SO CLOSE

Publication Series

VOL.1
Forced displacements: a European History
Javier Rodrigo
and Miguel Alonso
(eds.)

SO CLOSE

Enhancing Social Cohesion
through Sharing the Cultural Heritage
of Forced Migrations

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SO-CLOSE: A Brief Introduction
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The book that begins here is part of the European project SO-CLOSE. On more than one occasion, I have found myself explaining in simple terms what SO-CLOSE is and what it aims to do. It is not easy to explain because, while SO-CLOSE is based on a relatively simple idea, putting it into action is incredibly complex.

Our project has a central goal: to help combat stigmatization and the rhetoric of hate and to facilitate the integration of refugees (and asylum seekers) in Europe through mutual knowledge and understanding between these people and the communities that have welcomed them, using history and personal stories as central narrative threads. All of this is being done with technological tools that are attractive, innovative, and replicable and can be used in schools, museums, cultural institutions, public administrations, and civic organisations.

The goal is to facilitate and recognition between refugees and local communities in three main areas: research, education, and culture. There is pedagogy in SO-CLOSE, but also artistic production, cultural heritage, and digital humanities. The project also involves research at the highest possible level of interdisciplinarity on the past and present of migration and forced displacement. Combating anti-immigration and anti-refugee sentiments and facilitating mutual knowledge and understanding have been primary concerns in recent projects in the Horizon 2020 programme. A distinguishing feature of our project is that it places the voices of refugees and asylum seekers at the centre of historical and contemporary narratives. This can undoubtedly help to restore a certain degree of purpose to many lives that have been truncated by war or by persecution for political views or sexual identities.

The people with whom we work and whom we place at the centre of our research have experienced situations of expulsion, forced migration, and, in short, danger, both in their places of origin and, in many cases, in transit or in places of refuge. Now, we want to

contribute to making their stories, memories, and cultures known through the prism of the existence of similar experiences in Europe. In order to do so, SO-CLOSE draws on personal narratives, making this storytelling its central methodology. We want to contribute to mutual knowledge and understanding because of our conviction that malicious and hate-filled discourses often stem from stereotyping and ignorance. The way to do this is through the empowerment or – better still – the recognition of the empowerment of the subjects who participate in this project, and particularly the refugees and asylum seekers who have worked with us on the different activities that are part of SO-CLOSE. This empowerment occurs through the co-creation of educational, cultural, and artistic digital tools that, in turn, are based on the needs expressed by different actors, including the refugee communities with which we have worked in Spain, Poland, Greece, and Italy.

It might seem odd that this project is led by a historian. The truth is that SO-CLOSE involves a constant learning process. But it is also the case that historiography and the social sciences are becoming increasingly digitized, and this tendency will only increase in the future. In SO-CLOSE, we aim to be ahead of the curve, creating an extensive living scientific repository that is constantly evolving on the phenomena of violence, war, forced displacement, and asylum. SO-CLOSE is creating digital tools to contribute to the long-standing debate about public uses of the past and using history as a focal point from which to construct messages of knowledge, understanding, integration, and solidarity.

History is the focus of this book, the first in a series of Open Access publications that will be prepared by SO-CLOSE over its three years of existence. Using multiple case studies, this book shows the historical centrality in contemporary Europe of the phenomenon of forced migration and displacement due to war, political persecution, or reasons such as gender identity. These case studies are accompanied by a study on the important role of ethnic cleansing in driving forced displacement in 20th-century Europe, written by the leading expert on refugee history in Europe, Philipp Ther, member of the SO-CLOSE Advisory Board. What we propose in this book is a sort of incomplete panorama that will help to resituate a phenomenon that is both contemporary and historical in historical narratives.

Presentation of the SO-CLOSE Project

"SO-CLOSE. Enhancing Social Cohesion through Sharing the Cultural Heritage of Forced Migrations" is a three-year long project funded from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Programme.

The main aim of SO-CLOSE is to contribute to social cohesion and combat the exclusion or marginalization that refugees may suffer by facilitating the encounters between similar life stories and promoting mutual understanding and knowledge between these people and their host communities. Using co-creative design methodologies and innovative digital and artistic tools, the vital experiences of refugees will be shared with the memories of survivors of European conflicts, preserved in the centers of historical memory.

The resulting data and methodology will be used to develop several digital applications. SO-CLOSE will design educational and cultural tools like interactive story maps, interactive documentaries based on immersive video recording, online exhibitions based on personal memories and storytelling or an online platform - Memory Center.

The Memory Center will contain a selection of audiovisual content for its future musealization, offer an innovative cultural experience that can generate social awareness. The co-creation and prototyping processes (pilots) will be carried out in four historical and cultural heritage facilities: La Jonquera Exile Memorial Museum, Trikeri Island Concentration Camp (Greece), Villa Decius Association (Poland) and the headquarters of the Monte Sole Peace School (Italy).

The SO-CLOSE project is coordinated by the UAB departments of Modern and Contemporary History, Sociology and Translation and Interpretation and Studies of East Asia, and supported by the UAB Research Park. The project's Consortium also includes: the Swedish University of Lund, Villa Decius Association in Poland, the Greek Research and Technology Center (CERTH), the Greek Refugee Forum and The participation of technology development companies La Tempesta Media and Engineering aims to provide the project with a set of interactive tools that collect exchanges of experiences between refugees and victims of historical conflicts.

A Brief History of Ethnic Cleansing in Modern Europe

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Keywords: ethnic cleansing, mass flight, radical nationalism, forced displacement, Europe

A Brief History of Ethnic Cleansing
in Modern Europe

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Throughout modern European history, ethnic cleansing has been the single most import-ant cause of mass flight. Therefore, the causes, mechanisms and consequences of ethnic cleansing deserve special attention in the study of refugees and refugee history. When the war in former Yugoslavia erupted, the western media adopted the term "ethnic cleansing" (in Serbian "etničko čišćenje") as novel in their presentation of the atrocities committed there between 1991 and 1995. On track of the media, social scientists and historians picked up the term, and produced a large array of publications about ethnic cleansing that range from in-troductory articles to profound monographs.[1] The geographical area, time periods and cases covered grew rapidly.

Initially, most English language books about ethnic cleansing focused on former Yugoslavia and Eastern Europe.[2] There is also an increasing number of publications on

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1   One of the first academic publications that used the term was Andrew Bell-Fialkoff, "A Brief History of Ethnic Cleansing", in: *Foreign Affairs* 72/3 (1993), pp. 110- 121. Among these monographs are Norman M. Naimark, *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001; Benjamin Lieberman, *Terrible Fate: Ethnic Cleansing in the Making of Modern Europe*, Chicago: Ivan Dee, 2006. See for a typology of ethnic cleansing Stéphane Rosière, *Le nettoyage ethnique, terreur et peuplement*, Paris: Ellipses, 2006. An earlier version of this article was published in Dan Stone (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. All data and sources used here have been explored for my book: *The Dark Side of Nation States: Ethnic Cleansing in Modern Europe*, New York: Berghahn Press, 2014 and the earlier German version that was published in 2011. Since then, a number of synthetic studies on refugee history has appeared. Noteworthy for ist global perspective and crowning a long career is Peter Gatrell, *The Making of the Modern Refugee,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013; Philipp Ther, *The Outiders: Refugees in Europe since 1492*, Princeton: Prince-ton University Press, 2019. It is also worth reading older books, especially Michael Marrus, *The Unwanted: European Refugees in the Twentieth Century*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.

2   See for example Terry Martin, "The Origins of Soviet Ethnic Cleansing", in: *The Journal of Modern History* 70 (1998), pp. 813-861; J. Otto Pohl, *Ethnic Cleansing in the USSR, 1937-1949*, Westport: Greenwood Press, 1999. Regarding Nazi Germany the focus was always on genocide, but books published in the 1990s showed the connections between Nazi resettlements, ethnic cleansing and the Holocaust. Most important in this regard was Götz Aly, *"Endlösung". Völkerverschiebung und der Mord an den europäischen Juden*, Frankfurt/M.: Fischer, 1995.

non-European cases such as India, Palestine or the Americas.[3]

The fashionable status of the term ethnic cleansing in the media and academia has had the advantage that empirical knowledge has vastly increased. But there is the drawback that sometimes the term has been overextended to cover any kind of inter-communal violence and time spans, when neither an ethnically exclusive definition of the nation nor modern administrations to carry out mass scale population movements existed.[4] Both preconditions of ethnic cleansing came into being only in the second half of the nineteenth century. This does not mean one should ignore earlier periods. In certain parts of the world, there were already earlier incidents of "cleansing", but they were driven by different, often religious motivations.

The danger of overstretching the term can be avoided if a fairly narrow definition is provided. Ethnic cleansing is always directed at a particular group that is defined through its nationality and/or ethnicity. The goal of ethnic cleansing is to permanently remove a group from the area it inhabits. The power of deciding who is a part of this group rests upon the state or the institutions that carry out the process of mass removal. Groups or individuals have usually no opportunity to declare a different ethnicity or to prevent their removal. Ethnic cleansing is always organized and therefore requires the existence of an effective administration. There is a popular dimension to ethnic cleansing, because there are actors needed to threaten with violence, to evict homes, organize mass transports and to prevent the return of the unwanted. Nevertheless, ethnic cleansing is a modern, rationally-planned administrative practice that needs to be steered from above. In this way, it can be distinguished from inter-communal violence. A third defining element beyond the motivation and the process is a spatial dimension. Ethnic cleansing always covers large areas and often large distances. The removal of a group is connected with a precise idea of the territory to which it can be sent and which is usually imagined as an external or "true" national homeland.

This spatial dimension is also a first way to distinguish ethnic cleansing from genocide, which often happened on the spot if there was no territory to which the enemy group could be deported. Another way of distinguishing between ethnic cleansing and genocide

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3   On India, see especially Ian Talbot's chapter in Richard Bessel and Claudia B. Haake(eds.), *Removing Peoples: Forced Removal in the Modern World*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. On Palestine and Israel see especially the work by Benny Morris, *The Birth of of the Palenstinian Refugee Problem, 1947-1949*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

4   See as example for overstretching and unclear boundaries to other concepts Daniele Conversi, "Genocide, Ethnic Cleansing and Nationalism", in: Gerard Delanty and Krishan Kumar (eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Nations and Nationalism*, London: Sage, 2006, pp. 320-333.

is the primary intent. The main goal of ethnic cleansing was the removal of a group from a certain territory, the main intent of genocide the destruction of an entire nation. Recent publications on the 1948 UN convention on genocide do not keep that distinction.[5] In the 1990s began a trend of enlarging the scope of the term and the 1948 UN convention. If that continues, almost every modern war and many cases of inter-communal violence would have to be acknowledged as having genocidal dimensions. But acknowledgement is a normative goal, not a scientific one, and it might ultimately result in the conflation of the Holocaust. Also for analytical purposes, it is better to distinguish crimes and horrors apart. Genocide and ethnic cleansing, even if it escalated into mass killing, resulted in a different kind of victimization as well as numbers and proportions of casualties.

Another important component of ethnic cleansing is the attempt to replace the cleansed population with new settlers and thus to homogenize the population until it reaches the aspired ethnic purity. Taking into account the other side of homogenizing practices also allows us to look beyond the immediate removal of people which is often taken as the end point in studies of ethnic cleansing. Furthermore, one can distinguish variants of ethnic cleansing. If it is carried out over existing or newly erected state borders, it can be often termed "expulsion", whereas if it is carried out within state borders, it is a "deportation". Most cases of ethnic cleansing were based on international agreements, but there also was ethnic cleansing during wars or to reach a fait accompli in view of expected contractual solutions.

Origins and preconditions of ethnic cleansing

Although ethnic cleansing became a catchword, modern nationalism can be seen as a major precondition and obvious motive of ethnic cleansing.[6] The older and normatively-grounded distinction between civic, or subjective, political, western and hence basically "good" nationalism and ethnic, cultural, eastern European and therefore "bad" nationalism is not helpful for the discussion. A major step towards ethnic cleansing was the Darwinist turn in the late nineteenth century. According to the biologist concept of the nation, minorities were perceived as harmful to the organism or body of the nation.

A second precondition of ethnic cleansing was the concept of the modern nation-state. Already in the Enlightenment one sees the conviction that a centralized, mono-linguistic

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5   See Martin Shaw, *What is Genocide?*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007

6   See Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Program, Myth, Reality,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 133.

state would function better than the traditional empires. Second, the idea of popular sovereignty implied a different, much closer relationship between the state and the people it rules. There were no intermediary institutions like in feudal regimes, but direct accountability. If the people can hold their acclaimed or elected leaders to account, these leaders can ask for a different kind of loyalty. In the nineteenth century the idea of the nation-state was connected with the expectation that the problem of ethnic diversity would solve itself through assimilation, with all subjects of a state eventually becoming French, German, Italian, etc. The first concrete proposals of ethnic cleansing came up when the liberal (and later Marxist) expectation of assimilation was proven wrong.

By and large, one can apply the rule that the later the nation-state formation occurred, the more contested and violent it was. Especially after World War I, the French centralized nation state was seen as the model of how to run a state. This brought the state almost automatically into conflicts with its minorities and with other countries. The very term "minority problems", which can be found in numerous international discussions and conferences about the post-World War I order, already signifies who was seen as the culprit for Europe's major problems. Although additional conventions in the Paris peace treaties promised the protection of minorities in Central and Eastern Europe, the only minority right which was effectively put into practice was the "right of option" to migrate to the external nation state in case of border changes such as after the treaties of St. Germain, Trianon and Neuilly.[7] Moreover, in the treaties of Neuilly and Sèvres paragraphs concerning protection of minorities were already combined with provisions for their "emigration". On paper, the relocation was supposed to be voluntary, but the treaty of Neuilly was made compulsory when minorities resisted. Hence, over the course of time, emigration was given priority over protection in order to homogenize the newly created nation-states. Often this has been explained by a supposedly ethnic and violent character of nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe. But in 1918/19, the established western European nation-states avoided the acknowledgment of minorities all together. These double standards contributed to the desire of the newly created "minority states" to become "real", i.e. homogenous nation-states.[8]

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7   See See Eric D. Weitz, "From the Vienna to the Paris System: International Politics and the Entangled Histories of Human Rights, Forced Deportations and Civilizing Missions", in: *The American Historical Review* 113/5 (2008), pp. 1313-1343.

