**There Are Other Worlds: maternal knowledge beyond borders**

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**Introduction: Imagining new worlds, reassembling narratives**

I borrow the title for this paper from Sun Ra’s song “There Are Other Worlds (They Have Not Told You Of)” (Ra 1978). The energy undulating from his music drew upon “the interconnectedness of the human, earth, universe, and sounds regardless of diverse and new genres” (Adams 2019). This track was released in 1978, the year I was born, for Sun Ra’s album *Lanquidity* (Ra 1978)*.* The song is one of Sun Ra's most haunting space anthems, and easily the most sorrowful. There seems to be a weariness that separates this theme from all the others he composed. Sun Ra’s music remained unknown to me until I heard it late one night in a friend’s flat in Chicago in 2003, during the monthly meeting we held as a group of disenfranchised students at one of the most expansive art schools in the USA. Many of us were from what the West frames as The Global South. These gatherings were for us an embodiment of Frantz Fanon’s argument on political solidarity between the Third World masses in the post-war era ([1961]2005). We discussed endlessly issues of representation, and why, at the prestigious institution we all attended (mostly as token students) it was considered passé. But it was the early noughties, and the world basked in excess. The East/West divide was gone, everyone believed we would abolish borders altogether. Gender and race were not considered issues worth discussing any more.

But not for us, not for me. Never for us, never for me.

Since 2008 I have been based in the UK, where I continued my educational journey, yet again as a scholarship student from the fringes of Europe. As I was approaching the end of my degree, Theresa May (UK Home Secretary at the time) declared her aim to create a “Hostile Environment” for migrants (Kirkup and Winnet 2012, 4). Since 2010, migrants in the UK witnessed countless changes and restrictive measures being placed on almost every migration stream (student visas, work visas, residency permits etc.). The UK Home Office Hostile Environment policy has since become incorporated into a set of administrative and legislative measures designed to make staying in the United Kingdom as difficult as possible for migrants,in the hope that they might voluntarily leave. [[1]](#footnote-1)

The first part of this chapter will elaborate on the complex Hostile Environment phenomenon in the UK and how it is a contemporary legacy of colonial privilege. I will then talk about how this system has inspired an enormous creative response by artists from migrant backgrounds. It is this creative foil that inspired the chapter. As an artist-researcher-human who mothers, with a complex intergenerational migrant history, I will focus this chapter on migrant knowledge production and art-making as a way to not only understand, but to resist and defy the hostile political climate. I will reflect on the creative practices and intersectional, decolonial methodologies that informed my most recent practice research collaborative project “Finding Home” (2018–2021). I will particularly focus on the work co-created with the artists d’bi young anitafrika and Mojisola Elufowoju FRSA,[[2]](#footnote-2) who are both mothers. I will discuss two elements that informed our process: time and the creation of migrant-situated knowledge. With this chapter, I am asking: how we can talk about the meaning of maternal care from migrant experience of everyday caring?

In this chapter I use autotheoretical sketches to capture the complexity of everyday encounters that informed my collaborative creative work. Writing of this kind has been systematically excluded from the wider academic discourse, and has been deemed as too intimate, messy, emotional, fictional, weak, not rigorous enough. These entries are marked in italics and as reader, you can digest them as stand-alone text or as part of the wider academic context explored in this chapter. I argue that a maternal decolonial autotheoretical approach has the potential to give tools for the future generation of maternal thinkers and artists to recognise their experience and to continue to question the language and power structures of what is considered “knowledge” in academia and culture.

*We walk into a room, where an officer needs to take our biometric data. He looks at my younger daughter (born in the UK, but not a citizen) and shifts uncomfortably. We look at each other, he turns around and it seems he wants to leave the room. He turns swiftly back and confirms my daughter’s age.*

*“She is five, right?”*

*I nod.*

*“Shall we say, she is too young for fingerprints?”*

*Based on my experience with Home Office officials, I am hesitant and not sure how to respond to his ambiguous question. He notices my hesitation.*

*“She is too young for biometric data.”*

*I am glad he makes the decision for us, but also mistrust and years of experience with constantly changing rules, prompt me to ask.*

*“Are you sure?”*

*“Yes.”*

*We leave the room after he finishes with my partner, myself, and my older daughter. However, my younger daughter leaves slightly disappointed by being excluded from the odd ritual. We buy her a hot chocolate from the vending machine, while she is watching the loop of a Home Office information video on the screen in the tiny waiting room.*

