What does home mean in displacement? A case study of refugee women in the South of England.

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Abstract

Home is a complex, multi-faceted concept, yet it is frequently thought of as a static concept synonymous with a place of origin. Such construction of home, however, creates tensions between analyses of displacement, on the one hand, and the experience and meaning of home in contexts of forced migration, on the other. This study explores these tensions and contributes to existing debates at the intersection of migration and gender studies, specifically those which explore refugee women's experiences and practices of home-making.

Based on ethnographic research conducted with a group of women of various origins seeking asylum in the South of England, this research uses transnational and feminist frameworks to explore the meaning of home for the women themselves who took part in the study. It engages with visual methodologies, interviews, and informal group conversations to generate meaningful insights on the mundane, sensory, and affective registers through which women seeking asylum (re)create the meaning of home in contexts of displacement and resettlement. From this theoretical and methodological vantage point, this study aims to contribute to and expand current understandings and discussions on, home, gender, and displacement across migration studies.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Troubled by the work of Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951) where she postulated that humans could exist in a place called 'no-where', through displacement from political communities. This research will explore the complexities of home for refugee women in the Bournemouth area.

Home is a complicated concept, frequently demarked as a space in which we 'dwell' (Heidegger, 1971) and associated with a place of origin or homeland (Dona, 2015). It is often, and in many meaningful ways "defined by other people" (Taylor, 2009: 216), but the type and quality of these relationships can determine whether someone feels at home or not. Home is also a "situated experience" (Fathi, 2021: 980) and can be influenced by and mimic the wider structures in which it exists. These structures (gender, ethnicity, class, sexuality, religion etc) intersect with one another and can complicate an individual's experience and understanding of their home.

Home becomes infinitely more complex when it is considered in the context of migration especially when migration is forced. Forced migrants' experiences of mobility and settlement are often accompanied by feelings of ambiguity about being simultaneously here and there and can cause complex emotional entanglements in relation to places, people, objects, and relationships (Fathi, 2021). Some literature captures the feelings of loss or nostalgia felt by displaced people (Feldman, 2006; Kabachnik et al. 2010) for their former homes whereas others reflect the varied practices of homemaking (Boccangni, 2015; Brun, 2015; Dona, 2015; Cory 2020).

Part of this divergence of thought comes from the tension that exists between our understanding of the concept of home and how we think about forced migration/ displacement. Displaced is defined as being forced from home (Feldman, 2006) which suggests that refugees are in some way 'homeless' (Kabachnik, et al. 2010: 317; Dam and Eyles, 2012) as they have been removed from their homes. Underpinning this understanding is the tendency for scholars and political actors to assume that the "nation-state is the natural, social and political form of the modern world" (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2002: 301), and processes such as migration are unnatural and disrupting to the "national order of things" (Malkki, 1995: 516) as individuals are forced away from their country of origin. The juxtaposition of concepts creates a common cognitive disconnect between home, imagined as a non-movable place, on the one hand, and dislocation/ displacement represented as a loss of one's place and thus one's home, on the other.

The conflict between the conceptualisation of home and displacement has influenced how refugees are constructed and understood. According to Stonebridge (2020) “fewer groups can claim to be quite so thoroughly made by modern geopolitical history as refugees” (2020: 15), as it wasn’t until the drawing of political boundaries that the refugee was born. Peter Gatrell (2013) similarly, discusses how refugees are not the unfortunate by-product of wars, revolutions, or state formations but the direct outcome of targeting those who are deemed to not belong to a nation-state. Refugees are considered to be outside of the boundaries of nation-states, neither belonging to the ‘here’ nor ‘there’, and therefore are considered as being ‘nowhere’ (Kabachnik, et al. 2010). This narrative has played into the notion of the “groundless refugee condition” (Stonebridge, 2020: 16) which sustains many analyses of refugees.

This contestation of concepts and understandings leaves the question of how people who have experienced displacement understand their experience of home. This question is the core problem that this research explores.

Given the complexity of home and the consequences it has on the categorisation of refugees, transnationalism offers one theoretical perspective to tackle the conflict between home and displacement. The seminal works of scholars such as Massey, 1994; Massey et al, 1994; Portes, 1995; Smith and Guarnizo 1998 among others, signified the emergence of the theory of transnationalism. This approach rejects the idea that people are innately connected and bound within a nation-state, instead, scholars focused on the cross-border ties that migrants create. Many studies have since demonstrated the meaningful effects of such connections on politics, economies, and societies in both countries as well as on migrants themselves (Nowicka, 2020). The redirected focus in migration studies toward transnational connections has helped to illuminate aspects of the lives of migrants that remained unexplored when migration was seen through the conventional lens of here vs here, this includes the experience and meaning of home. From this field of study, there has been a growing contribution that examines the power dynamics and intersectionality between gender and migration (Passar and Mahler, 2010; Erel and Lutz, 2012; Salih, 2013; Yeoh and Ramdas, 2014). This is a rapidly expanding field that this research will contribute to by exploring the gendered experience of home in a forced migration context utilising transnationalist ideas about cross boarder connections.

The terminology used in this research needs to be clarified. Refugee, displaced person(s) and, forced migrant will be used interchangeably throughout this dissertation. These terms will include anyone who has been forcibly moved from their country of origin, because of fear of persecution or

violations of their human rights – in line with the UNHCR (United Nations High Commission for Refugees, 1948) definitions. However, these terms will not be limited to legal definitions or be based on visa status in the UK. The terms will include those who are considered asylum seekers, who are awaiting decisions on their asylum application, or who are appealing a ruling on their application. Additionally, the terms will also refer to people who have been awarded refugee status in the UK under resettlement schemes and family reunion schemes as well as others who have different pathways to sanctuary due to personal circumstances – this reflects the complex nature of forced migration and departs for arbitrary legal and political conventions (Taylor, 2015).

This research will contribute to the expanding body of knowledge on home, forced migration, and gender. However, this research has certain limitations which should be identified. Firstly, the research's ethnographic and exploratory approach means that the sample size is small and for practical and epistemological reasons, the research was conducted over a relatively short period. As a result, the study focuses on gaining in-depth qualitative data that represents the unique experience of the participants. Secondly, the participants who took part in the study were all supported by a Bournemouth-based charity. Most of the participants had refugee status, and some had entered the country on resettlement or family reunification schemes. Thus, the findings are associated with a specific category of refugees and the discussion reflects their unique experiences. Although this means the findings are not generalisable, the study can shed light on experiences that may resonate with the experiences of other refugee women who are part of resettlement programmes or not. It can also contribute to the knowledge of the experience of refugee women who are resettled in non-traditional dispersal areas such as Bournemouth, as currently, the majority of literature on this topic focuses on traditional dispersal areas such as London or some Northern cities. The discussion, therefore, provides some insight that can illuminate the experience of other refugee women including:

a. The way refugee women remake home
b. How resettled refugees, who are provided although limited opportunities to make home
c. It provides more insight into these processes of making home

Additionally, the research looks specifically at how gender and some other intersecting identities can complicate our understanding of home. It engages critically with some western feminist ideas about the home and demonstrates that each women's experience if different based on their different identities and trajectories. This contribution adds to the discussion on gender, migration, intersectionality, and of course the experience of home. It does leave a space for more specific research on intersectionality and the experience of home as this was explored purely when it arose from the data analysis.

The aim of this research is to explore the understanding of home for refugee women resettling in the Bournemouth area.

The research was informed by the following questions:

- What is the meaning of home for refugee women resettling in the Bournemouth area?
- How do refugee women experience home in relation to time?
- How do refugee women experience home in relation to place?
- What role does the social and affective relations play in understanding refugee woman's experience of home?

Guided by these questions, this thesis is structured as follows. Chapter one introduces the background of theoretical debates and complexities around home.

Chapter two explores the current literature and debates in three sections. Section 2.1 investigates how home has been defined across different disciplines and theories; 2.2 explores the complexities of home, looking at the conflict between how home and displacement are defined. It explores how the theoretical idea of transnationalism offers a way to deconstruct the common discourses around home. Section 2.3 follows the progression of gender in migration studies more broadly, highlighting the need to 'engender transnationalism'. It then narrows its focus and discusses how refugee women are defined and, conceptualised in forced migration studies and the issues this causes. This discussion highlights the gap in the knowledge that this research has contributed to by drawing on transnationalism theory, 'engendering' frameworks and engaging critically with largely western feminist debates around women's experience of home. Each of these threads has been explored separately but, to my knowledge, has not been brought together.

Chapter 3 sets up the framework which guided the study's methodological choices. It explains why the study engaged with visual methodologies, interviews, and informal group conversations to generate meaningful insights into the mundane, sensory, and affective registers through which refugee women (re)create the meaning of home in contexts of displacement and resettlement.

Chapter 4 illuminates the research findings and discusses them in relation to three core themes that have been identified through thematic data analysis. The temporal relations of home, spatial relations of home, and social/emotional relations of home that can simultaneously construct and

complicate our experience of home in relation to gender. These discussions demonstrate how the home is absorbed through the body as we interact with it on an embodied and sensory basis. The discussion ultimately suggests a relational framework for understanding home. This framework allows us to depart from the conflict between home and displacement and understand how home is experienced in displacement.

Chapter 5 synthesises these different strands of analysis to empirically challenge the notion of home as static and synonymous with a place of origin. It offers an alternative relational approach to home which calls into question common categorisations of refugees as ‘lost’ or out of place. Thus, it provides a springboard for further research into how we could renegotiate discourses about the qualities of refugees using a mobile understanding of home to do so.

The names and some details have been changed to protect the identity of the women who took part in the study. Participants were asked to choose their own pseudonyms. Those who didn’t pick their own names, had them picked for them. Each name was chosen to reflect the character of the women who took part. I thought it was important to humanise these wonderful women by giving the name and meaning of each woman who took part.

Rita – Pearl
Zara – Top or best of everything
Aziza – Powerful
Esther – Star
Farzin – A woman Queen
Daria – Blessing
Mehrvash – like the sun

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 How can home be defined: an interdisciplinary approach to a slippery concept

The following section will discuss the variety of definitions of home. It will take an interdisciplinary approach, drawing on definitions from Anthropology, Geography, and Psychology, among others. This approach has been taken to compile a comprehensive understanding of the concept of home. This is necessary to explore the existing understanding of home and the limitations of current definitions of home.

'Home' evokes many layers of meanings, symbolism, and emotions (Llyod and Vasta, 2017). The significance of home for an individual's understanding of self, identity (Korac 2009; Binaisa 2013; Den Boer 2015 *In;* Perez Murcia, 2021), and social relations (Brun and Fabos, 2015; Taylor, 2015) has been prominent in research. Fabos and Brun (2015) offer a framework to explore home both as an idea and a practice. They distinguish three core elements: "home" as the day-to-day practices of homemaking; "home" as representing values, traditions, memories, and feelings of home; and "HOME" referring to broader political and historical contexts in which the home is situated. Dona (2015) similarly introduces the idea of the constellation of HOME-Home-home and homemaking practices. These frameworks identify some of the elements that make up a home.

The most frequent understanding associated with home is "HOME," referring to the "broader political and historical context in which home is understood and experienced, and to the homeland, as defined by the national borders of nation-states" (Dona, 2015: 69). The importance of this conceptualisation of home is demonstrated when we meet people and ask, 'where are you from?' This question is used to geographically locate strangers in the world. It also provides a means of identifying people with a particular country. This is an external means of categorisation and self-identification (Taylor, 2009: 76). Those who migrate HOME can act as a “cognitive anchor and reference for identity and self-understanding” (Boccagni, 2021: 4).

Political leaders often utilise the idea that HOME is connected to a place of origin to maintain wider nationalistic discourses (Beeckman, 2022). These discourses perceive the nation-state as containing a "culturally homogenous group of people" (Turton, 2002: 25) who have an innate bond with each other and that state. This narrative infers that those who migrate across national borders somehow defy the “national order of things” (Malkki, 1995: 516). Although this assumption is dangerous,

rendering migrants out of place, international refugee organisations, most notably UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), continue to view home "primarily in spatial terms" (Dona, 2015: 69) and view the home as synonymous with homeland. Nostalgia is used as a visible example of this bond between a person and a place. It implies that it is natural to belong to a place and unnatural to transcend the state's borders. Nostalgia is also often overstated as the driving force of migrants' wish to return home (Hage, 1997; Black, 2002; Wiles, 2008; Fathi, 2021).

Scholars, particularly those who study transnational migration, are critical of the assumption of the connection between a person and a nation of origin. Wimmer and Glick Schiller (2002) suggest that this assumption is part of 'methodological nationalism', the tendency to assume that "the nation-state is the natural, social and political form of the modern world" (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2002: 301), which is prevalent within the social science studies. Others call for a rejection of the assumption of the naturalism of nation-states. Instead, they recognise that migration has been a part of human life for centuries (Stonebridge, 2020) and aim to explore lives that exist across national boundaries.

Home can also reference sites of practises "where comfort, familiarity, and intimate sociality occur" (Botticello, 2007: 18). This includes community spaces, neighbourhoods (see Llyod and Vasta 2017; Capo, 2015), buildings, or dwellings. This site is commonly referred to as a family home or 'household' (Malinowski, 1913; Moore, 2000; Lewin, 2001; Mallet, 2004). The household is a building or physical structure that provides shelter and creates boundaries between a private space and the public domain (Despres, 1991; Mallet, 2004; Berg, 2011; Gureyeva-Aliyeva and Huseynov, 2011; Boccagni, 2017). Founding one's home, according to Walters (2004), means drawing physical and symbolic thresholds that set inside and outside spaces apart and determine insiders and outsiders. This definition of home is also problematic. It links to western capitalist ideals of the nuclear family confined within a house. This idea is used to conflate the importance of home ownership (Mallet, 2004) as a way to create roots (Somerville, 1997; Clarke, 2003). Blunt and Dowling (2006) observe that we often speak of 'homeownership' rather than 'house-ownership,', implying that ownership of a space denotes a sense of home (Logan and Murie, 2016).

The physical house can symbolise a place of security, familiarity, and control (Boccagni, 2017). A "safe haven" (Brun and Fabos, 2015: 7; Moskal, 2015:145) and from some feminist perspectives a place of fear and exploitation (De Beauvoir, 1949; Friedan, 1983; Oakley, 1974; Irigaray, 1993). The emphasis of the house as home has been argued as reductive, as it represents home as one-

dimensional (Douglas 1991; Rapport and Dawson 1998) and static and ignores the significance of other elements that make up home, such as the symbolic, affective, psychosocial, and material aspects.

The material home is made up of the physical, tangible, and visible elements of a space (Buitelaar and Stock, 2010; Duruz, 2010). This element of the home has been widely explored in Anthropological literature (Miller, 2010; Tilley et al., 2013; Hicks and Beaudry, 2018) and Archaeology. The material home can include material culture, objects, and furniture. The material home is connected to the idea of 'homemaking' - embodied practises of interacting with a physical space (Dona, 2015: 69). These include practises, habits, and activities that make a space feel like home. Miller (1998; 2001; 2010) argues that 'houses' become 'homes' through interactions with the space and the material culture within them. He documents how residents, in his study, decorated and renovated their council flats in ways that reflected their class position and inflected it with a personal sense of identity and belonging (Miller, 1998). Similarly, Salih (2002) demonstrated how migrant women "articulate and give meaning to the spaces they inhabit through objects" (Salih, 2002: 56) brought back and forth between two countries. By adorning houses with objects, the physical boundaries of a house becomes home as it contains symbolic objects which create a sense of familiarity and comfort. Van Lennep (1987) argues that this is why a hotel room or coffee shop does not feel like home, despite having features of a home - warmth, safety, and comfort - because it is void of identifiable personal elements. These personal elements can include photos, objects, and other materials placed purposefully within a space for a particular reason. Edward Casey (1993) carries this insight further in his idea of the body forming "habit memories" (Casey, 1993: 117) as part of the process of coming to dwell in a place. His concept is developed from Heidegger's notion of dwelling, a state of peace and contentment that comes about through building or creating. This state is achieved by interacting with a space using the body.

