

Migration and the politics of 'the human': confronting the privileged subjects of IR

International Relations
2020, Vol. 34(3) 290–308
© The Author(s) 2020



Article reuse guidelines:
sagepub.com/journals-permissions
DOI: 10.1177/0047117820946380
journals.sagepub.com/home/ire



Vicki Squire

University of Warwick

Abstract

In what ways has migration as a field of scholarship contributed to the discipline of International Relations (IR)? How can migration as a lived experience shed light on international politics as a field of interconnections? And how might migration as a political and analytical force compel IR to confront its privileged subjects? This article addresses these questions by focusing specifically on precarious migration from the Global South to the Global North. It shows how critical scholars refuse the suggestion that such migrations pose a 'global challenge' or problem to be resolved, considering instead how contemporary practices of governing migration effectively *produce* precarity for many people on the move. It also shows how critical works point to longer standing racialised dynamics of colonial violence within which such governing practices are embedded, to emphasise both the limitations of liberal humanitarianism as well as the problematic politics of 'the human' that this involves. By building on the insights of anti-racist, indigenous and postcolonial scholarship, critical scholars of migration are well placed to draw attention to the privileging of some subjects over others in the study and practice of international politics. The article argues that engaging IR while rejecting the orthodoxies on which the discipline is built remains critical for such works in order to advance understanding of the silences and violences of contemporary international politics.

Keywords

interconnectedness, International Relations, migration, politics of 'the human'

Introduction

In what ways has migration as a field of scholarship contributed to the discipline of International Relations (IR)? How can migration as a lived experience shed light on international politics as a field of interconnections? And how might migration as a

Corresponding author:

Vicki Squire, Department of Politics and International Studies, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL, UK.
Email: v.j.squire@warwick.ac.uk

political and analytical force compel IR to confront its privileged subjects? This article addresses these questions by focusing specifically on precarious migration from the Global South to the Global North. Precarious migration has emerged as an issue of increasing concern over recent years in political and public debate, as well as in IR scholarship and the social sciences more broadly. The article explores precarious migration from a critical perspective, refusing its labelling as a 'global challenge' in light of the political dangers associated with the securitisation of migration. Drawing on works that address migration as a field of struggle rather than simply as a site of freedom and/or control, it highlights how critical scholars have focused on the ways in which precarity is *produced through* contemporary practices of governing migration. By exploring in particular those governing practices that are orientated towards preventing South-North migration, the article shows how critical scholars point to longer standing racialised dynamics of colonial violence within which such practices are embedded. It shows how such an emphasis is important both in emphasising the limitations of liberal humanitarianism as well as the problematic politics of 'the human' that it involves. By building on the insights of anti-racist, indigenous and postcolonial scholarship, critical scholars of migration are well placed to draw attention to the privileging of some subjects over others in the study and practice of international politics. The article argues that engaging IR while rejecting the orthodoxies on which the discipline is built remains critical for such works in order to advance appreciation of the silences and violences of contemporary international politics.

Interconnections

As a discipline that has grown out of a concern with the relations between different collectives on a global scale, questions of connectedness have long been important to International Relations (IR) (see the Introduction to this Special Issue¹). Such interconnections have been understood in a distinctive way through the discipline, namely as relations between states that embody the collective will of 'the people' and that thus entail a territorial form of sovereignty demanding non-interference on the part of other states.² Kerem Nisancioglu describes this 'orthodox' conception as a historical abstraction, which structures many of the foundational debates within IR and which elides the role that colonial relations of mobility and immobility have played in the racialised constitution of sovereignty.³ Indeed, it is this orthodox conception of sovereignty that many scholars of migration have sought to challenge over recent decades, in particular, through highlighting the exclusionary and contested nature of sovereign power manifest in various bordering practices.⁴ By undertaking such work, such scholars have played a key role in advancing a critical trajectory of IR research that rejects conventional assumptions about the existence of discrete states and contained societies. They have problematised both the nationalist worldview and the combative ethics that such assumptions implicate, as well as cosmopolitan alternatives that overlook histories of hostility and violence.⁵ Providing pioneering examples of scholarship that has engaged IR without remaining caught within its orthodoxies, migration scholars have thus contributed to the expansion of IR into a broad, diverse and inter- or transdisciplinary field of research. Such a field is increasingly appreciative of the ways in which interconnections across

territorial borders involve complex political configurations, which are run through with relations of power, authority and control.⁶

The importance of moving beyond the orthodoxies of IR is starkly evident if we consider the complex and connected challenges that have emerged on the global scene over recent decades, and that are set to continue into the century ahead. It is not so much because population movements have accelerated and deepened their reach across multiple regions that the perspectives of migration scholars are important in addressing these 'global challenges'. Rather, it is because migratory dynamics intersect with many contemporary challenges in ways that reflect longer standing inequalities of im/mobility. From climate change and environmental degradation, through technological advances and changing labour markets, to the exploitation and dispossession of various groups or communities across the world, migration as a lived experience and as an interdisciplinary field of scholarship connects with many of the key areas explored within this Special Issue. For example, if we consider the challenge of climate change and environmental degradation (see, for example, the article by Richard Beardsworth in this issue⁷), researchers within the field of migration have shown how such dynamics add to existing pressures in regions of major displacement, serving as primary or supplementary drivers of movement as people move in search of sustainable living conditions.⁸ Although environmental disaster and longer term processes of environmental degradation often generate internal displacement rather than cross-border migration, scholars nevertheless suggest that climate change has an indirect – if not a direct – impact on international migration, and that this is set to continue and intensify over the coming years.⁹ What is notable here is that climate change is understood both as unequally experienced as well as intimately related to migration as a 'global challenge' itself. This lends itself an analysis that is attuned to the interconnection of migration and environmental degradation as issues requiring action at an international scale.

Although migration can certainly be understood as a pressing cross-border matter that is connected to many of the concerns examined in the Special Issue, I nevertheless want to caution against an approach that conflates various political issues under the widely used umbrella term of 'global challenges'. The articulation of migration as such over recent years has emerged in the context of highly securitised discourses and practices of border control,¹⁰ whereby people migrating without state authorisation have been engaged in exclusionary and racialised terms as a problem or 'threat' to host societies.¹¹ Precarious migratory journeys and experiences certainly do present concerns that scholars in the interdisciplinary field of IR are well placed to shed light upon, not least because the violences experienced by people on the move often involve bordering practices that are embedded in the operations of sovereign power and that reflect inequalities that can be understood as international or global in nature. However, it is important to stress that migration is by no means *a challenge in and of itself*, whether to people on the move directly or to states and communities that seek to prevent new arrivals. Indeed, scholars of mobility have emphasised that migration is an inherent dimension of human life, which is perceived as problematic only within the context of particular political formations.¹²

From this perspective, Samid Suliman and his co-authors provide a different interpretation of the connection between migration and climate change, to suggest that paying attention to ongoing dynamics of im/mobility facilitates an appreciation of the 'forms of

loss that remain unaccounted for in global climate governance'.¹³ Focusing on the claims of indigenous Pacific islanders to both stasis *and* movement and showing how these are rendered invisible by 'state-led and state-centric processes and debates about the "climate-migration nexus"', they point to the need for 'governance to countenance *other ways of moving through a warming world*'.¹⁴ What is significant here is that human mobility is not approached as aberrant to the norm of sedentary living or as a challenge to existing ways of life, but rather as a way of being that is heavily impacted by governing practices that reflect (and work to further embed) the sovereign orthodoxies of IR.