*“Am I British now?” my youngest asks. I don’t answer.*

*“There are other worlds they have not told you of, They wish to speak to you.” (Ra, 1978)*

**Hostile borders**

The UK Home Office Hostile Environment policy refers to a set of government administrative and legislative measures aimed at identifying and reducing the number of immigrants in the UK with no right to remain.[[3]](#footnote-3) The origin of this wording, as I previously stated, can be traced back to Theresa May’s interview with the *Telegraph* in 2012, when she was Home Secretary. These measures were introduced formally by the Immigration Acts of 2014 and 2016, with an aim to restrict illegal immigrants renting property in the UK, driving, having bank accounts, and accessing benefits and free healthcare. According to The Free Movement website, this means that the current UK migration approach “is characterised by a system of citizen-on-citizen immigration checks” (Yeo 2018). As argued by the journalist Daniel Trilling, the border is now extended inwards into the everyday life of migrants. What used to be monitored only at the border crossing, is now becoming everyday monitoring. Trilling also highlights how the Government’s aim to control, police, and manage immigration has become more pronounced over the last few decades, due to huge political pressure. This escalated with the Brexit vote in 2016,[[4]](#footnote-4) compounded by pressure from the media and voters, and there were calls for accountability around how many immigrants, and of which sort, were in the country. This prompted the creation of what Trilling calls a “parallel system” for migrants:

So what you end up having set up is a kind of parallel system just for immigrants, with biometric visas initially, various forms of ID cards for asylum seekers and other kinds of immigrants, people who've been given leave to remain and so on, who are being monitored in a way that the native-born UK citizen population is not. (2021)

This “parallel system” is deeply ingrained in the experience of many migrant artists in the UK. As highlighted by a report by Migrants in Culture, based on a UK-wide survey conducted between May and July 2019, 90% of the responders felt angry and/or fearful about the Hostile Environment. The aim of the survey was to collect key information on the day-to-day experiences of all cultural workers, migrant, and non-migrant, within the parallel immigration system in the cultural sector. The report highlights the impact of the Hostile Environment policy:

The policy forces landlords, banks, hospitals and employers including universities and cultural institutions to act as proxy border agents in their daily interactions with their patients, tenants, staff and students. The Hostile Environment creates a culture of fear and distrust, and impacts anyone deemed to look “foreign.” (Migrants in Culture 2019, 4)

The findings of the report are sobering. Since the launch of the Hostile Environment in 2012, both migrants and citizens of colour are experiencing increased discrimination and hardship in the cultural sector. This manifests in overt discrimination and racial profiling, financial pressures, and emotional stress. Also, it demonstrates complacency by the cultural sector, including individuals in senior management, who lack knowledge around the Hostile Environment policy and the specific needs and experiences of migrant cultural workers.

The most distressing aspect of the report is how it considers the impact of the Hostile Environment at the intersection of migration and race. It highlights the links between the current oppressive immigration system and similar systems developed by colonial forces in the past. By trying to depersonalise migrants through data, we see once again the erasure of the experiences of marginalized groups (mostly people of colour and women). This is evident from this testimony section from the “Migrants in Culture” Research Report:

I know that the Hostile Environment Policy causes extreme stress for migrant workers and workers of colour in the cultural sector, as well as creating for those people real conditions of precarity and vulnerability in relation to economic and housing stability, and exposure to racist regimes of monitoring and surveillance. I know, for instance, colleagues and students in the cultural sector who have been detained in detention centres and who are currently at risk of deportation. Additionally, Hostile Environment programmes like Prevent mean that Muslim students in British Higher Education are subjected to standards not applied to their peers: whether this is expressing opinions on politically contentious matters or organising university events. Muslim students have been targeted by Prevent officers at universities in the UK on this basis. All of this has a serious, detrimental impact on those working in the cultural sector and so on the cultural sector itself. (2019, 2)

By ignoring the intersectional impact of the Hostile Environment policy, the UK government and public risk falling back to old colonial narratives of racial superiority. Creating “parallel systems” for migrants and naturalised citizens has a grim dystopian undertone.