Home is also made up of the intangible elements of a space. These can include sounds, light, or the sensory and affective dimensions of home. The home is absorbed through the senses (Taylor, 2015: 88), as the body resides in the space of home. The sensory dimension of home is an emerging component and has not been as extensively explored as the other features discussed in this review. However, paying attention to the sensory and affective elements of home, it is crucial to understand the embodied experience of home.

Beyond the material dimensions of the home, the home is a space where individuals feel comfortable to express themselves, maintain meaningful relationships and form their personal identity away from judgement (Blunt and Dowling, 2006; Easthope, 2004). Saunders and Williams (1988) claim, "home is a 'socio-spatial system' that represents the fusion of the physical unit or house and the social unit or household" (p. 68). People provide the characters of home and social networks, which provide comfort and companionship for an individual. People may also provide networks that “support access to social resources” (Taylor, 2009: 215) like marriage partners or inheritance. These networks create and sustain codes of behaviour that govern how people live and provide a sense of reassurance as people understand how they are to conduct themselves in social situations. People thus provide the rhythms of home, which support and constrain how people live.

Home does not exist in a vacuum. Relations within the home often mimic the structures of society in which the house is situated and can reproduce the “intersections between gender, race, ethnicity, and sexuality” (Fathi, 2021: 980). These structures may hinder one's life opportunities, not because of exclusively internal dynamics but due to structural constraints (Dossa and Golubovic, 2019: 172). To exemplify this point, the discussion will turn to home as a concept of contestation.

2.1.1 Contested Notions of Home – A Debate within Feminism

According to many definitions, home is a place of safety, security, and stability. However, this has been critically questioned by some feminists for being overly simplistic and androcentric. They claim that viewing home through this idealised lens ignores women's unique experience of the home. As stated above, home can reflect external power relations and constrict opportunities based on socially constructed categories, such as gender, race, and class. The home has been of particular significance for some western feminist writers, which will be explored briefly in the following paragraphs.

Women have been linked with the home through ideas of reproductivity and domesticity (Oakley, 1974; Eisenstein, 1984). The image of a woman sitting at home, cleaning, cooking, and waiting on her husband defines one of the Western culture's basic ideas of womanhood and, indeed, home (Young 2005). Almost without exception, second-wave feminist writers (of the 1970s and 1980s) "identify home as a site of oppression, tyranny and patriarchal domination of women" (Mallet, 2004:

75). They call for the rejection of the notion of home as an oppressive institution. Black intersectional and decolonial feminists argue against the ethnocentrism of these claims. This criticism is explored in a subsequent paragraph.

Feminist scholars, including Simone de Beauvoir (1949) and Irigaray (1993), have written extensively on women's oppression due to the so-called 'home' and domesticity associated with the feminine role in society. In a timeless tone, Irigaray writes about the association of house and home for the male 'longing' for a fixed identity. She argues that men project onto women the nostalgia and longing for wholeness that the original mother gave. In order to fix and keep hold of his identity, man makes a house and puts things in it, and "confines there his women" (Young, 2005: 125) who reflect his identity to him. Men, unlike women, can cultivate their dwelling and thus their subjective self through building a place in the world. Women become part of that dwelling either as a foundation or a material to build with (Irigaray, 1992; developed from Heidegger's notion of dwelling 1971). Irigaray's idea proposes that societies with a patriarchal gender system allows man a subjectivity that depends on women's objectification. Men have a home at the expense of woman's homelessness as she serves as the foundation on which he builds. This structure of society denies women the ability and opportunity to develop a 'self' of her own.

Similarly, Simone de Beauvoir, in her work *The Second Sex* (1949), describes women's existence as being deprived of active subjectivity. She argues that their activities concentrated on serving and supporting men in the home. de Beauvoir materialises her account by reflecting on the sexual division of labour in which women are assigned the domestic domain as their workspace to undertake unpaid domestic labour to free men up to participate in the paid public sphere. She analyses women's domestic labour, describing how women's domestic work is confined to a life of maintenance to support the transcending individual projects of men and children. This is a burden of responsibility that women are unable to avoid. "Even when the domestic role is experienced as burdensome a mesh of internalised social constraints makes it almost impossible to relinquish the identification with the home is always too great" (Darke, 1994: 21). Thus, both Irigaray and de Beauvoir advocate for a rejection of home to separate women from the oppressive domestic tasks in which she is object to support her husbands and children's needs. In doing so, both believe that women would be free to determine themselves as subjective in their own right and regain autonomy.

More recent scholars have noted that this account of home ignores the importance of home for some women and their development of forming and understanding their identity. Young (2005) suggests that to understand how women engage with the home, we must rethink the difference between homemaking and housework. Housework is the maintenance of a house ordinarily through cleaning, tidying, and other domestic tasks that generally fall to a woman (Oakley, 1974). Homemaking, by contrast, is the active participation within the domestic space that makes a house into a home. Young (2005) uses the concept of preserving to argue that women's work within the home is an act of preserving objects and their symbolic meaning. Homemaking consists of preserving things and their meanings as anchors to shifting personal (Kılıçkıran, 2013) and group identities. In this way, the tasks women engage in in the home are not as oppressive 'a priori' but are asserting an identity, maintaining memories and cultural histories that are imbued in power relations and asymmetries but are not determined by them. Home carries a core positive meaning for women as the material anchor for a sense of agency and a shifting fluid identity. Therefore, the layout, objects, and space of one's home become synonymous with one's identity and a reflection of the value and meaning of home.

However, scholars such as Biddy Martin (1986) Chandra Mohanty (1986), Teresa de Lauretis (1990), and Bonnie Honig (1994) wish to reject the idea of home as a totalising western-centric idea. Their analysis reveals that this feeling of having a home as a bounded identity is a matter of privilege. Much like Irigaray's (1993) understanding of the privilege of the home being held by men, the previously mentioned scholars consider the privilege from a class and race perspective. Martin and Mohanty (1986) discuss their reading Minnie Bruce Pratt's reflection on growing up as a privileged white woman in the South of America and reveal how the sense of security and comfort that the writer experienced as a child was reliant on the exclusion of black and lower-class whites. Although invisible, these people produced and maintained the comforts of home so that it was a place of safety and peace. A similar story is found when delving into the lives of black women in America and across the west whom white mistresses employed to keep house and look after the children (Jone-Rogers, 2019). Most recently, Bonnie Honig (1994), criticises the de-politicising of the house. She perceives it as a luxury afforded to the privileged woman and argues that questioning the home is needed to challenge the structures of society. She thus advocates for the home's rejection in seeking political causes for equality.

Despite these theoretical debates about women and the home, little literature has explored women's experiences and perceptions of home with the exception of Drake, 1994 and Leith, 2006.

However, recent research has been conducted into women and their experience of homelessness (Malos and Hague 1997; Baptista, 2010; Mayock and Bretherton, 2016; Savage, 2016; Phipps et al, 2019). Tomas and Dittmar's (1995) research found that homeless women struggled to differentiate between the 'house' and 'home'. Home for the homeless women represented a place of independence. This experience contrasted with women with secure homes, where the home had connotations of safe, emotional attachment, belonging, and warmth. A house for women in secure housing was a building or dwelling, but for homeless women represented dependence and was often thought of as a shared space or owned by someone else. This research exemplifies the variable meanings for women depending on their circumstances – 'home' is not as simplistic as a place of objectification as feminist theory suggests.

The contribution of Young (2005) and feminists explore the intersectional experience of home is essential in that they demonstrate that there is a need to question the natural link between women and home beyond binary oppositions like stasis/movement, tradition/modernity, stability/change, and private/public. Although feminist scholars are right to argue that patriarchal values are primarily displayed in the domestic milieu and restrict women's engagement with the larger society by limiting their movement outside this sphere, the home cannot be reduced to a site of oppression and domination or to a place that women need to leave behind (de Beauvoir, 1949; Oakley, 1974). The position of women in the home can only be understood by scrutinising "the practices through which women draw the boundaries of home and what those boundaries mean to them in specific social and cultural conditions" (Kılıçkıran, 2013: 21).

Home is not just contested by some feminists. Recent literature on migration, particularly in transnational theory, has contested the static image of home. Scholars in this field suggest a temporality about the home that represents the fusion of past, present, and future/ ideal homes. Boccagni's (2017) understanding of home as a process rather than a static space in time has been useful for understanding home in a migration context. According to Boccagni (2017), home is experienced in a similar way to the life cycle. The home contains memories, past experiences, and hope/ ideal notions of a future home. Taylor (2015) also argues that the home can be cyclical and linked to people's life patterns rather than being a linear timeline that moves from past to present as traditionally thought. Hammond (1999) points out, in her study of returnees to Eritrea, that there were different points in an individual's life cycle at which different places can become or defined as being 'home'. The temporal nature of home exemplifies that the home should be seen as a process of experiences, ideals, and practises. As Boccagni (2017) puts it, "home is a matter of search, hence

as an open-ended and possibly unaccomplished process, rather than as a fixed and predetermined state of things” (2017: xxv). Viewing home as a process rather than static in space and time means that home might be sought, found, and lost during an individual's life (Moore, 2000)—especially in a time of crisis, whether personal (Long and Oxfeld, 2004) or historical (like diaspora studies have shown; Brah 1996, see Bonfanti Chen and Massa 2022)

This extensive literature review on defining home highlights the complexities of home. The definition of the home contains different elements; the physical space; the emotional; relational, and culturally symbolic notions of the concept. It is a slippery concept to define because it is subjective and is experienced uniquely by individuals, which is hard to capture in a single definition. As Brah suggests, we need to investigate home and the construction of nationalistic discourses and “home as a site of everyday experiences" (1996: 3-4) in order to grasp what home means.

Some of the elements of the home described in the list above can be brought together in an understanding of home as a broad fusion between the spatial, social, psychological, and temporal domains (Sirriyeh, 2010). It is important to be aware of "the material worlds, histories, and power relations in which [home] is embedded" (Berg, 2011: 158). The following section will develop this idea further, focusing on the tension between home and displacement.

2.2 Home vs Displacement

The UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) continues to view home "primarily in spatial terms" (Dona, 2015: 69) and view the home as interchangeable with homeland. This portrayal of home defines it as static in space and time which can be problematic when discussing home in a forced migration context.

Displacement has had various definitions ascribed to it by academia but is thought to represent a time of limbo, uncertainty, and instability (Dona, 2015) or to signify the loss of home (Feldman, 2006). Salman Rushdie (1996) writes that we can only know what a home means to us when exiled from it because it evokes feelings of nostalgia and a realisation that it is no longer there.

This discussion starts with the dictionary definition to give a sense of the public understanding of displacement. The dictionary defines displacement as "the act of forcing somebody/ thing away from their home position" (Oxford English Dictionary, 2019). If displacement signifies a loss of home, those who experience displacement must be homeless (Kabachnik, et al. 2010: 317; Dam and Eyles, 2012; Stonebridge, 2020). This conceptual understanding exemplifies the uncertainty among politicians, policy makers, and some scholars to accept that homes can exist in a displacement context (Beeckman 2022: 14). Focusing on the contrary nature of home and displacement has left a gap in our understanding of "emplacement" (Sampson and Gillford, 2010: 116) and of the connections to place in settlement settings that allow forced migrants and refugees to create a sense of home. Thus, to understand the experience of home in displacement, we need to move away from reactionary perspectives on home and displacement as they risk romanticising the homeplace (especially as rooted and immobile) and demonising displacement.

Juxtaposing displacement and home has implications for the conceptualisation of refugees. Refugees become 'homeless' (Kabachnik, et al. 2010: 317; Dam and Eyles, 2012) in the sense that they are caught between the dichotomy of 'here' of the settled country and 'there' of the past country (Dossa and Golubovic, 2019). To unpack this further, we need to understand how refugees are conceptualised and categorised by exploring the so-called "refugee condition" (Stonebridge, 2020: 16).

The refugee condition refers to the categorisation of refugees in public and political discourses and to how this categorisation has been constructed. Fewer groups can claim to be quite so thoroughly "made' by modern geopolitical history than refugees" (Cox, 2020: 15). People have always moved across the globe as a result of war, disaster, poverty, economic factors or persecution. However, the refugee, as she is imaged is a direct consequence of European colonial, post-colonial nation-state formations (Mayblin, 2017; Cox, 2020). In political discourse, refugees are portrayed as 'uprooted' or homeless based on the assumption that individuals are born into fixed nationalities, identities, and cultures to which they belong; this also underpins how we predominantly define home. "Only a world of sovereign states that had categories of people called "citizens" and were intent on regulating population flows could produce a legal category of "refugees"', the historian Michael Barnett writes in his study of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) (Barnett 2001: 251).

From this construction for refugees, 'refugeeness' is conceived as traumatic, leading to an identity crisis and a general sense of homelessness (Dam and Eyles, 2012), making refugees into 'zombies' who fall outside the clear national borders and categories (Hoellerer, 2017: 136). Refugees are seen as out-of-place people and thus fundamentally flawed human beings who are not "social agents and historical subjects" but "passive victims" (Turton, 2005: 278) who need to be managed and controlled. The management methods associated with refugees are focused on one primary objective, "to stop people entering the nation-state" (Bloch and Dona, 2019: 6). This further emphasises the importance nation-states place on containing bodies within or outside a nation, depending on their legal status. Malkki (2002) argues that by portraying national identity as a natural quality (by using the metaphor of rooting), refugees are denied their agency. Refugees' uprootedness reflects on wider political and public discourses which ascribe fixed nationalities. Migration policies and these discourses make refugees a social, political, and moral problem that has to be dealt with through interventions (Malkki, 2002). Some of the rationales for reviewing refugees as such is based on how home is viewed, as static and fixed juxtaposed to displacement as a loss of home, liminality, and mobility. This conflict emphasises the importance of the focus and findings of this study.

The conflict between home and displacement has not only influenced how refugees are viewed but also how their experience of home is conceptualised. Refugees' experience of home is characterised by loss, not just of a place or territory but of a home "entrenched within a social milieu and a world of relationships" (Dossa and Golubovic, 2019: 171). Cernea (1996) suggests that refugees face a 'poverty' of social relations and connections due to their displacement (Cernea, 1996: 22). Scholars such as Kabachnik et al. (2010) emulate the feelings of loss and homelessness felt by their participants in their research. They identify a strong connection with what is known as the 'past' home (country of origin). Walicki (2011) and Zeender (2011) also presume that displaced people want to return to their former countries following conflict and displacement. But returning to said county is often not possible, and the belief in return is referred to as “the myth of return” (Zetter,1998: 309). As a result, there is a temporalisation of the home. Refugees "long for the home they lost, while past experiences of home influence the way home is envisaged in the future" (Brun and Fabos, 2015:7). This temporalisation was a common theme in Kabachnik et al. (2010) study on internally displaced people (IDPs) in the Balkans. They found that "the home of the past and the future usurps the focus on the home of the present" (Kabachnik, et al. 2010: 317), resulting in IDPs feeling 'homeless’. This feeling was not because they didn’t have accommodation but because they did not see their home as being in the present. They focused on the return to their true home in the

future to define their home. Policymakers and politicians have used the assumption of return to emphasise refugees' 'moral right' to return to their homeland (Allan, 2014). The moral right has justified policies that prioritise resettling displaced people in countries they have left (Boccagni, 2021), which is arguably immoral or unsafe (Mayblin, 2017).

The conflict between home and displacement needs to be addressed to prevent refugees from being conceptualised as out of place. The rise of the transnational optic has brought new perspectives on migration, presenting an alternative way to view home and displacement. Although transnationalism has been explored in depth here, translocalism might offer an alternative school of thought for a new analysis on home.

Transnationalism - used in the broadest sense to mean beyond borders - can offer a lens to redefine home. Transnationalism theory rejects the idea that "homogenous groups of people" (Turton, 2002: 25) are contained within nation-states. Instead, they advocate a move away from the dominance of territorialised and national forms of belonging towards cross-border, multi-sited and extra-national affiliations (Vertovec, 2007). Rejecting the natural connections between a person and a place means that home is no longer defined as a singular static place but can reflect the dynamic processes which constitute 'homemaking' (Boccagni, 2017). Therefore, displacement is not defined as a loss of home but reflects the involuntary movement refugees experience. This theory has provided a foundation to suggest that belonging is not confined to geographical sites and that "home can be decoupled from a territory and reconceptualized in terms of movement" (Dossa and Golubovic, 2019: 177). As Gilroy, (1993) and Magalhae, (2021) postulate, changing the narrative of home having 'roots' to 'routes' provides an insight into the process of 'uprooting' and 're-grounding' (Ahmed, et al. 2003 *In* Perze Muric, 2018: 1516) during mobility.