8   On the treaties and the resistance to them, see Carole Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others: The Great Powers, the Jews and International Minority Protection, 1878-1938*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp. 236-264.

A third pivotal factor was the development of *population policy*. Already in the late nineteenth century, European states (the German Empire being the first one) began to manipulate the demographic structures of contested border regions. At this time, and later in the policy of various nation-states in the interwar period, the main means of homogenization was the settlement of additional groups. When the borders changed, these groups were the first to be targeted as unwanted and forced to emigrate. The ethnic engineering depended upon precise statistics, population counts and a clear-cut distinction between titular nation and minorities. Since the 1870s, these statistics were created all over Europe and were brought to perfection even in countries which were commonly perceived as backward. As various population statistics show, every single soul and even newborn children were counted according to their nationality. Around the turn of the century, especially the British insisted on "ethnological arguments" for drawing nation-state boundaries in post-imperial spaces such as South-Eastern Europe. In this way, national belonging was objectivized, and groups could be singled out for various measures. All of these factors can be summarized under the term of "European modernity".[9] The attribute "European" is important, for it was this continent where the first and so far most ethnic cleansing occurred.

Periods of ethnic cleansing

In the history of ethnic cleansing in the twentieth century one can distinguish four major periods. The first one lasted from the Balkan Wars in 1912 to the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. Compared to later ethnic cleansing the number of removed people was limited. But this period resulted in an international consensus, that ethnic cleansing is a means to stabilize the international order and single nation-states. The second period began with the Treaty of Munich in 1938 and was continued under German hegemony over continental Europe until 1944. There were two kinds of ethnic cleansing, one under direct German occupation, the other one carried out by the countries allied with Germany. The third period of ethnic cleansing resulted from the postwar order of Europe decided at the Conference of Tehran and thereafter. This period, which brought by far the most numerous ethnic cleansing, also affected large areas beyond Europe, especially the Indian subcontinent and Palestine. The fourth period happened in the first half of the 1990s, but it affected only the former Yugoslavia and some contested border regions in the former Soviet Union.

9   This thought is a continuation of Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991. See also Amir Weiner (ed.,) *Landscaping the Human Garden*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003.

In terms of numbers and area the fourth period is of minor relevance compared to earlier ones. But it is important because it helped to create an international consensus against ethnic cleansing and even attempts to reverse previous flight and expulsion.

Some books on ethnic cleansing reach far back into the nineteenth century. Although it is true that hundreds of thousands of people were already expelled during the various wars against the Ottoman Empire in the Caucasus and in the Balkan peninsula, several aspects of modern ethnic cleansing were missing. The persecution of Muslims mostly occurred during wartime, when people could still attempt to escape to the woods and then return to their homes. For a long time, the newly-created nation states in South-Eastern Europe were too disorganized to carry out a consistent population policy through settling and unsettling. Moreover, the various postwar migrations of Muslims were driven not only by push, but also by pull factors such as the Sultan's call to his Muslim subjects as *Muhacir* to come home to the country where they could freely practice their religion.[10] The prominence of religion is a specific aspect of all the "wars against the Turks", a chiffre often used for all Southeast European Muslims. There are also other parallels between the *Reconquista* on the Spanish peninsula and the or Habsburg policy in the areas reconquered from the Ottoman Empire in Hungary in the eighteenth century. No Muslims stayed in the lands conquered by the Habsburgs, even converts were often driven out. The situation was more complicated in the Caucasus in 1860-64 and 1876-78, and in the Balkans, some Muslims were allowed to stay there. Nevertheless, around two million Muslims had to leave their homelands and turned the Ottoman Empire into the state receiving most refugees on a global level. The violence, massacres and expulsions were driven by a mixture of fear of and orientalist contempt for "the Turks".[11] In this way, the persecution of Muslims was decidedly modern and secular.

The first period of ethnic cleansing (1912-1925)

The Balkan Wars in 1912/13 brought three major changes. Henceforth, ethnic distinctions clearly prevailed over the Christian-Muslim divide. The conflicts between ethnically-defined Christian nations were as violent as the persecution of Turks. The ethnic cleansing

10   See Alexandre Toumarkine, *Les migrations des populations musulmanes balkaniques en Anatolie 1876-1913,* Istanbul: Isis, 1995.

11   For the issue of colonialism and genocide see Dirk Moses (ed.), *Empire, Colony, Genocide: Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History,* Providence: Berghahn, 2008.

was more pervasive in total numbers and in regard to the proportion of minorities which were allowed to remain in their homes. The uprooting of unwanted minorities was combined with the resettlement of members of the titular nation. Especially near external borders, nation-states carried out a population policy to demographically secure these areas. Hence, one could argue that the Balkan Wars marked the beginning of organized ethnic cleansing. Over all, up to 900,000 people had to leave permanently their homelands as a consequence of these two wars.[12] In 1914, Greece and the Ottoman Empire took up negotiations about a voluntary "exchange of populations" across the Aegean Sea, which can already be seen as precursor of the Lausanne treaty.

The outbreak of World War I led to a preliminary decrease of forced migration between the Balkan Peninsula and Asia Minor, because the borders were now closed and all the countries involved had other military and strategic priorities. But ethnic cleansing continued in other areas of Europe and on a larger scale. The Russian Empire deported one million Germans and Jews, who were regarded as potential traitors. Similar attitudes and fears of further territorial dismemberment motivated the genocide of the Armenians in Ottoman Eastern Anatolia. In contrast to cases of ethnic cleansing, the Armenians were not expelled to their external homeland, but deported into the Syrian desert or semi-desert in the Anatolian highlands. This deportation into the void resulted in more than one million casualties, and was the first genocide in modern Europe. The Russian Revolution, the pogroms in the former Pale of Settlement and the continued fighting in a broad zone from Lithuania in the north to Thrace in the south of Eastern Europe motivated two millions to leave their homelands. Although this mass flight was not a planned ethnic cleansing, it further demonstrated how endangered minorities were.

The persecution of Jews contributed to the establishment of collective minority rights in the Paris Peace treaties.[13] But these rights were only valid for the newly-created or expanded nation states in Central and Eastern Europe. Especially France carried out a very different policy in its newly acquired territories. In formerly German Alsace and Lorraine, the population was divided into four different categories, ranging from trustworthy French to Germans. Around 150,000 of the half million people belonging to the category "D" (which basically meant Germans) were pushed over the Rhine. Although this signifies that only a third of those presumed to be Germans were expelled, the French "épuration" in Alsace set negative standards for the interwar period.

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12   See for all numbers, Ther, *The Dark Side,* pp. 57-64.

13   See Fink, *Defending the rights,* pp. 193-208.

Under the guidance of the Western powers, another precedent was set at the Paris peace conference. In 1919, Bulgaria was forced to sign a peace treaty that included a convention about the "reciprocal emigration" of the Greek minority in Bulgaria and the Bulgarian minority in Greece. Paradoxically, this provision was a part of the stipulations about minority protection.[14] The treaty of Sèvres set up a similar provision for Greeks and Turks living on both sides of the future border in Asia Minor. Initially the convention of Neuilly did not result in mass migration because the registration for emigration was on a voluntary basis. But the scenario changed with the arrival of the refugees from Asia Minor. The Greek government settled many refugees on purpose in the contested Greek borderlands with Bulgaria. This set off the local social and ethnic balance and added pressure for the so called *Slavophonoi* to emigrate. When a commission of the League of Nations was called in to analyse the causes of the widespread local violence in 1925, it recommended that emigration should have priority over minority protection.[15] Subsequently 102,000 Bulgarians or around half of the Slavic speaking minority left Greece, and 53,000 Greeks left Bulgaria.

By then, the Treaty of Lausanne had set an even more ominous precedent. Under the auspices of the international community of states, Greece and Turkey agreed upon the compulsory exchange of minorities. All Muslims had to leave Greece, all Christians had to leave Turkey with the only exceptions of Western Thrace and Istanbul. Although Turkey is often blamed for this first case of ethnic cleansing that covered almost the entire territory of two countries, it was Lord Curzon who set it on the agenda of the negotiations in Lausanne.[16] Moreover, Lausanne should be seen as a continuation of the Treaty of Sèvres, which also proposed a mass migration over the future border. Only in the second half of the 1920s did mass flight and resettlement recede and the new order of nation states was stabilized. By then, the Treaty of Lausanne contributed to creating an international consensus that mass and compulsory population "transfers" were a last resort but a useful means to stabilize the international order of nation-states.

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14   See the respective paragraphs of the treaty in H.W.V. Temperley (ed.), *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris, Vol. V. Economic Reconstruction and Protection of Minorities*, London: Oxford University Press, 1969, p. 317.

15   See about this commission Stelios Nestor, "Greek Macedonia and the Convention of Neuilly", *Balkan Studies* 3 (1962), pp. 169-184, here p. 181. See about the entire situation the recent and very thorough study by Elisabeth Kontogiorgi, *Population Exchanges in Greek Macedonia: The Forced Resettlement of Refugees, 1922-1930*, New York: Oxford UP, 2006.

16   See *Lausanne Conference on Near Eastern Affairs 1922-23. Records of Proceedings and Draft Terms of Peace*, London: His Majesty's Stationary Office, 1923, p. 118.

Ethnic cleansing under the hegemony of Nazi Germany (1938-1944)

The second period of ethnic cleansing began with the Munich Treaty in 1938. This treaty symbolizes the appeasement of Nazi Germany, which was allowed to annex the borderlands of Czechoslovakia. But the significance and the consequences of the Munich Treaty go far beyond the case of the Sudeten Germans. The four major European powers basically decided upon a new peace order for Europe. In future, states and societies should be separated by ethnic boundaries. Minorities had the choice to emigrate or to assimilate. Minority protection as a central element of the Paris peace treaties was abandoned, and only the "right of option" was preserved. The groundbreaking character of the Munich Treaty is also shown by the fact that the four signatory powers stipulated additionally that Czechoslovakia and Hungary should agree upon a new border within three months. This new European order lead to a first round of compulsory mass migrations, at first of around 190,000 Czechs,[17] in 1939 of other nationalities in addition. Hitler's ideas of "European security" for the Central and South-Eastern parts of the continent were based on similar premises: the creation of ethnic boundaries based on "exchange of populations" or one-sided population transfers.

Between 1938 and 1941, the German Empire vastly expanded the German *Lebensraum* by expelling Poles, Slovenes and other Slavic nations. There also was ethnic cleansing in the territories retrieved from France in the West. The Jews in the occupied areas suffered another and even worse fate: mass shootings, deportation and eventually industrialized killing in death camps. But the history of the Holocaust is left aside here in view of the specific attention it deserves. In Southeastern Europe, which at the time was mostly ruled or occupied by countries allied with Germany (Hungary, Croatia, Slovakia, Romania and Bulgaria), Hitler's ideas of European security were put into practice by bilateral contracts for population exchanges or one-sided population transfers. Those countries had to organize the ethnic cleansing themselves.

Hitler's primary arena for ethnic cleansing carried out by Germans was the territory annexed from Poland. The initial idea was to push out the Polish population and to replace

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17   Jan Gebhart, "Migrationsbewegungen der tschechischen Bevölkerung in den Jahren 1938-39, Forschungsstand und offene Fragen," in: Detlef Brandes et al. (eds.), *Erzwungene Trennung. Vertreibungen und Aussiedlungen in und aus der Tschechoslowakei 1938-1947 im Vergleich mit Polen, Ungarn und Jugoslawien*, Essen: Klartext, 1999, pp. 11-22.

them with German "resettlers". This also was a major motivation for the various treaties with Italy, the Baltic States, the Soviet Union and Romania about the resettlement of German minorities. When Hitler announced the first "*Heim ins Reich*" (home to the empire) plans in the summer of 1939, he still wanted to appear as a peace loving statesman, who created a new European order through ethnic boundaries. As it turned out, the various German resettlers, who numbered around half a million,[18] were mostly transported to the "Warthegau", the main area annexed from Poland in 1939. Shortly before and immediately upon their arrival, Poles were driven over the border to free apartments and farms for the German resettlers. All in all, around 365,000 Polish citizens had to leave their homelands between the fall of 1939 and spring of 1941.[19]

Compared to the original plans of the Nazis, the numbers of people actually removed were small. The situation was similar in northern Slovenia, where, according to the plans of Reinhard Heydrich, 260,000 Slovenes were supposed to be pushed out, but eventually only 30,000 had to leave. The reasons for the limited ethnic cleansing were mostly practical. The Nazi authorities in the main part of occupied Poland, the *Generalgouvernement*, did not know what to do with the arriving expellees from the Warthegau and West Prussia. Since they could not provide shelter, food and jobs, the occupation administration repeatedly protested against further mass migration. The second reason was the priority to keep the war economy intact and to prepare the impending attack on the Soviet Union. The third reason was the priority of the destruction of the European Jewry, which reached another dimension after June 1941. However, the Holocaust and mass ethnic cleansing of other European nations was often linked in practice, for example in trains that carried Jews to the killing sites in the East, but then were also used to transport Poles and other groups for forced labour in the West.

In addition to the people pushed over the border of the *Generalgouvernement*, the German authorities deported 475,000 people from the Warthegau for forced labour. According to the various versions of the *Generalplan Ost* (General Plan East), the German government planned to remove up to 45 million people in Eastern Europe, 10 million in the annexed Polish territories alone. Had Germany won the war, some of these plans would have been put into practice. Moreover, the expulsion of Poles was accompanied by mass killings. Already during the attack on Poland, around 50,000 civilians were shot, resistance against

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18   See about the numbers and ethnic cleansing during and after World War II the excellent collective monograph by Pertti Ahonen et al., *People on the Move. Forced Population Movements in Europe in the Second World War and its Aftermath*, Oxford: Berg, 2008, here p. 19.

19   See about this case of ethnic cleansing Maria Rutowska, *Wysiedlenie ludności polskiej z Kraju Warty do Generalnego Gubernatorstwa 1939-1941*, Poznań: Instytut Zachodni, 2003.

the subsequent expulsions carried the death penalty.[20] Hence, the ethnic cleansing had a genocidal aspect. This is especially true for later cases such as in the area around Zamość, where the Nazi authorities deported around 110,000 Poles in 1942/43 in order to create an Aryan strip of settlement that reached from East Prussia to the Carpathians.