**Maternal decolonial autotheory**

My methodological approach to this chapter, and my collaborative practice research piece “Finding Home”, arose from my experiences of working, mothering, and living in the UK as “non-British”. Not being able to identify with dominant modes of thinking, because of my specific postcolonial and post socialist personal history, has been a big part of my migrant journey. I often felt trapped in an existential void, due to my precarious migration status. Many non-Western feminist scholars and artists in Anglo-American academia and cultural sectors also experience this. And though my personal journey might differ from other non-Western feminist scholars and artists, these experiences are all shaped by the same phenomenon, defined by Madina Tlostanova as “coloniality of knowledge” (2016, 214)

There is a need for intersectional methodologies and stories that entangle the maternal and creativity, and for knowledge that escapes Eurocentric definitions and binaries. In maternal studies, there is a need to extend Sara Ruddick’s early proposition on maternal thinking as a unity of reflections, judgment and emotion. Her vision of a maternal studies future was of a place/context where “maternal thinkers are respected and self-respecting without making for them/us any claims of moral and political advantages” (Ruddick 1989, 127). However, the field is currently dominated by white, Western scholars and, as observed by Lisa Baraitser and Sigel Spiegel, a much-needed critical turn in maternal studies, that will incorporate what Joy James’ calls the “captive maternal” (James quoted in Baraitser and Spiegel 2020, 1). As argued by Tlostanova et al:

There is a need for new transversal dialogues that are not only able to locate similarities but also see contextual and historical differences of colonialism and imperialism and understand gender and sexual relations alongside white heteronormativity. (2016, 223)

Maternal studies as a field needs to nurture dialogues that will carve ways forward, and will encounter intergenerational trauma, colonial damage, and environmental justice. The call for new kinds of dialogues is observed by Andrea O’Reilly, who says that “gender essentialism underpins modern motherhood and gives rise to many oppressive practices” (2010, 377). Motherhood has been sitting uncomfortably at the end of white western feminism, often forgotten or deemed problematic – mainly because the Western definition of motherhood and maternal labour are entangled with European colonial history. But feminists from the Global South and Black feminist scholars Joy James (2016), Manuela Boatcă (2016), Alexis Pauline Gumbs (2016), Cherrie Moraga (2016) and Dani McClain (2019) have been engaging proactively with the challenges of integrating uncomfortable motherhood dialogues in the everyday practice of liberation and critique. As argued by Fernardo Coronil, a view of capitalism from the (post)colonies – the world’s main providers of natural resources – “allows both a fuller understanding of the role of nature and of the role of women’s work in the making of European capitalism. Instead of viewing nature and women’s labour as ‘gifts’ to capital they should be seen as confiscations by capital, as part of its colonized other, as its dark side” (Coronil 2000, 358). Boatcă argues that during colonial expansion the religious celebration of motherhood and domesticity was used to colonize the female body and gender roles. The world became gendered and motherhood, along with nature, was put on a false pedestal, while being mined, maimed, and systematically oppressed (Boatcă 2016, 93).

It is not surprising that decolonial scholars are keen to actively reclaim the territory of mothering and choose the verb “to mother” over the noun “motherhood”. Mothering is an action done by a range of people, including grandmothers, aunts, and queer and gender nonconforming people who do not identify as women but who see themselves engaging in, as Gumbs put it, “The practice of creating, nurturing, affirming and supporting life” (2016, 9). Elif Shafak playfully, with a note of sarcasm, talks about how women are indoctrinated to despise showing weakness and embodied forms of knowledge:

Mrs. Weakness is not a popular woman among the members of our generation. Nobody knows where she is now, but there are rumors that she has been sent into exile to an island in the Pacific or a village on the outskirts of the Himalayas. We have all heard of her, but it is forbidden to say her name aloud. At our workplace, school or home, whenever we hear someone talk about her we flinch, fearing the consequences. While she is not exactly on the Interpol List of the Most Wanted, nobody wants to be associated with her. (2013, 9)

However, in this moment of multiple entangled eschatological threats, the COVID crisis, refugee crisis, climate chaos, there is a need to acknowledge that this perceived “weakness” actually allows scholars to nurture new kinds of knowledge and creative practice: practice that survives in spite of capitalism. This has been a long battle, a baton transferred from a generation of feminist, decolonial thinkers, border dwellers, and storytellers. It is based on the actual mode of surviving, despite being erased multiple times through history. As argued by Moraga:

In the face of the world-wide misogynist atrocities and intimate violence, we cannot escape recurring self-doubts about the actual power of our acts of resilience against global patriarchy. I admit I have long days of doubt. Perhaps it’s my age, the knowledge of the lengthening list of sisters/ compañeras who’ve passed and the sense of my own diminishing years. As so many others have said before me, I don’t imagine I will live to see the revolution. I smile at the arrogance of this, that we imagine that our work begins and ends with us. (2016)

Therefore, I employ a maternal decolonial autotheory, an approach that will allow the future generation of maternal thinkers and artists to recognise their experience and situation as part of a bigger battle informed by systematic oppression.