To take another example from this Special Issue, relations of exploitation and dispossession can also be seen as intersecting with migration through longer standing dynamics of unequal im/mobility (see the article by Amy Niang in this issue¹⁵). This point is highlighted by E. Tendayi Achiume, who suggests that contemporary migration needs to be understood as a response 'to the asymmetrical . . . structure of co-dependence', which was forged during the colonial period and which continues to structure global inequalities today.¹⁶ It is this structure of co-dependence or interconnection that Darshan Vigneswaran highlights in his analysis of the ways in which migration control emerged from within colonial spaces before being imported to Europe, rather than having been created in Europe and transported 'outwards' (as orthodox narratives within IR imply).¹⁷ In this context, international development does not provide a resolution to the 'global challenge' of migration, but instead further embeds IR's orthodoxies by overlooking the constitutive role that colonial dynamics of im/mobility play in the ongoing formation of political relations.¹⁸ Indeed, this points to the ongoing significance of what Alexander Anievas, Nivandi Manchanda and Robbie Shilliam call the 'global colour line', which can be viewed in 'arbitrary visa regimes, immigration controls and liberal modes of transnational incarceration' and which serve as 'testament to the institutionalisation of racism on a global scale'.¹⁹

What all this suggests is that migration scholarship has an important role to play both in unpacking the exclusionary dynamics through which governing practices *produce* 'global challenges', as well as in highlighting the ways in which these are reflected in the starkly differentiated experiences of many of the phenomena examined in this Special Issue. If migration is to be engaged in relation to wider debates about various global challenges, it is thus appropriate to do so only if the emphasis is firmly on the ways in which various contemporary challenges are *unequally* and *violently* experienced in ways that reflect dynamics of a longer duration. This not only requires consideration of the ways in which racialised subjects are rendered precarious precisely through practices of governing global issues such as climate change, environmental degradation, dispossession and exploitation. It also requires consideration of how such subjects are rendered precarious through processes of racialisation that are embedded in the migratory experience itself. It is thus to the *production* of precarity, specifically through racialised (or racialising) practices of governing migration, that this article will now turn.

The production of precarity

Research on migration within IR and the related discipline of Politics has largely focused on the ways that states and international institutions respond to the phenomenon of

people crossing international borders.²⁰ Such analyses are often situated in relation to macro-level perspectives on migration in different regions, and in relation to research on the causes and consequences of various forms of cross-border movement and its management.²¹ Indeed, such research has played a critical role in assessing political factors that impact on policy making,²² evaluating different theories of international migration²³ and assessing the ethics of migration and asylum policies.²⁴ Migration has been examined in the context of development issues,²⁵ labour issues,²⁶ citizenship²⁷ and forced migration,²⁸ and has also been explored in the context of diverse regions.²⁹ Yet despite this diversity of research on migration, what is notable is that many analyses within the field continue to privilege the role of the state in understanding cross-border movement. Even where critical of state practices, there is a risk of reinforcing the state – or international organisations working within a state-centric framework – as the primary actors and powerholders in the context of migration politics.³⁰ By contrast, a growing body of critical scholarship has addressed migration as a creative political force which power seeks to ‘capture’, thus engaging migration as a field of *struggle* rather than as a site of freedom and/or control.³¹ Such works are critical in displacing the analytical centrality and political privileging of state and institutional actors, highlighting instead the ways in which migration involves processes of negotiation in which people on the move play a constitutive role.³²

The increasing appreciation of migration as a political force has been important in fostering critical work that emphasises the ways in which precarity is *produced through* contemporary practices of governing migration. For example, some scholars have focused on the ways in which this occurs through the extension of visa controls and carrier sanctions, which seek to prevent safe and legal migratory pathways for those seeking to escape situations of harm.³³ Others have emphasised the importance of externalised border controls within so-called ‘transit states’, particularly those *en route* to the EU whereby policy developments have been increasingly orientated towards the prevention of South-North migration over recent years.³⁴ The extension of migration controls beyond state borders is not unique to the EU, however, and is evident more widely in practices that attempt to ‘repel’ those who seek asylum from accessing safety in ‘rich democracies’.³⁵ Drawing attention to the ways in which these practices perpetuate inequalities and provoke dangers for people *en route*,³⁶ critical scholars have shown how state governing authorities can become complicit with a smuggling ‘industry’ that capitalises on ‘clandestine’ journeys,³⁷ while operating without adequate measures of accountability.³⁸ Crucially, scholars of migration have emphasised the importance of understanding these developments as *attempts* at control, rather than as evidence of a form of total control.³⁹ Such attempts have also been identified by scholars examining the digitalisation of border security, who draw attention to the ways in which the prevention of unwanted arrivals has become increasingly ubiquitous based on distinctions between those travellers who are deemed to be ‘legitimate’ or ‘trusted’ and those who are not.⁴⁰ While these governing practices by no means go unchallenged, they do perpetuate precarity for those attempting to flee various situations of harm, including environmental degradation, dispossession and exploitation, among others.

Significant work has been carried out by migration scholars to unpack the relations of power that are embedded in the production of precarity. Some have emphasised the role

of spectacular operations of sovereign power,⁴¹ while others have focused on more mundane biopolitical operations that are designed to manage population movements.⁴² Some have emphasised the necropolitical drive to reduce migrating bodies to 'disposable lives' or a form of 'death-in-life',⁴³ while others have focused on zoopolitical processes of animalisation that render people on the move as 'less than human'.⁴⁴ Such works are important because they provide opportunities to focus attention on the ways in which contemporary practices of governing migration produce precarity in exclusionary and racialised terms.⁴⁵ In so doing, they highlight the multiple dimensions of violence that people experience during the migratory process. For example, Elena Fiddian-Qasmieh explores the symbolic violence embedded in representations of migration during the 2015 European 'migration crisis'. Showing how these rely on 'orientalist, Islamophobic and homonormative tropes' that operate through a gender-religion-asylum nexus, she suggests that it is often women who are humanised as vulnerable and innocent victims, while Muslim men are often dehumanised *en masse*.⁴⁶ Thom Davies, Arshad Isakjee and Surindar Dhesi focus attention on the material violence of racialised governing practices. In particular, they examine the physiological harms experienced by those living in Calais refugee camps, to suggest that these result from political inaction on the part of authorities.⁴⁷ Along similar lines, scholars have highlighted the ways in which people on the move experience physiological processes of material or 'biophysical' violence through their abandonment to the physical forces of deserts and seas during the migratory journey,⁴⁸ while others have pointed to the 'slow violence' of everyday struggles to survive under punitive welfare systems.⁴⁹ All these works point to the ways in which exclusionary dynamics of power and violence are integral to the production of precarity.

