



2019

UNSETTLING REFUGE: SYRIAN REFUGEES' ACCOUNT OF LIFE IN DENMARK

Malene H. Jacobsen

University of Kentucky, Geography, malene.jacobsen@uky.edu

Author ORCID Identifier:

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0494-3642>

Digital Object Identifier: <https://doi.org/10.13023/etd.2019.287>

[Right click to open a feedback form in a new tab to let us know how this document benefits you.](#)

Recommended Citation

Jacobsen, Malene H., "UNSETTLING REFUGE: SYRIAN REFUGEES' ACCOUNT OF LIFE IN DENMARK" (2019). *Theses and Dissertations--Geography*. 62.
https://uknowledge.uky.edu/geography_etds/62

This Doctoral Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Geography at UKnowledge. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations--Geography by an authorized administrator of UKnowledge. For more information, please contact UKnowledge@lsv.uky.edu.

STUDENT AGREEMENT:

I represent that my thesis or dissertation and abstract are my original work. Proper attribution has been given to all outside sources. I understand that I am solely responsible for obtaining any needed copyright permissions. I have obtained needed written permission statement(s) from the owner(s) of each third-party copyrighted matter to be included in my work, allowing electronic distribution (if such use is not permitted by the fair use doctrine) which will be submitted to UKnowledge as Additional File.

I hereby grant to The University of Kentucky and its agents the irrevocable, non-exclusive, and royalty-free license to archive and make accessible my work in whole or in part in all forms of media, now or hereafter known. I agree that the document mentioned above may be made available immediately for worldwide access unless an embargo applies.

I retain all other ownership rights to the copyright of my work. I also retain the right to use in future works (such as articles or books) all or part of my work. I understand that I am free to register the copyright to my work.

REVIEW, APPROVAL AND ACCEPTANCE

The document mentioned above has been reviewed and accepted by the student's advisor, on behalf of the advisory committee, and by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), on behalf of the program; we verify that this is the final, approved version of the student's thesis including all changes required by the advisory committee. The undersigned agree to abide by the statements above.

Malene H. Jacobsen, Student

Dr. Patricia Ehrkamp, Major Professor

Dr. Matthew Zook, Director of Graduate Studies

UNSETTLING REFUGE:
SYRIAN REFUGEES' ACCOUNT OF LIFE IN DENMARK

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
College of Arts and Sciences
at the University of Kentucky

By
Malene Herschend Jacobsen
Lexington, Kentucky
Director: Dr. Patricia Ehrkamp, Professor of Geography
Lexington, Kentucky
2019

Copyright © Malene Herschend Jacobsen 2019
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0494-3642>

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

UNSETTLING REFUGE: SYRIAN REFUGEES' ACCOUNT OF LIFE IN DENMARK

This doctoral dissertation examines the lived experiences of refuge in Denmark from the perspectives of Syrian refugees. Situated within feminist political geography, it moves beyond examining geopolitics merely from the perspective of the law, the state, and policy makers. Instead, it seeks to grasp the ways in which geopolitics are encountered, experienced, and negotiated on the ground – by the people who are most affected by state policies and practices. It draws on more than ten months of ethnographic fieldwork in Denmark with Syrian refugees, including semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and participant observations, as well as interviews with state and non-state actors providing assistance to Syrian refugees in Jordan. This dissertation brings insights from feminist political geography into conversation with those from critical refugee studies, border studies, geographies of law, and postcolonial studies in order to unsettle core ideas and terms of reference surrounding what refuge is and how it is practiced.

This dissertation makes three distinct but closely related arguments. First, focusing on family reunification of refugees and how this form of protection became a target in the Danish state's efforts to prevent refugee immigration, I argue that the geopolitics of refuge needs to be examined in a way that includes but also moves beyond the actual territorial border line as well as the legal border (i.e. the moment a person obtains protection and legal status). Second, through an examination of Syrian refugees' everyday encounters with the Danish state, I draw attention to the disjunctures between idealized notions of refuge with its ostensible 'humanitarian' ethos and the practical articulations of refuge as manifested in the everyday lived experiences of refugees. This is what I term *lived* refuge. I argue, however, that the dissonances between idealized and actually existing refuge point to the persistent presence of governance within refuge, rather than a lack or an absence of 'true' humanitarianism - i.e. a promise of freedom, betterment, and prospect that did not fully materialize. Instead, the state practices, which refugees are subject to within refuge, are enabled and normalized through the asymmetrical relationships between the state and the refugee. Third, calling attention to how Syrian refugees experience, articulate and locate war, I trouble prevailing

geographical imaginations of “Europe” and Denmark as spaces of peace, safety, and prosperity. Drawing on Syrians’ experiences of war, I argue that attending to everyday experiences of war in refuge prompts a re-articulation of *where* war is, *what counts* as war, and *who* decides.

KEYWORDS: forced migration, refugee protection, feminist geopolitics, transnationalism, Syria, Europe

Malene Herschend Jacobsen

07/04/2019

Date

UNSETTLING REFUGE:
SYRIAN REFUGEES' ACCOUNT OF LIFE IN DENMARK

By
Malene Herschend Jacobsen

Patricia Ehrkamp

Director of Dissertation

Matthew Zook

Director of Graduate Studies

07/04/2019

Date

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation is indebted to others' enormous support and many insights. First and foremost, I owe a debt of gratitude to the people whose words, actions, and lives I describe therein. The friendships I have made with Syrians living in Denmark and the generosity and kindness of the people who I met along the research path have truly inspired and shaped this work. Thanks to the many individuals who opened their lives to me, trusted me, and were willing to recount and reflect on their experiences as Syrian refugees. Deepest thanks to the three community centers that enabled me to volunteer and have daily interactions with people in exile in Denmark. Above all, thanks to Kirstine, Ali, and Riema. Your support, assistance, and belief in this project have been critical to its realization in every sense.

I would like to thank my advisor, Patricia Ehrkamp, for your invaluable feedback and for the inspiration of your incisive scholarship which is guided by a feminist ethic of theorizing from the lived experience. Your attention to detail and high standards have sharpened my own writing and thinking. Your generosity and support, but most importantly your vision, have been invaluable in guiding me through the journey of becoming a scholar. I am ever grateful for this. Thanks to Anna Secor for always showing your support and interest in my project. Your refusal to prescribe what to read or how to think gave me the confidence to build my own independent voice. Thanks to Sue Roberts for making time for serving on my committee and providing me with sharp critiques of my works in progress. Not only are you a model for feminist scholarship but also one for building caring scholarly community. Finally, thanks to Kristin Monroe for your insightful comments and kindness.

I had the privilege of spending almost two years conducting the research for this dissertation in Jordan and Denmark. This extensive fieldwork was made possible by the generous support from the National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant (BCS-1558400), the Social Science Research Council's Mellon International Dissertation Research Fellowship, a research grant from the Danish Institute in Damascus, as well as University of Kentucky Graduate Studies Dissertation Enhancement Award. During my time in the field, I have been able to discuss my research findings and deliver presentations of this work. In Jordan, I owe particular thanks to Kamel Dorai and the French Institute of the Near East, Amman. In Denmark, I am ever grateful to Tatiana Fogelman, Roskilde University as well as the scholars at the Center for Advanced Migration Studies, University of Copenhagen. I also owe much thanks to the 2016 SSRC IDRF fellows who participated at the SSRC workshop in Chicago. In particular, thanks are due to Sandy F. Chang who kindly read early drafts of this dissertation. Thank you all for listing and providing helpful and nurturing comments.

I owe so much gratitude to my friends and colleagues at the University of Kentucky, who made Lexington a very supportive intellectual community. Thanks to Jessa Loomis, Brittany Cook, Marita Murphy, Carrie Mott, and Christine Smith for endless support and encouragement over the years. Thanks to Jess Linz, Erin Clancy, and Ian Spangler for always making me feel like I had a home in Lexington that I could return to. Thanks also to all the people who participated in the migration group over the years; Liana Vasseur, Derek Ruez, Rebecca Lane, Mitch Snider, Christine Woodward, Leif Johnson, Araby Smyth, Elisa Sperandio, and Sophonie Bazile. Your help and encouragement has been much appreciated!

Finally, it remains for me to thank my family who has provided me with moral and material support. Thank you for supporting me when I decided to pursue not only a PhD but a PhD in a country far away from home. Thanks for your patience, your visits to Kentucky, and the many skype conversations.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	viii
CHAPTER ONE	1
Introduction.....	1
Refuge: a Geopolitical Practice	7
Securitization of Migration	11
Border Control and Immigration Enforcement.....	13
A Feminist Geopolitics of Forced Migration and Refuge	15
Re-conceptualizing the refugee.....	16
Embodiment.....	17
Political Subjectivity and Subaltern Geopolitics	18
Roadmap of dissertation	21
CHAPTER TWO	24
Introduction.....	24
The Syrian Civil War and the Danish state’s response to Syrian refugees.....	25
Syrian refugees in Denmark.....	28
The Danish State’s efforts to limit and prevent refugee migration.....	30
Refuge in Denmark.....	33
Feminist Geographical Research	35
Research Design.....	37
i) Research Timeline	37
ii) Research Methods.....	38
Conclusion	50
CHAPTER THREE	52
Introduction.....	52
Geographies of Border Work, Forced Transnationality and Time-Space	56
Refugee Protection as a Bordering Mechanism.....	60
Fractured Lives: Living with Forced Transnationalism Creating Virtual Spaces	65
Fractures.....	67
Reassembling the family.....	70

Conclusion	76
CHAPTER FOUR.....	80
Introduction.....	80
Refugee Condition, Government, and Subjection	82
Refuge in Denmark.....	86
The government of Refugee Dispersal	89
Financial Coercion	95
Workfare	102
Conclusion	108
CHAPTER FIVE	111
Introduction.....	111
Refugee Migration: War and Refuge.....	114
Syrians' Refugee Trajectories.....	117
The Crossing	120
Ongoing War.....	123
War in Denmark: ḥarb nafsīa.....	127
Promise of Refuge.....	134
Conclusion	138
CHAPTER SIX.....	140
Introduction.....	140
Lived Refuge.....	142
Unsettling Refuge	145
REFERENCES	149
VITA.....	163

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1: Number of Syrian refugees claiming asylum in Denmark	29
Table 2.2: Number of Syrians obtaining refugee protection status	29
Table 2.3: Family reunification approved.....	29
Table 2.4: Distribution of protection statuses for Syrian refugees	31
Table 3.1: Number of refugees granted refugee protection according to §7.3, distributed by nationality	62
Table 3.2: Number of Syrian refugees granted refugee protection according to §7.3, distributed by gender and age	63

CHAPTER ONE

UNSETTLING REFUGE IN DENMARK

Introduction

In this dissertation, I unsettle political refuge in its modern liberal meaning. Drawing on Syrian refugees' lived experiences of refuge in Denmark, I show how refuge is not space outside or beyond the geopolitics of migration and violence. More specifically, I explore how a refugee protection status/category actively contributes to the separation of displaced families across borders, how refuge becomes a site of dense governmental practices, and how experiences of war are very much part of refuge. Importantly, I trace how Syrian refugees experience, negotiate, and make sense of these practices and the politics that they enact.

Situated within Denmark and Jordan, this dissertation focuses on Syrian forced migrants' encounters with Western states' migration management practices. For the past sixty years, Jordan has functioned as a transit country for various groups of forced migrants *en route* to Europe and elsewhere (Chatelard 2003; Chatty and Finlayson 2010). The country's economy has benefited significantly from the influx of forced migrants due to a large amount of development assistance from Western countries. Yet, the *wellbeing* and *protection* of the 1.4 million Syrians currently residing in Jordan are fragile. While Jordan has historically provided refugee protection on ad hoc basis, the country is not a signatory of the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention. It lacks asylum legislation, and regards non-Palestinian forced migrants as 'temporary guests' rather than as 'refugees' (Mason 2011). Non-Palestinian forced migrants are subject to the country's

legislation applicable to foreigners. Further, according to the 1998 Memorandum of Understanding, a non-binding agreement between Jordan and UNHCR (Zaiotti 2006), Jordan is considered a transit country and UNHCR is responsible for the protection of forced migrants, adjudicating refugee claims, and facilitating third-country resettlement (Ward 2014). As a result, forced migrants' protection and access to refugee status depend on international and humanitarian organizations. European countries have increasingly put economic and political pressure on Jordan to control and limit the flows of forced migrants bound for Europe. Jordan, accordingly, is an important node in the international refugee regime.

Denmark is a prime site to study the relationship between Western migration management and the lived experiences of forced migrants. Among European countries, Denmark has been a pioneer of strict immigration law and asylum policy. In the early 1980s, Danish politicians mainly perceived asylum seekers as a vulnerable group of people who needed assistance, protection, and legal rights. Yet, toward the end of the 1980s, this political attitude gradually started to change as the number of spontaneous asylum seekers increased and migrants began to enter Denmark on their own rather than through the UN refugee resettlement program. In response to this increasing asylum population, right wing politicians turned immigration into a controversial topic within both the Danish Parliament and society at large. Gradually, asylum seekers and refugees were perceived as a threat to the Danish sovereignty, society, and culture.

Denmark's current Immigration and Integration Acts are results of the past 30 years' intense political debates and more than 160 legal amendments. Danish politicians have sought to stem the flow of asylum seekers by creating a more restrictive asylum policy

and optimizing the asylum system. The legal changes have, among others, included the repeal of the de-facto refugee category and asylum seekers' right to family reunification and implementation of new practices such as a cash allowance, a contract system, biometric data collection, and motivation measures (economic penalties and solitary confinement) to ensure asylum seekers' cooperation with state officials (Vitus and Nielsen 2011). These practices remain in force.

Similar to other European countries, Denmark has experienced a substantial increase of Syrian as well as other forced migrants seeking asylum in Denmark between 2014 and 2016, a period that is often talked about as the "European refugee crisis" (Collyer and King 2016; Dempsey and McDowell 2019). In September 2015, the Danish Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time, Kristian Jensen, presented the Danish government's proposal of how to solve the so-called refugee crisis, stating:

We are in the midst of a historical crisis. It calls for a bold response and for everyone in the EU to contribute to lifting this task. In presenting the package today, we are sending a clear message that Denmark is ready to take on extra responsibility in solving the extraordinary migration crisis that Europe is facing. We are faced with an overwhelming and complex challenge. We need to address the challenge both domestically and internationally. With our package, we are boosting our already strong efforts in support of the refugees in Syria's neighbouring countries, we are strengthening the integration of the refugees who come to Denmark, and we are contributing to mitigating the current migration pressure in Europe (Jensen 2015).

At the same time, as the Danish government supported a range of organizations and programs in Syria and the neighboring countries, it also passed more than 100 amendments to the Danish Immigration Act (*Udlændingelov*) and the Danish Integration Act (*Integrationslov*) respectively (Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet 2019). Several

of the legal changes have received international attentions, such as the Danish state's decision to seize assets from refugees (Taylor 2015a). Others amendments and policies were adapted by other European countries, such as the suspension of family reunification (see Chapter Three), illustrating how Denmark continued to act as a trendsetter for the European Union's asylum policy (Gammeltoft-Hansen and Whyte 2011). The majority of these amendments sought to deter future forced migrants from seeking refuge in Denmark. This deterrence policy became particularly apparent in the fall of 2015, when the Danish government placed an advertisement in a number of newspapers in Lebanon, listing a number of reasons why Denmark is an undesirable destination for refugees (Taylor 2015b).

Deterrence and securitization are intended to make Denmark a less attractive asylum destination, reduce the number of asylum seekers, and ensure that the asylum seekers who are granted asylum will assimilate into the Danish society. While many of these amendments did not directly target Syrian refugees, they were often rationalized and legitimized through references specifically to the Syrian Civil War and the increasing number of Syrian refugees on the move (in Syria's neighboring countries). Thus, in addition to the many legal changes, my informants' experiences of refuge were also shaped by the fact that Syrians became the articulated target of Danish anti-immigrant discourses and legislation.

Taken together, Jordan and Denmark provide important insights into the actions of states spearheading and implementing migration management policies and practices, and into the evolving connections between them.

This dissertation draws on in-depth fieldwork conducted in Denmark and Jordan between October 2015 and July 2017. In Denmark, I carried out archival research, seven semi-structured interviews with representatives from Danish Red Cross, Action Aid, the Danish Refugee Council, and the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as 40 semi-structured interviews and six focus groups with Syrian refugees who had obtained refugee protection in Denmark. As part of this research, I also volunteered in three different community centers assisting asylum seekers, refugees, and other migrants in need. In Jordan, I conducted 27 semi-structured interviews with Danish state representatives as well as program coordinators, case workers, and staff members from a range of humanitarian organizations, which had received a form of funding or financial support from the Danish state. In this dissertation, the interviews and focus groups with Syrian refugees as well as my observations through my work at the three community centers are at the center of my analysis. The interviews conducted with 34 humanitarian organizations, state and non-state actors in Denmark and Jordan as well as the archival research on the transnational linkages between Denmark and the Middle East serve to provide background information on formal processes and transnational connections.

Situated within feminist political geography, my work does not insist on merely examining the geopolitics of migration from the perspective of the law, the state, and policy makers. Instead, I seek to grasp the ways in which geopolitics of migration are encountered, experienced, and negotiated on the ground – by the people who are most affected by these state policies and practices. This follows from key thinkers in the field of feminist political geography. For instance, as Alison Mountz (2010, 35) has argued, “Written policies . . . tell only partial stories – idealized versions of what *might be* or

what *should* happen.” In extending this insight further, I show that written policies may not only tell us partial stories but, indeed, ones that hide and flatten more than they reveal. This dissertation brings these crucial insights from feminist political geography into conversation with related discussions in critical refugee studies – more specifically its important efforts to unsettle core ideas of the refugee and the very category of refuge.

In this dissertation, I make three distinct yet interrelated arguments. First, I critically examine refuge as it is provided by a signatory state. Rather than looking at refuge as a place of freedom and as the radical antithesis of violence, I show how Syrian refugees’ experiences of *lived* refuge renders this space a site of dense governmental practices that deliberately target and dehumanize refugees. The government of refuge takes place through a number of distinct governmental technologies and strategies spanning from mundane bureaucratic decisions to legal changes and categories as well as disciplinary administrative practices surrounding the provision of assistance. While interrogating refuge is an important move in its own right that recovers the many obscured and intimate consequences of state practices, it also has other significances as well. As I show, the government of refuge does not simply make refugee lives difficult or even unlivable; it also has profound roles in producing subjects. My second argument concerns refuge and its relationship to questions of spatiality. More specifically, grappling with the experiences of *lived* refuge troubles conventional boundaries between war/not war and raises new questions about the multiple ways in which Denmark and Syria have been and are connected before and after the so-called ‘Syrian refugee crisis’. I argue that refuge and war do not exist in any rigid spatial or temporal contradistinction; rather the two are intimately linked and woven together through time and space.

Third, I argue that engagement with the rich texture of Syrian refugees' accounts of everyday lives allows us to reflect on the politics and geopolitics of so-called migration management in new ways. Here, I suggest that the sovereign decision to grant refuge must be resituated not merely as a singular event but as a series of routinized discretionary decisions. I further show how attending to Syrian refugees' experience of refuge in all of its violent and subjectifying impulses ultimately helps to reclaim the refugee subject, not merely as passive and grateful, but as a narrator and a political subject that speaks back and find ways to exercise politics in terms of survival and making do. A crucial corollary of all these arguments is to challenge the liberal promise of refuge. The point here is to make sense of refuge in its lived forms, rather than as an absence, lack, or failure to live up to its idealized essence.

For the remainder of this introductory chapter, I discuss the idea of modern refugee protection and summarize the literature I use to conceptualize the geopolitics of migration, the lived experience of refuge, and war. I will discuss each body of literature and my contribution to them in more depth in each empirical chapter. Following this summary, I provide a brief description of each chapter and a roadmap for the dissertation.

Refuge: a Geopolitical Practice

In its most basic sense, refuge denotes a place of relief, safety, and security. Originating from the Old French word “refuge” meaning “hiding place” (Oxford English Dictionary), the term refuge commonly refers to a physical place that provides safety or a shelter from danger, trouble, and hardship. A refuge can be a building, a safe house, a church, a city, or a country – all places in which the person taking refuge feels a sense of relief and

security from the danger s/he has fled from. In this dissertation, however, I am specifically concerned with refuge as it is provided for and legally defined by sovereign nation-states signatory to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and 1967 Protocol (hereafter “1951 Convention”). Following this, I understand refuge as a geopolitical practice of providing protection to forced migrants fleeing violence and persecution.

Throughout history, people in various forms of danger have sought refuge in religious institutions, city states, and countries. Yet, it was not until the twentieth century that refugee populations became significant in numbers due to various wars and genocides (Darling 2017) and became marked by the international community as a “problem” to be managed (Soguk 1999). Today, the vast majority of the world’s refugees experience long-term exile in countries nearby to their countries of origin, sometimes for decades and without foreseeable end. Many of these refugees live in refugee camps, cities, and informal settlements without access to the entitlements outlined by the 1951 Convention (Hyndman and Giles 2016), a life marked by liminality (Ramadan 2013) and waiting (Brun 2015). Yet, some refugees are able to gain access to Convention Refugee status or other legal protection statuses in other/third safe countries either through international resettlement programs or through successfully obtaining asylum. Refuge in countries signatory to the 1951 Convention – most located in the global North – is assumed in humanitarian, political, and scholarly dialogues to be a “durable solution” to the refugee problem (Ramsay 2019), offer a “better life” (Horst 2006), and entail some kind of transition to ‘modernity’ from places deemed less modern (Hyndman and Giles 2016).

Political refuge is a product of the international post-war state system and associated liberal ideas about freedom, liberty, and state sovereignty. Created in the aftermath of World War II, the 1951 Convention provided the first basic legal definition of the refugee as an out-of-place victim; who has crossed international borders and unable to obtain protection and rights from his/her country of origin. In order to solve the ‘refugee problem’ – their displacement and their statelessness – the 1951 Convention further defines the sovereign nation-state as the ultimate provider of refuge and protection, as it holds the capacity to restore the citizen-state bond and re-establish the national order of things (Malkki 1996).

However, while the 1951 Convention provides a legal framework for signatory states’ obligations towards refugees, the individual signatory state holds much power with regard to interpreting the 1951 Convention in terms of who qualifies as a refugee (Ashutosh and Mountz 2012; Gorman 2017) and how to treat asylum seekers and accepted refugees (Coddington 2018). It is up to the individual sovereign nation-states to decide how they are going to interpret and implement the obligations outlined by the 1951 Convention. That is, varying interpretations of the 1951 Convention together with national policies and everyday state practices mark the condition of refuge. Furthermore, as Kate Coddington (2018, 331) explains, “landscapes of protection (...) [also] include the affective climates that infuse refugees’ lives with precariousness from negative media coverage, hostile rumour or exploitation”. As such, providing state protection and refuge is not just a humanitarian act but also “a moment when the sovereign state reasserts its monopoly over matters of security” (Espiritu 2014, 175).

Refuge is rooted in notions of hospitality. Granting a refugee – a stranger – refuge and refugee protection is often framed through the language of state “hospitality”. Following article 14 of the United Nation Human Rights Declaration of 1948, “everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution”, the 1951 Convention prohibits states from penalizing refugees for unauthorized entry into a state when the purpose of his/her entry is to claim asylum. As such, states are obligated to welcome refugees seeking protection and provide her/him with basic human rights. By allowing a refugee – a stranger – to stay within the territory of the state and be included into the political community (through legal refugee status), the sovereign state - as the host - provides not only hospitality to the refugee - the guest - but also gives the refugee that which he/she is understood to be lacking; state protection and rights. However, drawing on Derrida, Mimi Thi Nguyen (2012, 71) argues that in the context of providing refuge, hospitality:

is certainly, necessarily, a right, a duty, an obligation, the greeting of the foreign other as a friend but on the condition that the host (...) the one who receives, lodges or gives asylum remains the patron, the master of the household, on the condition that he maintains his own authority in his own home, that he looks after himself and sees to and considers all that concerns him as thereby affirms the law of hospitality as the law of the household.

Thus, while signatory states have the duty to provide refuge, this hospitality is also that which enables the state to assert its control over the stranger, the refugee.

The prospect of obtaining refuge is often associated with the promise of freedom, future, and betterment (Ramsay 2019). Apart from protecting the most basic and fundamental of human rights, the ‘right to life’, the 1951 Convention also seeks to protect

liberal freedom, human dignity, and equality of all mankind (Long 2013). The 1951 Convention defines political, cultural, and social identities and freedoms as potential causes of persecution and thus in need of also being protected in refuge. The 1951 Convention, as Long (2013) reminds us, “presents a particular liberal-democratic understanding of political community and popular sovereignty as the forum through which to express – and through expression protection – human dignity and human freedoms” (Long 2013, 16). As such, the 1951 Convention provisions that signatory states protect a person who, as a result of his or her membership of a particular group, is unable to access meaningful citizenship and its associated rights, while at the same time grant this individual entitlements – such as civil and political rights – on the same terms as nationals and other non-citizens. Thus, according to the 1951 Convention, refuge encompasses a form of protection that not only provides a space of safety but also enables those who meet the refugee definition to live a life with dignity and a sense of normality and stability (Ogg 2016). In this sense, refuge is often imagined by refugees, humanitarian organizations, policy makers, as well as scholars to signal an end of instability, uncertainty, and fear of persecution and mark the start of betterment and prospect. As such, within this liberal democratic framework, refuge is supposed to be a place where refugees have the freedom to build new lives, plan for the future, acquire education, and gain employment experiences (Hyndman and Giles 2016).

Securitization of Migration

States have long sought to control migration and migrants (Coleman 2012; Kanstroom 2010). However, since the end of the 1980s, Western states and the media increasingly

perceive ‘uncontrolled’ flows of migrants as a security threat national security and territorial integrity (Bigo 2002; Karyotis 2007; Khosravi 2010; Nicholls 2013; Walters 2010). “Illegal”, “bogus refugees”, non-legitimate refugees, and potential ‘terrorists’ are all terms used by the media, politicians, and anti-immigrant groups in their effort to argue that unauthorized migrants and spontaneous asylum seekers variably pose a threat to the nation-state’s welfare system and sovereignty (Neumayer 2005; Pratt and Valverde 2002; Zetter 2007). While unwanted migrants who take action and move to countries located in the global North are represented as potential threats to the welfare state and national security in Europe, Australia, and the United States and Canada (Huysmans 2000), refugees, often in protracted displacement in refugee camps in the global South and silenced, helpless, and passive objects of management policies, technologies, and practices (Hyndman and Giles 2011; Malkki 1995). This political process of framing a particular group of people or an activity as an object of security has been captured with the term “securitization” (Buzan, et al. 1997).

In Europe, the securitization of migration began with the Schengen Agreement in the early 1990s. Since then, the EU’s internal borders have largely “disappeared” in favor of the so-called Fortress Europe, which set out to harmonize immigration and border control for signatory states (Leitner 1997). Today, Fortress Europe is a highly securitized migration apparatus, which attempts to monitor, control, and regulate migrants through technologies such as biometric registration, I-Map, FRONTEX¹, the Dublin Agreement, and EURODAC (Feldman 2011). The disappearance of internal borders has led to increased concerns among European countries regarding their individual lack of national

¹ European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union

control and sovereignty over immigration and border security (Feldman 2011; Salter 2004; Wren 2001). These concerns have pushed towards a strengthening of EU's external borders (Bialasiewicz 2012) – a strengthening that so far has included various programs and agreements with countries bordering EU in order to control, police, and stop immigration before migrants reach the actual border of the European Union, thereby externalized EU borders (Gammeltoft-Hansen 2010). As a consequence, migrants increasingly find themselves in special holding centers for processing asylum applications outside the EU's borders (Andrijasevic 2010), or in detention centers in remote and non-sovereign territories, as “[e]nforcement practices grow more transnational, and the relationship between migrants, refugees, and nation-states grows more ambiguous” (Mountz 2010, 145; also see Andrijasevic 2010; Hyndman and Mountz 2008). Accordingly, new spaces of strategic exclusion have emerged. Thus, the securitization of migration marks not only a shift in how states perceive migrants but also how they treat migrants (Mountz et al. 2013).

Border Control and Immigration Enforcement

Geographers and other scholars have made important contribution to the literature on the securitization of migration, focusing on the ways in which securitization of migration has brought about a wide range of new practices, technologies, and institutions of migration management. These include the temporal and spatial expansion of border control (Coleman and Kocher 2011), new technologies of biometric surveillance (Amoore 2006), the growth of detention and deportation (Bloch and Schuster 2005; Genova and Peutz 2010; Mountz et al. 2013), frequent transfers of detainees (Gill 2009), and self-reporting

by asylum seekers (Conlon 2010). Scholars have further documented how these new practices and institutions influence migrants' lives in terms of protracted waiting and legal ambiguity (Conlon 2011; Hyndman and Giles 2011; Mountz 2011), mobility (Ashutosh and Mountz 2012; Coleman 2007), citizenship (Luibheid 2013; Staeheli et al. 2012), and family detention (Martin 2011). These studies offer important insights into how sovereign power and migration management practices act upon, over, and through migrants.

While the majority of the literature on securitization of migration shows how the state sees and treats forced migrants, it says little about how forced migrants see and experience the state. There is a need to examine forced migrants' experiences and the subjectivities that emerge in their encounters with the international refugee regime and migration management practices in order to not silence migrants and overlook their potential political subjectivities and actions.

This dissertation's focus Syrian refugees' experiences allows me to uncover the transnational unevenness and connectedness of migration management as it is materialized through migrants' bodies, experiences and struggles as they become refugees. It offers important insights into the lived realities produced through immigration enforcement. In addition, a focus on migrant experiences holds the potential to address how geopolitical relations of power are *constituted*, the dissertation also reflects on how they are challenged and *remade*. In doing so, this dissertation contributes to feminist geographers' efforts to tease out how migrants themselves experience, embody, or even challenge this changing geopolitical landscape of migration management (Hiemstra 2012, 2014; Nagel and Staeheli 2008; Noxolo 2014; Peutz 2010).

A Feminist Geopolitics of Forced Migration and Refuge

Feminist geographers have made important contributions to the literature on the geopolitics of migration. Broadening the traditional geopolitical analysis beyond the nation-state to include a range of actors and spaces, feminist geographers have shown how power acts spatially in the world to control, regulate, confine, intercept, racialize, criminalize, and gender migration and migrants. As part of broader moves to de-center the state and dominant voices in geopolitics (Dowler and Sharp 2001; Hyndman 2001b; Secor 2001), feminist geographers have importantly moved their analytical focus from the borders to border-crossers even whilst continuing to foreground the violence that borders exercise (Hyndman 2012; also see Conlon 2011; Collyer and King 2015; Mountz 2011). Yet, somewhat surprisingly, the interrogation of geopolitics of migration often becomes less central in these analyses once the migrant, including refugees and asylum seekers, has obtained legal status in the country of resettlement or asylum. For instance, feminist geographers concerned with processes of bordering and migration management have mainly focused on migrants whose legal status is still to be determined, liminal, and precarious. As a result, this body of literature has primarily focused on the geopolitics of (forced) migration in terms of access (inclusion/exclusion) and treatment of asylum seekers waiting for their case to be determined, rejected asylum seekers awaiting removal deportation, or undocumented migrants. This, of course, remains a fundamental question with enormous political stakes, particularly given the wide ranging efforts by states around the world to limit or entirely preclude the making of refugee claims.

However, with few exceptions, this body of literature has left the concept of refuge itself fairly un-interrogated. Refuge as a space and site of geopolitics as well as the

lived experience of refuge in signatory countries have remained under-explored by feminist geographers, despite some notable exceptions (Hyndman and Giles 2016). This oversight has significant analytical and political consequences. If we do not consider refugees' lives in refuge as part of the geopolitics of migration, we run the risk of reproducing the liberal narrative of refuge in countries signatory to the 1951 Convention as a “durable solution” to the refugee problem (Ramsay 2019).