Boccagni (2021) identifies the practical and performable dimension of home as an "emplaced social experience" (Boccagni, 2021: 4). This shifts the understanding of home from a static place to a practise/ process of 'homemaking'. Homemaking encapsulates the ways of attaching a sense of home to a particular space, place, or feeling (Hammond, 2004: 79). Home becomes less about a particular place and more about a process which individuals, including refugees, can interact with. Homemaking is practised by almost everybody through day-to-day activities (Beeckman, 2022) yet becomes far more significant in the context of displacement where individuals proactively remake home. Dossa and Golubovic (2019) suggest using a perspective on homemaking as a form of labour, implying that home is a process, "not simply stepped into ready-made" (Dossa and Golubovic, 2019:

173). This perspective emphasises an individual's autonomy in the situation of displacement to remake and reimagine home in a given context. Thus, although home might once have been considered fixed, unchanging, and stable in terms of geography, governance, and institutions, such a linear focus fails to acknowledge the changing personal, historical, social, and political context through which home is continually defined (Gardner, and Osella, 2004).

The static view also fails to recognise how people's relations to a particular place continually change and are made and remade in space and time (Vasey, 2011: 26). Home, therefore, has the potential to be reshaped and reconstituted through processes of adjustment, renegotiation, transformation, and redefinition (Gedalof, 2003 *in;* Belford and Lahiri- Roy, 2019). A broader and more mobile concept of home is necessary to understand how the home can be taken along as individuals move through space and time. By redefining home, home can be transformed, reinvented, and developed in relation to the context and circumstance in which people find themselves. In this sense, home becomes an experience of belonging not just to a particular place or people but between social relations (Probyn, 1996). Consequently, displacement becomes less about the loss of home and more about the strong sense of connection to places left behind but also about refugees' ability to "foster new relations of closeness and solidarity in displacement" (Salih, 2017: 744).

Rethinking the narrative of home does, however, bring into question the evident connection people feel with a past home. This connection cannot be ignored or dismissed as mere nostalgia (Dossa and Golubovic, 2019) as it would overlook the significant impact on the process of homemaking it performs (Sugiman, 2004; Omata, 2013). Ruba Salhi's (2017) work with Palestinian women highlights how memories bring to light a long-term invisible work of compassion, connection, and solidarity among exiled women. It also highlights the constant endeavour to remake home in displacement (Salhi, 2017: 757). Similarly, in her work on displaced Palestinians, Feldman (2006) argues that repeated narrations ("refrains") of home function to create a sense of security and community in situations of displacement, thereby approximating the comforting function of homeland. These findings highlight that displacement is more complex than moving from 'there' to 'here'. Individuals may maintain a connection with the past but not because they expect or sometimes want to return. Memories of different places can come together in “the practices of homemaking at the place of a present dwelling” (Brun and Fabos, 2001: 8). Ahmed (1999) argues that we do not simply reflect on our past, homes, on networks of belonging, but we produce the very object of our memories. This perspective emphasises the importance of utilising the past to serve the present. Maintaining ties and creating new memories between and bound national boundaries allows those experiencing

forced displacement to actively remodel their homes based on familiarity and memories Feldman (2006) discovered that when reflecting on where home is, research participants ascribe value to experiences of home in both the place left behind and the places they inhabited following displacement. While some might experience a perceived loss of a sense of home and only see it 'there' or 'nowhere,' others may carry home within themselves (Povrzanović Frykman, 2002) and experience it either as a “mobile symbolic habitat” (Motasim and Heynen 2011: 44) or as a 'journey' (Mallett 2004).

As scholars in the field of transnationalism have suggested, the 'here' 'there' dichotomy becomes a barrier to understanding the experience of migration (Levitt, 2004). Others underline how the relationship between displaced people and the place is positioned somewhere in-between rather than 'there' or 'here’ (Beeckman, 2022). This relationship reflects economic, political, and cultural processes extending beyond nation-states' boundaries. Furthermore, the connections held with a place of origin are not a barrier to creating and maintaining meaningful lives and homes away from the place of origin (Schiller, et al., 1995). This theory identifies the solid connection for places left behind, and it acknowledges the possibilities of rebuilding connection to place within the context of resettlement (Vasey, 2011: 27). Refugees, in particular, develop complex spatial and emotional attachments with their present place while concurrently negotiating social, economic, and emotional relationships with places from which they are physically absent (Brun, 2001).

It is important not to glamorise the experience of displacement and recognise that not all refugees will experience a seamless connection between their place of origin and destination. Salih (2002) makes us aware of the fragmentations people living transnationally may feel. This separation is because "transnational relations do not always seem to forge a sense of belonging simultaneously to two countries" (Salih, 2002: 52). Paradoxically, living between two countries may cause forced migrants to feel they belong to 'neither place.'

This discussion clearly shows that the conflict between home and displacement needs to be addressed. We can draw from transnationalist theories related to making home to tackle this juxtaposition. These theories suggest that the home must be decoupled from a territory and the nation-state (Beeckman, 2022). Instead, the home should be reframed as a home-making process (Boccagni, 2017). This process reflects the human agency that can be exerted in situations of displacement. Reframing home in terms of mobility can be made and remade on the move (Zetter, 1999; Black, 2002; Hammond, 2004; Korac, 2009; Taylor, 2015).

2.3 Gender and Forced Migration

Gender is one of the fundamental social relations anchoring and shaping immigration patterns. Likewise, migration is one of the most powerful forces disrupting and realigning everyday life (Pessar, 2003). As such the field of migration has developed in recent decades to reflect the importance of gender in the experience of migration. The first section of this discussion follows the development of gender in migration studies to set out how gender has been conceptualised within the field generally and to establish how gender and transnationalism have been brought together. The discussion will then turn to the core problems that arise in the field of forced migration in relation to gender and some intersections including religion. It will propose that bringing together theories of engendering transnationalism and forced migration provides a unique framework to explore the experience of home for refugee women.

2.3.1 Migration and Gender: from invisible women to *en*gendering transnationalism

Before the 1960's, literature on women within the field of migration and migration studies was extremely limited. However, the invisibility of women in migration scholarship did not correspond to the reality of international migration. "Women migrate across international boundaries at approximately the same rate as men" (DeLaet, 1999: 13 *in: P*asser and Mahler, 2003) despite research having been biased in favour of men. The omission of women from research was largely due to women being perceived as 'passive' migrants. It was presumed that their migration was a result of them following their husbands or male counterparts or being victims of trafficking rather than protagonists of their own movement (Magalhães, 2021). Therefore, the assumption that international migrants are young, economically motivated males has overshadowed the reality of migrant streams (Pedraza, 1991). As a result, there was little research conducted into the motivation of women's movements or how it was experienced. The consequence of this assumption was for an extended period little was known about the nature of women's movement around the globe.

During the '70s-'80s there was a change in migration studies. This change reflected an awareness that women and the interplay between sex, gender, and power had been 'missed' from migration studies. Much of this phase of research sought to address the virtual absence of women from research designs and androcentric biased research (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2000: 113). However, despite the endeavour to bring women into focus the approach taken has been retrospectively called the 'add and stir' method (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2000; Indra 1999; Kofman et al. 2000). This method involved women being added as a variable and measured and/or compared against male

migrants' statistics with regards to education and labour market participation among others. Due to this renewed emphasis on women, Donna Gabaccia observed that “the numbers of volumes exploring immigrant women separately from men now exceeds the volumes that successfully integrate women into general accounts” (Gabaccia, 1992, p. xv). This approach was therefore limited in its design and philosophy as it implies that only women’s experiences of migration are gendered.

Between the 1980’s-90’s another development occurred. This development reflected “the growth in feminist-oriented scholarship” (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2003: 4) which challenges the universal binaries of ‘men’ and ‘women’ and their ascribed roles and identities. It also reflected an increase in migration research which, because of the increased awareness about the implications of intersection identities, highlighted the multiple differing experiences of individuals in relation to their migration. The research of this particular time period focused heavily on gendering migration patterns and understanding how migration reconfigures new systems of gendered inequality for both men and women. The attention on gender moved away from focusing on women’s gendered experience of migration to an interactional investigation focusing on the gendered experience of migration.

The 2000’s marked an advance to what Hondagneu-Sotelo (2003) called “gender as a constitutive element of migration” (2003:9). This examined how gender permeates a variety of practices, identities, and institutions implicit in migration. This approach aimed to integrate and understand the role that gender played in experiences of migration, including patterns of labour, globalisation, religious practises and values, citizenship and sexuality. It also considered how these elements were integrated in a way that revealed how gender is incorporated into a myriad of daily operations and institutional, political, and economic structures. This stage of gender and migration research has produced numerous and complex understandings of how gendered institutions and gender relations are reconstituted and “transformed following migration through interactions of micro- and macro-level processes” (Nawyn, 2010: 750).

Although, “transnationalism has become one of the fundamental theoretical ways of understanding contemporary migration practises across the multi-disciplinary field of migration studies” (Vertovec, 2010: 3), the original literature on transnationalism and transnational social field omitted gender from their analysis and research design. Transnational relations were often viewed in a gender-neutral way failing to acknowledge the power dynamics and intersectionality of migration and gender. This has since been addressed with a rise in studies that aim to ‘engender transnationalism” – to explore how gender, hierarchies and inequalities associated with it are constructed and reconstructed in transnational social spaces and to analyse similarities and differences in how men and women participate in said fields (Brettell, 2016). To capture the complexity of engendering

transnationalism Pessar and Mahler (2001) outline a framework to navigate gender and transnationalism. Since this framework was proposed there has been a number of more contemporary works that focus on engendering various elements of migration including, Freeman (2016) who examines the so-called 'migration crisis' borders and security, and other who explore various related topics (Mills, 2005; Nolin, 2006; Erel and Lutz, 2012; Cohen and Man, 2015).

2.3.2 The very epitome of the human cost of conflict: concerns and critiques of gender in forced migration studies

Since this study focuses on forced migration, it is important to highlight how discussions around gender and forced migration are constructed and what implications these current narratives have on the study of refugee women.

The gender identity of a refugee is one of several critical variables affecting how forced migrants; construct and are exposed to danger; constitute and react to political and other threats; take decisions to flee; and engage with life in exile, including as recipients of humanitarian aid. Research on gender and forced migration has followed a similar trajectory as detailed above, seeking to address the gap in research on gendered experiences of forced migration. In 1989 Camus- Jacques argued that refugee women remained the forgotten majority in forced migration studies. Ten years later Doreen Indra published her edited volume of *Engendering Forced Migration* (1999). In her book, she addressed the pertinent questions regarding gender relations in forced migration. Since then, several papers have sought to critically examine the gender experience of forced migration (Nolin, 2006; Dossa, 2008; Aliefendioğlu & Behçetoğulları, 2019; Sanyal, 2022). Yet in forced migration literature most of the time women remain invisible (Harrell-Bond and Voutira, 2007 In: Ugolotti and Collision, 2022).

Although the different experiences of forced migration for men and women have been studied, there is a concern about the representation of forced migrant women within these analytical frames. Initially, feminists aimed to render women and girls visible as a social group affected by war and to document the female experience of conflict and forced migration (Pittaway and Bartolomei 1991). This included a focus on the female experience of sexual violence and conflict. Research in this field informed ground-breaking changes in international responses to sexual violence against women during conflict including the introduction of UNHCR (United Nations Refugee Agency) Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women in 1991. However, there is still a concern about the equality of

care and provisions that women and girls receive during and after conflict (Fiddian- Qasminyeh, 2014).

Although this was a big step in the right direction in terms of humanitarian aid and support for women, there is still a tendency for women to be read as passive victims of a world in flux (Ball, 2022: 4). While men on the move have been read as active, even threatening, or illegitimate agents, women's images are used to stress the 'human cost' of forced migration (Carpenter, 2005). This idea is often highlighted in or essentialised in public policy narratives (Doná, 2007). Under these conditions, women tend to feature in symbolic and ultimately reductive terms. Their own voices, cultural differentials, and individual narratives are omitted in the service of a coherently gendered appeal for institutional support that reinforces an image of subaltern female refugee's powerlessness and need. This leaves women who have faced forced displacement in a precarious position, depicted and responded to as apolitical and non-agentic victims, either as Madonna-like figures (Malkki 1992: 33, 1996: 389) or weakened, dependent, and vulnerable 'women and children' (Enloe 1991). Refugee women thus often represent the epitome of the docile object of moral compassion, the ultimate vulnerable refugee (Malkki, 1996; Nyers, 2006; Freedman, 2016). However, not all literature victimises women, there has been a call to reject the "infantilisation of women in refugee studies" (Manchanda, 2004), others focus on women's autonomy in situations of displacement yet as Ball (2022) makes it clear this is in a minority, not a majority.

Following the assumption of displaced women's vulnerability, their migration has often been theorised in terms of liberation from oppressive gender and patriarchal structures (Pedraza, 1991; Hoy, 2007). This is particularly true for Muslim women who are seen to be further oppressed by religion and culture (Abu-Lughod, 2002; Farooq Samie, 2018). Yet Abu-Lughod warns that this narrative has been used to sustain colonial and imperialist endeavours and that the salvation rhetoric is "deeply problematic" (Abu- Lughod, 2002: 788) implying that women from different cultures and religions are in need of saving from something and to something else. Instead, Anthias and Lazaridis (2000) invite us to explore men and women's liberation from an alternative lens. They argue that liberation can be achieved through migration, even the experience of forced migration could be seen as liberating, on the conditions that the individual who is migrating identifies the structures as oppressive and is seeking to liberate themselves through their mobility. It is not for others to determine an individual's circumstances but rather to accept that an individual sees their mobility as such.

This exploration of literature has highlighted the progression in migration studies toward recognising the importance gender plays in the experience of migration. The evolution of the field highlights a need to engage critically with assumptions based on gender and recognise how it influences and

shapes individuals' experience of (forced) migration. Further, it details the complexities and shortcomings of gender in forced migration and refugee studies. It specifically highlights the need to investigate the gendered experience of forced migration while being wary of victimising women who have experienced displacement, and how intersecting identities can also impact on an individual's experience. This awareness along with the offers from transnationalism, separating home from homeland, provides a unique space to investigate refugee women's experience of home.

2.4 Conclusion and contribution

The literature review presented above highlights the complexities around defining home in relation to displacement. It proposes that understanding home in terms of 'homeland' lays the foundations for the way we understand the 'refugee condition' (Stonebridge, 2020) as groundless or, as Arendt says, leaves refugees in a place called 'nowhere'. This conflict illustrates why there is uncertainty among politicians, policymakers, and some scholars to accept that homes can exist in the context of displacement (Beeckman 2022: 14). A transnational optic is a useful starting point to explore how home can exist across borders and provides a lens to explore the homemaking practises of refugees. The discussion on gender and forced migration highlights the importance of recognising the impact of gender on one's experience of forced migration and the need to be wary of victimising refugee women which sustains the essentialised narrative of their lives as the epitome of the human cost of conflict. Drawing on feminist and transnational ideas will provide a unique standpoint to explore refugee women's experience of home.

Chapter 3: Methods and Methodology

This paper draws on five months of qualitative sensory ethnographic research. It is supplemented with interviews using photo elicitation conducted between March 2022 and July 2022 in the weekly conversation groups, English classes, homework clubs, and other social events (e.g., home visits).

Across the research period, about 20 women attended the group, with each session containing between four and fifteen women —the groups were aimed at refugee women from various geographical, economic, and educational backgrounds. Participants had been settled in the UK for varying amounts of time from several months to several years. Most participants who attended these sessions had been granted asylum under resettlement or family unification schemes. Their status highlighted a unique opportunity to explore their specific experience and understanding of home.