Aside from its extreme brutality, the Nazi ethnic cleansing was specific in its selection criteria. Not only the people who were removed but also the resettlers who were supposed to replace them were screened for racial characteristics. This turned out to be an obstacle for the planned Germanization of the annexed Polish territories and ultimately even slowed the ethnic cleansing of Poles. The countries allied with Germany were less picky and, except for the Jews, used primarily national criteria of selection. Comparing the policy of Germany and its allies, one could label the Nazi policy as a racial and not ethnic cleansing. Even that may appear as euphemistic in view of the mass killing of Poles. But still a distinction should be made. In the case of the Poles and other Slavic nations, the Nazis mainly targeted the social and political elites, not all classes, genders and ages, as was the case with the Jews. Nevertheless, it is not easy to draw a line between genocide and ethnic or racial cleansing perpetrated by the Nazis. There was a gradual difference on the level of intent and a difference in the results, especially if one looks at the victim rates. But that should not be used to downplay any of the individual and also collective suffering.

The German policy of ethnic cleansing had far reaching repercussions. Already in 1940, a consensus emerged in Poland and Britain that the attempted Germanization of Western Poland would need to be reversed, and that there was no future for a German minority in Poland. The British journal *Fortnightly* wrote in 1940 with reference to the ethnic cleansing in Western Poland: "Hitler has burned his boats… He is daily establishing precedents which cannot be forgotten when the reckoning comes."[21] The ethnic cleansing also destroyed the social connections within the local societies. A peaceful coexistence of Germans with Poles in Poznań or other previously mixed cities and rural areas was precluded after the experience of German occupation.

In terms of numbers, the re-ordering of Europe through ethnic cleansing was much more effective in the areas ruled by the countries allied with Nazi Germany. As already mentioned, the Munich agreement contained a provision about the creation of an ethnic boundary between Slovakia and Hungary. This was put into practice in the First Vienna

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20   See Czesław Madajczyk, *Die Okkupationspolitik Nazideutschlands in Polen 1939-1945*, Köln: Pahl-Rugenstein, 1988.

21   Cited from Matthew Frank, *Expelling the Germans. British Opinion and Post-1945 Population Transfer in Context*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 42.

Accord (or Dictate, depending on the national viewpoint) in November 1938. Italy and Germany (France and Britain had dropped out due to rising tension with Nazi Germany) assigned parts of southern Slovakia to Hungary. More than 100,000 Czechs and Slovaks had to leave from there.[22] Once more, the arrival of refugees disturbed the local balance in the places of arrival. In late 1938 and early 1939, at least 50,000 Czechs were forced to migrate from Slovakia to the Czech Lands, which were soon occupied by Nazi Germany.

The first Vienna Accord was followed by the second one in the summer of 1940. This time a presumably ethnic boundary was set up in Transylvania, which was contested between Hungary and Romania. Around 370,000 Romanians and Hungarians who lived on the "wrong" side of the new border had to get out.[23] Formally, the migrants took advantage of the "right of option"; de facto most were forced to emigrate. In September 1940, Bulgaria and Romania concluded the treaty of Craiova, which set up a new border in the contested Dobrudja: 61,000 Bulgarians who lived north of the new border and 100,000 Romanians who had resided in the southern Dobrudja took part in an compulsory "exchange of populations". A similar solution had already been proposed by the British ambassador in Bucharest briefly before the outbreak of World War II.[24]

The ethnic re-ordering of space continued when Nazi Germany attacked Yugoslavia in April of 1941. Nazi Germany was assisted by revisionist Hungary and Bulgaria. In the recovered Hungarian territories in the Vojvodina, at least 25,000 Serbs were immediately expelled to German occupied Serbia. Bulgaria, another state greatly diminished by the Paris Peace treaties followed the Hungarian example. At least 110,000 Serbs were pushed out from Vardar-Macedonia, a similar number of Greeks had to leave the Bulgarian zone of occupation in Thrace.[25] The ethnic cleansing by the revisionist countries, and after June 1941 also by Romania in formerly Soviet occupied Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, had two components: one was retrospective and targeted the elites which had been settled by the interwar nation states that had profited from the Paris peace treaties. Hungary and Bulgaria basically removed everybody who was sent to the borderlands by the Czechoslovak,

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22   See Martin Vietor, *Dejiny okupácie južního Slovenska 1938-1945*, Bratislava: Vydavatelstvo Akadémie Vied, 1968, p. 42.

23   See about the various forced migrations in wartime and postwar Romania Dumitru Şandru, *Mişcări de populaţie în România* (1940-1948), Bucureşti: Editura Enciclopedică, 2003

24   See about this proposal Frank, *Expelling the Germans*, pp. 36-37.

25   See about these statistics Joseph Schechtman, *European Population Transfers 1939-1945*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1946, p. 407; Björn Opfer, *Im Schatten des Krieges. Besatzung oder Anschluss – Befreiung oder Unterdrückung? Eine komparative Untersuchung über die bulgarische Herrschaft in Vardar-Makedonien 1915-1918 und 1941-1944,* Münster: LIT Verlag, 2005, pp. 264-265.

Yugoslav, Romanian and Greek government. The second element was proactive and future oriented. Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania removed all people, who could have guided irredentist national minorities in the future. The ethnic cleansing in the German sphere of influence was connected with destitution, mass violence and killings. The number of affected people would have been much larger had there not been the priority of attacking the Soviet Union. That is true for Nazi Germany and its allies in Central and South-Eastern Europe, who had all devised plans for an almost total removal of minorities from their territories. Although the cleansing remained limited, it created a permanent climate of fear and terror.

Another zone of violent conflict was the former South-East of Poland, where Ukrainian and Polish underground units fought each other with great brutality since 1943. As a result, around 400,000 people escaped or were expelled until 1944, when a contractual solution was found under Soviet domination (see below). There was no direct German involvement in this case of ethnic cleansing, but the Holocaust set a negative example of how to deal with unwanted minorities, and Hitler′s ideas of an order of homogeneous nation-states in particular influenced the Ukrainian nationalist underground.

A special case in the German sphere of domination was the Independent State of Croatia (Nezavisna Država Hrvatska). There the goal to remove all Serbs resulted in genocide. In early June of 1941, Nazi Germany and Croatia had agreed upon a chain of ethnic cleansings. Croatia would take in 170,000 Slovenes that were supposed to leave the parts of Slovenia which had been incorporated into the Reich; in turn, Croatia was allowed to remove as many Serbs. But matters spiralled out of control already in the summer of 1941. The fascist Ustaša, who governed Croatia, were not able to organize the uprooting of the unwanted population and the transports. Consequently, the Croatian state mobilized criminals and the most radical nationalists to drive away the Serbs through maltreatment and symbolic killings.[26] Churches filled with people were set on fire, people who could not swim chased into the river Drina, where it marks the border with Serbia. The expellees arrived in Serbia plundered, maltreated and malnourished. Because the German authorities in Serbia could not handle this humanitarian disaster and were afraid of a strengthening of the Serbian resistance, they closed the border. Subsequently the Ustaša turned the transit camps for Serbian settlers into concentration camps. According to reliable calculations made by Croatian and Serbian historians, a minimum of 330,000 Serbs was killed 1941-44 in the Independent State of Croatia, many of them in death camps.[27] Just to compare:

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26 See about the ethnic cleansing in Croatia Jozo Tomasevich, *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941-1945. Occupation and Collaboration*, Stanford: Stanford University Press 2001, pp. 380-416.

27 See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, p. 738.

in 1991-95, there were approximately 100,000 victims on *all* sides of the war in Bosnia Herzegovina.[28] Around the same number of Serbs was expelled to Serbia. These proportions and the mass killings demonstrate that this case of ethnic cleansing escalated into a genocide. All in all, Hitler's vision of European security resulted in the ethnic cleansing of at least two million people in the countries allied with Germany.[29]

In creating a new European order, Nazi Germany was initially assisted by the Soviet Union. But in spite of all the recent literature on Soviet ethnic cleansing one should not forget that Stalin's priority rested upon social homogenization and persecution. The deportations of various minority groups between 1936 and 1941 were either based on military considerations and security paranoia or on the destruction of the social elites of the newly acquired western territories. Most affected were the Baltic countries and the former eastern territories of Poland, from which the NKVD deported 330,000 people. However, fewer than two thirds of the deportees were Poles, which demonstrates again that a social selection had priority over a national one, although in view of Stalin's anti-Polonism, one can also see a combination of the two criteria.

The Soviet Union changed its policy after the attack by Nazi Germany. Now it began with punitive and clearly ethnic deportations, which at first affected the Volga Germans. The Soviet ethnic cleansing peaked in 1944 with the deportation of various Caucasian nations and the Crimean Tatars. But these measures were retrospective, based on accusations of treason and collaboration during the war. In contrast to the policy of the European nation-states, the deportations were not based on the utopia of ethnic homogeneity. This might also explain why, in view of the size and the population of the Soviet Union, and even more so compared to social cleansing, the Soviet ethnic cleansing remained limited. Including the deportation of minority groups in the late 1930s, Stalin removed around 2.1 million people on ethnic premises.[30]

The ethnic cleansings in the period between 1938 and 1944 amounted to some six million people and changed the ethnic map of Europe forever. The expulsions and deportations added to the already existing nationalist hatred, caused tremendous suffering, and made a return to the status quo before 1938 almost impossible. Another and maybe the most important result of all these "wars in the war" was that it confirmed the consensus of

28   For the numbers see Ther, *The Dark Side*, pp. 221-222.

29   The number is based on the following single national cases: 500,000 Serbs, 540,000 Romanians (however, 220,000 refugees from the territories annexed by the Soviet Union in 1940 could temporarily return), 280,000 Czechs and Slovaks, 120,000 Greeks, 150,000 Hungarians and 60,000 Bulgarians. Special cases are the 200,000 German settlers who came from the prewar territory of Romania, and the Jews from the countries allied with Germany who are dealt with below.

30   On the ethnic deportations, see the comprehensive volume by Pavel Poljan, *Ne na svoie vole. Istoria i geografia prinditel´nych migracracii v SSSR*, Moscow: Memorial, 2001.

the Allies that peace in Europe could only be secured if it was based on ethnically homogenous nation-states.

Ethnic Cleansing and the Postwar European order (1944-1948)

This consensus was officially expressed by Winston Churchill in his speech on the future of Poland. In December 1944, he stated in the House of Commons: «There will be no mixture of populations to cause endless trouble. ... A clean sweep will be made.»[31] The British premier pointed to the "success" of the Treaty of Lausanne and the manageability of large scale population transfers. As Matthew Frank has shown, this speech and the following decisions taken at the conferences of Yalta and Potsdam were the result of a longer process of discussion. The principal decision to remove the German minorities from postwar Czechoslovakia and Poland had already been made in 1942, when the British government declared the Munich agreement of 1938 null and void.[32]

Yet, this reversal only encompassed the border changes made then under the pressure of Hitler. The second element of Munich, that minorities should either assimilate or emigrate, remained intact. At the Tehran conference in 1943, the Allies decided to move Poland's borders westwards. The Poles who lived east of the future Polish-Soviet border were supposed to emigrate to postwar Poland, while the Germans should be pushed out from the territories allotted to Poland as compensation.[33] In 1944 and 1945, the Allies continued to discuss the precise location of the Polish borders, which would determine the number of Poles and Germans, who had to be removed. The result of these diplomatic deliberations, like in earlier cases, was an escalation of the territorial and demographic range of ethnic cleansing. While the plans of 1943 foresaw the transfer of between five and seven million Germans, in 1945 it was clear that at least 12 million should be removed.

31   Winston Churchill, "The Future of Poland. A Speech to the House of Commons, December 15, 1944", in: Charles Eade (ed.), *The Dawn of Liberation. War speeches by the Right Hon. Winston S. Churchill C.H., M.P.*, London: Cassell, 1945, pp. 290-300, here p. 296.

32   For a perspective more on the East Central European governments in exile, see Detlef Brandes, *Der Weg zur Vertreibung. Pläne und Entscheidungen zum "Transfer" der Deutschen aus der Tschechoslowakei und aus Polen*, Munich: Oldenbourg, 2005.

33   See about the interdependence between the ethnic cleansing of Poles and Germans my dissertation Philipp Ther, *Deutsche und polnische Vertriebene. Gesellschaft und Vertriebenenpolitik in der SBZ/DDR und in Polen 1945-1956*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998.

These huge numbers aroused questions of the British and the US government about the feasibility of such unprecedented population movements.[34] But Stalin claimed that most Germans had already run away from the Red Army and that a very limited number was left in Poland. In addition, the main victor of World War II in Europe created a contractual solution for the Poles who still remained in the vast areas annexed by the Soviet Union. In September 1944, the communist puppet government in Lublin concluded "evacuation treaties" with the Ukrainian, the Belorussian and the Lithuanian Soviet Republics about the reciprocal exchange of minorities. Subsequently 1.5 million Poles were moved westward, and 480,000 Ukrainians were moved from postwar Poland to the Soviet Union (another 150,000 who resisted were deported within Poland in 1947), whereas the number of affected Belorussians and Lithuanian was rather small.[35] All in all, 2.1 million Poles originating from the Eastern territories arrived in postwar Poland – so far the largest single ethnic cleansing. The arrival of the Polish "repatriates", as they were called in the spring of 1945, was often the starting point for expelling Germans.

Prior to the Potsdam conference, the Red Army, Poland and Czechoslovakia attempted to create a fait accompli concerning the Germans. Especially near the postwar borders at the rivers Oder and Neisse, Germans were pushed out en masse from April to July of 1945. Simultaneously, the return of those who had fled from the approaching Red Army was prevented. The masses of expellees added to the chaos in the British, American and Soviet zones of occupation, which already had been flooded by war refugees (often both groups are lumped together, which is incorrect in view of motivations and the process of forced migration). The untenable situation motivated the Allies to limit and control the ethnic cleansing at the Potsdam conference. At the same time, they legalized the process by deciding upon the "transfer" of all Germans who lived in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. The stipulations for an "orderly and humane" transfer never materialized, however. The living conditions of the Germans still residing in Poland and Czechoslovakia and the organization of the transports improved only little after the British and American occupation authorities concluded agreements with Poland and Czechoslovakia in the beginning of

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34   Frank, *Expelling the Germans*, p. 122

35   The ethnic cleansing of Poles is documented extensively in Stanisław Ciesielski, *Przesiedlenie ludności polskiej z Kresów Wschodnich do Polski 1944-1947*, Warszawa: Neriton, 1999. For the "evacuation" of Ukrainians from Poland see in English Orest Subtelny, "Expulsion, Resettlement, Civil Strife. The Fate of Poland's Ukrainians, 1944-1947", in Philipp Ther and Ana Siljak (eds.), *Redrawing Nations: Ethnic Cleansing in East-Central Europe, 1944-1948*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001.