**Project “Finding Home”: migrant-led knowledge creation**

*A female child in the tree, a female child under the tree. A female child gazing at the sky. A woman singing in Yoruba. Sounds of pounding yam. Rainbow colours on a chopping board, borsch cooking in the pot. Smells of childhood, something that you hate, something that you now crave. Window inside a window inside a window. Naked female body framed. Letter to male child, to hold on and wait, while mother gathers resources and thoughts. Everyday knowledge not documented, mundane, repetitive, slow. Time welling, extending. Using time to defy, defend, persevere.*

In 2018 I started working on the three-year international research project “Finding Home: Migration, Placemaking & Research Creation”. This project, as summarised by the Principle Investigator Professor Marusya Bociurkiw, foregrounds the idea that migration is story, and story is survival (2021, 6). When originally planning the UK side of the project, with the co-researchers Carolyn Defrin and Winstan Whitter, we decided to use an auto-ethnographic approach to studying borders and migration. As argued by the author and academic Shahram Khosravi, this enables research that can “explore abstract concepts of policy and law and translate them into cultural terms grounded in everyday life” (2011, 5). The intersection of the personal and the political was critical to our research. Engaging with other migrant artists over three years, we worked deliberately as co-researchers and co-creators in a non-hierarchical dynamic. We ate together, we took our time, we shared stories of our own personal journeys, and together created a series of four films that explored how we find home when it is so impacted by government policy, social and cultural integration, and intergenerational relationships.

The entire project was driven by migrant artist lived experience (including the research team’s own complex migrant journeys) and time was a prominent factor in how the artistic process was approached. We approached time as an element of the artistic production cycle. More importantly, we also looked at time as a dominant factor in the migrant legal journey (paperwork, visas, financial costs, etc.). Time, on both the artistic production cycle and the migrant legal journey, is suspended time. As argued by Baraitser, “this is time conceived of as a viscous fluid, no longer a line with direction or purpose but a pool, the welling up of present time that will not pass and has no rim” (2017, 1). This viscous fluid time was something that I shared with artists d’bi and Mojisola as migrants and mothers. We discussed the suspended time of early motherhood and care for babies and young children, time that is not measured by hours, but by repetitive tasks. As migrants, this welling up of time was familiar because of the endless waiting, being out of control, being monitored and measured, but never given a realistic “timeline”. Both of these actions, caring for children and waiting for documents to arrive, are characterised by an inability to “control time” or to experience “linear progress”, defining principles of Western society.

Migrant artists often talk about this relationship to time. This process is what Ayşe Güleç calls the “migrant-situated knowledge” of those directly affected by governmental anti-immigrant politics and racism (2018, 2). Migrant-situated knowledge mediates between the fields of art and politics in order to expose practices of silencing on various societal levels and combat these by making it impossible to ignore. For our practice research approach, we wanted to find a way for our co-creators, the migrant artists that we met through our project, to be able to creatively explore over a prolonged period what knowledge they hold and how that knowledge challenges the Hostile Environment narrative in UK right now. In the next two sections I will reflect on the issues of time and knowledge by reflecting on the specific collaborations.

**Mojisola’s story**

With my co-researcher Carolyn Defrin, I meet Mojisola Elufowoju FRSA in the Nigerian restaurant Aso Rock in Dalston, London, UK. She comes out of rehearsal from the Arcola theatre, where she is working on her forthcoming production *Here’s What She Said to Me* (2020), a semi-autobiographical mixture of music, ritual, and poetry about motherhood and families. It has her parents’ story at its core, recounting how her mother was disowned by her Christian parents for marrying a Muslim man. While she talks about some of the stories, she is simultaneously giving us advice on what to order. Born in London, Mojisola grew up in Nigeria, where she was looked after largely by her grandmother. She currently runs Sheffield Theatres’ resident company Utopia Theatre, which focuses on stories of the African diaspora. When we settle at the table, her son arrives with a beautiful bouquet. He apologises for taking time out of our meeting, but he wants to see his mum and wish her an early happy birthday before he goes travelling again. We see a confident young man and his mother embrace; he joins us for a quick coffee, and we all get entangled in intergenerational stories of migration. They tell us anecdotes about their lives unfolding between Nigeria and the UK, he speaks about what it means to grow up black in Northern England.

