimes intimately impacting their lives. I wish to thank my co-editor of this special issue, Magdalena Suerbaum, the contributors, and Professor Dr Bridget Anderson and Professor Dr Vanessa Grotti for their thoughtful feedback and encouragement. I also thank the blind peer reviewers for their useful feedback and Loes Lijnders, Maayan Ravid, and Adane Zawdu for their insightful comments.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Ethical approval

The research was conducted with approval from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. All interlocutors were fully informed about the purposes of this research and how their responses would be used and stored. All respondents have been anonymised and gave verbal consent to be interviewed for the purposes of this research.

ORCID

Laurie Lijnders  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9474-9423>

References

- Anteby-Yemini, Lisa. 2017. "African Asylum-Seekers in Israel: Illegalization, Incorporation and Race Relations." *Hagira* 7: 7–20.
- Belloni, M. 2019. *The Big Gamble The Migration of Eritreans to Europe*. Oakland: California University Press.
- Bendixsen, S., and T. H. Eriksen. 2018. "Time and the Other: Waiting and Hope among Irregular Migrants." In *Ethnographies of Waiting*, edited by A. Bandak and M. K. Janeja, 87–112. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Berlant, L. 2011. *Cruel Optimism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Bloch, Alice, Nando Sigona, and Roger Zetter. 2011. "Migration Routes and Strategies of Young Undocumented Migrants in England: A Qualitative Perspective." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 34 (8): 1286–1302.
- Brown, Rachel. 2017. "69 Four Years, Three Months: Migrant Caregivers in Israel/Palestine." (PhD diss.). The City University of New York.
- Chakkour, S., and A. de Koning. 2022. "Legal Precarity, Migrant Mothering and the Space of Hesitation in Paris." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. doi:10.1080/01419870.2022.2075232.
- De Genova, N., S. Mezzadra, and J. Pickles. 2015. "New Keywords: Migration and Borders." *Cultural Studies* 29 (1): 55–87.
- Erel, U., T. Reynolds, and E. Kaptani. 2018. "Migrant Mothers' Creative Interventions into Racialized Citizenship." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 41 (1): 55–72.
- Eritrean Women's Community Center. 2013. https://www.eritreanwomenscenter.org/_files/ugd/7d7875_a7f1d8c4f3b2cb56ed72e7abe2e5f4f1.pdf.
- Fassin, D. 2012. *Humanitarian Reason: A Moral History of the Present*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Feldman, I. 2018. *Life Lived in Relief: Humanitarian Predicaments and Palestinian Refugee Politics*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Gebreyesus, T., Z. Sultan, and H. M. Ghebrezghiabher. 2018. "Life on the Margins: The Experiences of Sexual Violence and Exploitation among Eritrean Asylum-Seeking Women in Israel." *BMC Women's Health* 18 (135): 1–11.
- Gebreyesus, Tsega, Nora Gottlieb, Zebib Sultan, Habtom Mehari Ghebrezghiabher, Wietse Tol, Peter J. Winch, Nadav Davidovitch, and Pamela J. Surkan. 2017. "Barriers to Contraceptive Careseeking: The Experience of Eritrean Asylum-seeking Women in Israel." *Ethnicity & Health* 25 (2): 255–272.

- Ghebregziabher, Habtom M., and Pnina Motzafi-Haller. 2015. "Eritrean Women Asylum Seekers in Israel: From a Politics of Rescue to Feminist Accountability." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 28 (4): 570–594.
- Grabska, K. 2020. "'Wasting Time': Migratory Trajectories of Adolescence among Eritrean Refugee Girls in Khartoum." *Critical African Studies* 12 (1): 22–36.
- HIAS. 2020. "The Numbers Speak for Themselves: The Israeli Asylum Process." <https://hias.org.il/numbersreport/>.
- Holzberg, Billy, Anouk Madörin, and Michelle Pfeifer. 2021. "The Sexual Politics of Border Control: An Introduction." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 44 (9): 1485–1506.
- Horton, Sarah. 2009. "A Mother's Heart is Weighed Down with Stones: A Phenomenological Approach to the Experience of Transnational Motherhood." *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry* 33 (1): 21–40.
- Kalir, Barak. 2015. "The Jewish State of Anxiety: Between Moral Obligation and Fearism in the Treatment of African Asylum Seekers in Israel." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 41 (4): 580–598.
- Kanaaneh, Rhoda Ann. 2002. *Birthing the Nation: Strategies of Palestinian Women in Israel*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Khosravi, Shahram. 2010. *'Illegal' Traveller: An Auto-Ethnography of Borders*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Khosravi, Shahram. 2021. "Prelude: The Weight of Waiting." In *Waiting: A Project in Conversation. Culture and Theory*, edited by Shahram Khosravi, Vol. 2, 13–26. Bielefeld, Germany: Transcript Verlag.
- Kibreab, Gaim. 2013. "The National Service/Warsai-Yikealo Development Campaign and Forced Migration in Post-Independence Eritrea." *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 7 (4): 630–649.
- Kirmayer, Laurence. 2003. "Failures of Imagination: The Refugee's Narrative in Psychiatry." *Anthropology and Medicine* 10 (2): 167–185.
- Kofman, E. 2004. "Family-Related Migration: A Critical Review of European Studies." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 30 (2): 243–262.
- Kritzman-Amir, T. 2009. "'Otherness' as the Underlying Principle in Israel's Asylum Regime." *Israel Law Review* 42 (3): 603–627.
- Lentin, Ronit. 2018. *Traces of Racial Exception Racializing Israeli Settler Colonialism*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Lentin, Ronit, and Elena Moreo. 2015. "Migrant Deportability: Israel and Ireland as Case Studies." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 38 (6): 894–910.
- Luibhéid, Etienne. 2002. *Entry Denied: Controlling Sexuality at the Border*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.
- Lutz, Helma, and Ewa Palenga-Mollenbeck. 2012. "Care Workers, Care Drain, and Care Chains: Reflections on Care, Migration, and Citizenship." *Social Politics* 19 (1): 15–37.
- Madziva, Roda, and Elisabetta Zontini. 2012. "Transnational Mothering and Forced Migration: Understanding the Experiences of Zimbabwean Mothers in the UK." *European Journal of Women's Studies* 19 (4): 428–443.
- Massa, A. 2020. "Borders and Boundaries as Resources for Mobility. Multiple Regimes of Mobility and Incoherent Trajectories on the Ethiopian-Eritrean Border." *Geoforum; Journal of Physical, Human, and Regional Geosciences* 116: 262–271.
- Mizrachi, Nissim, and Adane Zawdu. 2012. "Between Global Racial and Bounded Identity: Choice of Destigmatization Strategies among Ethiopian Jews in Israel." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 35 (3): 436–452.