Re-conceptualizing the refugee

Recent work with the field of critical refugee studies has begun to interrogate rescue, refuge, and resettlement and map the interlinkages between war, violence, and refuge. Importantly, critical refugees studies has re-conceptualized the ‘refugee’ as “a site of social and political critique” and “a social actor whose life, when traced, illuminates the interconnections of colonization, war, and global social change” (Espiritu 2014, 11; also see Espiritu 2006), rather than “an object to be studied, a problem to be solved, or a legal classification to be dissected” (Tang 2015, 5). Through this re-conceptualization, this body of literature has begun to expose the hidden violence behind the humanitarian term “refuge” and examine the roles that “the refugee subject” play in wider state politics and narratives about war and refuge (Espiritu 2014; Nguyen 2012; Tang 2015). Rather than locating the “problem” of refugees in the body and minds of the refugees themselves, critical refugee studies seeks to address the geopolitical conditions and legacy of war and social upheaval (Espiritu 2006; Trinh 2010; Um 2015). In doing so, this body of work traces the connections and relationship between war, colonialism, race, violence, and forced displacement.

In this dissertation, I bring insights from critical refugee studies together with literature on transnationalism and time-space (Chapter Three), humanitarian government and subjectivity (Chapter Four), and geographies of war (Chapter Five). I argue that we need to continue following forced migrants and extend our geopolitical analysis beyond the point of access/admission to sovereign territory. Rather than taking refuge as an already-given and unproblematic term denoting an abstract and well defined space or territory, I argue that a closer reading of refuge reveals processes, relationships, and experiences of power, violence, and politics. I seek to unsettle any assumptions that obtaining refuge in Denmark - in “the West” or “global north” - entails an end or solution to displacement and some kind of transition from a less safe space to a safe space, from a less modern place to modernity.

Embodiment

This research uses embodiment to uncover the processes, relationships, and experiences of Syrian forced migrants. As an analytic tool, embodiment challenges the traditional geopolitical gaze (one without women and other marginalized voices) by shifting the focus onto people and how they experience state policies (Hiemstra 2012). Embodiment shows how concepts and ways of being are taken up and employed by people (Dowler and Sharp 2001). Feminist geographers have argued that the body is a powerful site and scale for examining migration (Pratt 2004) because it calls attention to such embodied subjectivities as ‘immigrant’, ‘refugee’, ‘illegal’, and ‘failed asylum seeker’ and to the role migrant bodies plays in the production of space and place (McDowell 1999). Further,

the scale of the body illustrates the differentiated dimensions of migration along the lines of social differences such as gender, race, nation, sexuality, and religion (Silvey 2004).

In studies on migration, geographers have deployed embodiment to examine refugee displacement (Hyndman 2000), the power of states to manage transnational migration (Mountz 2004), the effects of immigration enforcement policies (Hiemstra 2012), and the violence enacted on migrant bodies by bordering practices (Mountz and Loyd 2014). Embodiment as an analytic approach puts:

forth a complex reading of power in and through bodies that refuses dualistic, structure/agency polarizations, and insists that migration be viewed through embodied cultural struggles of both migrants themselves and the forces that control their mobility” (Silvey 2004, 142).

Building on these insights, this dissertation examines how refugees embody various subjectivities, mundane practices, and struggles as they negotiate the state, practices of migration management, and rework the geopolitical powers within it. More specifically, I seek to bring this work on embodiment into conversation with literature on political subjectivity.

Political Subjectivity and Subaltern Geopolitics

Even though new state practices of migration management strive to control, exclude, and de-politicize forced migrants, it would be a mistake to conclude that forced migrants are “abject subjectivities, discarded and jettisoned from political life” (Nyers 2004, 207; also see Häkli and Kallio 2013; Häkli, et al. 2017). It is therefore important to examine not only how forced migrants’ everyday life is influenced by new state practices, but to also

examine how forced migrants themselves experience state practices (Waite et al. 2014), and how forced migrants contest and challenge these practices (Gill et al. 2014; Millner 2011). Such an analysis of forced migrants' embodied experiences of everyday life is necessary in order to focus on "the migrant self as constituted through a range of intersecting, sometimes competing, forces and processes, and as playing agentic roles in these processes" (Silvey 2004, 499). It provides insights that challenge the assumption that forced migrants are vulnerable, passive, de-politicized subjects.

The politicization of a subject takes place in the moment when a subject speaks against injustice and challenges the status quo of dominant order. "Becoming political is that moment when the naturalness of the dominant virtues is called into question and their arbitrariness revealed" (Isin 2002, 275). Far from the docile subject that the Danish state practices seek to produce, I argue that refugees constitute themselves as political subjects through forms of everyday resilience, re-working, and resistance (Katz 2004). They enact alternative subjectivities. Often the moment of becoming political or the performance of political subjectivities is connected to demonstrations and other direct forms of political resistance (Isin and Nielsen 2008; Sziarto and Leitner 2010). Yet, by only searching for moments of overt political resistance, we fail to consider how marginalized groups including forced migrants are able to engage in other practices through which they become themselves political (Chatterjee 2011).

Subaltern geopolitics (Jazeel 2014; Sharp 2011) provides a crucial framework for theorizing forced migrants' political subjectivities because it moves beyond traditional geopolitical binaries of political domination and resistance. Drawing on postcolonial notions of power (cf. bell 1990), subaltern geopolitics opens up possibilities for political

subjectivities that are neither dominant nor resistant, neither fully 'inside' nor 'outside' the existing order. Subaltern geopolitics calls for a political geography that engages with a number of different voices and actions – particularly those that have remained obscure within conventional geopolitics. The actors, often rendered invisible within dominant geopolitics, enact political subjectivities that cannot be articulated as or reduced to resistance but rather rework the geopolitical (Harker 2011; Smith 2011). In highlighting these nuances, subaltern geopolitics usefully expands the scope of what counts as political subjectivities and offers alternative ways of imagining and doing geopolitics (Koopman 2011; Sharp 2011; 2013).

Building on these insights, this dissertation examines how Syrian refugees embody various subjectivities, mundane practices, and struggles as they negotiate the state, practices of migration management, and rework the geopolitical powers within it. Refugees' embodiment does not exist on a different scale disjointed from the state or the nation (Secor 2001). Rather, I understand migration management and forced migrants' embodied experiences as entangled in the same process (Sharp 2007) – the process of securitization of migration. Thus, this dissertation contributes a geographical account of the embodiment of forced migration and refuge to the existing literature on securitization of migration.

Roadmap of dissertation

CHAPTER TWO: Feminist Geographical Research in Denmark and Jordan: Research Sites and Methodologies

In this chapter, I provide a description of the two field sites - Jordan and Denmark - where I conducted my research that this dissertation is based on. I situate my research within the displacement caused by the Syrian Civil War and the Danish state's response to forced migration both domestically and internationally. I then describe the research methodologies that I used to collect data: archival research, interviews, and focus groups. Within this description, I reflect on how I approached these methods and the challenges of gaining access and working across multiple cultural and linguistic contexts.

CHAPTER THREE: Challenging Forced Transnationalism: Syrians' Struggles for Family Reunification in Denmark

In this chapter, I focus on the protracted separation of displaced families and Syrians' efforts to reunite in Denmark. More specifically, I focus on §7.3 a temporary legal protection instituted by the Danish state in 2015. On paper, §7.3 might appear as a refugee protection category that enables a refugee to gain state protection and a residence permit, yet in practice Syrians' accounts illustrate how it permeates and disrupts their family and intimate personal relations across borders. Chapter Three grapples with §7.3's severe – yet hard to discern – consequences for Syrian families subject to it. This chapter contributes to political geographers' long-standing efforts to trace the geographies of border work by examining Syrian refugees' embodied experiences of §7.3, as it separates their families by keeping them geographically dispersed. I bring together insights from feminist geographical literature on time-space, socio-legal scholarship on the temporality

of law, and literature on political subjectivity to illustrate how the family becomes a site of political struggle. I argue that the geopolitics of refuge needs to be examined in a way that includes but also moves beyond the actual territorial border line as well as the legal border (the moment a person obtains protection and legal status).

CHAPTER FOUR: Lived Refuge: The government of refuge in Denmark

Through an engagement with Syrian refugees' accounts of everyday life in Denmark, Chapter Four locates the routine and bureaucratic practices at work in *lived* refuge. This term specifically foregrounds the disjunctures between idealized notions of refuge with its ostensible 'humanitarian' ethos and the practical articulations of refuge as manifested in the everyday lived experiences of actual refugees struggling to remake their lives. Drawing on findings from focus group discussions with Syrian refugees, I examine *lived* refuge through Syrians' experiences of a number of training programs, workfare regimes and other legally-mandated programs that refugees in Denmark are obliged to undertake. Bringing together insights from the field of critical refugee studies, work on "humanitarian government" (Fassin 2012), as well as theorization of subjection, I argue that that the sovereign decision to grant a person refuge is an ongoing practice of subjection, which structures the experience of *lived* refuge.

CHAPTER 5: War and Refuge: Syrian Refugees' Journey for Safety

This chapter offers a feminist analysis of war. Geographers have made great efforts to theorize the geographies of war and state violence, illustrating how war is understood to take place everywhere, elsewhere, at home, and within algorithms and practices of

policing. This chapter builds on the literature by tracing how war is encountered and negotiated by refugees within and across geographical sites. Drawing on interviews and focus group discussions with Syrian refugees in Denmark, I examine Syrian refugees' experiences and articulation of war; the war of death in Syria and a war in Denmark, which Syrians called *ḥarb nafṣiā* (حَرْبُ نَفْسِيَّة). While *ḥarb nafṣiā* cannot be easily translated into English, the term refers to a war on and against the soul and the existence of a person. I argue that the experience of war does not end when Syrians are able to escape the territory of Syria. Rather, the violence and trauma of war are experienced in intimate ways, appear in unexpected places, and morph into what my informants call *ḥarb nafṣiā*. In doing so, this chapter contributes to feminist geographers' theorizations of war. I seek to further this literature by using *ḥarb nafṣiā* to question the location of war and unsettle the dominant narrative of Europe as a place of peace.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

In this final chapter, I summarize this dissertation's key findings and arguments. I reflect on the need to unsettle refuge as it is provided by signatory states as well as on the stakes of doing so.

CHAPTER TWO

FEMINIST GEOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH IN DENMARK AND JORDAN: RESEARCH SITES AND METHODOLOGIES

Introduction

This dissertation draws on data collected through extensive fieldwork conducted in Denmark and Jordan from October 2015 through July 2017. This dissertation project was designed to answer the following two research questions:

RQ1: How is the refugee regime constituted across transnational space?

RQ2: How do Syrian forced migrants experience the refugee regime across their migration trajectory and once they arrive in Denmark?

Situated within feminist methodology, I sought to answer these two questions by combining a set of qualitative methods: archival research, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups. I collected archival data at the Danish National Archive (Rigsarkivet) and through online databases, I conducted 34 semi-structured interviews with state- and non-state actors in Denmark and Jordan, and I carried out 40 in-depth interviews and six focus groups with Syrian refugees, who had obtained refugee protection status in Denmark. During my fieldwork in Denmark, I also volunteered at three different community centers that offer a range of assistance and support to asylum seekers, officially recognized refugees, and other migrants.

In this chapter, I begin by briefly situating my research within the context of the Syrian Civil War and the resulting displacement of Syrians across international borders. I then consider the Danish state's response to Syrian refugees, including humanitarian

efforts in Jordan and legislative changes and immigration enforcement practices enacted in Denmark. I then describe the research design for this project, including the timeline and the different research methods that I used, and I reflect on how I approached these methods. I end this chapter by reflecting on conducting research with Syrian refugees, a refugee population that has received a great deal of attention from researchers, journalists, and politicians as a result of the complicated geopolitical situation in Syria and the so-called refugee ‘crisis’ in Europe. As part of this reflection, I describe the challenges of conducting a transnational research project that spans across multiple countries, languages, and cultures.

The Syrian Civil War and the Danish state’s response to Syrian refugees

As the Arab Spring and mass demonstrations spread across North Africa and the Middle East, many commentators thought that Syria – a “kingdom of silence” – would be immune to this movement calling for political change (Pearlman 2018). However, in March 2011, the Syrian security forces arrested a group of children in the city of Deraa, accusing them of painting anti-regime graffiti on a school wall in the city. The arrest, combined with local officials’ unwillingness to release the children, sparked a series of protests and demonstrations. Just one week after the first protest in Deraa, tens of thousands of Syrians joined demonstrations across the country, calling for reform and demanding that the regime be overthrown (Lynch 2013; Yassin-Kassab and Al-Shami 2018). As it is now well documented, Bashar al-Asad regime’s response to these uprisings as well as the various opposition groups formed in the aftermath, have been and continue to be indiscriminate and brutal, which have led to charges of gross human rights

violations and war crimes (Dakhli 2013). In addition to the widespread atrocities committed against the civilian population by Syrian state authorities, there have been reports of many other atrocities committed by other militant groups in Syria and its border regions.

The Syrian Civil War shaped, altered, and continues to affect Syrians' lives. Several of the Syrians who I engaged with for this research took part in these early protests, hoping that a different and less repressive Syria might be possible. Many explained to me that Syrians did not come to Europe because they were "hungry", stating instead that they sought refuge on purely political (rather than material) grounds. Many of them have lost their homes, family members, and friends in the war. Syrians also described how the Syrian Civil War continues to mark their lives as their family members and friends who remain in Syria face varying degrees of deprivation and threats of violence. In Chapter Five, I examine how war is present in Syrian refugees' daily lives in Denmark and explore the interconnectedness between war and refuge.

As a result of the Syrian Civil War, an estimated 6.2 million Syrians have been displaced internally and more than 6.3 million Syrians have fled the country in search of refuge in countries neighboring Syria and elsewhere (UNHCR 2018). In Jordan, more than 660,000 Syrian refugees have registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (hereafter "UNHCR") (UNHCR 2019). Yet, the total number of Syrians in Jordan is estimated to be 1.4 million (*Jordan Times* 2015). The wellbeing and protection of Syrians currently residing in Jordan and other neighboring countries, such as Turkey and Lebanon, is fragile. While Jordan has historically provided refugee protection on an ad hoc basis, the country is not a signatory of the 1951 United Nations

Refugee Convention and it lacks asylum legislation (Chatelard 2003). Its government regards non-Palestinian refugees as ‘temporary guests’ rather than as ‘refugees’ (Mason 2011). Non-Palestinian refugees are subject to the country’s legislation applicable to foreigners. Further, according to the 1998 Memorandum of Understanding, a non-binding agreement between Jordan and UNHCR (Zaiotti 2006), Jordan is considered a ‘transit country’ and UNHCR is responsible for the protection of refugees, adjudicating refugee claims, and facilitating third-country resettlement (Ward 2014). As a result, Syrian refugees’ protection and access to refugee status in Jordan and other countries in the Middle East depends on the work of international and humanitarian organizations (Chatty 2016; Culcasi 2019).

Similar to other European countries, the Danish state has undertaken humanitarian and development interventions in Jordan² as it has sought to contain Syrian refugees in countries in close geographic proximity to Syria (Lenner and Turner 2019). While the Danish state has funded programs in Jordan and other neighboring countries including Turkey and Lebanon since the Syrian Civil War broke out, this migration management strategy became much more explicit in the summer of 2015 as (Syrian) refugees arrived at the Danish border in greater numbers than in previous years (see table 2.1 below). In this context, Danish politicians began to advocate for policy approaches that would allow Denmark to ‘help’ refugees in the so-called ‘neighboring areas’, rather than within

² These interventions have taken place through various funding schemes, include contributions to the Jordan Humanitarian Fund (JHF) a multi-donor country based pooled fund established in 2014 and managed by OCHA, humanitarian framework agreements with the Danish Refugee Council, Save the Children Denmark, the Danish Red Cross, UNHCR, and UNICEF, and funding of specific projects such as Caritas health care program in Mafraq in Northern Jordan. In addition, the Danish Ministry of foreign Affairs has taken the lead on the EU Regional Development and Protection Programme for refugees and host communities in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq, a program funded by the European Union, Denmark, Ireland, The Netherlands, Czech Republic, Norway, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

Danish territory through the Danish asylum system. Politicians argued that a policy targeting the neighboring areas would allow the Danish state to assist more forced migrants as well as the (allegedly) *most vulnerable* refugees, discouraging Syrians from making the dangerous journey across the Mediterranean Sea (Regeringen 2015). In short, intervening in the ‘neighboring areas’ was described by politicians as a better value for Denmark’s limited funds.

Syrian refugees in Denmark

Despite intentional efforts to contain forced migrants in what Hyndman (2010) has described as an external location ‘over there’, Syrian refugees arrived to Denmark to make asylum claims, often after a long, costly, and dangerous journey crossing the Mediterranean Sea or the Aegean Sea. Through the 2000s, Syrians increasingly arrived to Denmark to claim asylum, yet in small numbers; approximately 30-60 applicants each year. As a result of the Syrian Civil War, the number of Syrians seeking asylum in Denmark increased to 429 applications in 2011 (Udlændingestyrelsen 2012) and continued to increase each year until peaking in 2015 (see table 2.1). In 2016, the number of Syrians applying for asylum in Denmark dropped to just 1,253 and continued to drop steadily throughout 2017 (Udlændingestyrelsen 2017), primarily because of the 2016 migrant control deal between European states and the Turkish government (European Commission 2016).

Table 2.1: Number of Syrian refugees claiming asylum in Denmark

Nationality	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
Syrians	429	822	1710	7087	8608	1253	863	20772
Total number of people seeking asylum	5115	3806	7557	14792	21316	6266	3500	62352

(Udlændingestyrelsen 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018)

Table 2.2: Number of Syrians obtaining refugee protection status

Nationality	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
Syrians	457	752	1382	4126	5995	5286	1030	19028
Total number of people obtaining refugee protection status	2057	2460	3806	6031	10783	7444	2706	35287

(Udlændingestyrelsen 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018)

Table 2.3: Family reunification approved

Nationality	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
Syrian Partner	22	64	128	494	2023	870	395	3996
Syrian Children	35	114	237	946	4593	2065	1062	9052
Total number of Syrians	57	178	493	1440	6616	2935	1457	13176
Total number of family reunification cases	2902	3170	5112	5727	11645	7679	7015	43250

(Udlændingestyrelsen 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018)

The three tables above illustrate both a rapid increase and subsequent decrease of Syrians arriving in Denmark in the last decade. Yet, they tell us little about how Syrian refugees became a target group used to legitimize the Danish state's broader efforts to limit and deter refugee migration.

The Danish State's efforts to limit and prevent refugee migration

The majority of Syrians arriving to Denmark shortly after the Syrian Civil War broke out in March 2011 found themselves in a state of legal limbo. In April 2011, the Danish Refugee Appeals Board suspended all deportations to Syria due to growing instability, yet Danish authorities did not automatically grant refuge to Syrians. Rather, the Danish authorities postponed all rulings in asylum cases where the applicant could not be immediately granted asylum; for example, in cases where the applicant had difficulty proving that s/he was individually persecuted in Syria (Flygtningenævnet 2012). During this time, many Syrians had their asylum case postponed and were unable to establish themselves in Denmark because they did not hold a residence permit. At the same time, they were prevented from leaving Denmark because their case was on hold and they were required to live in one of the Danish asylum centers. As a result, several Syrian refugees, particularly Syrian Kurds, went on hunger strikes and organized other demonstrations (Jørgensen 2012). In September 2013, after reviewing new background material, the Danish Refugee Appeals Board found that the conditions in particular areas of Syria were so dangerous and unstable that it called for a change of practice regarding the process of granting refugee protection to Syrians (Flygtningenævnet 2014). Thus, more than two years after the start of the Syrian Civil War the majority of Syrians finally began to obtain asylum much more successfully.

However, the Danish state continued its longstanding efforts to limit Syrian and other refugees' access to legal protection in Denmark. As the number of refugees and other migrants began to increase in the fall of 2014, the government introduced a new refugee protection status to the Danish Immigration Act, §7.3: a general temporary

refugee protection status. This status grants recipients a 1-year temporary residence permit, which can be extended for up to one or two years at a time if the Danish Immigration Service determines that the applicant still has a demonstrable need for protection. Additionally, §7.3 enables Denmark to suspend the recipient’s right to family reunification for the first three years. In short, §7.3 provides a more precarious and potentially short-term protection than §7.1: Convention Status and §7.2: Individual Protection Status because it is a temporary status.

Table 2.4 displays the percentage of Syrian forced migrants who received protection under three different protection statuses between 2014 and 2017. This table documents a shift in which refugee protection status that the majority of Syrian refugees are granted. In 2014, 70% of Syrians who obtained asylum in Denmark were granted asylum according to §7.1: Convention Status, and only 28% were granted asylum according to §7.3. In 2017, these two numbers were more or less reversed.

Table 2.4: Distribution of protection statuses for Syrian refugees

Protection Status	2014	2015	2016	2017
§7.1: Convention Status	70%	66%	45%	27%
§7.2: General Protection Status	2%	1%	1%	1%
§7.3: Individual Temporary Protection Status	28%	33%	54%	72%
(Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet 2018: 7)				

Thus, table 2.4 captures how there has been a shift from mainly granting Syrians asylum according to §7.1 to now §7.3. Short term, this shift has consequences for Syrian refugees’ access to family reunification and higher education. Long term, Syrian refugees

who have obtained protection according to §7.3 risk having their refugee protection status revoked. For this group of refugees, the question of revoking a person's protection status is no longer a matter of ascertaining whether or not the individual person's fear of persecution remains valid. It is instead a matter of whether or not Denmark deems the area or country where the person originates from to be 'safe'. Thus, §7.3 provides a more precarious and potentially short-term protection, and in turn actively alters the very meaning of refuge.

I mentioned the institution of §7.3 here because while §7.3 might seem like an abstract legal statute that is not officially reserved for Syrian refugees, in practice §7.3 has primarily been applied to Syrians. In Chapter Three, I discuss §7.3 in much greater detail and examine how it influences Syrian refugees and their families.

The institution of §7.3 was the first of a series of radical changes carried out by the Danish state. In 2015, the mainstream media reported on the so-called refugee 'crisis' daily and politicians began to argue that the number of refugees seeking asylum in Denmark was historically high. Both right and left wing politicians claimed that this influx of refugees was an extraordinary situation in need of an extraordinary solution because the sheer numbers of forced migrants were said to be putting unprecedented pressure on Denmark and thereby threatening the social cohesion of the Danish society as a whole (Udlændinge-, Integrations-, og Boligmin. 2015).

In the summer of 2015, the newly elected right-wing government took office and as part of its deliberate efforts to stop refugees and other migrants from coming to Denmark, it introduced a wide-ranging asylum policy package that included 35 amendments to the Danish Immigrant Act and the Danish Integration Act. For instance,

Bill 87 quickly became known as the “jewelry bill” because one of the amendments in the bill allowed the Danish police to carry out search-and-seize cash and other valuables from forced migrants seeking asylum in Denmark (Taylor 2015a). While this amendment was a high profile change, other amendments have received far less attention from both Danish and international media. Since the right-wing government took office in 2015, it has passed more than 100 amendments to the Danish Immigration Act and the Danish Integration Act, many of which were hastily pushed through (Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet 2019). While I do not have the space to go into greater detail about each of these amendments here, in a variety of ways and to varying degrees these amendments seek to limit and deter refugee migration. The Danish government’s anti-immigrant discourse and efforts to radically change refugee protection in Denmark – what the government themselves call a “paradigm shift” – have shaped and continue to affect Syrians’ lived experiences of refuge and access to protection in Denmark.

Refuge in Denmark

While Syrians refugees who obtain refugee protection in Denmark have secured themselves from overt threats from the Syrian police, military, and other militant groups operating in Syria, their legal status as refugees does not automatically offer Syrians permanent refuge. Rather, in contrast to, for example, refugees who automatically become permanent residents upon resettlement in Canada (Hyndman and Giles 2016), refugees in Denmark receive a temporary residence permit that is valid for one or two

years depending on their individual refugee protection status.³ At the time I conducted this research, the individual refugee had to apply for an extension before the permit expired in order to renew it. Failure to do so could result in loss of status and expulsion at worst.⁴ After eight years of legal residency in Denmark, a refugee may apply for permanent residence status. To successfully do so, s/he must fulfill a number of requirements regarding Danish language skills and employment and have no criminal record. The temporary nature of their legal refugee status marks Syrians and other refugees' lives as they worry about whether their residence permit will be renewed and find ways to cope with the uncertainty of securing permanent residence.

Syrians' experience of refuge in Denmark is also shaped by their socio-political status as "newly arrived refugees under the Integration Act" (*nyankommen flygtning under integrationsloven*). The Danish Integration Act stipulates that refugees are required to live for five years in the municipality assigned to them. This policy means that refugees are dispersed to municipalities throughout the country and are often forced to live in a town or a neighborhood with a predominantly white population. Consequently, refugees have no choice about where to live and their locations are assigned without consideration of the locations of refugees' relatives, friends, access to social networks, shopping facilities, public transportation, schools, and day-care institutions (Larsen 2011). In addition, refugees are obligated to sign a declaration pledging their commitment

³ According to the Danish Immigration Act, a person applying for asylum in Denmark can be granted one of the following refugee protection statuses: Art. 7.1: Convention Status (2 year temporary residence permit), Art. 7.2: Individual Temporary Protection Status (1 year temporary residence permit), Art. 7.3: General Temporary Protection Status (1 year temporary residence permit, without right to family reunification for the first three year and no right to free higher education).

⁴ This has recently been changed, residence permit for certain groups are now automatically renewed if the state decided that there is grounds for renewal.

to integration and active citizenship as well as an integration contract that stipulates their participation in a 5-year mandatory integration program, which consists of a comprehensive civic and Danish language training courses, job training, and internship. During this five year-period or until they obtain full-time employment, refugees are entitled to receive an integration allowance (*integrationsydelse*), a lower amount of aid than ordinary social welfare benefits (*køstanthjælp*). The integration allowance is conditional, meaning that a refugee only receives the full amount of the integration allowance if s/he complies with the rules and obligations stipulated in their integration contract. For example, if a refugee fails to show up to a language class without a legitimate excuse, the municipality can make a reduction in her/his integration allowance. On the face of it, this integration policy might seem like an act of welfare and care that aims to better assist refugees as they ‘integrate’ into Danish society (Fernandes 2015). As I illustrate in Chapter Four, however, this policy structures refugees’ daily lives in intimate ways and reproduces the “refugee condition” (Nguyen 2012).

Feminist Geographical Research

This dissertation is situated within my commitment to feminist research (Jones et al. 1997; Moss 2002). While feminist scholars continue to emphasize that there is no distinct or single feminist epistemology or feminist politics (Gilbert 1994; Moss 2002), feminist methodological strategies “have emerged out of and reflect women’s ways of knowing within the context of patriarchy” (Nast 1994, 60). Claiming that women and other marginalized groups’ experiences and ways of knowing matter, feminist research challenges the political basis of knowledge and takes seriously the relationship between

the researcher and participants as a site of knowledge production imbued with existing power relations (Hyndman 2001a; Nast 1994; Rose 1997). As such, the knowledge obtained through research is always partial, incomplete, biased, and situated (Haraway 1988).

Taking these core insights as its analytical starting point, my work insists on moving beyond merely examining the geopolitics of migration from the perspective of the law, the state, and policy makers. I seek to grasp how geopolitics of migration are encountered, experienced, and negotiated on the ground – by the people who are most affected by these state policies and practices. Importantly, the aim of this research is not simply to ‘give voice’ to refugees, who are often marginalized, ignored, silenced, or victimized in discussions of migration management and forced migration. I argue that simply ‘giving voice’ through representing the experiences of Syrian refugees runs the risk of further victimizing and de-individualizing them (Pratt 2012). Building on feminist methodologies, I understand “the refugee” as a knowledge producer, who articulates, contests, and alters ways of knowing (Espiritu and Duong 2018). Here, I draw on the critical refugee studies’ reconceptualization of “the refugee” as “a critical idea” and “a social actor whose life, when traced, illuminates the interconnections of colonization, war, and global social change” (Espiritu 2014, 11). I argue that a focus on refugees’ knowledges and lived experiences provides insights into the sites where power is reproduced, negotiated, and reworked. This approach allows us to expose the hidden political forces of war and migration management that structure refugees’ lives. Finally, a focus on refugees’ knowledges might also disrupt dominant and often idealized stories about the state, refuge, and migration journeys as linear and irreversible trajectories.

Research Design

i) Research Timeline

In October 2015, I moved from Lexington, Kentucky to Copenhagen, Denmark. From October 2015 to April 2016, I undertook the first phase of this dissertation research, which included archival research at the Danish National Archives and seven semi-structured interviews with representatives from the Danish Red Cross, Action Aid, the Danish Refugee Council, and the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In addition, I reconnected with immigration lawyers and advocates through volunteering at a community center in Copenhagen, where I had conducted my Master's research, and worked to establish contact with the Syrian community in Denmark.

In May 2016, I relocated from Copenhagen to Amman, Jordan to begin the second phase of this research. There, I conducted 27 semi-structured interviews with program coordinators and staff members from international and humanitarian organizations, including DANIDA, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the Danish Red Cross, ActionAid, the Danish Arab Partnership Program (DAPP), the Danish Institute Against Torture, the European Union's Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP), Save the Children, OCHA, UNHCR, WFP, and UNICEF. Furthermore, I made visits to a community center in Amman run by an international humanitarian organization and I participated in the DAPP's 'synergy meetings' as well as biweekly meetings with the livelihood working group at UNCHR main office in Amman.

In October 2016, I moved back to Copenhagen to conduct interviews and focus groups with Syrian refugees who had been granted asylum in Denmark. I started volunteering at two other community centers, one located in Copenhagen and one located

on a small Danish island. Volunteering at these two centers proved helpful in terms of getting access to Syrian refugees. I will explain my work at these two centers in greater depth below. During this third phase, I conducted semi-structured interviews with 40 Syrian refugees.

In March 2017, I returned to Amman for six weeks to conduct follow-up interviews with program coordinators of DRC, Danish Red Cross, DAPP, IOM, UNHCR, UNICEF, ICRC, and the Jordan INGO forum. From May 2017 through July 2017, I finished my research in Denmark where I conducted six focus groups with a total of 21 Syrian refugees. During this final phase, I continued my volunteer work at the three different community centers.

ii) Research Methods

Archival Research

The aim of the archival research was first, to examine the historical relations between Jordan and Denmark and second, to trace the legal changes made to the Danish Immigration Act. This data allowed me to historically situate the Danish state's current interventions in Jordan as a means to address the so-called 'refugee crisis' facing Europe broadly and Denmark in particular. Archival research also allowed me to investigate how legal and policy documents shape the production of particular forms of knowledge and discourse (Schwartz and Cook 2002). I mainly conducted archival research at the Danish National Archives, at the library of the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS), and through the online database www.retsinformation.dk. The archival data consists of bilateral agreements between Denmark and Jordan, exchanges related to these

agreements, the Danish International Development Assistance's (DANIDA) Annual Funding Reports, institutional contracts between the Danish state and humanitarian organizations, and the Danish Immigration Act, the Danish Integration Act (2011-2017) and related policy documents.

The archival research has enabled me to identify the organizations receiving funding from the Danish state and the humanitarian interventions these organizations are carrying out in Jordan. With this data, I have furthermore been able to map the historical linkages between Denmark and Jordan in order to historicize contemporary forms of engagement.

Semi-structured Interviews with State- and Non-state actors in Denmark and Jordan

The aim of conducting interviews with representatives from humanitarian organizations and state actors in Denmark and Jordan was to gain knowledge about how humanitarian organizations and state institutions collaborate across national borders and the ways in which the 'refugees crisis' is affecting the character of their work. In Denmark, I conducted seven semi-structured interviews with regional office managers and representatives from Danish Red Cross, Action Aid, the Danish Refugee Council, and the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In Jordan, I conducted 27 semi-structured interviews with program coordinators and staff members from international and humanitarian organizations, including DANIDA, the Danish Refugee Council, the Danish Red Cross, ActionAid, the Danish Arab Partnership Program, the Danish Institute Against Torture, the European Union's Regional Development and Protection Programme, Save the Children, OCHA, UNHCR, WFP, and UNICEF. The interviews were conducted in English or Danish depending on the preference of the person being interviewed. Each

interview was at least an hour in length and I have since transcribed these interviews. Based on the knowledge gained from the first set of interviews, I modified the interview guide to further explore the interactions between the humanitarian organizations and the donor community. The aim was to get more detailed knowledge about how refugee management is constituted through an interplay of forces; the movement of ideas, rules, money, and technologies between places and actors.

