Leisure and Forced Migration: Lives lived in Asylum Systems

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Introduction

The events that marked 2020 have illuminated with devastating clarity the connectedness of the world(s) we live in, as a global pandemic, prospects of economic collapse, climate calamities and civil unrest feed into each other with yet-to-be known impacts and consequences. As if to underline these entanglements, the (in)capacity to breath has become a political, embodied, and historical semantic that signals domains usually perceived as separated (Beneduce, 2020). The health inequalities exacerbated by Covid-19, the devastating impacts of air pollution and unprecedented wildfires, the deadly consequences of entrenched racisms and police brutality, the suffocating precariousness of lives lived in asylum systems[1] all represent substantial examples of the ways in which "the universal right to breath" (Mbembe, 2020) has been breached by violence and injustice before and during the pandemic.

Yet, in the past months the domains of leisure and forced migration seemed to belong and relate to different and separated life-worlds. During extended lockdowns, leisure practices increasingly emerged as life-affirming, though unequally accessible domains for home-bound populations (Mowatt, 2020; Fullagar and Pavlidis, 2020). However, in the same timeframe State procedures put in place to manage migration flows intensified their attempts to deny the possibility-of-life-itself for people seeking asylum. Despite being increasingly common before the pandemic, non-assistance at sea, unlawful refoulement to death and torture, confinement in overcrowded camps and detention centres, and abandonment to hunger and destitution became seemingly *legitimate practices* of migration management amid the Covid-19 crisis (Meer and Vilegas, 2020). Even more starkly, the intensification of harmful practices of migration management during the pandemic were met by a deafening lack of public concern beyond human rights circles, all amid widespread claims that "we are in this together" (De Martini Ugolotti, 2020a).

Writing about leisure and forced migration in this time urges us to consider the disjunctions in the cultural and public narratives of the pandemic as revealing lenses of an increasing public and political consensus regarding whose lives are worth less[2] amid recurring "crises" (in sparse and

1 As described by Darling (2014), Canning (2019), Mayblin (2020).
2 A "sorting process" that also meant that pandemic and its responses disproportionately harmed racialised minorities, victims of domestic violence, the poor and the excluded (with these categories often intersecting).

overlapping order: economic, terror, migration, health). Concurrently, writing about leisure and forced migration in this time requires us to highlight how the relevance, meanings and experiences of leisure for people seeking asylum cannot be disentangled from intersecting forms of emboldened nationalisms and xenophobia, deadly State and border policies, and skewed public narratives.

Unfortunately, despite an increasing scholarly interest in refugees' leisure practices in the last three decades, the analytical lenses and research questions informing this body of research have been remarkably narrow. As Lewis (2015) noted, most of the research on the topic has centred on functionalist and policy-driven themes and questions, such as the role that leisure can play in refugees' integration into host countries, fostering community cohesion, (mental) health and well-being (see Amara et al., 2005; Stack and Iwasaki, 2009; Quirk, 2015; Whitley et al., 2016; Hurly and Walker, 2018; Hurly, 2019; Cain et al., 2019). At present, and although well-intentioned, much of the research on the topic has unwittingly replicated narrow framings of refugee populations in public and policy domains; either by uncritically reflecting skewed concerns of (forced) migrants' integration vs. segregation, and/or by reproducing simplistic binaries between a "longed homeland" and an unfamiliar country of exile (see Lewis, 2010).

Building on what Malkki (1995) and Bakewell (2008) argued in the field of refugee studies, the tendency to centre research on policy-driven themes and questions has some substantial political and epistemological implications for scholars engaging with these topics. Studies arising too closely from policy-driven themes and buzzwords (e.g. community cohesion) can end up producing short-term answers to limited questions. Additionally, this tendency can make critical questions and wider issues that sit outside of immediate policy-makers and practitioners' concerns "irrelevant" and therefore invisible in academic and public debates. In this sense, studies that discussed leisure and refugees' integration in re-settlement countries have rarely[3] addressed the increasing assimilationist turn surrounding the term in policy domains; nor have they unpacked how policies—which insist on refugees' responsibility to integrate—operate to transfer societal problems such as unemployment and poverty onto newcomers (Uheling, 2015). Relatedly, discussions of leisure and refugees' inclusion and community cohesion in contexts of resettlement seldom problematise policy-makers and academics' perspectives that frame social tensions and divisions as coming from beyond State borders, rather than, for instance, coming from persisting social and economic inequalities (see Lewis, 2010).

