Annika Lems

EXISTENTIAL KINETICS OF MOVEMENT AND STASIS: YOUNG ERITREAN REFUGEES' THWARTED HOPES OF MOVEMENT-THROUGH-EDUCATION

ABSTRACT

This article attempts to theorise people's balancing acts between conditions of movement and stasis. Drawing on a radical empirical reading of one critical moment that occurred while conducting ethnographic research among Eritrean unaccompanied minors living in a Swiss educational institution, it thinks through what happens when this equilibrium is thrown out of whack and life's flow is suddenly experienced as a standstill. By focusing on the experiences of one young man, it explores the importance of education as a vectorial metaphor for moving forward in one's life. Zooming in on one critical moment in Abel's life, it sheds light on what happens when hopes of 'movement-through-education' clash with the reality of a restrictive asylum system that curtails young refugees' hopes for forward movement. By showing the dialectical ways mobility and immobility enter into and envelop each other, the article highlights how an existentially oriented ethnography can be utilised as an avenue for theorising migrant im/mobilities.

Keywords: existential anthropology, mobility, refugees, education, Eritrea

ABEL'S MESSAGE[1]

In early August 2015 I made my first visit to an educational institution in a small village on the outskirts of Zürich. I was there to meet Abel, Kibrum, and Aaron, three young men from Eritrea who had just moved in. In the following weeks five more boys were to join them and become part of a unique educational pilot project: Over the next year these eight teenagers from Eritrea, aged between fifteen and eighteen, who had come to Switzerland as unaccompanied minor asylum seekers, were to receive intensive German language classes as well as work experience in the various workshops located on the premises. After the orientation year they were to start an apprenticeship in one of these trades. For a total of three years they would live in shared apartments on the premises, be supervised by a group of in-house social workers and receive support from vocational teachers in the trades they were to learn. This kind of project was unique in the Canton of Zürich. Although the

number of unaccompanied underage refugees lodging asylum applications in Switzerland rose dramatically from 2014 onwards, most of them did not gain access to public (particularly secondary) schooling. This pilot project was an attempt by a privately funded institution to create pathways into the apprenticeship system for a select group of unaccompanied minors.[2]

That day at the beginning of August when I was introduced to Abel, Kibrum, and Aaron, I observed their joyous, almost ecstatic reactions to the institution. Upon inspecting the newly furnished shared apartments where they were going to live, the workshops, the German classroom and the sports grounds where they could play soccer in their free time, the boys were overwhelmed by their good fortune at being chosen. They walked around the premises singing and making little dance moves, pinching each other's hands in happiness.

One of the boys who struck me as particularly delighted that day was sixteen-year-old Abel. As we inspected the carpentry workshop he told me that he had arrived in Switzerland one and a half years before, and that he had spent most of this time in a home for unaccompanied minors not far from Zürich. Much later I learned that he left Eritrea on his own when he was twelve years old, after his father was arrested. He crossed the border into Ethiopia by foot, where he spent two years in a refugee camp before attempting the dangerous journey through Sudan and Libya and across the Mediterranean.

Abel had received a temporary permit to stay in Switzerland on humanitarian grounds a few months before I first met him. As his legal guardian was unable to find any other 'child-appropriate' accommodation he had to remain in the home for unaccompanied refugee youth until he received the offer to join the educational pilot project. That afternoon in the carpentry

workshop Abel told me that he was happy that he had left the home behind, and that he would never go back there, 'not even to visit my friends'. When I asked him why, he gave me a wry smile. He said that he was very unhappy there, especially because he was not allowed to go to a 'normal' school. He said that the school in the refugee youth shelter was 'good for nothing', that the teacher kept on repeating the same things and that he spent his days sleeping to escape the boredom—in brief, he felt stuck and isolated in the shelter. 'And what about this place?' I asked. This education pilot, Abel was convinced, would finally allow him to move ahead and 'become integrated'. Throughout the year I spent with Abel and the other young men, I learned that being 'integrated' meant having a sense of equal mobility—of being able to move about with the same ease as their Swiss peers, without their ways of talking, walking, or going about the world immediately revealing them as 'other'.

Fast-forward three weeks: I was working with Abel, Aaron, and Kibrum in the carpentry workshop. Together with Daniel, the trainer, we were putting together bedside tables for the apartments of the unaccompanied minors arriving the following week. After the morning coffee break, I noticed that the boys were gathered around Abel, gesticulating and talking excitedly in Tigrinya. Abel, however, was not reacting. He was standing still, his arm resting on the workbench, staring into the distance. As I went nearer to see what was happening I noticed that he had stuck a post-it note to his chest. In crooked handwriting and broken German he had written the following words:

I am not alive. Maybe dead. I am in heaven. Do I still live on this earth?[3]

EXISTENTIAL KINETICS OF MOVEMENT AND STASIS

Abel's message and his stoic, detached glance went right through me. What had happened? How had his perception of the educational institution shifted so dramatically from a place that would allow him to move forward in his life to the ultimate embodiment of a terminus (death)? To answer these questions I need to dig deep. So deep, indeed, that I will dedicate this entire article to Abel's message and the existential questions about being and nothingness it throws up, thereby unravelling a phenomenology of the fragile and at times deeply ambiguous interrelationship between movement and stasis.

Rather than thinking about movement and stasis as two linked, yet distinct ways of being-in-the-world, I want to take my cue from Abel's message to think through the *interactivity* between them. In doing so, I aim to push forward debates in the anthropological study of migrant mobilities that attempt to come to a more nuanced understanding of the interrelationship of im/mobility in an age of globalisation (e.g. Graw and Schielke 2012; Salazar and Smart 2012; Glick-Schiller and Salazar 2013). By looking at different experiences or 'figures' of mobility (Salazar 2017), anthropologists currently put much emphasis on approaches that move beyond the celebratory view of movement that marked many earlier engagements with migratory phenomena. In focusing on experiences of boredom, stuckedness, or waiting, a growing number of studies show that for a large proportion of the population globalisation is not characterised by excitement and accelerated speed, but by downward social mobility and the sensation of being slowed down (see Auyero

2012; Jansen 2014; Elliot 2016; O'Neill 2017: 5; Khosravi 2017). Rather than assuming a universal flow of people and things, they ask in relation to what these people and things move, thereby creating 'slow and fast lanes of social life' (Hannam, Sheller and Urry 2006: 11). This double understanding of im/mobility becomes all the more important as we enter a new era of containment in which tens of thousands of migrants find themselves stranded or stuck while being on the move (Tazzioli 2018).

However, although there has been much talk about the importance of developing analytical lenses that will allow us to better understand the interdependency between mobility and immobility, there is still a tendency in mobilities studies to prioritise *either* people's movements (and by extension agency) *or* the socio-political factors halting them (and encroaching on their agency). In a similar vein, studies tend to emphasise *either* the 'regimes of mobility' (Glick-Schiller and Salazar 2013) governing people's ability for action and forward movement *or* the more intimate, subjective tactics individuals or groups deploy to evade these obstacles. Furthermore, in the context of refugees' mobilities, scholars tend to look at *either* their acts of migratory planning, movement, and border crossing *or* their struggles for settlement and social inclusion in the countries of refuge. Yet, with the dramatic intensification of the politics of exclusion towards migrants and refugees in Europe, the US, and Australia over recent years, the obstacles en route and in arrival countries have both intensified and become diffuse to the point that there is now an urgent necessity to develop a more precise understanding of the ways all these dimensions overlap and, indeed, *interact*. Rather than compartmentalising specific politics, phases, or figures of mobility or immobility, it has become

necessary to develop analytical lenses able to capture the contradictory social realities this new paradigm creates.