While scholars in the field of migration have undertaken important work in unpacking the ways in which precarity as a lived experience is produced through governing practices that involve exclusionary dynamics of power and violence, more work needs to be done in connecting these works to postcolonial and anti-racist analyses of the 'global colour line'.⁵⁰ One way in which these connections are being developed within the broad field of IR is through the critical engagement of scholars of migration with the politics of humanitarianism. Moving beyond a critique of the securitisation of migration,⁵¹ those developing a critique of humanitarianism have questioned its effectiveness as an alternative to security-focused responses to migration.⁵² They have argued that humanitarianism and securitisation come together in producing precarity, particularly in situations of emergency or 'crisis' such as search and rescue (SAR) operations at sea.⁵³ Highlighting the intimate relationship between care and control,⁵⁴ these works draw attention to the ways in which governing practices are implicated in the deaths of people they are designed to protect.⁵⁵ Critically, they have also increasingly pointed to the intimate relationship between colonial trajectories of governing and contemporary practices of migration management,⁵⁶ and to the colonial hierarchies of race that are embedded in contemporary humanitarianism.⁵⁷ As B.S. Chimni argues in his seminal critique of refugee studies, humanitarianism tends to reinforce racialised patterns of domination through a 'myth of difference'.⁵⁸ Critical migration scholars increasingly emphasise the limitations of humanitarianism as an answer to the problem of precarity, even while examining humanitarian politics as a contested field that is constituted through relations of solidarity as well as through relations of control.⁵⁹ As we will see

in the next section, the engagement of critical migration scholarship with anti-racist, indigenous and postcolonial works is particularly important in exposing the problematic politics of 'the human' embedded both in liberal humanitarianism and in contemporary practices of governing migration at the 'humanitarian border'.⁶⁰

The politics of 'the human'

Migration scholars have made significant contributions to the understanding of how humanitarianism is complicit both in the production of precarity as well as in the constitution of 'the human' or 'humanity' in exclusionary terms.⁶¹ For example, Michel Agier highlights how humanitarian responses to refugees rely on a conception of humanity that is perceived in bounded and absolute terms as a singular identity, which is split only in relation to its 'double' as a 'wounded, suffering, or dying humanity'.⁶² In other words, he suggests that a universalised politics of the human rests on an 'other' that is characterised by experiences of victimhood. For Agier, this 'suffering double' of humanity is used to justify a form of humanitarian government, in which the attempt to maintain order relies on the constitution of camps as spaces to administer emergency and suffering.⁶³ The racialised and racialising dimensions of these humanitarian practices of care and control are directly highlighted in Liisa Malkki's early work on Hutu refugees in Tanzania. Here, Malkki points to the ways in which images of 'masses of black (male) bodies' are integral to the portrayal of 'a vision of humanity that repels elements that fail to fit into the logic of its framework'. This, she suggests, invokes a 'particular variety of humanism', or one which 'humanises in a particular mode'.⁶⁴ Malkki's emphasis on the racial formation of liberal humanism and humanitarianism might be interpreted here in terms of the ways in which colonial trajectories are embedded in international politics as 'a structure not an event', to use Alissa Macoun and Elizabeth Strakosch's terms.⁶⁵ As Ida Danewid argues, contemporary migratory politics do not appear from nowhere, and need to be understood in relation to longer standing encounters that have been 'created through more than 500 years of empire, colonial conquest and slavery'.⁶⁶ It is precisely in drawing attention to these dynamics that migration scholars challenge some of the orthodoxies on which the discipline of IR rests.

While not all critical migration scholars engage a structural reading of colonialism, many have pointed to the ways in which the ongoing legacies or resonating dynamics of colonialism are crucial in understanding racialised governing practices during the 'post-colonial present'.⁶⁷ As Thom Davies and Arshad Isakjee suggest, 'a postcolonial lens allows modern imperial forms of subjugation to become strikingly visible', and shows how 'the racial othering that sustains national borders correlates to the logics and legacies of empire'.⁶⁸ Lucy Mayblin draws on Sylvia Wynter and other scholars from the Global South in order to show how a gendered civilisational conception of 'man' informs human rights as an exclusionary category.⁶⁹ Indeed, there are important overlaps here with the critical work of Black feminist scholars, many of whom focus on the ways in which 'the human' is structured through a colonial register. Katherine McKittrick shows how a plantation logic leads to a situation whereby '[white colonial] Man's human others (the *them* of the *us and them*) naturally occupy dead and dying regions as they are cast as the jobless underclasses whose members are made to function as our "waste products"

in our contemporary global world'.⁷⁰ This is a point to which Mimi Sheller points in her analysis of the co-constitution of mobility and immobility across various phases of the colonial project, in which she draws on Sara Ahmed's pioneering work to suggest that the mobility of some usually comes at the expense of the immobility of others.⁷¹ Lisa Lowe directly attributes a colonial logic to the formation of modern liberalism, which she describes as having 'defined the "human" and universalised its attributes to European man' at the same time as it 'differentiated populations in the colonies as less than human'.⁷² Similarly to McKittrick's analysis of the plantation, Lowe here points to the ways in which race as a marker of colonial difference 'is an enduring reminder of the processes through which the human is universalised and freed by liberal forms, while the peoples who create the conditions of possibility for that freedom are assimilated or forgotten'.⁷³ It is on the basis of the related positionalities of immigrants, slaves and indentured labourers that Lowe argues an analysis of migration needs to be examined in relation to studies of slavery.

These various critiques of the politics of 'the human' point to the intimate relationship between im/mobility and the production of racialised subjects under conditions of enduring colonial dynamics. In this context, questions arise about whether the 'violences and exclusions of humanism's normative emergence and trajectory' render it defunct, or whether a 'politics of the human' can be renewed in terms that enable us 'to govern our existence together'.⁷⁴ In raising this question, Wendy Brown engages with critiques of liberal humanism that emerge from another angle, namely 'posthumanist' or more-than-human approaches that are sometimes referred to under the broad term 'new materialisms'.⁷⁵ Juanita Sundberg has highlighted the ways in which these approaches can play an important role in contesting 'dualist constructions of nature and culture' to show how 'a multiplicity of beings cast as human and non-human – people, plants, animals, energies, technological objects – participate in the coproduction of socio-political collectives'.⁷⁶ Indeed, Sundberg herself has emphasised the more-than-human dimensions of contemporary bordering practices, drawing attention to the relationship between the land, human and nonhuman interactions to highlight the impossibility of full human control in situations of border crossing.⁷⁷ Her work is crucial here, because it highlights the limits of what Wendy Brown refers to as 'the foundational humanist idea', that 'humans make their own meanings, histories and worlds, that humans are a fundamental (though not necessarily exclusive) agency in their universe and that humans, rather than God, are the proper centre of their own political and cultural universe'.⁷⁸