Under these resettlement schemes, refugees receive support finding and funding accommodation, they are also entitled to claim benefits and are permitted to work in the UK. They also receive orientation support and have a point of contact for questions for up to three years. This support provides greater opportunities and possibilities to make home in the UK. Thus, their experiences and understanding of home are likely to differ from asylum seekers who have different legal statuses and permission to access resources (Mayblin, 2017), which give them different opportunities to make home. It's critical to recognise how immigration policy shapes how people negotiate and create/ understand home within the im(possibilities) of making home (Brun, 2015; Robertson et al, 2016).

The research focused on exploring the meaning of home for refugee women in the Bournemouth area. The location was specifically selected for this research as previous research on refugees' processes of resettlement, either by dispersal or resettlement programmes, has been focused on dispersal cities (major cities including London, Manchester etc). Bournemouth has high levels of refugees despite not being considered a dispersal city, I wanted to shed light on the experiences of women in a place that is 'off the beaten track'.

Many quantitative and qualitative approaches have explored home. However, given its complexity and subjectivity, a qualitative methodology was chosen as the most appropriate approach. As the research focused on the lived experience of home in displacement, phenomenology was identified

as a suitable methodological approach. The approach was underpinned by the belief that knowledge on the subject of home needs to be generated with and from the perspective of the women who have experienced displacement. As Linda Tuhiwai- Smith writes, "sharing knowledge requires a long-term commitment" (2012: 6); thus, the research took an ethnographic approach. As the home is experienced “through the body” (Ugolotti, 2022: 97) and I shared research spaces with participants, sensory ethnography became an influential part of how the research was approached and constructed.

A range of different disciplines use sensory ethnography. It develops an "approach to the world and to research which accounts for how sensory ways of experiencing and knowing" (Pink, 2015: page unknown) come up in data collection, both for those who participate in research and how ethnographers carry out research. It involved situating myself within the field using my sensory awareness to connect with the shared embodied experiences that I (the researcher) and the participants shared. Engaging in this sort of ethnographic exploration and paying attention to more than just the visual or verbal data created a dialogue between yourself and the research participant. This dialogue was based on a common shared experience of the research site which helped to promote an understanding of their experiences (Pink, 2015). These shared experiences were particularly significant when I was invited to visit and share meals at participants' houses/ homes. I was able to fully immerse myself within their lived experience of their houses, hear the sounds of the home, smells, tastes, and aesthetics, and listen and engage in verbal conversations about the topic. Through this approach and involvement with the same spaces the women occupied, I was able to “think through my body” (Ugolotti, 2022: 97) and engage with the sensory data emerging through 'being' within the space. This awareness allowed me to think about “more than what was said” (Longhurst Ho and Johnston, 2008: 215) about the meaning of home and the experience of home. In doing so, I considered my position as a white middle-class European academic student in Britain who had moved several times over the last 5 years. This experience allowed me to relate to feelings of attachment to places I no longer lived and the importance of social relations and family for constructing something called 'home.'

Steered by my sensory and phenomenological approach, I wanted to capture the diverse interactions and conversations that occurred during my interactions with participants. I began taking ethnographic field notes in March 2022 (following ethical approval). These notes consisted of interactions, conversations, observations of social structures, power dynamics, friendships, and more that occurred during the volunteered hours. My notes detail sensory experiences of sharing a

space with my participants, the sounds, smells, and tastes presented during this fieldwork. This awareness created a shared embodied experience between myself and the women I was volunteering with. These field notes became part of the data. They were analysed alongside images, and interview transcripts which contained the narratives of the images in text form. This triangulated approach allowed me to identify themes, similarities, and differences between the three forms of data that had been generated from research.

Participant observations and my field notes became ever more salient when I was invited on some occasions to visit participants' houses. The home is often experienced within the confines of a house or dwelling and represents a private space away from the public's prying eyes. It is often concealed from outsiders (Despres, 1991; Mallet, 2004; Berg, 2011; Gureyeva-Aliyeva and Huseynov, 2011; Boccagni, 2017); thus, being invited into the space of the home was a real honour for me, a sign of the relationships I had built during my volunteering which allowed for a "greater degree of openness" (Marsh et al, 2017: 67).

Participant observations determine what additional method would be appropriate for more in-depth conversations around the topic of home. While volunteering, I observed how the women communicated with each other despite being from many different backgrounds, cultural traditions, and spoken languages. Individuals with proficient English would support and translate for less confident people. In addition, the women often shared images and pictures with each other and me of weekend trips, their families, and celebrations. Collison and Ugolotti (2021) had a similar experience and found that participants in their research would ask to show photos to convey something important. This observation and knowledge informed the use of photo-elicitation in interviews.

This method aligned with my desire for participants to be creators of the research. Brigham, et al (2018: 105) argues that photo-elicitation's participatory nature makes participants co-researchers who have control over their representations in the study. I asked participants to bring images of home with them to interviews. No further guidance was given to reduce my influence over participants' interpretation of the task as this itself gave insight into how they understood their experience of home. This also reduces the influence of my status, existing knowledge on the subject, and cultural background as well as gives the participants a sense of ownership over the project (Levell, 2019) and providing space for them to visually show their representation of home and guide the discussion.

From my reading about different methods, I was already aware that visual methods have become more common and are recognised as an acceptable tool for qualitative research in various disciplines such as sociology, psychology, anthropology, and health care (Pain, 2012). This method has been used with marginalised or vulnerable groups (Glaw, 2017; Level, 2019) including refugees and im/migrant youth populations (Brigham, Baillie Abidi, & Calatayud, 2018; Brigham, Baillie Abidi, & Zhang, 2018; Fassetta, 2016; Robertson et al, 2016). The increase in the use of this method can be attributed to its empowering properties as it provides the space and recourses for participants to create their own creative work that represents their experiences and opinions (Harper, 2002). Further, I found that this method reduced the reliance on verbal communication allowing wider participation from participants from diverse language traditions which was particularly important to prevent those who wanted to take part in the study from being excluded because of their language capabilities.

Miled (2020) suggested that photo-elicitation is particularly suitable for working with refugees, who are often an unheard group. This is because it gives participants the space to be experts of their own experience (Barrow, 2017), and the opportunity to express opinions, views, and thoughts more freely than the researcher setting the parameters (Pain, 2012: 310) of research with pre-determined questions. Thus, I reframed from asking too many questions, instead, I opted to ask an opening question 'describe your home', then open-ended questions which encouraged participants to expand on their thoughts or feelings. This approach reduced the likelihood of participants being silenced on aspects of their experiences and allows them to express what was important to them. Robertson et al (2016), similarly highlighted the importance of giving refugees, in particular, the space to create their own images. They argue that refugees are often defined by the image presented in the media. Therefore, by asking refugees to create images, they can define their own image through photos and present their narratives and experiences (Robertson et al, 2016). Requesting the women to create images they felt were important repositions them as narrators of their own stories.

Participant-generated photographs have increasingly been used to inform interviews (Pink 2007) as they can create sensory awareness, enriching conversations by offering a portal to otherwise unexplored elements (Harris and Guillemin, 2012) of bodily experiences of place, space, and home as it gave me a visual way into the participant's world (Gold, 2004) which aligned with my sensory ethnographic approach. The use of images was a good starting to think about the sensory

experience of home. This informed an impromptu visualisation exercise. I asked some participants to do to help with the conversation flow and diversify the way participants were thinking about home. I asked participants to close their eyes and think about home. Then I asked them to describe what they could see, smell, hear, taste, and touch in their imagination. This acted as a portal to the sensory experience of home and generated rich data getting participants to think through their bodies to understand the way they experienced home.

The photo-elicitation approach was not without its problems. On a practical level, participants often forgot to take photographs, or images were blurred and unusable (Packard, 2008). There was also a risk that participants would take images they believe were socially desirable, which can hide important parts of their experience (Torre and Murphy, 2015: 13). I found that a lot of the images brought to interviews were of the physical house or rooms within the house, reflecting a restrictive definition of home. During the discussion, the participants elaborated that this was because I'd asked them to bring images of 'their home' which didn't lead to the diversity of images I expected. I chose to phrase the task in such a way as to prevent ambiguity or confusion, but it might have led to a diverse range of images. Following this learning, I would ask participants to bring images that helped them explain what home meant to them or what home was.

There are also ethical considerations related to "the protection of subjects from harm, the right to privacy, the notion of informed consent, and the issue of deception" (Merriam, 2009, 230). Using photos with marginalised or vulnerable groups like refugees poses an issue of anonymity and confidentiality (Noland, 2006). This concern is particularly prominent if the images taken are of other people, especially if they are then used when presenting the data. Brigham and Kharbach (2020) argue that these concerns can be addressed with careful planning and communication with participants. They also suggest that spending long periods in the field or with participants can help build trust, which can address the issues of power imbalances and ownership over images (Brigham and Kharbach, 2020: 156). I managed these concerns by asking participants to take images that didn't show others' faces. In addition, I clarified if participants felt comfortable with the images being displayed in this thesis. Participants who did not want their images to be shared expressed this during interviews or subsequently. These images have been replaced with descriptions or field notes where appropriate.

The research had to be flexible, given the dynamic nature of the fieldwork. Originally, I intended to conduct focus groups so that participants could support each other with spoken English language

and encourage informal dialogue. However, after the first focus group, it became clear that the women preferred to speak individually with me rather than as part of a group. Participants seemed reserved and uncomfortable discussing their opinions with others on such a personal subject. Therefore, I adapted my approach and conducted one-to-one interviews.

For practical access reasons, all participants in this study were women. My gender and volunteer status appeared helpful in making my presence justified and accepted and supported the development of informal relationships with participants. The significance of my gender became particularly evident when discussing the topics around menstrual cycles and childbirth. These arguably 'unique' female experiences allowed me to be a woman in a room full of women rather than a researcher. Mazzei and O'Brien (2009) comment that the alignment or misalignment of one's gender with informants has somewhat deterministic effects for gaining access and rapport (359). However, despite this shared identity, I am aware that other elements of my identity, a white European student with no experience of displacement, will have influenced my relationship with participants.

Access to participants who are considered 'vulnerable' can be very difficult and it is common for a gatekeeper (McAreavey and Das, 2013) to be used to support access. Therefore, I approached a local charity that supports refugees, asylum seekers, and vulnerable migrants in the Bournemouth and Poole area. I presented them with a research proposal to gain access to participants. In this proposal, I asked to volunteer for the charity so that I could meet potential participants and develop a relationship with them before recruiting participants for the study. As a result, I was allowed to volunteer at community-based activities namely ESOL (English as a Second language) classes, a weekly conversation group for women, and a homework club. The charity attained a DBS for working with vulnerable adults and children for myself prior to commencing voluntary work, which started in September 2021 and continued after data collection until July 2022.

It is generally recognised that gatekeepers play an important role in social research (de Laine, 2000), particularly for researching communities that are seldom heard from or for research involving sensitive subjects (Eide & Allen, 2005; Knight et al., 2004; Yancey et al., 2006). However, accessing participants via a gatekeeper has specific ethical considerations (Flyvbjerg, 2001). The primary concern is how gatekeepers affect the power dynamics in research. Relying on a nominated representative for access to the refugees may end up negotiating agreements that silence the voices of those most in need of being heard, namely those who are already disempowered (Mackenzie

2007: 304). For example, gatekeepers, especially in research concentrating on refugees, may have preconceived ideas about how the research should look and 'suitable' candidates for researchers to engage. This assumption can cause two problems. Firstly, not all voices are represented and considered. Secondly, an individual's participation is not wholly voluntary, especially if they feel they have been nominated by the gatekeeper and do not want to compromise the services they are receiving by not engaging in the research.

To mitigate against the power struggles, I had several meetings with the gatekeeper to ensure we were both clear about our roles in the research project:

1. The charity would facilitate access to participants and allow me to arrange interviews during their activities or outside their sessions.
2. They would not alter any of their services to individuals who participated or did not participate in the research. Beyond this, the charity would have no involvement in the project.
3. I would volunteer every week, manage the research project, and be responsible for recruiting participants based on the relationships I built.
4. I would make it clear to potential participants that their decision to participate (or not) would not affect their access to the charity's services.
5. I would not ask for support or additional information about participants from the charity.

Setting out these parameters created an essential working relationship (Oka & Shaw, 2000) between myself and the charity.

Recruitment was done voluntarily. I distributed posters and information sheets during the activities I attended. However, prior to distributing the recruitment posters, I had already been volunteering with the women for a number of months. During this time, I had already told several women about my research. Having those initial conversations and being open and honest about my intentions for volunteering, my education and research helped (Bailey, 1996) when it came to recruitment, as some of the women had already expressed an interest in *'helping'* with my study. In addition, some of the women had completed university or were looking to go to university once they had a *'good level of English'* (Zara) and saw my research as an opportunity to support my studies.

My qualitative and exploratory phenomenological approach guided the number of participants who participated in the study. The focus was to understand the lived experience of home; thus, as Boyd (2001) argued, between two to 10 participants or research subjects is sufficient to reach saturation

in this type of research. Creswell (1998, pp. 65 & 113) similarly recommends "long interviews with up to 10 people" for a phenomenological study is optimal. I followed this guide and had 6 participants initially interested in the study (See table below for details).

Table 1: participants' details.

Name (pseudonym)	Country of Origin	Approximate age	Other details
Zara	Afghanistan	Mid 20s early 30s	Lives with her husband and has two boys in primary school. Wants to go to university to study midwifery
Aziza	Turkey	Mid 30s	Used to be a schoolteacher in Turkey
Esther	Iran	Late 30s	Wants to teach children to swim and enjoys being active
Farzin	Afghanistan	Late 60s	Little English but uses others to translate for her – has 5 grandchildren
Daria	Iran	Mid 30s	Came to the UK in January 2022
Rita	Iraq	Mid 50s	Lives in the UK for 5 years but was in Switzerland before for 12 years
Mehrvash	Afghanistan	Mid 40s	Goes to college two days a week to learn additional English. Has 4 children

Ethics are fundamental to any research especially involving human participants. My research proposal was submitted to the BU ethics board of clearance. It was only after the project had been approved did any data collection commence. Although the primary concern for ethics is to reduce harm, I wanted this research to go beyond that and be a stimulating and a worthwhile activity for participants.

There is growing literature on the ethics of working with refugees or other vulnerable migrant populations (see Mackenzie et al 2007; Dona, 2007; Pittaway et al., 2010; Dona, 2012). One of the core concerns for this research was achieving genuine informed consent from participants. Refugees are considered vulnerable for several reasons—their exposure to violence, the precarity of the political circumstances, and the presence of trauma. Periods of protected displacement can "undermine their sense of their own identity, self-worth and trust in themselves" (Machenzie, et al, 2007: 303), which can ultimately impair their ability for self-determination. These conditions can greatly reduce their autonomy over their decisions and can affect the giving of informed consent.

To mitigate these concerns, I engaged with consent as an interactive process (Lewis, 2010). This approach moved away from the static idea that consent can be achieved through signing a piece of paper at the beginning of research and then forgotten about. An example of the interactive process is highlighted in the dismissal of using consent forms. In the first interview session, I asked participants to sign a consent form endorsed by the BU ethics board. However, the form appeared to be more a hinderance than a help. When I presented the consent forms before recording the interviews, many women looked hesitant and a little nervous. I deduced that their experience of the asylum system may have made them nervous around interviews and formal paperwork. The formality of a signed document contrasted with the 'informal relaxed' atmosphere I was aiming to create. Rather than insisting the participants sign the form, I chose to spend time before, during and, after each session answering questions about their participation in the project. I ensured I could use their images in the research or asked if they would prefer a description to be used in its place in the write-up. I also ensured that if a participant seemed hesitant, we postponed the session to give them the chance to reconsider rather than feel pressured to continue. All communication about their consent was done through verbal communication rather than writing as some of the women were not confident in reading English. UKRI standards approve this form of verbal consent.

Adapting this process of achieving consent meant that it was approached with more flexibility to reflect the dynamic research environment. It allowed me and the participants to determine where

the research should take place (in their homes, at a café or another location) as well as them being able to express concerns or worries they had about taking part. Constructing consent as an interactive relationship between myself and the participants ensured that consent was gained in a legitimate form and that participants felt that they had been part of the process and discussion about how they would feel comfortable participating in the research.