In this article I will turn the dialectical interrelationship between movement and stasis in an age of containment into an explicit object of inquiry. In line with existential anthropology's aim to develop theory through direct engagements with the lived experiences of particular human beings (Jackson and Piette 2015: 3), I will adopt a radical empirical reading of how the young Eritrean men living in the institution on the outskirts of Zürich discussed their hopes for education as a vehicle for forward movement as well as the forces holding them back. I will show how this group of young men, whose journeys to Switzerland have been marked by hypermobility and the ability to react to constantly changing environments, actively deal with the reality of being cast into an extremely regulated environment that not only curtails their freedom to move about physically, but also impinges on their most intimate hopes for forward movement in their own lives. Deploying an existential lens will enable me to theoretically capture their balancing acts between states of movement and stasis, without losing sight of the ways the environment they find themselves thrown into channels and weighs down upon them.

As divergent as the schools of thought proposed by such key existential thinkers as Heidegger, Jaspers, Arendt, Sartre, or Merleau-Ponty might be, one core tension of the human condition they all analyse is how people deal with the paradox of being at once actors in charge of the direction of their own lives and acted upon by a world they have little control over. Michael Jackson (1998: 8) poignantly describes this tension as the existential struggle of striking a balance between being a 'who' and a 'what'. Heidegger coined the term 'thrownness'

(*Geworfenheit*) to capture this core existential condition of being-in-the-world (Heidegger 1962: 219–224). He argues that humans find themselves thrown (*geworfen*) into a world that is not of their making. This does not imply that they have no means to leap into action or initiate change, but rather that human life is never undetermined or neutral, that we are always already situated *in* something. This being *in* constitutes the setting and limits of our actions (Withy 2014: 62). As I have argued elsewhere (Lems 2018: 51–52), this focus on the situatedness of experience in existential theory allows for a multidimensional reading of migrant im/mobilities: While theorising social life by zooming in on everyday lifeworlds, it also involves a move that zooms out again to establish how these subjective experiences link into a wider whole.

Heidegger and other existential thinkers have repeatedly been accused of creating intuitive, universalist, and apolitical depictions of social life (e.g. Lévi-Strauss 1973: 58; Geertz 1973: 12–13). Yet, I believe that a critical reading of their work allows anthropologists to shed light on how power dynamics constitute the social settings people find themselves cast into. Rather than keeping the focus solely on the structural factors weighing them down, however, an existential perspective also sheds light on the strategies people deploy to leap into action and actively deal with their thrownness. In attempting to develop a perspective on movement and stasis that is firmly grounded in migrants' experiences, while keeping in mind the situatedness of these experiences, I am in conversation with a number of anthropologists who have drawn the contours of an existential take on migrant im/mobilities along the lines of a critical phenomenology (Jackson 2002, 2013; Lucht 2011; Gaibazzi 2015; Schielke 2015). While such an approach stays true to

the phenomenological leitmotif to describe the 'things themselves' (*die Sache an sich*) (Husserl 2001), it also asks why things are the way they are (Desjarlais 1997: 25).

It is precisely this multidimensional reading of migrant im/mobilities that I attempt in this article. Taking my cue from the post-it message and its social pre- and afterlife among Abel and his friends, I will flesh out the importance of an existential sense of forward movement that is often attached to migratory projects and pay attention to the seemingly banal, everyday moments when this equilibrium is thrown out of whack and life's flow is suddenly experienced as a standstill. By zooming in and out of the dynamics surrounding Abel's movements and halts that led him to write the post-it note, I attempt to at once capture the complexity and nuances of the subjective and intimate ways people experience states of movement and stasis, while at the same time linking them to a wider field of forces that has a bearing on these very experiences. What I am attempting in this article, then, could be described as an existential kinetics of movement and stasis. Not dissimilar to kinetic physicists studying the motion of objects in relation to their causes, I am focusing on the particularity of the experiences of movement and stasis of a group of young men in relation to the forces acting upon them. In doing so I am following Henrik Vigh's (2006: 54–55) call for a kinetic perspective on mobilities that allows us to capture not just physical acts of movement, but the *motion within motion*—the 'ability to act in relation to the movement of the social terrain one's life is set in'. I will expand on this perspective to also capture the degree of *stasis within motion*, as well as the *motion within stasis*, in short, the interactivity between these two modes of being in young refugees' everyday lives. In accordance with the other authors in this special section, I argue that such a dialectical

understanding of movement and stasis requires not just ethnographic attention to the details of everyday life. It also requires a specific form of radical empirical writing that allows these details to enter theoretical frameworks.

MAPPING THE FIELD OF FORCES

Throughout the one and a half years Abel had spent in Switzerland by the time I first met him, the refugee and humanitarian system heavily influenced his opportunities for activity and forward movement. Indeed, the extent of its control was such that simple daily actions, like taking the bus to go for a walk in Zürich, or being able to visit his girlfriend, Lula, became impossible bureaucratic balancing acts. The home for unaccompanied young asylum seekers to which he was transferred by the migration authorities after his arrival in Switzerland was in a village on the outskirts of Zürich. With the meagre pocket money he received Abel could not afford bus tickets into the city, and when he did get to venture out, he did not know what to do there once he arrived. While he was telling me about his life in the home for unaccompanied minors Abel explained that because they had no money to go to a café or bar, he and his friends would just hang out at the main train station in Zürich, observing the passers-by until they got yelled at or shooed away by the security guards.

Listening in on the conversation, eighteen-year-old Haileb, another participant in the pilot project, sighed, saying that what they really needed was a hobby—a word they had only learned in Switzerland. But their problem was, he said, that they did not even know what activities qualified as a hobby. 'What do Swiss people do in their free time?' he asked me, adding that he often felt bored. I responded with a question, asking what he

believed Swiss teenagers did in their free time. 'I have been here for two years and I don't have one Swiss friend', Haileb replied unhappily. 'I don't know what they do.' While the young men's opportunities to move about were highly restricted by bureaucratic and economic factors, what weighed most heavily was that their own moves seemed to be hopelessly out of sync with those of Swiss youth, thereby relegating them to a position of awkward onlookers to social life. This social isolation created not just a sense of spatial separation, but also the feeling that they were living their lives along radically different temporal tracks. Samuli Schielke (this issue) describes the importance of the pacing of Egyptian migrant workers' steps as a means of adapting to an exclusionary social environment in Qatar. In a similar vein, the boys felt that their ways of going about the world did not resemble the pace and style that marked the manner in which Swiss people moved about. While they were not sitting idle, the pacing of their movements and actions seemed to be located in an 'alienated time' (Auyero 2012: 4), a time that was not shared by others. As Martin Demand Frederiksen and Anne Line Dalsgaard (2014: 3) have pointed out, the feeling of not being able to keep up with society's speed and time can radically impact young people's sense of agency, leading to what they describe as the 'objectification' of time.

Compounding the social isolation restricting Abel's sense of agency was the fact that the social workers in the home for unaccompanied minors had controlled Abel's every move, making him sign in and out, checking receipts to see how he spent his money, and making him plan weeks in advance if he wanted to go any further than Zürich. 'Here in Switzerland I had to learn to be a child', Abel said. In Switzerland, Abel realised soon after his arrival, he was an unaccompanied minor, and

his possibilities to move forward were greatly determined by his ability to act according to the expectations attached to this role.