Finally, studies that address leisure in relation to refugees' health and well-being often assume

[3] See Jeanes et al., (2015) for an exception

experiences of trauma and acculturation-stress as intrinsic to an essentialised "refugee experience"[4] (Malkki, 1995, p. 508). Such contributions fail to acknowledge the well-documented role of asylum policies, processes, and spaces in shaping forced migrants' access and opportunities for health, well-being and sociality (Fassin, 2005; Canning, 2019; Mayblin, 2020). Taken overall, and apart from notable exceptions[5], the growing scholarly attention towards refugees' leisure practices has consistently failed to position these domains in relation to essentialising humanitarian narratives, and State-sanctioned attempts to dehumanise and exclude forced migrants from (and within) national borders. In other words, scholarship on leisure and forced migration has often unwittingly contributed to narratives that constructed refugees as a "kind of person" (Malkki, 1995, p. 513): traumatised, lacking, or needing to "integrate". At the same time, leisure scholars often fail to recognise the (bio)political and moral construction of refugeness and forget to acknowledge how necropolitical forms of migration management[6] impact and shape the experiences, meanings, needs and access to leisure for people seeking asylum. As a result, explorations of refugees' leisure practices have often enabled the leaching out of political histories and processes that have shaped refugees' lives and subjectivities through a seamless continuum of "paternalistic humanitarianism, bureaucratic violence, and compassionate repression" (Beneduce 2015, p. 10).

All of the above points invite a much more critical examination of the role that leisure can have in contributing to, or challenging the reproduction of assumptions, narratives, and practices that shape the lives and trajectories of people seeking asylum. In responding to the omissions and shortcomings of scholarship, and in addressing the nexus of leisure and forced migration, this book has two main aims. The first is to showcase and call for a closer engagement between leisure scholarship and critical, inter-disciplinary perspectives of forced migration, and the second is to foreground the relevance of a critical focus of forced migration for leisure studies more widely. We contend that this engagement is long overdue, as well-known discussions of leisure in contemporary societies (Rojek, 2009; Blackshaw, 2016) have so far failed to articulate leisure theories and perspectives to the issue of forced migration, which is (re)shaping definitions of identity, citizenship, belonging, rights, and ultimately humanity in our historical present.[7]

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[4] Following Malkki (1995, p. 510), "it would be foolish to claim that displacement does not cause distress of many kinds, but when considering the question of psychological disorders among refugees [...] We cannot assume psychological disorder or mental illness *a priori, as an axiom*, *nor can we claim to know, from the mere fact of refugeeness, the actual sources of a person's suffering.*" (emphasis added)

[5] See Lewis, 2015; Pelham and McGee 2017; Stone, 2018; Doidge, 2018

[6] Following Mayblin (2020) we consider necropolitical forms of migration management when boats are allowed to sink, children separated from their families, homeless migrants' spontaneous camps burnt to the ground, and people seeking asylum abandoned to hunger and destitution, in other words when people seeking asylum are "kept alive, but in a state of injury in a phantomlike world of horrors and intense cruelty and profanity" (Mbembe, 2003, p. 21; see also Webster and Abunaama, this volume).

[7] Ben Carrington highlighted a related omission in relation to issues of race and coloniality in his keynote speech at Leisure Studies Association Annual Conference 2018 . We relate and expand on Carrington's arguments here, by

Such a critical engagement with the leisure-forced migration nexus aims to meaningfully contribute to current debates on the scope, relevance and aims of leisure studies within current, unfolding global scenarios. In doing so, this focus highlights and expands crucial perspectives of leisure as a contested domain where power, knowledge, subjectivity, belonging and marginality are constantly negotiated along the intersecting lines of class, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, physical (dis)ability and legal status (Watson and Scraton, 2013; Thangaraj et al., 2018; Caudwell and McGee, 2018; Ratna, and Samie, 2018; Kuppan, 2018; Mansfield et al., 2018).

At the same time, while highlighting omissions and complicating debates regarding leisure and forced migration, this collection aims to offer critical questions, analyses and discussions that can enrich wider debates of forced migration across academic disciplines. In fact, while leisure scholarship has been so far tied to narrow analytical lenses and questions when addressing the topic, wider debates in refugee/forced migration studies have rarely paid attention to leisure as a meaningful entry point to address the everyday lives, practices and negotiations of people seeking asylum[8].