Whether to use a translator or not was one of the most challenging decisions to make. As English is most of the participants' second, third, or fourth language, there was a concern that not using a translator would lose some of the important information required to gain a deeper understanding of this complex topic. However, overreliance on translators can also be ethically problematic. Temple and Edwards (2002) remind us that interpreters actively produce research accounts. Thus, a poor translation can hamper the mutual understanding required for ethical research and potentially undermine the research's validity (Inghilleri 2004). In addition, interpreters may bring to the research relationships a complex mix of power based on ethnicity, class, and race, incurring the risk of 'transgressing political, social or economic fault-lines of which the researcher may not be aware,' (Jacobsen and Landau 2003: 103). In worst cases, translators may breach confidentiality or be hostile to research participants' views and interests. This reflection on using a translator is drawn from Mackenzie et al. (2007: 304) but exemplifies the decision-making process I went through when I decided not to use a translator. I wanted to record the women's words, not translated words. Instead, if there was a translation issue, we used tools such as Google translate or created methods like drawing or sharing more images to overcome misunderstandings or language barriers. I also reviewed the transcripts with participants to ensure I had accurately captured their opinions and views. This process made the interviews interactive and dynamic for myself and the women.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussions

The following section will detail the findings of this research. It will explore the three core themes that emerged from the visual and participatory approach to the research.

The first section explains how the home can be experienced in relation to temporality. It looks at the relationships between an individual and the past, present, and future. It details how the home is experienced in a timeless manner with the past present and future interacting with one another to create a home in the present while simultaneously maintaining the relevance of the past and informing the future.

The next section explores the importance of space in relation to home. Pointing out that there can be multiple spaces that are identified as home. The multipleness of home is only possible through by an individual building and sustaining a relationship with these spaces across boaders and time.

The final theme highlights the significance of social, emotional, and embodied relationships with and between others as well as emphasises that relationships can simultaneously make or complicate an individual's relationship with home.

This discussion reveals a relational approach to understanding home by underscoring individuals' autonomy to create a sense of home in new environments while maintaining their connections to former homes.

4.1 The multiple temporalities of home: blurring past, present, and future

> A: I very very little I remember in village in East Turkey very little because in Istanbul when child had a lot of green places behind my home and big park. Not park, but empty space err and some gardens and some cow? and fruit and err tree and bring them down [acting climbing and picking fruit from the trees]
>
> Researcher: yum what fruit trees were they?
>
> A: err fig and then err plum, apricot and apple and kiwi
>
> (Aziza)

Esther presented images, which she felt important to explain what home meant. She told me that she had taken these images while visiting her grandmother's house where she had spent a lot of time when she was a little girl. She explained that she could recall going to her grandmother's house, where there would always be an urn of tea and that her grandmother would use teapots (like the one below) to serve tea to her guests. (Field notes, 17.5.22)

Figure 1: Esther's grandmother's teapot

The image and example above suggest the childhood home still holds great symbolic significance in how participants understand their experience of home, as Zara explained further.

"Home is mother home. Mother home, every time everywhere you can go and relax… want to something 'oh mum I don't make up... um don't make today mm today a cooking, I don't like it today then your mum was cooking you feel relax and your mum, in your mother home. Be a little girl again." (Zara)

References to the childhood home were a constant presence in the conversations that animated the sessions with participants, together with the sharing of food and space (Pink, 2015). As shown in the above excerpts, these stories of childhood memories of home were presented as a starting point for the participant to begin their discussion about what home meant. These memories of the childhood home were embodied experiences of the past (Dona, 2015: 70). They helped to interpret and shape both the present and future, and this became more apparent during a conversation with Aziza. When I asked Aziza to imagine her home, she described a vivid scene:

> "If I think of home and imagine it, I see a big room, lots of people, a kitchen, it is important to me. It is loud, lots of talking, there is tea and people are sit at big table. Lots of light, I like light. It's childhood home. Um not important furniture or have a lot of things and good homes, bad homes no, but important for me, light." (Aziza)

Her description has many layers of significance. Firstly, it exemplifies how the home is experienced through the body. The relationship one makes to the environment passes through the senses, such as smell, taste, seeing, and feelings of weather (cold, smog, rain, wind) and atmospheric qualities, (warmth, light, etc). As Aziza explains, these sensory experiences evoked memories of homes occupied in other places and times. The sensory awareness of our environment also helps to locate us in the world as they connect us through our bodies to the world around us (Pink, 2011). Aziza's emphasis on the sensual experience, the noise, and the light was essential to making this vision home. Her account demonstrates how the "home is absorbed through the senses" (Taylor, 2015: 88) as part of the sensory and affective experience of home.

Secondly, her account highlights how the sensory, affective, and material qualities helped her transcend time by remembering and supporting her in making sense of homes and places that are distant and present in space and time. Her example illustrated how her body recognised the light quality of a space, this familiarity helped to connect her to another place in another time something which Lloyd and Vasta (2017) identify. They suggest that these embodied experiences of home can help us travel across time by remembering homes and places that are distant in time and space. Bodies intermingle with spaces that occur over time as we inhabit places and places inhabit us (p189), thus the senses work as part of us and our home, particularly in a post-migration context. They assist refugees in feeling included in the environment where they find themselves through experiences with ordinary senses of the past in the present and using this familiarity of bodily sensations to inform the construction and practises of the home.

Finally, the excerpt suggests temporal connotations for "how refugees conceptualise the past, present, and future" (Arvanitis and Yelland, 2019: 538) in relation to the home. In the description, the light was mentioned as something essential for Aziza. Although this description was based on her childhood, she went on to explain that it was part of how she imagined the future:

> “My home, bright and err big light and err have lots of flowers and then a lot of people around a table, coffee, eating and err talking, chatting, happy and the weather is very nice.” (Aziza)

Aziza's account expresses how her past home informed how she imagined her home in the future, *big light, flowers,* and *lots of people.* It suggested that these qualities are desired in the present home. This suggests that the "past is no more static than the present" (Massey, 1992: 13) but interacts with the present by moulding it into how we imagine home should be, which is informed by past points of reference, like the childhood experience of home.

Subsequent interviews with other participants echoed the interaction between the past and present, including Mehrvash. Mehrvash had lived in the UK for over 12 years and shared her house with her husband, four children, and mother.

> Sat in a beautiful garden with Mehrvash and her mother. Mehrvash explained that her mother doesn't speak any English, but she likes living here, other than the weather which is too cold and rainy, something we could both agree on. She explained that her mother had had to look after Mehrvash and her brother by herself when they had lived in Afghanistan. Her father had died when Mehrvash was young and there was no support from anyone to help with money or food or shelter. She told me her mother had had a hard life and had had to do everything for herself but had always made sure Mehrvash and her siblings had food and were looked after and encouraged to go progress in their education. She said she'd had a happy childhood and her mother's strength had inspired her to create a beautiful home for herself, her mother, and her children in the UK. (Field notes: 13.6.22)

The accounts of Aziza and Mehrvash diverge from the normative way the temporality of home is conceptualised in migration studies. The temporal meanings ascribed to the home are often viewed as linear as the home is experienced as part of the life cycle (Csikszentmihályi and Rochberg-Halton, 1981) or, as Taylor (2009: 123) explains, "repetitive and cyclical" mapping onto events that take place in the calendar year. These “rhythms of life” (Douglas, 1991: 289) provide a point of reference, bringing the past into the present and allowing individuals to anticipate the future.

Zetter (1998) proposes that this continuity is fragmented as refugees are "cut off from the physical and symbolic representations of the past" (Zetter, 1998: 301). This fragmentation destabilises

refugees' points of reference and leaves them questioning their place in the world (Downing, 1996: 36), creating ambiguity and loss. Refugees thus exist in a liminal present (Brun and Fabos, 2015), located at a physical and temporal distance from their (past) lost home, unable to predict whether they will return or continue being in exile (the future) (Arvanitis and Yelland, 2019: 538). However, presenting this narrative fails to acknowledge the fluidity and movement of people's lives (Rapport and Dawson, 1998: 7). It characterises refugees as "pathologically unable to function in exile in the present when removed from their lost home and their past" (Taylor, 2009: 125) by overemphasising the past as a static place of nostalgia.

The examples from interviews and fieldwork above suggest that the past and nostalgia play an active role in the present. They act as a "symbolic anchor" (Arvanitis and Yellend, 2019: 536) to the past. This anchor supports the construction of new visions of home. Thus, remembering the past and nostalgia play a role in the "creative process in the present" (Warner, 1994: 171). The role of nostalgia is something Svetlana Boym explores in his book '*The Future of Nostalgia (2001).* He distinguishes between 'restorative' and 'reflective' nostalgia in this book. Restorative nostalgia is a seemingly desperate longing for former times when things were allegedly genuine, original, and authentic – this is the form of nostalgia commonly associated with refugees and their lost homes. Reflective nostalgia, by contrast, reflects upon the value of the (remembered) past for present purposes. The past is used to inform and shape the present rather than being a woeful force. For Creet (2011: 3) and Lems (2016: 430), memory and nostalgia have the potential to re-create temporal continuity and stability for refugees. Therefore, remembering and nostalgia are temporally ambiguous and not exclusively associated with the past, as often understood, but are practises linking people's past, present, and future (Lems 2016, 430). Much like how Mehrvash used her childhood experiences to shape the home in the present for herself and her children. Transnationalism resonates with this idea of blurring time by suggesting that memories of the past, or of different places can come together in “the practises of homemaking at the place of the present dwelling” (Brun and Fabos, 2001: 8) by informing where/ what we recognise as home.

Transferring material culture and objects was another prominent example of participants’ disrupting the past, present, and future continuum. During two sessions, Esther (from Iran, she had moved to the UK in the last ten years but didn't explain why or how. She lives here with her husband and two daughters) and Daria (also from Iran but had moved in the last six months following a confrontation with the police as she refused to wear a Burka or hijab in public), revealed that they had been able to bring some small but significant objects from their past homes.

> “Spoon plates, a little thing because we had to bring just 20kg not more, just 20kg.” (Daria).

> “Umm some of daughter's toys, not a lot but some, daughters' toys and clothes, some clothes, I bring a little bit of them like my I brought a little bit of my clothes and err yeah just this. [pause] I wish I had all of them.” (Esther)

Transferring materiality from one space to another is crucial for mnemonic practices and remembering (Fuhse, 2022: 28). These objects may be carefully chosen (Tošić and Palmberger 2016, 2) or picked up in haste so that individuals have something, a tangible reminder. Placing familiar objects in an unfamiliar space can disrupt the feeling of loss by providing a physical anchor to the past in the present. It can be an embodied practise of situating oneself in the world (Ingold, 2010) by acting as an 'interface' between the owner and the world. Such objects helped to connect Daria and Esther physically and simultaneously to their past and present (Digby, 2006: 180).

Objects can also complicate the linear past, present, and future temporal relationship with home by providing physical continuity between spaces. For example, Daria can use the plates and spoons in the present the same way she would have used them in the past; the objects make continuity of practises possible. Therefore, materiality provides continuity in an otherwise unsettled life in which a mundane object such as a plate, spoon, or clothing can become “companions for life” (Friedemann Yi-Neumann, 2022: 109), offering familiarity and comfort (Mattlet, 2004). Thus, the objects create a certain amount of fluidity over space and time as they sit in the present but symbolise the past and may produce new meanings and relevance in the present.

Objects that travel from one place to another reveal links between objects and homing practises which has been explored in some transnational literature. This literature details how objects can be used to disrupt feelings of loss by providing familiarity and a physical means of sustaining feelings of attachment to former places (Parrot, 2012) which a person is physically distance from. They also become part of the aesthetic practises of home, which is discussed in more detail in the next section.

However, the possibility of transporting objects during migration may only be possible under certain conditions of forced migration. As mentioned, the studies participants had specific pathways to sanctuary. These routes provided limited yet viable opportunities to bring items with them, like the ones mentioned above. However, individuals with different paths to the UK are unlikely to be

granted such rights under hostile government policies. The differentiation in political categories can profoundly affect an individual's ability to reconstruct home in a forced migration context. This data above thus signifies a specific experience of forced migration.

What is clear, through the data discussed in this chapter, is how the home is dynamic in time. It shows how the childhood home is symbolic of the past but highlights how there is a blurring of the traditional past, present, and future narration of time in this context. The discussion also underlines how material objects reveal how participants experience and negotiate time. Finally, it indicates that the home is multiple in space, a point this paper will now turn to.

4.2 There's no *one* place like home: multipleness of home

"Home always was always, is always place" (Daria)

As this excerpt suggests, making sense of place is necessary to understand the meaning of home. However, scholars in refugee studies are often reluctant to discuss the nature and importance of place out of fear of playing into the "hands of the governments who wish to ignore the rights of refugees" (Turton, 2005: 277). This tension arises from the belief that refugees 'belong' to a place, thus, should be returned regardless of the consequences. According to Malkki (1992), this belief is sustained by the portrayal of the world as divided into spatial segments and the concept of culture as rooted in these separate and specific locations. This assumption has led to the naturalisation of the links between people and places (Malkki, 1992: 34). The physical boundaries are labelled as 'nations' which protect and control their populations which national ruling bodies assume to be comprised of homogeneous "historically continuous groups of people" (Turton, 2002: 25). As a result, refugees are seen as outside the national and natural order, uprooted, and cut loose from their cultural and moral bearings (Malkki, 1992: 32-33) due to their forced mobility. Ironically until recently, the idea that refugees naturally belong to the place they have been forced to leave has sustained both host governments keen to return refugees from whence they came and those speaking out in defence of refugees' right to return (Taylor, 2009: 78).

Despite the cautious approach to defining home as a place in refugee studies, we cannot outright reject the idea that physical locations bear significance for individuals and their understanding of home, as Daria (above) and other participants in the study emphasised the relevance of the wider material environment of place for their conceptualisation of home.

Discussions with participants resonated with transnational rejections of the idea that a single point of origin represents home. Participants highlighted how this assumption was not an accurate reflection of their experience of home. This became evident in how participants reacted to my question- "can you describe your home for me?" The open-ended question brought a range of similar replies like the examples below.

"Which one? I have a lot of homes" (Aziza)

Other responses to this opening question echoed these responses.
"My home in this place or my home in my country?" (Rita)

These responses challenge the idea that a singular point represents home. Instead, participants emphasised that they had multiple physical environments they associated with home.

Delving deeper into this idea, some of the participants revealed that they had multiple homes because they felt lots of connections and relationships to their former countries, other places they had lived or visited, and the country they currently resided in (UK):

> "Home for me, mother home and my home here and my brother and my sister home umm. I changed a lot of home, yeah. Before I was born in a different country and moving, and then change very lot umm I live in about 16 years, live with my mum and after we live with my brother and my sister and going to university and my a classmates' home and other universities. I changed a lot of and then I get married. Each time place means home." (Aziza)

Similarly, Rita identified that even after living in many different places, they all still felt 'like home':

"I have lived in three countries (Iraq, Switzerland and England) and I don't know where I feel most at home, maybe all of them. Home maybe is where you go or live or where you think 'I'll go back to" (Rita)

Similarly, in Feldman's (2006) research, their participants, when reflecting on where home was, ascribed value to their experiences of home both in both places they had left behind and places they inhabited after displacement. Likewise, the replies illustrate that the home is not limited to a singular place but can represent multiple homes that exist across time and space. Transnationalism

theories have offered a lens to explore the multiplicity of home. They advocate moving away from the dominance of territorialised and national forms of belonging, rejecting the assumptions that we belong to a fixed place defined by our national identity allowing us to recognize multi-sited affiliations (Vertovec, 2007) that exist over space and time. Such affiliations highlight that home is part of an "emplaced social experience" (Boccagni, 2021: 4) rather than restricted to one location. Thus, refugees' sense of home can be attached to different points of reference and enacted over several scales, as the examples illustrate.

Esther emphasised this point by explaining:

“Home is a place, yes yes but everywhere not home” (Esther)

This excerpt highlights how a place that is recognised as home is a “special kind of place” (Easthope, 2004), implying there is more to the relevance of a place for an individual than simply being born there or it being their so-called ‘homeland’.