Unaccompanied refugee youths' lives are strongly defined by the asylum and children's rights regimes. Although people like Abel have often spent years on the move, facing the toughest odds without adult assistance, once in Switzerland and categorised as an unaccompanied minor, they are under the constant supervision of social workers, legal guardians and therapists. Categorisation as exceptional humanitarian cases allows the young people to access opportunities that asylum-seeking youths over the age of eighteen cannot. Yet it simultaneously creates specific expectations and thus pressure to act in accordance with the image of the dependent, innocent child refugee. The figure of the unaccompanied minor is thus a double-edged sword: While it sets out to protect the rights of children, it also leads to institutionalised expectations about what defines the 'proper' refugee child (Lems 2019). Researchers have shown that around the world the arrival of increasing numbers of young unaccompanied refugees has provoked paranoid reactions by policymakers and the wider public that quickly shift back and forth between labelling them as '*at* risk' to '*the* risk' (Bryan and Denov 2011; Heidbrink 2014; De Graeve 2017), or from vulnerable children to potentially dangerous youth.

Compared to the deep sense of suspicion that accompanies the reception of adult asylum seekers, the figure of the unaccompanied minor initially had a more positive public response in Switzerland. In the summer of 2015 this figure became the human face of the European 'refugee crisis' in Switzerland. Media outlets produced countless stories about the young people's traumatic journeys, provoking a wave of compassion. Yet not dissimilar to the

Stimmungswechsel (mood shift) from xenophilia to xenophobia that John Borneman and Parvis Ghassem-Fachandi (2017) describe in the context of Germans' reaction to Merkel's open door policy towards refugees in 2015, in Switzerland the narrative of the innocent, needy unaccompanied child refugee quickly morphed into that of the potentially dangerous, fraudulent youth. Right-wing populist parties such as the SVP (Swiss People's Party), which have long been a mainstream force in the Swiss political and discursive landscape, cast doubt on the genuineness of the young people's claims to be 'real' children, instead introducing a narrative of irresponsible and calculating parent-villains sending away their kids in order for them to live as parasites off hard-earned Swiss wealth. Building on a historically engrained fear of the *Überfremdung* (over-foreignisation) of Switzerland, right-wing parties spread fear about the supposed unbridgeable cultural differences these young people introduced to Swiss society, which, if tolerated, would eventually lead to the country's cultural collapse. This fear of *Überfremdung* is so deeply engrained that Wicker (2009: 26) has described it as the golden thread spinning its way through Swiss responses to migrants and refugees from the nineteenth century onward, feeding into the myth of Switzerland as an island of security and cultural integrity amidst a Europe that is beyond the pale (Piñeiro 2015). The sudden *Stimmungswechsel* that initiated a rapid shift from benevolence to spite thus did not appear out of the blue, or as the product of a 'refugee crisis' overwhelming the country. It needs to be read against the backdrop of a Swiss genealogy of racialised fears of being outnumbered in one's own country.

While these developments happen largely at a discursive level, they cannot be reduced to an abstract political sphere. Throughout the twelve months I accompanied Abel and the other seven young Eritrean men in their daily routines in the educational institution I came to see that these ideas, policies, and practices of exclusion have the power to trickle down into young refugees' everyday lives, determining their possibilities for action to a significant degree. Secure but at the same time trapped in the category of the unaccompanied minor, they had to adapt to the reality of life as dependents of a state that simultaneously signalled its disapproval of their being there. This dependency created a number of obstacles that significantly slowed down the pace at which they could move forward. None of the eight young men in the educational project had received full refugee status but only temporary humanitarian protection visas. As a result of this bureaucratic label, the hurdles they had to overcome to be able to move in any direction at all were greater. These restrictions blocked them in vital areas of their lives such as the amount of social welfare they received every month, the impossibility of family reunification, the funds available for education, access to the labour and apprenticeship market, and the chances of receiving permanent residency and one day perhaps even Swiss citizenship. In defining their ability to act in all these crucial areas of life, the refugee and humanitarian system did not just channel the young men's ability for physical movement. More importantly, it also affected their ability to take decisions regarding their future and as such the ability to move forward in their own lives. In the next section I will discuss this sense of moving forward in one's life in more detail. I will do so by shedding light on what was commonly described by the young men to be the most crucial force impacting on their ability to move forward: education.

EDUCATION AS FORWARD MOVEMENT

Just how important a force education was, became apparent as the young men talked about the hopes and imaginaries that had propelled them into embarking on the dangerous journey to Europe. In Abel's case, education played a crucial role in his decision to leave Eritrea. When his father was imprisoned, his mother decided that Abel should no longer go to school. The Eritrean state—described by the UN Human Rights Council (2016) as one of the cruellest contemporary totalitarian regimes based on surveillance, terror, arbitrary incarcerations, and torture—forcibly recruits young people at the end of secondary schooling to serve in the national army for an indefinite period of time. Throughout their service they receive hardly any pay, often have to perform heavy labour and are not allowed to return home regularly to see their families. This happened to Abel's father, whom Abel hardly knew because he had been away on duty in the army for years on end. When his mother had a complicated birth and his father asked for extended leave of absence from the military to be with her, the request was turned down and he was accused of intended desertion. As a result of his father's arrest, Abel was forced to stay at home all day, unable to work towards a better future. Abel told me that this lack of prospects was one of the main reasons why he decided to leave the country. While each of the other seven young men in the educational project had different stories, they had all left the country to escape forced recruitment into the Eritrean national army and to search for better educational opportunities elsewhere. The impossibility of upward social mobility and, most importantly, the freedom to move about as they wished at all, were key factors motivating them to leave.

Like most Eritrean youth I have worked with Abel took the decision to leave the country on his own. He simply left home one day without first consulting his mother or family. Unlike the stories circulating in the Western media about unaccompanied minors being sent off by their parents to wealthier countries as 'parachute' (Heidbrink 2014: 6) or 'imposter' (Silverman 2016) children in order to receive benefits that would sustain the entire family, Eritrean youths' migratory decisions are actually often taken against their family's will and without their consent. This can force parents into a dreadful position, when they receive phone calls from traffickers holding their children ransom in Libya or Sudan until the parents agree to pay the fee for their passage to Italy (see Belloni 2016). In Abel's case, his decision to migrate to Europe took a heavy toll on his already strained family. When his mother received the phone call to say her son was with traffickers in Libya, she was forced to sell their last two cows and beg cousins living overseas for money in order to raise the necessary funds. Like many of the parents of the young Eritreans I met, Abel's mother did not necessarily expect him to refund the money or send remittances once he had made it to Europe. Rather, she expected him to use the educational opportunities European countries offer as a means of making something of himself, of learning a profession and moving towards a better future.