1946.[36] But even afterwards, many people arrived sick, maltreated and badly traumatized.

Stalin has often been accused of having been the mastermind behind these unprecedented ethnic cleansings. But all the "Big Three" agreed that Europe's postwar order should be built upon homogenous nation-states. This consensus was especially strong concerning the German minorities and their dissolution through compulsory migration. In its own sphere of influence, the Soviet Union pursued an ambiguous policy. When the Red Army occupied Transylvania, a region where mass ethnic cleansing had occurred 1940-44, it stopped the Romanian army and paramilitary units from taking revenge against Hungarians. Around three quarters of the 400,000 Hungarians who had fled from the front in the autumn of 1944 were allowed to return. The Red Army and Tito's National Liberation Army stopped widespread revenge against Hungarians and mass expulsions in the Vojvodina in early 1945. The country most fiercely advocating ethnic cleansing in Central Europe in 1945/46 was Czechoslovakia[37], which was still ruled by a mostly non-communist government.

For all that, the Soviet Union actively supported ethnic cleansing when it served its strategic aims. An example was the Polish-Ukrainian conflict, where the "evacuation" of the minorities and the deportation of the Ukrainians remaining in Poland in 1947 helped to get rid of the Poles in the Soviet Union, who were likely to put up most resistance against the Sovietization of the newly acquired Western territories, and to weaken the nationalist Ukrainian underground, which violently fought against the Red Army and the NKVD. The removal of the Germans also made Poland and Czechoslovakia dependent on the Soviet military protection against German revanchism and thus preceded the Cold War setup.

In Europe alone, the ethnic cleansing between 1944 and 1948 uprooted around 20 million people. Many more were to follow in some of the British colonies, which became the main arena of ethnic cleansing in 1947/48. Around 12 million Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs were removed when India and Pakistan were separated. Again, the European concept of a modern nation state was pivotal. Pakistan was supposed to be a Muslim state, and the separation only made sense if the population was homogenized at least in religious terms. There had been partition plans for Bengal already in 1905, when Lord Curzon had served as viceroy. After World War I, he proposed a neatly drawn borderline for Poles and

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36   On the way ethnic cleansing of Germans was carried out in Poland, see the profound documentation by Włodzimierz Borodziej and Hans Lemberg (eds.), *"Unsere Heimat ist uns ein fremdes Land geworden..." Die Deutschen östlich von Oder und Neiße 1945-1950. Dokumente aus polnischen Archiven, Bd. 1 – 4*, Marburg: Herder Institut, 2000-2004. On the ethnic cleansing of Germans from Czechoslovakia see various works by Tomáš Staněk, among them *Odsun Němců z Československa 1945-1947*, Prague: Academia, 1991.

37   On Czechoslovak policy toward the Hungarian minority, see Štefan Šutaj, *Maďarska Menšina na Slovensku v Rokoch 1945-1948*, Bratislava: Veda,1993.

Ukrainians, and in 1923 he chaired the Lausanne conference. This example shows that although Europe was the main area of ethnic cleansing in the twentieth century, colonial thinking and practices had an impact on Europe.

The British had also proposed the partition of Palestine between Jews and Arabs in 1937. Then the plans to move around 200,000 people, most of them Arabs, failed due to Arab resistance. But the Israeli-Arab war of 1948 created another opportunity to follow up on these earlier proposals. Again, the idea of a modern nation-state could not be reconciled with the existence of a substantial ethnic minority. In both areas, there also was a long tradition of inter-communal violence which let appear ethnic cleansing as a final means to create a stable nation state and lasting peace.

This consensus was, however, shaken because of the massive suffering and chaos created by the post-World War II ethnic cleansing. Although Germany had few sympathizers in 1945, the British and American public were appalled by the news from the areas of expulsion and the extreme misery in their zones of occupation. At the very least, the practicability of ethnic cleansing was questioned. The beginning of the Cold War also had a pivotal impact. The Western powers (re)discovered the discourse of human rights and distinguished their ideas of Western civilization from Communist rule. Another important issue was the prevention of future genocides. Although population transfers were not viewed as immoral or let alone genocidal in the immediate postwar years, the UN convention against genocide in principle covered many aspects of ethnic cleansing, the singling out of one particular group for persecution, its removal from the territory it used to inhabit and the destruction of material property and culture. This is one of the reasons why ethnic cleansing eventually diminished in the postwar period.

In Europe there were only few incidents such as the "Septembrianá" in Istanbul, when a massive pogrom forced the remaining Greeks in Turkey to leave, or after the partition of Cyprus when Greeks from the North of the Island and Turks from the South fled over the new border. But there was no more ethnic cleansing on the scale seen in postwar Europe or India. As a result of the 1968 movement, the awareness for human rights issues and for the suffering of minorities further increased in the 1970s and 1980s. Due to the long period of peace in Europe after 1945 the specters of war also had receded into a distant past. The greater was the shock when the breakdown of the Soviet Union and of Yugoslavia opened up another period of ethnic cleansing in the 1990s.

Epilogue: Ethnic Cleansing in Yugoslavia 1991-95

In the "Wars of Yugoslav Succession",[38] the republics striving for independence insisted on the existing boundaries of federative Yugoslavia, while Milošević and his allies aspired to change these boundaries by violent means in order to carve out a sphere of power as big as possible. Ethnic cleansing was a means to crush actual and potential resistance and to secure contested territories.

Now the international context was radically different. There was no consensus for ethnic cleansing anymore, but growing opposition against it. This is also true for non-Western states which are often criticized for their human rights record. Moreover, Milošević was no new Hitler, as some Western intellectuals suggested in the heat of the debate about the atrocities committed in Bosnia-Herzegovina. So far no master plan was detected in Belgrade that foresaw the ethnic cleansing of "greater Serbia". There is even some counter-evidence against plans of total cleansing, such as the continuing existence of ethnically mixed areas in Serbia proper like the Vojvodina and the Sandjak, and even within the war zone in northern and eastern Bosnia, such as the enclave of Bihać. When political power was undisputed, the authoritarian regime of Milošević tolerated the existence of subordinated minorities and of ethnic mixture. Of course, radical nationalists such as Vojislav Šešelj were very outspoken about the removal of all minority groups from contested areas already in 1991, but the political elites which then carried out the ethnic cleansing in the breakaway parts of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina only came to power briefly before or during the war. Hence, an explanation of this case of ethnic cleansing needs to focus on the course of events in 1991/92 and the subsequent escalation of violence to ethnic cleansing in various contested areas.[39]

In spite of all the suffering, one should keep an eye on the proportions of the war and the ethnic cleansing it involved. Calculations by the Research and Documentation Center (Istraživačko dokumentacioni centar) in Sarajevo reduced the number of casualties to around 100,000.[40] Moreover, among the war victims, Bosnian Serbs are only slightly underrepresented compared to their proportion of the entire population. But they were mainly victims of a different kind. While the Muslims in Bosnia suffered by far the most civilian

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38   See for this term Naimark, *Fires of Hatred*, pp. 139-184. The best book about the conflict in former Yugoslavia and also about the actors of ethnic cleansing there is Holm Sundhaussen, *Jugoslawien und seine Nachfolgestaaten 1943-2011. Eine ungewöhnliche Geschichte des Gewöhnlichen*, Wien: Böhlau, 2012.

39   There are numerous books about the former Yugoslavia, most of them written during or briefly after the war. For an in-depth analysis with including a pre-history and a comparative perspective see Cathie Carmichael, *Ethnic cleansing in the Balkans: Nationalism and the Destruction of. Tradition*, New York: Routledge. 2002.

40   Unfortunately the IDC and its webpage do not exist anymore. But the number of ca. 100,000 has been verified by various sources.

victims, the Serbians mainly lost military combatants and people shot by their own troops in beleaguered cities. That shows the asymmetry in the warfare, in which well-equipped Serbian soldiers and paramilitary units went into action against a Muslim population that could hardly put up armed resistance thanks to the way the Yugoslav army was dissolved and because of the international weapons embargo on Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Another difference between previous periods ethnic cleansing and the former Yugoslavia is that there have been attempts to reverse the effects and to repatriate the refugees. However, that policy has only brought limited results because many refugees did not see a future in the Republika Srpska (the part of Bosnia-Hercegovina which is administered by Serbian parties). The sobering conclusion is that once the ethnic balance of an area has been violently changed, a return to the status quo ante is very difficult.

There were new and horrible proportions of this most recent case of ethnic cleansing in the twentieth century. The refugees in Bosnia-Herzegovina numbered up to two million, almost half of the population. Most of the displacements were carried out in 1992 in a very short amount of time. This further demonstrates the increasing asymmetry between military might and civilian population in twentieth century Europe. However, the Serbian military power should not be overestimated. In 1991/92 Milošević had problems mobilizing people in support of his policy and draft dodging was rife.[41] These problems and the general vacuum of power strengthened paramilitary units like the infamous "Arkan Tigers", led by Željko Ražnatović, who did most of the dirty work of ethnic cleansing. Another factor in the mobilization was Serbian nationalist propaganda that revived the memories about World War II. The auto-victimization supported a very aggressive nationalism. Interviews with combatants after the war have shown that a major motive was the defense of the family or the neighborhood, which according to propaganda was endangered by supposedly neo-fascist Croats and Islamist Bosnian Muslims.[42]

A close look at the worst and most violent areas of ethnic cleansing also points to the validity of a bottom up perspective. The first major massacre of the war in Croatia in 1991 occurred in Glina, the same city where the Ustaša first burnt an Orthodox church full of people in the summer of 1941. Also in Eastern Bosnia, the expulsion and mass killing of Serbs during World War II had been especially horrendous. Moreover, the area around

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41   See about the problems of mobilization and the policy of demobilization Valère P. Gagnon, *The Myth of Ethnic War: Serbia and Croatia in the 1990s*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004.

42   See Natalija Bašić, "Die Akteursperspektive. Soldaten und „ethnische Säuberungen" in Kroatien und Bosnien-Herzegowina (1991-1995)", in Ulf Brunnbauer, Michael G. Esch, and Holm Sundhaussen (eds.), *Definitionsmacht, Utopie, Vergeltung. „Ethnische Säuberungen" im östlichen Europa des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Münster: LIT Verlag, 2006, pp. 144-168.

Srebrenica was the zone of fiercest military confrontation during the hot phase of the war in 1993. The Bosnian army temporarily regained large areas and persecuted the Serbs living there. Chasing out minorities cut off the support from enemy military units who, especially on the side of the Muslims, fought with a guerilla "hit and run" strategy.[43] Nevertheless, most of the ethnic cleansing in 1991 in Croatia and in 1992 in Bosnia was pre-emptive. Especially in northern Bosnia and along the most important railway routes and roads to Serbia proper, the purpose was to achieve a lasting military and political domination.

In terms of time, one can distinguish a first phase of ethnic cleansing in late 1991 and 1992 which was supposed to mark the territory of the break-away regions of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Even after military domination had been achieved there was a lot of violence including rape and mutilations. These crimes were often carried out in public in order to induce the remaining minority population leave. A second phase in 1993 was more connected to the military situation and strategic aims. The rest of the remaining minority population and the "enemy population" in still contested areas was expelled in order to fortify the frontlines and to prevent guerilla attacks. In this second phase, Central Bosnia and parts of Herzegovina were raged by the new Croat-Bosnian war. After a period of relatively stable frontlines a last round of ethnic cleansing occurred in 1995. Most affected was the Krajina in Croatia, where the Serbs were expelled by the Croatian army, and again Eastern Bosnia, where the Serbs aimed at dissolving the remaining Muslim enclaves in order to get as much territory as possible at a future peace conference. It was there, where the worst massacre of the war occurred, the genocidal killing of 8,000 Muslim men in and around Srebrenica. However, the fact that women and children were spared death marks a difference to numerous Nazi crimes during World War II. By this ultimate crime against humanity, the worst one of this war which was later persecuted as a genocide by the ICTY, the leaders of the Bosnian Serbs wanted to demonstrate that Eastern Bosnia is theirs. In spite of the international outcry, this strategy worked. The Dayton peace agreement allotted Srebrenica to the Republika Srpska.

Will the international condemnation of the atrocities in Yugoslavia prevent future ethnic cleansing and genocidal acts like in Srebrenica? In Kosovo NATO intervened to preclude a repetition of the Bosnian scenario. However, the West did not prevent the persecution and exodus of the Serbian minority, and the pogroms that occurred in 2004. Incidents like the war in Rwanda point to an even more pessimistic reading. Since ethnic cleansing is not accepted on the level of international politics any more and is difficult for an individual state to organize because of its spatial dimension, the way out might be more mass killing on the spot, that is to say, genocide.

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43   See the precise analysis of the war including ethnic cleansing in *Balkan Battlegrounds. A Military History of the Yugoslav Conflict, 1990-1995,* Vol. I, Washington D.C., Central Intelligence Agency, 2002, 142 ff.

The Past and Future of Forced Migration Studies

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In the contemporary world, international protection, humanitarian assistance, and access to asylum procedures are lifesavers for many people who have been forced to flee their homes to escape conflicts, abuse, and discrimination. Over the last ten years, there has been a frightening growth in the number of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) following the emergence of new hotbeds of tension in different parts of the globe. The current figure is around 80 million people. Humanitarian crises have been triggered by civil wars in Yemen and Syria; the latter conflict has produced 5 million refugees and 6.6 million IDPs since 2011. Since 2013, 4 million Venezuelan citizens have fled the violence and misrule of the national government, while over 100,000 people have left Nicaragua due to daily violations of human rights. The African continent continues to be a powder keg, constantly generating new flows of involuntary migrants. Recently, these have concerned the Central Sahel region, Mozambique, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to name a few. In addition to refugee crises of more recent origin, there are humanitarian emergencies that have lasted for several decades and are still far from being resolved. In this regard, the examples of Palestinian and Afghan refugees are emblematic as some of the most enduring situations of forcibly displaced persons in the world.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented new and compelling challenges to the international community with regard to refugee protection. It has led to greater difficulties and limitations in movement and admission to receiving countries, while it has intensified the illicit business of smugglers. In parallel, the global health emergency has severely reduced access to medical services for forcibly displaced populations and exacerbated the economic difficulties of these vulnerable people. According to recent surveys by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), pandemic-induced poverty, in turn, has produced an increase in gender-based violence, especially in terms of domestic violence and forced marriage. Moreover, it has deprived many children of the financial support necessary

to continue their studies. Not least, it has resulted in many displaced families being obliged to return to their home countries due to the loss of their livelihoods in host states.