While such insights have been taken up to further problematise the politics of 'the human' from within the field of migration specifically,⁷⁹ these are also concerns spanning debates within IR more broadly (see the articles by Audra Mitchell and Aadita Chaudhury and by Mustapha Kamal Pasha in this issue⁸⁰). It is here that scholarship in the field of indigenous studies plays an important role in problematising the violence and exclusions integral to liberal humanism, and in uncovering alternative conceptions of 'the human' that work against the racialised anthropocentrism that this involves. In his discussion of the work of the Brazilian anthropologist, Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, Peter Skafish emphasises the importance of diverse perspectives that draw out 'coordinates, values, suppositions and truths' that 'throw our own into disarray'.⁸¹ Viveiros de Castro's research focuses on Amerindian or Amazonian ways of life. Here, people qualify as such

whether they are understood to be human or not, because nonhumans are simply viewed as persons who are not human. Nonhuman sentient lifeforms, Skafish elaborates, are ‘distinct from “human” humans not from lacking consciousness, language and culture – these they have abundantly – but because their bodies are different . . . endow[ing] them with a specific subjective – “cultural” perspective’.⁸² While distinctions between humans and nonhumans continue to resonate in the language adopted here and while questions might be raised about the limitations of a focus on cultural difference, what Skafish importantly emphasises is that an Amazonian way of being is appreciative of ‘the theoretical imaginations of all peoples’ and as such provides the means for a ‘permanent decolonisation of thought’.⁸³ The significance of this for the purposes of this article lies in the potential that such a perspective holds for a rejection of the privileging of human life over nonhuman life, as well as the privileging of some humans over others. As we will see in the final section of this article, a concern with engaging the theoretical imaginations of diverse peoples has been a critical move within migration scholarship, albeit in terms that (often necessarily) remain human-focused.

Juanita Sundberg has also pointed to the importance of indigenous perspectives in disrupting the dominance of Anglo-American and Eurocentric forms of knowledge production, whether in a humanist or a posthumanist register.⁸⁴ Nevertheless, a cautionary note needs to be raised here in order that attempts at the ‘decolonisation of thought’ do not ‘continue to reproduce the white supremacy of the academy’.⁸⁵ Drawing inspiration from Sundberg’s reflections on her own discomfort about the ways in which debates surrounding posthumanism involve the erasure indigenous epistemes, the indigenous scholar Zoe Todd points to the dangers of an ‘ontological turn’ that remains complicit with colonial legacies and that rests on the exploitation of indigenous peoples. Rather than carelessly excavating indigenous forms of knowledge for the purposes of academic advancement, she suggests the need for an engagement with indigenous scholarship in terms that destabilise dominant frameworks of knowledge along with the exclusionary politics through which they are constructed. For research engaging IR without accepting its orthodoxies, this does not only mean acknowledging those thinkers and forms of knowledge production that have been erased and silenced within the academy.⁸⁶ Nor does it solely demand a rejection of orthodox interpretations of core IR concepts such as sovereignty.⁸⁷ In *addition*, it also requires the rejection of a conception of ‘the human’ that is grounded in colonial dynamics.⁸⁸ In this sense, scholars of migration engaging with the discipline of IR can learn much from anti-racist, indigenous and postcolonial scholars who consider ‘what different modalities of the human come to light if we do not take the liberal humanist figure of man as the master-subject but focus on how humanity has been imagined and lived by those subjects excluded from this domain’.⁸⁹ The question of what role migration scholars might play in this task forms the focus of the final section of this article.

Confronting the privileged subjects of IR

Thus far, this article has shown how critical migration scholars have contributed to a broad interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary field of scholarship, in which the discipline of IR is engaged on the basis of a rejection of its core assumptions. In particular, the

article has emphasised the importance of scholarship that critically challenges orthodox conceptions of sovereignty and sovereign power, especially those that draw attention to the problematic erasure of their ongoing implication in racialised forms of colonial violence. It has also suggested that migration as a lived experience sheds critical light on international politics as a field of interconnections, specifically by offering a powerful lens through which to highlight the unequal experience of various 'global challenges'. The discussion has focused on migratory experiences of climate change, exploitation and dispossession to show how precarity is a produced condition that is unevenly experienced by those racialised in complex ways, whether as 'masses of black (male) bodies' (to use Liisa Malkki's terms) or as "waste products" in our contemporary global world' (to use Katherine McKittrick's). Exploring the problematic politics of 'the human' that are embedded in liberal humanism, humanitarianism and contemporary practices of governing migration, the article has thus stressed the importance of engaging anti-racist, indigenous and postcolonial scholarship to emphasise the constitutive role that im/mobility has played – and continues to play – in the racialised formation of political relations over time. In this section, I want to go further to consider how critical migration scholarship can further challenge IR's privileging of some subjects over others, specifically with reference to research carried out during 2015–2016 on precarious migration across the Mediterranean.⁹⁰

As indicated earlier, critical migration scholars have increasingly sought to displace the analytical centrality and political privileging of state and institutional actors, instead exploring how people on the move play a constitutive role in migratory politics. This is important because such an approach goes beyond the critical analysis of practices of governing migration, to also consider the contestations, resistances or what Alexander G. Weheliye calls the 'living enfleshments' through which such practices are disfigured.⁹¹ This understanding of migratory politics as a field of struggle is hinted at in Agier's consideration of the refugee as humanity's 'suffering double', discussed in the previous section. On the one hand, Agier highlights how this suffering double represents the demand for a form of humanitarian government, which attempts to maintain order through the formation of camps as spaces to administer emergency and suffering.⁹² Yet, on the other hand, Agier also points to the importance of 'the refugee who will not play his [sic] assigned role, who no longer stays in his [sic] place, who does not keep silent'. It is in this context that he points to the importance of migration scholars making a 'political choice . . . in the construction of the object of research', in particular, through paying attention to the refugee who does not 'stay in place' and 'keep silent' in the face of violence and exclusion.⁹³ For Agier, the research process itself can thus play an important role in challenging a form of humanitarianism that involves a politics of 'the human' or 'humanity' in which refugees are treated as 'a human "waste" that has no voice and no place in this world'.⁹⁴ It is precisely this kind of politico-methodological decision that some critical migration scholars have taken over recent years.

Heather L. Johnson's research on refugees is an excellent example of this mode of critical migration scholarship. She addresses people on the move as 'autonomous and creative subjects' who play a role as authors of the migratory process in their own right, rather than at the invitation of others.⁹⁵ What Johnson's work thus represents is a rejection of 'the division between elite and marginalised, the powerful who frame and

sustain the dominant narrative, and the subaltern, who are silenced within it'.⁹⁶ I suggest that this approach might be interpreted as one that seeks to move away from an extractive approach to knowledge production, towards a participatory or co-productive one.⁹⁷ Such a shift is important, precisely because it seeks to counter a situation whereby those subjects who have been silenced in wider political and public debates are in turn silenced through the research process. Rather than representing people on the move as passive victims who await intervention by others,⁹⁸ critical scholars of migration increasingly engage those who are reduced to objects of research as *protagonists* in their own right.⁹⁹ Instead of 'giving voice' to the disempowered or those otherwise perceived to be politically deficient, such works focus on the politics of 'taking not waiting' that emerge through migratory struggles over im/mobility.¹⁰⁰ It is in this regard that critical scholars of migration are particularly well placed to challenge the privileging of some subjects over others in international politics. Indeed, an important body of 'militant' research seeks precisely to challenge the power asymmetries that render migrants as objects of investigation through 'destabilis[ing] the binaries of the researcher and researched'.¹⁰¹ By problematising the dynamics of power and violence through which practices of governing migration privilege the sovereign state, institutionalised bodies operating in state-centric terms, and 'the people' who are racialised according to enduring colonial norms of Whiteness in postcolonial European or 'Western' states, many critical migration scholars precisely seek to reject the orthodox assumptions on which such privileges are built. In so doing, they play an important role in uncovering and amplifying the violences and silences of contemporary international politics as well as of IR as a discipline itself.