Gaining access to relevant informants in the humanitarian sector has involved a range of hurdles including mapping relevant organizations and actors and finding opportunities to experience the day-to-day bureaucratic texture of transnational humanitarian work. As my project focused on how the Danish state seeks to intervene in Jordan in order to prevent refugees from reaching Danish territory, I have mainly focused on organizations that have received funding from the Danish state or are related to Denmark in some way. I used various sources to make this determination, including the state-budgets for the Danish ministry of Foreign Affairs, the website openaid.um.dk, and the Jordan Response Plan Financial Tracking. This necessary selectivity, however, made me feel that I was missing out on parts of the humanitarian conversation in Jordan. While interviews proved extremely useful for gaining expert knowledge about specific humanitarian practices and the collaboration between non-state and state agencies, I felt that I did not get sufficient texture out of the interviews about the nature of day-to-day practices of transnational humanitarian work and previous and current challenges about operating in Jordan. To address this gap, I broadened my scope to capture more fine-grained knowledge about the field by participating in meetings organized by the UNHCR, such as the Livelihood Working Group meeting and the Basic Needs Working

group meeting. I also sat in on the monthly synergy meeting hosted by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs' technical advisor of the Danish Arab Partnership Programme. Through these meetings I was able to gain knowledge about present issues, the role of UNHCR and the Government of Jordan, and the more mundane humanitarian practices and knowhow, which my informants most often did not mention in interviews because it seemed insignificant. Furthermore, during these meetings I met new potential interview subjects and was able to maintain interactions with people who I had already interacted with. Thus, I was able to maintain an informal contact and build trust with people within the humanitarian community by becoming a more familiar face.

Semi-structured Interviews with Syrian Refugees in Denmark

In order to better understand how Syrian refugees experience migration management and refugee protection as an everyday lived reality, I used semi-structured, in-depth interviews. I conducted semi-structured interviews with 40 Syrians who have been granted refugee protection in Denmark. The interviews were conducted in Danish, English, or Arabic depending on the interviewee's preference and language skills. The interviews conducted in Arabic were carried out with the help of an Arabic-speaking interpreter, which I will discuss in more detail below. Each interview was between one and three hours in length. 17 of the interviewees were women and 23 were men. The ages of interviewees ranged from 19 to 65. While participants identify with different ethnic and religious groups including Kurd, Arab, stateless Palestinian, Alevis, and Sunni Muslims, they were all born in Syria and considered themselves Syrians too. At the time of this research, all participants had been granted asylum, received refugee protection

status, and moved to the municipality where they had been assigned to live during the 5-year mandatory integration program. The majority of the participants depended financially on the integration allowance, which refugees are entitled to until they obtain full-time employment.

During the process of conducting these interviews, I modified the interview guide in order to address additional questions. Based on my archival research of the Danish Immigration Act and attention to the legal changes made in response to the so-called European migration crisis, I decided to conduct interviews with Syrians who had received the new 1-year temporary protection status (see Chapter Three). Compared to the other interviews, in these interviews I focused more on how this status influences Syrians' everyday life and connections to family members in Syria.

Focus Groups

The aim of the focus groups was to gain information about the migration journey. I conducted six focus group interviews with 21 Syrians who had arrived in Denmark to claim asylum between 2011 and 2016. Together with my research assistant, I conducted these focus group discussions in a private place that was convenient to all participants. All focus groups were conducted in Arabic and later transcribed and translated into English. Focus groups lasted for two to four hours. Each focus group was comprised of three to five participants who knew each other beforehand. Two focus groups were mixed gender, while the other four focus groups were either all male (n=2) or female (n=2).

The ages of participants ranged from 21 to 55. Similar to the informants who participated in the interviews, the focus group participants identify with different ethnic

and religious groups including Kurds, Arabs, stateless Palestinians, Alevis, and Sunni Muslims. Participants were all born in Syria and considered themselves to be Syrians. All focus participants had obtained asylum, received refugee protection status, and moved to the municipality where they had been assigned to live during the 5-year mandatory integration program. The majority of them depended financially on the integration allowance.

I had originally designed these focus group discussions to take place through the format of participatory mapping workshops. Yet, after conducting a number of interviews of Syrians living in Denmark, I realized that it would be difficult to carry out these workshops because some participants had been reluctant to share detailed information about their journey from Syria to Denmark for a number of reasons including concerns about how this information might affect their attempts to gain legal status in Denmark as well as fear of reprisal against loved ones remaining in Syria or third countries, among other concerns. Thus, I decided to conduct focus groups where the participants would be given the opportunity to talk about their journey, yet without mentioning specific places or people and instead allowing them to talk about relations and embodied experiences.

Informant Recruitment and Volunteer Work

While I had already established some contacts with Syrian refugees in Denmark through my Master's research, I anticipated the recruitment of Syrian informants to be relatively difficult because of my positionality as a white Danish researcher affiliated with a university in the United States. Yet, I accounted for this in the research design of this project, primarily through volunteer work and establishing longer-term relationships with informants.

Due to the heightened political significance of the perceived refugee ‘crisis’ in Europe and elsewhere, there has been a spike in interest in related issues among journalists and social scientists. This seems to have resulted in a ‘fatigue’ towards researchers and journalists among Syrians living in Denmark (and elsewhere) (Pascucci 2017), meaning that Syrians were less likely to be interested in sharing their stories and experience and sometimes less than enthusiastic or even skeptical when they did agree to participate. When I approached Syrians to ask if they would participate in an interview they often asked how they and Syrian refugees in general would benefit from this research and if this research would actually change anything or if it would just be another moment where they were asked to share their story without any benefits to themselves, their families, or even to their communities at large. Furthermore, Syrians were very reluctant to refer me to other Syrians they knew.

I addressed this issue, in part, by investing much of my time volunteering at three community centers for asylum seekers, officially recognized refugees, and other migrants. These three centers offer various services, including language training, legal counseling, child care, social activities, and cultural events. The first community center mainly offers services to asylum seekers whose cases are under consideration or who have been rejected asylum. As a volunteer, I was part of the socio-legal support group assisting asylum seekers with questions regarding their asylum case. In this capacity, I also participated in the weekly Women’s Club, which focuses specifically on issues related to being female in the Danish asylum system. This work proved helpful in connecting me to immigrant lawyers and advocates as well as getting in-depth knowledge about the Danish Immigration Act and the Danish asylum system. Yet, only few Syrian

refugees came to this community center. Therefore, I began to consider other ways of connecting with Syrian refugees in Denmark.

The second community center is a newly established center mainly for refugees who have been assigned to live in Copenhagen. I joined the center in November 2016 and spend 3-5 days a week there. As volunteer, I taught a weekly Danish language class and as part of the socio-legal counseling group, I assisted Syrians and other refugees with legal questions and bureaucratic issues, such as translating Danish documents regarding their asylum case and integration program, assisted people in requesting child benefits, renewing residence permits, applying for passports, filing applications for family reunification, and filing complaints over the ruling of their cases. Through this work, I was able to build connections, trust, and even some close personal relationships with Syrians and other refugees while at the same time ‘give back’ to the community by assisting them with gaining proficiency in Danish and navigating the Danish legal system. Furthermore, through this engagement I gained useful information about Syrian refugees’ daily challenges, fears, and experiences with starting new lives in Denmark. For instance, as one of my participants often reminded me: “I feel like a little child here in Denmark, Malene. I have to learn everything again”. The information and knowledge I gained through being consistently present in this community center has been invaluable. It has both informed the course of my research and crucially deepened my understanding of how Syrian refugees navigate migration management practices in multiple ways, whilst they cope with everyday obstacles as well as different degrees of loss, deprivation, and trauma.

The third community center was established in the late 1980s and is located on a small island. I joined this community center in December in 2016 where I assisted refugees with socio-legal issues two days a week. While my work at this community center involved that I travel to this island every week, I got deeper insight into the lives of Syrian refugees who have been relocated to a small, more rural area of Denmark. Through my involvement at this community center I was able to conduct 17 interviews and one focus group discussion with Syrians living on this island.

During my time at these three community centers, I kept a detailed research journal of my daily activities and interactions. Taken together, this ethnographic research gave me direct insights into the texture of Syrian refugees' lived realities. All informants who have participated in this research have been given a pseudonym and any identifying details have been removed in order to preserve anonymity.

Language, Cultural Knowledge, and Positionality

All Syrian refugees who participated in this study had some familiarity with the Danish language because they were or had been enrolled in mandatory Danish language classes as part of the integration program. Yet, not all participants were able to speak Danish or English with proficiency to carry on a full conversation. Furthermore, in order to capture their lived experiences, I found it important that my informants were able to express themselves in a language that was most familiar to them, namely Arabic. Thus, the majority of the interviews were conducted in Arabic with the help of an interpreter. For the focus groups, I decided to conduct these in Arabic in order to let the conversation flow more easily.

My Arabic language skills and knowledge about Syrian culture developed over the course of the research and while interpretation was essential in the beginning of the research by the end of the research, the interpreter only translated the most important points during our interviews. This allowed the interviews to flow more easily without being interrupted by translation. After each interview, the interpreter and I would go over the interview and the interview situation. We discussed some of the main points that the interviewee had brought up, Arabic expressions, and cultural references that I was not familiar with. We also talked about things that remained in silence and the atmosphere of the interview situation, such as frustrations, hesitations, silences, irony, laughter, interruptions, and non-verbal communication. Working with an interpreter has been extremely helpful in order for me to gain a better understanding of the Syrian culture and the Syrian dialect. Throughout the analysis and writing process, I have continued to work with the interpreter as questions about the material have come up, such as specific references, terms, sentences, and phrases.

While participants would mainly express themselves in Arabic throughout the interviews and focus group discussions, sometimes participants would use Danish words such as “kommune” (municipality), “praktik” (internship), and “kontrakt” (contract). Some of these words are particular to the Danish language and therefore cannot easily be translated into Arabic, or simply do not exist in the Arabic language and cultural context. Other times, participants would deliberately turn to me and express themselves in Danish, using Danish words or a short sentence. Often this took place at moments in the interview when the informant wanted to highlight a particular point or main idea. Participants knew that what they said in Arabic would be mediated through the interpreter. Thus,

participants' decision to use Danish words or express themselves in Danish illustrates both how they emphasized a particular point while at the same time negotiated my positionality (Tang 2015).

My positionality as a white female Danish researcher with knowledge about the Danish legal and bureaucratic system also influenced the interviews and to lesser extent the focus group discussions. This knowledge was helpful in terms of building relationships with Syrians who used the community centers and enabled me to “give back” to the community. Yet, it might also have influenced what my informants were willing to share with me, as I could be “read” as someone too close to the Danish state. During the interviews I conducted with Syrians who I did not know very well, they made sure to state how thankful they were to Denmark and the Danish people for granting them refuge in Denmark, illustrating how they sought to negotiate my position as a Danish citizen. Yet, it also illustrates the general reluctance of my Syrian interlocutors to speak about the state and politics overtly (Pearlman 2016; Wedeen 1998, 2013).

The interpreter's presence added a complex dimension to the focus group discussions and interview sessions. The interpreter was of Syrian origin, and had come to Europe right before the outbreak of the Syrian civil war to attend university. While the interpreter's knowledge of Syria and Syrian culture allowed me to gain a better understanding cultural elements specifically to Syria and the dialect, I am sure that having another (unfamiliar) Syrian man in the room ultimately influenced what participants were willing to share. For instance, a few interviewees declined to have the interview recorded. Because of Syrians' experiences of living under a repressive rule with an extensive surveillance apparatus, I had expected that it might be difficult for

some informants to fully trust the interpreter (and myself). Yet, at the same time, the interpreter was able to make jokes and share familiar anecdotes about life in Syria, which seemed to make the interviewees comfortable.

In this dissertation, I follow the transliteration guide of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* for Arabic words and phrases. For Arabic names of individuals, I use the phonetic pronunciation, which is more accessible to an English-speaking audience.

Analysis of Primary and Secondary Data

To manage and structure the different data sets produced through this research project (field notes, archival data, interview and focus group transcripts, and narratives) I have used the software program MAXQDA. I have *in vivo* coded the data with the research questions in mind as well as using codes derived from reading relevant literature, and information gained from the archival material (Schilling 2006). In coding the interviews with state- and non-state actors involved in responding to Syrian refugees, I have used terms such as political partnership, negotiations, development, financial burden, responsibility, security, cooperation, management and welfare (RQ1). For the interviews and focus groups that I conducted with Syrian refugees, I have used codes such as worry, insecurity, uncertainty, waiting, hope, as well as family, work, education, aspirations, struggles, home, politics, activism, and ties/contacts to Syria (via social media, family, and through organizations) to capture the complexity of Syrian refugees' lives and well-being (RQ2). These words and phrases have then been used to evaluate and develop a set of thematic concepts (Cope 2010). As expected, the process of coding has not been linear

(Schilling 2006); through the process of coding, analyzing the data, and writing up the findings, I have continued to re-consider the codes and themes and re-organize them as repeating ideas.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have provided an overview of my field sites and outlined the methodologies that I have employed in order to carry out the research for this dissertation. I was privileged to be able to spend almost two years in the field. Like for many other researchers, the field for me is a complicated thing (Hyndman 2001a; Katz 1994; Smith 2016). This research project has sought to better understand the relationships between Western migration management and forced migrants, who have been displaced by war. As such, it is a transnational project, meaning that the relevant ‘field’ is not reducible to a collection of geographical sites in Denmark and Jordan but is rather an uncertain and complex set of dispersed actors and relations that exist through various dis/connections across time and space. In keeping with my core commitment to conducting feminist geographical research, being in ‘the field’ included the moments when I got new insights into otherwise obscure processes (knowledges, emotions, and people’s transnational lives, etc.) by getting closer to them, literally and figuratively. So while my fieldwork was located in Denmark (a place that I was very familiar with because I was born there) and Jordan (a place that I was much less familiar with and continue to learn about), my research was more so than anything else defined by a group of people I engaged with – Syrian refugees – whose country of origin I have never visited and know only through their accounts and other media. As such, as I worked in the field,

I occupied competing roles as an ‘insider’, an ‘outsider’, and maybe everything in-between (Cuomo and Massaro 2016; Miraftab 2004; Mullings 1999) depending on whose standpoint you consider.

In order to conduct in-depth research in and across these places and with these people, the two years of fieldwork was crucial because it allowed me to have conversations with Syrian refugees on a daily basis and over an extend period of time. Through my weekly work in the three community centers in Denmark, I was able to build relationships and get insights into the complexities and contradictions that shape forced migrants’ lives as they were entangled in war, violence, and state practices. I was able to witness how intrusive and violent the state can feel, even when it is ‘acting’ in the name of aid, assistance, care, and ‘humanity’. At the same time, I witnessed on a daily basis how Syrian refugees coped with and re-worked their everyday lived realities and struggles, by helping and caring for each other, continuing cultural practices and traditions, sharing meals, smoking shisha in the park, and much more. Some of these everyday ways of living can be hard to access through interviews and conversations, but also hard to convey in writing because they are so corporeal and embodied that it can be difficult to find the right words with which to describe them. Yet, this ongoing challenge represents a fundamentally central generative aspect of doing my research in a way that is faithful to feminist ethics of analysis and politics.

CHAPTER THREE

CHALLENGING FORCED TRANSNATIONALISM: SYRIANS' STRUGGLES FOR FAMILY REUNIFICATION IN DENMARK

Introduction

After an aerial strike destroyed Farah and Ahmed's home, they decided that it was time for their family to leave Syria. They sold their belongings and borrowed additional money, but found that they still did not have sufficient funds for the whole family to leave together. Farah and Ahmed therefore decided that Farah would take their youngest and oldest daughters with her as she made her way to Europe, while Ahmed and their middle son and daughter would remain in Syria. Once Farah reached a place of safety, they hoped that the family would be able to reconnect through family reunification. As Farah explained to me in an interview:

So the initial plan was because we did not have enough money and if I stayed in Syria, I could not work and leave my children [at home], and the situation could get difficult at any moment, Da'esh [ISIS] might come to us, Jabhat al Nusra might come to us. I, a woman alone, cannot stay, because they take the women. We decided to go to the village and sell everything we had, and we borrowed money. I should make two children leave and leave (without my husband) and then do family reunification so that he and our two other children could come. He could escape to Turkey... he could work, he could leave the children with somebody and work, he could manage. And I left to come here. And I would do the papers for family reunification.

While Farah was eventually granted asylum in Denmark, her dreams of quickly reuniting with her family were quashed. Rather than permanent asylum, Farah was granted temporary protection status according to §7.3 of the Danish Immigration Act

(*Udlændingeloven*) that provides a 1-year (renewable) residence permit, yet suspends an applicant's right to family reunification for the first three years of holding this status⁵.

In this chapter, I focus on the protracted separation of Syrian families and the ways in which 'the family' became a site of political struggle and mobilization. Family reunification is one of the most enshrined principles of the international refugee protection regime because separation is a frequent consequence of displacement. The 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (hereafter "1951 Convention") recognizes the significance of the right to family life for refugees, with its recommendation for "considering that the unity of the family, the natural and fundamental group unit of society, is an essential right of the refugee" (UN General Assembly 1951, 146). Similarly, Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights provides the right to respect for everyone's private and family life (Council of Europe 1950, 10). Yet, with the introduction of §7.3, the Danish state began to challenge and undermine this principle.

Mobilizing discourses of crisis surrounding the Syrian Civil War and the burden of the increasing number of refugees seeking asylum in Denmark, the Danish government proposed §7.3 to the Danish parliament in November 2014. In her introduction to the bill, then minister of justice, Mette Frederiksen, explained that while the government sought to observe the country's international obligations towards refugees, Denmark did not have the capacity to offer refuge to all the refugees in need of protection. The Danish government argued that the increasing number of Syrian refugees and other forced

⁵ §7.3 of the Danish Immigration Act is a temporary refugee protection status that grants the recipient a 1-year temporary residence permit. This residence permit can be extended for up to one or two years at a time if the Danish state determines that the recipient still has a demonstrable need for protection (*Udlændingeloven* 2016, §7.3).

migrants arriving to Denmark was of such character that it was a burden to the Danish welfare state and a threat to the social cohesion of the Danish society as well as a threat to successful integration of accepted refugees (Jurstitsministeren 2014). The Danish government sought to address this so-called threat by instituting §7.3 to the Danish Immigration Act, which instituted a temporary protection status, made it easier for the Danish state to deport (Syrian) refugees once the war became less violent or had come to an end, and limited refugee immigration through suspending family reunification.

The Danish government recognized that it was obligated to protect refugees' right to private family life as outlined by the 1951 Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights. Yet, the Danish government referred to the European Convention on Human Rights Article 8, subsection 2 that states: "There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right to respect private and family life except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others" (Council of Europe 1950: 11). In doing so, the Danish government argued that it was legitimate to suspend refugees' right to family reunification in order to protect the Danish state. Thus, the Danish government legitimized and instituted §7.3 in the name of national security.

However, in this chapter, I illustrate how §7.3 has severe -- yet hard to discern -- consequences for Syrian families who are subject to it. More specifically, I argue that the Danish state instituted §7.3 as a mechanism to control accepted refugees (subject to this status) and to prevent immigration of forced migrants through family reunification. On

paper §7.3 might appear as a refugee protection category that enables a refugee to gain state protection and a residence permit, yet in practice Syrians' accounts illustrate how it permeates and disrupts their family and intimate personal relations across borders. The everyday practices that Syrians keep up and take on in order to maintain intimate relations generate new ways of practicing family life. Yet, over time it becomes difficult to sustain these practices and Syrians use different strategies to maintain hope and reunite with their loved ones. Thus, while §7.3 actively prolongs family separation, I show how Syrians' desires and demands for the right to (physically) live together as a family prompt them to mobilize and find ways to challenge the Danish state's decision to suspend their right to family reunification.

This chapter contributes to political geographers' long-standing efforts to trace the geographies of border work by examining Syrian refugees' embodied experiences of §7.3, as it separates their families across borders. I bring together insights from feminist geographical literature on time-space with socio-legal scholarship on the temporality of law to illustrate how processes of bordering are manifest in refuge itself. More specifically, when a person is granted refuge one might assume based on international conventions that this person would be entitled to family reunification. As such, their spatial location in "refuge" would grant them the ability to bring loved ones through family reunification into this space. Yet, as I show this is an access point through which legal protection is precluded not simply through spatial bordering but through a legal form of bordering that governs refugees through temporality. The point here is not to provide another case study of a "new" border mechanism. Rather, I seek to challenge the implicit "methodological nationalism" (Amelina et al. 2014) that takes place by assuming

that the geopolitics of refuge is reducible to the sovereign decision to grant or not grant refuge to a forced migrant. As such, I argue that the geopolitics of refuge needs to be examined in a way that includes but also moves beyond the actual territorial border line as well as the legal border (the moment a person obtains protection and legal status).

This chapter is organized as follows. In the first section, I briefly examine geographers' contribution to literature on bordering and provide a review of feminist geographical literature on time-space and socio-legal scholarship on the temporality of law. I then move on to illustrate how §7.3 of the Danish Immigration Act can be considered a border mechanism and describe its uneven consequence across nationality, gender, and age. I proceed by examining the ways in which Syrian families experience, negotiate, and make sense of this temporary protection status (§7.3) and being separated from their family. In conclusion, I discuss the importance of paying attention to both spatiality and temporality as we continue to examine how (forced) migrants encounter and negotiate processes and practices of bordering.

Geographies of Border Work, Forced Transnationality and Time-Space

The institution of §7.3 is not itself entirely novel; it fits within the larger landscape of border control and immigration enforcement practices implemented by Western states in the name of protecting the territorial integrity, health, and well-being of the nation (Walters 2010; Williams 2017). Geographers have traced how Western states have produced ever more complex strategies and practices that cut across multiple spaces, places and scales, making processes of bordering ever more diffuse, polymorphic, and increasingly de-territorialized (Burrige et al. 2017; Johnson et al. 2011; Raeymaekers

2014). While border enforcement efforts have intensified at the actual territorial margins of nation-states (Brown 2010; Jones 2009; Nevins 2001), Western states are also expanding strategies of migration management to sites both beyond the nation-state (Bialasiewicz 2012; Casas-Cortes et al. 2013, 2015; Hyndman and Mountz 2008) and within the interior (Coleman and Kocher 2011; van Baar 2017). Immigration detention, deportation, and temporary hotspots control have become fundamental to strategies of Western states in their attempts to contain and control migrants' movements, remove unwanted migrants, and deter future migrants (BurrIDGE et al. 2017; Hiemstra 2012; Mountz et al. 2013; Nethery and Silverman 2015; Tazzioli 2018; Tazzioli and Garelli 2018).

The unit of the family remains a key site through which the management and control of migrants takes place (Harker and Martin 2012). Migrants' sexuality, reproductive bodies, and genetic ties have become a point of focus in immigration enforcement and regulatory practices (Conlon 2010; Helén 2014; Luibhéid 2004) that states use to limit family migration. In the United States, for example, immigration authorities have identified family migration as a threat to national security (Martin 2012), resulting in the increasing tendency to explicitly focus on detaining entire families (Williams 2017). In Europe, several countries now require proof of immigrants' biological ties to their children or other family members in order for family reunification to take place, using DNA testing and genetic profiling (Helén 2014). Biological ties play an important role in the state's decision-making on inclusion and exclusion, while also reproducing the family as a biological nuclear family model and based on (Western)

norms about what a ‘normal’ family is. Thus, the family is becoming a site at which border control and migration management strategies are lived and materialized.

Processes of bordering and states’ attempts to control the movement of migrants produce transnational spaces (Collyer and King 2015). While the literature on transnational migration has paid little attention to the state, often by design, as it has focused on writing against or beyond the state (Schiller 2005), geographers have insisted on the importance of examining the role of the state as states control transnational activities (Hyndman 2012). Drawing on Spark (2005) and Ho (2011), Collyer and King (2015, 186) argue that “the state inevitably tries to reterritorialize transnational and diasporic spaces” as it continually seeks to re-establish its own existence. Focusing specifically on refugees’ transnational practices and ruptures, Nolin (2006, 183) states that “[r]efugees and (im)migrants are ‘bound’ by the political, social, and national contexts of both (if not more) countries (...)”, and she further argues that states “are of immense importance in perpetuating ruptures rather than facilitating transnational flow [of refugees]”. In a slightly different context, Golash-Boza (2014) has illustrated how Jamaican deportees rely on transnational ties as a way to cope with their financial and emotional struggles. Building on the work of Golash-Boza (2015) and Zilberg (2011), Ybarra and Peña (2017) have further shown how deportation – understood as forced migration – can affect and alter the life of entire families, not just the individual deportee. Thus, while states exclude groups of migrants through mechanisms of bordering such as deportation (Golash-Boza 2014; Kanstroom 2012; Ybarra and Peña 2017) – and I would add suspension of family reunification – excluded and forced migrants, in turn, engage in transnational practices as coping and survival strategies, what Golash-Boza (2014) has

called “forced transnationalism”. Yet, these transnational ties and activities also remind forced migrants of their exclusion and alienation (Golash-Boza 2014).

This chapter contributes to the growing body of research on the migrant experience as one increasingly characterized by uncertainty, precarity, and waiting (Bailey et al. 2002; Brun 2015; Conlon 2011; Hyndman and Giles 2016; Seitz 2017). Legal geographers and other scholars have argued that although space remains a centrally important focal point of analysis and theorization, it is important to consider the ways in which governing processes operate through various temporalities (Braverman et al. 2015; Mawani 2014; Valverde 2015). More, specifically, if we take Massey’s (2005) impulse to undertake spatial analysis *through* examining it in relation to time – rather than as distinct and separate from it – aspects of state and geopolitical power become visible and apprehensible in new and productive ways. As will become clear below, the question “where to begin” cannot be answered through an exclusive focus on either space or time. When we attend to legal changes in refugee protection spatially (for instance protracted family separation across borders), we find out that the primary way in which this apparent spatial intervention is experienced is through references to time. Similarly, by paying attention to the ways in which legal protection is administered temporally (for instance by making refugee protection temporary and provisional) we see how the spatial separation of families becomes legally temporary, yet experienced by Syrian families as never ending and indeed disruptive of the family united as such. Thus, legal interventions like §7.3, which are necessarily spatial and temporal both in their operational logics and consequences, represent forms of bordering that do more than simply keep forced migrants outside of the remit of Europe. Together this body of work illustrates the

importance of analyzing time-space of border-work in relation to forced migrants' experiences of and engagement with (forced) transnational activities, ties, and ruptures.

Refugee Protection as a Bordering Mechanism

Refugees, who are granted protection according to §7.3, obtain a form of refugee protection and a legal residence permit. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, §7.3 of the Danish Immigration Act defines a temporary protection status that grants recipients a 1-year temporary residence permit. This status can be extended for up to one or two years at a time if the Danish Immigration Service determines that the applicant still has a demonstrable need for protection. Additionally, §7.3 enables Denmark to suspend the recipient's right to family reunification for the first three years⁶.

I argue that §7.3 needs to be understood as a mechanism through which the state exercises power over authorized forced migrants within Danish territory but also beyond its remit and specifically through family ties. First and foremost, §7.3 importantly grants a refugee legal protection and provides the accepted refugee with a residence permit, which enables the refugee to legally stay in Denmark, even if just temporarily. However, in contrast to the two other protection statuses outlined in the Danish Immigration Act (§7.1: Convention Status and §7.2: Individual Protection Status), §7.3 works to exclude refugee family members who normally would have been able to access the space of refuge through family reunification. As such, §7.3 prevents the family from being

⁶ When §7.3 was first implemented to the Danish Immigration Act in March 2015, the right to family reunification was suspended for the first year of holding this status. Yet, in January 2016, the newly elected right-wing government with the support of the majority of the parliament extended this suspension of family reunification from one to three years, when it passed Bill 87 (Udlændinge-, Integrations-, og Boligmin., j-nr. 2015-1767 2016). This amendment made to §7.3 was retroactive so it applied to refugees who had made an asylum claim even before the amendment was passed.

reunited and violates the spirit of the international conventions (as explained in the introduction). In this sense, §7.3 is a form of spatial bordering as it excludes a group of forced migrants who traditionally would have been able to access the Danish territory through family ties. Importantly, it does so through the inclusion of a refugee who has successfully obtained refuge through an asylum claim.

§7.3 governs refugee families through time. There seems to be an assumption within the legal and political documents relating to §7.3 that the family unit will remain during the time the right to family reunification is suspended (three years). However, as I will illustrate below, if we pay attention to the lived experience of displaced family who are separated we come to see how the time of separation – both the actual time but also the uncertainty for individual families who actually do not know the exact date for when they will be able to reunited⁷ – fractures families. Thus, §7.3 governs refugees both spatially and temporally.

In principle §7.3 is an abstract legal statute that applies in the same way to everyone. However, in practice, it is important to pay attention to how §7.3 works unevenly across gender, age, and nationality. First, while §7.3 is not officially a category reserved for Syrian refugees, in practice it has primarily been applied to Syrians, as table 3.1 illustrates.

⁷ According to the Danish Immigration Act, a refugee who has been granted protection according to §7.3 has the right to apply for family reunification two months before the three year suspension period ends. Yet, the average time for processing a family reunification application was ten months at the time I conducted this research.

Table 3.1: Number of refugees granted refugee protection according to §7.3, distributed by nationality

Nationality	2015	2016	2017	Total
Syria	869	2159	473	3465
Stateless*	194	293	87	574
Somalia	5	19	0	24
Iraq**	0	4	0	4
Yemen**	0	0	2	2
Total	1068	2475	526	4069

* Includes stateless Palestinians from Syria

** Minor children from Iraq and Yemen who have arrived in Denmark together with their mother who is either a Syrian citizen or a stateless person from Syria.

This table shows the number of refugees who have been granted refugee protection status according to §7.3, in the period February 20, 2015 – July 31, 2017. (Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet 2018, 5).

Second, as table 3.2 shows, a higher percentage of Syrian women (43%) have been granted asylum according to §7.3 than Syrian men (13%). This is because it can be a lot easier for Syrian men to document evidence of individual persecution or fear thereof, than it is for women. For instance, it is now well documented by international country reports that Syrian men between the ages of 18 and 43 are at risk of being called to perform military service and fight in the ongoing war. As a result, this group of Syrians will more or less automatically be granted asylum according to §7.1: Convention Status. Syrian women (and men under the age of 18 and over 43) will be granted protection according to §7.3 if they are not able to prove that their need for protection is individual.

Table 3.2: Number of Syrian refugees granted refugee protection according to §7.3, distributed by gender and age

Gender and Age	Number	Percentage
Adult women	1481	43%
Adult men	463	13%
Children who arrived in Denmark with a parent	1296	37%
Unaccompanied minor: female*	52	2%
Unaccompanied minor: male*	173	5%
Total	3465	100%
* Includes children who were unaccompanied at the time of the ruling of their asylum case. (Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet 2018, 6).		

This gendered dimension of §7.3 has serious implications for refugees’ rights and access to family life. For instance, in Farah and Ahmed’s case, if Ahmed had left Syria instead of Farah and sought asylum in Denmark, he would very likely have obtained protection according to §7.1: Convention status. This is because he as a Syrian man in his thirties is facing the threat of having to serve in the Syrian military, which the Danish state considers an individual threat of persecution. Accordingly, Ahmed and his family would have been able to maintain their right to family reunification. This example of Ahmed and Farah’s family illustrates that while a person’s protection status is granted based on the person’s individual case, the different types of protection statuses affect more than the individual refugee because they determine which families may be able to reunite.

As a mechanism of bordering, §7.3 limits immigration by preventing family reunification and is applied unevenly across nationality, gender, and age, but its impacts stretch well beyond the territory of Denmark. As I show below, Syrian families’ lived

experiences of §7.3 reveal their struggles to maintain family life and intimacy across transnational space, which create new problems as time passes. In the remainder of this chapter, I discuss how Syrian families experience and negotiate §7.3. The semi-structured interviews with Syrian refugees and ethnographic observations, which I made through my volunteer-work at the three different community centers, form the basis of my analysis. While I did not ask my informants specifically about their specific refugee protection status, some of them provided the information when they recounted the moment they received refugee protection. On other occasions, the protection status came up during our conversations about family reunification (see Chapter Two). More than half of the Syrians I interviewed had dealt with issues related to family reunification. Some of my informants had arrived in Denmark through family reunifications or had successfully been able to bring their family members to Denmark through family reunification, while others were still waiting for a ruling of their family reunification case or had been rejected for family reunification due to their refugee protection status. I bring the findings from the interviews together with my observations at the three community centers, where I among other things assisted Syrians and other forced migrants with legal questions and bureaucratic issues specifically related to their refugee protection status, and filed applications for family reunification and complaints over the rulings on their asylum case (see Chapter Two). This ethnographic work provided me with detailed insights into how §7.3 and the separation of family influenced Syrian refugees' everyday life, as they longed for loved ones, did their best to maintain contact with family members, and struggled to make sense of Danish immigration policies and procedures.

