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Immigration Studies

UCLA Center for the Study of
International Migration

The Big Gamble: The Migration of Eritreans to Europe

Friday, February 19, 2021 | 12:00PM-1:30PM PST

Will be held via Zoom



Author: Milena Belloni

Milena Belloni is a FWO Postdoctoral researcher at the University of Antwerp and at the Human Rights Research Centre of the University of Gent (Belgium). Her research concerns refugees' migration dynamics and integration pathways, transnational families and ethnographic methods.



Discussant: Kelsey Norman

Kelsey Norman is a fellow for the Middle East at Rice University's Baker Institute and director of the Women's Rights, Human Rights and Refugees Program. Her research has been published in numerous academic journals and also in policy-oriented outlets including The Washington Post and The Atlantic.



Tens of thousands of Eritreans make perilous voyages across Africa and the Mediterranean Sea every year. Why do they risk their lives to reach European countries where so many more hardships await them? By visiting family homes in Eritrea and living with refugees in camps and urban peripheries across Ethiopia, Sudan, and Italy, Milena Belloni untangles the reasons behind one of the most under-researched refugee populations today. Balancing encounters with refugees and their families, smugglers, and visa officers, *The Big Gamble* contributes to ongoing debates about blurred boundaries between forced and voluntary migration, the complications of transnational marriages, the social matrix of smuggling, and the role of family expectations, emotions, and values in migrants' choices of destinations.

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