As recent perspectives have identified, the relevance of these analytical viewpoints is underlined by the tendency of media, public and some academic analysis to address refugees' lives through the binaries of victimhood or extra-ordinary achievements, speechlessness or political participation (Fiddian-Qamsiyeh, 2020). We contend that a critical focus on leisure domains can contribute to existing analyses that have articulated the violence of migration management processes and the ambivalences of hospitality with the complex everyday experiences of lives lived in asylum regimes (Darling 2011, 2014; Mountz, 2011; Fiddiam-Qamsiyeh, 2020; Mayblin, 2020; De Martini Ugolotti, 2020b).

Responding to and expanding these debates, this collection highlights how a critical engagement with leisure domains, mediums and contexts can represent a way of bridging academic research, and the lived experiences of forced migration in ways that can be attentive and bring to the fore the nuances, complexities, harms and negotiations characterising the lives of people seeking asylum. As the contributions in this collection demonstrate, paying attention to leisure domains can contribute to: defy boundaries and rigid categorisations; refuse the narrative enclosures that flatten people seeking asylum in to essentialising binaries; and explore contexts of forced migration beyond “the

addressing forced migration as a structural phenomenon whose responses can be seen as an example of the “coloniality of power” (see Mayblin, 2017).

[8] For some relevant exceptions see Van Aken (2006), Khan (2013) and Zaman (2019)

discursive channels through which abjection works" (Darling 2014, p. 496).

Themes of the Book

Three interrelated themes underpin this collection: *spaces and temporalities; displaced bodies and intersecting inequalities; voices, praxis and (self)representation*. These themes reflect a commitment to engage with perspectives and experiences that unsettle and oppose dehumanising or infantilising binaries, and instead aim to articulate the reach of asylum regimes with the complexities of refugees' everyday lives and leisure practices.

The first theme, *spaces and temporalities* underlines the relevance of domains that have been, so far, neglected in existing scholarship on leisure and (forced) migration as well as in recent, state-of-the-art reviews on the topic (Stodolska, 2018; Spaaij et al., 2019). Recognising the relevance of this theme not only expands important debate of the spatial politics of leisure, but provides meaningful entry points to explore the "everyday geographies of asylum" (Darling, 2011, p. 408). This focus enables the potential to illuminate the gendered and racialised power relations shaping refugees' "ordinary" spatial practices and contexts, and how these can be reproduced and negotiated through apparently mundane leisure domains.

Furthermore, as the production of (leisure) space is intertwined with the rhythms of everyday life (Lefebvre, 1991), a focus on the spatial politics of leisure can represent a meaningful way to examine forced migrants and allies' disruptions of the *suspended time* that is inherent in the spatial practices of asylum regimes (Mountz, 2011). The chapters contributing to this theme address leisure, space and temporality in contexts of forced migration and resettlement and open important avenues to examine the ways in which cities, towns, camps, reception centres are differently lived and (re)constructed through leisure practices by people seeking asylum. Relatedly, discussions highlight how attention to this theme can advance opportunities to consider, conceptualise and shape a temporal politics of asylum that is not only defined by the spatial, technological and bureaucratic mechanisms of the border/asylum regimes.

The second theme, *displaced bodies and intersecting inequalities* brings together chapters that address the diversity and complexities of forced migration experiences. It focuses on the ways displacement and resettlement are differently lived and negotiated by people seeking asylum across different and overlapping markers of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religion and legal status. This theme expands important contributions in the field of leisure studies (Caudwell and Browne, 2011; Watson and Ratna, 2011; Watson and Scraton, 2013; Ratna and Samie, 2018; Kuppan, 2018)

towards a reading of the diversified forms of access, meanings and experiences of leisure in contexts of forced migration.

The chapters within this theme illuminate how an appreciation of the diversity of forced migration and resettlement experiences requires an understanding of intersecting forms of power structures such as racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, patriarchy, homophobia, transphobia, State-policies and late-capitalist forms of "accumulation by dispossession" (Harvey, 2003). Addressing leisure and forced migration through this lens complicates current narratives of displacement and forced migration in (at least) two ways. First, it problematises homogenizing and reductive depictions of refugees as passive victims waiting to be 'saved', 'assisted' or 'protected' by non-refugee others (Fiddian Qamsiyeh, 2020). This focus of analysis highlights how initiatives driven to improve forced migrants' (mental) health can implicitly silence refugees' diversified meanings and practices of health, sociality and (self-)care. This is often relevant when such shortcomings overlap with the lack of attention in asylum policies towards gender and sexuality (Canning, 2019), and the employment of stereotypical and rigid definitions of vulnerability (Donà, 2007). Second, the chapters contributing to this theme highlight how an attention to intersecting forms of inequality can enable insight in to refugees' multiple meanings and responses relating to leisure, health, safety and marginality.