To be clear, what I am *not* suggesting here is that critical migration scholars play an important role in compelling IR to confront its privileged subjects due to superior knowledge or insights. Nor am I suggesting that the field of critical migration studies is an ideal to aim for, escaping the academic tendencies towards White supremacy and epistemic violence that anti-racist, indigenous and postcolonial scholars highlight as problematic. This is clearly not the case, despite the importance of examples of autoethnographic work within the field.¹⁰² Rather, what I want to suggest is that migration scholarship is particularly important as a critical field of research both in highlighting the constitutive role that racialised dynamics of im/mobility play in the historical and contemporary formation of international politics, as well as in compelling IR to confront its privileged subjects. This is the case, I argue, precisely because migration plays an important role as a political and analytical force that forces us to confront the colonial dynamics that remain embedded within IR, academia and international politics more widely. Such a confrontation is evident, for example, in the testimony of a woman migrating to Italy from Nigeria who rejects the inequalities of our postcolonial present by claiming the right to migrate: 'You are free to go to Nigeria, there is your choice. So your push allows us enter Italy freely without no problem, that is what we want'.¹⁰³ It is also evident in the testimony of a man migrating to Istanbul from Iraq, who asks,

Am I not human? Anything that is useless, gets thrown out. When I see that I'm useless in my country, useless in Europe, useless in other countries, then who am I? A hidden pronoun? In the Arabic language we call it a hidden pronoun. An invisible subject.¹⁰⁴

Migration scholarship, to put it another way, is a field of research that demands a confrontation with privilege, whether we like it or not. That is, we have a choice as to whether we listen to claims advanced by people migrating when we speak with them, and we also have a choice as to *how* we engage such claims. For example, what do we do when someone challenges us as to who benefits from the research: ‘you benefit from this information and this evidence’?¹⁰⁵ Do we perceive such a claim as an inconsequential statement that is irrelevant to our analysis? Do we view it as a ‘threat’ that undermines or misunderstands our normative or moral commitments? Or might we address such a claim as reference to a shared struggle? Certainly, those with the resources to reflect on these matters have significant privileges that cannot be overlooked. The criticality of migration research can thus neither be taken lightly nor for granted, due to the ongoing inequalities and dynamics of power and violence that constitute our interconnected lives.¹⁰⁶ Nevertheless, listening to the claims of people on the move and engaging those with whom we speak as companions and allies can potentially contribute towards wider efforts to ‘decolonise the university’.¹⁰⁷ This is not to overlook that research on migration from within the White Western academy is a ‘fraught’ process.¹⁰⁸ It is precisely this fraught process that demands care is taken not to perpetuate patterns of knowledge production and ownership that extend the colonial legacies of our postcolonial present. The political economy of research funding in this regard also needs critical attention, in order that the ongoing silences and violences of international politics – along with IR’s implication within them – can also be rejected.

Conclusion

Alexander Anievas, Nivandi Manchanda and Robbie Shilliam suggest that IR can play a distinctive role within academia, in order ‘to facilitate examination of the link between race as a structuring principle and the transnational processes of accumulation, dispossession, violence and struggle that emerge in its wake’.¹⁰⁹ In this article, I have made the suggestion that critical migration scholarship can also play a distinctive role within IR, specifically by exposing the discipline’s grounding in ‘racial sovereignty’ and forms of power, violence and inequality that characterise our ‘postcolonial present’.¹¹⁰ It can do so, I have argued, both by highlighting the centrality of (post) colonial dynamics of im/mobility to the historical and contemporary formation of international politics, as well as by compelling us to confront the privileged subjects of IR to which such racialised formations give rise. Focusing in particular on precarious migration from the Global South to the Global North as an area of research as well as a lived experience, I have emphasised the ways in which precarity is *produced through* practices of governing migration that assume migration to be a ‘global challenge’ or problem to be resolved. I have suggested that such practices involve a problematic politics of ‘the human’ that are embedded in humanitarianism and liberal humanism more broadly, and I have pointed to the importance of anti-racist, indigenous and postcolonial scholarship in drawing attention to the privileging of some subjects over others in the study and practice of international politics.

Migration as a field of critical scholarship, I argue, can contribute to overturning IR’s disciplinary orthodoxies by rejecting the silences and violences of international politics,

while opening the field to the possibility of 'different modalities of the human'.¹¹¹ Specifically, it can do so by engaging migration as a lived experience that sheds light on the unequal experience of various 'global challenges', in so doing engaging people on the move not as objects of knowledge extraction but as 'authors' in their own right.¹¹² As a political and analytical force, migration compels scholars such as myself to confront the privileges of researching from within the White Western academy, just as engaging with people migrating in precarious conditions demands politico-methodological choices that compels IR to confront its privileged subjects. This article has focused in particular on the ways in which critical migration scholarship can contribute to the rejection of racialised relations of power, violence and inequality, which are embedded within colonial dynamics of a longer duration. This is not to accept race as a category of analysis,¹¹³ nor is it to overlook forms of inequality or exclusion that run along lines such as gender and class. Rather, it is to acknowledge the critical insights of an intersectional approach that highlights the violence of erasing an analysis of colonial histories and racialised dynamics of exclusion.¹¹⁴

The article has also gone further to hint at the ways in which racialised forms of exclusion are resonant with anthropocentric forms of exclusion, as (post)colonial forms of mastery extend their reach across people, places and things.¹¹⁵ Despite this, there have been significant limits in the engagement of a more-than-human critique within migration scholarship to date, which is perhaps a reflection of concerns about the failure of many 'posthumanist' approaches to fully address the all-too-human inequalities and ongoing forms of racialised violence integral to the field. Nevertheless, a growing body of work influenced by Science and Technology Studies explores the ways in which assemblages of human and nonhuman 'actants' constitute contemporary practices of governing migration.¹¹⁶ These works have the potential to open up new insights into the postcolonial formation of such assemblages, and to consider how anti-racist, indigenous and postcolonial insights surrounding 'the human' can be engaged in the analysis of migratory experiences and practices of governing migration. The politics of 'the human' is a rich and contested field of study in its own right, to which critical migration scholarship as well as scholarship engaging the broad interdisciplinary field of IR can contribute, and from which such works can also draw important insights. Indeed, I argue that this remains a critical dimension of the broader effort to reject the very orthodoxies on which the discipline of IR is built.