The refugee issue, which is now more topical than ever, has caught the attention of academics over time. Early studies began to appear in the interwar years, when some scholars manifested their interest in the massive forced population displacements that occurred following the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman, and Russian empires after the end of the First World War. Later, the ethnic reshuffling tragically organised by Nazi Germany across Europe beginning in the late 1930s further stimulated scholarly debate. The creation of the International Refugee Organization in 1946, the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in 1949, and the UNHCR in 1950 provided additional incentives for research on involuntary migrants. In the aftermath of the Second World War, remarkable studies on legal and institutional aspects related to the definition and protection of refugees were published. These included the pioneering work of the political scientist Louise W. Holborn on the main international organisations active in this field.[1]

Beginning in the 1960s and 1970s, anthropologists and human geographers initiated decisive studies on forced displacements. Their curiosity was directed at changes in cultural and religious practices, social relations, political and economic organisation, growth, and development among populations compelled to flee. The analysis of the adaptation mechanisms of involuntary migrants was, for instance, at the heart of the Gwembe Tonga Research Project, which was launched by the anthropologists Elizabeth Colson and Thayer Scudder in 1956. This famous study examined the impact of the building of Kariba Dam and the subsequent flooding of the Middle Zambezi Valley on approximately 57,000 Gwembe Tonga, who were obliged to relocate.[2] The great novelty of this study lay in its strong ethical and social connotations. Beyond its strictly academic value, it was aimed at encouraging policy makers to take initiatives to support refugees by showing the latter's difficulties in resettlement and discomfort during and after flight. For the first time, forcibly displaced persons appeared not only as a category to be analysed but also as people to be helped.

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1   Louise W. Holborn, "The League of Nation and the refugee problem", in: *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 1 (1939), pp. 124-135; Id., *The International Refugee Organisation. A specialized agency of the United Nations. Its history and work*, London: Oxford University Press, 1956; Id. et al., *Refugees: a problem of our time. The work of the United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees. 1951–1972. Vol. 1–2*, Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1975.

2   Elizabeth Colson, *The social consequences of resettlement: the impact of the Kariba Resettlement upon the Gwembe Tonga*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1971.

The ground-breaking book *Imposing Aid* by the legal anthropologist Barbara Harrell-Bond, published in 1986, had a similar purpose.[3] By examining the refugee crisis that affected the Ugandan population in early 1982, Harrell-Bond produced the first independent evaluation of an assistance programme organised by international agencies in response to the emergency influx of involuntary migrants. In so doing, she addressed policy makers with the primary aim of placing refugees at the centre of humanitarianism. This is what has motivated anthropological research up until the present day. Anthropologists continue to study key concepts such as home and homeland, nationalism, and identity in relation to forcibly displaced people. In particular, recent studies have criticised the traditional concept of territorial attachment based on the idea of the nation-state. They have progressively introduced the concept of deterritorialization to justify the existence of different types of attachment that involuntary migrants feel not only towards the place where they live, but also towards the memory of a distant or imagined homeland.[4] This has meant rejecting the view that sees sedentarism as normal and territorial displacement as pathological. Moreover, it has given due emphasis to the lived experience of forcibly displaced people, which had long been neglected.

Attention to the lived experience of refugees has also consistently featured in studies conducted since the late 1950s by psychologists, who have focused on the impact of forced displacement on the mental health and behaviour of those who experience it.[5] This field of research, which began to grow steadily following the refugee emergency generated by the Vietnam War, has highlighted the dysfunctional effects of involuntary migration on individuals. Numerous studies on the main psychological disorders that occur in forcibly displaced persons have been published. There has been lengthy discussion on the emotional trauma suffered by these people, the sense of marginalisation they feel, and their difficulties in adapting to the new reality of resettlement in camps and host societies. There has also been scholarly interest in family separations and victims of political violence, as well as in refugee minors and practices in psychology to support involuntary migrants. Since the 1990s, mental health studies have also combined traditional analysis relating to the diagnosis of mental disorders with new research on positive psychology.

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3   Barbara Harrell-Bond*, Imposing Aid. Emergency assistance to Refugees*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

4   Liisa Malkki, "National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees", in: *Cultural Anthropology* 1 (1992), pp. 24-44; Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, "Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference", in: *Cultural Anthropology* 7 (1992), pp. 6-23.

5   Claudius K. Cirtautas, *The Refugee: A Psychological Study*, Boston: Meadow, 1957; Maria Pfister-Ammende, "Mental Hygiene in Refugee Camps", in: Charles Zwinmann and Maria Pfister-Ammende, *Uprooting and After*, New York: Springler-Verlag, 1973, pp. 241–251.

The latter is concerned with stimulating positive thinking and emotions in refugees, bringing out their strengths and activating their mental resources to encourage resilient behaviour and favour integration.[6] On the whole, psychology deserves credit for emphasising the most intimate dimension of the experience of flight by exploring the conscious and unconscious cognitive processes of those compelled to flee their homes in order to help them cope with the trauma of forced displacement.

Although political science, anthropology, and psychology have shown an interest in studying refugees since the post-war period, forced migration studies has established itself as a truly autonomous and multidisciplinary field of research since the 1980s. In that decade, the amount of research on refugees increased exponentially, not least in response to a surge in the number of asylum applications in Europe and North America. These applicants were people escaping war and violence, primarily from Africa, the Middle East, and South East Asia. The need to provide them with quick and effective solutions was the main motivation behind this new research. In 1981, the *International Migration Review* led the way in what would be a decade of extensive academic production by publishing a special issue on refugees, which largely dealt with national assistance policies, legislative developments in asylum procedures, and international humanitarian aid. It also contained an article providing indications for creating a theory of forced displacement and a rich research bibliography with over 800 entries.[7]

Further proof of the increasing scholarly interest in involuntary migrations are the various highly qualified research centres founded around the world in the 1980s. The Refugee Documentation Project, later re-named the Centre for Refugee Studies, was created at York University in Toronto in 1981. The Refugee Policy Group was founded in Washington, D.C. a year later. In 1982, the Refugee Studies Programme, now called the Refugee Studies Centre, was established by Barbara Harrell-Bond at the University of Oxford. As part of the Department of International Development, it aimed – and still aims today – to build knowledge of the causes and effects of forced displacement, thus helping improve the lives of involuntary migrants.

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6   Eranda Jayawickreme et al., "From trauma victims to survivors: The positive psychology of refugee mental health", in: Kathryn Gow and Marek Celinski (eds.), *Natural disaster research, prediction and mitigation. Mass trauma: Impact and recovery issues*, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1993, pp. 313-330; Sevasti Foka et al., "Promoting well-being in refugee children: An exploratory controlled trial of a positive psychology intervention delivered in Greek refugee camps", in: *Development and psychopathology* (2020), pp. 1-9.

7   Egon F. Kunz, "Exile and resettlements: Refugee theory", in: *International Migration Review* 1-2 (1981), pp. 42-51; Barry N. Stein, "Refugee research bibliography", in: *International Migration Review* 1-2 (1981), pp. 331-393.

Specialised interdisciplinary journals arose in the same decade to give this new, burgeoning field international forums for sharing research. *Refugee Reports* and the *World Refugee Survey* started to appear in 1980 and 1985, respectively, as official publications of the NGO U.S. Committee for Refugees (since 2004, U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants). In 1982, the first issue of the *Refugee Survey Quarterly* was launched by the UNHCR Centre for Documentation and Research, publishing wide-ranging analyses of issued related to involuntary migration. In 1987 and 1988, the Refugee Study Centre began publishing the *Forced Migration Review* and the *Journal of Refugee Studies,* both containing reflections on forced displacement from a primarily ethno-anthropological perspective. In 1989, the *International Journal of Refugee Law* was founded to address topics related to the refugee phenomenon from a legal point of view.

More critical analysis and greater attention to theoretical aspects have characterised the lively academic debate on refugees since the 1980s. This debate has involved various disciplines, each of which has contributed to forced migration studies in its own way over time. International relations scholars, for instance, have explored the link between the state system and refugees, interpreting involuntary migrations as an inherent component of world politics. According to IR researchers, the refugee phenomenon is a consequence of the creation of separate sovereign states, which fail to give adequate protection to forcibly displaced persons and exclude them from the «normal citizen-state-territory hierarchy».[8] Research on the causes and effects of forced displacement with a more theoretical slant has also been published by international relations scholars. Some studies have pointed out that refugees can be at the same time both a consequence and a cause of conflicts and have explored the circumstances under which refugees constitute a hindrance to peace-building processes.[9]

Reflections on the impact of refugee flows on global security have also appeared, with a focus on the debated connection between involuntary migration and transnational terrorism after 11 September 2001.[10] Institutional response to forced displacement is another hot topic among international relations theorists, who have examined international support to refugees and states in terms of asylum procedures and burden sharing.[11] Non-institutional

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8   Emma Haddad: "The Refugee: The Individual between Sovereigns", in: *Global Society* 3 (2003), pp. 297-322.

9   Gil Loescher, *Refugee Movements and International Security,* London: Brasseys for The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1992.

10   Sharon Pickering, "Border terror: policing, forced migration and terrorism", in: *Global Change, Peace & Security* 3 (2004), pp 211-226; Daniel Milton et al., "Radicalism of the Hopeless: Refugee Flows and Transnational Terrorism", in: *International Interactions* 5 (2013), pp. 621-645.

11   Astri Suhrke, "Burden-Sharing during Refugee Emergencies: The Logic of Collective Action Versus National Action", in: *Journal of Refugee Studies* 4 (1998), pp. 396-415; Alexander Betts, *Protection by Persuasion: International Cooperation in the Refugee Regime,* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009.

interventions have also been considered, especially with regard to the involvement of NGOs, transnational civil society, and private actors in refugee governance. Overall, research in international relations has contributed to refugee studies by exploring the macro factors that mould how states and the international community respond to forced displacement. Looking at regional, national, and global dynamics, IR research has the potential to further deepen understanding of critical issues related to involuntary migration, such as human rights protection and international political economy, in the near future.

Sociology, for its part, has contributed to the advancement of refugee studies by examining the impact of social processes and changes on forced migration at the micro, meso, and macro levels, in both origin countries and receiving countries. Assuming that individuals' freedom of choice is conditioned by social structures, sociologists have highlighted the interactions between political, educational, and religious institutions, on the one hand, and individual agency, on the other, to explain refugees' behaviour.[12] This has meant questioning the traditional division between voluntary migrants and involuntary migrants, which is based on the distinction between economic and socio-political factors as causes of displacement. In addition, by highlighting the connections between various levels of analysis, sociological research has made it possible to present forced migrations as an inherent aspect of globalisation. According to this interpretation, the refugee phenomenon is an outcome of 'global social relations', which are based on inclusion/exclusion mechanisms that increase the disparity between poor states and rich states.[13] Compared to traditional nation-centred approaches, this analytical reflection has broadened research perspectives considerably, incorporating transnational flows and relations and placing social, communications, and transport networks that link departure countries and receiving countries at the centre of the academic debate.[14] Moreover, recent sociological studies have examined the influence of non-state actors on refugees and IDPs. These actors include local and religious communities but also criminal associations and warlords, whose battle for power against the state often acts as a stimulus for population displacement in countries with weak governance.[15]

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12   Anthony H. Richmond, "Sociological Theories of International Migration: The Case of Refugees", in: *Current Sociology* 2 (1988), pp. 7-25; Oliver Bakewell, "Some Reflections on Structure and Agency in Migration Theory", in: *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 10 (2010), pp. 1689-1708.

13   Stephen Castles, "Towards a Sociology of Forced Migration and Social Transformation", in: *Sociology* 13 (2003), pp. 13–34.

14   Nina Glick Schiller et al., "Transnationalism: A New Analytic Framework for Understanding Migration", in: *Annals of the New York Academy of Science* 1 (1992), pp. 1–24; Nicholas Van Hear, "Refugees, Diasporas and transnationalism", in: Elena Fiddian Qasmiyeh et al. (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014, pp. 176–187.

15   Thomas B. Hansen and Finn Stepputat, *Sovereign Bodies*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.

Another discipline in the social sciences that has been interested in the refugee phenomenon is political theory, which has offered insights into normative aspects of the global refugee humanitarian emergency. In particular, political theorists and philosophers have approached the critical issue of duty allocation between states with regard to involuntary migrants.[16] Scholars have made careful considerations on the inequality of the contemporary system of refugee distribution, in which the majority of forcibly displaced people pour into a few poor countries for reasons of geographical proximity and ease of access. This has pushed political theorists to demand a more balanced subdivision of duties which is attentive to different states' capacities for integration, based on the factors of territorial sustainability, economic growth, and political stability.[17] Critical analyses have also emerged on the limits states place on the admission of refugees, the moral duty for states to facilitate integration, and the conditions for an ethical return of involuntary migrants to their home countries. Political theorists' research has thus proved relevant in guiding policy makers towards solutions that pursue justice not only for refugees but also within the international community.[18]

In spite of the prolific academic production in the social and political sciences, one discipline that did not partake in the academic debate on refugees for a long time is history. Until the beginning of the 21st century, studies on forced displacement led by historians were scarce, which often made scholars think of forced migration studies as an ahistorical research area. This is in part justified by differences in analytical perspectives. On the one hand, refugee studies has always been a distinctly policy-oriented field, aimed at providing quick and practical responses to current problems. On the other hand, history prefers a broader analytical approach which combines synchronic and diachronic analysis and looks at the past to explain contemporary phenomena without the limitations of policy-determined labels. As a result, historians have often distrusted refugee studies due to its close ties to the policy-making process. At the same time, politicians and scholars in the social and political sciences have underestimated the role of history in investigating forced displacement, as they have long considered this discipline of little use for the study of refugees.[19]

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16   Michael Walzer, *Spheres of Justice*, New York: Basic Books, 1983; Matthew J. Gibney, "Asylum and the Principle of Proximity", in: *Ethics, Place & Environment* 3 (2000), pp. 313–317.