The final theme *voices, praxis and self-representation* contributes to discussions that address how processes of representation and knowledge production shape narratives and practices in the domains of leisure and forced migration. While existing work underlined the lack of discussions afforded to ethical research processes on this topic (Doidge, 2018; Spaaij et al., 2019), the chapters in this theme address and expand these considerations by looking at the ethics and politics of knowledge production in research and practical interventions. Central concerns that animate this theme are questions of voice, power, knowledge and representation. More specifically, the chapters address questions such as what voices and whose viewpoints are put in the foreground in research and interventions about leisure and forced migration? What are the consequences of skewed narratives adopted in leisure/artistic projects with or for people seeking asylum? How well-intentioned leisure interventions can contribute to reproduce the "othering" of people seeking asylum in contexts of resettlement and in public discourses? The chapters in the final theme of the book go some way to respond to calls and efforts to decolonise leisure studies (Carrington, 2018, Mowatt, 2018; Fox and McDermott, 2020) by complicating "single stories" employed to represent racialised migrant and displaced populations. Some explicitly engage and make visible the interconnected histories (Bhambra, 2014; see also Ratna, 2018) that exceed and complicate Western understandings and

uses of leisure as a means for integration, therapy, or community cohesion; Others bring to the fore their own voices as authors, practitioners and (forced) migrants to critically interrogate experiences, absences and problematic approaches surrounding the topic. In critically questioning (and providing alternatives to) the representational choices and assumptions that inform a wealth of leisure interventions with and for people seeking asylum, the chapters speak to wider discussions on the politics and praxis of knowledge production in the domain of leisure studies (and beyond).

Chapter Outlines

In the first chapter of the section *spaces and temporalities*, Webster and Abunaama focus on the experiences of nine male research participants living their lives within the asylum system in the UK. The nine men, including Abunaama, and Webster share an active involvement with football. This involvement centres around a local football club – Yorkshire St. Pauli and the club's initiative Football for All. Both the club and the initiative enact anti-discriminatory politics, in particular the ethos that 'no person is illegal' and 'refugees are welcome'. Over a three-year period, Webster, Abunaama and the research participants spent time together supporting and playing football as well as hanging out beyond football grounds. The discussion addresses the temporal politics through which the Home Office shape the lives and circumstances of asylum-seekers in both tangible and intangible ways. These include denying access to basic entitlements of security and safety, and the slow erosion of asylum seekers' hopes, desires, health and well-being. Yet, the ethnographic data show how football and the forms of socialities which surround Yorkshire St. Pauli practices can provide opportunities for the re-structuring of the waiting time, slow time, dead time, and frantic time that Home Office processes enforce on asylum seekers' lives. The chapter highlights how the shared time of football enables the participants to claim back some form of control of their time through leisure, and to re-appropriate their bodies and lives as more than objects of asylum policies.

In her chapter, Mohammadi moves our attention to women living in the asylum system in Germany. Her research is with four women (aged between 19 and 45 years) that are involved with a cycling project called Bike Bridge. This focus is significant because the use of bicycles by women and girls has a history in some contexts as regulated, controlled and liberatory (Langhamer, 2000). For the four women in Mohammadi's research, cycling enabled physical activity outside the confines of the refugee accommodation centre where they were placed. At times, this activity was independent of the official project. Drawing from five months of research including ethnographic observation and interviews, the chapter engages Lefebvre's (1991) analysis of spatiality in discussing participants' embodied experiences of cycling. The research explored the participants' experiences of refugee accommodation as a space of safety from where they could start to plan their futures, but also as a

space of confinement and suspension. The findings show how the research participants dislocated the often-liminal spaces (and temporalities) of asylum 'accommodation' by their regular and frequent physical activity - cycling. Moreover, as a women-only project, the cycling provided a number of opportunities to forge solidarity and support as well as individual and collective challenge of gender-, raced- and ethnicity-based stereotypes evident both within and beyond the accommodation centre. The chapter highlights how through their cycling, the women in the study contested, transformed and re-claimed their presence inside and outside of the accommodation centre.