Fractured Lives: Living with Forced Transnationalism Creating Virtual Spaces

As Syrian families in Denmark negotiate their lives under §7.3 they found new ways to care and maintain family life at a distance, developing forms of what Parreñas (2005, 319) has called “transnational intimacy”. For many of the Syrians I engaged with, the Internet and smartphone applications (apps) such as WhatsApp, Viber, or Messenger, allowed them to maintain relationships with family members and friends back home in Syria or in other parts of the world. For instance, Hasan, who was newly married when he left his home in the northern part of Syria, used WhatsApp to maintain daily communication with his wife Le. Through text, images, and emojis, Hasan and Le expressed love, affection, and longing across borders, time, and transnational space. It was a way through which the two newlyweds could hold on to each other while separated physically across borders.

Likewise, Sami, a 55-year old Palestinian man from Damascus who had arrived in Denmark with his 18-year old son called, his wife and two children through Facebook Messenger daily. Sometimes, Sami would insist that I participate in these video calls so that his family and I could get to know each other. These video calls and the interactions they made possible represent a way through which Sami was able to open the door to his family, his home, and provide a sense of hospitality. Like other Syrians who I engaged with daily at the community centers, Sami sought to make a home in Denmark. Yet, he felt unable to complete such home-making until his wife and two children would join him and his 18-year old son in Denmark. As such, the virtual space created through these video calls was in some way a temporary virtual ‘home’ in-between and across borders that allowed for ‘guests’ (like me) and held the family together.

Smartphone applications like WhatsApp helped Syrian families mitigate electricity outages and unstable Internet connections caused by bombings and battles in Syria. WhatsApp allowed for asynchronous recording and transmitting of voice messages. Hasan and Le, similar to other Syrian families, sometimes resorted to recording and sending a verbal message through WhatsApp rather than making a direct call or send a text message, a method that was also particularly useful for illiterate family members and smaller children. This technique allowed Le to receive a message from Hasan as soon as she was able to reconnect to the internet and she would then reciprocate by sending a recorded message back. Receiving these messages took at best just a few minutes and at worst several days. Despite unreliable internet connections and electricity outages, Syrian families found ways to use smartphone applications and social media that enabled them to create virtual transnational spaces of care and intimacy.

Through apps and the virtual spaces they provide, Syrians families were able to stay connected and continue their life as a family, although in asynchronous ways because Syrian families were physically separated for the time being yet connected through transnational activities. Yet, these communication strategies never fully alleviated the realities of displacement and separation and the anxieties that came with them. For instance, Farah explained to me that despite her best efforts to sustain her relationship with Ahmed and their children under these circumstances, the physical separation left her with uncertainty, in part because she never knew if the lack of response to a message was a matter of a power outage or due to more bombing and shelling. As Farah stated “it is either me worried [about him] or him worried [about me]”. Thus, Syrian families’ engagement with transnational activities as a strategy to maintain

family life bear some resemblance to those of deportees who retain transnational ties with family and friends in their former host country for both financial and emotional support (Golash-Boza 2014). Yet, Syrian families' transnational ties and activities are different because they are marked by war and displacement. For Farah this meant that she was often worried about Ahmed and their two children, particularly when she was unable to get in contact with Ahmed. For Sami, his transnational ties to his family in Damascus was a desire and waiting for a future home in Denmark where he and his family can physically live together, rather than a diasporic yearning (Burman 2002) for a home in Syria or a former home in a host country (Golash-Boza 2014). Thus, Syrian families' daily video calls, text messages, emojis, and voice messages, I argue, can be understood as active strategies through which Syrians maintain their family and intimate relations for the time being with the hope and expectation that the family will continue to exist once they are able to reunite in exile in the future.

Fractures

Temporal and spatial challenges of living under conditions of 'forced transnationalism' (Golash-Boza 2014) altered family life for Syrians in my study as the protracted separation began to fracture relationships between parents and children as well as between spouses. For Farah's family, two years of separation had already taken a heavy toll. During our interview, Farah looked at her youngest daughter, Jamila, and said: "when I brought Jamila she was not able to walk yet. It was here [in Denmark] that Jamila started to walk, it was here that she started to speak". Farah continued to explain that in phone conversations or when Jamila saw a picture of Ahmed: "she [Jamila] will

only call him by his first name, she does not call him baba [dad], she does not know her father”. While Farah knew that Jamila did not recognize her father because she was just a little child when they left Syria, it nevertheless pained her that Jamila was growing up without identifying Ahmed as her father.

Farah found keeping the relationship with her other two children, Ranim and Ali, who remained in Syria, particularly complicated. With tears in her eyes, Farah explained to me that every time she looked at Jamila and Reem (who were playing doctor and patient on the couch), she was reminded of their two siblings, Ranim and Ali, who she had to leave behind in Syria. The war in Syria with its power outages and routine breakdowns of telecommunication networks made daily communication and interactions with Ranim and Ali difficult. In addition, Ranim had stopped talking to Farah in retaliation against her because Ranim thought her mother had abandoned her.

Farah’s family life across transnational space shows that virtual space and its associated communication strategies do not fully mitigate the realities of physical separation. As Pratt (2012, 55) notes, “the forms of communication available to most mothers [and fathers] who attempt to care at distance – tape recordings, phone calls, letters, text messaging – are all of necessity disembodied, decontextualized, and partial”. The physical geographic distance between children and their parents brought with it growing and seemingly intractable feelings of emotional separation and alienation from one another. This in turn renders it impossible for both parents to play the roles in their children’s lives that they otherwise would. This illustrates how the intimacy and relations that Syrian families seek to retain across transnational space are challenged by both the spatial and psychical separation as well as through temporality. Working in tandem with

the spatial separation, the temporality of the separation is experienced by Syrians as they struggle to maintain “normal” family relations and roles.

Farah’s marriage to Ahmed was under growing stress. While they had been inseparable in pre-war Syria, Farah lamented that: “Now sometimes months will pass without us [Farah and Ahmed] speaking to each other. Since we got married we had not left each other for more than an hour, now it is a matter of months that we do not speak with each other because there is no Internet”. Under these circumstances, sustaining their intimate bond became an ongoing struggle:

Sometimes I do not feel like speaking because every time we want to talk, we talk about family reunification, when and what happened [so far]. I have run out of lies to tell.

Farah lit a cigarette and continued:

It affects us mentally, psychologically very much. (...) Imagine that my husband – we would not use offensive language with each other at all - imagine that now on the phone he could say one hundred bad words to me! Just because he thought that we came here, and there are no such laws. This is all lies and maneuvering on my part because I don’t blame him because he is being pressured.

Farah left the room to check on Jamila and Reem, who seemed to be fighting next door.

When she returned she said:

And he says ‘do not blame me, it is just me burning to see you’.

According to Farah, the separation caused by §7.3 had violently disrupted their (previous) ways of being together. In light of the stresses borne out of separation, Ahmed had started to verbally abuse Farah and she felt that she needed to lie to him in order to deflect his

anger. Farah's example illustrates the challenges of sustaining some semblance of a family life across borders and demonstrates how forced transnationalism turns families and intimate relationships into sites of discord and alienation.

§7.3 and its suspension of family reunification produce a form of forced transnationalism for refugees, Syrian families in particular. Scholars have noted that refugees often experience social relations as a disruption of communications and face-to-face contacts (Nolin 2006), which in turn pulls apart idealized imaginaries of the household as a coherent entity (Ybarra and Peña 2017). Jamila's lack of recognition of Ahmed as her father, Ranim's refusal to speak to her mother, Ahmed's "bad words", and Farah's lies are all examples how §7.3 works to undermine families and intimate ties. In doing so, §7.3 becomes a violent bordering practice that "cut[s] across conventional bounds of places and scales, connected by political relations that traverse the intimate and the geopolitical" (Pain and Staeheli 2014, 344), changing the lived experience of what it means to be a family in a protracted state of separation.

Reassembling the family

Many Syrians struggled to make sense of the suspension of family reunification that seems to erode and unsettle the idealized liberal promise of refugee protection. For instance, during our interview, Farah articulated the following:

Europe whatever it does, I do not blame them, there was pressure of refugees. But what has become of humanity when they prevent family reunification. My husband is exposed to danger at any moment. In my country [Syria] he is exposed to danger, how is that humanity? They gave one year, no problem, but why would you cancel family reunification?

More than simply lamenting the erosion of liberal ideals, however, Syrian families also fought the forced transnationalism imposed by the suspension of family unification. Rather than being passive and just waiting to apply for family reunification after the three years, Syrian families sought legal recourse and found multiple, often creative, ways of physically re-assembling their families sooner than the three-year suspension period allowed. For instance, several Syrians sued the Danish state for their right to be with their loved ones. In the spring of 2016 a group of Syrians, who had all received asylum according to §7.3, sued the Danish government and the Minister for Immigration, Integration and Housing, Inger Støjberg (Hvilson 2016). Likewise, Mosalam, a 58-year old Syrian man, sued the Danish Refugee Appeals Board for their decision to reject his family reunification request (Frich 2017). In May 2017, the Danish High Court affirmed the Danish Refugee Appeals Board's decision and ruled that the 3-year suspension of family reunification was not against the European Convention on Human Rights. Mosalam appealed that decision to the Danish Supreme Court (Singberg 2017), which in November 2017 supported the High Court's ruling (Olsen 2017). Albeit unsuccessful in both cases, these lawsuits show that family unification is a strong motivator for Syrians living in Denmark, many of whom sought to shorten the time of living separated from their families under forced transnationalism.

In addition to lawsuits, Syrian refugees also contested the Danish state's ruling on their asylum cases by filing complaints to the Danish Immigration Service and the Danish Refugee Appeals Board. Nour, a 46-year old man from Damascus, decided to challenge the Danish state's decision to grant him asylum according to §7.3 of the Danish Immigration Act, which prevented him from reuniting with his wife and two children

who he had left behind in Syria. In February 2017, Nour consulted with an immigration lawyer and sought to have his protection status changed from §7.3 to either §7.1 or §7.2 of the Danish Immigration Act in order to obtain the right to family reunification. In June 2017, Nour received the good news that the Danish Refugee Appeals Board would hear his case and he was appointed a migration lawyer. The hearing was successful and Nour's refugee protection status was changed to §7.1

Nour's story is not unusual. Between July 2015 and August 2017, the Danish Refugee Appeals Board processed 219 cases where Syrians filed a complaint against the Danish state's decision to grant them asylum according to §7.3. Out of the 219 cases, 46 Syrians had their status changed to either refugee protection according §7.1 or §7.2 of the Danish Immigration Act, which does not suspend the right to family reunification (Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet 2018, 9). Together with these numbers, Nour's story illustrates how Syrians are not just grateful for having received refugee protection in Denmark nor are they willing to wait three years until they can reunite with their families. Rather, Syrians' concern for their family members in Syria as well as need and desire to physically live together as a family motivated Syrians to make rights claims and challenge the state's decision to suspend family reunification; they insist "on their right to *more*" (Espiritu 2014, 14). As political subjects, Syrian refugees actively mobilize their legal right to file a complaint over the particular refugee protection status that they have been granted by the state as a strategy to reunite their family. Syrian refugees demand that the Danish state uses its sovereign power to reconsider and change its initial ruling of their asylum case so that they are no longer subject to the suspension of family reunification laid down by §7.3. Thus, rather than directly challenging and forcing the

Danish state to abolish the law, which enables the state to suspend their right to family reunification, Syrians' political actions here take place within the realm of the law and the existing legal system.

Desperate to end their separation and wanting to speed up their reunification with family members, some Syrians resorted to extralegal and somewhat dangerous means. For instance, Salam, who had left her three children behind in Syria with some relatives, filed a complaint to the Danish Refugee Appeals Board right after she received the ruling on her asylum case. Salam told me that she had a good case from having her status changed because as she explained "I worked as a secretary for a minister. They [the Syrian government] considered me a dissident". While Salam's case was processing, she contacted people she knew in Syria who helped her bring her children from Syria to Denmark through informal channels. Consequently, her three children had to make the dangerous journey across the Aegean Sea and through Europe by various means of transportation and with the assistance of smugglers before they reached Denmark where they were able to reunite with their mother. Salam's complaint was later successfully approved and her status was changed to asylum according to §7.1 of the Danish Immigration.

Not all mothers were as brazen as Salam, however. Nor did they or their families have the same substantial financial means it takes to hire smugglers. Other Syrians simply sought to end the separation of their families more quickly by applying for family reunification before the 3-year suspension period ended⁸. According to the Ministry of

⁸ It is possible for Syrians as well as other recipients of §7.3 to apply for family reunification before the 3-year suspension period ends because the Danish Immigration Service is required to process individual cases in order to establish whether or not Denmark violates international legal frameworks such as the European

Immigration and Integration, between February 2015 and July 31, 2017, 1,420 people who had been granted refugee protection according to §7.3 applied for family reunification even though their right had been suspended (Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet 2018, 14)⁹. Farah was one of these 1,420 people. After much consideration and several consultations with a legal counselor, Farah filed a family reunification application for her husband and two children in Syria in January 2017. While she was well aware that her family reunification case would likely be rejected, she hoped that filing this application might open up a possibility for the Danish state to grant them family reunification before the end of the three-year time period. As she explained “I manage to ignore them [the people who told her that her case is likely to be rejected], I live in a hope that there is an ‘Okay’ [approval of her family reunification case]”. By filing an application for family reunification, in other words, Farah was able to establish a hope that her family would be able to reunite soon, a hope that she could hold on to in difficult times.

Farah further elaborated on the violent and dehumanizing consequences of the process of applying for family reunification. Here she focused on the anguish of the de facto state of limbo that §7.3 brought about based on the anxiety of anticipating the ruling on her pending family reunification case:

Convention of Human Rights and the Convention of the Rights of the Child, even if it ultimately suspends an individual’s right to family reunification. There are special circumstances, such as a child being sick or a spouse being dependent on the other spouse due to a disability, where the Danish state cannot suspend the right to family reunification. Thus, if a person who has been granted asylum according to §7.3 submits a family reunification application, the Danish Immigration Service will process the case in order to see if the case meets the exception made to the regulation of suspending family reunification.

⁹ By July 31, 2017, the Danish Immigration Service had ruled on 480 of the 1420 cases. 112 of the 480 cases obtained family reunification before the end of the three-year suspension period (Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet 2018, 16-17).

Imagine a woman sitting on pins and needles [waiting anxiously], there is the word YES and the word NO – to family reunification – still YES or NO. I try to distract myself. I would say yes, it is definitely going to happen. I try to pretend it is going to be okay. How would I accept a NO?!

While fully aware of the acute possibility of a “NO”, i.e. having her application rejected, Farah emphasized to me that she would not be able to accept such an outcome. As she repeatedly emphasized, if the Danish state truly knew the specificities of her case and ongoing struggles to sustain her family *as a family* it would be impossible for them to issue a “NO!” According to Farah, rejecting her case would (hopefully) prove impossible because it would be so de-humanizing. Through these claims we can see Farah wrestled with complicated emotions, fighting for a way to maintain hope and optimism.

Yet, filing the application represents more than just an attempt to maintain hope; it also became a way for Farah to illustrate to her family that she was committed to them. Before Farah filed the family reunification application, Ahmed had started to question her about their plan and whether or not she was, in fact, actually still interested in bringing them to Denmark. Farah said that Ahmed refused to acknowledge that a law like §7.3 could exist. His suspicions caused many arguments between them and their communication became less frequent. Right before signing and sending the application documents to the Danish Immigration Service Farah took pictures of the application as proof for Ahmed and their four children that she was indeed *doing* everything in her power to fulfil their collective aspirations to be reunited in Denmark, hoping to rebuild their trust. Thus, Farah’s action of filing family reunification represents a way in which Farah was dealing with the forced transnationalism imposed on her and her family. It was

a way for Farah to not give up and let the Danish state destroy her family, Farah took action in order maintain hope and rebuild her family.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have focused on Syrian refugees' experiences and strategies of coping with protracted separation of families across borders, caused by displacement and prolonged by the Danish state's decision to suspend the right to family reunification. Drawing on Syrian refugees' accounts, I have showed how Syrian families find new ways to maintain their family and intimate relations while also trying to reassemble their families before the end of the three-year suspension period. Drawing on these findings, I argue that §7.3 needs to be understood as a border mechanism, not only in the sense that it prevents family reunification (i.e. the immigration of family members) and physically inhibits families from being together but also in the sense that it fractures families (and sometimes destroys family relations) over time. Further, this approach makes visible the irreducible ways in which this bordering mechanism must be apprehended as simultaneously spatial and temporal. The ways in which family relations are fractured and possibly destroyed is not simply the outcome of physical separation. §7.3 states that the suspension of family reunification is three years, a time period that in theory is demarcated and can be measured in a very conventional sense of measuring time, counting days and years. In this sense, time is a condition precedent to a legal status, a legal mechanism through which the state is able to exclude refugee immigration (Kanstroom 2012; Valverde 2015). Yet, Syrian families' experience of this time period is marked by uncertainty. While Syrian refugees do countdown to the day when their right

to family reunification is no longer suspended, there is no legal guarantee that they will be able to reunite with their loved ones once the suspension period is over. The state can at any point use its sovereign power to extend this time period, as it did when it expanded the time period from one to three years in 2016. Furthermore, as the time passes, children grow older, and the longing and worrying for family members' safety and wellbeing get stronger, Syrian families' find it increasingly difficult to maintain the family and intimate relations. Makers of time, such as daily routines, important religious and cultural celebrations, and annual birthdays and anniversaries, remind Syrian families of their physical separation. Thus, we might say that time 'thickens' (Valverde 2015, 10) and shapes the spatial separation of families.

However, the law's control over social life is never total. Syrian families engage in various strategies in order to limit this time of separation and re-assemble their families before the end of the three-year suspension period, illustrating how refugees, despite great uncertainties, "work toward particular kinds of futures" (Ramsay 2017, 519). Syrian families mobilize different strategies that both challenge and engage with the fundamental rule of law. The court cases and insistence on claiming a right to family reunification may be considered "acts of citizenship" (Isin and Nielsen 2008; Mitchell et al. 2015). But beyond such acts that fall fairly squarely into liberal democratic citizenship, Syrians' multiple strategies are more closely aligned with what Partha Chatterjee (2004, 4, also see Chatterjee 2011) calls the "politics of the governed". In thinking through the politics of the governed, Chatterjee (2011, 207) conceptualizes the subject of political practices "as concrete selves necessarily acting within multiple networks of collective obligations and solidarities to work out strategies of coping with,

resisting, or using to their advantage the vast array of technologies of power deployed by the modern state.” Chatterjee’s conceptualization of what it means to act as a political subject allows us to make sense of how Syrian families mobilize whatever technologies of power they have access to in making due and potentially seeking to rework the relations and subject positions that forms of violent statecraft seek to assign them. Hence, Syrian families take political actions, use legal avenues available to them, and mobilize informal networks in order to “deal with” (Harker 2011) and end the protracted separation of their families prolonged by the Danish state. As such, Syrian refugees perform and enact a form of political subjectivity that is not below, outside of, or beyond the state (Sharp 2013), but rather operates and mobilizes the means available within it.

Syrians’ efforts to accelerate family reunification, I argue, need to be understood as efforts that challenge bordering practices like §7.3, which create forced transnationalism and work to sever intimate relationships. Syrians mobilize temporality to overcome space, and in trying to manipulate or change the temporalities of Danish asylum laws they seek to reclaim sovereignty over their lives and intimate relationships. In this sense, making due or getting by becomes itself the horizon of what is politically possible in many cases. I draw here on Berlant’s (2011, 262) conceptualization of political action “as the action of not being worn out by politics.” Syrian families’ attempts to end the separation of their families through various means and actions are themselves ways to deal and cope with the politics at play (the political practice of prolonging the separation of forced migrant families), even when they end up not being successful in the sense of ending family separation.

It is important to mention that Syrian families' story of separation is in no way unusual or unique to Syrian refugees in Denmark. Countries across Europe, including Austria, the Czech Republic, Finland, Ireland, Germany, Sweden, and Switzerland have followed Denmark's lead in immigration enforcement, adopting new laws and policies that suspend forced migrants' rights to family reunification (Council of Europe, 2017). As such, the Danish state is continuing to act as a trendsetter for asylum and refugee policy among the European countries.

CHAPTER FOUR

LIVED REFUGE: THE GOVERNMENT OF REFUGE IN DENMARK

We live in a tent, fastened by nails made of iron.
Any gust of wind would shake it or might uproot it.
You are afraid and cold.
You will continue to be cold and worried.
You cannot go out to get food to eat.
The wind blows.
It is freezing.
You are afraid that the tent will collapse on you.

Salma, age mid-50s, official recognized refugee from Syria, focus group participant,
Copenhagen, 2017

Introduction

I open with Salma’s description of refuge to illustrate the uncertainty and insecurity that Salma and other Syrian refugees experience - notably *after* obtaining asylum and refugee protection in Denmark. Together with her adult son, her daughter, and her three grandchildren, Salma fled from Syria to Turkey, crossed the Aegean Sea to Greece, and moved through multiple European countries before arriving in Denmark in the fall of 2015. While they all survived the dangerous journey and obtained refugee protection status within less than a year, Salma experiences ‘refuge’ in Denmark neither as a permanent nor a secure condition. Rather, using the metaphor of the tent -- a familiar symbol of refugee displacement, temporary settlement, and humanitarian relief -- she describes refuge as a dwelling away from home, a place where you reside for the *time being*. It is a temporary and very fragile shelter (“any gust of wind would shake it or might uproot it”). Living with the constant threat (“wind blows”) that this place might be taken away from you, Salma further characterizes refuge as a place marked by continuing

insecurities and feelings of discomfort, unease, and worries. What is most significant in the context of this chapter, however, is how Salma's description fundamentally troubles idealized geographical imaginations of refuge as a safe haven, a place of betterment, and a space for a stable future.

In the previous chapter, I began to unsettle refuge by analyzing the state of legal limbo and the protracted separation that fragments Syrian families. In this chapter, I continue to unsettle refuge, albeit in a different way. I focus on Syrian refugees' experiences of what I call *lived* refuge. This term specifically foregrounds the disjuncture between idealized notions of refuge—with its ostensible 'humanitarian' ethos—and the practical administration of refuge as manifested in the everyday lived experiences of actual refugees. I argue that these distinctions are not obvious simply by merely attending to the programs and policies themselves as articulated in legal statutes, policy documents, and official statements.

Indeed, Syrian refugees' embodied experiences of *lived* refuge in Denmark highlights the ways in which refuge is defined and shaped by a number of training programs, workfare regimes, and other legally-mandated programs that the Danish state requires of refugees in Denmark. Here I group these practices together under the banner of what I term "the government of refuge". The analytic emphasis is on not merely showing how ostensibly humanitarian programs structure and affect refugees' lives in intimate ways but also on showing how these programs (re)produce refugee subjectivity. The process of subjection is performative in the sense that it enacts and makes real the characteristics projected onto refugees. In this sense, it is not reducible to simple stigmatization in terms of labeling discursively, but rather a form of administration that

casts out refugees through practices and regimes. Attending to the government of refuge from the perspective of refugees shows how refugees rather than becoming ‘integrated’ as these policies purported to do, are instead rendered precarious and deprived of access to core rights that Danes and other residents are accorded. In doing so, this chapter takes up Yêñ Lê Espiritu’s (2014) call to critically interrogate the humanitarian term refuge and the forms of power embedded within it. It contributes to migration geography’s concern with how migrants’ subjectivities are (re)produced, negotiated, and mobilized (Leitner and Ehrkamp 2006; Häkli, et al. 2017; Silvey and Lawson 1999).

The chapter proceeds as follows. I begin by outlining a framework for conceptualizing the relationships between refuge, humanitarian government, and subjection. I then provide a brief description of the conditions that shape Syrian refugees’ lives in Denmark and the specific sets of data I draw on for this chapter. This discussion is followed by my analysis of Syrian refugees’ accounts of what I term *lived* refuge in order detail the government of refuge and its significance. Here I locate the government of refuge and its multiple state practices, which Syrian refugees are subject to, not as a lack or an absence of ‘true’ refuge, but as a structural part of contemporary *lived* refuge.

Refugee Condition, Government, and Subjection

Within the modern refugee protection system, refuge is a geopolitical practice of providing protection and a place of safety to forced migrants fleeing violence and persecution. The 1951 Convention stipulates signatory states’ legal obligations towards refugees, yet it is up to the individual signatory state to decide how it is going to interpret and implement these obligations, as I have explained in greater detail in Chapter One.

Furthermore, because the modern system of refuge relies on the act of “giving” (Nguyen 2012), this sets up an inherently asymmetrical power relationship between the state and the refugee. As many other scholars have noted (Liu 2002; Soguk 1999), the provision of hospitality embedded within it establishes asymmetrical power relationships, a dynamic that the granting of refugee protection accentuates. Refuge is provided by the (more powerful) state to (the less powerful victim) the refugee; the one who is only recognized “in relation to those who have power over them” (Fassin 2012, 4). Because the state has to actively grant refuge to an individual in order for the individual to obtain the protection of the state, the asymmetrical relationship between the state and the refugee in the provision of this hospitality is not merely asymmetrical, however, but also discretionary - - both in terms of who it is accorded to and how this protection is administered once legally granted.

In order to address how refuge is administered in practice, I draw on Didier Fassin’s concept of “humanitarian government”. In *Humanitarian Reason*, Fassin (2012, 2-5) defines the concept of humanitarian government as the set of measures and initiatives designed and brought into operation to manage, regulate, and aid the existence of human beings. According to Fassin, humanitarian government is neither limited to the work of humanitarian and non-governmental organizations nor is it limited to geographical locations in the so-called ‘Third World’. Rather, what makes humanitarian government humanitarian and what brings these initiatives and practices together is the fact that they are all rationalized and carried out “in the name of humanity” (Feldman and Ticktin 2010). The language of humanitarianism -- including the vocabulary of suffering, compassion, assistance, and ‘responsibility to protect’ -- “serves to qualify the issues

involved and to reason about choices made” (Fassin 2012, 2). Thus, the concept of humanitarian government ties together a range of different governmental practices and programs that may seem on the face of it to have little in common - from the regulations of poverty, to disaster management and responses to epidemics. Fassin’s broad definition of humanitarian government is useful in examining how refugees are managed and governed not only within refugee camps and informal urban settlements within or in close proximity to war and natural disasters (Biehl 2015; Darling 2009; Hyndman 2000; Hyndman and Giles 2016; Malkki 1995; Ramadan 2013), along the migration journey (Garelli and Tazzioli 2018; Vaughan-Williams 2015), or during asylum process (Conlon 2010; Darling 2011; Jacobsen 2016), but also after refugees have been resettled or obtained refugee protection status in (signatory) countries, considered peaceful and far away from war and conflict.

Espiritu notably charts how the category of the refugee comes with expectations of indebtedness, passivity, victimhood, and silence (2014; also see Malkki 1995). The ‘refugee’ is (re)constructed as subject position that forced migrants have to “fit into” and preform within the policies and practices of the international refugee regime, in other words forms of subjection. Here, I understand the subjection in a Foucauldian sense, as a form of power that:

applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him. It is a form of power which makes individual subjects (Foucault 1982, 781).

In this sense, the subjection of the 'refugee subject' takes place through a kind of power that both acts on 'the refugee' through techniques of control, domination, regulation, and dependence but also shapes the subject - his identity and self-knowledge. Scholars have used terms such as 'refugeeness' (Malkki 1992; Nyers 2006) and 'refugee condition' (Nguyen 2012) to describe the processes, practices, and techniques through which the 'refugee subject' is (re)produced. For instance, through practices of categorizing, codifying, systematic naming, and ordering of so-called refugee illnesses, the refugee subject is (re)produced as a subject in need of help and interventions and the "problem" of refugees is located within the body of the refugee rather than within the geopolitics and institutional structures. As Mimi Thi Nguyen (2012, 55) explains "the condition of being a refugee is construed as a generalizable state of abnormality, shorthand for deprivation, deindividuation, and deficiency". Furthermore, the 'refugee condition', in turn, acts as an explanation and justification for humanitarian or state intervention.

However, refugees are not passive within this un-going process of subjection, rather refugees like all other subjects re-inscribe, reconfigure, and resist 'the refugee subject' as they move through and between political spaces (Foucault 1982; Grosz 1994). Scholars including geographers have explored the relationship between political agency and subjection of refugees in its various forms (Allan 2009; Fassin 2012; Häkli, et al. 2017; Ticktin 2006; 2011), documenting the capacities of refugees to negotiate and mobilize their position both individually and collectively. For instance, Ilana Feldman (2012, 157) distinguishes between the politics of life (i.e. a politics that ascribes values to life) and the politics of living (i.e. the dynamics of being, what people do within the humanitarian space) in order to examine the ways in which refugees survive, claim, and

act within humanitarian operations. In a similar vein, Nell Gabiam (2016, 9) uses the concept “politics of suffering” to show how Palestinian refugees in Syria mobilize suffering as a kind of political tool through which to claim political legitimacy and rights. As such, refugees employ their political agency in ways that both reproduce and challenge existing relationships of power.

While this chapter does show how Syrian refugees become subject to state practices that seeks to govern them, the point here is precisely not to locate the ‘problem’ of refuge(es) in the bodies and mind of the people who are categorized and legally classified as refugees (Espiritu 2014; Malkki 1995). Rather, the aim is to show how the government of refuge takes place through administering conditions that cast the (newly accepted) ‘refugee’ as an abnormal subject in need of assistance and state intervention and in turn (re)produces particular refugee subjectivities. In short, together this body of work illustrates that analyzing the ways in which refugees’ experience, negotiate, and make sense of *lived* refuge is central to understanding the processes of government of refuge, subjection, and resistance.

Refuge in Denmark

While Syrians and other refugees who obtain refugee protection in Denmark have gained safety from overt violence and threats by the Syrian police and military and other militant groups operating in Syria, their legal status as refugees does not automatically offer permanent refuge. In contrast to, for example, refugees in Canada who automatically become a permanent resident upon resettlement (Hyndman and Giles 2016), refugees in Denmark only receive a temporary residence permit, which is valid for one or two years

depending on their individual refugee protection status¹⁰. In order to renew the residence permit, the individual refugee has to apply for an extension before the permit expires, failure to do so can result in loss of status and expulsion at worst¹¹. After eight years of legal residency in Denmark, a refugee may apply for permanent residence status. In order for such an application to be successful, refugees must meet a number of different requirements including demonstrating Danish language skills, employment, and the absence of a criminal record. The temporary nature of their legal refugee status marks Syrians and other refugees' lives as they worry about whether or not their residence permit will be renewed and the very distant prospect of securing permanent residence.

Syrians' experience of refuge in Denmark is also shaped by their socio-political status as 'newly arrived refugees under the Integration Act' (*nyankommen flygtning under integrationsloven*). The Danish Integration Act stipulates that refugees are required to live for five years in the municipality they were assigned to by the state upon obtaining official refugee protection status in Denmark. This policy means that refugees are dispersed to municipalities throughout the country and often have to live in town or a neighborhood with a predominantly white population. That is, refugees have no choice about where to live in relation to relatives, friends, social networks, shopping facilities, public transportation, schools, and day-care institutions (Larsen 2011). In addition, refugees are obligated to sign a declaration pledging their commitment to integration and

¹⁰ According to the Danish Immigration Act, a person applying for asylum in Denmark can be granted one of the following refugee protection statuses: Art. 7.1: Convention Status (2 year temporary residence permit), Art. 7.2: Individual Temporary Protection Status (1 year temporary residence permit), Art. 7.3: General Temporary Protection Status (1 year temporary residence permit, without right to family reunification for the first three year and no right to free higher education).