17   David Miller, *National Responsibility and Global Justice*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007; Matthew J. Gibney, "The duties of refugees", in: David Miller and Christine Straehle (eds.), *The political philosophy of refuge*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019.

18   Marion Couldrey and Jenny Peebles (eds.), "Return: voluntary, safe, dignified and durable?", in: *Forced migration Review* 62 (2019); Arianne Shahvisi, "Redistribution and moral consistency: arguments for granting automatic citizenship to refugees", in: *Journal of Global Ethics* 2 (2020), pp. 182–202.

19   Tony Kushner, *Remembering Refugees: Then and Now*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006; Philip Marfleet, "Refugees and History: Why We Must Address the Past", in: *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 3 (2007), p. 136.

However, it would be incorrect to argue that history has been completely uninterested in forced migrations until recently. Some historical research on this topic appeared as early as the 1940s and 1950s, with a focus on forced population transfers after the First and Second World Wars. Nevertheless, this research has not been classified as refugee studies, but rather included among studies on interwar Europe, genocide, or transnational and global history more generically. With the flourishing of research on forced migration in the 1980s, historical research also advanced in this area, albeit at a slower pace than in other disciplines. This new research included a greater degree of critical analysis and attention to non-European case studies than before. Moreover, historians began to consider hitherto unexplored aspects of the refugee issue, such as national policies with regard to involuntary migrants in the past and their repercussions on refugees' lives.[20]

The real leap forward in historical research on refugees, in both quantitative and qualitative terms, occurred at the beginning of the 21st century. Since the early 2000s, numerous studies have been published on the history of international organisations, as well as on the role of NGOs and other non-state actors in managing forced migrant flows around the world.[21] Historians of the postcolonial period have stressed the impact of decolonisation on involuntary migrations. Forced displacements in interwar and post-war Europe have been broadly scrutinised, with particular attention to their impact on receiving countries and the response of these countries to these massive population shifts.[22] Studies on transnational cooperation and the origins of humanitarianism have also been published, together with several studies on refugees and their protection in antiquity and the early modern period. Philipp Ther's recent book *The Outsiders* stands out as one of the most significant examinations of the refugee phenomenon in the modern and contemporary world.[23] It chronicles the history of forced migration in Europe from 1492 to the present day, also examining the lives of refugees after their arrival in host countries through the analysis of several biographical case studies.

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20   Michael Marrus, *The Unwanted: European Refugees in the Twentieth Century*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985; Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947–1949*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

21   Jérôme Elie, "The Historical Roots of Cooperation between the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration", in: *Global Governance* 3 (2010), pp. 345–360; Peter Gatrell, "Western NGOs and Refugee Policy in the Twentieth Century", in: *Journal of Migration History* 2 (2019), pp. 384–411.

22   Frank Caestecker, *Alien Policy in Belgium, 1840–1940: The Creation of Guest Workers, Refugees and Illegal Immigrants*, New York: Berghahn, 2000; Peter Gatrell and Liubov Zhvanko, *Europe on the Move: The Great War and its Refugees*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017.

23   Philipp Ther, *The Outsiders. Refugees in Europe since 1492*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019.

In recent years, historical research has begun to occupy a central place within the academic debate on forced migrations. The study of the dynamics, causes, and implications of past refugee movements provides information that is essential to better understanding forced displacement in the contemporary world. Not least, the memory of past migrations frequently influences the choices of forcibly displaced people today, which confirms just how much refugee studies ought to be concerned with history, and vice versa. However, there are several areas in which historical research still has a significant contribution to make. These include a greater commitment to examining the personal stories of refugees using, for instance, the tools of oral history and social history. This would help to correct the traditional image of forced migrants as passive victims by emphasising their agency during displacement and in influencing policy choices within world refugee governance. Further reflection by scholars in cultural history is also desirable, as it would shed light on the cultural representations of displacement and flight. Finally, research in political history could prove crucial in exploring the political dynamics and significance of the refugee regime across space and time.

Novel lines of research have emerged recently from the combination of the various disciplinary approaches considered above. This essay will conclude with a brief examination of these new areas of study, since they are indicative of the growing social engagement of refugee studies and provide hints as to the future evolution of the field. Critical analysis of the gender dynamics of forced migration is one crucial area of research. Early, pioneering studies appeared in the 1980s, drawing attention to refugee women as a forgotten minority.[24] However, their analytical approach was rather limited, as they primarily dealt with sexual violence perpetrated against women, who continued to be portrayed as fragile and as disempowered victims. Research on gendered aspects of forced migration has become more prolific since the 2000s. These novel studies have centred on women's experiences of displacement, expectations, and opportunities regarding resettlement, obtaining asylum, and potential repatriation. By giving a voice to refugee women for the first time, this new research has finally recognised their agency and capacity for action. Moreover, it has explored the impact of gender identities and relations on the everyday lives of forcibly displaced individuals, also covering the experiences of LGBTI people.

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24   Genevieve Camus-Jacques, "Refugee Women: The Forgotten Majority", in: Gil Loescher and Laila Monaham (eds.), *Refugees and International Relations*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989, pp. 141–147; Jacqueline Greatbatch, 'The Gendered Difference: Feminist Critiques of Refugee Discourse', in: *International Journal of Refugee Law* 4 (1989), pp. 518–527; Doreen M. Indra, "Ethnic Human Rights and Feminist Theory: Gender Implications for Refugee Studies and Practice", in: *Journal of Refugee Studies* 2 (1989), pp. 221–242.

Accordingly, studies on the multiplicity of patriarchal dynamics that women and LGB-TI refugees often face in their countries of origin, host countries, and camps have been published.[25] Some authors have emphasised the empowering impact that forced displacement can have on women and LGBTI involuntary migrants, precisely because it can provide them with the opportunity to renegotiate gender relations in both camps and resettlements by breaking patriarchal patterns.[26] Other scholars have shed light on gendered obstacles to integration for women and LGBTI refugees and on various forms of gender-based violence that these individuals suffer during their journeys or on arrival in a country of destination.[27] Overall, research on gendered aspects of forced displacement has the merit of helping to overcome the hitherto consolidated trend towards portraying women and LGBTI people as victims and homogenised groups. By giving due relevance to their experiences of flight, this research contributes to altering the asymmetries of power that often characterise humanitarian assistance programmes in order to effectively promote gender equality among the forcibly displaced population.

The connection between climate change and forced displacement is another popular issue within the contemporary debate on involuntary migration. So-called 'environmental refugees' have attracted the interest of many scholars, as well as a variety of criticism. The origins of this term date back to the 1980s, when it was used to refer to people who are forced to abandon their homes or countries due to the effects of environmental stress and natural disasters.[28] Climate-induced migrants flee floods, desertification, rising sea levels, and extreme weather events which jeopardise their survival and their ability to find means of subsistence. The expression 'environmental refugee', however, is a misnomer. It is not endorsed by UNHCR because it does not fall within the umbrella of the 1951 UN Convention on the Status of Refugees and the additional protocol of 1967, nor does it exist in international law. It is more correct to refer to individuals who have been displaced in situations of natural disasters and climate change. In this regard, academics are currently unanimous in rejecting the idea of a direct causal link between environmental factors and

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25   Sharon Carlson, "Contesting and Reinforcing Patriarchy: An Analysis of Domestic Violence in the Dzaleka Refugee Camp", in: *RSC Working Paper no. 23* (2005), pp. 1–59.

26   Ulrike Krause, "Analysis of empowerment of refugee women in camps and settlements", in: *Journal of internal displacement* 1 (2014), pp. 28–52.

27   Jane Freedman, "Sexual and gender-based violence against refugee women: a hidden aspect of the refugee 'crisis'", in: *Reproductive Health Matters* 47 (2016), pp. 18-26.

28   Essam El-Hinnawi, *Environmental Refugees* (report), Nairobi: United Nations Environmental Programme, 1985; Jodi L. Jacobson, *Environmental refugees: A yardstick of habitability,* Washington D.C.: World Watch Institute, 1988.

forced displacement. Instead, they have highlighted a nexus between climate change, economic factors, and situations of conflict and violence in determining cross-border population movements, which are a multicausal phenomenon.[29]

Nevertheless, these people are granted international protection in some cases, which have been the object of recent study, particularly in geography, anthropology, and sociology. Since the second decade of the 21ˢᵗ century, sound empirical research has been produced, among which the pioneering work of Robert Zimmer stands out.[30] Based on evidence collected in Bangladesh, Vietnam, Ghana, and Kenya, Zimmer has examined the capacity of national legal frameworks to protect the rights of people who face displacement produced by climate change. Following his example, additional research has been published over the last ten years, focusing on several other case studies. These studies are proof of the growing academic commitment to producing useful field research, which can guide policy makers in adopting effective decisions to reinforce the defence of refugees' rights when aggravating factors stemming from environmental hazards emerge.

Elderly refugees constitute an additional and hitherto little-explored subset of the world's forcibly displaced population to which scholars have recently drawn attention. Research on the lived experience of older involuntary migrants is based on the practical need to offer targeted support to these individuals, who struggle to cope with flight and adapt to the new reality of displacement precisely because of their advanced age. They face additional complications due not only to health problems but also to mental disorders. Some studies have highlighted the frustration of older refugees at being unable to find employment that makes them feel useful to their family and community in host countries. Other have stressed the high risk of depression that these individuals face due to their greater difficulty in overcoming the trauma of flight and loosening ties with their countries of origin compared to younger refugees. Such work is undoubtedly a significant step towards a deeper understanding of the lived experience of elderly refugees. Nevertheless, research on this category of involuntary migrants is still considerably limited. Few studies have been published on this topic and those that do exist are limited to specific geographical areas. These limitations have contributed to delaying the proposal and adoption of durable solutions to

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29   Roger Zetter, "The politics of rights protection for environmentally displaced people", in: *Siirtolaisuus-Migration Quarterly* 1 (2017), pp. 5–12. See also Diane C. Bates, "Environmental Refugees? Classifying Human Migrations Caused by Environmental Change", in: *Population and Environment* 5 (2002), pp. 465–477; Roger Zetter, Camillo Boano, and Tim Morris, *Environmentally displaced people: understanding the linkages between environmental change, livelihoods and forced migration* (report), Refugee Studies Centre, 2008.

30   Roger Zetter, *Protecting environmentally displaced people: developing the capacity of legal and normative instruments* (report), Refugee Studies Centre, 2011.

the hardships endured by elderly displaced people.[31]

The topic of disabled refugees concludes this brief overview of new areas of research within forced migration studies. Existing research on displaced people with disabilities focuses on their specific needs and the obstacles they encounter during flight and in camps and urban resettlements. Papers by Shivji, Mirza, and Lätzsch, for instance, have stressed the practical barriers that prevent disabled involuntary migrants from accessing the most basic services, which include food and water distribution, educational facilities, hospitals, and social services.[32] Some research has also reported sexual and psychological abuse and discriminatory behaviour towards the disabled. Other studies have looked at deficiencies in the management and infrastructure of camps and urban resettlements, usually due to the financial constraints of national and international aid programmes, which greatly complicate the stay of refugees with disabilities.[33] Evidence of the impact of these studies on the policy-making process can be seen in the fact that the UNHCR has recently stepped up its commitment to the defence of disabled people experiencing forced migration. Nonetheless, much remains to be done. Focus groups and individual interviews might be used in future research aimed at restoring full dignity to disabled refugees and stimulating targeted responses to their needs, thus alleviating at least part of the suffering they have experienced due to displacement.

The study of forced migration is a vibrant and thriving area of research which has come a long way since its inception. Its multidisciplinary nature has determined much of its success, allowing the production of comprehensive analysis that has shed light on the many aspects and dynamics that characterise forced displacements. In this field, theoretical research and political practice have coexisted and worked together for the benefit of the world's refugee population. Greater collaboration in the near future would further increase their positive impact on national and international protection systems for involuntary migrants. Increased attention by scholars to the needs and timing of the political agenda is desirable, as is additional attention by policy makers to wide-ranging analyses and methodological issues.

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31   Helena Scott, and Claudio Bolzman, "Age in Exile: Europe's Older Refugees and Exiles", in: Alice Bloch and Carl Levy (eds.), *Refugees, Citizenship and Social Policy in Europe,* Houndmills: Macmillan Press, 1999; Lama Bazzi, and Zeima Chemali, "A Conceptual Framework of Displaced Elderly Syrian Refugees in Lebanon: Challenges and Opportunities", in: *Global Journal of Health Science* 11 (2016), pp. 54–61.

32   Aleema Shivji, "Disability in Displacement", in: *Forced Migration Review* 35 (2010), pp. 4–7; Mansha Mirza, "Unmet Needs and Diminished Opportunities: Disability, Displacement and Humanitarian Healthcare", in: *New Issues in Refugee Research Working Paper Series. Research paper 212,* Geneva: UNHCR, Policy Development and Evaluation Service, 2011; Cornelius Lätzsch, "Dimensions of Health Care and Social Services Accessibility for Disabled Asylum Seekers in Germany", in: Katharina Crepaz, Ulrich Becker, Elizabeth Wacker (eds.), *Health in Diversity – Diversity in Health*, Wiesbaden: Springer, 2020.

33   Mansha Mirza, "Disability and Humanitarianism in Refugee Camps: The Case for a Traveling Supranational Disability Praxis", in: *Third World Quarterly* 8 (2011), pp. 1527–1536.

Refugees and Internal Displacement during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939)

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Since the 20th century, forced displacement has become one of the primary social problems stemming from armed conflicts. Population movements caused by war are evidently not a problem that originated in the 20th century, but it was then that they acquired hitherto unseen dimensions, leading to large-scale humanitarian crises in a context in which civilians were increasingly directly targeted by violence.

Thus, forced displacements have been a significant aspect of many wars, and particularly civil wars. While it is true that the term first brings to mind the experience of exile and the need to leave one's country of origin, displacement within a country – especially when its territory has been split in the context of a war – is also commonplace. This type of displacement can be equally traumatic for those who experience it. Whether or not it involves crossing international borders, forced displacement means fleeing one's home in order to save one's life, with all that this entails: leaving the known for the unknown, living with perpetual uncertainty and the constant feeling of not being safe, and leaving nearly everything behind – one's home, belongings, and even loved ones. Displacement has a destabilizing effect on both the place from which people are forced to flee and the place to which they flee, with the latter forced to provide shelter and assistance to large numbers of destitute people. It is important to discuss internal displacement, as the focus on exile accounts for only a fraction of the overall problem. The full scope of life behind the frontlines is considerably more complex.