The young men saw education as the key to the kind of forward movement in their lives that they and their families were hoping for. As they could not gain access to it in Eritrea or in the refugee camps in Ethiopia, they went in search of it elsewhere. When I asked Abel what drove him to embark on the dangerous journey through Sudan and the Libyan desert, he responded that it was the idea of getting an education. The content of these educational

aspirations was rather vague, but one vision about the future kept him going: 'What I always thought about was that when I arrived I would first get to go to a good school and after that I would look for work.' This strong imaginary of education as a forward-moving force is deeply linked to modern ideas about education and progress. Resembling the dynamics Daniel Mains (2007: 669) observed in his work with unemployed young men in Ethiopia, the Eritrean refugee youth I worked with did not describe the forces compelling them to migrate solely in economic terms or as a reaction to the oppressive political situation in Eritrea. They were drawn towards this decision because of the radical transformation of self and personhood they believed it would offer. Mains describes how the young men in his research hoped that they could instantaneously transform into self-fulfilled adults by associating themselves with the modern, progressive values they imagined Western countries to embody. For the young men in my research, education was the strongest of the progressive forces that they believed would be able to propel them forward and finally also upward. At the same time, this hope of forward movement through education was not purely driven by the desire for upward social mobility, and as such the wish to be included in the capitalist order of things. It also contained the hope for personal transformation, a feeling of inner forward movement. Ghassan Hage (2009) captures this inner movement in his notion of 'existential mobility'. He argues that migrants often engage in physical activity because they are seeking an existential sense of forward movement, the feeling of going somewhere:

> In a sense, we can say that people migrate because they are looking for a space that constitutes a suitable launching pad for their social and existential self. They are looking for a space and a life where they feel they are going somewhere as opposed to nowhere, or at least, a space where the quality of their 'going-ness' is better than what it is in the space they are leaving behind. (Hage 2009: 98)

Hage's statement perfectly illustrates the existential kinetics underlying the young men's urge to keep moving and overcome the greatest obstacles. Throughout their migratory journeys towards Switzerland Abel and the other young men had been driven forward by the hope for education as a springboard for their social and existential self. After receiving a good education, they hoped, their going-ness would be better, enabling them to finally feel in charge of their own lives. In doing so they would not only fulfil their own aspirations. They would also be able to fulfil the expectations of the families they had put in such difficult situations when they chose to leave. Yet, while the young men had hoped education would be a driving force in gaining control over their own lives and destinies, once they had made their way to Switzerland, what they imagined to be a driving force quickly turned out to be a potential new stumbling block.

EDUCATION AS IMPEDIMENT TO FORWARD MOVEMENT

Since his arrival in Switzerland Abel had struggled to gain access to education. While he had hoped to be able to go to school with Swiss classmates, he soon discovered this was impossible. The Children's Rights Convention— the core body of laws regulating the reception and treatment of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers in signatory states such as Switzerland— grants them the right to the same quality of free

compulsory education as Swiss nationals. Yet because post-compulsory education is seen as an 'integration measure', which is only afforded to officially recognised refugees who are allowed to stay permanently, the Swiss cantonal authorities often refuse to finance the schooling of asylum seekers or refugee youth with humanitarian visas who are past sixteen—the cut-off age for compulsory education. As the majority of the unaccompanied minors arriving in Switzerland are between sixteen and seventeen years old, many have no rights to education. While most homes for unaccompanied refugee youth offer education in-house, their classes are often run by untrained teachers or volunteers and do not link into the national curriculum. A further complication is that the Swiss school system is interspersed with selection practices (Streckeisen, Hänzi and Hungerbühler 2007) that form a notorious obstacle for migrants or youth from lower socio-economic backgrounds whose parents cannot guide them through this process (Oester, Fiechter and Kappus 2008). Swiss students are separated according to their skills from the early age of eleven to twelve. Depending on their abilities and interests, they either get channelled into secondary schooling or an apprenticeship in a trade.

In an attempt to create pathways into the apprenticeship stream of education, some cantons have opened reception classes specifically designed for unaccompanied refugee youth past the obligatory cut-off age in bridging schools (*Brückenangebote*). Under the guidance of specialised teachers and through work placements that allow them to gain experience in different trades they are expected to use the school to transition into the apprenticeship stream. Yet, as my research in various reception classes shows, bridging projects that aim to be a springboard for refugee youths' inclusion in mainstream

education in fact often create an insurmountable number of new obstacles (Lems 2019).

In many ways the educational pilot project Abel and the other young men were chosen to participate in can be seen as an extreme manifestation of these dynamics of 'inclusive exclusion' (Oester and Lems 2019). It is not a public school, but rather a charitable institution that specialises in the social rehabilitation of delinquent young men. Located on large, secluded premises in the countryside around Zürich, it offers young men aged between fifteen and twenty-two the chance to do an apprenticeship under the strict supervision of social workers, therapists, and legal guardians in lieu of a prison sentence. Because the number of youths classified as delinquent has reduced drastically over recent years in Switzerland, the institution faced serious financial issues. This crisis brought the unaccompanied minors into the picture: The idea of starting the pilot project with refugee youth came up in the search for ways to keep the home and its training workshops afloat. At the peak of the wave of compassion during the summer months of 2015, the home successfully gained funding to realise this self-described 'integration pilot'.

On the one hand, the situation in the institution was almost picture perfect: The boys received intensive German classes in small groups of four. They had guaranteed access to apprenticeships and the supervision of relatively open-minded, friendly social workers. On the other hand, the institution's structures were set up for delinquent youth, and no allowances were made for the unaccompanied young men, who had no criminal record. This meant that their lives were strictly controlled. From the moment they woke up in the morning, through their lunch breaks, to the evening check-ups—the boys were under constant supervision, following a rigorous

schedule. Unsurprisingly, the rigid and punitive structure led to regular outbreaks of rebellion among the delinquent youth living in the facility. Most of the youths in the institution had a history of social abandonment and had been passed from one correctional facility to another.

On that August morning, when Abel wrote the message, he had come to the realisation that the educational institution he was living in was not the perfect existential launching pad he imagined it to be upon his arrival. Throughout the three weeks he had spent there, he was confronted with the suspicious and at times aggressive behaviour of the young people already living there towards the newcomers. Once again he had been placed with 'problem kids', out of sync with the reality of Swiss teenagers attending public schools. In a conversation with the social worker that morning during the coffee break, just before Abel stuck the post-it note to his chest, he realised how deep this social isolation went. She had told the boys about the rules regarding the weekends, that they were only allowed to have one visitor per apartment and that she did not want them to get into 'the habit of inviting all their refugee friends over'. While Kibrum and Aaron were up in arms against these rules, Abel remained quiet, observing the bickering with a removed, depressed gaze. Minutes later, when Abel stuck the post-it note to his T-shirt, he forced everybody to take notice of the deeply troubling questions on his mind. While his message indicated the need for a conversation, Abel refused to talk to anybody. He spent the next hour working in complete silence. His act got the attention of the shocked social workers, who did not know how to react to his refusal to speak.

Later on, when the social workers had left and the carpentry trainer sent us to the shed at the other end of the premises for some

tools, Abel started to talk. He told me that he felt overwhelmed by the many rules imposed upon him. He said that he had lived on his own since he was twelve years old and that the social workers treated him 'like a child that has to be taken by the hand': they wanted to control everything, even the people he invited at the weekends. What upset him most was the fact that they had to hand in the keys to their apartments whenever they went to work or school—a measure aimed at the delinquent youth to keep them from returning to their rooms when they refused to work. To Abel, the act of handing in his keys felt like an invasion of his privacy, and, more importantly, as restricting his free movement. 'What is this here, a prison?' Abel asked. While he had hoped the educational project would be an accelerating force, he now felt it was just another form of entrapment. Rather than using education as a vehicle to move forward, he perceived it as a blockage that kept him from participating in the 'real' world and in 'real' society. That his mother sold all her belongings to pay for his journey to Europe and that he now felt it was impossible to make something of himself made his life appear to be at a standstill. As the dramatic message Abel stuck to his chest demonstrates, it even made his life appear dead.