¹¹ This has recently been changed, residence permit for certain groups are now automatically renewed if the state decided that there is grounds for renewal.

active citizenship. They have to enter into an integration contract that stipulates their participation in a 5-year mandatory integration program, consisting of a comprehensive civic- and Danish language-training courses, job-training, and internships. During this five year-period or until they obtain full-time employment, refugees are entitled to receive an integration allowance (*integrationsydelse*), which can be up to 50% lower than ordinary social welfare benefits (*køntanthjælp*). The integration allowance is conditional, meaning that a refugee only receives the full amount if she/he complies with the rules and obligations stipulated in their integration contract. For example, if a refugee fails to show up to a language class without a legitimate excuse, the municipality can reduce her/his integration allowance¹². On the face of it, this integration policy might seem like an act of welfare and care that aims to better assist refugees in integrating into Danish society (Fernandes 2015). As I illustrate in this chapter, however, refugees experience this integration policy as invasive in their daily lives.

The Syrians who participated in my research described how they felt life in refuge was structured and shaped by manifold rules, regulations, and requirements. In this chapter, I draw specifically on the data produced through the six focus group discussions that I conducted with 21 Syrian refugees (see Chapter Two). At the time of this research, all participants had been granted asylum, received refugee protection status, and moved to the municipality to which they had been assigned for the 5-year mandatory integration program. Out of the 21 participants, four had obtained full-time employment while the rest were still depending on the integration allowance. All participants were taking

¹² There are no specific rules for the reduction of integration allowance, it is up to the individual municipality to decide how they are reducing the refugee's integration allowance (Integrationsloven, 2017).

Danish language classes and had participated in one or multiple job-training programs. The focus group discussions revealed that these Syrians' experiences of refuge in Denmark did not live up to the safe haven they had expected to find. During the focus groups, participants often highlighted their continued struggles to make a somewhat durable and meaningful life in Denmark. Drawing on these discussions, the remainder of this chapter focuses on what I call 'the government of refuge'; a set of state practices, which structures Syrian refugees' everyday lives in Denmark. I discuss these practices by dividing them into the three categories of 'dispersal', 'financial coercion', and 'workfare'.

The government of Refugee Dispersal

Obtaining asylum or refugee protection is often a major relief for refugees and forced migrants. Yet, the joy and relief of obtaining official status are often soon eclipsed by new challenges and anxieties associated with the governance practices that begin to regulate refugees' lives thereafter. The first of these that I will attend to is the Danish policy of dispersal, which assigns new official recognized refugees a geographic location where they are mandated to live for the following five years¹³. While this policy

¹³ The dispersal policy regulates where newly accepted refugees are required to live. It stipulates that refugees are required to live in an assigned municipality for a five-year period. This dispersal practice is organized through a quota system, where each municipality receives a certain number of refugees every year depending on the total number of refugees who need a placement and size of the pre-existing ethnic minority population. For instance, for several years the quota for specific municipalities such as Copenhagen, Albertslund, and Høje-taastrup has been zero because the Danish state has identified that these municipalities have an existing high rate of ethnic minorities. This means that refugees cannot be placed in such municipalities. The aim of the dispersal policy and quota system is to distribute refugee evenly throughout the country in order to prevent refugees from ending up living in so-called urban ethnic 'ghettos'. The dispersal policy is often justified by politicians in terms of the need to geographically distribute the financial 'burden' of refugees (Wren 2003) as well as enabling refugees to get immersed in an ethnically Danish local community (Larsen 2011). As such, the dispersal policy is based on the assumption that living in a small ethnically Danish community will facilitate 'integration' and reduce the right of social

disperses refugees geographically, one of its principle consequences is a sense of physical containment. I here understand containment not in the sense of a form of spatial confinement analogous to detention but instead in terms of diversions and disruptions of refugees possibilities for physical movement (Tazzioli 2018) within Denmark. As such, I argue that dispersal of refugees in Denmark is a technique of governing that regulates where refugees can live and actively differentiates refugees from other residents as this policy is only applied to newly accepted refugees.

My focus group participants usually talked about the day that they were officially granted refugee protection status in Denmark while making references to being governed and disciplined in various ways. Mahmoud's story is one such example. After receiving several threats from the Syrian security forces, Mahmoud, a 45-year old married man with three teenage sons, left his family behind in Damascus to seek refuge in Europe. In the early days of January 2014, Mahmoud arrived to Denmark where he went through two 6-8 hour-long interviews with the Danish Immigration Service, lived in three different asylum centers, was not allowed to work, and depended entirely on his meagre cash allowance from the Danish state (Jacobsen 2016), while the Danish authorities considered his asylum case. After 10 months of waiting for his asylum case to be determined, in November 2014, Mahmoud received the good news that he had been granted refugee status in Denmark. It was a big relief for him to finally be granted refugee protection and be able to begin life in Denmark. Yet, the letter from the Danish Immigration Service, which stated that the Danish state had granted refugee protection to

and economic marginalization. However, research has shown that refugees' lack of a social networks and access to other kinsmen can have serious implications for refugees' ability to establish a new life (Larsen 2011; Olwig 2011). The dispersal policy has been in place since 1999 when the Danish Integration Act (*Integrationsloven*) was first introduced.

Mahmoud, also stipulated conditions: according to the Danish Integration Act's (*Integrationsloven*) Chapter Three "Housing of refugees" (*boligplacering af flygtninge*) - also known as dispersal policy (Larsen 2011) - Mahmoud was required to move from his current accommodation - an asylum center located close to the Danish-German border - to Vidi, a small Danish island, where he was to reside for the duration of the mandatory integration program. Mahmoud expressed surprise about this decision. In his second interview with the Danish Immigration Service, a caseworker had asked him if there was an area of Denmark where he would prefer to live. Mahmoud had informed this caseworker that he would like to live close to his nephew who was settled in northern Jutland. Yet, for reasons unknown, the Danish Immigration Service decided to require Mahmoud to reside on this small island of approximately 40,000 residents – a place that Mahmoud had never heard of until he received this letter. He believed that he was one of the first Syrian refugees to be re-located there.

For Mahmoud, then, obtaining refuge in Denmark still did not bring him the freedom he had aspired to, at least not the freedom to move to a place of his own choosing that was closer to his only relative in Denmark. As a newly recognized refugee, Mahmoud was forced to reside in this area for the duration of the mandatory "integration program" – a period that was three years when Mahmoud initially received protection status, but which got extended retroactively to five years in July 1, 2016 (Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet 2016). In reflecting on his life on the island, Mahmoud noted that he was forced to live here regardless of his own needs and desires for employment and kinship:

Mahmoud: I requested to live closer to my family, but ended up far away from them. It cost me a lot of money to visit them. I asked the municipality here if they could move me [to the municipality of his relative], they said that it is not possible because of the rules. I want to ask you a question: if I was Danish would I be able to move?

Author: yes

Mahmoud: why is it that we as refugees, we cannot move, we cannot breathe, we cannot... How is it acceptable?

Mahmoud's account of the dispersal policy illustrates how refuge is a site of governance; Mahmoud was not free to decide where he wanted to live. As such this policy notably constrained Mahmoud's "freedom", as he put it his ability to "breathe". Mahmoud as well as other refugees emphasized that despite living in Denmark they did not experience the same freedoms that Danish residents and other migrants enjoyed. They were not free to move to a different community if they so desired and where they could work towards creating the life they had dreamed of. Thus, for some refugees, the dispersal program means that they have to live in an area that lacks social and family networks and support services, often vital to establish a life in refuge (Larsen 2011; Huizinga and van Hoven 2018).

While the dispersal policy necessarily constrains refugees' freedom by mandating where they will live, the Syrians I spoke with frequently made note of the particular regions, towns, and cities where they were assigned, namely rural, isolated and economically depressed communities. In describing their everyday lives, these Syrian refugees referenced the challenges of living in these places as they struggled to find jobs. For instance, Yasin, who was in his early 30s, and Bashir and Ghazi, who were both in their 40s, had all been relocated to the small rural town of Ryhuse with approximately 4,500 residents, a town marked by population decline and economic deprivation. While

the three men were all from Aleppo, they did not know each other before they got relocated to Ryhuse. In a focus group conversation, the three men talked about the difficulties of being forced to live in this community because of the remoteness of the town combined with the lack of employment opportunities:

Yasin: there is no work! It is tiring; the refugee suffers from this issue, especially here in the isolated places.

Ghazi: there is no work! One needs to go to the big cities like Odense, Århus, or Copenhagen to find work.

Yasin, Bashir, and Ghazi all explained to me that they had never experienced being unemployed before coming to Denmark. Yasin was a trained electrician who had worked in Egypt and Libya before returning to Aleppo to open his own business, Bashir used to work as a salesman for a beverage company, while Ghazi had owned a grocery store. At the municipality's job-center, Yasin, Bashir, and Ghazi had been told by their case worker to apply for full-time jobs and make sure to register the jobs they had applied for on their individual job-monitoring site, so that the municipality could insure that they were actively seeking jobs. The three men emphasized that they had done everything in their capacity to find a job in their local area, including participating in unpaid internships at the three different grocery stores (Netto, Spar, and Fakta) where their job was mainly to re-stock the store, collaborating with the job-center which includes participating in a monthly mandatory meeting with their casework, seminars about writing a good job application, job interviews, and how to find a job in Denmark, and organized tours to visiting companies, and sending out job applications on their own initiative to companies in the surrounding area for almost two years at the time I conducted this focus group. Yet, their efforts were in vain, leading Yasin and Ghazi to believe that there were simply no

jobs to be had in the area where they lived. They described their community as one that had suffered from a sharp population decline brought about by social and economic deprivation, disinvestment, and where the only employment opportunities were seasonal jobs in the tourist industry, which illustrates Wren's (2003) findings about how dispersal programs often result in residential and social segregation of refugees into areas characterized by social and economic deprivation.

Yasin, Ghazi, and Bashir were perplexed by the Danish state's decision to relocate refugees to rural areas without employment opportunities:

Yasin: They [the government] know that in these remote areas there is no work

Ghazi: Why do they send us here?!

Ghazi further explained how being forced to live in this town put him and other refugees in an impossible situation: "Frankly, I do not have the ability to go there [to the big cities]. To be honest, I do not have the financial ability to go to these areas. It is a catch-22. If you go out you lose, if you stay you lose. What can you do?" Ghazi thereby referenced how although the dispersal policy did not necessarily prevent him from traveling geographically to find employment, the high costs of such travel in effect precluded him from being able to access potential job opportunities beyond his assigned town. Because he was not allowed to move to another place, he was stuck in this town, unable to change his situation and slowly sliding into poverty, something he had never previously experienced in Syria.

Ghazi's experiences highlight some of the inherent contradictions between the state's aim to encourage refugees to seek jobs while at the same time preventing Ghazi

and others from moving to the larger urban areas where jobs were more easily available (Larsen 2011). In addition to reflecting on the absurdities of the dispersal policy and its overtly counter-productive nature, Syrians' accounts of this policy also make visible another of its less obvious repercussions, namely how it began to constitute relations of dependency. It is worth emphasizing here how, through the dispersal policy, able-bodied former business-minded people (former business owners and a salesman) were rendered into the subjects most vilified by Danish right-wing political parties, namely the needy refugee subject who is becoming an undue 'burden' on the Danish welfare state. As the discussion among Ghazi, Yasin, and Bashir illustrates, they found themselves exasperated trying to actively prevent themselves from sliding into such positions.

Financial Coercion

For Syrian refugees, who participated in this study, feelings of fear, worry, and anxiety continued even after they obtained refugee protection. For instance, in a focus group conversation, Nidal, a 52-year old man who used to work as an Arabic language instructor in Damascus, insisted that I wrote down the following words: "psychological worry" and "anxiety", as he began to narrate his experience with the integration allowance (*integrationsydelse*), a social welfare allowance specifically designed for refugees. Nidal and other refugees were entitled to receive this allowance until they obtained a full-time or livable-wage job. Yet, in order to receive this allowance, refugees had to fulfill the requirements of the mandatory integration program, outlined above. Nidal's anxiety, he claimed, was a direct outgrowth of the conditional nature of this allowance: if he and other refugees failed to attend any of these ongoing requirements,

the municipality could respond with legal or financial sanctions, most often a reduction of their monthly integration allowance (see below).

The economic insecurity brought about by the strings attached to the integration allowance system left other Syrian refugees similarly anxious, stressed, and worried. In a focus group discussion with Maya, 20 year-old from Homs, Muna, 31 year-old university student from Damascus, Salma, in her mid-50s school teacher from Tartus, and Sara, 30 year-old mother of three children from Hama, all four women talked about the many obligations related to the integration allowance and the integration program. Maya, Muna, Salma, and Sara shared their frustrations with the fact that they always had to be somewhere attending mandatory language classes, job training, internship, or a meeting with their caseworker, their integration mentor, their housing adviser, or the citizen service center.

For instance, Maya, who worked 30 hours per week in a discount supermarket as part of a job training program while taking mandatory Danish language classes three evenings a week, said: “When I have a meeting, I get stressed. [I feel] fear and horror”. Maya continued to explain that she was actually more worried about missing a meeting with one of her caseworkers or mentors at the municipality regarding her integration program and allowance, than about what took place during the actual meeting itself. As a result, Maya found that receiving mail was stressful because it could be a letter from the municipality regarding a mandatory meeting. Maya explained “if I get mail, I start kissing the hands of this and that person, begging for their help”. This quote reflects Maya’s sense of desperation in both anticipating some new piece of bad news in the mail (a notification of a disciplinary action, an appointment, etc.) and the inability to even

fully grasp the meaning of these messages without assistance from others. While Maya's Danish language skills were quite good, she still felt that she depended on the help of volunteers who assisted refugees with translating letters and other legal documents at the community center, to fully understand these letters (because they were most often written in Danish and a technical and judicial language) and insure that she was not going to miss a meeting.

In addition to receiving mail, Maya explained how the fear and worry of missing a meeting also made her nervous about catching the correct train that would take her to the location of a meeting. Because if she did not catch the right train, she feared she would miss her meeting and thus have her allowance reduced. Maya further explained that she consequently had developed a habit of staring at the sign that indicated which train would arrive next. Yet, ironically sometimes she even missed the train because she was so occupied worrying about whether or not it was the correct train. As Maya explained how this state practice influenced her daily life, she stated:

We worry and fear about that if we make a mistake will we get marked absent. So this thing [integration allowance system] affected me; their mails, their meetings. This is a thing that really affected me mentally. I cannot understand that I stay afraid and worried. Even if I take the right train I continue to be worried and afraid.

Maya's fear and stress caused by these meetings and the allowance system manifested itself in embodied ways. I observed this, for instance, when Maya asked me for help with translating letters for the municipality, Maya's body was tense and her smile and kind way of being was replaced by an nervous and concerned look.

Maya's experience illustrates the ways in which Syrians experienced 'the state' daily through being subject to the conditions attached to the integration allowance. For Maya, Nidal, and other Syrian refugees, who depend on the integration allowance as their only income, the presence of state was materialized in intimate ways through the fear of missing a meeting, worries about catching the right train, and anxiety about understanding official letters – all related to the risk of having one's integration allowance reduced. Thus, Syrian refugees encountered the Danish state daily in embodied and intimate ways that were often invisible to others, yet were experienced as ever-present, cruel, and intrusive. Furthermore, Maya and Nidal's experiences illustrate how forms of subjection underwritten by forms of mandated economic dependency multiply and morph into new subjectivities such as the constant feeling of anxiety and fear of having one's meagre allowances cut further.

Yet, Syrian refugees' also mentioned how the integration allowance system was carried out in such a way that made them feel distrusted, particularly in the relation to the practice of whether or not the allowance should be cut. Sara, who was almost ten years older than Maya, called attention to the fact that in order for her and other refugees to be marked absent without having one's allowance reduced they not only had to have a 'legitimate' reason but also had to be able to document such legitimate reason, for example with an authorized note from a doctor. As a mother of three small children who were sick now and then as small children often are, Sara had become rather frustrated with this rule because as she explained:

for example, if you have a baby and he gets sick, you see that he is ill but you don't need to take him to the doctor. But he is sick". They [the municipality] say "bring me a report that he is sick". How can you bring a report that he is sick when you did not take him to a doctor. This is difficult to understand!

Sara further explained that when she tried to tell the caseworker that there was no need to take her child to the doctor because he was not sick enough or that by the time she was able to get an appointment with the doctor the child was well again, the caseworker said just responded: "NO, you should bring a report!" Salma, Maya, and Muna contributed to the conversation by stating that they felt that this was a sign of distrust:

Salma: They don't believe us

Sara: [They say]: "have you gone to the doctor? When will he give you the report?" Your absence is noted in your record and you cannot do anything! This is the struggle.

Muna: They don't trust you, they discredit you.

Maya: They do not believe us.

Sara found this practice of showing documentation rather annoying and hard to make sense of; its rigidity and the requirement of going to a doctor even though there was not always a need to see a doctor. Within this system, Salma, Muna, Maya, and Sara found that their words were discredited as a way to establish the truth of their absence. Example after example had shown the four women as well as other refugees that those in power – the municipality – were able to withhold their integration allowance at will. If refugees did not provide the required documents their cash allowance would be reduced, no matter what their story was. As Sara explained, an official note was necessary in order to verify the validity of their account, illustrating the trend of growing suspicion, skepticism, and mistrust towards refugees (Fassin 2013). Not only did this unwarranted skepticism make

Sara, Salma, Muna, and Maya feel degraded, frustrated, and upset, it also illustrates, I argue, how the system works in intimate ways as it diminishes and discredits them as sources of knowledge. Thus, while the integration allowance system works to discipline the refugee, it also (re)produces a system through which the refugee subject is deprived of the ability to advocate for themselves even in the most basic of senses such as ‘explaining’ their absences, illnesses and other basic needs like medical care.

Yet, Syrian refugees by no means accepted these new subject positions passively or willingly. Rather, many of the Syrians I spoke with began to question whether or not this system of providing them aid (integration allowance) was indeed genuinely ‘humanitarian’. Talking about the system, which was ostensibly supposed to support them – i.e. that it was even an act of aid or ‘humanitarianism’ – Syrians called attention to how the integration allowance system punished them financially and foreclosed any reasonable negotiations for exceptions to disciplinary sanctions to punish ‘bad’ behavior. For instance, Salma, who used to work as a school teacher in Syria yet struggled to find a job in Denmark, expressed how she found the integration allowance system unjust and incoherent:

We don’t want their aid or assistance. This is not protection. Until now, we live under their injustice. If you are absent, your money (integration allowance) is cut (...). There are many things like this. That is why we WANT to work, in order to feel like we are real human beings.

Salma here expressed her reticence to accept aid at all and how living under this system of “allowance” was fundamentally dehumanizing. Welfare program such as the integration allowance is often represented by mainstream media and political discourses as a noble act of welfare given by the state to assist a vulnerable population who is new to

the Danish society and labor market (Regeringen 2016). Yet, Salma here pointed out how she and other refugees found the integration system as a form of injustice, where they were being punished if they could not perform according to the rule. Salma further rejected the need for the state's assistance and care, rejected the "gift of freedom" (Nguyen 2012). As long as they were subject to the rules and degradation of this system, Salma and other participants insisted, they were not "real human beings" in Salma's rendering.

In a similar vein, during our conversation about the integration allowance, Nidal recounted how he took a day off from the required activities without having a so-called legitimate excuse of absence: "I took a day off at my own free will in order to make myself feel that I am free". Yet this indulgence of 'freedom' came at a cost. The next month the municipality deducted a sum of money from his integration allowance, which meant that Nidal struggled to get through the month financially. Nidal recognized that he had broken the rules of the allowance system. Yet, the sanction imposed on him for violating these rules led him to questioning the (liberal) normative underpinning of the system itself:

I admit that I broke the law but [...] should I get punished in this way?
What has become of the humanitarian aspect? Is this person who is
responsible for me [Nidal's caseworker] supporting me or working against
me? Even if I broke the law, where is humanity?

Here, Nidal implicitly posed a central question that many of my informants similarly grappled with: was the withholding of the integration allowance an expression of true humanitarianism or its violation? While Nidal clearly subscribed to the idea of humanitarianism and self-identified as a refugee who deserved to be protected and treated

according to its principles, his experiences with the integration system brought ‘humanitarianism’ and claims to ‘humanity’ into question.

Nidal’s set of questions is an example of how Syrians do not just accept the rules and terms of the integration system but rather start to question the purpose and intentions of a system that claims to assist them. I suggest that through these questions, Nidal as well as Salma start to call into question “the given order of things” (Feldman 2012, 162) – the giving order of the integration system and how it operates – starting to produce a form of “dissensus” to use Rancière’s (2010) terminology of what it means to be political.

Workfare

Syrian refugees routinely expressed deep wishes to become economically independent and thereby free themselves from the conditional integration allowance system outlined above. Many of the Syrian refugees, who I engaged with on a daily or weekly basis for this project were thus very happy when they were able to share with me that the municipality had declared them “jobparat” (job ready) and found them three-month internship placements. While these internships were unpaid, my informants told me that their caseworkers at the municipal job-center and their employers had stated clearly that if they did well, they would likely be able to obtain full-time employment at the end the internship-period. As such, caseworkers and employers told refugees that their current dependency on integration allowance was only temporary situation and that participating in an unpaid internship was just a stop along the way, a means to something better: full-time employment.

Syrian refugees' experiences of unemployment were for the most part neither temporary nor exceptional situations. As the three-month unpaid internship came to an end, many of my informants expressed frustration that they did not get hired. Instead, they were told that either the company was no longer looking to hire more employees or that they did not quite possess the Danish language proficiency or skills required for the job. As Rami, who was in his mid-50s and eager to get a job so he could provide for his eight children, explained: "they said: 'you still need a bit more training'", recounting the numerous times employers and caseworkers had told him that he would not get hired. In a similar vein, Omar, who had worked for the postal service in Syria, explained that at first he had been very optimistic about the prospect of obtaining a job through the internship program. He had not said no to a single internship placement, he had worked hard at discount stores and cleaned hospitals in these placements. Omar felt that he had made several sacrifices including working night shifts, spending long work-days mainly on his feet, worked in cold storage rooms, and performing heavy lifting duties even though he was suffering from back pain and a chronic heart condition. As he emphasized to me, he had done his best to be what he thought made a good employee. Yet, after having participated in several internships that did never materialized in a job, Omar's optimism, hope, and trust in this system began to steadily erode. When I asked Omar how these experiences made him feel, he said:

I need to go and work for free! The refugee tolerates all of these pressures but nobody understands his situation. It is as if I hit you and after I hit you, I smile to you. Is this smile an honest smile or is it fake? I sometimes ask myself [this].

Omar thus described how he was frustrated with this mandatory internship program. Omar felt that he as well as other refugees were being taken advantage of by providing “free labor” to these companies without getting anything in return other than the meagre integration allowance, which they struggled to survive on. While Omar felt pressured to accept internship placement in undesirable jobs such as cleaning and work night shifts, he did not complain about the nature of the work itself. Indeed, early on in these roles he believed in the promise that such internships would lead to stable a job. As such Omar was disciplined into performing the role of the ‘good refugee’ (Nguyen 2012), requiring that he be thankful for internship placement in undesirable jobs and the opportunity to be offered a job, which never arrived. However, in his remark (“I hit you and after I hit you, I smile to you”) Omar additionally underscored the pain, humiliation, and sense of duplicity that came with providing one’s free labor to these companies when these internships never materialized. In questioning whether this smile was genuine or fake, Omar started to consider that the companies - where he had been an intern - might never have had any intention of hiring him in the first place; they just wanted his ‘free labor’, which came at virtually no wage costs to the companies participating in these internship programs. Thus while Omar played the role of the ‘good refugee’ as best he could his experience of the internship program as a form of disciplining and exploitation led him to question whether or not performing this subject position would ultimately chart a path forward.

Like Rami and Omar, almost all of my informants recounted strikingly similar experiences of participating in several unpaid internships at different companies -- as they finish one they are assigned to the next -- only to be deemed ‘not quite ready’ for a full-

time position but more than ready for another unpaid internship. With the completion of each of these unpaid internships, the municipality recurrently failed to place refugees in a job with any real prospect for full-time employment and merely re-located them to the next position of ‘free labor’. They openly charged that this reflected racism against them, particularly in light of observing Danes being hired to permanent jobs at the very companies that denied them employment. Rather than improving their chances of obtaining full-time employment by gaining new skills, each placement in an unpaid internship Syrians felt that they instead merely kept them in the captivity of the Danish welfare state and some lost faith in the internship altogether.

Many of the Syrians who I engaged with, however, tried to avoid any confrontations with the municipality because it was in charge of their housing, controlled their cash allowance, and arranged internships. Furthermore, many did not feel comfortable criticizing the Danish state. For example, in response to Rami’s comment about the internship program mentioned above, Nizar stated: “I in my personal opinion, I owe it for the rest of my life. This country has done me a favor. I owe them [Denmark] because they let me in”. Nizar felt that he as a refugee was not in a position to complain or critique the Danish state and the internship program and he tried to reorient the focus group conversation with expressing his gratitude to Denmark. Similarly, many of the participants ensured me that they were very thankful to Denmark for having provided them refuge, illustrating how refugees knew quite well that they were expected to show gratitude (Nguyen 2012), rather than express demands for rights (Fassin 2012).

Yet, not all the Syrian refugees, who I engaged with, remained silent or passive. While some remained hopeful that trainings, language courses, and other mandatory

programs would eventually lead to more stable employment, these recurring experiences of feeling deceived and let down by these false promises of betterment—always in sight but just out of reach—led many to be highly skeptical and cynical of Danish officials’ promises and intentions. After having participated in several unpaid internship without seeing any sign of full-time employment, Rami was determined to call out the injustice of this system:

I said this to the jobcentre: “you are sending slaves to companies without monitoring, you are just sitting at your offices”. I said to him [the jobcentre representative]: “why are you making the language an excuse?” There are people who slit their own throats working [dedicating themselves fully to the internship], it is true that they do not know the language very well but they are killing themselves with work, and they are working, and in the end you make the language your excuse!

Rami here stepped out of the role of the refugee who is supposed to be passive, permissive, and grateful, as he contested the idea that the job training through internships is an act of assistance provided by the state to help them become part of the Danish labor market. In doing so, Rami also explicitly called out how Syrians’ language barriers were being weaponized against them as a convenient “excuse” to continue exploiting their labor for free and without ever granting employment. In this sense, Rami reflected on the widely-commented on “double-bind” of Danish so-called “integration” programs: ““You are not ready to become integrated until you are like us, and you will not prove that you are like us until you are integrated”” (Sjørøsløv 2011, 83; also see Rytter 2018).

While Rami’s transgression did not prove any material beneficial, he had begun to address the injustice of the system, illustrating how he and others were very aware that the promise of a job through the internship program as a false promise. To Rami, it was

abundantly clear that he would not obtain a full-time job through this system not matter how hard he worked because the companies never had any intentions of hiring him and other refugees. As his account illustrates, Rami had seen example after example of how he and other Syrian refugees had worked really hard, done everything they could to be a good employee, or to use Rami's own words "there are people who slit their own throats working", only to be told once again that they are not quite ready or qualified for a full-time job. Deliberately using the word "slaves", Rami indicated how he felt that this system was taking advantage of his and other refugees' labor.

The internship program was framed by the Danish government, the municipalities, the caseworkers, and the employers as way to help Syrians and other refugees enter the Danish labor market and achieve economic independence as quickly as possible (Regeringen 2016). However, as Syrian refugees' experiences illustrate these workfare initiatives were not without violence. Similar to other workfare schemes, the internship program allowed employers to exploit Syrian refugees. Workfare, as Burnett and Whyte (2017, 63) explain "contains within it the seeds of an abuse of power – the power to force people to work harder". In the case of the internship program designed for refugees in Denmark, the employers were able to exploit 1) the fear of having the integration allowance sanction if a refugee did not comply with the rules and 2) refugees' hope of obtaining a full-time job after the internship ended. Similar to other workfare schemes, the violence at play within the internship program was violence not as 'exceptional' or 'unusual' events but ordinary and mundane processes that Syrians experienced daily through feelings of humiliation, exploitation and vilification.

If we conceptualize “conditions” as “the very geographies of being” as per Laurie and Shaw (2018, 8) then this enables us to grapple with both “the existential resources that nourish and sustain, but also harm and violate”. Indeed, as I have shown above, the government of refuge shapes the underlying conditions that characterize everyday lives of refugees, exerts disciplinary mechanism through practices that might otherwise be defined as nourishing and life-giving. These conditions *work* both by limiting refugee potentialities to build lives and families, seek employment, and cope with the ongoing connections to military violence in Syria. But it also functions to limit these potentialities through subjecting Syrian refugees into performing roles and occupying the positions most commonly mobilized to stigmatize and dehumanize refugees in the increasingly and ever more naked forms of resurgent xenophobia across Europe.

To be sure, some Syrians did find full-time employment but not necessarily through the job-training programs or with the help of the jobcenter. For example, several participants living the more rural areas of Denmark sought to free themselves from this regime of workfare by opening their own business such as a food truck and grocery stores while participants living in Copenhagen used informal networks to obtain employment.

Conclusion

The term refuge connotes things that we typically believe to be good, such as relief, safety, and betterment. In exploring how Syrian refugees experience of *lived* refuge in Denmark, this chapter has challenged this self-evidence. Syrian refugees’ experiences illustrate three main sets of dissonances between the idealized notions of refuge and its lived articulations. First, although the liberal conception of refuge promises freedom to

refugees fleeing violence and persecution, once in Denmark, Syrian refugees were hardly free to choose how and where to live. As a result they experienced refuge as a form of spatial dispersal that constrained their economic opportunities and produced feelings of isolation. Second, Syrian refugees frequently emphasized that although the ‘aid’ they received in order to meet basic needs was given (or at least rationalized) under the auspices of humanitarian objectives, it was hardly ‘free’. Not only was the access to this aid conditional on certain types of ‘good’ behavior on the part of refugees; Syrians’ efforts to ‘prove’ reasons for exceptions to this code of conduct effectively discredited them and rendered them objects of additional surveillance and suspicion. And as a result, receiving the so-called integration allowance rendered them in a perpetual state of anxiety with little to no sense of security. As Salma emphasized “this is not protection!”. Finally, although the (neo-)liberal promise of self-sufficiency and betterment through employment was held out as a prospect through various forms of job training and temporary internships ostensibly leading to stable work if refugees could demonstrate ‘good’ behavior and certain skills, full-time work proved perpetually elusive. In short, through their accounts of *lived* refuge, my Syrian informants rendered the lofty claims embedded in the liberal promise of refuge as questionable, if not entirely empty.

As I have shown the provision of refuge (re)produces particular conditions that are not visible outside of the experiences of refugees themselves. Attending to refugees’ lived experiences of these conditions and crucially their efforts to make sense of them, however, shows that these conditions are not accidents, unintended consequences, or shortcomings of idealized version of refuge. Rather, they represent the logical consequences of the government of refuge in its contemporary form. Its core practices

(dispersal, integration allowance, integration program, and job-training) are specifically applied to refugees because they are categorized by the state as “newly accepted refugees”, but not to Danish citizens or permanent residents. As such, I argue that the sovereign decision to grant a person refuge is not simply an event but an ongoing practice of subjection that establishes and consolidates a particular relationship that continues to structure the experience of *lived* refuge and reproduces experiences of fear, worry, anxiety, and injustice that structure, even define, refugees’ lives. Furthermore, I argue that the conditions, which characterize *lived* refuge, are actively administered in ways that (re)produce refugee subjectivities. Yet, Syrian refugees’ actively perform, negotiate, and challenge these subjectivities as they navigate and build lives in refuge.

CHAPTER FIVE

WAR AND REFUGE: SYRIAN REFUGEES' JOURNEY FOR SAFETY

Introduction

Within liberal narratives of war and refuge, the two remain rather separated. There is an assumption that war is “over there”, distinct from the space of refuge and that experiences of war do not exist within refuge. Similarly, when I began this dissertation research, war was not at the center of my conceptualization of refuge and refugee protection. Rather, I was thinking about war more in terms of that which had caused Syrians to flee their homes, cross international borders, and seek refuge in various countries across the world. I was expecting to hear how the Syrian Civil War and its violence and atrocities continued to haunt Syrians who had been able to escape Syria and obtain refuge elsewhere. And I did. But these were rarely stories of leaving war behind. Instead, as I show below, these stories emphasize the impossibility of separating life in exile from life under war, in refugee camps, and the cities in countries of first asylum where family members and friends continue to live.