Mojisola uses food references in her discussion of mothering between Nigeria and England. She recalls ingredients and smells, talks about processes of making different recipes. Food becomes a mediator and softens the edges of a story that is in places difficult and challenging. We originally plan to film Mojisola at the National Theatre, where she was staff director on Inua Ellams’ *Three Sisters* adaptation in 2020. However, the pandemic starts, and our plans change rapidly. To keep moving the project, we devise a set of filming instructions as offerings to our co-creators. We ask them to think about favourite meal or an object, that reminds them of home. We reach out to Mojisola, now back in Sheffield, and ask her if she can film herself and respond to our provocation (Marchevska, Defrin and Whitter 2020). After few weeks, we receive a video and a sound file from her. The video is of Mojisola cooking a traditional Nigerian dinner, pounding yam, sizzling oil. The sound file is her singing a traditional Nigerian song and reflecting on home and food; she quickly turns stereotypes into clever storytelling:

Home is where you go after your journey,
Home is where the heart is,
When I think about home there is huge link with food,
where is home, what is home,
my grandmother, the soil, the earth, my spirit,
why I cook thinking of home? (Elufowoju, 2021)

Mojisola reflects on how she was mothered by her grandmother in Nigeria who would tell stories “as she was [doing] your hair, as she was making food – it was just part and parcel of her life. It’s why I love writers who use language in a way that stops you in your tracks” (Wyver 2020). She also reflects how this model of caring meant that she was surrounded by her grandmother’s traditional Nigerian storytelling techniques, which now influence her work. “Oral traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation, music of the olden days, pre-colonial. I feel my work speaks on a spiritual level because it connects with that” (Wyver 2020). The first time I watch the video draft from Mojisolo, I am transported to our first meeting. Smells flood my memories, and I am nostalgic for our pre-pandemic life. I wish we could all sit again together in Dalston.

Mojisola holds migrant-situated knowledge that with the passing of time opens new worlds, worlds that can hold her, her children, and her culture in new entangled constellations. She offered us part of that intimate, domestic migrant space through her video and singing. And that shifts the ideological boundaries of knowledge *about* migrants, to the intimate lived situated knowledge *of the* migrant.

**d’bi’s story**

The first time I meet d’bi in Brixton market, London, UK, she suggests we eat lunch together in the Ethiopian restaurant “Habesha village”. As soon as I see her, I understand that she is a power force: she stands tall and graceful, with a big smile and head held high, while greeting people in the market in the sincerest way, and gives me a warm, sisterly hug. We sit on a low bench and eat food with our hands. d’bi is finishing a master’s degree in London, coming back to education after years in a successful career as an actress, teacher, and dub poet. She immediately tells us how this journey is difficult because she had to leave her sons in Toronto, Canada with her mum, while embarking on a one-year precarious and expensive journey that will hopefully bring her new challenges and improve her prospects. She talks about her complex migrant journey, self-describing as:

Me—a thrice-diasporic African humxn, being (dis)entangled by a-yet-to-be-named Black-queer/ed-feminist praxis—decolonising personhood, practice and pedagogy—emerging from a 500-year lineage of resistance to colonial violence. In a long-away prior moment: Ancestors abducted as chattel from Africa. Transported to Xaymaca (Jamaica) to toil plantation soil. To fatten the curiosity, bellies, pockets, pride and nations of European enslavers. In (an)other/ed moment: Parents emigrated from Xaymaca to the north of Turtle Island, Kanata—the settler colony called Canada—in search of the absence of colonial trauma, only to (re)awaken in the nightmare of colonization’s many-headed hydra in an anti-Jamaican Tkaronto (Toronto). (Anitafrika 2021)

Many narratives that d’bi had carried for years have come together for her since she moved to London. For the first time she decides to explore silence on stage in her MA performance piece *Concrete Jungle* (2019). As a spoken word dub poet, this move is unusual and criticised by some of her tutors and friends. This is challenging for d’bi, but she quickly explains to me that there is a difference between silence and “silenced” in her work. She underlines that people like her, with complex forced migration journeys, are always silenced. The silence is her way of exploring mourning, lamentation, and intergenerational trauma that emerges from these experiences over prolonged periods of time. We talk about what we can do to highlight this journey in the film we plan to make together. After a few months, d’bi sends us her film, a gift that arrives as the pandemic begins to take over our life and our project. The short film is a love letter to her sons, still in Canada, still separated, now even more since the pandemic slows down all the formal immigration processes in the UK and her sons’ applications to join d’bi are stuck somewhere in the ether.