Acknowledgements

I would like to extend warm thanks to the editors of this collection and to the full editorial team, as well as to all the participants at the preparatory workshop in Aberystwyth where an early version of this article was presented. Particular thanks are extended to Milja Kurki and Jairus Grove for their suggestions on how to develop the piece, and to the two anonymous reviewers for their excellent insights. I would like to thank the research team, as well as those who generously and courageously shared their struggles with us. Thanks in particular to Co-Is Angeliki Dimitriadi, Maria Pisani, Dallal Stevens and Nick Vaughan-Williams, researchers Nina Perkowski, Vassiliki Touhouliotis, Skerlida Agoli, Emanuela Dal Zotto, Alba Cauchi, Sarah Mallia and Mario Gerada, as well as various translators and fixers across the different research sites. Interviews cited in this article are from the ESRC Urgent Research Grant ES/N013646/1, 'Crossing the Mediterranean Sea by Boat: Mapping and Documenting Migratory Journeys and Experiences'.

Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Notes

1. Charalampos Efstathopoulos, Milja Kurki and Alistair Shepherd, 'Facing Human Interconnections: Thinking IR into the Future', *International Relations*, 34(3), 2020, pp. 267–289.
2. John Agnew, 'Mapping Political Power Beyond State Boundaries: Territory, Identity and Movement in World Politics', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 28(3), 1999, pp. 499–531.
3. Kerem Nisancioglu, 'Racial Sovereignty', *European Journal of International Relations*. Epub ahead of print 5 November 2019. DOI: 10.1177/1354066119882991.
4. For example, please see M. Dillon, 'The Scandal of the Refugee: Some Reflections on the 'Inter' of International Relations', *Refuge* 17(6), 1998, pp. 92–124; Roxanne Lynn Doty, 'Racism, Desire and the Politics of Immigration' *Millennium* 28(3), 1999, pp. 585–606; Sarah Fine and Lea Ypi, *Migration in Political Theory: The Ethics of Movement and Membership* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); Heather L. Johnson, *Borders, Asylum and Global Non-Citizenship* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2014); Anne McNevin, *Contesting Citizenship: Irregular Migrants and New Frontiers of the Political* (New York: Colombia University Press, 2011); Peter Nyers, *Rethinking Refugees: Beyond States of Emergency* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006); Nick Vaughan-Williams, *Border Politics: The Limits of Sovereign Power* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 2010); Nick Vaughan-Williams, *Europe's Border Crisis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).
5. For example, please see Dan Bulley, *Migration, Ethics and Power* (London: SAGE, 2017); Kim Rygiel, *Globalising Citizenship* (Vancouver, BC, Canada: University of British Columbia Press, 2010).
6. Mark B. Salter (Ed.), *Making Things International II: Catalysts and Reactions* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2016).
7. Richard Beardsworth, 'Climate Science, the Politics of Climate Change, and the Futures of IR', *International Relations*, 34(3), 2020, pp. 273–290.
8. Mohammed Sall, Al Assane Samb, Serigne Mansour Tall and Aly Tandian, 'Changements Climatiques, Strategies D'adaptation et Mobilites. Evidence a Partir de Quatre sites au Senegal', Human Settlements working paper No. 33, November 2011, Rural-urban interactions and livelihood strategies, International Institute for Environment and Development, available at: <https://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/10598FIIED.pdf?> (accessed 13 May 2019).
9. Richard Black, W. Neil Adger, Nigel W. Arnell, Stefan Dercon, Andrew Geddes and David Thomas, 'The Effect of Environmental Change on Human Migration', *Global Environmental Change*, 21(S), 2011, pp. S3–11.
10. Jef Huysmans, *The Politics of Insecurity: Fear, Migration and Asylum in the EU* (London: Routledge, 2006).
11. Vicki Squire, *The Exclusionary Politics of Asylum* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009).
12. Thomas Nail, *The Figure of the Migrant* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2015).
13. Samid Suliman, Carol Farbotko, Hedda Ransan-Cooper, Karen Elizabeth McNamara, Fanny Thornton, Celia McMichael and Taufiee Kitara, 'Indigenous (im)mobilities in the Anthropocene', *Mobilities*, 14(3), 2019, pp. 298–318, p. 308.
14. Suliman et al., 'Indigenous (im)mobilities in the Anthropocene' original emphasis p. 299.
15. Amy Niang, 'The Slave, the Migrant and the Ontological Topographies of the International', *International Relations*, 34(3), 2020, pp. 333–353.

16. E. Tendayi Achiume, 'Reimagining International Law for Global Migration: Migration as Decolonisation?', *AJIL Unbound*, 111, 2017, pp. 142–6, p. 142, available at: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/american-journal-of-international-law/article/reimagining-international-law-for-global-migration-migration-as-decolonization/436A3F0B95B-82483F7BEAB7110FEDA2C/core-reader> (accessed 13 May 2019).
17. Darshan Vigneswaran, 'Europe has Never Been Modern: Recasting Historical Narratives of Migration Control', *International Political Sociology* 14(1), 2020, pp. 2–21.
18. Samid Suliman, 'Mobility and the Kinetic Politics of Development' *Review of International Studies* 42(4), 2016, pp. 702–23.
19. Alexander Anievas, Nivi Manchanda and Robbie Shilliam, 'Confronting the Global Colour Line: An Introduction' in Alexander Anievas, Nivi Manchanda and Robbie Shilliam (eds) *Race and racism in International Relations* (London: Routledge, 2015), pp. 1–16, p. 10.
20. For example, Alexander Betts, *Forced Migration and Global Politics* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009); Martin Geiger and Antoine Pécoud, 'International Organisations and the Politics of Migration', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 40(6), 2014, pp. 865–87.
21. Hein De Haas, Mark J. Miller and Stephen Castles, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, 5th ed. (London: Red Globe Press, 2020).
22. Sarah Spencer (ed.), *The Politics of Migration: Managing Opportunity, Conflict and Change* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003).
23. Douglas S. Massey, Joaquin Arango, Graeme Hugo, Ali Kouaouci, Adela Pellegrino and J. Edward Taylor, 'Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal', *Population and Development Review*, 19(3), 2003, pp. 431–66.
24. Matthew Gibney, *The Ethics and Politics of Asylum: Liberal Democracy and the Response to Refugees* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
25. Hein De Haas, 'Migration and Development: A Theoretical Perspective', *International Migration Review*, 44(1), 2010, pp. 227–64.
26. Timothy J. Hatton and Jeffrey G. Williamson, *Global Migration and the World Economy: Two Centuries of Policy and Performance* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005).
27. Stephen Castles and Alastair Davidson, *Citizenship and Migration: Globalisation and the Politics of Belonging* (London: Routledge, 2000).
28. Guy S. Goodwin-Gill and Jane McAdam, *The Refugee in International Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).
29. For example, James Milner, *Refugees, the State and the Politics of Asylum in Africa* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009); Robyn R. Iredale, Charles Hawksley and Stephen Castles (eds), *Migration in the Asia Pacific: Population, Settlement and Citizenship Issues* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2003); Andrew Geddes, *The Politics of Migration and Immigration in Europe* (London: SAGE, 2003).
30. Stephan Scheel, *Autonomy of Migration? Appropriating Mobility within Biometric Border Regimes* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019).
31. See, for example, various contributions in Vicki Squire (ed.), *The Contested Politics of Mobility: Borderzones and Irregularity* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011).
32. Elena Fontanari, *Lives in Transit: An Ethnographic Study of Refugees' Subjectivity Across European Borders* (London: Routledge, 2018).
33. Leonie De Vries and Elspeth Guild, 'Seeking Refuge in Europe: Spaces of Transit and the Violence of Migration Management', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 45(12), 2019, pp. 2156–66.
34. See Luiza Bialasiewicz, 'Off-Shoring and Out-Sourcing the Borders of Europe: Libya and EU Border Work in the Mediterranean', *Geopolitics* 17(4), 2012, pp. 843–66; Nadine