The Spanish Civil War is a clear example of this complexity. The military uprising of July 1936 left the country divided between those regions where the coup was successful and those which remained loyal to the government of the Second Republic, leading to civil war. From the very beginning, the conflict resulted in continuous population movements. While some involved leaving Spain's borders, most were internal. The repression and indiscriminate violence carried out by rebel troops as they advanced led millions of non-com-

batants to abandon their homes and seek refuge in the Republican rear-guard, embarking on a lengthy exodus, though they initially thought it would last only a few weeks. In the course of the war, further forced displacements occurred, though they took varied forms, from spontaneous flight – particularly during the first months of the conflict – to planned evacuations organized by institutions that were created for this very purpose, one it became clear that the war would not come to a quick end and that the situation of displaced persons was becoming increasingly untenable. Factors such as the proximity of the frontlines were evidently key to determining the timing, scope, and frequency of these movements, particularly in areas near long-lasting fronts, where a large proportion of the population was eventually evacuated to either the Republican or the insurgent rear-guard, as occurred in Aragon.

The conflict took place in a context characterized by the lack of a solid framework in international law for the protection of displaced persons. Such a framework would not emerge until after the Second World War and the foundation of the United Nations, which led to the creation of the International Refugee Organization (IRO). This organisation was succeeded by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the agency still active today. However, it must be noted that, despite the lack of provisions in international law, the Spanish Civil War was a conflict that received considerable attention in the international press, generating headlines in numerous countries. Despite the Non-Intervention Agreement, first-hand information on the course of the war was consistently available abroad, thanks to the large number of foreign correspondents reporting from different parts of Spain – who made the brutal violence committed against civilians known to an international audience – and to the wide variety of humanitarian organisations providing aid on the ground.

It is estimated that millions of people were forced to abandon their homes during the conflict. Counting just internally displaced persons, the most widely accepted figure is around three million, of whom approximately 1,800,000 required institutional assistance and shelter.[1] It must be stressed that it is difficult to determine the exact number, both because sources have been lost and due to the nature of these movements. In many cases, refugees themselves made the decision to flee, and as a result they were not documented. The difficulty in establishing concrete numbers is aggravated by the unpredictable movement of large numbers of individuals. While the exact figures may remain elusive, it is clear than an enormous number of people were forced to leave their homes.

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1   Julio Clavijo Ledesma, *La política sobre la població refugiada durant la Guerra Civil, 1936-1939*, Girona: Universitat de Girona, 2003, pp. 87-88.

Based on currently available data and information, forced displacement was among the most significant social problems faced by the Republican government during the war, due to the obligation to provide assistance and find room for the large number of people who arrived each day in places like Madrid and the need to organize evacuations in the face of shifting frontlines and the threat of air raids. Another major problem was overcrowding in places of arrival, which complicated the provision of supplies and made living together difficult. The problem of displacement affected much of the population living in Republican-controlled territory, either directly or indirectly. In the Republican rear-guard, which continued to shrink as the insurgents made gains, the number of displaced persons eventually amounted to 12% of the total 1936 population. Displacement was also a problem in the insurgent rear-guard, though on a smaller scale. Displaced persons in rebel territory included both refugees who had fled the Republican zone and people who had found shelter in cities that subsequently fell to the insurgents. The rebels were forced to deal with a series of problems that they had not anticipated, such as the large number of orphaned and lost children who needed all manner of assistance and the scarcity of basic supplies, including medical supplies and warm clothing.[2]

The difficulties inherent in assimilating such large numbers should not impede efforts to understand that these were not mere statistics, but rather millions of individual people, each with their own experiences and losses. Displaced persons were victims of the conflict, people who – for various reasons – were forced to flee their homes due to circumstances that put their lives and those of their families at risk. Their departure conditioned life and politics in the rear-guard. It is important to avoid the stereotype that sees displaced persons as mere recipients of aid. Indeed, many women refugees actively participated in support networks in the places where they had found refuge, performing agricultural labour and providing childcare. As for men of military age, upon reaching their destination, they had to enlist in the Republican army.

Flight

In the days that followed the partially successful military uprising, those who were ideologically aligned with the side – insurgent or Republican – that had been defeated in the part of Spain where they lived fled, fearing that they would fall victim to repression and outbreaks of violence due to their political activities and proximity to certain groups.

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2   Gabriel Petrus, *La ayuda humanitaria en la Guerra Civil española (1936-1939)*, Granada: Comares Historia, 2015.

Those most closely aligned with right-wing positions and those who supported the uprising largely chose to go into exile, leaving Spain by land – particularly by crossing into Portugal, where they were immediately warmly welcomed, but also by travelling to Gibraltar, France, or Andorra.[3] In coastal areas, people also fled by sea, some travelling to the same countries as those who escaped by land, while others left for more distant destinations, such as Italy or Latin America. This exile of right-wing individuals fleeing areas that had remained loyal to the Republic was largely temporary, as many were able to return to Spain, either quickly reaching rebel territory or, at the very least, returning as soon as the war was over. Those who were able sought shelter in embassies or in nearby regions where the uprising had triumphed from the start. Conversely, people loyal to the Republic who had to flee areas now controlled by the rebels largely stayed within Spain's borders, believing that the uprising would be quashed in a matter of weeks. Some did flee across borders after finding themselves encircled. However, there were also people loyal to the Republic who stayed in their homes, believing they had done no wrong and therefore had no reason to leave, and were subject to the repressive practices of the rebels. As has been noted, at the beginning of the conflict, people fled their homes because they believed they were in danger due to their political activities. However, as news of atrocities committed against civilians in the cities and towns occupied by the fascists began to spread, the population of displaced persons increasingly came to include non-combatant segments of society, particularly women, children, and the elderly.

These early movements were generally not long journeys with a set destination. Rather, people sought refuge in nearby towns, preferably in the homes of relatives, friends, or acquaintances, intending to stay there until the situation became calmer. Travel through the countryside and to destinations far from major transport routes was preferred, in order to avoid controls on major roads. People used the lay of the land to their advantage, crossing natural borders such as rivers and forests, which allowed them to travel outside the routes generally used for the movement of troops. However, this early flight to nearby areas or towns, carrying minimal belongings and taking advantage of natural obstacles or taking refuge in the mountains, soon gave way to the search for refuge in the principal cities of the rear-guard.

This change in the intended destination of the displaced was motivated by the desire to avoid falling victim to the barbaric acts committed by occupying fascist forces: all manner of abuse, the humiliation of women, and the terror instilled by the Moroccan troops

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3   Fábio Alexandre Faria, "Refugiados em Portugal: fronteira e vigilância no tempo da Guerra Civil de Espanha (1936-1939)", in: *Revista Portuguesa de História* 48 (2017), pp. 61-84.

wherever they went. Reports of terror and atrocities appeared in the press, with clearly propagandistic aims, but these stories were also spread by witnesses who had fled occupied zones after seeing them with their own eyes. Thus, the testimony of the first to flee may have motivated subsequence departures. The exact reasons for which people fled their homes varied, but the news coming from occupied zones undoubtedly contributed to creating a generalized climate of fear, along with other factors, such as the threats broadcast by the insurgent general Queipo de Llano over the radio. The displaced provided direct information on the course of the war, and particularly on how it was experienced by civilians at a time when the press favoured largely optimistic accounts that were far-removed from reality, but which focused on cultivating the image of the enemy. Indeed, particularly during the first months of the war, the press used the alleged accounts of displaced persons for propagandistic purposes, claiming that the defeat of the insurgents was imminent and that their troops were demoralized.

The means of escape varied greatly by location and according to each individual's personal circumstances. Some fled on wagons drawn by animals, while others left by automobile or train, if they had the opportunity to do so. Boats were used by some fleeing coastal areas or the Balearic Islands. However, it was most common to flee on foot, often covering long distances without resting for days. Pained at having to leave their homes behind, people took their most valued and useful possessions – especially blankets and warm clothing for winter. In places where people were forced to flee with little to no notice, a wide variety of possessions were left behind, fragments of lives upended by the conflict.[4] Forced displacement had an inevitable psychological impact, as people had to leave everything they knew behind, not knowing what lay ahead even in the first hours following departure. However, it also took a physical toll on the displaced, who had to endure long journeys with nothing to eat but the food they had managed to gather before they left. Adverse weather conditions were a further hardship faced by some, due to the hot summers and cold winters in some of the regions from which the largest numbers of people were forced to flee, in addition to the difficulties inherent in walking for days without rest. These harsh conditions had a significant impact on the health of many, and some were unable to go on and were left behind or perished along the way.

The spontaneous decision to flee was particularly commonplace in the summer of 1936, though it was not limited to this period; rather, it featured, with more or less frequency, throughout the conflict. Perhaps the most impactful and best-remembered example occurred in February 1937, when the city of Málaga fell to the insurgents.

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4   A testimony of sudden flee in: Norman Bethune, *Las heridas,* Logroño: Pepitas de calabaza, 2012.

Thousands of people, most of them civilians, attempted to flee *in extremis* along the road to Almería, which followed the coastline, under constant fire from the air and the sea from forces who were well aware that they were targeting civilians, leaving a trail of dead. What happened in Málaga is perhaps even more shocking given that planned evacuations had been a common practice for some time, but in this particular case nothing was done, at least not until it was too late to avoid disaster.[5]

As in Málaga, not all those who fled their homes managed to reach a destination. Some fugitives were caught and forced to return and face retaliatory measures. Furthermore, the commotion and haste that characterized many departures led to a large number of missing children and the separation of families, sometimes for good, though the most fortunate were eventually reunited thanks to the systems put in place to allow communication between refugees in different locations. Moreover, starting in the first weeks of the conflict, the insurgents used deceptive statements in the press, as well the direct intervention of third parties, to convince the relatives of those who had fled to urge them to return, with the false promise that they would face no reprisals. Those who did return faced not only repression but, in most cases, death.

Evacuation

Following an intense summer characterized by massive population movements, this type of flight began to give way to planned evacuations beginning in September 1936, particularly after institutions specifically charged with organizing them were established. This does not mean that no evacuations had taken place over the summer; indeed, there were small-scale movements precipitated by the course of the war, but which cannot be considered spontaneous flight because they were more or less planned and organized by trade unions, political organisations, or existing entities that took on a new purpose, such as the *Consejo Superior de Protección de Menores* (High Council for the Protection of Minors). These groups undertook the task of moving the injured, the disabled and sick, children from preventoriums, and even entire small communities away from areas near the frontlines to safer locations. However, in these first months, there were no administrative entities responsible for overseeing the evacuation of the civilian population.

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5   See Encarnación Barranquero Texeira and Lucía Prieto Borrego, *Población y Guerra Civil en Málaga: Caída, éxodo y refugio*, Málaga: Centro de Ediciones de la Diputación de Málaga, 2007.

It was in late September, as the situation grew increasingly untenable – especially in Madrid – that the need to organize official evacuations to redistribute the displaced population and move people away from war zones began to be discussed. The first committees were constituted for this purpose beginning in early October, organized by the Spanish and Catalan governments. These committees were charged with organizing evacuations and providing assistance to refugees at the central, provincial, and local levels. The history of assistance for displaced persons cannot be separated from the political context of the time and the disputes over responsibilities and jurisdictions within the government. As a result, multiple institutions existed during the war whose roles overlapped or which disappeared when there were changes in the makeup of the government, being replaced by new institutions. For instance, in Catalonia, the provision of supplies and assistance was initially divided between the *Conselleria de Proveïments* (Department of Supplies), controlled by the PSUC (Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia), and the *Conselleria de Sanitat i Assistència Social* (Department of Health and Social Assistance), led by the CNT (National Confederation of Labour). On numerous occasions, tensions between the two organisations over the control of these services meant that they were not properly provided.[6] Policy with regard to displaced persons was characterized by the creation of new organisations and regulations as new needs and problems emerged or when these services were transferred to a different department or ministry.

While all displaced persons had been forced to abandon their homes due to the circumstances of the war, the government differentiated between "evacuees" and "refugees" in order to determine the degree to which they were the responsibility of the administration. The difference was that it was directly responsible for refugees, who lacked sufficient resources to cover travel costs and sustenance once they had reached their destinations, whereas it was understood that evacuees could pay for their own travel and living expenses or had relatives in their destinations who could provide for them. Family support networks were therefore essential for many displaced persons who were classified as evacuees but lacked the means to survive on their own. The distinction between refugees and evacuees also determined where displaced persons ended up. Voluntary evacuees, who paid their own way, could choose a destination, whereas refugees were not given a choice.[7]

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6   Clavijo Ledesma, *La política*, pp. 216-222.

7   Juan Carlos Collado Jiménez, *Los evacuados de la Guerra Civil de la provincia de Toledo (1936-1939),* Madrid: Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, 2015, p.169.

The situation in Madrid, overcrowded following the arrival of numerous groups of displaced persons in the summer of 1936, primarily from Extremadura, Andalusia, and Castile, meant that evacuation plans largely centred on Madrid, though they also occurred throughout the Republican rear-guard. The problem steadily worsened as the amount of available habitable space decreased, both in the Republican zone as a whole and within cities themselves.

In general, evacuations motivated by advancing frontlines were more abrupt, while the evacuation of displaced persons from overcrowded areas was more sustained over time. Given that the largest number of evacuations departed from Madrid, the case of the Spanish capital serves as an example that allows the phenomenon to be better understood as a whole. The first step was to register at the offices responsible for those who were to be evacuated. These people would again be registered once they reached their destination. Convoys of lorries and buses were organized to transport people to the principal railway stations from which trains would depart[8] – in the case of Madrid, bound primarily for the cities of the eastern Mediterranean coast, though some evacuations to areas of the Republican rear-guard closer to the capital, in what is now Castilla-La Mancha, were also carried out. Evacuations made use of the existing rail and road networks. Special safe-conducts were required in order to take part in group evacuations, as well as for travel in general. The conditions in which people were evacuated left much to be desired, particularly early on, with overcrowding and insufficient assistance during the journey. Valencia was the principal destination for evacuations from Madrid, and from there further transfers were organized, particularly to Barcelona, generally by train. After a few days in temporary accommodation, those who did not stay in Barcelona embarked on journeys to nearby locations or further inland in Catalonia. As for displaced persons from the northern regions of the Basque Country, Asturias, and Santander, many used France as a bridge to reach Catalonia, arriving primarily by train.