'Waiting time' continues as foci of analysis for Schmidt and Palutan's study of migrants in-transit, refugees and asylum seekers in Italy. Working with people in provisional and informal encampments in Rome, the researchers map out how activists connect with refugees through food, medical and legal support as well as leisure. Schmidt and Palutan highlight how the people living in informal camps can be seen as migrants-in-transit from a physical point of view and from a juridical point of view. Relatedly, the authors discuss how despite the common experiences of suspension for people in the camps, the concept of waiting cannot be reduced only to an externally imposed category; it can be addressed instead as waiting *for* and waiting *to.* Meaningful leisure practices—sport activity, music, dance, art and craft workshops, socializing, eating and drinking together—are shown to punctuate the temporalities of waiting time. The authors use the term 'thick leisure' to emphasise how these practices can contest waiting time and produce agency for the refugees and the activists involved in the study. Leisure can thus be assigned temporal agency in opposing experiences of waiting time as passively endured and powerless.
This form of agency might, momentarily, transcend the enforcement of temporal and spatial confinements for people living in the asylum system.

The final chapter in the section *spaces and temporalities*, documents the experiences of a fan of men's football. Chris Stone discusses how Dekor, an Arsenal fan, lives his fandom as an asylum seeker in the UK. Dekor has always supported Arsenal men's team, and the history of this involvement includes following the team's performances while living close to the Iran-Iraq border, travelling through Europe and in the UK. Transnational football fandom and the reach of football consumption are critically discussed in the chapter, as are forced migration and transgressional football consumption. Stone details the ways Dekor navigates watching his team in places such as pubs, libraries and a live game. The author concludes that Dekor's fandom has enabled a sense of 'home' within the cultural sphere of football fandom. This 'home' is not pure, as it remains a predominantly masculine space marked by forms of racism. However, for Dekor it is a stable source

of identity within the liminal spaces and permanent impermanence of his life as an asylum seeker. Dekor's fandom appears as a rich subjective domain of his everyday life in spite of Home Office's demeaning treatment of asylum seekers.

The next section of the book turns our attention to *displaced bodies and intersecting inequalities.* The four chapters offer insights into 'LGBTQI+ refugees' in Brazil; women newcomers in Denmark; Syrian Muslim refugee women in Sweden; and members of the British-Somali diaspora community in the UK. The intersections of inequality involve gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and religious practices.

Venturini-Trindale focuses on the group named *travestis* by Brazilian activists. This group, within the LGBTQI+ collective in Brazil identifies male-born transgender individuals, and the chapter explores the experiences of *travesti* individuals that seek asylum in Brazil as a consequence of prejudice, discrimination, persecution and violence. The high number of crimes against trans people, including murder, has led commentators to refine the terms homicide and femicide to distinguish gendercide as a transgender-contingent crime. Detailing a three-year Participatory Action Research (PAR) project seeking to support 'LGBTQI+ refugees', Venturini-Trindale illuminates the tensions—in terms of project outcomes and power relations—between funders, professionals working on the project, and the project's participants. The chapter champions the voices of the *travestis* participants and critically discusses how their experiences and needs are overlooked within existing funding approaches relying on pre-determined, quantitative measures of "social change". As Venturin-Trindade highlights, the application of these pre-determined measures often show very little understanding of the specific patterns of violence against *travestis* and gender non-conforming individuals seeking refuge. The chapter explains these tensions and the worth of the project's participatory methodologies. Such an approach insists that researchers and practitioners focus on reflexivity, integrative participatory processes and a commitment to social justice.

The next two chapters, in different ways, centre the experiences of women refugees in Northern Europe. Agergaard, Lenneis, Bakkær Simonsen and Ryom discuss how Eritrean and Syrian women experience physical activity and leisure upon arrival in Denmark. Collison and De Martini Ugolotti focus on a women-only yoga course attended by Syrian Muslim refugee women in Sweden.

In their chapter, Agergaard and colleagues critically discuss the limited leisure opportunities for women newcomers against the backdrop of increasingly restrictive asylum policies and Western

“healthist” discourses. The chapter focuses on the experiences of four Eritrean and eight Syrian women attending Danish language courses as part of their introduction programme for newcomers granted asylum and/or residence permit. Based on the findings from semi-structured interviews, the authors critique scholarly and policy frameworks that focus on newcomers' health promotion and integration into receiving societies, but that neglect the practices and experiences that (forced) migrants carry with them. The research shows that despite previous experiences of active leisure and physical activity the women in the study spoke about feeling and/or being unhealthy in comparison to health discourses and practices promoted in Denmark. The chapter demonstrates how Western health-promoting discourse can operate to make invisible women newcomer’s past and present (transnational) relationships to physical activity. Furthermore, the discussion shows how lack of time, economic restrictions and personal worries related to the their uncertain future in Denmark make the pursuit of active leisure for women newcomers a (desired) practice hindered by a number of overlapping obstacles.