THE POST-IT NOTE'S SOCIAL AFTERLIFE

In the weeks and months after Abel's message, we often talked about this feeling of imprisonment, of life being on hold, and death and dying became crucial topics of debate among the eight young men living in the institution. Through postings on Facebook containing religious images and YouTube videos they played with the idea of death and being on the edge (see Images 1 and 2).

Image 1. Screenshot of a Facebook post by Abel.

Image 2. Screenshot of a Facebook post by Kibrum. It shares a song about suicide entitled 'This is my goodbye-song in case I leave early'. The lyric in the image says: 'Please tell me what I am living for, otherwise I will give up.' Kibrum comments on the song with 'This is really fu…'

While the idea of suicide reverberated through the young men's discussions, and particularly the images they shared on Facebook, they did not always verbalise it. They often played with the idea of being dead, of escaping all the pressures in their lives on earth. The following snippet of conversation illustrates one such moment when the young men brought up the idea of death in an everyday situation. It occurred during German class, when the teacher was explaining the Swiss political landscape. When she came to the right-wing SVP party, she explained that it had a very tough stance on refugees, that it promoted the idea that Switzerland should only be for the Swiss and that no more refugees should be allowed in. Sixteen-year-old Kibrum laughed bitterly, saying that if it were up to him, he would like to leave Switzerland as soon as possible so that the Swiss could have their country to themselves, but that he could not as he was unable to move about the world as he wished. 'Everything is a problem here', he said. Sighing, he added: 'It would be better not to be on this earth.' 'Yes', Abel agreed, 'we want to live somewhere else than on this earth'. This sparked a discussion between the young men in which they played with imaginary scenarios of what life would look like elsewhere. Life on earth, they agreed, was not good; it had nothing but trouble in store for them. While they had been forced to take radical action, their circumstances never actually improved. These discussions about the end of life occurred regularly. They formed short intermezzos, brief moments in the midst of everyday interactions or conversations. Another variation on the same theme was what being dead felt like. They fantasised endlessly about the feeling of being a corpse buried in the ground. While some of them believed their souls would travel to another place, others found the idea of there being nothing but cold earth

and quietness comforting. They imagined how worms would slowly eat up their bodies and how, in the end, there would be nothing left of them but earth and a heap of bones.

Abel's message caused a stir among the social workers and teachers, who organised a meeting with a translator and brought up the possibility of psychotherapy. They interpreted the prevalence of these narratives of death and dying as an effect of the traumatic journeys the refugee youths had been through. Rather than seeing them as expressions of the dead end the young men experienced the educational project to be, they used psychological models to make sense of the boys' narratives. Yet, I would argue that more than anything these imaginaries about the end of life and dying need to be understood in the context of the deeply felt existential misbalance provoked by the experience of enforced stasis.

The forcefulness of the experience of stasis, of thwarted hopes of movement-through-education, spoke through the young men's discussions about boredom that often followed their toying with ideas about the end of life. While many of the young men were still struggling to speak in German, they used the German word for boredom, *Langeweile* (literally: long while) incessantly. Whether talking about the lack of spice in their food, the work they had to do, or a quarrel with a friend, all descriptions ended with the remark, 'it's boring' (*es ist langweilig*). The kind of boredom they expressed was driven by more than a lack of meaningful activity or oversupply of time. It was a radical form of boredom with everything, including life itself. 'No matter what I do, I always feel bored here', Haileb said one afternoon, when the German teacher asked how they were doing. 'Life is just boring. I have to get used to a boring life.' On another occasion, when they were discussing the things

they had been up to in their free time with the same teacher, Kibrum suggested that he often thought about life and where it was leading him. 'What's there to think about in life?' Haileb asked provocatively. 'I already know what it'll look like, and it's boring: I am learning a trade here, I will start to work, get married, have kids, raise them and die.'

The boredom the young men expressed is close to the 'profound', existential kind of boredom Heidegger (1995: 81–155) describes in his work. While we instinctively react to other forms of boredom by preoccupying ourselves with activities and in doing so turn away from the nothingness of existence they confront us with, profound boredom does the opposite. It radically throws us back upon ourselves, into a being-here we cannot turn away from, thereby allowing bare existence to present itself (Gilliam 2013: 252). In the context of her work with Warlpiri men and women in Northern Australia, Yasmine Musharbash (2007: 309) describes existential boredom as an 'all-encompassing boredom where the individual is bored independently of or detached from the world around them'. She distinguishes between a situative kind of boredom that people are reflexive and reactive about, and an existential boredom that (paraphrasing Heidegger) is characterised by a 'silent fog of indifference'. This fog of indifference is evident in Haileb's suggestion that there was nothing he could do about the boredom he was experiencing, because it was life itself that was boring. From his perspective the vital stages characteristically thought to form a person's life trajectory—from birth to marriage to death—were inherently boring. With little room to change the monotonous flow of life, all there was left to do, he suggested, was to get used to it. The indifference about the world and life itself caused by the profound boredom the young men

experienced was so far-reaching that it even stretched into their discussions about death and dying: When Haileb talked during German class about the monotony of his life in Switzerland, the teacher and other boys suggested activities that could help him feel less bored. While seventeen-year-old Fikru proposed a hobby like soccer or volleyball, Kibrum said he should go outside every evening and watch the sunset. When Haileb liked none of these suggestions, Kibrum teased him: 'Perhaps the best thing for you is to go to heaven: there you'll never be bored'. Haileb rejected this idea: 'No', he responded. 'Being dead is boring, too.'

While the nothingness revealed in profound boredom is deeply unsettling, it should not be too easily discarded as a dead end, as a state of being devoid of motion or the possibility for agency. Heidegger insists that in confronting us with the predicaments of our being-here (*Dasein*), profound boredom facilitates a state of existential understanding and forward movement. In enduring this condition, he notes, in not fighting against the deep sense of uncanniness that accompanies the experience of stasis, but in making room for it, in letting it 'approach us and tell us what it wants', we open ourselves up for future movements (1995: 81, 155). In this vein, the everyday discussions about death and profound boredom among the young men in the educational institution were not just expressions of a feeling of existential immobility. The playing with nihilistic ideas simultaneously enabled them to think through radical new possibilities for selfhood and the human condition. The narratives of boredom and life coming to a halt thus paradoxically also became an important vehicle for the young men to regain a sense of agency, of acting upon the environment they found themselves cast into.

SUICIDE AS EDGEWORK

Besides these debates about boredom and the end of life, the young men sometimes also explicitly talked about suicide. The busy road running alongside the institution's premises turned into the main focus of these imaginaries. Observing the large trucks passing by from his apartment, Abel imagined people's reactions if he were to suddenly open the window and jump into the road. When crossing the road to get to the workshops, the boys repeatedly played with the idea of stopping short midway between, causing the next big truck to hit them. If one of them was late after the lunch break, they would joke that he had probably taken an 'early exit' at the road. These remarks usually took the form of jokey conversations, but they sometimes unsettled me to the point that I struggled to verbalise them in my fieldnotes—as if the mere act of writing down these suicidal imaginaries made me complicit, as if my decision not to intervene and call on the expertise of a psychologist was questionable. Yet my conversations with the young men made me see that this talk of suicide should not be reduced to the language of trauma or suffering of many interventionist frameworks. As Elizabeth Cullen Dunn (2017: 54) aptly points out, frameworks of trauma tend to reduce refugees' existential struggles to individual battles devoid of links to the violence marking the here and now. When looked at from an existential rather than a biomedical perspective, the young men's conversations about suicide have much to say about the sense of movement at play in seemingly inescapable conditions of stasis.