> R: when you talk about your country and you know every place, and language is easier.
>
> E: How long did it take you to feel at home after you have moved?
>
> R: err long time, yeah is err yeah two years, 3 years
>
> E: and what makes you feel settled?
>
> R: err you feel sometime err don't know anybody you scared to talking, how you talk. First time when I came I was very scared I don't, I didn't go outside alone. Just with my husband, with children, alone no. I just stay at home just my err husband go and then slowly, err … I learnt language and I know people .. I come here, know where to get my food err. Then … some people have err quickly make any contact, some people difficult

Rita’s words indicate that home is not premade, as Dossa and Golubovic state (2019: 173). She explains that it took her 3 years to feel at home in the UK. Recognising the UK as ‘home’ was only achievable by building a relationship with her new place by attending social events, learning the language, and understanding how a local food shop works, a mundane yet essential task. Her

examples compliments transnationalist ideas of the "practical and performable" element to home (Boccagni, 2021: 4), which involves individuals constructing a relationship with a place to feel an attachment to it. Hammond (2004) describes this process as 'emplacement' where an individual gives a place meaning (Hammond, 2004: 79). As the example above illustrates, becoming emplaced involves creating familiarity between a person, affective and embodied elements of home as well as the "habitable material present" (Berlant, 2011: 684) or building an infrastructure for proximity (Berland, 2011). This infrastructure relies on developing habitual practises such as food shopping, as Rita mentions and allows an individual to feel settled and familiar with their material environment. The that is created familiarity and the feeling of emplacement provide a sense of home as Rita explains. These efforts may also entail a patient building of relationships with whom to share spaces of sociality and mundane pleasures, for example, sharing food; this aspect is discussed in more detail further on.

Giving meaning to a place means that new places can be identified as home (Massey, 1992; Mallet, 2004). Rita and Aziza’s identification of multiple homes suggests that once a place has been given meaning, the connection to said place is not automatically lost when an individual ceases to be there. In fact, their account suggests that the significance of a place can be created, transferred, or maintained across “different geographical locations and material backgrounds” (Boccagni, 2016: 50) as well as over time. Again, transnationalism explains that this is because home can be “decoupled from a territory (or singular place) and reconceptualised in terms of movement” (Dossa and Goluboic, 2019: 77) which allows for connections and processes to extend beyond the nation-state or place of origin. This means that multiple homes can exist simultaneously as individuals create new relationships with new places but additionally maintain connections to former places. The examples presented above thus suggest that home can be both a material anchor and a multi-sited and open-ended process. These relationships are maintained taps into the “practical and performative dimensions of home” (Boccagni, 2021: 4). The practises of maintaining connections became evident in the embodied and sensory elements of making home.

Figure 2: *Eid-al -Fitr* meal shared at conversation group (taken by the researcher)

In figure 2 above it is possible to see various dishes prepared by participants and women who attended conversation groups to celebrate the end of Ramadan *Eid al-Fitr.*

> Each person prepared a unique dish traditionally cooked and shared by their families in their countries of origin. The variety was immense and delicious! Participants shared and compared recipes and explained why each dish was cooked, why it was special and how it was eaten. Denna explained that a jar of nuts (pistachios, almonds, and pine nuts) was soaked in water and sugar and then eaten during Eid. She explained that Farzin (another woman in the group) used to make these for her children, and it made her remember home [referring to Afghanistan] whenever she ate them. (Field notes 3.5.22)

There has been limited research on the relationship between food and memory within transnational migratory or diasporic contexts (Holtzman, 2006). Yet it is clear that taste and practises around food can support and maintain a person's relationship over space and time. Food tastes, smells, textures, and sights can be extraordinarily evocative not only of the memory of the food itself but of reassuring and vexed memories of the places and settings in which that particular food was consumed, as Farzin exemplifies. Hage (1997) suggests that cooking and eating 'home foods' creates 'homeliness' for migrants as they prepare and consume foods they associate with their home. The taste of food transcends territorial and temporal boundaries allowing individuals to experience food in one place while remembering and re-experiencing the taste and food in another. This embodied experience reveals that mundane practise like preparing food can have great significance for maintaining a connection across space and time. Smell, taste, and embodied practises allow us to remain familiar with a space from which we are distant while renegotiating our familiarity with a

space we are present in. As Allen (2012) reminds us: beyond memories of taste and place, food is effective as a trigger for even deeper memories of feelings and emotions, and internal states of the mind and body. (p. 150) that are crucial to our understanding of home.

Food and taste exemplify the sensory and embodied elements of making home across spaces. This process is continual and is most commonly seen in interacting with the home space. The space(s) and households in which people live are the most obvious marker of home. They rely on boundaries between private and public spaces (Despres, 1991; Mallet, 2004; Berg, 2011; Gureyeva-Aliyeva and Huseynov, 2011; Boccagni, 2017) and may include buildings, houses, or other structures that create a form of separation. During a discussion with Mehrvash, she explained how important practises of making home were for her in her understanding of home.

> M: "When I came to this place, it wasn't a home. But now err because we fix this home, umm we started from zero we get married and umm er this garden, this home was rubbish all over them my husband was, when he was single, he gets this house and all the rooms, 3 rooms where student, was living and all the rubbish bring into the garden and this garden was…"
>
> Researcher: "a mess"?
>
> M: "yes a mess, and the house was, the flat was too dirty and it was stinky and dirty and we make the slow slow like a home that is why we love to live in the house so it's hard to make a home, we had nothing, but we if you keep it nice it will make it home, if you not then there is no home. When I came here all the flat was err umm it was damp and all black and the toilet was all stinky and the shower and the living room everything was so bad. And the carpet was really dirty, and we take up the carpet and we put mm like eerr wood yeah and now for cleaning easy and err um I painted, I paint all the house and umm we brought good quality painting, paint on the house and make it my home. Especially the garden was a mess until this place it was all rubbish and all the things. I make this place [pointing to the patio] make it like level it was up and down and umm everything rubbish and in there and two car err coming and take the rubbish from here and I make it like a small soil umm and put the grass seed and make it like a garden. I save a little money every week and give to my husband to make this like that and everything, every single thing, we buy I place nice things here there to make it our home. Now we can cook and live in our home, share food

company and enjoy. It is not dirty it smell nice and look clean. We started from zero of course we love to live in here, this our home."

Mehrvash's detailed account highlights two very important elements to understand the experience of home.

Firstly, home is not fixed or associated with a particular space that has been experienced in the past, present, or imagined in the future. Rather, it refers to a space that has been refined or changed to reflect an environment that can be recognised as home. This is exemplified in the text above as Mehrvash didn't identify the space she was living in as home at first. It was through cleaning and decorating that she made it a space she called home. Her account implies that a space becomes home, through 'homemaking'. Homemaking is a process of attaching a positive sense of home to a particular portion of space (Boccoagni, 2021: 4). This process is about cultivating and continuously reimagining space in the context of everyday life (Dossa and Goluborvic, 2019: 178).

Homemaking isn't just about starting again or building from new. Young (2005) argues that it consists of preserving the things and their meanings as an anchor to shifting personal (Kilickiran, 2013) and group identities. She discusses this in relation to women and the home, challenging the notion of the home as an oppressive institution for women and focusing on the acts within the home which give women a sense of identity. Mehrvash's reflection on the process of making a space home speaks to wider debates about gender and the home which will be elaborated further in later discussions on gender and home.

Secondly, homemaking as a process involves interacting with the space and materiality contained within it. These spatial practices are ones that intrinsically relates to the shaping of the built environment. Mehrvash's account highlights how painting, cleaning, and paving her built environment made it *my home*. Llyod and Vasta (2017) explain that this becomes more salient when "a home that is never settled requires human interventions" (p6). Miller (1998; 2001, 2010) similarly explains that this is how a house becomes a home, by interacting with the space and material environment within it that creates a sense of home.

This thought was echoed by Zara who explained:

> “I really like to change my home like err new sofas put in there … and umm new decorations and things and er er especially with kids you decor- home your kids house like this bed not good this not put it this side” (Zara)

Zara's account further emphasises that making home is not a one-off event but is a process that is continually engaged in (Dossa and Goluborvic, 2019), to renegotiate a space into something that is shaped into an individual's idea of home. This process can also depend heavily on the space's purpose, how it is used in everyday life, the function it fulfils, and the meanings it conveys. The examples above expose the significant labour that goes into cultivating and achieving this basic sense of home, as an environment in which people feel content and happy to live. It recognises the homemaking experience of refugees as spatial practises brings to the fore their spatial agency as fundamental in the process of making home and highlights the transient nature of home, something that can be reinvented across national boundaries, rather than something that is static and situated.

Mehrvash was not the only participant who mentioned the importance of the space of the home as significant for their understanding of home Daria further materialised this idea but relaying the importance of material culture for the construction of home:

> “When I came here I didn't, I didn't feel for home because is very hard for me. When I err came here err I get flat, the flat and err I don't furnish and I'm very, very sad and err I didn't want to move but now my is my church is opposite my flat help me and bring for me a table and err sofa and some [Fasi] some tools for the kitchen and is very help me. Now is more like home.” (Daira)

Daria also explained that she had brought certain significant objects with her to help adorn her space with a sense of home which the objects embodied (full description see section 4.1). Although objects can disrupt the supposed linear process of home from past to present, they can also play a significant role in making a new space feel like home. Van Lennep (1989) recounts that space becomes recognised as home when it has personal objects that create a sense of familiarity within it. The objects Daria brought with her have been embellished with webs of significance built from every day practises and relations between things, actions, words, and cultural memories. Each object is anchored to a "specific life world which makes their presence and usage obvious" (Vanni, 2017: 196). This might imply that once these objects have been removed from their domesticity that they lose their significance. But objects can act as a memory stimulus as well as aesthetically and symbolically

creating continuity between the ‘old’ and ‘new’ homes. The object becomes a means to recreate new relations in a different lifeworld thus contributing to 're-grounding'. The example Daria gave suggests the materiality of something that can assist in the process of homemaking by providing tangible reminders and references of the past space and providing familiarity and continuity over space.

Daria's account demonstrates that objects can provide continuity between space and illustrates the importance of the 'mundane' processes for making home. Reimagining home in a new spatial context also involves negotiating between loss and replacement. The loss of material intimacy with one's home is followed by the forging of new material intimacies and new daily practices as refugees actively work to embed themselves in a new society while retaining a connection to their past locales.

The spatial, locatable, and material aspects of home reflect how home is established through a relationship built between an individual and their material and spatial environment. This is achieved by 'emplacing' oneself in the world by building an infrastructure of proximity or familiarity with the environment. Affective and embodied elements of home can support the creation of multiple spaces being identified as home as they create a sense of continuity over time and space. Additionally, sensory elements of home, for example, taste, allows individuals to remember and imagine the past space in which food was consumed, while being present in another. Homemaking is a materialised practice that involves interacting with a space and the material culture within it. As home is part of a process it is not fixed to a location or space but can be multiple and built-in different contexts.

The process of a place becoming home relies intimately on individuals “ability to foster new relationships of closeness and solidarity” (Salih, 2017: 744). This ability maybe hindered by political structures which dictate the level of agency an individual can exercise based on their legal categorisation. The participants in this study were recognised as refugees under government resettlement schemes, thus they were entailed to limited by vital access to resources and support enabling them to create a new relationship with their special home. This experience is not necessarily generalisable to other categories of forced migrants, like asylum seekers, who exist within a hostile legal position which entails reduced opportunities to make home. Yet the discussion above may well resonate with other categories of refugees by foregrounding the resilience of displaced women and their ability to make home in a given context.

4.3 Home as relations: the good, the bad and the ugly

‘Home means family, and love’. (Esther)

Esther and many of the other participants in the study emphasised how their family, or more broadly, people, were key to their understanding and experience of home.

Some of the images sent by participants featured their children or close family. Mehrvash sent me an image of her children drawing in chalk in their garden and another of her children dressed for Eid celebrations. The images have been omitted to keep Mehrvash’s and her children’s identities confidential, but she did explain:

> “My children drawing in the garden they draw their own favourite pictures which was very lovely. It was easter holidays. They mean so much to me they make our home happy.” (Mehrvash)
>
> “One of my favourite pictures that was Eid days me and my children brought lovely and traditional clothing we went to the park and had a great time together.” (Mehrvash)

Figure 3 is another image Mehrvash showed me. It is of some Mother’s Day flowers her children had brought her; she explained “The picture I put card and beautiful flowers that was Mother’s Day gift. My children brought it for me, and I was so proud”

Figure 3: Mehrvash’s mother’s day gifts from her children

These examples highlight that the home is as much about the social aspects as it is about the spatial (Mallet, 2004). The home, as these snippets illustrate is social; referring to the social and emotional relationships we have with others in a space or outside it (Silverstone, 1994). These can include close family relations, friendships, extended families and even the people we merely exchange pleasantries with.

> “err family is like a bond to each other helping support each other and make the family make bright and good, but without family, living alone is not good, it is not home. I saw my brother he was living alone and he was err in Japan 5 years. He was okay but cooking but one time he cook and err there was one week he keep it and the clothes he ready for their self and ironing he was lonely.” (Mehrvash)

Mehrvash’s account indicates that the absence of people leads to feelings of loneliness, making the space empty and ‘not like home’. Without the people, a home is ‘only a house’ (Samanani and

Lenhard, 2019) as people provide intimate connections, support, and companionship for one another which is necessary to the experience of home. As Taylor (2009) puts it this is because we experience home, on a daily basis, through a series of interactions, negotiations, intimacies and exchanges with others.

Other discussions highlighted that these intimacies were not limited to the family or close relations.

"Society [community] is important for home, you feel right. They are your people." (Daria)

Daria indicated a very important element about home. '*Society'* – clarified to mean community post transcription amounts to the wider social networks and relations are encapsulated in the social aspect of home. Previously a community has been defined as living among people one can recognise as 'one's own' and being recognised by others as such (Hage, 1997); as Daria makes clear when saying *'they are your people'*. A community can mobilise a feelgood feeling of a safe environment where "we all understand each other well" and there are "no strangers" (Bauman, 2001: 1-2). Being surrounded by people you recognise as your own can create a sense of ease, described as feeling *'right',* and can facilitate the feeling of connectedness to a group of people. These connections create feelings of familiarity, comfort, and emotional attachment which convey the feeling of having a home or being at home.

Refugees, however, are often subjected to sudden removals from their communities, forms of relationships and networks which Cernea sees as a form of poverty brought about by forced migration. Cernea describes this loss as "social disarticulation" which amounts to the "dismantling of communities" (Cernea, 1996: 22). However, Cernea's anaylisis implies that a community is a homogenous group (Turton, 2002: 25) connected by similarities of ethnicity, location or culture. Yuval Davis (2011) similary identifies a community as people with the same political affiliations or citizenships. As a result of community beging defined in their way refugees are grouped into "ethnic communities based on their regional origin or migratory history" (Hoellerer, 2017: 140) and ascribed the same identity based on their homeland and history of displacement, an identity that is fixed in time. This static grouping suggests that once an individual has been removed from these relations, they are 'lost' and unable to create this sense of community, and ultimately home, elsewhere. This assumption fails to acknowledge the level of success refugees have in rebuilding a sense of belonging and adapting social networks that "operate increasingly at a transnational rather than national level" (Anthias, 2006: 19).

Ester highlighted the levels of transnational relations that individuals simultaneously maintained between their place of origin and the UK. She explained how communication technologies, including her phone, allowed her to stay in contact with her family in Iran.

> R: do you miss them?
>
> E: mmm [pause], these days because you can use video calls to speak with them
>
> R: ah facetime
>
> E: I do not I miss ah lot but I miss, I remember, three or when I was child my mother my mother cousin , or her sister, no no aunt

Malvasha had a similar take, explaining that although her family was all over the world, including the USA and Germany, she could stay connected to them through platforms like Facebook or Whatsapp. She said they called frequently and sent each other gifts or food that they wanted to share with each other. These two accounts highlighted how participants were able to produce their own "transnational social fields" (Pries, 2022: 236) as part of their everyday lives. As transnational scholars suggest this is a great example of how social relations can be maintained across national borders rather than being contained within them.

Other participants, including Rita identifies how their sense of community and home was based on creating a feeling of belonging in a new location by forming new social networks and friendships rather than it being based on ascribed identities, such as nationality.