Collison and De Martini Ugolotti address the experiences of a group of Syrian Muslim refugee women attending women-only yoga courses in Sweden. These courses were part of a Civic Orientation programme that combined the prescription of therapeutic yoga and educational activities with the aim to transform refugees into integrated, employable Swedish citizens. Collison's expertise as a yoga practitioner and her ethnographic participation in the courses means that the authors provide an in-depth account of the participants' embodied experiences of yoga and re-settlement. The core of the mandatory yoga-courses aimed to support refugee women's health and well-being. However, the courses relied on specific gendered assumptions regarding the vulnerability and trauma of refugee women. By adopting a phenomenological and ethnographic frame the authors are able to show how the participants' embodied experiences of yoga reflected and responded to objectifying narratives depicting them as traumatised refugees, oppressed Muslim women and hyper-visible others in Sweden. The in-depth engagement with the participants' subtle and intimate re-appropriations of the compulsory yoga space contributes to unsettle such narratives. Moreover, the participants' re-appropriations of the secular and self-development-oriented space of trauma-sensitive yoga complicated rigid dichotomous understandings of East/West, here/there, and secular/religious in understanding leisure domains.

Drawing from his research in the UK with members of the British-Somali diaspora, Swain explores khat-chewing as a form of leisure activity that shapes community belonging and identity expression for middle-aged men living at the intersections of citizenship and (forced) migration. The chapter focuses on gender, masculinity, tradition, and marginality. Khat stalks (plant product) are chewed as

a form of leisure because the constant chewing process releases the naturally occurring chemical dopamine; this enables lively and vibrant social interaction with other khat-chewers. The chapter indicates that those who take part in the chewing and the ensuing conversations maintain a sense of Somali identity, which Swain discusses in terms of devotional leisure. In particular, older and middle-aged men connect with each other, their country of origin, and share masculinist cultural practices. However, not everyone perceives khat in such a positive way, with many younger second-generation British-Somalis and women's groups viewing the substance as a symbol of domination used to exercise patriarchal and patrilineal hierarchies. This means that while providing a sense of purpose and identity for some, Khat-chewing as devotional leisure is highly controversial and an example of the multiple and contrasting subjectivities constituting diasporic communities. Swain shows how gender, masculinity, tradition and marginality are, through leisure, contested, shifting and in flux.

The final section: *voices, praxis and (self)representation*, reflects the methodological approaches of collective story telling, script writing and autoethnography. In the chapter, '"we the Afghan kids": decolonial stories of physical activity', Mashreghi with Yasmin, Mohammad, Hassan, Ali, Baset explain the value of co-creating accounts of forced migration. The research project involved Mashreghi working with ten young people living in a small town in Sweden. To challenge the "single stories" surrounding Afghan unaccompanied children as either vulnerable victims or cunning strategists, the authors offer an amalgamated analysis of their ordinary engagements with physical activity during their migration journeys and in re-settlement. The methodological joining of Arts-Based Research and Participatory Action Research gives rise to a unique project that debunks the coloniality of western-based accounts of forced migration, young people and physical activity. This is achieved through the co-researchers' narratives that highlighted how experiences of physical activities and its benefits are not universal but historically and materially contextual. This is the case when the co-researchers' narratives constantly connect their experiences of leisure, labour and migration with Khorasani forms of poetry and self-reflection. While the chapter challenges often-assumed stereotypes of young forced migrants as victims or tricksters it also displaces the narrow understanding of sport initiatives with unaccompanied migrants as tools for "development" and "integration". As the authors argue, engaging with the co-researchers' experiences of physical activity *in their own terms* provides opportunities to highlight muted and subjugated knowledges regarding bodies, subjectivities and socialities that have been so far silenced by Western-based approaches and uses of sport in contexts of (forced) migration.