As the most decisive of all acts, suicide throws up core questions about existence, agency and voice (Asad 2009; Broz and Münster 2015). Julie Livingston (2009: 659) argues that because of its defining role in modern social life, we need to understand the narrative quality of suicide, how it enters stories and discourses and comes to 'serve as a cautionary vehicle through which people contemplate and comment on what they see as the fundamental existential questions of their time'. Rather than interpreting the young men's 'imagined suicides' (Schäuble 2006) solely in medical terms, they need to be looked at as important narrative vehicles through which they could regain a sense of agency, as a means of overcoming the social and existential stalemate they found themselves locked into. It enabled them to imagine different scenarios of selfhood and being, and in doing so to critique their prolonged social and educational isolation.

As Tom Widger (2015: 170) shows with his research in Sri Lanka, the joking about and playing with ideas of suicide formed an important tool for young people to test out ideas about identity and formulate societal critiques. By imitating and imagining suicidal practices the young people were 'making explicit statements about their lives, their relationship with others, and their perceived ability or inability to control or shape the future' (ibid.: 170). The debates about death and dying that Abel's message initiated resemble the dynamics Widger describes. By imagining the end of their lives and toying with the idea of suicide, the young men were able to express the deep sense of stasis and exclusion they experienced in Switzerland. While some of these debates took place among the youth themselves, they often included the social workers and teachers. The narratives about suicide, existential boredom, and death thus also had a decidedly social function. In playing with these extreme imaginaries they shocked the social workers, provoking them to leave their professional role for a moment and force them into a direct conversation. By engaging in this form of 'edgework' (Lyng 2005), the young men were able to break through the monotony

of life in the institution, thereby creating brief moments of excitement and empowerment when they felt that they were in control of the situation they found themselves thrown into (also see Bengtsson 2012: 531).

As short-lived and banal as these moments might appear to be, I believe that anthropologists need to take them seriously and include them in their theorisations of im/mobility. In the context of the educational pilot project, these brief moments enabled the young men to voice a critique against the social and existential immobility the institution and Swiss asylum policy at large had forced them into. The playing with ideas of the most extreme form of stasis thus paradoxically allowed them to create a sense of forward movement, the feeling that they were confronting the seemingly insurmountable field of forces weighing down upon them. What is more, through these discussions the idea of death itself lost its character as a terminal point. Instead, it came to stand for an ultimate sense of forward movement, one that nobody else could control.

EVERYTHING INSIDE ME WANTS TO MOVE

I will end the article the way it started: With a brief moment in the everyday lives of the eight Eritrean young men living in the correctional facility. Like Abel's message, it forms only one 'minor mode' of existence (Piette 2015), a short interruption within the usual flow of events in the highly regulated daily routine of the educational institution where it occurred. Yet, I contend that it is exactly in such brief, banal instances of everyday life—moments that could easily be overlooked for their commonplace appearance—that some of the most important social, political and existential parameters for our being-here are made and remade. In doing

so, they can shed light on the dialectical ways movement and stasis enter into and envelop everyday lives, leading to ceaseless balancing acts between these two states of being. Importantly for this special section's aim of creating new epistemological angles, such an existential focus throws up conceptual questions about the interplay between the political and experiential.

The moment occurred during German class, about four months after the post-it incident. I was sitting next to Kibrum, a brilliant student who always looked forward to the two hours a day when he could leave behind the carpentry workshop and go to the internal school. This afternoon, however, he was struggling to focus. He was moving back and forth on his chair, teasing the other boys with little jokes, kicking them under the table. No matter how often the teacher told him off, it was impossible for Kibrum to sit still. At some point his restlessness became so overpowering that the teacher suggested the boys take a ten-minute break to walk around and let off some steam. When they returned to the classroom the teacher warned them that they needed to be more focused in the second half of the lesson. He said that Kibrum in particular needed to calm down, that he seemed to be very nervous that day. 'Yes, I am boiling inside', Kibrum said. Pointing at his stomach, he added: 'Everything inside me wants to move. It doesn't like to sit still.' Later on, after the class had finished and I was accompanying some of the boys to the carpentry workshop, I asked Kibrum where he believed the 'fever' that was raging in his body stemmed from. 'I don't know, maybe it's because I am unhappy', he said. I asked why he was so unhappy. 'How can I say this?' he replied. 'Where can I start?' He paused for a moment. 'Why am I here?' 'Would you like to be somewhere else instead?' I asked. 'Yes', Kibrum responded. 'But what can I do? I have to be here now.'

This brief moment with Kibrum has much to say about the ambiguous potential of education as a motive *and* decelerating force in the lives of young refugees. It shows the consequences of a biopolitics of stasis that pushes some people into the slow lane of social life where they are exposed to boredom and the lack of control and future prospects. The article has shown what happens when young people's hopes for education as a means of forward movement are systematically drained, thereby producing institutionalised forms of stasis, boredom, and hopelessness. In Kibrum's case the prolonged state of enforced educational immobility and, perhaps most importantly, the lack of anywhere else to turn to make his going-ness better, caused him to literally 'boil inside', to feel like he did not have his body's motion under control. It made him feel unhappy, as he explained, for while everything inside him wanted to move, the educational institution where he was living prevented him from doing so.

Compared to the tens of thousands of people currently stuck en route to Europe, in such countries as Libya, Morocco, or Sudan, the young men I focused on in this article were among the lucky few who made it to Switzerland, one of the richest and safest countries in the world and which has a strong public education system. As I have shown, the youth attached huge importance to the idea of gaining access to this education system as a means of moving forward in their lives. The idea of movement-through-education had propelled them on their dangerous journeys through the Libyan desert and across the Mediterranean. Yet Kibrum's statement shows what happens when a place that is believed to form a perfect launching pad for social and existential mobility turns out to be everything but a springboard to a better future, instead producing a deep and

utter sense of entrapment. Such experiences of existential stasis should not be reduced to the figure of the refugee or written into a domain of exceptionality. While they are clearly racialised, I agree with Georgina Ramsay's (2019: 17) observation that such experiences have to be read against the backdrop of contemporary global capitalist modes of dispossession that push an increasing number of people—refugees and non-refugees alike—into 'zones of political containment in which time is slowed, unmeasured, unproductive'. These processes of precaritisation do not just hinder access to material and social resources, but also encroach on people's innermost sense of forward movement (ibid.: 5).

Kibrum's inner fever as well as the dramatic discussions about death and the nothingness of being provoked by Abel's post-it message show what happens when the kinetic energy of migratory journeys—here embodied in the vectorial metaphor of movement-through-education—slowly gets sucked out of people's bodies and minds by a bureaucratic system that weighs down upon them, making every step forward they take feel heavy and lacking direction. Yet, these experiences of stasis should not be misinterpreted as a lack of agency or, indeed, motion. Kibrum's statement that his entire being resisted the enforced stasis the educational institution produced, that 'everything inside me wants to move', is telling. It shows the contradictory ways in which movement and stasis interact in people's daily lives—how enforced states of immobility can actually enter bodies and minds as an irresistible urge to move about and resist the forces holding one back. These dynamics also showed in Abel's message. By zooming in on the criss-crossing mobile and stationary vectors at play in the post-it note and its social afterlife, I showed how, in conditions of (politically produced) stasis, the

playing with ideas of suicide, death and the end of life could actually produce an inner sense of forward movement, thereby allowing the young men to act upon their environment.