> "Home is where you think you belonging, when you feel you belong. This can be with people from Iraq or other people, new people. New friends. Doesn't matter where people are from or anything just if they are nice and kind you know people around you. All people can be your people." (Excerpt taken from field notes, 9.3.22 of Rita speaking)

Rita's statement emphasises two significant elements of the social home. First, the significance of belonging in creating a sense of home, and second that (re)creating social networks can create a sense of belonging.

To clarify, belonging, according to Yuval Davis (2011), has three facets that "cannot be reduced to each other" (2011: 19). The first aspect concerns social locations; the second relates to people's identifications and emotional attachments to various collectives and groupings; the third relates to ethical and political value systems with which people judge their own and others' belonging.

'Belonging' in this excerpt refers to the second element identified by Yuval Davis (2011); people's identification and emotional attachments to various collectives and groupings. This indicates that belonging involves an important affective dimension relating to social bonds and ties (Anthias, 2006: 21) which can be recreated across space and time.

Probing for more, I asked Rita what made her feel she belonged.

“It is meeting people you know; you like similar things, you feel accepted. It is in here (pointing to heart), and a psychology. You can make this feeling with new people.” (Rita)

From her response, we can see that belonging is not predetermined. She indicates that a sense of belonging can be built by creating and renewing social bonds with people, emphasising the relational element of belonging. Again, transnationalism suggests that this possible because our sense of belonging is not confined within the borders of a nation but that transnational social fields can extend beyond them and allow individuals to create attachments and belongings simultaneously elsewhere. Rita, identifies that belonging is achieved through inclusion or *liking similar things,* which creates acceptance and identification with a particular group. Her example suggests that belonging is comprised of being accepted as part of a community by sharing values, interests, networks, and practices. This does not mean that inclusion always brings about a feeling of belonging but identifies that it is through practises and experiences of social inclusion (Anthias, 2006) that a sense of acceptance and belonging can be achieved. The acknowledgment of the practical elements of belonging suggests that belonging is more than a case of identification with a group, but that it relies on an individual's active engagement with a said group. Thus ties can exist within national boundaries or transcend them allowing people to renegotiate where they feel they belong (Ugolotti, 2022). This negotiation can allow people to feel multiple senses of belonging or belonging to more than one group or community simultaneously. Therefore, viewing belonging in terms of taken-for-granted categories of ethnicity, culture, or race fails to reflect the relational aspect of belonging and dismisses the transnationality of ties which can create a sense of home in multiple places, as identified in the previous section.

Rita’s reflections challenge the way refugees ‘belongingness’ is often determined. Currently, refugees’ ‘belonging’ is externally determined by policies on refugee and asylum seekers' integration (Fulfer and Gardiner, 2019). Belonging, under such policies, is determined as assimilation (Rattansi 2004) or achieving social cohesion within communities. This is accompanied by additional

requirements from 'others' to learn and conform to the central cultural and values systems (Yuval-Davis et al., 2005) that have been used to establish if refugees belong. However, Rita's comment that *all people can be your people* suggests that external categories of identification of any kind do not define belonging. The policy focus on integration ignores the subjective and personal element of belonging which is clear in Rita's words.

A conversation with Aziza revealed that belonging to a group provides continuity of everyday practises which can be performed habitually and without questioning until they are challenged by a new environment or social norms. This was illuminated over a shared *proper Turkish breakfast* we had at her house (see figure 4)

Figure 4: Turkish breakfast shared with Aziza (taken by the researcher)

Over our meal Aziza explained how socialising in Turkey was very different to the UK.

> While I was eating Aziza looked at me. She started to explain that I didn't need to eat so fast, that in Turkey eating breakfast was slow. You enjoyed the taste of the food, you had lots and lots of cups of tea and you would sit and chat, eat 'slowly slowly'. She went on to explain that normally breakfast would take hours, it would start at maybe 10am and continue until

2pm, with the food being left on the table for people to pick at as they sat and chatted. Then people would stay help clear away and prepare a lunch. This form of socialising could take all day with people not leaving until into the night. In fact, I didn't end up leaving Aziza's house until gone 3pm although Aziza was happy to host me all day. It stuck me that this was a very different social norm to what I was used to. Normally I was used to going to a coffee shop for a couple hours drinking or eating one thing which was placed and removed quickly before making an excuse to leave or not wanting to over stay your welcome, unless it was with a really good friend which I hadn't seen for a long time when a whole day event would be planned. (Field notes, 30.6.22)

She explained how at first, she had found it difficult to make new friends and (re)create social networks because of the difference in the way people socialised.

> A: "Having friends in home for my country is very important, everybody coming not before calling, if you are available, I coming. No. if you want "
>
> Researcher: "you just turn up?"
>
> A: "yeah yeah and then come in not morning not evening not yeah if you want coming and preparing a lot of meal. Not like here when you plan a time or invite people just turn up and enjoy"
>
> Researcher: "and here?"
>
> A: "you must make appointment, say ' I come this time'. I know now so it's easy but before was hard."

Her account suggests that how we experience home is framed by habitual social practises such as social etiquette. These social practises represent habitual behaviour that becomes self-evident to individuals who are accustomed to them. Removal from these "symbolic systems" (Bottomley, 1992: 38) can leave individuals feeling lost, or find it *hard* to settle. van Liempt and Staring (2021) similarly uncovered that Syrian refugees found it difficult to establish new social networks because of the differences in social etiquette. Serensen (1997) identified that this was because the feeling of being 'at home' is in many ways generated by the experience of "living within a socially familiar environment" (1997: 145). Unlike van Liempt and Staring 's (2021) findings, Aziza indicates that this feeling is not permanent and that learning and adapting to new social practises makes it *easy* to make friends and feel settled. New social practises become second nature as individuals adapt and

establish new patterns of behaviour. Compliance with the prevailing social practises does not, of course, imply acceptance of it, and some may feel forced to conform while others choose (or feel compelled) to reject the accepted systems of behaviour.

Crucially, social practises may create conflict, preventing an individual from feeling at home. Fathi (2021) argues that the home can reproduce the intersections between gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality. These intersections can influence an individual's experience of the home and the meaning they attached to it. Gender is one of the defining features of our identity (Pessar, 2003) and can heavily influence our experiences of the world including our experience of home (Mallet, 2004).

Before delving into any findings and data, I want to distinguish between the two uses of the word patriarchy. Patriarchal refers to a form of social organisation. This organisation is culturally specific and can be subjected to change. This entails patrifocal ways of living, including women moving into the man's house, often along with his family, when a couple gets married, or inheritance being passed through the patrilineal or male line. This is the form of social organisation that most participants in this study experienced. Zara for example moved into her husband's familial house when she got married.

Alternatively, patriarchy is associated with the feminist movement and has been defined by Walby as a "system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women". (Walby, 1989: 214). This understanding of the word has caused some western feminists to call for a rejection of the home as a prime example of women's oppression and subjugation (Mallet, 2004: 75). It is not for this study to define the participants' experience of oppressive but merely to highlight how the women in this study experience their home in relation to their gender and other intersections of their identity including national identity and religion. The following discuss follows how participants' experience of home was influenced by patriarchal systems of organisation and the form of patriarchy to Walby is referring.

> "In my in laws house you most wake up like ah 6 o'clock, in your... in law house you make do everything, clean everything. In laws families house you was everything was change for you every time you wake up like ah is … da a umm… is there means like er like every time you wake up like 7 o'clock, you make it everything, you make it umm clean the house you have well or no every time you 'must do the clean the house' and your must do cooking um every time. This is why your mother's house is home, you can relax be looked after." (Zara)

Zara makes it clear that her experience of moving into the patrilineal home complicated her experience of home. She elaborates that under these conditions she was expected to *clean, cook* and maintain the house.

In her work '*The Second Sex*' Simone de Beauvoir suggests that the sexual division of labour confines women to the domestic domain while allowing men to take part in the paid public sphere. She analyses women's domestic labour, describing how women's domestic work is confined to a life of maintenance for the sake of supporting the transcending individual projects of men and children. As a result of the gendered expectations and her role in the home, Zara didn't identify her marital house as home. Instead, she viewed her mother's house as her 'home' as it was a space where she could *relax* rather than being expected to fulfil certain responsibilities. Her experience highlights how gendered expectations can alter the experience of home for women.

During field work it became clear that Zara was not the only woman who felt she was responsible for the maintenance of the home. During conversations, which primarily occurred during volunteering hours, not interviews, some of the women revealed their opinions on the division of housework that occurred in their homes.

> Sitting together in a small group, Rita, Zara and Esther and myself. This conversation followed a 'charade' exercise we had been doing where someone had to act out an action and the others had to guess what action was being presented to aid vocabulary development. We were sitting drinking cups of tea that Zara and Rita had made for the whole group when Zara turned to me and asked if I knew how to get stains off glass in the bathroom. I recommended something that I used for my bathroom and agreed to send her a picture of the bottle when I got back. Then I asked if they felt they did most of the cleaning of their houses. All of them said they did. Esther laughed and explained that her husband was 'too slow' and take ages when he did the cleaning, or didn't do it properly. She said it was easier if he went out and earnt the money for the family than if he tried to do any cleaning. (Field notes, 5.7.22)

This discussion revealed that the women, in this small group, believed there was a seemingly fair trade between their responsibility of cleaning and maintaining the house and their husband's responsibility of providing financially for them and their families. However, some feminist theory would be sceptical of the assumption that this is 'fair trade', commenting that this adheres to

gendered divisions of space which have been fundamental to patriarchal social relations (Walby, 1990). As Dominelli (1991) describes defining womanhood in terms of domestic labour confines women to the private arena while men dominate the public one. Keeping the two spheres separate is essential in maintaining relations of subordination and domination" (Dominelli, 1991: 267).

We have to consider that although the women view the division as equal, it limits their participation in the public space. Additionally, the women may view themselves as participating in equal but different forms of labour because they have been socialised to believe such, leading to an internalisation of patriarchal values (Gilligan and Snider, 2018). Internalisation prevents women (and men) from recognising their own situation and means they are unable to question the division of space and labour when it occurs as they don't recognise it as a form of oppression. Although this may be true, participants in this discussion highlighted an important point to remember. People's experience of home is unique, tasks such as housework can be interpreted as burdensome or create a negative experience of home, as Zara exemplified, or can be construed as a fair share of responsibility as other women suggested.

Conversations with Daira further emphasised how the participant's experience of home was not a 'one size fits all' experience.

Daria left Iran with her daughter and husband following several confrontations with the police as she refused to wear a Hijab in public - this is a legal requirement for women being seen in public in Iran. She reflected that;

> "Iran is no good, bad place now. Women cannot do things, no sports, no design. Anna [her daughter] has to wear the [indicating covering her hand a face] – clarified as burka after transcription] to school. She no sports, boxing, wrestling. Here is good. UK is good, I like here because I am free. No interfering. There is very bad for girls. Marriage young, I was 17, it's too young." (Daria)

Daria's account recognises that the wider structures which were in place in Iran limited and constrained women's behaviour by demanding they wear a Bukha or prevented them from participating in certain activities. She recounts how she now feels *free* now she is living in the UK as there is no one *interfering* with the way she wants to live. This conversation with Daria indicated that it wasn't just her gender that had affected her experience of home. She spoke clearly about the

fact she was here in relation to her activism in Iran. As well as refusing to wear a Hijab she publically disagreed with her daughter's school policy which required her to wear a Burka when on school grounds or commuting to and from school. She explained she feared for her daughter and what living in Iran as a young woman meant for her. She herself pointed out that she was *'different'* from the other women in our conversation group as she didn't want to just sit and look after the house. Her views contrasted with the conversation illustrated above with the group of women who saw their housework as their fair share of responsibility. Daria also explained said she was active in her search for employment, wanted to return to university to study for her master's in sport. To emphasis this point further she was adamant to teach her daughter that she didn't rely on men to do certain tasks. She told me she had built her own kitchen table and knew how to fix the boiler in her house after it had broken the first couple of months she had been in the UK. She also explained how although she had been brought up in an Islamic country, she felt her region was part of the cause of Iran's decline and no longer practiced it, she hadn't taken part in Ramadan for this reason. Her experiences of her gender but also her religion and national identity and the different trajectories that had brought her to the UK influenced the way she conceptualised her home and how she went about making home.

"When I was a child until now I, I desire, I wish I imagine my bedroom is very big err bed and err big library and err a chair [rocking], book." (Daria, 20.5.22)

From this Daria's idea of home is closely linked to having her own space, containing her books and her own items. This contracted dramatically to Azaia's imagining of home which contained friends and family and involved her hosting such people. Daria's opinions of home highlight how each participant's experiences of home had been affected by the different intersections of their identities. For Daria, her gender and religion had caused her 'homeland' to be hostile and unhomely, as it didn't allow the freedoms she valued for a place to feel like home. This, for me, highlighted how each participant's experience of home was unique and subjective, it was not only affected by their gender but the intersection of their identity which influenced how they thought and conceived home. Although I have only touched on intersectionality it would be an interesting topic within itself but is beyond the remit of this study.

It would appear apriori that migration, from Daria's perspective, is a liberating experience. Migration from South to North has often been theorised as a liberating for women (Pedraza, 1991, Parrenas, 2001; Sweetman, 1998) as it provides immigrant women with economic independence, new social

and cultural opportunities due to the different gender norms of the receiving country, and new expressions of gender and identity. Daria, associated her experiences of freedom with the norms of the west as it allowed her to depart from the oppressive structures of her religion and state. But Abu – Lughod (2002) reminds us that we need to be cautious of such an assumption and challenge the idea that migration equals liberation for women. She highlights a risk in presuming that migration to a western country is liberating. In her discussion, she highlights that the cause of women's liberation has been used for colonial endeavours and thus emphasises the importance of being critical of outsiders framing migration as a form of liberation. This becomes paramount when considering the "existing assumptions and discourses about the female Muslim body in contexts of (forced) migration" (Collison and Ugolotti, 2021: 121). While this issue has been highlighted in some forced migration literature, most of the time women remain invisible (Harrell-Bond and Voutira, 2007) or are essentialised in public and policy narratives (Doná, 2007). Refugee women often represent the docile object of moral compassion and are the ultimate 'vulnerable refugees' (Malkki, 1996; Nyers, 2006; Freedman, 2016) who, when Muslim, are further oppressed by religion and culture (Abu-Lughod, 2002; Farooq Samie, 2018). In order to avoid essentialising refugee women or making presumptions about their status or experience, Anthias (2000) argues we should recognise that migrants make the decision to migrate to escape oppressive structures and do so because **they** define the structures as oppressive. Thus, Daria views her experience as liberating as she had defined the structures she experienced as oppressive, rather than her experience being defined by Western discourse of liberation.

What is clear from these different accounts is the way wider social structures and expectations altered the women's view on what made a place home or not home. Zara saw her mother's house as home because she wasn't expected to clean or cook or maintain a house. The women in the discussion about housework found it comical that their husbands should be any good at housework and suggested they viewed the housework as equal to their husbands' financial contributions although theory suggests this might be wrapped in internalised patriarchy and sustain the spatial division between the public and private spheres. Daria's account highlights how she believed she experienced a form of oppressive patriarchy, and she viewed her migration as liberating, although it is risky to presume that this is the case for every woman who migrates, especially if there is a lack of choice in the matter. Ultimately the social aspect of home is complicated by individuals' experience of their gender. This finding also demonstrates a further line of inquiry about how men experience the home as a gendered space as well as how the intersectionality of individuals' identity influences their conceptualisation of home.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Drawing on in-depth ethnographic and participatory research which utilised photo-elicitation interviews with refugee women in Bournemouth, this research sort to understand the meaning of home. It paid particular attention to the mundane affective and embodied experience of the home a still under-researcher element of home (see Dunn, 2010 for exception), while drawing on theories from transnationalism and feminism.