- O'Neill, Maggie. 2018. "Walking, Well-Being and Community: Racialized Mothers Building Cultural Citizenship Using Participatory Arts and Participatory Action Research." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 41 (1): 73–97.
- Pappe, Ilan. 2006. *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*. Oxford: Oneworld.
- Paz, Yonathan. 2011. "Ordered Disorder: African Asylum Seekers in Israel and Discursive Challenges to an Emerging Refugee Regime." *New Issues in Refugee Research Article*, No. 205: 1–21.
- Rajjman, Rebecca. 2017. "Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Israel." *Hagira* 7: 2–6.
- Ramsay, Georgina. 2020. "Time and the Other in Crisis: How Anthropology Makes its Displaced Object." *Anthropological Theory* 20 (4): 1–29.
- Ravid, M. 2021. "Criminalisation and Detention of African Asylum Seekers in Israel: Exclusionary Policies, and the Dynamics of Race and Place." PhD diss. Oxford, University of Oxford.
- Ravid, M. 2022. "Making Their Lives Miserable: Structural Violence and State Racism towards Asylum Seekers from Sudan and Eritrea in Israel." Scienceopen.com, <https://www.scienceopen.com/hosted-document?doi=10.13169/statecrime.11.1.0128>.
- Sabbagh-Khoury, A. 2015. "Colonization Practices and Interactions at the Frontier: Ha-Shomer Ha-Tzair Kibbutzes and the Surrounding Arab Villages at the Margins of the Valley of Jezreel/Marj Ibn 'Amer, 1936–1956." (Ph.D. Dissertation). Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv.
- Sayej, L. 2018. "Palestinian Refugees and the Right of Return in International Law." OxHRH Blog. <https://ohrh.law.ox.ac.uk/palestinian-refugees-and-the-right-of-return-in-international-law> > [Last access 23 June 2022].
- Shobiye, Laura, and Samuel Parker. 2022. "Narratives of Coercive Precarity Experienced by Mothers Seeking Asylum in the UK (Wales)." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. doi:10.1080/01419870.2022.2079383.
- Suárez-Orozco, Carola, and Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco. 2001. *Children of Immigration*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Suerbaum, M. 2022. "In Search of Legal Stability: Predicaments of Asylum-Seeking Mothers in Berlin." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. doi:10.1080/01419870.2022.2074281.
- Treiber, Magnus. 2013. "Grasping Kiflu's Fear. Informality and Existentialism in Migration from North-East Africa. Modern Africa." *Politics, History and Society* 1 (2): 111–139.
- Tschalae, M. 2022. "Queer Motherhood in the Context of Legal Precarity: Experiences of Lesbian Mothers Seeking Asylum in Germany." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. doi:10.1080/01419870.2022.2085055.
- van Reisen, M., C. Rijken, and M. Estefanos. 2012. *Human Trafficking in the Sinai: Refugees Between Life and Death*. Brussels: Wolf Legal Publishers.
- Vigh, H. 2009. "Motion Squared." *Anthropological Theory* 9 (4): 419–438.
- Willen, Sarah. 2018. *Fighting For Dignity: Migrant Lives at Israel's Margins*. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Yaron, Hadas, Nurit Hashimshony-Yaffe, and John Campbell. 2013. "'Infiltrators' or Refugees? An Analysis of Israel's Policy Towards African Asylum-Seekers." *International Migration* 51 (4): 144–157.
- Zijlstra, J., and I. van Liempt. 2017. "Smart(Phone) Travelling: Understanding the use and Impact of Mobile Technology on Irregular Migration Journeys." *International Journal of Migration and Border Studies* 3 (2/3): 174–191.
- Zinngrebe, Kim Jezabel. 2019. "Palestinian Women in Israel: Embodied Citizen Strangers." *Settler Colonial Studies* 9 (1): 117–134.