My informants' accounts of their everyday lives in Denmark were laden with recurring references to a different kind of war, a war that was located, experienced, and fought in Denmark. My informants repeatedly referred to this war as *ḥarb nafsīya* (نفسية حرب). *ḥarb* is a noun and comes from the Arabic root *ḥariba* (حرب), meaning “to fight”, “to combat”, “to battle”, and “to wage war” (Cowan 1994, 195). As a noun, *ḥarb* can be translated into the English word “war”. While *nafsīya* comes from the Arabic root *nafs* (نفس), meaning “self”, “soul”, “spirit”, “mind”, “psyche”, and “human being”. *Nafs* can

be used to indicate a person's own-self, which can be translated to the English word "self" or "soul". *Nafs* can also be used to refer to a specific part of a person's self that has a desire, anger, and passion, which some might call the ego in English (Cowan 1994, 1155). *Nafs* is not part of the *rūh*, which is considered the inner or spiritual part of a person's creation (Moid 2010). Rather, *nafs* is part of the physical human being, our physical self. Thus, *nafs* can refer to the human soul or the human person as a whole. There is no English term to which we can directly translate *ḥarb nafsīa*. Based on the meaning of the two words, one might assume that *ḥarb nafsīa* denotes an internal war, personal war against one's self and one's desire, such as to overcome temptations, desires, and bad habits. Yet, in Arabic such war is known as *jihad al-nāfs* (Sharif 2018). In this context and the ways in which Syrian refugees used *ḥarb nafsīa*, I suggest that it refers to a war on and against the soul, the mind, and the existence of a person, a human being, and/or the Syrian self. As I explain further below, Syrian refugees usually used *ḥarb nafsīa* when they talked about how they felt that the Danish state was waging a war against them. *ḥarb nafsīa*, Syrian refugees explained, was a different kind of war than the war in Syria because it did not include physical violence (bombs, air strikes, etc.). Rather, *ḥarb nafsīa* was a war that was felt in the mind and experienced by Syrians as an attack on their soul and existence. Syrian refugees used the term to describe their personal and collective struggles as refugees in Denmark, a place marked by anti-immigrant discourses and state practices seeking to directly deter and limit refugee immigration. As such, Syrian refugees' usage of the term *ḥarb nafsīa* (حَرْبُ نَفْسِيَّة) indicated the presence of war within the everyday lived realities of refuge. In the following, I will continue to rely on the Arabic term in order to preserve its meaning and complexity.

In this chapter, I argue that the complicated and overlapping existence of war within refuge necessitates rethinking a broader set of questions, including where war takes place and what counts as refuge. I attend to how war is at play in refugees' journeys. The 'refugee journey' not only includes physical travel between sites and across geographic space but is also a form of narrative through which Syrian refugees reckon with their experiences of war and unfulfilled expectations of refuge. This approach is instructive in furthering geographic conceptualizations of war/not-war and their relations to forced migration and refuge in a number of ways. First, it continues to trouble the clear demarcation and associated binaries between war/peace, violence/security. Second, it calls attention to how refugees themselves draw on and mobilize geographical imaginations and knowledges of war, violence, and safety as they try to make new lives as 'refugees'. Third, attending to these experiences not only enables us to challenge the idealized notion of refuge as a space beyond war and violence, but to also examine how spaces of war and refuge stretch and fold into one another, in topological sense of space (Allen 2011; Martin and Secor 2014).

This chapter proceeds as follows: I first outline geographical literature on the migration journey and bring it into conversations with insights from critical refugee studies and debates within geography about the nature and location of war. Second, I give a brief description of the nature of Syrian refugees' journeys from Syria to Denmark and describe the data that I am drawing on in this chapter. Third, I examine how Syrians experiences of refuge continue to be imbricated with references to war and violence. In the final section, I discuss how Syrians' encounters with *lived* refuge and continued experiences of war trouble imaginations of refuge.

Refugee Migration: War and Refuge

The refugee journey is often depicted as a linear transition from unsafe to safe space, including a timeline from ‘being’ a refugee/asylum seeker to holding a residence permit (temporary or permanent) to becoming a citizen. In such accounts, each phase allegedly brings the refugee closer to greater stability (Tang 2015). However, recent scholarship within critical refugee studies and geography have begun to unsettle such accounts by illustrating how the refugee journey – or journeys to be more accurate – are often multi-directional and characterized by chaos, confusion, messiness, and fragmentation.

Focusing on a range of different migrant groups, geographers have shown how migrants’ movement are produced, facilitated, slowed down, and blocked (Collyer 2007; Innes 2016; Kaytaz 2016; Schapendonk et al. 2018), demonstrating the ways in which migration trajectories often do not follow “the conventional order of uprooting-movement-regrounding” (Schapendonk and Steel 2014). These observations resonate with Loyd et al.’s (2018, 380) recent argument that “refugee migrations, rather than being a linear trajectory from unsafe to safe spaces, are embodied, nonlinear and spatially folded”. Through their focus on the role of PTSD in the administration of refugee resettlement, Loyd et al. (2018) have mapped the spatial as well as temporal intimate connectivities between geopolitical spaces of war and peace. These insights not only disrupt conventional geographical imaginations of (refugee) migration, but Loyd et al. also unsettle closely related assumptions that war is “over there” and peace is “here”.

This resonates with recent research within critical refugee studies that has addressed the linkages between war, rescue, and refuge. Bringing together refugee studies and war studies, Yêñ Lê Espiritu (2014), for example, has exposed the geopolitical

conditions that produce mass displacement and shape refugee migration. Espiritu tells the story of Vietnamese refugees' flight to the United States in 1975, illustrating not only how this group of refugees was itself a product of U.S. war but also how the United States' rescue and liberation mission of Vietnamese refugees – a seemingly humanitarian operation – only became possible by U.S. military colonialism and destruction in Vietnam, the Philippines, Guam, and California. Additionally, these rescue operations enabled the United States to represent itself as a benevolent rescuer and savior of Vietnamese people, thereby helping to justify and legitimate the U.S. military intervention in Vietnam. Using the conjoined term “militarized refuge(es)”, Espiritu argues that refuge and refugees are “co-constitutive” and a product of militarism and colonialism. In this reading then, ‘refuge’ is inextricably linked to war and violence. Refuge is a product of colonial war and military violence rather than a response to it.

In a similar vein, both Mimi Thi Nguyen (2012) and Eric Tang (2015) have argued that refugee resettlement might better be understood as a continuation of warfare, rather than an end to it. Focusing on Cambodian refugees who were resettled in New York in the wake of the U.S. war in Vietnam and the Khmer Rouge genocide, Tang documented how resettlement in the United States is marked by wretched housing conditions and evictions, punitive welfare programs, unabated in-work poverty, and criminalization of everyday life. Yet, Tang's work is not merely another story of refugee suffering that highlights the failures and hardships entailed in resettlement. Instead, Tang situates these seemingly new forms of displacement, captivity, and state violence in resettlement as part of liberal warfare – i.e. “liberal war perpetrates violence that it claims is incidental to its exercise of power to free others from a named enemy who is in their

midst” (Nguyen 2012, 20). In this way, Tang illustrates how Cambodian refugees experience their resettlement to the United States *not* as a moment of transition to a better life or form of salvation but as a transfer from one site of captivity to the next.

In further unsettling this war/refuge dichotomy, I draw on and contribute to debates within geography about the nature and location of war (Agnew 2009; Amoore 2009; Gregory 2011; Fluri 2014; Kobayashi 2009). Geographers have paid close attention to and also troubled the dichotomy between war and peace. Drawing on the work of feminist and peace scholars, Loyd (2009, 864) argues that “treating war as exceptional in relation to the liberal presumption of peace ignores the ‘normalcy of war’ (Cowen and Gilbert 2007, 6), within the ‘peacetime’ political-economic order”. Building on this impulse to de-exceptionalize war, Loyd suggests that we conceptualize wars as part of broader histories and geographies of colonialism, racial violence, imperialism, and capitalist exploitation. As part of these debates about where to draw the boundaries of war, geographers have attempted to re-map the locations of contemporary military violence. In trying to geographically situate the Global War on Terror, Derek Gregory (2011) uses the term “everywhere war” in order to suggest that conventional theorizations of war’s locations are less bounded and more diffuse. While emphasizing that the everywhere war always remains *somewhere*, Gregory argues that it has become increasingly difficult to map the boundaries of the modern warfare battlespace definitively, i.e. where it begins and ends. In response to these claims, Jennifer Fluri (2014) has argued that we need to be careful in potentially overdrawing these framings and their totalizing implications. Focusing on visual representations of aid, Fluri shows how the war is located ‘elsewhere’ precisely as part of reinforcing the idea that the

citizen-subject is secure within the US homeland. Yet, Fluri (2014, 810) argues if we pay attention to corporeal geopolitics, “the places inside and outside the nebulous battle space are more acutely illuminated”. In other words, rather than simply conceding to the apparent diffuseness that Gregory’s everywhere war terminology suggests, Fluri insists on the analytical and political imperatives of trying to grasp the specificity of its locations and materializations. Other feminist geographers have linked the violence that takes place ‘at home’ together with global military conflicts, in order to actively deconstruct the ‘artificial separation’ between the two (Brickell 2015; Cuomo 2013; Little 2019; Pain 2014, 2015). In doing so, feminist geographers have traced and examined the geographic ties that bind spaces of war, violence, and harm together with spaces of peace, home, and health whilst insisting on grasping different forms in their specificities. Informed by the broader feminist engagement with theorizations of embodiment (Grosz 1994), this literature insists on foregrounding war and other forms of violence as corporeal experiences that enable particular situated vantage points from which to theorize power relations and geopolitics.

Syrians’ Refugee Trajectories

This chapter is based on data from both interviews and focus group conversations with Syrian refugees who have obtained refugee protection status in Denmark. As part of my interview guide, I routinely asked Syrians about their journeys to Denmark. The focus group discussions were designed to facilitate further collective discussion among Syrians about their journeys. In these focus groups I employed a range of activities, including looking at maps of Europe and the Middle East, writing down words that described their

journeys, and raising questions about where the journey starts and ends (geographically, temporally, emotionally, etc.). In these ways, I thereby sought to facilitate conversations among and with Syrian refugees about the multifaceted nature of their journeys and trajectories, rather than merely focusing on their experience of a specific place, regulatory practice or legal status in isolation from other considerations. Methodologically, I thus tried to follow a “trajectory approach” (Khosravi 2018; Schapendonk and Steel 2014; Schapendonk et al. 2018), which self-consciously situated the experiences of journeys and becomings from Syria to Denmark, including all of the ruptures, returns, slow downs, frictions, strategies, and dis-connections therein.

The Syrian refugees, who I engaged with for this study, had been displaced from their cities and homes as a result of the Syrian Civil War. There is no single version that can capture my participants’ migration journey from Syria to Denmark. Rather, they all have their own individual journeys but of course with certain commonalities and overlaps in experiences and routes, such as displacement, crossing of the Aegean Sea or Mediterranean Sea, and applying for asylum in Denmark. Out of the 40 Syrians who participated in an interview, 29 Syrians traveled through informal channels and various means of transportation to Denmark where they claimed asylum and eleven Syrians arrived to Denmark through family reunification. Of the 21 Syrians who participated in the focus group, only two participants arrived to Denmark through family reunification. Out of the 19 focus group participants who travelled through informal channels, 16 crossed either the Mediterranean Sea or the Aegean Sea, while the remaining three arrived through other means (air or land).

Syrian refugees' travel trajectories were shaped by ad hoc decision making and limitations for planning. Being a forced migrant does not mean being entirely without agency in deciding the course of one's journey nor does it mean being entirely in control of one's ultimate destination and route thereto. While some of my informants had a clear idea about their desired final destinations, others made decisions about where to go next along the way with highly partial information and based on scarce financial resources. Indeed, these decisions were informed by a range of actors, including family members, friends, smugglers, and other migrants along the journey. For instance, George, a man in his late-20s from Homs, left Syria in 2013 after receiving a letter stating that he had been drafted to serve in the Syrian military. His parents advised that he flee to Turkey in order to avoid military service and return at a later date. When George left Syria he expected to soon be back home, noting: "I never imagined that I would leave Syria". George's plan was to stay in Turkey until his father was able to resolve the issue through informal connections. However, George's father was unsuccessful in getting his call to serve revoked and after approximately six months, George decided to leave Turkey for an undetermined location in Europe. Similarly, Anwer, who was a former factory owner in his mid-40s from Aleppo, explained in a focus group discussion how he had never had a final destination in mind, even upon entering EU territory:

When I arrived in Italy, I had no goal [final destination], which country to go to. What mattered is that I pass the most dangerous part of the journey [the sea]. In Italy, we heard a lot of people who wanted to go France, Germany, Denmark, or Sweden. I did not have any country in mind. Yet, in Milan, we [the four people Anwer was traveling with] made a collective decision that we wanted to go to Denmark.

In contrast to George and Anwer, Maya, who was 20 years old from Homs, had a clear plan about going to Sweden because her brother had successfully arrived there previously. Yet, Maya's plan got interrupted when she was stopped by the Danish border control on a train in Denmark towards Sweden. Maya, therefore, decided to make an asylum claim in Denmark. These examples illustrate how migratory trajectories were shaped, facilitated, and interrupted by multiple competing contingencies, including desires and geographical imaginations, financial resources, threats and risks, information about possible destinations and routes, and encounters with actors including border guards, humanitarian actors, smugglers and other migrants en route.

The Crossing

During our interviews and focus group discussions, Syrian refugees would often make reference to their crossings of the Aegean and the Mediterranean Seas as we talked about their journeys to Europe. While Syrians had moved across many dangerous places as part of these journeys, such as the Syrian-Turkish border and areas of Syria controlled by militant groups, they represented the crossings between Turkey and the European Union and between Egypt and the European Union as the most formidable. These sea crossings are, of course, widely known for being extremely dangerous and the sites of thousands of migrant deaths. Yet, this crossing also has intense symbolism as a key threshold separating the Middle East from Europe and as a signifier of separation between violence, war, and instability on one hand and peace, security and stability on the other.

In emphasizing the specificity and particular perilousness of the sea crossings from the Middle East to Europe, many Syrians I spoke with referred to this journey as

“the journey of death” or “the trip of death”. For instance, Rami, who was in his mid-50s, from Qameshli, and had traveled from Syria together with his wife and eight children, described the sea crossing in the following way: “the trip was the most difficult [part of the journey to Denmark]. You see death”. Rami recounted how his and his family’s first attempt to cross the Aegean Sea had failed because the motor of the rubber boat carrying them continuously broke down, after which they decided to return to shore in Turkey. Yet, as they approached the shore, Rami recalled that the boat was hit by a large wave and some people on board the boat fell into the ocean. Recounting their second attempt the following day, Rami stated: “So the second trip, although it was during the day we were so afraid, fear kept in our hearts”. Rami and his family’s second attempt to cross the Aegean Sea was successful; they made it to Greece and continued their travel onward to Denmark, in hopes of reuniting with Rami’s sister and brother already there.

In emphasizing just how dangerous this crossing was, Anis, a 28-year-old man from Homs who came to Denmark with his older brother, sister-in-law, and niece in 2011 similarly recounted how he had lost several relatives in their attempt to cross the Sea:

The crossing and the sea is very dangerous. One morning, I woke up and my phone was full of messages (Facebook, and WhatsApp). I knew that something was wrong. I opened Facebook (to find) that seventy people had died trying to cross the sea, thirteen of them was from my mother’s family!

In a focus group discussion with Salam, Suzan, and Anwer, Salam stated: “seriously, it was a trip of death” as she and Anwer recounted their journey from Turkey to Italy. They were both in their mid-40s. Salam had worked as a secretary in Damascus where she had lived all her life, and Anwer was from Aleppo, where he owned a clothing factory.

Anwer had moved to Tartous due to the fighting in Aleppo, but he continued to be harassed by the Syrian regime's security service and, after receiving a death threat, Anwer decided that it was time for him to leave Syria. Anwer and Salam did not know each other prior to their trip to Europe. They first met in Mersin, Turkey, the night before they were going to catch a ferry to Italy, a trip that was organized by a smuggler. Salam and Anwer described how they had quickly become friends and looked after one another during the five day trip from Turkey to Italy. During the focus group discussion Anwer and Salam took turns re-counting the horror of their journey together across the sea on a ferry that was overcrowded with people suffering from dehydration. Anwer recounted that as they arrived to the coast of Italy:

I had a feeling... it was really beautiful. After we survived the trip of death [the journey from Turkey to Italy], I felt as if I was reborn". Salam followed by saying: "when we arrived in Italy, everyone said: 'Thank God we arrived'".

In another focus group discussion, Maya described crossing the Aegean Sea between Turkey and Greece in a rubber boat together with approximately 40 other people. Maya recounted the relief she felt when the boat successfully reached the shore of a Greek island, saying: "We escaped the death! It was good that we managed to escape death". After evocatively recalling the sheer terror of this journey, several of the Syrians I engaged with emphasized the sheer relief of simply having survived it. My informants recalled the survival of crossing as *the* definitive moment in their broader journeys of becoming refugees. The sea crossing loomed large even before undertaking it as a key site of danger but it was also a symbolic and geographic threshold between the Middle East and Europe. Syrians referenced "the journey of death" and "the trip of death" to

denote the dangers of this crossing and the high stakes it represented to gain access to refuge. However, even the successful crossing and its accordant associations with access to safety and protection from war severed Syrians from the war in Syria. Indeed, as I explore in the next section, in many respects the journey of becoming refugees is characterized by its enduring connections to violence in Syria and those who remain there.

Ongoing War

Many of the Syrian refugees I spoke with referenced the ways in which the war in Syria continued to mark their lives long after gaining refugee protection in Denmark. All my informants still had some family members and friends in Syria and in any case felt deeply emotionally connected to Syria, the place they were born and raised in and violently displaced from. As such, Syrian refugees continued to closely follow the news about the ongoing war and other political developments in Syria and regularly communicate with family members and friends still remaining there. For these reasons, leaving Syria to seek refuge in Europe did not mean simply leaving Syria behind entirely. For instance, in a focus group conversation Omar, a 50-year old man from Damascus, and Nizar, a 24-year old university student from Tartus, had the following exchange

Omar: Yeah, it is true that I left Syria where the war is, but the war is still there [with me in Denmark]. As a Syrian person, I cannot get detached from my skin [my identity]. The [Syrian] war is not over for me. There are still people suffering, there are still people dying. There are people being bombarded. There are still people who are being arrested.

Nizar: You cannot forget the country you lived in, the country you were raised.

In another focus group, Nasri, a businessman in his mid-40s from Damascus, echoed this sense of unshakable attachment to Syria, even as it continued to be ravaged by war and was geographically far off:

We are speaking about a country in which we grew up, and lived and originated from - and our families. Nobody is going to be happy and nobody is going to have peace of mind [here in Denmark], as long as the children of your country are dying.

Omar, Nazir, and Nasri thus all describe a common feeling among many of the Syrians who I engaged with for this project. While they were no longer living in Syria and no longer exposed to the physical danger of military operations such as bombings or the intimidation by Syrian state security forces or other militant groups, the war remained ever-present in their lives in Denmark.

Other Syrians mentioned how Syria continued to be present in their daily lives as they maintained connections with family members and friends through social media and various mobile applications. In a focus group discussion, Hassan, Abu Imad, and Anis, three men who all had parents and siblings still in Syria, worried about their close relatives because of the ongoing war. Hassan, who was in his mid-thirties, unmarried, and had left his parents and two adult sisters behind in Syria, emphasized:

I'm always thinking of my family. Sometimes, I cannot sleep and I worry a lot about them. I have secured myself, I have secured my life, but I keep thinking and worrying about my family.

Abu Imad, who was from Afrin in Northern Syria where his parents were still living, jumped in:

You cannot forget your family. We pray that it [the war in Syria] calms down. When the internet connection breaks down in Syria, I cannot speak to my mother, I cannot speak with my father...

In response to Hassan and Abu Imad's comments, Anis who had arrived to Denmark in 2011, recounted the Syrian regime's military assault on several rebel-controlled neighborhoods in Homs in 2013:

I was in Denmark and my family was in Syria, it was the worst day of my life, honestly. Back then, I was always following the news and the internet about the war. I would always make phone calls to my family. I lost many of my friends. Someone would call me or I would see it on the internet, photos on Facebook posts [when people died].

This conversation with Hassan, Abu Imad, and Anis thus illustrates how war remains present in Syrians' everyday lives in exile.

Similar to Anis, many of the Syrians who I talked to explained how they received updates about the war in Syria from online groups on Facebook or WhatsApp. As Syrian refugees' worry about their family members' safety, communicate with them, and receive updates about the war and its many victims, the Syrian Civil War becomes part of Syrian daily lives. Abu Nasir, a father of four children and in his mid-40's, expressed it this way:

Here [in Denmark] my children do not think about the war in Syria. But for me, I hear on Facebook, for instance, that my friend died! That my maternal aunt's son is gone, dead! My paternal aunt's son was put in prison! The war is in the minds and souls of Syrians – wherever you are, you cannot forget.

So while the virtual space provided some comfort by enabling Syrians to stay connected with friends and loved ones in Syria, the access it provided also served as a reminder of the ongoing war faced by Syrians relayed in the form of texts and social media messages.

Abu Nasir's comment "the war is in the minds and souls of Syrians" was echoed in other conversations I had with Syrians. For instance, in my interview with Nawal, a middle-age woman from Homs, Nawal spoke about how she was constantly thinking about her adult daughter who was still living in Syria. As Nawal explained:

We left the war but it came with us. Our hearts and minds keep with the people in Syria. Me, for example, I have my daughter in Syria, I keep thinking about her. I wish that I did not have to eat, I wish I could send my money [integration allowance] to her and then my daughter who is here [in Denmark] could support me. I don't like to eat when I know that my daughter [in Syria] is struggling.

Thus, for many Syrians the war in Syria was very much still part of their everyday life, as they received updates through social media about the war and its victims, maintained contact with family member and friends who remained in Syria, worried about the lives of these same people, and mourned the loss of their homes, cities, friends, and family members.

As Nasri's words above 'nobody is going to have a peace of mind, as long as the children of your country are dying' illustrate, the feeling and experience of having peace cannot be obtained simply by being granted physical safety and legal refugee protection. Because the war in Syria remained ongoing, Nasri and others did not feel 'at peace' as they worried about the fate of their homeland, their neighbors, friends, and family members who remained there.

This testimony resonates with feminist scholars' well-established arguments concerning the need to attend to the complex geographic and emotional boundaries at work in relation to war in places far beyond the territory where it is physically fought and more specifically to attend to war *not* merely in terms of actual military violence waged

in battlefields but instead through the register of embodied experience (Enloe 2010; Sylvester 2014). Doing so allows us to address, among many other things, the ways in which violence exercised in various *elsewheres* continues to reverberate in the lives of those who would appear to be outside of its remit. Most relevant for the present chapter, however, are the ways in which references to war in Denmark were put to work in making sense of the policies and practices that structured and indeed saturated the experience of *lived* refuge there.

War in Denmark: *harb nafsīa*

As the Syrians who I engaged with sought to make sense of their lived experiences in Denmark, they used the term *harb nafsīa*. Syrian refugees described how they had arrived in Denmark, obtained protection, and were protected from the overt violence they had experienced in Syria - to use Farah's words: "We secured ourselves [in the sense] that we are not going to die". But Farah and others also felt that it was as if the war had not ended but rather morphed into what they called the *harb nafsīa*. For instance, Sara, who had successfully escaped the war in Syria, survived the treacherous journey across the Aegean Sea together with her three small children, her mother, and her brother, explained that she had not been able to free herself from the experience of war:

I left the war (...) But I do not feel that I left the war! I left the war in Syria behind but I feel myself here living in *harb nafsīa* with myself and with the others. There is a war [here]!

Sara's reflection and use of the term *harb nafsīa* was echoed in the accounts of many of my other Syrian informants. Syrians' narratives of *harb nafsīa* in Denmark draw our

attention to “issues of war, race and violence, rather than to questions of identity, assimilation, and recuperation of history” (Nguyen 2012, 930). That is, rather than self-pathologizing their struggles in Denmark as reflective of some individual failings to ‘assimilate’ or leave their troubled pasts behind, many of my informants preempted such an interpretation and proposed an alternative political reading of their ongoing struggles for dignity and justice.

Syrian refugees actively used the term *ḥarb nafṣiā* both to describe the character of their everyday experiences as refugees in Denmark but also to make sense of these experiences of the acute violences stemming from the government of refuge. While Farah used the term *ḥarb nafṣiā* to explain to me how the suspension of family reunification had intimate and violent consequences for her family as well as other Syrian families (explained in Chapter Three), Lama used the term to explain how she experienced the many demands associated with the integration program: “All this psychological pressure and stress they [the government] are doing – I call it *ḥarb nafṣiā*” (described in Chapter Four). Likewise, Maya stated that: “they [Denmark] do not protect you. On the contrary, they exhaust your personality (put psychological burden on you). They make you hate your life and yourself!” The multiple references to *ḥarb nafṣiā*, I suggest, illustrate how this war can be conceptualized as the cumulative effect of the state violence Syrian refugees were subject to in Denmark, including restricted immigration legislation, demands of integration, conditional social workfare programs, and anti-immigrant discourses.

Several of my informants believed that *ḥarb nafṣiā* was explicitly *not* an unintended consequence of some otherwise noble efforts to administer refuge. Rather,

Syrian refugees used this term deliberately to connote an active campaign they felt was being waged against refugees and particularly Syrian refugees. For instance, in the focus group conversation with Salam, Suzan, and Anwer – Salam emphasized that she believed that she and other Syrians had become the target of this war because they were refugees: “It is [...] *because* you are a refugee”. Similarly, as Sami described his struggles to make sense of the law and legislative changes that the Danish government had instituted since his arrival to Denmark in 2015, he stated: “it is not from the Danish people, they are kind”. Sami shifted from speaking in the Syrian dialect to using Fus’ha (Standard Arabic, a more formal way of speaking) and stressed each word in a careful and deliberate manner, as he stated: “I am totally sure there is someone who wants to harm the Syrian people”. While Sami made it clear to me that the war was not caused by “the Danish people”, he hesitated to directly blame the Danish government for this war. Sami’s hesitation made sense because at the time of our conversation his family reunification application was pending and he was nervous about calling out the Danish state as he likely worried that it could hurt his case. Amira, however, was less reserved about who to blame: “they [the Danish government] waged a *ḥarb nafsīa* against us”.

Indeed, it is easily conceivable that the onslaught of amendments to the Danish Immigration and Integration Acts was directly aimed at (Syrian) refugees. Since June 2015, the Danish government enacted more than 100 amendments to the Danish Immigration Act and Integration Act. Some of these amendments received international notoriety because of their sheer cruelty and dehumanizing qualities, which fell in sharp contrast to Denmark’s erstwhile status as a kind of model social democracy known for its well-established welfare programs and high wages. Conservative politicians argued that

these amendments were justified by making direct references to the Syrian Civil War and the arrival of Syrian refugees to Denmark. But such arguments appear problematic given that Syrian refugees made up less than half of the refugees who applied for asylum in Denmark in 2015, the year with the highest number of refugees seeking asylum during the so-called refugee crisis. Hence, the Danish state's efforts to limit and deter refugee migration can indeed be thought as a war against refugee/migrants.

The use of war metaphors to make sense of state practices targeting Syrian refugees in Denmark shows the importance of *re-locating* war beyond the boundaries of formal military institutions and associated forms of violence. While I am in no way suggesting that addressing such violence is necessarily problematic per se, Loyd (2009, 866) points out that “[t]he reification of direct violence fails to capture military strategies that target infrastructures for living, avoids the contradictions of militarization, and obscures the structural violence engendered by privileging of militarized priorities”. Thus, Syrians’ references to *ḥarb nafṣiā* in refuge, should not be understood as “war” encroaching onto an otherwise pristine zone of “peace” to follow Howell’s (2018) argument. Instead, violence should be situated as always already entangled with the practice of liberal refuge and the government of refuge with its constituent power relations and racialized subjectifying gazes.

Amira was not alone in ascribing *ḥarb nafṣiā* and the damage that it caused Syrians directly to the Danish government and its actions. For instance, in a focus group conversation with Ghazi, Bashir, and Yasin, the three men described how the media portrays refugees who the government represents as deserving of particular close scrutiny and suspicion:

Ghazi: When you see on TV, “laje'a”, “laje'a”, “laje'a”, “laje'a” (refugee) then even the Danish people started to be afraid of us. “These people [refugees] No! They are robbing us, they are so and so”.

Bashir: ...The government repeats: ‘refugee, refugee, refugee’. They [Danes] think: “so these refugees are scary!” (...) They hear what the government is saying and take it as the truth. They take what they say on TV as the truth.

Yasin: They [the government] are making people fear us more! (...) I wish for once, that I could turn on the radio and not hear the word laje'a! I wish that they for once would leave us alone and speak about other issues. You have a thousand things to talk about – [but] you only talk about refugees!

Through this conversation, Ghazi, Bashir, and Yasin described how the intense focus and repeated media coverage of refugee-related stories produced and created fear among “Danish people”, to use Ghazi’s words. Bashir and Yasin further stated that the Danish government was to be blamed for this because the Danish government’s very well-known anti-immigrant discourse, often framed as an explicit fight to limit and deter the number of refugees, was understood among Danes as the truth. Ghazi, Bashir, and Yasin all expressed a yearning to break free from the category of refugee that was being imposed upon them. Yet, Yasin’s words (“I wish for once, that I could turn on the radio and not hear the word laje'a (refugee)”) illustrated how the intense focus and repeated coverage of stories affected Yasin as well as other Syrians’ everyday lives. Yasin’s comment shows us how he felt targeted, caught, and contained by these portrayals. Ghazi, Bashir, and Yasin’s observation illustrates the “discursive violence” (Jones, et al. 1994: 394) that takes place through the media and government’s representation as refugees are portrayed in ways that counter how refugees see and define themselves.

When Syrians talked about the experience of war in Denmark, they made clear distinctions between the war in Syria and *ḥarb nafṣīa* in Denmark. They did so through

giving the two wars different names. While Syrians referred to the war in Denmark as *ḥarb nafsīa*, they referred to the war in Syria as the war of death. This is illustrated in Farah’s account of leaving Syria: “We managed to escape the war of death, the one that we would die in”. Syrians also distinguished between the two wars by making references to the instruments, the nature, and consequences of war, as well as geographical references to the physical location of war. For instance, Amira stated “there is no plane above us [that is dropping bombs]”. Likewise, in the focus group with Salam, Suzan and Anwer, Salam and Suzan had the following dialogue about *ḥarb nafsīa*:

Salam: The war here [in Denmark] is for survival and existence. We came here to seek peace, we do not have it. We left the war [in Syria] with guns, rifles, and things like that but we came to another kind of war. A war for existence and a war of...

Suzan: *nafsīa*?

Salam: *ḥarb nafsīa*. (...) All the people who are fighting you, you feel that they are attacking you.

Here Salam made it clear that *ḥarb nafsīa* was not the same as the war in Syria because the war in Syria was the war with military power (“with guns, rifles, and things like that”). Rather, *ḥarb nafsīa* is a war in the sense that Syrians feel that they are fighting for their very right to exist as dignified human beings with individual needs, desires, and aspirations not reducible to the roles imposed on them by the government of refuge.

Drawing on these descriptions of *ḥarb nafsīa*, I argue that Syrians’ use of the term *ḥarb nafsīa* is a collective way of making sense of *lived* refuge. The collectiveness of this term became particularly apparent through focus group conversations. For instance, in response to Sara’s description of how she experienced war in Denmark, Salma affirmed Sara’s description stating: “yes, there are a lot of people who say that”. The

collectiveness also expressed itself in the ways my informants used the term in an attempt to illustrate how they had become a target, not individually, but collectively as a group defined as refugees. Furthermore, Syrian refugees' efforts to make a clear distinction between the war in Syria and *ḥarb nafṣiā* in Denmark, I argue, illustrates that the experience of war in Denmark cannot be reduced to the residual trauma – i.e. *post-traumatic stress* caused by the Syrian Civil War – but instead is located as an outcome of Danish state violence.