After meeting d’bi, I immediately observe that her story is part of numerous transnational care constellations. In migration studies it is problematic to identify family with a domestic, bounded group that always travel together. Transnational families do not belong to only one nation or place. This fluidity is typical for transnational mothering and influences the ideals behind caregiving. Nancy Scheper Hughes explains:

“Mother love is anything other than natural and instead represents a matrix of images, meanings, sentiments, and practices that are everywhere socially and culturally produced … Consequently, mother love is best bracketed and understood as (m)other loves.” (1994)

Maternal care is not a romantic endeavour.

In d’bi’s video we see her moving slowly, we watch her naked body through a white window frame. We also see the image reverberating in the window reflection, endlessly looping. You can’t really see her face, partially covered with tightly bound plaits spilling over her body. The white of the frame stands in strong opposition to the orange walls of the room. There is a dark drawing of a tree silhouette parallel to her body, matching, mirroring. Her voice is intimate and comforting while she describes the pandemic-imposed separation as a feeling when “your chest are under water”. She also acknowledges her fear, of being alone in a small cottage in a foreign land away from support structures, but simultaneously observes that, as a society in the moment of panic, we left out the most vulnerable. Here d’bi is practicing the verb “mothering”. She observes that all her creative engagements have been cancelled, just like that, but also that she is reminded daily that death comes just like that. She considers her choice to have children in these times and how difficult that decision is while she navigates the hostile waters of the UK. She says:

I am the one who chose to be
to be with my doubts and my fears,
watching them fall away from me like the leaves of the grandmother oak,
feeling exposed without them in the forest
(without my children)
deep in, without, worse without,
it’s a funny thing about life isn’t,
with this new development, it cuts small scars into my hope,
I tell myself it is the choice
I choose to continue, to make,
while these vulnerabilities swim puddles around my feet
in which I soak (Anitafrika 2021, online)

In this text, we see d’bi struggling with the time limitations imposed by the pandemic and dysfunctional UK immigration policy. As she poetically implies, this imposed frozen time “cuts small scars” into her hope. But we also see d’bi proactively talking about agency over this stand-still situation and that ultimately transnational mothering is a choice – a choice for a different future.

**There are other worlds**

*We often play this game, where we recite letters and numbers in different languages. Mainly because we are constantly stuck between languages and words. They laugh when I can’t pronounce words. I often fail to pronounce failure in English. My tongue gets twisted and something else comes out. Maybe this failure to pronounce failure acknowledges my will to not be defeated by the expectations imposed on migrants. I will pass the tests, I will recite the oath, but I will never be able to pronounce failure. And that is ok.*

I argued at the beginning of this chapter that the Hostile Environment in the UK had an adverse effect on migrant artists. I therefore offered this analysis of migrant maternal creative practice to partially fill the gap that exists in the contemporary maternal studies field in the UK. I argued that there is a need for an intersectional, transversal dialogue about maternal perspectives, that will enable a better understanding on how to develop a stronger maternal intersectional empowerment movement. To date, the literature (O’Reilly 2010, McClain 2019, Gumbs 2016) argues for a repositioning of the word mother, from a noun to a verb, so that care is divested of biology. My study of migrant mothers’ experiences documents embodied migrant maternal knowledge creation in the practice of Mojisola and d’bi. We see how their complex creative processes activate the verb “to mother” and deliver intersectional methodologies and stories that entangle the maternal and creativity in an empowering way. As a result of conducting this research, I propose that intersectional methodologies like this are an important contribution to decolonial discourse and can help better the understanding of the eschatological entanglements that are key to us envisioning Other Worlds. This is important for maternal studies as a field because it offers a way forward in how we define and understand the maternal as a feminist position. “There are other worlds they have not told you of, They wish to speak to you” (Ra 1978).

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1. Many of these changes were officially introduced by the Immigration Acts of 2014 and 2016 (Taylor, 2018). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. I will refer to the artists d’bi young anitafrika and Mojisola Elufowoju by their first name in further sections of this chapter, to acknowledge that we worked deliberately as co-researchers and co-creators in a non-hierarchical dynamic. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. According to Russel Tylor the definition of a right to remain status in the UK is complex and can occur under a wide range of circumstances. As an example, those with the ‘right to live or work in the UK’ includes: British citizens; EEA citizens; those on certain visas; people with ‘indefinite leave to remain’; and asylum seekers/refugees. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Brexit is the colloquial term used to refer to a referendum held on 23 June 2016, when the majority of the British public who voted chose to leave the European Union. For a timeline of this process see Nigel Walker’s *Brexit timeline* (2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)