After conducting a comprehensive literature review, it became clear that home is a complex and multi-faceted concept in academic literature (Mallet, 2004). Home has been associated with 'homeland' (Dona, 2015), material spaces (Buitelaar and Stock, 2010; Duruz, 2010), and social relations (Taylor, 2015), which create and complicate an individual's experiences of home. Defining home as homeland or place of origin suggests that it is static in space and time, which causes conflict when home is considered in the context of displacement. *Displacement* is defined as a loss of home (Feldman, 2006), or "the act of forcing somebody/ thing away from their home position' (Oxford English Dictionary, 2019). Thus, displacement means a loss of home or homelessness (Dam and Eyles, 2012) for refugees. This dichotomy characterises refugees' experience of home as one of loss of their place in the world and a “poverty of social relations” (Cernea, 1996: 22). This conceptualisation of home and displacement in turn influences how refugees are understood and conceptualised both in academic and public discourses. They are seen as out of the "national order of things" (Malkki, 1995: 516) and existing in a place called ‘nowhere’ (Arendt, 1951). The juxtaposition of these concepts highlighted the core research question that underpins this study, how does one experience home in displacement and what does home mean when you have been displaced. These questions and the subsequent findings aim to move beyond the ‘home vs displacement’ dichotomy and draw on the lived experiences of refugee women in Bournemouth to explore how it is possible to understand and construct a home in a displacement context.

This thesis proposes a relational framework for to understanding home. The framework is based around three core dimensions of home, the temporal, spatial and social/ affective. Exploring these dimensions through a relational framework highlights individual’s opportunities and autonomy to build and sustain a home beyond the borders of their place of origin. Thus, these findings contribute to wider debates on transnationalism by putting the literature on transnationalism and the three dimensions of home into dialogue. Through these findings the research challenges the idea that the home is fixed or synonymous with homeland and breaks down the conflict between the

conceptualisation of home and displacement. It also suspends the assumption that an individual naturally belongs to a place and thus forced migration results in refugees being “outside the national order of things” (Malkki 1996: 516), and therefore experiencing homelessness (Kabachnik, et al. 2010: 317). This theoretical lens also contributes to a growing body of work on homemaking and viewing home in terms of ‘routes’ not ‘roots’. Additionally, the relational framework highlights an opportunity to question the current categorisation of refugees or the 'refugee condition' as Stonebridge (2020) calls it. Rethinking home in terms of relations enables us to challenge the idea that refugees are passive victims of circumstance (Taylor, 2009) and instead focus on the autonomy refugee exercise, even in displacement situations.

The findings also speak to an intersectional feminist perspective by focusing on how women’s gendered experiences can be influenced by their religion, nationality, or different trajectories. This has not yet, to my knowledge, been embedded or integral element to the understand the gendered experience of migration and home.

It is important to highlight that the findings of this research capture the unique and distinctive experience of refugee women supported by a Bournemouth-based charity. Because of the participants’ specific routes to sanctuary, their experiences are not reflective of all categories of refugees as their resettlement status gave them a limited but vital opportunity to create the relational framework proposed in this work. This research is therefore not, generalisability but does shed light on to the experiences of refugee women that may resonate with the experience of other refugee women either on resettlement scheme or not in different areas in the UK that are outside of the traditional dispersal areas. These experiences may include

a. The way refugee women remake home
b. How resettled refugees, who are provided although limited opportunities to make home
c. It provides more insight into these processes of making home

This study, therefore, highlights some new avenues for further research. Further research could explore the possibilities or impossibilities for different categories of refugees to make home, exploring in depth how political categorisation can create opportunities to make home or reduce individuals’ capacity to build a relational framework proposed in this thesis. Further, the research highlights the need to explore how charities, NGOs, and third-sector organisations can further support refugees in creating their home in the UK. This research suggests that the current focus on employment or language as a means of integration may only represent some of the support that refugees require to feel ‘at home’ in their host countries.

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Appendix 1: Ethics checklist

Bournemouth University

Research Ethics Checklist

About Your Checklist	
Ethics ID	40022
Date Created	25/10/2021 15:04:24
Status	Forwarded
Risk	High

Researcher Details	
Name	Emily Robins
Faculty	Faculty of Health & Social Sciences
Status	Postgraduate Research (MRes, MPhil, PhD, DProf, EngD, EdD)
Course	Postgraduate Research - HSS
Have you received funding to support this research project?	No
Please list any persons or institutions that you will be conducting joint research with, both internal to BU as well as external collaborators.	no

Project Details	
Title	The possibilities and impossibilities of making home in a migrant context: The case of female forced migrants in Bournemouth
Start Date of Project	20/09/2021
End Date of Project	22/07/2022
Proposed Start Date of Data Collection	11/01/2021
Original Supervisor	Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers

Summary - no more than 600 words (including detail on background methodology, sample, outcomes, etc.)

This research will investigate the concept of home, meanings and attachments to home for refugee women who seek support and sociality at the charity ICN (International Care Network),in Bournemouth, in which I am embedded as a volunteer since September 2021. The project is guided by social anthropological and phenomenological approaches and based on a two-fold ethnographic methodology, including elicitation techniques.

Field site details: the refugee women are from countries such as Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Venzuela, Turkey, Poland, Albania. They all hold recognised refugee status. ICN support services include language classes, after school home work support and community support. As a volunteer with this charity, I hold the appropriate DBS certificate.

From beginning of my volunteering, the women were informed of my eventual intention to conduct research about their concept of home. They also know that the decision to participate is theirs alone and independent of my or ICN's support services. While my volunteering is helping in building trust in advance of commencing any research, without yet recruiting research participants or soliciting such response, many of the women have already expressed that they are hugely interested in this project as an opportunity to share their stories, being

listened to, have fun and practice their language skills.

Research is envisaged to start from mid-January and end mid-April 2022.

Part 1: participant observation, including field note taking, during the first six weeks, investigating everyday relationships of the women at English language classes, conversation groups, and in casual conversations during volunteering work.

Part 2: from mid-February until end of data collection, five to six conversation groups (embedded in ICN regular support activities and schedules), with around 4/6 women per group, facilitating open conversations around the theme of 'home' through photo and/or object (material culture) elicitation techniques.

Women will be informed about the opportunity to participate voluntarily, how to self-recruit, their rights - if they decide to participate- to withdraw at any time through and anonymisation at source (pseudonyms): a) a poster about the project displayed on the premises of Bournemouth ICN (see draft attached); b) informal conversations; and b) participation information sheets handed out to recruits only (attached).

Participants will also sign an Agreement Form (attached).

Further information regarding focus groups/photo and/or object elicitation: women will be asked to bring in images or objects that are significant to them for their understanding of home or their connection to home. These photos or objects will guide the conversation and enable the women to direct the conversation in away they are comfortable with. The objects/ photos will also act as a prompt for me and act as a visual aid for women with lower levels of English. There will be no translator but groups will include participants who are able to support and translate for each other with the aim of reducing the effect any external party might have on the women talking about this subject. Participants will be asked if they are comfortable with the groups being recorded and, if not, detailed notes will be taken for analysis.

My presence and intentions as a researcher will be overt at all times. The women involved will be regarded, treated and credited (in acknowledgement) as co-researchers.

Risks and vulnerabilities: the women's status is secure and their participation voluntary. Risks arise from potentially bringing up traumatic memories or emotions relating to leaving home. Photo/object elicitation techniques work well in highly sensitive contexts. They assure that agency and choice over what to disclose and share remains with the research participants themselves. Furthermore, ICN offers a professional support network, including recourse to psychological support if required.

Filter Question: Does your study involve Human Participants?

Participants	
Describe the number of participants and specify any inclusion/exclusion criteria to be used	
8-12 participants will be included women that must have refugee status in the UK. This will excluded asylum seekers or individuals waiting for refugee status to be confirmed. Participants will be drawn from a conversation group and English classes run by ICN. Inclusion will be based on voluntary participation in the research and will include women from a number of different countries, from different ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds.	
Do your participants include minors (under 16)?	No
Are your participants considered adults who are competent to give consent but considered vulnerable?	No
Is a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check required for the research activity?	Yes
Please provide DBS number (if known)	

Recruitment
Please provide details on intended recruitment methods, include copies of any advertisements.
A poster about the project displayed on the premises of Bournemouth ICN (see draft attached). If participants express an interest in taking part in the project informal conversations will be had to clarify any details about the project or concerns potential participants might have and a participation information sheets handed out to recruits only (attached). Emphasis is placed on self recruitment and no pressure will be placed on anyone from any external parties to take part in the research.

Do you need a Gatekeeper to access your participants?	Yes
Please provide details, including their roles and any relationship between Gatekeepers and participant(s) (e.g. nursing home manager and residents)	
The gatekeeper is the community support and volunteers manager at ICN who I approached in September with the intention of volunteering with the charity to access this group of participants and who offered me the position. Her role is to manage the community division at ICN. She works closely with many of the women who are potential participants, supporting them through the government resettlement scheme to find appropriate housing, enrol children in schools and support any additional concerns or needs. She is well liked by many of the potential participants and supports the research. Her background in social anthropology and her role make her highly risk aware, including the need to clearly differentiate any support or sympathy offered to the women from their participation in this research. Great care will be taken, in continuous communication with ICN branch department manager, that there will be no sense of obligation or conditionality attached to the services offered; and that the prospective research participants retain all freedoms of choice to participate or not in this research. The gatekeeper has provided a letter (see attached) outlining her understanding of her part in the research and their support for the research to take place.	

Data Collection Activity	
Will the research involve questionnaire/online survey? If yes, don't forget to attach a copy of the questionnaire/survey or sample of questions.	No
Will the research involve interviews? If Yes, don't forget to attach a copy of the interview questions or sample of questions	No
Will the research involve a focus group? If yes, don't forget to attach a copy of the focus group questions or sample of questions.	Yes
Please provide details e.g. where will the focus group take place. Will you be leading the focus group or someone else?	
Focus groups will take place from mid-February until end of data collection and will be conducted by myself. Five to six conversation groups (embedded in ICN regular support activities and schedules), will take place at the church hall were the group sessions are currently being held. Groups will include around 3/5 women per group, facilitating open conversations around the theme of 'home' through photo and/or object (material culture) elicitation techniques.	
Will the research involve the collection of audio materials?	Yes
Will your research involve the collection of photographic materials?	Yes
Will your research involve the collection of video materials/film?	No
Will any photographs, video recordings or film identify an individual?	No
Please provide details	
Photographs will be selected by the participants who will be informed that any identifiable characteristics from the photographs will be distorted to ensure anonymity.	
Will any audio recordings (or non-anonymised transcript), photographs, video recordings or film be used in any outputs or otherwise made publicly available?	Yes
If Yes, please provide details.	
Photographs of objects and photos brought in by participants will be taken if they have agreed on the participant agreement form (see attached). If participants are not happy for their images or objects to be presented in this format in the research a description will be used in it's place.	
Will the study involve discussions of sensitive topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use, criminal activity)?	Yes
Please provide details and measures taken to minimise risks	

Risks arise from potentially bringing up traumatic memories or emotions relating to leaving home. Photo/object elicitation techniques work well in highly sensitive contexts. I will assure that agency and choice over what to disclose and share remains with the research participants themselves. Furthermore, ICN offers a professional support network, including recourse to psychological support if required.	
Will any drugs, placebos or other substances (e.g. food substances, vitamins) be administered to the participants?	No
Will the study involve invasive, intrusive or potential harmful procedures of any kind?	No
Could your research induce psychological stress or anxiety, cause harm or have negative consequences for the participants or researchers (beyond the risks encountered in normal life)?	Yes
Please provide details and measures taken to minimise risks	
Risks arise from potentially bringing up traumatic memories or emotions relating to leaving home. Photo/object elicitation techniques work well in highly sensitive contexts. I will assure that agency and choice over what to disclose and share remains with the research participants themselves. Furthermore, ICN offers a professional support network, including recourse to psychological support if required.	
Will your research involve prolonged or repetitive testing?	No

Consent

Describe the process that you will be using to obtain valid consent for participation in the research activities. If consent is not to be obtained explain why.	
Firstly, participation will be voluntary and information about the project will be displayed on posters at a conversation group at ICN (see attached). Following self recruitment, participant information sheets (see attached) will be given to participants with detailed information about the project and their role in it is. Information sheets will be written in plain English to ensure that women with lower levels of English will be able to understand the information. If necessary information sheets will be translated in to the participants first language to ensure the participant is fully aware of the intensions of the research. Paricipants will be encouraged to discuss the research with myself to clarify or settle any concerns. Agreement forms (see attached) will be written in plain English for the same purposes and will include a range of questions about the different elements of the research such as if they consent to having images taken of pictures or objects they bring to the group or if they wish for these to be with held and a description take their place.	
Do your participants include adults who lack/may lack capacity to give consent (at any point in the study)?	No
Will it be necessary for participants to take part in your study without their knowledge and consent?	No

Participant Withdrawal

At what point and how will it be possible for participants to exercise their rights to withdraw from the study?
Participants will be able to with draw from the study at any point by leaving the group discussions while they are taking place or expressing verbally their desire to stop taking part to myself or any member of ICN staff.
If a participant withdraws from the study, what will be done with their data?
If the participant withdraws from the study, data that has already been collected will remain part of the data for analysis in an anonymised format and will be stored on a password protected BU SharePoint or 'one drive'. No further data will be collected after the participants with drawl.

Participant Compensation

Will participants receive financial compensation (or course credits) for their participation?	No
Will financial or other inducements (other than reasonable expenses) be offered to participants?	No

Research Data

Question	Answer
Will identifiable personal information be collected, i.e. at an individualised level in a form that identifies or could enable identification of the participant?	Yes
Please give details of the types of information to be collected, e.g. personal characteristics, education, work role, opinions or experiences	
Research participants will be asked a number of questions about before the session starts to be identify their general demographic. These will be anonomised using a coding system (see attached Coding 1) and will be matched with a pseudonym which participants will be asked to selected for themselves. This pseudonym will be used during the write up of the research. Data collected will include opinions and experiences which will be transcribed and audio recording deleted once transcribed. Any data that might be used to identify the women will be annomised	
Will the personal data collected include any special category data, or any information about actual or alleged criminal activity or criminal convictions which are not already in the public domain?	No
Will the information be anonymised/de-identified at any stage during the study?	Yes
Will research outputs include any identifiable personal information i.e. data at an individualised level in a form which identifies or could enable identification of the individual?	No

Storage, Access and Disposal of Research Data

Question	Answer
During the study, what data relating to the participants will be stored and where?	Details of basic demographic will be stored in a coded format (see coding 1). Transcribed data will be stored on a BU SharePoint/ cloud that is password protected and backup regularly on to an external hard drive.
How long will the data relating to participants be stored?	Until the end of course completion plus 12 months (August 2023)
During the study, who will have access to the data relating to participants?	Myself and my supervisors.
After the study has finished, what data relating to participants will be stored and where? Please indicate whether data will be retained in identifiable form.	Identifiable data will be stored on a BU Sharepoint/ cloud and back up to an external hard drive until completion of course plus 12 months (until August 2023) when data will be distroyed and hard drive whipped.
After the study has finished, how long will data relating to participants be stored?	Identifiable data will not be kept past the comletion of course plus 12 months (August 2023)
After the study has finished, who will have access to the data relating to participants?	Myself only
Will any identifiable participant data be transferred outside of the European Economic Area (EEA)?	No
How and when will the data relating to participants be deleted/destroyed?	Data will be deleted after the completion of the course plus 12 months (August 2021). Data will be deleted manually from the sharepoint storage and from the external hard drive.
Once your project completes, will any anonymised research data be stored on BU's Online Research Data Repository "BORDaR"?	Yes

Dissemination Plans

How do you intend to report and disseminate the results of the study?	
Peer reviewed journals,Conference presentation	
Will you inform participants of the results?	Yes
If Yes or No, please give details of how you will inform participants or justify if not doing so	
Participants will be informed of academic dissemination plans in the 'participant agreement' form (see attached) and will be informed that there participation might result in data collected from their experience being used in publications. Participants will need to agree to this in the participant agreement form	

Final Review

Are there any other ethical considerations relating to your project which have not been covered above?	No

Risk Assessment

Have you undertaken an appropriate Risk Assessment?	Yes

Attached documents

Coding.xlsx - attached on 29/11/2021 15:21:05
Focus group theme guide.docx - attached on 29/11/2021 15:21:58
Participant Agreement Form.docx - attached on 29/11/2021 15:22:10
Participant information poster.docx - attached on 29/11/2021 15:22:14
Participant Information Sheet.docx - attached on 29/11/2021 15:22:22
Sawers Rachael ICN letter.pdf - attached on 02/12/2021 11:00:27