In his work with theatre and theatre production in the UK, Adbulla considers how and why

community and refugee theatre can move beyond scripts of trauma, tragedy and victimhood. As a theatre academic, a practitioner and a refugee, Abdulla provides details that are most likely unfamiliar to leisure studies. However, the author is careful to offer a balanced and full exploration and explanation of community and refugee theatre. Abdulla discusses the emergence of refugee theatre as a response to xenophobia and populist migrant-blaming narratives that have become systematically normalised in the UK and other European countries. However, through a reflective discussion of refugee theatre scripts and productions, Abdulla warns of the dangers of theatre that reproduces 'archetypal refugee' narratives that can be described as 'uncomplicatedly tragic' (Wilcock, 2019, p. 146). Addressing a worrying trend towards one-dimensional depiction of refugees and their stories in refugee theatre, the author explores the problematic implications of such approaches and proposes a different way to enact theatre with refugees. While centring his discussion on the domain of community/participatory theatre with refugees Abdulla stresses the points of critical dialogue and exchange across theatre, forced migration and leisure studies.

In the final chapter of the book, Shemine Gulamhusein takes an auto-ethnographic approach to explore her experiences of recreation, leisure and sport as a child of immigrants in Canada. Her narrative focuses on her sporting experience as a Shia Ismaili Muslim woman of migrant background who learns to navigate playing sport as a person of colour in Canada while playing ringette (a competitive sport similar to hockey). In doing so, she acknowledges how her experiences of leisure and recreation are related to wider racialised hierarchies and Canada's history of settler colonialism that have shaped, in different ways, the experiences, practices and access to leisure of (forced) migrant and aboriginal youth. Through an auto-ethnographic approach Gulamhusein uses her experience to attend to the forms of oppression and privilege a person can experience based on race, ethnicity, class, gender, and religion within the hegemonic whiteness of ringette and Canadian society. Adopting Ahmed's (2014) concept of the 'willful subject', Gulamhusein reflects on how her own embodied experiences in becoming a ringette player drove her to trespass social settings and carve an in-between space that could be possible for her to inhabit on and off the ice. The author's auto-ethnographic discussion opens relevant insights that elucidate the tensions of being a "willful" young woman at the cross-road of multiple social locations (race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age). Gulamhusein's narrative closes the book by providing a rich, intimate and in-depth account that highlights relevant connections across the domains of leisure and (forced) migration studies.

Concluding comments

Throughout this book, the use of an interdisciplinary approach has been inescapable and, we hope,

enabling. This edited collection has brought together a variety of voices, viewpoints and positionalities across various disciplinary perspectives to critically address the nexus between leisure and forced migration. The result is not, and never aimed to be a neat and exhaustive picture of the relationship and points of contact between these domains. Rather, it is a polyphonic collection of perspectives and analyses each highlighting and addressing critical questions and issues without any pretence to present a "definitive" answer.

In defining the remit and scope of this edited book, as editors we decided to employ the terms "refugee", "forced migrant", "people seeking sanctuary/asylum" inclusively to refer to people at all stages of the asylum process (see Lewis, 2015). This flexible terminology aimed to highlight how the complexity of the phenomenon of forced migration cannot be simply approached by following legal/policy categories that often create arbitrary and shifting distinctions between people moving across borders (Erdal and Oeppen, 2017; Crawley and Skleparis, 2018). Taking this editorial approach, we want to highlight how immigration categories and socio-legal statuses are not fixed nor "objective", and are not usually embraced by those they seek to define. The use of this terminology seeks to highlight the slipperiness and complexity of people's migration trajectories as they move between statuses through time, either "agentically" or because of shifting structural barriers such as increasingly restrictive legislation and policies (Lewis et al., 2014).

Relatedly, our use of the term "forced migration" reflects our aim to recognise and take in to account highly differentiated *displacement geographies* that exceed normative and restrictive understandings of refugeehood (see Zetter, 1991; Erdal and Oeppen, 2017; Crawley and Skleparis, 2018). While this approach reflected our analytical and political stance in addressing the topics of this collection, the book's contributors chose to engage with a variety of categories according to what was more relevant to address specific contexts and questions, and according to the preferences of research interlocutors. Nevertheless, we engaged with all the authors in a critical dialogue regarding the use and implications of the lexicon currently available to discuss leisure and forced migration.

Our intention as editors was not to define, normatively, what frameworks and keywords should (not) be used in researching these topics. Rather, we critically engaged with the contributors' perspectives with the aim to foster interdisciplinary dialogues and provocations that could interrogate, enrich, and exceed debates in and around studies of leisure and forced migration.

