



## Child Migrant Voices in Modern Britain

Oral Histories 1930s-Present Day

**Eithne Nightingale**

“In this vigorous, timely, and politically astute book, Eithne Nightingale documents the lived experiences of people who have migrated to the UK as children over the past century. Written with deep empathy and compassion, it captures the struggles, dreams, and achievements of those who have helped to make modern Britain. A powerful antidote to anti-migrant rhetoric.”

*Alastair Owens, Professor of Historical Geography, Queen Mary University of London, UK*

“This is a superb piece of committed scholarship weaving together, through oral history, a powerful range of child migrant voices from the 1930s to the present day. When the British government is treating young asylum seekers and others with disdain, it is crucial to restore their humanity; Eithne Nightingale’s book does so with care, subtlety and compassion.”

*Tony Kushner, James Parkes Professor of History, Parkes Institute, University of Southampton, UK*

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Almost half the people displaced worldwide are under 18, yet their voices are rarely heard. This book throws a spotlight on children arriving in Britain from Hitler’s Europe in the 1930s to those escaping war in Ukraine in 2022. It follows the journeys of war traumatised children from Mogadishu to Mile End and from Syria to a Scottish isle. Some followed their parents to the ‘motherland’ from the former British Empire. Others came independently to escape forced marriage or military conscription.

These powerful testimonies shed light on children’s motivations, trials and achievements, including in adult life, providing critical insight into how the British – both individually and collectively – have welcomed or shunned child migrants. Importantly, Eithne Nightingale links these stories with contemporary issues such as the Windrush Scandal and Britain’s Illegal Migration Act 2023.

Situated in its historical and political context *Child Migrant Voices in Modern Britain* makes vital reading for those studying modern British history, migration and human rights as well as those working with child migrants. It will also appeal to a general audience interested in inspirational life stories.

**Eithne Nightingale** has over forty years’ experience of working on equality issues in the education and cultural sectors. As the V&A’s Head of Equality and Diversity she co-produced the *World in the East End* gallery that became the inspiration for her PhD in child migration and the films *Child Migrant Stories* <https://childmigrantstories.com/>. A trustee of BAOBAB Centre for Young Survivors in Exile, Eithne is an award-winning writer, photographer and filmmaker and lives in Hackney, East London.

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