- El-Enany, 'The EU Asylum, Immigration and Border Control Regimes: Including and Excluding: The 'Deserving Migrant'', *European Journal of Social Security*, 15(2), 2013, pp. 171–86.
35. David Scott Fitzgerald, *Refuge Beyond Reach: How Rich Democracies Repel Asylum Seekers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).
36. Reece Jones, *Violent Borders: Refugees and the Right to Move* (London: Verso, 2016).
37. Ruben Andersson, *Illegality Inc* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2014).
38. Julian Brachet, 'Policing the Desert: The IOM in Libya Beyond War and Peace', *Antipode* 48(2), 2016, pp. 272–92.
39. Vaughan-Williams, *Europe's Border Crisis*.
40. Louise Amoore, 'Biometric Borders: Governing Mobilities in the War on Terror', *Political Geography* 25(3), 2006, pp. 336–51.
41. Paolo Cuttitta, 'Borderizing the Island: Setting and Narratives of the Lampedusa Border "Play"', *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies*, 13(2), 2014, pp. 196–219; Nicholas De Genova, 'Spectacles of Migrant 'Illegality': The Scene of Exclusion, the Obscene of Inclusion', *Journal of Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 36(7), 2013, pp. 1180–98.
42. Martin Geiger and Antoine Pécoud, 'The Politics of International Migration Management', in M. Geiger and A. Pécoud (eds) *The Politics of International Migration Management* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2010), pp. 1–20.
43. Thom Davies, Arshad Isakjee and Surindar Dhesi, 'Violent Inaction: The Necropolitical Experience of Refugees in Europe', *Antipode*, 49(5), 2017, pp. 1263–84.
44. Nick Vaughan-Williams, 'We are *not* Animals!' Humanitarian Border Security and Zoopolitical Spaces in Europe', *Political Geography* 45, 2015, pp. 1–10.
45. Nicholas De Genova, 'The 'Migrant Crisis' as Racial crisis: Do Black Lives Matter in Europe?', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 41(19), 2017, pp. 1765–82.
46. Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 'The Faith-Gender-Asylum Nexus: An Intersectional Analysis of Representations of the 'Refugee Crisis'', in Luca Mavelli and Erin K. Wilson (eds) *The Refugee Crisis and Religion: Secularism, Security and Hospitality in Question* (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2017), pp. 207–21, pp. 212–9.
47. Davies et al., 'Violent Inaction'.
48. Roxanne Lynn Doty, 'Bare Life: Border Crossing Deaths and Spaces of Moral Alibi', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 29(4), 2011, pp. 599–612; Vicki Squire, *Post/Humanitarian Border Politics between Mexico and the US: People, Places, Things* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2015); Juanita Sundberg, 'Diabolic Caminos in the Desert and Cat Fights in the Rio: A Posthumanist Political Ecology of Boundary Enforcement in the United States-Mexico Borderlands', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 101(2), 2011, pp. 318–36.
49. Lucy Mayblin, Mustafa Wake and Mohsen Kazemi, 'Necropolitics and the Slow Violence of the Everyday: Asylum Seeker in the Postcolonial Present', *Sociology*, 54(1), 2020, pp. 107–23.
50. Anievas et al., 'Confronting the Global Colour Line'.
51. Rens Van Munster, *Securitizing Immigration: The Politics of Risk in the EU* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009).
52. Claudia Aradau, 'The Perverse Politics of Four-Letter Words: Risk and Pity in the Securitisation of Human Trafficking', *Millennium*, 33(2), 2004, pp. 251–77; Martina Tazzioli, *The Making of Migration: Biopolitics of Mobility at Europe's Borders* (London: SAGE, 2019).
53. Glenda Garelli, Alessandra Sciarba and Martina Tazzioli, 'Introduction: Mediterranean Movements and the Reconfiguration of the Military-Humanitarian Border in 2015', *Antipode*, 50(3), 2018, pp. 662–72.

54. Polly Pallister-Wilkins, 'Humanitarian Rescue/Sovereign Capture and the Policing of Possible Responses to Violent Borders', *Global Policy*, 8(1), 2017, pp. 19–24; Polly Pallister-Wilkins, 'Hotspots and the Geographies of Humanitarianism', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*. Epub ahead of print 25 January 2018. DOI: 10.1177/0263775818754884.
55. Vaughan-Williams, *Europe's Border Crisis*.
56. Martin Lemberg-Pedersen, 'Manufacturing Displacement: Externalisation and Postcoloniality in European Migration Control', *Global Affairs*, 5(2), pp. 247–71; Pallister-Wilkins, 'Hotspots and the Geographies of Humanitarianism'.
57. Lewis Turner, '"#Refugees can be entrepreneurs too!" Humanitarianism, race, and the marketing of Syrian refugees', *Review of International Studies*, 46(1), 2020, pp. 137–55.
58. B.S. Chimni, 'Birth of a "Discipline": From Refugee to Forced Migration Studies', *Journal of Refugee Studies* 22(1), 2009, pp. 11–29.
59. Squire, *Post/Humanitarian Border Politics between Mexico and the US*; Vicki Squire, *Europe's Contested Migration Crisis: Border Deaths and Human Dignity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020); Maurice Stierl, 'A Fleet of Mediterranean Border Humanitarians', *Antipode*, 50(3), 2018, pp. 704–24.
60. William Walters, 'Foucault and Frontiers: Notes on the Birth of the Humanitarian Border', in U. Bröckling, S. Krassman and T. Lemke (eds) *Governmentality: Current Issues and Future Challenges* (London: Routledge, 2011), pp. 138–64.
61. Ilana Feldman and Miriam Ticktin (eds), *In the Name of Humanity: The Government of Threat and Care* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010).
62. Michel Agier, 'Humanity as an Identity and its Political Effects: Notes on Camps and Humanitarian Government', *Humanity* 1(1), 2010, pp. 29–45, p. 31.
63. Agier, 'Humanity as an Identity and its Political Effects', pp. 35–9. See also Didier Fassin, *Humanitarian Reason: A Moral History of the Present* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012).
64. Liisa Malkki, 'Speechless Emissaries: Refugees, Humanitarianism and Dehistoricisation', *Cultural Anthropology*, 11(3), 1996, pp. 377–404, pp. 378–90.
65. Cited in Nisancioglu, 'Racial Sovereignty', p. 9.
66. Ida Danewid, 'White Innocence in the Black Mediterranean: Hospitality and the Erasure of History', *Third World Quarterly*, 38(7), 2017, pp. 1674–89, p. 1680.
67. De Genova, 'The 'Migrant Crisis' as Racial Crisis'; Vicki Squire, Nina Perkowski, Dallal Stevens and Nick Vaughan-Williams, *Reclaiming Migration: Voices from Europe's 'Migrant Crisis'* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020); cf. Gurinder K. Bhambra, 'Whither Europe? Postcolonial versus neo-colonial cosmopolitanism', *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 18(2), 2016, pp. 187–202.
68. Thoms Davies and Arshad Isakjee, 'Ruins of Empire: Refugees, Race and the Postcolonial Geographies of European Migrant Camps', *Geoforum*, 102, 2019, pp. 214–7, pp. 2016–7.
69. Lucy Mayblin, *Asylum after Empire: Colonial Legacies in the Politics of Asylum Seeking* (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2017).
70. Katherine McKrittick, 'Plantation Futures', *Small Axe*, 17(3), 2013, pp. 1–15; original emphasis, p. 7; see also Sylvia Wynter, 'Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, after Man, its Overrepresentation – an Argument' *The New Centennial Review* 3(3), 2003, pp. 257–337.
71. Mimi Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean: From Arawaks to Zombies* (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 22–30.
72. Lisa Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), p. 6.
73. Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents*, p. 7.