By re-framing the “violent conditions” (Laurie and Shaw 2018) they experienced in Denmark in the terms of *war*, Syrian refugees drew active parallels to the atrocities of the war in Syria. While qualifying that there was no overt military violence in Denmark (bombings, chemical attacks, etc.), Syrians represented their experience of refuge in Denmark as *ḥarb nafṣiā* to draw attention to how the state practices they were subject to affect them, to use Maya's words “they exhaust your personality”. Drawing parallels between the violence caused by war in Syria and the violence caused by the Danish government, Syrians further challenged the geographical representation of Denmark as being a safe haven beyond the remit of violence. In doing so, I suggest that Syrian refugees' narratives of *ḥarb nafṣiā* begin to disrupt prevailing geopolitical imaginations of Europe/Denmark and war. Indeed, through challenging these prevailing pictures of war/not-war I argue that Syrian refugees prompts us to question the very idea of state borders and geographical locations as defining spaces of refugee protection (or lack thereof). In other words, although Syrian refugees are ostensibly ‘safe’ in Denmark, they insisted that Denmark was not a place outside or beyond war.

Promise of Refuge

Syrian refugees often expressed to me how refuge in Denmark did not turn out to be what they had anticipated it to be. For instance, Anis, a 28-year-old man who came to Denmark with his older brother, sister-in-law, and niece in 2011, recounted what he and other Syrian refugees had imagined refuge in Europe to be, prior to their arrival there:

Europe: the countries of freedom and the law. Europe helps, Europe is advanced and developed. We had this idea about Europe that it is a haven and that if we arrived there (in Europe) our life would be complete!

Likewise, Reema explained:

We came for the human rights, to a place where human rights are highly regarded. We assumed that Europe was a place of culture, education, and civilization, with people who know the human rights. [In Syria] we envied them [Europeans], their lifestyle and life standards. In Syria, this thing did not exist – human rights and respect for humans!

Anis and Reema's reflections illustrate how imaginations of Europe as an idealized place were central to their expectations of being able to exercise rights, freedoms, and dignity previously inaccessible to them in Syria. This assumption in turn shaped their expectations of a quick transition into a comfortable life once in Denmark. For instance, Farah noted: "I expected that we would come here [Denmark] and find safety, find peace of mind – find a home, settle down."

However, as the narratives about war mentioned above illustrate, Syrian refugees' lives did not become complete when they obtained refuge in Denmark nor did they "find peace of mind" to use Farah's words. Rather, the experiences of war continued to be present in their lives both in terms of the ongoing war in Syria and in Denmark. Yet, here

I am simply not concerned with the fact that these imaginations of refuge were false. Instead, I am interested in how the imagination of refuge as a space beyond war might have been key driver of Syrians' desires to seek refuge in Europe. Here, Lauren Berlant's (2011) concept of "cruel optimism" might be helpful in order to make sense of how attachments to this imagination worked as a force, a desire that could never be fulfilled.

Through this concept of cruel optimism, Berlant seeks to address our (optimistic) attachments to a thing, an object, or a way of life, such as the 'good life', upward mobility, political and social equality. Berlant (2011, 2) further describes how this optimism and optimistic relations become cruel when:

the object/scene that ignites a sense of possibility actually makes it impossible to attain the expansive transformation for which a person or a people risks striving; and, doubly, it is cruel insofar as the very pleasure of being inside a relation have become sustaining regardless of the content of the relation, such that a person or a world finds itself bound to a situation of profound threat that is, at the same time, profoundly confirming.

Thus, cruel optimism is a force that moves us closer to that which we desire yet this object becomes an obstacle for our (human) flourishing. The object actively impedes the aim that brought you to it. In this sense, refuge and the belief that upon leaving the site of the immediate war, one could be free and enjoy life characterized by peace – and not war – can be understood as a promise and a fantasy that individuals including refugees can become attached to and which worked as an affective force. It is this promise that guarantees that Syrian refugees would escape war once they had made the dangerous across the sea and "find safety, find peace of mind" to use Farah's words. This promise of refuge as a place of peace and safety beyond war and violence is a "magnetic attraction" (Berlant 2011, 48).

Yet, the promise of refuge as a place of peace and without war is cruel in the sense that it never came true. As Syrian refugees' lived experiences of the ongoing Syrian Civil War and *ḥarb nafsi'ya* illustrate, it was impossible for Syrian refugees to experience a life in refuge that was not marked by war. Despite their best efforts, despite leaving their homelands and arriving at a place where they believed there would be peace, safety, and human dignity, they instead arrived to a land (Denmark) where the war at home followed them and where the war on their soul, existences, and sense of self was waged day in and day out by the Danish state that reluctantly had accepted them as refugees. Indeed, the promise that leaving the site of war would allow Syrians to be free of being in a relationship of violence to the Syrian state or any state could never become true because it is a fantasy and a false promise.

Importantly, here I am interested in the moment when this false promise, the fantasy of what life in refuge is, comes undone, the moment or moments of undoing. Whereas Berlant's core concern is why we stay attached to the good life fantasy even once its associated false promises start to reveal themselves (becoming undone), what is significant about Syrians' disruptive encounters with Denmark is the ways in which they utterly shatter Syrians' prior attachments to refuge as a place without war as a realistic expectation. In recounting their broader journey, my informants frequently emphasized that some of their initial feelings of relief upon their arrival to Europe soon gave way to other more disorienting emotions. Here, a number of Syrian refugees described feelings of being "shocked" or "surprised" as they encountered aspects of Europe and Denmark that were radically out of step with what they had anticipated. For instance, Sami, a 55-year-old man who arrived to Denmark in the late fall of 2015, described his experience of

being shocked: “from the moment I entered Denmark, and still now, it has been a big shock, a constant shock”.

Syrian refugees’ description of being shocked, surprised, and disappointed reveal this moment of the promise of refuge starting to fall apart. While Sami’s shock was associated with the Danish government’s response to the arrival of Syrian and other refugees, Najwa, a young woman in her mid-twenties, expressed how she was surprised about her inability to obtain basic human rights in refuge. Najwa further explained “it turned out that this vivid imagination is not... [the] reality”. Najwa’s realization of how the promise of refuge as a place where she could obtain and access her rights was just a “vivid imagination”, to use Najwa’s own words, manifested itself in feelings of disappointment. It illustrates the moment when the promise of refuge starts to fray and fall apart. It is this moment of falling apart –or to use Berlant’s terminology this impasse – that provides insights into how Syrian refugees began to reckon with and were prompted to fundamentally reconsider the basis of the optimisms that had compelled them to undertake the perilous journey there. As becomes very explicit through the references to *ḥarb nafsā*, their emphasis was not merely in showing the promise of refuge to be a false one. It was instead to ascribe political responsibility for targeted violence against them as a choice rather than as a natural feature of the state per se. In this way, Syrian refugees began to reconsider their own geopolitical imagination of where to geographically locate security, humanity, war, and violence.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined the ways in which war and refuge are connected, the terms of this connection and their limits. I have focused on Syrian refugees' accounts of their journeys to Denmark as well as their experiences of war in Denmark, both the ongoing Syrian civil war and the psychological war. Through an analysis of Syrians' accounts, I have illustrated how, although Syrians fled their home land in order to escape immediate threats to them and their families, they were never entirely able to leave the war behind. Indeed, Syrians found it impossible to make a clear separation between life under war and life in exile. Intimate connections and relations endured as Syrian refugees became spectators to the Syrian War from a distance, yet mediated through the eyes and visceral experiences of those left behind.

Through these discussions about war, refuge, and exile, the term *ḥarb nafsiya* also emerged as Syrian refugees' claimed that there was also war in Denmark, yet a different kind of war that was distinct from the war in Syria. I argue that Syrians' various accounts of war complicate conventional geographical imaginations of where war is located and challenge us to re-think the spatial boundaries of war. Syrians' corporal experiences and accounts of war(s) illustrate how war can be conceptualized as a multi-faceted and multi-sited force. The ongoing Syrian Civil War is physically fought in Syria, the battlefield and the destructions caused by this war can be documented by mapping the physical damage of buildings, neighborhoods, and cities within the geographical territory of Syria. In this sense, the Syrian Civil War can be located geographically in one particular place (Gregory 2011; Fluri 2014). Yet, if we take the emotional, psychological register of the war into account – a different yet connected register – the Syrian Civil War is very much

part of Syrian refugees' everyday lives in Denmark, through transnational connections and activities. The nature, consequences, and destruction of the war become visible and felt by Syrians in Denmark through virtual interactions with family members and friends who remain in Syria. As such, the lived experiences of Syrian Civil War cannot be bounded to the geographical territory of Syria, but is also lived within spaces of refuge.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

Majed: the word refugee used to feel like an insult for me. But now it is the opposite.

Author: Why did it make you feel that way?

Majed: because the way that people would say it, it was disrespecting. But I found the weakest point in it and I turned it around to be the strongest point.

Author: What does the word refugee mean to you now?

Majed: Now, it means hero! Because if you are a refugee or an asylum seeker, it means that you have been through a lot of things and it is not because you are weak or cannot hold on anymore. And as a refugee living here in Denmark among other people (non-refugees) you been through a lot of things that they never had to go through.

Majed, male, age mid-30s, official recognized refugee from Syria, interview, Copenhagen, 2017

Introduction

How do we tell the story of the refugee? What stories can be told and what stories cannot or should not be told? And how do we tell stories about war, rescue, and refuge in ways that do not reduce refugees to mere victims, yet still emphasize the consequences and damage of war and violence? These are some of the questions that Y  n L   Espiritu (2014,171) raises in the end of her book *Body Counts* as she describes her long-term struggle of *how* to write the Vietnamese story of war and displacement. Espiritu's questions and reflections resonate with my own experiences of writing about war and displacement. Since I first started to conduct research with forced migrants in Denmark in 2012 for my Master's thesis, I have grappled with similar questions concerning representation and paid close attention to the ways in which forced migrants appear in or

are sometimes entirely written out of geopolitical writing on borders, immigration enforcement, and migration management.

In order to address this concern about how to tell the story of the Vietnamese refugees, Espiritu has proposed a re-conceptualization of “the refugee” “not as an object of rescue but as a site of social and political critique, whose emergence when traced, would make visible the processes of colonization, war, and displacement” (Espiritu 2014, 174). This re-conceptualization allows us to re-center the geopolitical conditions that produce human displacement, rather than locating the “problem of refugees” within the bodies and minds of the refugee. As such, the refugee is not understood as “an object of study but as a source of knowledge” to use Espiritu’s words (2014, 171).

In this research project, I have sought to follow this re-conceptualization by bringing it together with feminist geographers’ longstanding efforts to examine geopolitics from the perspective and actions of those who are often left out of conventional geopolitical stories, yet are very much caught up in and subject to national policies, state practices, and international relations (Dowler and Sharp 2001; Hyndman 2004; Koopman 2011). My research has been driven by the quest to bring forced migrants – their experiences, struggles, actions, and opinions – into the political geographical literature on displacement and geopolitics of migration. What do we learn about the geopolitics of migration if we start from the stories and experiences of forced migrants themselves, rather than from state authorities? How do we write these stories in ways that highlight the power relations and struggles at play therein? How do we represent forced migrants’ accounts and experiences not merely as effects of or responses to state practices, which seek to deter, manage, and control unwanted migrants? As the

previous chapters have illustrated, it is undeniable that forced migrants' lives and experiences are influenced by state practices, at every turn. Yet, this does not mean that forced migrants are passive subjects. Rather, despite various constraints, forced migrants forge meanings, make lives, and push back against and rework relationships of power and identity. As Majed's reflections on the word "refugee" illustrates, people like Majed who have been assigned the category "refugee" reflect on how this labeling and categorization makes them feel and also re-work what it means.

In this concluding chapter, I provide a summary for my findings while I reflect on how this approach to studying the geopolitics of forced migration has informed my research and analysis. I then turn to the questions of what is at stake when we unsettle ideas and liberal promise of refuge and refugee protection in signatory states, which often are assumed to be already-given and unproblematic. While I do provide a simple and/or technical solution that can fix the problems related to refugee protection and the government of refuge, I reflect on the need to unsettle the liberal promise of refuge in order to make space for alternative visions to become thinkable.

Lived Refuge

In this dissertation, I have examined refuge as a lived reality rather than as a set of abstract principles, legal statutes, or norms. The empirical thrust of my research has therefore been to explore refuge as it is experienced and known by (Syrian) refugees themselves, to trace the fine grained texture of what I consider *lived* refuge. By foregrounding Syrian forced migrants' encounters with Western states' migration management practices, particularly those of Denmark, I have rendered these practices

legible in new ways that rethink their meaning and stakes, both analytically and politically. Undertaking analysis from these particular embodied and situated vantage points, my dissertation develops three core claims.

First, it argues that in practice refuge and the exercise of state violence are deeply enmeshed through a dense and overlapping set of governmental practices. Refugees' accounts of refuge in Denmark considerably complicate and critique the terms of standard liberal conceptions of refuge. However, Syrians' accounts also present alternative renderings that help us to rearticulate what refuge is, does, and for whom. Indeed, I have suggested that grappling with the meanings of *lived* refuge helps to unpack how government of refuge constitutive of new categories and subject positions. A core argument of this dissertation is that the state's decision to grant an individual refuge cannot simply be understood as an event but is rather an ongoing practice of subjection, which establishes and consolidates a particular relationship between the state and the refugee.

Second, in unsettling the prevailing conceptions of *what* refuge is ontologically, this dissertation also seeks to critique and re-write geographical imaginations about *where* refuge is and how spaces of refuge are or are not connected to war. Here I argue that concern with experiences of *lived* refuge productively rearticulate the supposed dichotomy of war/not war and illustrates how Denmark is connected to the Syrian Civil War and the Middle East more broadly. Refuge, in sharp contradiction to how it is commonly understood, is irreducibly connected to war in ways that must be considered both temporally and spatially.

Third and finally, I argue that engagement with embodied experiences of refuge can help us to rethink key political questions about forced migration and its management – within states and across transnational space. Not only does this approach allow us to rethink sovereign decisions and practices, but also what counts as politics and geopolitics and how subjects and victims of dehumanizing structural violence speak back to power. While the concept or notion of *lived* refuge is an attempt to account for the government of refuge beyond the point of access and inclusion, it is also a concept for thinking about the individual and collective strategies and practices that forced migrants mobilize in the never-ending political struggle to live a meaningful life. Syrian refugees' legal and political claims for the right to live together with their families as well as their informal strategies to obtain family reunification, attempts to call out the injustice of the integration allowance system and the job-training programs, strategies to find employment through informal networks, and reference to *ḥarb nafsīa* all represent moments of being political. These forms of political action concern survival, whether in terms of not being worn down by the government of refuge and of making do but also the making of homes and life. The ways in which (Syrian) refugees respond to government of refuge and make sense of refuge in Denmark reveals emergent forms of political subjectivity and agency that do not fit neatly with conventional and liberal models for political subjectivity, yet need to be considered part of the (geo)politics of forced migration.

Through these three closely connected claims, I have unsettled but also begun to re-write an alternative account of refuge that might generate a different set of

expectations and political demands on Western states to respond to a condition of deepening planetary displacement.

Unsettling Refuge

What I have tried to illustrate in this dissertation is the need to unsettle the liberal promise of refuge as well as the value of doing so. Tracing refugees' lives, experiences, and knowledges beyond the point of access to sovereign territory and refugee protection demonstrates that refuge in signatory countries is simply not the safe haven, which it is typically imagined to be. Instead, refuge is a place where familiar yet surprising experiences of war, violence, and displacement continue and are reconfigured. In doing so, this dissertation helps to expose the liberal myth of refuge by deconstructing the idea of signatory countries as the all-good saviors of helpless refugees (Hyndman and Giles 2016), elevated above non-signatory countries (Coddington 2018), as well as the corollary that refugees should be forever thankful for their refugee protection (Nguyen 2012).

I of course recognize that a lot is at stake when being critical of refuge and refugee protection as it is provided by signatory states today. There is a tension between the need to unsettle refuge and a political struggle for displaced people's access to spaces of safety and rights. To be clear, obtaining refugee protection and a residence permit in a signatory country is enormously important for refugees and a moral mandate for signatory states. As Ramsay (2019, 200) states refugee resettlement – I would add asylum and refugee protection in a country signatory to the 1951 Convention – “may provide the only possible means to alleviate situations of extreme physical insecurity in camps and

urban asylum”. Refuge in a signatory country, whether it is obtained through refugee resettlement or claiming asylum, can be a ‘privilege’ as this legal status affords refugees a range of rights and entitlements, including the right to work, social benefits, healthcare, and increased mobility that they simply would not otherwise have. The legal status given to officially recognized refugees, Nell Gabiam (2016, 145) emphasizes, “ensures that refugees have at least some of the rights associated with citizenship, and it can be a conduit to full, formal citizenship”. So to claim that refuge provided by signatory countries does not matter would be to dismiss the importance of (permanent) legal status for refugees and security provided by the state. As Hyndman and Giles (2016, 124) put it “the “right to have rights” is undeniably better than no right to have rights”. Refuge and refugee protection in signatory state thus remain fundamentally important, even if partial or imperfect. Thus, I do not advocate for abandoning the current international refugee regime altogether.

However, I do not believe that the solution is to be found in the idea of substantive citizenship and the liberatory power of the law. It is not simply a matter of requiring that refugees obtain membership or citizenship so that they can be included and recognized as ‘human’ and the national order of things can be re-stored, as Long (2011) has suggested. As other scholars have argued, such a liberal emancipatory approach reproduces and expands the remit and authority of state sovereignty. For instance, drawing on Marx’s critique of political emancipation, Neferti Tadiar (2012, 6) states that political emancipation of marginalized groups such as women and migrants “into the political category of the human serves only to naturalize and expand the authority and rule of Western liberal secular law, an expansion crucially supported in the contemporary

moment by “democratizing” wars of economic restructuring as well as militarist regime change”. As I have illustrated in this dissertation, Syrian refugees who obtain refugee protection in Denmark are legally included into Danish society through the Danish Immigration Act and their refugee protection status, which provides them certain rights and obligations. However, such inclusion also enables the Danish state to govern this population and normalize the violence embedded within and inherent to the government of refuge. Thus, politico-legal incorporation of refugees into the host society can expand the state’s power over this group. Thus, to solve the “problem of refugees” through citizenship is still part of a state-sponsored approach to managing people’s well-being.

Jennifer Hyndman and Wenona Giles (2016, 126) encourage us to stop “seeing like a state in terms of solving the refugee problem”. In a similar vein, Georgina Ramsay (2019, 201) has recently suggested that “perhaps it is the focus on the solution as a distinct and definable object that is the central impasse through which the problem of refugees continues to be reproduced, and which makes this supposed problem seem impossible to resolve”. Ramsay turns to the idea of “connectedness” (2019, 200) as an attempt to relate the experiences of refugees with other marginalized groups in order to trace how displacement is produced and is an existential experience, rather than one defined by politico-legal dislocations. Ramsay (2019, 207) further states that “it is through attention to the possibility of connection, rather than the fortification and renewal of borders and boundaries of difference and otherness, that global systems of responding to forced migration may work towards shared, rather than incommensurable, futures”. Yet, Ramsay also recognizes that in order to enable connectedness require an “overhaul”,

as she calls it, not only of the international refugee regime, “but of the very organizing logics of neoliberal capitalist societal frameworks, themselves” (Ramsay 2019, 206).

Building on Ramsay’s insights, I argue that there is a need to conceptualize refuge differently. Yet, while Ramsay calls for an overhaul of the current system, I argue that we need to build new institutions and ways of life rather than rehabilitate old ones. Rather than approaching refuge as either a means or an end – and idealized form to be aspired to – we should instead attend to the lived experiences of refuge. We cannot wait until the moment when sovereign states recognize refugees as political subjects and restore the citizen-state bond. People displaced by war and violence are always already in the process of making lives and might find refuge in places we do not recognize as such. Paying attention to this might enable us to see other possible forms of refuge and ways of life as well as the seeds of futures that seem currently deemed impractical and unimaginable.

REFERENCES

- Agnew, John. 2009. "Killing for Cause? Geographies of War and Peace." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 99 (5): 1054–59.
- Allan, Diana. 2009. "From Nationalist to Economic Subject: Emergent Economic Networks among Shatila's Women." *Journal of Palestine Studies* 38 (4): 75–90.
- Allen, John. 2011. "Topological Twists Power's Shifting Geographies." *Dialogues in Human Geography* 1 (3): 283–98.
- Amelina, Anna, Devrimsel D. Nergiz, Thomas Faist, and Nina Glick Schiller, eds. 2014. *Beyond Methodological Nationalism: Research Methodologies for Cross-Border Studies*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Amoore, Louise. 2006. "Biometric Borders: Governing Mobilities in the War on Terror." *Political Geography* 25 (3): 336–351.
- . 2009. "Algorithmic War: Everyday Geographies of the War on Terror." *Antipode* 41 (1): 49–69.
- Andrijasevic, Rutvica. 2010. "DEPORTED: The Right to Asylum at EU's External Border of Italy and Libya1." *International Migration* 48 (1): 148–74.
- Ashutosh, Ishan, and Alison Mountz. 2012. "The Geopolitics of Migrant Mobility: Tracing State Relations Through Refugee Claims, Boats, and Discourses." *Geopolitics* 17 (2): 335–54.
- Baar, Huub van. 2017. "Evictability and the Biopolitical Bordering of Europe." *Antipode* 49 (1): 212–30.
- Bailey, Adrian J., Richard A. Wright, Alison Mountz, and Ines M. Miyares. 2002. "(Re)Producing Salvadoran Transnational Geographies." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 92 (1): 125–44.
- bell, hooks. 1990. "Marginality as a Site of Resistance." In *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures*, edited by Russell Ferguson and Trinh T. Minh-ha, 341–43. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Berlant, Lauren. 2011. *Cruel Optimism*. Durham: Duke University Press Books.
- Bialasiewicz, Luiza. 2012. "Off-Shoring and Out-Sourcing the Borders of Europe: Libya and EU Border Work in the Mediterranean." *Geopolitics* 17 (4): 843–66.
- Biehl, Kristen Sarah. 2015. "Governing through Uncertainty: Experiences of Being a Refugee in Turkey as a Country for Temporary Asylum." *Social Analysis* 59 (1): 57–75.
- Bigo, Didier. 2002. "Security and Immigration: Toward a Critique of the Governmentality of Unease." *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 27 (1): 63–92.
- Bloch, Alice, and Liza Schuster. 2005. "At the Extremes of Exclusion: Deportation, Detention and Dispersal." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28 (3): 491–512.
- Braverman, Irus, Nicholas Blomley, David Delaney, and Alexandre Kedar, eds. 2015. *The Expanding Spaces of Law: A Timely Legal Geography*. Stanford Law Books.
- Brickell, Katherine. 2015. "Towards Intimate Geographies of Peace? Local Reconciliation of Domestic Violence in Cambodia." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 40 (3): 321–33.
- Brown, Wendy. 2010. *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty*. New York: Zone Books.
- Brun, Cathrine. 2015. "Active Waiting and Changing Hopes: Toward a Time Perspective on Protracted Displacement." *Social Analysis* 59 (1): 19–37.

- Burman, Jenny. 2002. 'Remittance: or diasporic economies of yearning', *Small Axe*, 12 (2), 49–71.
- Burnett, Jon, and David Whyte. 2017. "Violence of Workfare." In *Violence of Austerity*, edited by Vickie Cooper and David Whyte, 59–66. London: Pluto Press.
- Burridge, Andrew, Nick Gill, Austin Kocher, and Lauren Martin. 2017. "Polymorphic Borders." *Territory, Politics, Governance* 5 (3): 239–51.
- Buzan, Barry, Ole Wæver, and Jaap De Wilde. 1997. *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publication.
- Casas-Cortes, Maribel, Sebastian Cobarrubias, and John Pickles. 2013. "Re-Bordering the Neighbourhood: Europe's Emerging Geographies of Non-Accession Integration." *European Urban and Regional Studies* 20 (1): 37–58.
- . 2015. "Riding Routes and Itinerant Borders: Autonomy of Migration and Border Externalization." *Antipode* 47 (4): 894–914.
- Chatelard, Géraldine. 2003. "Iraqi Forced Migrants in Jordan: Conditions, Religious Networks and the Smuggling Process." 2003/34. WIDER Discussion Papers // World Institute for Development Economics (UNU-WIDER). <http://www.econstor.eu/handle/10419/52801>.
- Chatterjee, Partha. 2004. *The Politics of the Governed: Reflections on Popular Politics in Most of the World*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- . 2011. *Lineages of Political Society: Studies in Postcolonial Democracy*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Chatty, Dawn. 2016. "The Syrian Humanitarian Disaster: Disparities in Perceptions, Aspirations, and Behaviour in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey." *IDS Bulletin* 47 (3).
- Chatty, Dawn, and Bill Finlayson, eds. 2010. *Dispossession and Displacement: Forced Migration in the Middle East and North Africa*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.
- Coddington, Kate. 2018. "Landscapes of Refugee Protection." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 43 (3): 326–40.
- Coleman, Mathew. 2007. "A Geopolitics of Engagement: Neoliberalism, the War on Terrorism, and the Reconfiguration of US Immigration Enforcement." *Geopolitics* 12 (4): 607–34.
- . 2012. "Immigrant Il-Legality: Geopolitical and Legal Borders in the US, 1882–Present." *Geopolitics* 17 (2): 402–22.
- Coleman, Mathew, and Austin Kocher. 2011. "Detention, Deportation, Devolution and Immigrant Incapacitation in the US, Post 9/11." *The Geographical Journal* 177 (3): 228–37.
- Collyer, Michael. 2007. "In-Between Places: Trans-Saharan Transit Migrants in Morocco and the Fragmented Journey to Europe." *Antipode* 39 (4): 668–90.
- Collyer, Michael, and Russell King. 2015. "Producing Transnational Space International Migration and the Extra-Territorial Reach of State Power." *Progress in Human Geography* 39 (2): 185–204.
- . 2016. "Narrating Europe's Migration and Refugee 'Crisis'." *Human Geography* 9 (2): 1–12.
- Conlon, Deirdre. 2010. "Ties That Bind: Governmentality, the State, and Asylum in Contemporary Ireland." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28 (1): 95 – 111.

- . 2011. “Waiting: Feminist Perspectives on the Spacings/Timings of Migrant (Im)Mobility.” *Gender, Place & Culture* 18 (3): 353–60.
- Cope, Meghan. 2010. “Coding Transcripts and Diaries.” In *Key Methods in Human Geography*, 2nd edited by Nicholas Clifford, Shaun French, and Gill Valentine, 440–52. SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Council of Europe. 1950. “European Convention on Human Rights.” European Court of Human Rights. Strasbourg. France.
- Council of Europe. 2017. “Realising the right to family reunification of refugees in Europe.” Commissioner for Human Rights. Strasbourg. France.
- Cowan Milton J. 1994. *Arabic-English Dictionary. The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic. Fourth Edition.* Spoken Language Services, INC. Urbana, IL.
- Culcasi, Karen. 2019. “‘We Are Women and Men Now’: Intimate Spaces and Coping Labour for Syrian Women Refugees in Jordan.” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 1-16.
- Cuomo, Dana. 2013. “Security and Fear: The Geopolitics of Intimate Partner Violence Policing.” *Geopolitics* 18 (4): 856–74.
- Cuomo, Dana, and Vanessa A. Massaro. 2016. “Boundary-Making in Feminist Research: New Methodologies for ‘Intimate Insiders.’” *Gender, Place & Culture* 23 (1): 94–106.
- Dakhli, Leyla. 2013. “Tunisia and Syria: Comparing Two Years of Revolution.” *Middle East Critique* 22 (3): 293–301.
- Darling, Jonathan. 2009. “Becoming Bare Life: Asylum, Hospitality, and the Politics of Encampment.” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 27 (4): 649–65.
- . 2011. “Domopolitics, Governmentality and the Regulation of Asylum Accommodation.” *Political Geography* 30 (5): 263–71.
- . 2017. “Refugees.” In *International Encyclopedia of Geography*, 1–7. American Association of Geographers and Wiley.
- Dempsey, Kara E., and Sara McDowell. 2019. “Disaster Depictions and Geopolitical Representations in Europe’s Migration ‘Crisis’.” *Geoforum* 98 (January): 153–60.
- Dowler, Lorraine, and Joanne Sharp. 2001. “A Feminist Geopolitics?” *Space and Polity* 5 (3): 165–76.
- Enloe, Cynthia. 2010. *Nimo’s War, Emma’s War: Making Feminist Sense of the Iraq War.* Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Espiritu, Yên Lê. 2006. “Toward a Critical Refugee Study: The Vietnamese Refugee Subject in US Scholarship.” *Journal of Vietnamese Studies* 1 (1–2): 410–33.
- . 2014. *Body Counts: The Vietnam War and Militarized Refugees.* Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Espiritu, Yên Lê, and Lan Duong. 2018. “Feminist Refugee Epistemology: Reading Displacement in Vietnamese and Syrian Refugee Art.” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 43 (3): 587–615.
- European Council, 2016. “EU-Turkey Statement, Press release, 114/16. March 18, 2016. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18/eu-turkey-statement/>
- Fassin, Didier. 2012. *Humanitarian Reason: A Moral History of the Present.* University of California Press.
- . 2013. “The Precarious Truth of Asylum.” *Public Culture* 25 (1 (69)): 39–63.

- Feldman, Gregory. 2011. *The Migration Apparatus: Security, Labor, and Policymaking in the European Union*. Stanford University Press.
- Feldman, Ilana. 2012. "The Humanitarian Condition: Palestinian Refugees and the Politics of Living." *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development* 3 (2): 155–72.
- Feldman, Ilana and Miriam Ticktin, eds. 2010. *In the Name of Humanity: The Government of Threat and Care*. Durham NC: Duke University Press Books.
- Fernandes, Ariana Guilherme. 2015. "(Dis)Empowering New Immigrants and Refugees Through Their Participation in Introduction Programs in Sweden, Denmark, and Norway." *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies* 13 (3): 245–64.
- Fluri, Jennifer L. 2014. "States of (in)Security: Corporeal Geographies and the Elsewhere War." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 32 (5): 795–814.
- Foucault, Michel. 1982. "The Subject and Power." *Critical Inquiry*, 777–795.
- Frich, Morten. 2017. "Mosalam har ventet 22 måneder op at se sin familie. Nu sagsøger han Danmark." *Information*, April 12, 2017.
<https://www.information.dk/indland/2017/04/mosalam-ventet-22-maaneder-paa-se-familie-sagsoeger-danmark>
- Gabiam, Nell. 2016. *The Politics of Suffering: Syria's Palestinian Refugee Camps*. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Gammeltoft-Hansen, Thomas. 2010. "The Externalisation of European Migration Control and the Reach of International Refugee Law." *European Journal of Migration and Law*.
<http://www.diis.dk/graphics/Events/2011/Thomas%20Gammeltoft%20Paper%20a%20sylseminar.pdf>.
- Gammeltoft-Hansen, Thomas, and Zachary Whyte. 2011. "Dansk Asylpolitik 1983-2000." In *Asylbørn i Danmark: En Barndom i Undtagelsestilstand*, edited by Kathrine Vitus and Signe Smith Nielsen, 152-72. Copenhagen: Hans Reitzels Forlag.
- Garelli, Glenda, and Martina Tazzioli. 2018. "The Humanitarian War Against Migrant Smugglers at Sea." *Antipode* 50 (3): 685–703.
- Genova, Nicholas De, and Nathalie Peutz, eds. 2010. *The Deportation Regime: Sovereignty, Space, and the Freedom of Movement*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press Books.
- Gilbert, Melissa R. 1994. "The Politics of Location: Doing Feminist Research at 'Home.'" *The Professional Geographer* 46 (1): 90–96.
- Gill, Nick. 2009. "Presentational State Power: Temporal and Spatial Influences over Asylum Sector Decisionmakers." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 34 (2): 215–233.
- Gill, Nick, Deirdre Conlon, Imogen Tyler, and Ceri Oeppen. 2014. "The Tactics of Asylum and Irregular Migrant Support Groups: Disrupting Bodily, Technological, and Neoliberal Strategies of Control." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 104 (2): 373–81.
- Golash-Boza, Tanya. 2014. "Forced Transnationalism: Transnational Coping Strategies and Gendered Stigma among Jamaican Deportees." *Global Networks* 14 (1): 63–79.

