

New Research Approaches in Migration Studies: Syrian and Iraqi Refugees in Jordan as an Example

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Millions of refugees fleeing from civil unrest and war in Syria and Iraq have found refuge in various neighbouring countries in the Middle East and in Europe. Arts-based and arts-informed research are creative approaches for studying migration and the lived experiences of families and young people. I argue in this paper that new combinations of research approaches and representations as well as interdisciplinary academic and non-academic collaborations need to be created in order to understand and examine the refugees' lives and experiences.

This paper uses aesthetic forms of research in form of art and virtual reality (VR) as a methodology for enhancing our understanding of the diversity and complexity of human experiences. The first part of the paper introduces *body mapping* (Solomon et al., 2005) which is an artistic technique for creating life-sized images that traces the contours of the individual's body. The act of creating a body tracing allows participants to directly communicate a story about the impact of displacement on their body. Body mapping has proven to be very useful in providing refugees with an alternative tool to share their own experiences of displacement (Shanneik 2018). The second part, discusses the production of virtual reality in which the refugees I worked with become co-producers of knowledge directed to its user. The paper engages critically with the use of creative approaches during various stages of the research process, from inception to dissemination, and the kind of knowledge produced about migration.

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