However, one common concern links all of the chapters. That is, the importance for scholars in the fields of leisure and (forced) migration studies to remain aware of the role they can have in influencing different political and public narratives and approaches to human displacement. This means we must be cognisant of how concepts, assumptions and positionalities we inherit, adopt and choose to engage with—even while aiming to make "impactful" research—can (unwittingly) imply an investment in and complicity with diverse power structures (e.g. from assimilationist policies and discourses, to essentialising humanitarian narratives, and "othering" forms of knowledge). This critical awareness translated in analyses that did not instrumentally address leisure as a "fix" for policy-driven issues (e.g. community cohesion, integration/ segregation), or as a domain through which specific "benefits" (e.g. health, and various forms of "capitals") can be identified and measured for people seeking asylum and host societies. Rather, the contributions in this book aimed to critically interrogate these perspectives, by engaging with leisure as a domain where social, political and structural issues *are lived and addressed* by people seeking asylum. Therefore, leisure domains emerge through the chapters as related to the "political production of sociality" (Rozakou, 2016, p. 187) in contexts of forced migration. In other words, the chapters highlight the relevance of examining leisure to address the contingent but productive spaces and practices of migration solidarity, to make visible the harms and negotiations associated with displacement and intersecting inequalities, and to illuminate the bio- and necro-political management of refugee populations.

Following these considerations, the critique of existing approaches that is advanced in this collection does not stem from a willingness to minimise the need to produce relevant and impactful research, especially when addressing issues connected to political violence, poverty, and systemic exclusion. In fact, we contend that precisely because leisure domains have received an increasing interest from initiatives and interventions across (inter)national scenarios (Jeanes et al., 2015; UNHCR, 2020) we should be able to critically and productively challenge practitioners, policy-makers and stakeholders around existing/established ways of conceptualizing and employing leisure in displacement and resettlement contexts. That is why, following Malkki (1995) we understand interdisciplinarity in the study of forced migration as not simply an academic matter, but as implying the necessity to find relevant and yet-to-be-explored engagements with organizations, local communities and institutions who address or want to address these issues.

From this basis, we underline how on several occasions, important contributions on understanding the relevance of leisure domains have come from refugees, grassroots and activist groups acting beyond the remit of established humanitarian and/or governmental frameworks, priorities and

approaches (see Pelham and McGee, 2018; Zaman, 2019; De Martini Ugolotti, 2020b; Webster and Abunaama, this volume; Schmidt and Palutan, this volume; Abdulla, this volume). While solidarity initiatives for and by refugees have been facing increasingly hostile responses by State and security apparatuses worldwide (Fekete, 2018), we contend that they represent crucial domains that need further explorations because they can highlight the relevance and productivity of leisure in contexts of forced migration.

It is obvious that this edited book is not able to exhaustively discuss the complexities of forced migration, and the possible directions and questions that can inform leisure scholars aiming to explore and interrogate the issues. As the contributions of this collection mainly relate to European contexts (with the relevant exceptions of Venturin-Trindade and Gulamhusein chapters), much remains to be said in regard to the locations where the majority of the world's displaced people actually reside (see also Spaaij et al., 2019). Therefore, we intend this collection as an initial, and inevitably partial exploration of the nexus between leisure and forced migration. It is a call for leisure scholars to engage more widely with critical questions and analyses that are more representative of the global geographies of displacement. As we make this call, we stress the importance of engaging with non-Western voices and dominant epistemologies in Western contexts and "refugees-receiving" societies. To borrow from Minh-ha (1989), such a perspective is fundamental for future analyses on and beyond leisure and forced migration[9], in reminding us that "What is at stake is not only the hegemony of western cultures, but also their identities as unified cultures; in other words, the realization that there is a Third World in every First World, and vice versa" (p. 23).

Following these considerations, and despite the limitations of this edited book, we suggest that it offers productive directions and interrogations of the role and relevance of leisure perspectives in the global present. The chapters in this book provide in-depth and compelling explorations of the rich, diversified and contested meanings, experiences and vocabularies through which leisure domains are lived in and relate to contexts of displacement and resettlement. Moreover, the chapters demonstrate that a focus on leisure can reveal and oppose dehumanising policies and discourses surrounding refugees as well as question and displace well-intentioned, but often problematic efforts to foster "development", "integration", and "health" for people seeking asylum. From this

[9] We envisage a dialogue between studies of leisure, forced migration and indigenous' practices, ontologies and epistemologies as an important future development for leisure studies more widely. We see this dialogue to start from acknowledging the links between the forms of displacement and dispossession experienced by people seeking asylum and those endured by indigenous populations in settler colonial states.

basis, we invite leisure and forced migration scholars to engage with and expand these critical perspectives. We hope that the insights advanced in this collection can offer provocations and inspire yet-to-be-explored questions to critically address the challenges and unresolved injustices that shape the entangled world(s) we live in.

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