The epistemological shift from treating movement and stasis primarily as socio-physical processes to looking at them as existential orientations provokes profound questions—not just about im/mobility per se, but also about the links between the political and experiential. Cullen Dunn (2017: 6) suggests that anthropologists of displacement need to be careful to distinguish between the 'politics of life' and a 'politics of living'. While the former allows capturing the biopolitical techniques used by powerful actors and institutions to govern refugees as a population, the latter allows light to be shed on the existential struggles people living in the shadows of refugee and humanitarian regimes are grappling with. The provocative questions Abel posed in his post-it note and the social dynamics it invoked confirm how important it is not to caricature refugees as powerless victims of an all-encompassing system, as mere bodies governed by abstract political regimes. Viewed through an existential epistemological lens, however, I would add that these two domains of life cannot always be so clearly separated. The young Eritrean men's experiences reveal that their intimate struggles for forward movement in the realms of their own lives cannot be divorced from the politics of life marking their treatment as 'problem cases' in need of intervention. Ethnographically capturing how powerful ideas and discourses manage to trickle down into people's lived experiences does not equal reducing them to puppets of an all-encompassing system. The narratives, imaginaries and actions the young Eritrean men deployed in response to the institutional and societal forces holding them back demonstrate that people are never solely

determined by external factors, that human life can (and should) never be reduced to bare life. Fassin (2010: 82–83) has noted that the 'seductive dualistic framework' haunting many anthropological engagements with marginalised groups tends to assume that there is a clear distinction between physical and existential life. He is critical of this distinction, arguing that even though individuals or groups might be subject to powerful forces of domination, they often manage to develop subtle tactics that enable them to 'transform their physical life into a political instrument or a moral resource or an affective expression' (ibid.: 94).

The narratives and actions focused on in this article underscore Fassin's point. They show that just as there is no such thing as bare life, there is no such thing as absolute existential stasis. The sensation of life on hold provoked the young men to imagine nihilistic scripts that allowed them to combat the powerful forces holding them back. Abel's post-it note and Kibrum's insistence that everything inside him was aching to move show the profound existential struggles for being involved in these processes. Pushing the forcefulness of these experiences into the spotlight helps see the dialectical ways movement and stasis interact in the daily lives of so-called 'mobile' people—how refugees and migrants currently attempting to find their way in increasingly hostile social landscapes are propelled forward and onward by intimate hopes of self-fulfilment and transformation, while simultaneously being pulled back by the very field of forces they have prevailed against.

At a time when migratory pathways are violently blocked, fenced off, or shut down, forcing people into desperate counter-moves, it becomes almost impossible to distinguish desired from enforced forms of mobility, or to disentangle the forces that push people forward

from those holding them back. Yet, by taking the existential struggles involved in these balancing acts seriously, we can begin to grasp the complex and at times contradictory ways in which people's innermost quests for forward movement correspond with the fields of forces they find themselves thrown into. Rather than reducing these struggles to a language of (bio) politics or intervention, a focus on refugees' struggles for being allows their meaning-making practices in response to and against these fields of forces to be captured. These struggles reveal an existential kinetics of movement and stasis: how seemingly oppositional modes of being-in-the-world envelop and condition each other. By re-centring the epistemological focus to the realms of the everyday, we can begin to gain glimpses of the 'directionality and magnitude of life as it unfolds' (Lems and Tošić, this issue), while embedding this unfolding in a global political condition of thrownness.

NOTES

1 I am indebted to a range of colleagues and friends who have commented on and discussed various versions of this article. This includes Hans Lucht, Paolo Gaibazzi, Sebastien Bachelet, Gerhild Perl, Josefine Raasch, Sabine Strasser, Kathrin Oester, Michael Schnegg, Julia Pauli, Edward Lowe, Jelena Tošić, and Paul Reade. I am particularly thankful to the two anonymous reviewers as well as Matti Eräsaari for their productive comments and suggestions. I would also like to express my gratitude to Nina Glick-Schiller for her helpful engagement with earlier versions of this text. This work was supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation under Grant 10001A_156476.
2 My fieldwork in the educational institution in Zürich was part of a larger research project entitled 'Transnational Biographies of Education', which was funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation. Due to the vulnerable positions of my research participants all names in the text have been changed.

3 The original message in German read as follows: 'Ich lebe nicht. Vielleicht tod. Ich bin in Himmel. Lebe ich noch auf dieser Welt?'

REFERENCES

Asad, Talal 2007. *On Suicide Bombing*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Auyero, Javier 2012. *Patients of the State: The Politics of Waiting in Argentina*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822395287.

Belloni, Milena 2016. 'My Uncle Cannot Say "No" if I Reach Libya': Unpacking the Social Dynamics of Border-Crossing among Eritreans Heading to Europe. *Human Geography* 9 (2): 47–56.

Bengtsson, Tea 2012. Boredom and Action: Experiences from Youth Confinement. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 41 (5): 526–553. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241612449356.

Borneman, John and Parvis Ghassem-Fachandi 2017. The Concept of Stimmung: From Indifference to Xenophobia in Germany's Refugee Crisis. *Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 7 (3): 105–135. https://doi.org/10.14318/hau7.3.006.

Broz, Ludek and Daniel Münster (eds) 2015. *Suicide and Agency: Anthropological Perspectives on Self-destruction, Personhood, and Power*. Farnham: Ashgate. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315611297.

Bryan, Catherine, and Myriam Denov 2011. Separated Refugee Children in Canada: The Construction of Risk Identity. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies* 9 (3): 242–266. https://doi.org/10.1080/15562948.2011.592806.

Cullen Dunn, Elizabeth 2017. *No Path Home: Humanitarian Camps and the Grief of Displacement*. New York: Cornell University Press. https://doi.org/10.7591/9781501712517.

De Graeve, Katrien 2017. Classed Landscapes of Care and Belonging: Guardianships of Unaccompanied Minors. *Journal of Refugee Studies* 30 (1): 71–88.

Desjarlais, Robert 1997. *Shelter Blues: Sanity and Selfhood among the Homeless*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. https://doi.org/10.9783/9780812206432.

Elliot, Alice 2016. Paused Subjects: Waiting for Migration in North Africa. *Time & Society* 25 (1): 102–116. https://doi.org/10.1177/0961463X15588090.

Fassin, Didier 2010 Ethics of Survival: A Democratic Approach to the Politics of Life. *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights* 1 (1): 81–95. https://doi.org/10.1353/hum.2010.0000.

Frederiksen, Martin Demand and Anne Line Dalsgaard 2014. Introduction: Time Objectified. In Anne Line Dalsgaard, Martin Demand Frederiksen, Susanne Holjund and Lotte Meinert (eds). *Ethnographies of Youth and Temporality*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Gaibazzi, Paolo 2015. *Bush Bound: Young Men and Rural Permanence in Migrant West Africa*. London, New York: Berghahn. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv6zdd1r.

Geertz, Clifford 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. London: Fontana.