74. Wendy Brown, 'Climate Change, Democracy and Crises of Humanism', in A. Baldwin and G. Bettini (eds) *Life Adrift: Climate Change, Migration, Critique* (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2017), pp. 25–41, p. 38; Anne Phillips, *The Politics of the Human* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).
75. Diana Coole and Samantha Frost, *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency and Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010).
76. Juanita Sundberg, 'Decolonising Posthumanist Geographies', *Cultural Geographies* 21(1), 2014, pp. 33–47, p. 33.
77. Sundberg, 'Diabolic Caminos in the Desert and Cat Fights in the Rio'.
78. Brown, 'Climate Change, Democracy and Crises of Humanism', pp. 26–7.
79. For example, see Squire, *Post/Humanitarian Border Politics between Mexico and the US*; Squire, *Europe's Contested Migration Crisis*.
80. Audra Mitchell and Aadita Chaudhury, 'Worlding Beyond "the" "End" of "the World": White Apocalyptic Visions and BIPOC Futurisms', *International Relations*, 34(3), 2020, pp. 309–332; Mustapha Kamal Pasha, 'After the Deluge: New Universalism and Postcolonial Difference', *International Relations*, 34(3), 2020, pp. 354–373.
81. Peter Skafish, 'Introduction', in Peter Skafish (ed.) *Canibal Metaphysics* (Eduardo Viveiros de Castro; Minneapolis, MN: Univocal Publishing, 2009), pp. 9–33, p. 18.
82. Skafish, 'Introduction', p. 12.
83. Skafish, 'Introduction', p. 10.
84. Sundberg, 'Decolonising Posthumanist Geographies'.
85. Zoe Todd, 'An Indigenous Feminist's Take on the Ontological Turn: "Ontology" is Just Another Word for Colonialism', *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 29(1), 2016, pp. 4–22, p. 16.
86. Todd, 'An Indigenous Feminist's Take on the Ontological Turn', pp. 16–8.
87. Vigneswaran, 'Europe has Never been Modern'.
88. Mayblin, *Asylum After Empire*.
89. Alexander G. Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus: Racialising Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), p. 8.
90. Vicki Squire, Angeliki Dimitriadi, Nina Perkowski, Maria Pisani, Dallal Stevens and Nick Vaughan-Williams, 'Crossing the Mediterranean Sea by Boat: Mapping and Documenting Migratory Journeys and Experiences', available at: https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/pais/research/researchcentres/irs/crossingthemed/ctm_final_report_4may2017.pdf (accessed 3 July 2020).
91. Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus*, p. 2.
92. Agier, 'Humanity as an Identity and its Political Effects', pp. 35–9.
93. Agier, 'Humanity as an Identity and its Political Effects', pp. 41–2.
94. Agier, 'Humanity as an Identity and its Political Effects', p. 43.
95. Heather L. Johnson, 'Narrating Entanglements: Rethinking the Global/Local divide in Ethnographic Migration Research', *International Political Sociology*, 10(4), 2016, pp. 83–397, p. 383.
96. Johnson, 'Narrating Entanglements', p. 384.
97. Vicki Squire, 'Researching Precarious Migrations: Qualitative Strategies Toward a Positive Transformation of the Politics of Migration', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 20(2), 2018, pp. 441–58.
98. Cf. Moya Lloyd, 'Naming the Dead and the Politics of the "Human"', *Review of International Studies*, 43(2), 2017, pp. 260–79, p. 262.
99. See Charles Heller and Lorenzo Pezzani, 'Report on the left-to-die boat case', *Forensic Oceanography*, 2015, available at: <https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/the-left-to-die-boat> (accessed 23 May 2020).

100. Vicki Squire and Jennifer Bagelman, 'Taking Not Waiting: Space, Temporality and Politics in the City of Sanctuary Movement' in P. Nyers and K. Rygiel (eds) *Migration and Citizenship: Migrant Activism and the Politics of Movement* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), pp. 146–64.
101. Nicholas De Genova et al. cited in Federica Mazzara, *Reframing Migration: Lampedusa, Border Spectacle and Aesthetics of Subversion* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2019), p. 77.
102. Shahram Khosravi, *Illegal Traveller: An Autoethnography of Borders* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2010).
103. See Squire et al., *Reclaiming Migration*.
104. Squire et al., *Reclaiming Migration*.
105. Squire et al., *Reclaiming Migration*.
106. Gurinder K. Bhambra, *Connected Sociologies* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014).
107. Gurinder K. Bhambra, Dalia Gebrial and Kerem Nisancioglu (eds), *Decolonising the University* (London: Pluto Press, 2018).
108. Squire, 'Researching Precarious Migrations'; Squire et al., *Reclaiming Migration*.
109. Anievas et al., 'Confronting the Global Colour Line', p. 9.
110. Nisancioglu, 'Racial Sovereignty'; Bhambra, 'Whither Europe?'.
111. Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus*, p. 8.
112. Johnson, 'Narrating Entanglements'.
113. See Mayblin, *Asylum After Empire*.
114. Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, 'Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics and Violence against Women of Colour', *Stanford Law Review* 43(6), 1991, pp. 1241–99.
115. Sundberg, 'Decolonising Posthumanist Geographies'.
116. For example, see Martin Lemberg-Pedersen and E.H.M Haioty, 'Reassembling the Surveillable Refugee Body in the Era of Data-Craving' *Citizenship Studies*, 24, 2020, pp. 607–24; Ben Muller, '(Dis)qualified Bodies: Securitization, Citizenship and 'Identity Management'' *Citizenship Studies*, 8(3), 2010, pp. 79–294; Scheel, *Autonomy of Migration?*

Author biography

Vicki Squire is Professor of International Politics at the Department of Politics and International Studies, University of Warwick, UK. Her research focuses on the politics of migration and asylum, contemporary border struggles, and solidarity activism. She is the author of *The Exclusionary Politics of Asylum* (Palgrave, 2009), *The Contested Politics of Mobility* (Routledge, 2011), *Post/Humanitarian Border Politics* (Palgrave, 2015), *Europe's Contested Migration Crisis* (CUP, 2020) and *Reclaiming Migration* (MUP, 2021). She is also co-Editor of the journal *International Political Sociology*.