- . 2015. *Deported: Immigrant Policing, Disposable Labor and Global Capitalism*. New York: NYU Press.
- Gorman, Cynthia S. 2017. "Redefining Refugees: Interpretive Control and the Bordering Work of Legal Categorization in U.S. Asylum Law." *Political Geography* 58: 36–45.
- Gregory, Derek. 2011. "The Everywhere War." *The Geographical Journal* 177 (3): 238–50.
- Grosz, Elizabeth. 1994. *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism*. Allen & Unwin.
- Häkli, Jouni, and Kirsi Pauliina Kallio. 2013. "Subject, Action and Polis Theorizing Political Agency." *Progress in Human Geography*, 38 (2): 181-200.
- Häkli, Jouni, Elisa Pascucci, and Kirsi Pauliina Kallio. 2017. "Becoming Refugee in Cairo: The Political in Performativity." *International Political Sociology* 11 (2): 185–202.
- Harker, Christopher. 2011. "Geopolitics and Family in Palestine." *Geoforum*, Themed Issue: Subaltern Geopolitics, 42 (3): 306–15.
- Harker, Christopher and Lauren L Martin. 2012. "Familial Relations: Spaces, Subjects, and Politics." *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 44 (4): 768–75.
- Helén, Ilpo. 2014. "Biological Citizenship across the Borders: Politics of DNA Profiling for Family Reunification." *Distinktion: Scandinavian Journal of Social Theory* 15 (3): 343–60.
- Hiemstra, Nancy. 2012. "Geopolitical Reverberations of US Migrant Detention and Deportation: The View from Ecuador." *Geopolitics* 17 (2): 293–311.
- . 2014. "Performing Homeland Security within the US Immigrant Detention System." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 32 (4): 571 – 588.
- Ho, Elaine Lynn-Ee. 2011. "'Claiming' the Diaspora: Elite Mobility, Sending State Strategies and the Spatialities of Citizenship." *Progress in Human Geography* 35 (6): 757–72.
- Horst, Cindy. 2006. "Buufis amongst Somalis in Dadaab: The Transnational and Historical Logics Behind Resettlement Dreams." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 19 (2): 143–57.
- Howell, Alison. 2018. "Forget 'Militarization': Race, Disability and the 'Martial Politics' of the Police and of the University." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 20 (2): 117–36.
- Huizinga, Rik P., and Bettina van Hoven. 2018. "Everyday Geographies of Belonging: Syrian Refugee Experiences in the Northern Netherlands." *Geoforum* 96 (November): 309–17.
- Huysmans, Jef. 2000. "The European Union and the Securitization of Migration." *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 38 (5): 751–777.
- Hvilsom, Frank. 2016. "Syrere vil have familien til Danmark og sagsøger nu staten." *Politiken*, May 25, 2016. <http://politiken.dk/indland/politik/art5623406/Syrere-vil-have-familien-til-Danmark-og-sags%C3%B8ger-nu-staten>
- Hyndman, Jennifer. 2000. *Managing Displacement: Refugees and the Politics of Humanitarianism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- . 2001a. "The Field as Here and Now, Not There and Then." *Geographical Review* 91 (1/2): 262–72.

- . 2001b. “Towards a Feminist Geopolitics.” *Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe Canadien* 45 (2): 210–22.
- . 2004. “Mind the Gap: Bridging Feminist and Political Geography through Geopolitics.” *Political Geography, Reconceptualizing the State*, 23 (3): 307–22.
- . 2010. “Introduction: The Feminist Politics of Refugee Migration.” *Gender, Place & Culture* 17 (4): 453–59.
- . 2012. “The Geopolitics of Migration and Mobility.” *Geopolitics* 17 (2): 243–55.
- Hyndman, Jennifer, and Wenona Giles. 2011. “Waiting for What? The Feminization of Asylum in Protracted Situations.” *Gender, Place & Culture* 18 (3): 361–79.
- . 2016. *Refugees in Extended Exile: Living on the Edge*. London ; New York: Routledge.
- Hyndman, Jennifer, and Alison Mountz. 2008. “Another Brick in the Wall? Neo-Refolement and the Externalization of Asylum by Australia and Europe.” *Government and Opposition* 43 (2): 249–69.
- Innes, Alexandria J. 2016. “In Search of Security: Migrant Agency, Narrative, and Performativity.” *Geopolitics* 21 (2): 263–83.
- Integrationsloven. 2017. “Bekendtgørelse af lov om integration af udlændinge i Danmark.” LBK nr 1127, November 10, 2017.
<https://www.retsinformation.dk/forms/R0710.aspx?id=193999>
- Isin, Engin F. 2002. *Being Political: Genealogies of Citizenship*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Isin, Engin F., and Greg M. Nielsen, eds. 2008. *Acts of Citizenship*. London: Zed Books.
- Jacobsen, Malene. 2016. “Pocket Money: Discipline and Control through Denmark’s Cash Allowance System.” In *Intimate Economies of Immigration Detention: Critical Perspectives*, edited by Deirdre Conlon and Nancy Hiemstra, 155–70. New York: Routledge.
- Jazeel, Tariq. 2014. “Subaltern Geographies: Geographical Knowledge and Postcolonial Strategy.” *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 35 (1): 88–103.
- Jensen, Christian. 2015. Kristian Jensen: Vi tager et ekstra ansvar”. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark. September 17, 2015.
<http://um.dk/da/udenrigspolitik/udenrigspolitiske-nyheder/newsdisplaypage/?newsid=458e490d-aa90-4f56-99f1-8d1d96d4612e>
- Jones III, John Paul, Heidi J. Nast, and Susan M. Roberts. 1997. “Conclusion: Crossing Thresholds.” In *Thresholds in Feminist Geography*. Edited by John Paul Jones III, Heidi J. Nast, and Susan M. Roberts, 393–406. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Johnson, Corey, Reece Jones, Anssi Paasi, Louise Amoore, Alison Mountz, Mark Salter, and Chris Rumford. 2011. “Interventions on Rethinking ‘the Border’ in Border Studies.” *Political Geography* 30 (2): 61–69.
- Jones, Reece. 2009. “Geopolitical Boundary Narratives, the Global War on Terror and Border Fencing in India.” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 34 (3): 290–304.
- Jordan Times*. 2015. “Number of registered Syrian refugees reaches 637,000 – gov’t,” January 28, accessed June 25, 2015.
<http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/number-registered-syrian-refugees-reaches-637000-%E2%80%94gov%E2%80%99t>

- Jurstittsministeren. 2014. "Lovforslag L72: Midlertidig beskyttelsesstatus for visse udlændinge samt afvisning af realitetsbehandling af asylansøgninger, når ansøgeren har opnået beskyttelse i et andet EU-land m.v." Folketinget. Denmark
- Jørgensen, Steen A. 2012. "Krav om dansk asyl til flygtninge fra Syrien." *Berlingske Tidende*. September 26, 2012. <https://www.berlingske.dk/samfund/krav-om-dansk-asyl-til-flygtninge-fra-syrien>
- Kanström, Daniel. 2010. *Deportation Nation: Outsiders in American History*. Harvard University Press.
- . 2012. *Aftermath: Deportation Law and the New American Diaspora*. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press.
- Karyotis, Georgios. 2007. "European Migration Policy in the Aftermath of September 11." *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research* 20 (1): 1–17.
- Katz, Cindi. 1994. "Playing the Field: Questions of Fieldwork in Geography." *The Professional Geographer* 46 (1): 67–72.
- . 2004. *Growing Up Global: Economic Restructuring and Children's Everyday Lives*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Kaytaz, Esra Stephanie. 2016. "Afghan Journeys to Turkey: Narratives of Immobility, Travel and Transformation." *Geopolitics* 21 (2): 284–302.
- Khosravi, Shahram. 2010. *"Illegal" Traveller: An Auto-Ethnography of Borders*. Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- . 2018. "Afterword. Experiences and Stories along the Way." *Geoforum*, In Press.
- Kobayashi, Audrey. 2009. "Geographies of Peace and Armed Conflict: Introduction." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 99 (5): 819–26.
- Koopman, Sara. 2011. "Alter-Geopolitics: Other Securities Are Happening." *Geoforum*, Themed Issue: Subaltern Geopolitics, 42 (3): 274–84.
- Larsen, Birgitte Romme. 2011. "Becoming Part of Welfare Scandinavia: Integration through the Spatial Dispersal of Newly Arrived Refugees in Denmark." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 37 (2): 333–50.
- Laurie, Emma W., and Ian G. R. Shaw. 2018. "Violent Conditions: The Injustices of Being." *Political Geography* 65 (July): 8–16.
- Leitner, Helga. 1997. "Reconfiguring the Spatiality of Power: The Construction of a Supranational Migration Framework for the European Union." *Political Geography* 16 (2): 123–143.
- Leitner, Helga, and Patricia Ehrkamp. 2006. "Transnationalism and Migrants' Imaginings of Citizenship." *Environment and Planning A* 38 (9): 1615–32.
- Lenner, Katharina, and Lewis Turner. 2019. "Making Refugees Work? The Politics of Integrating Syrian Refugees into the Labor Market in Jordan." *Middle East Critique* 28 (1): 65–95.
- Little, Jo. 2019. "Violence, the Body and the Spaces of Intimate War." *Geopolitics* 0 (0): 1–20.
- Liu, Robyn. 2002. "Governing Refugees 1919-1945." *Borderlands e-journal* 1 (1). www.borderlandsejournal.adelaide.edu.au/vol1no1_2002/luig_governing.html.
- Long, Katy. 2011. *Permanent crisis? Unlocking the protracted displacement of refugees and internally displaced persons*. Oxford Studies Centre, University of Oxford.
- . 2013. *The Point of No Return: Refugees, Rights, and Repatriation*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

- Loyd, Jenna M. 2009. "'A Microscopic Insurgent': Militarization, Health, and Critical Geographies of Violence." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 99 (5): 863–73.
- Loyd, Jenna M., Patricia Ehrkamp, and Anna J. Secor. 2018. "A Geopolitics of Trauma: Refugee Administration and Protracted Uncertainty in Turkey." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 43 (3): 377–89.
- Luibhéid, Eithne. 2004. "Childbearing against the State? Asylum Seeker Women in the Irish Republic." *Women's Studies International Forum* 27 (4): 335–49.
- . 2013. *Pregnant on Arrival: Making the Illegal Immigrant*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Lynch, Marc. 2013. *The Arab Uprising: The Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East*. PublicAffairs.
- Malkki, Liisa. 1992. "National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity Among Scholars and Refugees." *Cultural Anthropology* 7 (1): 24–44.
- Malkki, Liisa H. 1995. *Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory, and National Cosmology among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press.
- . 1996. "Speechless Emissaries: Refugees, Humanitarianism, and Dehistoricization." *Cultural Anthropology* 11 (3): 377–404.
- Martin, Lauren. 2011. "The Geopolitics of Vulnerability: Children's Legal Subjectivity, Immigrant Family Detention and US Immigration Law and Enforcement Policy." *Gender, Place & Culture* 18 (4): 477–498.
- . 2012. "Governing through the Family: Struggles over US Noncitizen Family Detention Policy." *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 44 (4): 866–88.
- Martin, Lauren, and Anna J. Secor. 2014. "Towards a Post-Mathematical Topology." *Progress in Human Geography* 38 (3): 420–38.
- Mason, Victoria. 2011. "The Im/Mobilities of Iraqi Refugees in Jordan: Pan-Arabism, 'Hospitality' and the Figure of the 'Refugee'." *Mobilities* 6 (3): 353–73.
- Massey, Doreen B. 2005. *For Space*. London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Mawani, Renisa. 2014. "Law As Temporality: Colonial Politics and Indian Settlers." *UC Irvine Law Review* 4 (1): 65.
- McDowell, Linda. 1999. *Gender, Identity and Place: Understanding Feminist Geographies*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Millner, Naomi. 2011. "From 'Refugee' to 'Migrant' in Calais Solidarity Activism: Re-Staging Undocumented Migration for a Future Politics of Asylum." *Political Geography* 30 (6): 320–28.
- Miraftab, Faranak. 2004. "Can You Belly Dance? Methodological Questions in the Era of Transnational Feminist Research." *Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 11 (4): 595–604.
- Mitchell, Don, Kafui Attoh, and Lynn Staeheli. 2015. "Whose City? What Politics? Contentious and Non-Contentious Spaces on Colorado's Front Range." *Urban Studies* 52 (14): 2633–48.
- Moid Faraz Abdul. 2010. An Introduction to the Three Types of Nafs. Accessed May 25, 2019. <https://www.ilmgate.org/an-introduction-to-the-three-types-of-nafs/>

- Moss, Pamela J., ed. 2002. *Feminist Geography in Practice: Research and Methods*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Mountz, Alison. 2004. "Embodying the Nation-State: Canada's Response to Human Smuggling." *Political Geography*, Reconceptualizing the State, 23 (3): 323–45.
- . 2010. *Seeking Asylum: Human Smuggling and Bureaucracy at the Border*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- . 2011. "Where Asylum-Seekers Wait: Feminist Counter-Topographies of Sites between States." *Gender, Place & Culture* 18 (3): 381–99.
- Mountz, Alison, Kate Coddington, R. Tina Catania, and Jenna M. Loyd. 2013. "Conceptualizing Detention Mobility, Containment, Bordering, and Exclusion." *Progress in Human Geography* 37 (4): 522–41.
- Mountz, Alison, and Jenna M. Loyd. 2014. "Constructing the Mediterranean Region: Obscuring Violence in the Bordering of Europe's Migration 'Crises.'" *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies* 13 (2): 173–95.
- Mullings, Beverley. 1999. "Insider or Outsider, Both or Neither: Some Dilemmas of Interviewing in a Cross-Cultural Setting." *Geoforum* 30 (4): 337–350.
- Nagel, Caroline R., and Lynn A. Staeheli. 2008. "Integration and the Negotiation of 'Here' and 'There': The Case of British Arab Activists." *Social & Cultural Geography* 9 (4): 415–30.
- Nast, Heidi J. 1994. "Women in the Field: Critical Feminist Methodologies and Theoretical Perspectives." *The Professional Geographer* 46 (1): 54–66.
- Nethery, Amy, and Stephanie J. Silverman, eds. 2015. *Immigration Detention: The Migration of a Policy and Its Human Impact*. London ; New York: Routledge.
- Neumayer, Eric. 2005. "Bogus Refugees? The Determinants of Asylum Migration to Western Europe." *International Studies Quarterly* 49 (3): 389–410.
- Nevins, Joseph. 2001. *Operation Gatekeeper: The Rise of the "Illegal Alien" and the Remaking of the U.S. - Mexico Boundary*. New York: Routledge.
- Nguyen, Mimi Thi. 2012. *The Gift of Freedom: War, Debt, and Other Refugee Passages*. Durham: Duke University Press Books.
- Nicholls, Walter J. 2013. "Making Undocumented Immigrants into a Legitimate Political Subject: Theoretical Observations from the United States and France." *Theory, Culture & Society*, 30 (3): 82-107.
- Nolin, Catherine. 2006. *Transnational Ruptures: Gender and Forced Migration*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.
- Noxolo, Patricia. 2014. "Towards an Embodied Securityscape: Brian Chikwava's Harare North and the Asylum Seeking Body as Site of Articulation." *Social & Cultural Geography* 15 (3): 291–312.
- Nyers, Peter. 2004. "Introduction: What's Left of Citizenship?" *Citizenship Studies* 8 (3): 203–15.
- . 2006. *Rethinking Refugees: Beyond State of Emergency*. New York: Routledge.
- Ogg, Kate. 2016. "Protection from 'Refuge': On What Legal Grounds Will a Refugee Be Saved from Camp Life?" *International Journal of Refugee Law* 28 (3): 384–415.
- Pain, Rachel. 2014. "Everyday Terrorism Connecting Domestic Violence and Global Terrorism." *Progress in Human Geography* 38 (4): 531–50.
- . 2015. "Intimate War." *Political Geography* 44 (January): 64–73.

- Pain, Rachel, and Lynn Staeheli. 2014. "Introduction: Intimacy-Geopolitics and Violence." *Area* 46 (4): 344–47.
- Parreñas, Rhacel. 2005. "Long Distance Intimacy: Class, Gender and Intergenerational Relations between Mothers and Children in Filipino Transnational Families." *Global Networks* 5 (4): 317–36.
- Pascucci, Elisa. 2017. "The Humanitarian Infrastructure and the Question of Over-Research: Reflections on Fieldwork in the Refugee Crises in the Middle East and North Africa." *Area* 49 (2): 249–55.
- Pearlman, Wendy. 2016. "Narratives of Fear in Syria." *Perspectives on Politics* 14 (1): 21–37.
- . 2018. *We Crossed a Bridge and It Trembled: Voices from Syria*. Custom House.
- Peutz, Nathalie. 2010. "'Criminal Alian' Deportees in Somaliland." In *The Deportation Regime*, edited by Nicholas De Genova and Nathalie Peutz, 371–409. Dur: Duke University Press Books.
- Pratt, Anna, and Mariana Valverde. 2002. "From Deserving Victims to 'Masters of Confusion': Redefining Refugees in the 1990s." *The Canadian Journal of Sociology / Cahiers Canadiens de Sociologie* 27 (2): 135–61.
- Pratt, Geraldine. 2004. *Working Feminism*. Temple University Press.
- . 2012. *Families Apart: Migrant Mothers and the Conflicts of Labor and Love*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Raeymaekers, Timothy. 2014. "Introduction Europe's Bleeding Border and the Mediterranean as a Relational Space." *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies* 13 (2): 163–72.
- Ramadan, Adam. 2013. "Spatialising the Refugee Camp." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 38 (1): 65–77.
- Ramsay, Georgina. 2017. "Incommensurable Futures and Displaced Lives: Sovereignty as Control over Time." *Public Culture* 29 (3 (83)): 515–38.
- . 2019. *Impossible Refuge: The Control and Constraint of Refugee Futures*. New York: Routledge.
- Rancière, Jacques. 2010. *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*. Translated by Steven Corcoran. Continuum.
- Regeringen. 2015. "Asylpakke". Statsministeriet.
http://www.stm.dk/publikationer/Asylpakke_15/index.html
- Regeringen. 2016. "Trepartsaftale om integration". Statsministeriet.
http://www.stm.dk/_p_14312.html
- Rose, Gillian. 1997. "Situating Knowledges: Positionality, Reflexivities and Other Tactics." *Progress in Human Geography* 21 (3): 305–20.
- Rytter, Mikkel. 2018. "Writing Against Integration: Danish Imaginaries of Culture, Race and Belonging." *Ethnos* 0 (0): 1–20.
- Salter, Mark B. 2004. "Passports, Mobility, and Security: How Smart Can the Border Be?" *International Studies Perspectives* 5 (1): 71–91.
- Schapendonk, Joris, Ilse van Liempt, Inga Schwarz, and Griet Steel. 2018. "Re-Routing Migration Geographies: Migrants, Trajectories and Mobility Regimes." *Geoforum*, In Press.

- Schapendonk, Joris, and Griet Steel. 2014. "Following Migrant Trajectories: The Im/Mobility of Sub-Saharan Africans En Route to the European Union." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 104 (2): 262–70.
- Schiller, Nina Glick. 2005. "Transnational Social Fields and Imperialism: Bringing a Theory of Power to Transnational Studies." *Anthropological Theory* 5 (4): 439–61.
- Schilling, Jan. 2006. "On the Pragmatics of Qualitative Assessment." *European Journal of Psychological Assessment* 22 (1): 28–37.
- Schwartz, Joan M., and Terry Cook. 2002. "Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory." *Archival Science* 2 (1): 1–19.
- Secor, Anna. 2001. "Toward a Feminist Counter-Geopolitics: Gender, Space and Islamist Politics in Istanbul." *Space and Polity* 5 (3): 191–211.
- Seitz, David K. 2017. "Limbo Life in Canada's Waiting Room: Asylum-Seeker as Queer Subject." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 35 (3): 438–56.
- Sharif, Surkheel. 2018. "Is Islam a Conquest Ideology? On Jihad, War, & Peace". Last modified April 16, 2018. Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research. <https://yaqeeninstitute.org/surkheel-sharif/is-islam-a-conquest-ideology-on-jihad-war-peace/#.XQDNvIhKhHb>
- Sharp, Joanne. 2007. "Geography and Gender: Finding Feminist Political Geographies." *Progress in Human Geography* 31 (3): 381–87.
- . 2011. "Subaltern Geopolitics: Introduction." *Geoforum*, Themed Issue: Subaltern Geopolitics, 42 (3): 271–73.
- . 2013. "Geopolitics at the Margins? Reconsidering Genealogies of Critical Geopolitics." *Political Geography* 37 (November): 20–29.
- Silvey, Rachel. 2004. "Power, Difference and Mobility: Feminist Advances in Migration Studies." *Progress in Human Geography* 28 (4): 490–506.
- Silvey, Rachel, and Victoria Lawson. 1999. "Placing the Migrant." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 89 (1): 121–32.
- Sindberg, Mathias. 2017. "Østre Landsret frikender regeringen for brud på menneskerettighederne." *Information*, May 20, 2017. <https://www.information.dk/indland/2017/05/oestre-landsret-frikender-regeringen-brud-paa-menneskerettighederne>
- Sjørsvlev, Inger. 2011. "The Paradox of Integration: Excluding While Claiming to Integrate Into Danish Society." In *The Question of Integration: Immigration, Exclusion and the Danish Welfare State*, edited by Karen Fog Olwig and Karsten Paerregaard, 77–93. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Smith, Ron J. 2011. "Graduated Incarceration: The Israeli Occupation in Subaltern Geopolitical Perspective." *Geoforum*, Themed Issue: Subaltern Geopolitics, 42 (3): 316–28.
- Smith, Sara. 2016. "Intimacy and Angst in the Field." *Gender, Place & Culture* 23 (1): 134–146.
- Soguk, Nevzat. 1999. *States and Strangers: Refugees and Displacements of Statecraft*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Sparke, Matthew. 2005. *In the Space of Theory: Postfoundational Geographies of the Nation-State*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

- Staeheli, Lynn A., Patricia Ehrkamp, Helga Leitner, and Caroline R. Nagel. 2012. "Dreaming the Ordinary Daily Life and the Complex Geographies of Citizenship." *Progress in Human Geography* 36 (5): 628–44.
- Sylvester, Christine. 2014. "Bodies of War." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 16 (1): 1–5.
- Sziarto, Kristin M., and Helga Leitner. 2010. "Immigrants Riding for Justice: Space-Time and Emotions in the Construction of a Counterpublic." *Political Geography* 29 (7): 381–91.
- Tadiar, Neferti X. M. 2012. "Life-Times of Becoming Human." *Occasion: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities* 3: 1–17.
- Tang, Eric. 2015. *Unsettled: Cambodian Refugees in the New York City Hyperghetto*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Taylor, Adam. 2015a. Refugee crisis: Denmark discourages asylum seekers with newspaper adverts in Lebanon. The Independent, September 8, 2015. Accessed April 1, 2019. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/refugee-crisis-denmark-discourages-asylum-seekers-with-newspaper-adverts-in-lebanon-10490666.html>.
- . 2015b. "Denmark puts ad in Lebanese newspapers: Dear refugees, don't come here." September 7, 2015, accessed December 15, 2015. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/09/07/denmark-places-an-advertisement-in-lebanese-newspapers-dear-refugees-dont-come-here/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.3d921d29b0bf
- Tazzioli, Martina. 2018. "The Temporal Borders of Asylum. Temporality of Control in the EU Border Regime." *Political Geography* 64 (May): 13–22.
- Tazzioli, Martina, and Glenda Garelli. 2018. "Containment beyond Detention: The Hotspot System and Disrupted Migration Movements across Europe." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, In Press.
- Ticktin, Miriam. 2006. "Where Ethics and Politics Meet: The Violence of Humanitarianism in France." *American Ethnologist* 33 (1): 33–49.
- Ticktin, Miriam I. 2011. *Casualties of Care: Immigration and the Politics of Humanitarianism in France*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Trinh, Minh-ha. 2010. *Elsewhere, Within Here: Immigration, Refugeeism and the Boundary Event*. London: Routledge.
- Udlændingeloven. 2016. Bekendtgørelse af udlændingeloven. LBK nr 412, September 05, 2016. <https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=180093>
- Udlændinge-, Integrations-, og Boligmin. 2015. "Lovforslag L87: Udskydelse af retten til familiesammenføring for personer med midlertidig beskyttelsesstatus, skærpelse af reglerne om tidsubegrænset opholdstilladelse, skærpelse af reglerne om inddragelse af flygtninges opholdstilladelse m.v." Folketinget. Denmark.
- Udlændinge-, Integrations-, og Boligmin. 2016. "Lov om ændring af udlændingeloven." Lov nr 102, March 02, 2016. <https://www.retsinformation.dk/pdfPrint.aspx?id=177348>
- Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet. 2018. "Evaluering af reglerne om en midlertidig beskyttelsesstatus for visse udlændinge i medfør af udlændingelovens §7, stk. 3." Copenhagen, Denmark. <https://www.ft.dk/samling/20171/almdele/UUI/bilag/65/1847507/index.htm>

- Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet. 2019. "Gennemførte stramninger på udlændingeområdet. accessed April 24, 2019. <http://uim.dk/gennemforte-stramninger-pa-udlaendingeområdet>.
- Udlændingestyrelsen. 2012. Tal og fakta på udlændingeområdet 2011. Udlændingestyrelsen. Copenhagen.
- . 2013. Tal og fakta på udlændingeområdet 2011. Udlændingestyrelsen. Copenhagen.
- . 2014. Tal og fakta på udlændingeområdet 2012. Udlændingestyrelsen. Copenhagen.
- . 2015. Tal og fakta på udlændingeområdet 2014. Udlændingestyrelsen. Copenhagen.
- . 2016. Tal og fakta på udlændingeområdet 2015. Udlændingestyrelsen. Copenhagen.
- . 2017. Tal og fakta på udlændingeområdet 2016. Udlændingestyrelsen. Copenhagen.
- . 2018. Tal og fakta på udlændingeområdet 2017. Udlændingestyrelsen. Copenhagen.
- Um, Khatharya. 2015. *From the Land of Shadows: War, Revolution, and the Making of the Cambodian Diaspora*. New York: NYU Press.
- UN General Assembly. 1951. "Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees". United Nations, Treaty Series, Vol. 189, p. 137.
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. 2018. "Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2017." accessed April 09, 2019. <https://www.unhcr.org/5b27be547.pdf>
- UNHCR. 2019. "Syria Regional Refugee Response", accessed April 09, 2019. <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria/location/36>
- Valverde, Mariana. 2015. *Chronotopes of Law: Jurisdiction, Scale and Governance*. New York: Routledge.
- Vaughan-Williams, Nick. 2015. *Europe's Border Crisis: Biopolitical Security and Beyond*. Corby: Oxford University Press.
- Vitus, Kathrine, and Signe Smith Nielsen. 2011. *Asylbørn I Danmark: En Barndom i Undtagelsestilstand*. Denmark: Hans Reitzels Forlag.
- Waite, Louise, Gill Valentine, and Hannah Lewis. 2014. "Multiply Vulnerable Populations: Mobilising a Politics of Compassion from the 'Capacity to Hurt.'" *Social & Cultural Geography* 15 (3): 313–31.
- Walters, William. 2010. "Migration and Security." In *The Handbook of New Security Studies*, edited by J. Peter Burgess, 217–28. London: Routledge.
- Ward, Patricia. 2014. "Refugee Cities: Reflections on the Development and Impact of UNHCR Urban Refugee Policy in the Middle East." *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 33 (1): 77–93.
- Wedeen, Lisa. 1998. "Acting 'As If': Symbolic Politics and Social Control in Syria." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 40 (3): 503–23.
- . 2013. "Ideology and Humor in Dark Times: Notes from Syria." *Critical Inquiry* 39 (4): 841–73.

- Williams, Jill M. 2017. "Crisis, Subjectivity, and the Polymorphous Character of Immigrant Family Detention in the United States." *Territory, Politics, Governance* 5 (3): 269–81.
- Wren, Karen. 2001. "Cultural Racism: Something Rotten in the State of Denmark?" *Social & Cultural Geography* 2 (2): 141–162.
- . 2003. "Refugee Dispersal in Denmark: From Macro- to Micro-Scale Analysis." *International Journal of Population Geography* 9 (1): 57–75.
- Yassin-Kassab, Robin, and Leila Al-Shami. 2018. *Burning Country: Syrians in Revolution and War*. Second edition. Pluto Press.
- Ybarra, Megan, and Isaura L. Peña. 2017. "'We Don't Need Money, We Need to Be Together': Forced Transnationality in Deportation's Afterlives." *Geopolitics* 22 (1): 34–50.
- Zaiotti, Ruben. 2006. "Dealing with Non-Palestinian Refugees in the Middle East: Policies and Practices in an Uncertain Environment." *International Journal of Refugee Law* 18 (2): 333–53.
- Zetter, Roger. 2007. "More Labels, Fewer Refugees: Remaking the Refugee Label in an Era of Globalization." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 20 (2): 172–92.
- Zilberg, Elana. 2011. *Space of Detention: The Making of a Transnational Gang Crisis between Los Angeles and San Salvador*. Durham: Duke University Press Books.

VITA

Educational Institution

M.A. (2013) University of Kentucky, Department of Geography
Thesis: The Everyday Space of Humanitarian Migrants in Denmark
Advisor: Dr. Patricia Ehrkamp

B.Sc. (2010) Roskilde University, Department of Geography and Education Studies
Thesis: 'The Latinos are coming' – The Public Debate of the Demographic
Transformation of Georgia
Advisor: Kristine Juul

Professional Position

Research Assistant, Dr. Ehrkamp (PI), NSF funded Research Project: *The Geopolitics of Trauma* (BCS-1461615), University of Kentucky, Department of Geography (Fall 2017-Fall 2018)

Teaching Assistant, University of Kentucky, Department of Geography (Fall 2011-Spring 2015)

Scholarship and Professional Honors

Social Science Research Council, The Mellon International Dissertation Research Fellowship, \$20,100 (2016)

NSF Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant (BCS-1558400): Forced Migrants Encountering the Refugee Regime, \$15,955 (2016)

The Danish Institute in Damascus Research Award, \$13,200 (2016)

University of Kentucky Graduate Studies Dissertation Enhancement Award, \$2,000 (2016)

Barnhart-Withington Fund Research Grant, University of Kentucky, Department of Geography, \$2,000 (2014)

European Geography Specialty Group, PhD Student Paper Award, \$300 (2014)

Political Geography Specialty Group, M.A. Student Paper Award, \$250 (2013)

Professional Publications

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

Murphy, M., M. Jacobsen, A. Crane, J. Loomis, M. F. Bolduc, C. Mott, S. Zupan, A.M. Debbane, R.L. (2015). "Making Space for Critical Pedagogy in the Neoliberal University: Struggles and Possibilities." *ACME* 14(4): 1260-1282.

Commentaries and Conversations in Refereed Journals

Crampton, J., J. Bowen, D. Cockayne, B. Cook, E. Nost, L. Shade, L. Sharp, and M. Jacobsen. (2013). "Whose Geography? Which Publics?" *Dialogues in Human Geography* 3(1): 73-76.

Book Chapters

Jacobsen, M. (2016). "Pocket Money: Everyday Precarities in the Danish Asylum System". In *Intimate Economies of Immigration Detention: Critical Perspectives*. Ed. Conlon D. and N. Hiemstra. Routledge: 155-170.

Ehrkamp, P. and M. Jacobsen. (2015). "Citizenship" in *Companion to Political Geography*. Ed. Agnew, J., and V. Mamadouh, A. Secor, J. Sharp. Wiley-Blackwell: 152-164.

Book Reviews

Jacobsen, M. (2015). "On Linda McDowell's Working Lives: Gender, Migration and Employment in Britain, 1945-2007." *International Migration Review* 49(2): e13-e14.

Jacobsen, M. (2013). "On Gregory Feldman's The Migration Apparatus: Security, Labor, and Policymaking in the European Union", AntipodeFoundation.org

Malene Herschend Jacobsen