Gilliam, Christian 2013. Existential Boredom Re-examined: Boredom as Authenticity and Life-Affirmation. *Existential Analysis* 24 (2): 250–261.

Glick-Schiller, Nina and Noel B. Salazar 2013. Regimes of Mobility Across the Globe. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 39 (2): 183–200. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2013.723253.

Graw, Knut and Samuli Schielke (eds) 2012. *The Global Horizon: Expectations of Migration in Africa and the Middle East*. Leuven: Leuven University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt9qf0sg.

Hage, Ghassan 2009. Waiting Out the Crisis: On Stuckedness and Governmentality. In Ghassan Hage (ed.). *Waiting*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.

Hannam, Kevin, Mimi Sheller and John Urry 2006. Editorial: Mobilities, Immobilities and Moorings. *Mobilities* 1 (1): 1–22. https://doi.org/10.1080/17450100500489189.

Heidbrink, Lauren 2014. *Migrant Youth, Transnational Families, and the State: Care and Contested Interests*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. https://doi.org/10.9783/9780812209679.

Heidegger, Martin 1962. *Being and Time*. New York: Harpers & Row.

Heidegger, Martin 1995. *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Husserl, Edmund 2001. *Logical Investigations*. London: Routledge.

Jackson, Michael 1998. *Minima Ethnographica: Intersubjectivity and the Anthropological Project*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Jackson, Michael 2002. *The Politics of Storytelling: Violence, Transgression, and Intersubjectivity*. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press.

Jackson, Michael 2013. *The Wherewithal of Life: Ethics, Migration, and the Question of Well-being*. Berkeley: University of California Press. https://doi.org/10.1525/california/9780520276703.001.0001.

Jackson, Michael and Albert Piette (eds) 2015. *What Is Existential Anthropology?* New York, London: Berghahn. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt9qcthj.

Jansen, Stef 2014. On Not Moving Well Enough: Temporal Reasoning in Sarajevo Yearnings for 'Normal Lives'. *Current Anthropology* 55 (S9): 74–84. https://doi.org/10.1086/676421.

Khosravi, Shahram 2017. *Precarious Lives: Waiting and Hope in Iran*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. https://doi.org/10.9783/9780812293692.

Lems, Annika 2018. *Being-Here: Placemaking in a World of Movement*. New York, London: Berghahn.

Lems, Annika 2019 (online first). Being Inside Out: The Slippery Slope between Inclusion and Exclusion in a Swiss Educational Project for Unaccompanied Refugee Youth. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*: 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2019.1584702.

Lévi-Strauss, Claude 1973. *Tristes Tropiques*. London: Jonathan Cape.

Livingston, Julie 2009. Suicide, Risk, and Investment in the Heart of the African Miracle. *Cultural Anthropology* 24(4): 652–680. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-1360.2009.01043.x.

Lucht, Hans 2011. *Darkness Before Daybreak: African Migrants Living on the Margins in Southern Italy Today*. Berkeley: University of California Press. https://doi.org/10.1525/california/9780520270718.001.0001.

Lyng, Stephen 2005. Edgework and the Risk-taking Experience. In Stephen Lyng (ed.). *Edgework*. New York: Routledge.

Mains, Daniel 2007. Neoliberal Times: Progress, Boredom, and Shame among Young Men in Urban Ethiopia. *American Ethnologist* 34 (4): 659–673. https://doi.org/10.1525/ae.2007.34.4.659.

Musharbash, Yasmine 2007. Boredom, Time, and Modernity: An Example from Aboriginal Australia. *American Anthropologist 109* (2): 307–317. https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.2007.109.2.307.

Oester, Kathrin, Ursula Fiechter and Elke-Nicole Kappus 2008. *Schulen in transnationalen Lebenswelten: Integrations- und Segregationsprozesse am Beispiel von Bern West*. Zürich: Seismo.

Oester, Kathrin, and Annika Lems 2019. Recht auf Bildung? Unbegleitete Minderjährige zwischen Inklusion und Exklusion. In Anja Sieber Egger, Gisela Unterweger, Marianna Jäger, Melanie Kuhn and Judith Hangartner (eds). *Kindheit(en) in formalen, nonformalen und informellen Bildungskontexten: Ethnografische Beiträge aus der Schweiz*. Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-23238-2_12.

O'Neill, Bruce 2017. *The Space of Boredom: Homelessness in the Slowing Global Order*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822373278.

Piette, Albert 2015. *Existence in the Details: Theory and Methodology in Existential Anthropology.* Berlin: Duncker & Humblot. https://doi.org/10.3790/978-3-428-54677-0.

Piñeiro, Esteban 2015. *Integration und Abwehr: Genealogie der schweizerischen Ausländerintegration*. Zürich: Seismo.

Ramsay, Georgina 2019 (online first). Time and the Other in Crisis: How Anthropology Makes Its Displaced Object. *Anthropological Theory*. https://doi.org/10.1177/1463499619840464.

Salazar, Noel B. 2017. Key Figures of Mobility: An Introduction. *Social Anthropology* 25 (1): 5–12. https://doi.org/10.1111/1469-8676.12393.

Salazar, Noel and Alan Smart 2012. Anthropological Takes on (Im)Mobility. *Identities* 18 (6): i–ix. https://doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2012.683674.

Schäuble, Michaela 2006. 'Imagined Suicide': Self-sacrifice and the Making of Heroes in Post-war Croatia. *Anthropology Matters* 8 (1): 1–14.

Schielke, Samuli 2015. *Egypt in the Future Tense: Hope, Frustration, and Ambivalence Before and After 2011*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Silverman, Stephanie 2016. 'Imposter-Children' in the UK Refugee Status Determination Process. *Refuge* 32 (3): 30–39.

Streckeisen, Ursula, Denis Hänzi and Andrea Hungerbühler 2007. *Fördern und Auslesen: Deutungsmuster von Lehrpersonen zu einem beruflichen Dilemma*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-531-90751-2.

Tazzioli, Martina 2018. Containment through Mobility: Migrants' Spatial Disobediences and the Reshaping of Control through the Hotspot System. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 44 (16): 2764–2779. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2017.1401514.

UN Human Rights Council 2016. *Detailed Findings of the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in Eritrea*. Geneva: Human Rights Council.

Vigh, Henrik 2006. Social Death and Violent Changes. In Catrine Christiansen, Mats Utas and Henrik Vigh (eds). *Navigating Youth, Generating Adulthood*. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.

Wicker, Hans-Rudolf 2009. Die neue schweizerische Integrationspolitik. In Esteban Piñeiro, Isabelle Bopp and Georg Kreis (eds). *Fördern und Fordern im Fokus: Leerstellen des schweizerischen Integrationsdiskurses*. Zürich: Seismo.

Widger, Tom 2015. Learning Suicide and the Limits of Agency: Children's 'Suicide Play' in Sri Lanka. In Ludek Broz and Daniel Münster (eds). *Suicide and Agency*. Farnham: Ashgate. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315611297-9.

Withy, Katherine 2014. Situation and Limitation: Making Sense of Heidegger on Thrownness. *European Journal of Philosophy* 22 (1): 61–81. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0378.2011.00471.x.

ANNIKA LEMS
MAX PLANCK INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL
ANTHROPOLOGY HALLE, GERMANY,
AND INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL
ANTHROPOLOGY UNIVERSITY OF BERN,
SWITZERLAND
lems@eth.mpg.de