Not all evacuations involved moving people from one end of the Republican zone to the other. Some were carried out on a smaller scale. In cities, the need quickly arose to evacuate buildings or even entire neighbourhoods in order to house militias or due to bombings or the proximity of the frontlines. The most vulnerable groups were always given priority for evacuation, with special attention to children, the elderly, pregnant women, and the injured. Even in places like Madrid, the largest number of movements coincided with the proximity of the threat of occupation. In short, evacuations did not take place at a steady rhythm over time, but rather intensified when there were fears that the capital

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8   Several of these convoys transported the refugees straight to the host regions.

might be taken. The greater emphasis placed on evacuating Madrid in comparison with other areas clearly shows the limitations of the institutions established to organize evacuations. What occurred in Málaga is a clear example of the lack of equal attention to other areas. As has already been mentioned, no evacuation was planned in Málaga, despite the imminent threat posed by the advancing rebel army, forcing inhabitants to flee the city in desperate circumstances.

When the insurgents' plans to take Madrid were thwarted, the number of evacuations fell because people were reluctant to leave a place which they felt was safe to embark on a new exodus full of uncertainty. Many of those who had been evacuated tried to return to the capital because the change had not always been for the better, with some suffering considerable hardship. The government called unceasingly for people to evacuate Madrid because, although the city was not under immediate threat – and would in fact hold out until the end of the war – problems of scarcity continued to worsen. For this reason, it was decided that anyone who had arrived in Madrid on or after 19 July 1936 and who was not essential to the war effort would be required to evacuated. However, many managed to avoid leaving.

Refuge

Whether forced displacement took the form of spontaneous flight or planned evacuation, the result was a steady stream of people who were forced to leave everything behind, with no roof over their heads and, in most cases, no financial means. Cities and provincial capitals in the rear-guard attracted the largest number of displaced persons because they were located along major transport routes, were better able to accommodate and assist displaced persons than smaller towns, and were seen as being safer and providing better protection, in addition to factors specific to particular cities, such as good weather. This observation does not contradict what has previously been stated: those forced to make a hasty escape tended to first seek refuge in areas near their towns, which had been occupied by the insurgents, and then undertake longer journeys to more distant locations that attracted large numbers of displaced persons.

A wide variety of places were used as shelters. In large cities like Madrid and Barcelona, the number of refuges was greater than the maximum capacity of the places set up to accommodate them. At first, refugees were housed in flats and buildings that had been seized, while cinemas, theatres, and hotels were readied for this purpose. The idea was to make use of existing buildings, repurposing all manner of spaces. However, this proved

insufficient to house the enormous number of arrivals, who were forced to seek shelter elsewhere, in the metro, in public spaces – from large squares to parks – or wherever they could improvise a place to sleep.[9] This problem also led to the growth of slums, which had been present for years in a number of growing cities.

Those who were evacuated were housed in provisional shelters – temporary accommodation, generally with room for a large number of people, where refugees stayed while awaiting relocation to their final destinations. They were then sent to new accommodations in the same city or to nearby towns that could take people in, thus reducing overcrowding in the principal points of arrival. The use of bullfighting rings, theatres, stations, and even former religious buildings has been documented. For instance, in Barcelona, the Montjuïc stadium and buildings that remained from the 1929 International Exposition were used as shelters. These spaces were also where the displaced underwent medical check-ups and were given basic toiletries, clothing, and shoes, whenever possible.

The vast majority of the displaced were not able to stay in one place for the remainder of the war after fleeing their homes. It is therefore useful to speak in terms of an exodus or a lengthy journey characterized by constant change. After the initial displacement, many were forced to move on to safer areas multiple times as the frontlines drew nearer, leaving one place of refuge or city for another. Furthermore, as the war set in and the frequency of air raids increased, it was common for people to flee cities and major towns in the rear-guard.

The constant stream of people arriving in certain places immediately led to difficulties in attending to the needs of these displaced persons and in the provision of supplies. It must be noted that, in addition to civilians fleeing occupied territory, some cities saw their populations increase due to the arrival of militias, members of the International Brigades, and humanitarian workers, among other groups. The concentration of such a large number of people in these cities created a constant need to reduce population density in order to alleviate problems of scarcity of space and provisions.

Groups of refugees were distributed among smaller cities and towns in the rear-guard to reduce overcrowding in places of shelter located in major cities. Municipal governments played a key role in attending to the needs of refugees, serving as intermediaries with central and provincial organisations and taking on the task of facilitating family-based arrangements for many refugees. When relocating refugees, an attempt was made at all times to keep relatives or people from the same place together. This had the advantage of

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9   For a more detailed description of the situation in Madrid, see: Juan Carlos Collado Jiménez, *Los evacuados de la Guerra Civil de la provincia de Toledo (1936-1939)*, Madrid: Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, 2015. For Barcelona: Joan Serrallonga i Urquidi, *Refugiats i desplaçats dins la Catalunya en guerra, 1936-1939*, Barcelona: Editorial Base, 2004.

helping to better control the refugee population, averting individual attempts to travel in search of family members. Both during evacuation and after arrival, special attention was paid to children who were cared for in children's camps, housed either by local families or in group facilities. In these safe locations, far from the frontlines, girls and boys up to 12 years of age were given housing, food, care, and schooling.[10] The aim was above all to avoid young children being sent to other countries. However, because the ultimate priority was to keep them safe, some children were sent abroad over the course of the war, to destinations including Mexico, England, and the Soviet Union.

The needs to be met were not exactly few in number. The provision of necessities is always difficult in times of war, but in this case the war was a civil conflict that had left Spain's territory divided, making numerous agricultural areas inaccessible. These circumstances made it difficult to feed the population of the areas that had remained loyal to the Republic. Further complicating matters was the growth of this population as hundreds and sometimes thousands of people arrived daily, fleeing occupied areas. These displaced persons increasingly arrived in destitute circumstances. This situation created problems of scarcity and, on numerous occasions, led to tensions surrounding access to resources.

From the first weeks of the war, efforts were made at various levels to tackle needs that were becoming increasingly apparent. In this situation, humanitarian organisations played a key role in assisting displaced persons. Material assistance and humanitarian workers were provided by organisations from Spain and numerous other countries, the most important being Swiss and Belgian aid organisations and British and American Quaker groups, though help arrived from all over the world.[11] Some of these organisations had experience providing humanitarian aid during earlier conflicts, while others were created in response to the events in Spain. All of them worked alongside political and trade union organisations whenever their help was needed, setting up canteens, hospitals, clothing banks, and children's camps, among other activities. While many of these projects had limited resources and had to be shut down, new ones emerged throughout the three years that the war lasted. Furthermore, Spanish organisations worked constantly to encourage the local population to contribute to relief efforts, holding charitable events to collect donations, clothing, and toys for children. Once again, children were the principal recipients

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10   On children's camps, see; Juan Manuel Fernández Soria, "La asistencia a la infancia en la Guerra Civil. Las colonias escolares", *Revista Interuniversitaria* 6 (1987), pp. 83-128.

11   Petrus, *La ayuda humanitaria*. For an example of Quaker assistance during the war, see: Xavier García Ferrandis, and Àlvar Martínez-Vidal, "La ayuda humanitaria de los British Quakers durante la Guerra Civil española (1936-1939): el caso del Hospital Infantil de Polop de la Marina (Alicante)", *Asclepio* 71/1 (2019), http://asclepio.revistas.csic.es/index.php/asclepio/article/view/810.

of this aid – refugees, orphans, and other children in need, without distinction. After the Republican side was defeated, some of these organisations continued to provide aid in exile.

As the months went by, the hardships caused by the difficulties in securing supplies and the rationing system became widespread. Furthermore, people were fearful and on constant alert due to the proliferation of disease. The risk of epidemics remained high throughout the war because of deficient sanitation and nutrition. For this reason, soap became one of the most prized articles among donated supplies. Conditions both during the journey and after arrival were not always the best. Overcrowding, poor sanitation, food shortages, and inclement weather faced by people who lacked suitable winter clothing were among the factors behind the high mortality rate among refugees. While exact numbers are not currently available, it is known that child mortality was particularly high. Most of the dead were small children who perished due to malnutrition or infectious diseases. The harsh conditions and overcrowding in many places of refugees contributed to the spread of disease. Indeed, in addition to the risk of infectious disease, many refugees developed conditions caused by malnutrition, such as rickets and pellagra. Such diseases are characteristic of situations of extreme deprivation like those experienced by refugees during the Spanish Civil War, who were forced to subsist on a highly unbalanced and nutrient-poor diet.

As the war continued, a problem that in the first months had been thought to be temporary became entrenched. Those who had fled their homes believing that they would only be away for a few weeks realized that would not be the case. The fear of looting and losing their homes and possessions forever even led some people to return secretly to occupied areas or towns located perilously close to the frontlines, despite the risk to their lives. The insurgents' advances continued to shrink the Republican rear-guard zone, causing new refugee movements from regions that had been seen as safe, but which during the final year of the war began to receive increasing numbers of refugees from local provinces, as in the case of Catalonia.[12]

The end of the war

The victory of Franco's insurgents in the war resulted in constant repression against the defeated. The future of those who had been forced to abandon their homes after the war was generally conditioned by this repression, as the mere fact of having fled was questioned by the new regime. Many were forced to embark on a new exodus, this time leaving

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12   Serrallonga i Urquidi, *Refugiats i desplaçats*.

for exile – most commonly to France, but in some cases to Algeria or Latin America. Most exiles ended up in French concentration camps in dreadful conditions, and some had the misfortune of being sent to the front when war broke out a few months later or being deported to Nazi concentration camps like Mauthausen. Those who, conversely, embarked on a different sort of exodus, returning to their homes, did not always fare better. Calls were immediately made for people to return home. The conditions in which they returned were often even more difficult than when they had fled. They felt like strangers in what had been their homes. Many of those who had fled during the war were denounced before the new authorities or faced stigma that marked them for life. They were subject to purges, sentenced to prison and, in some cases, killed. Some chose to go into hiding until they believed they could safely be seen in public. The most fortunate, while experiencing the tragedy of having to leave behind the lives they had led before the conflict, were able to avoid following orders to return to their places of origin and begin a new life in the places where they had found refuge, though this was not easy due to the conditions of extreme deprivation that characterized the post-war period. Experiences like the Spanish Civil War highlight the importance of looking to the past to examine forced displacement today in historical perspective. This perspective can help us respond to similar problems, serving to remind us that such circumstances can arise anywhere in the world and must be properly addressed.

Violence, Civil War, and Female Forced Displacement: The Return to Chios

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Keywords: forced displacement, women, Greek Civil War, concentration camps, Trikeri

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Introduction

By the end of 2019, there were 79.5 million forcibly displaced individuals world-wide as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, and human rights violations.[1] Armed conflict usually exacerbates inequalities, including gender-based ones, although the effects vary depending on the particular context. Women and men experience conflict, displacement, and post-conflict settings differently because of the culturally determined gender division of roles and responsibilities. This culturally determined division plays a crucial role in establishing each gender's needs, vulnerabilities, and opportunities. On the one hand, displaced women tend to be at greater risk of deprivation, insecurity, and abuse and are likely to face many forms of violence, extortion, and exploitation, including sexual and gender-based violence. On the other hand, refugee women are not disempowered, passive victims. The impact of forced displacement on women is complex and multifaceted. Forced displacement can give female refugees the opportunity to assume different gender roles, since refugees renegotiate and redefine gender relations while in camps and settlements.

This article aims to highlight the gender dimensions of forced displacement by narrating a story of past forced displacement: the story of the Greek women who were forcibly displaced in concentration camps on islands during the Greek Civil War and the post-war era (1947–1953). At the end of the armed conflict, in 1949, almost five thousand women, some with their children, were sent to a concentration camp, which had been established specifically for women on the island of Trikeri. The exile camp circuit started with exile to the island of Chios, then Trikeri, followed by Makronisos, ending once again in Trikeri. This is an irrational story of extreme deprivation and constant physical and psychological pain, but it is also a story of resistance and

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1   See https://www.unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/statistics/

women's empowerment. The camps on Greek islands where exiled women lived in the 1940s and the 1950s, and which have today been transformed into hot spots – refugee camps – constitute a common thread that links past and present female forced displacement. In these camps, women in the past and in the present live in closed-off or isolated locations under special rules that are distinct from the country's main system of rights and punishments. They live, they suffer, and they resist on the periphery of the established order.

Internal Forced Displacement in Greece

Internal forced displacement in Greece started during the Metaxas dictatorship, a typical interwar authoritarian regime that lasted from 1936 to 1940. However, it was during the Greek Civil War (1946–1949), the last event of the Second World War and a link to the Cold War, that internal forced displacement reached its climax. The creation of concentration camps on Greek islands constitutes a significant and unique feature of twentieth-century Europe, as they were the only camps opened after the end of the Second World War in liberated Western Europe, just a few years after stories about the horror of Auschwitz became widely known. In contrast to other European countries, where Nazi collaborators were detained in internment camps – for instance, in France – in Greece, it was left-wing Resistance fighters who were detained, abused, and tortured in internment camps during the Civil War. Left-wing individuals continued to be exiled in camps long after the war ended, throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, and again during the military dictatorship of the Colonels (1967–1974).

Idyllic and not so idyllic barren islands, which today are tourist attractions, were part of a topography of exile and terror. About 50,000 people were interned in prisons or camps and banished to islands between 1947 and 1949.[2] Public security committees, rather than courts, made the decision to deport political exiles to islands, a penalty that was officially called "administrative banishment". The government established mass internment camps on the inhabited islands of Makronisos, Giaros, and Trikeri – the latter for female political exiles – to punish and rehabilitate its internal enemies. Makronisos was used to detain soldiers and officers who had not been convicted of any offence whatsoever, but who were interned for "rehabilitation through enlightenment and education" – a latter-day secular Inquisition. "Rehabilitation", as defined by the state language and propaganda of the time, meant the transformation of leftist prisoners into nationalist and loyal citizens.

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2   Polymeris Voglis, "Political Prisoners in the Greek Civil War 1945-1950: Greece in Comparative Perspective", in: *Journal of Contemporary History* 37/4 (2002), p. 529.

In all camps, as illustrated in many exiles' memoirs, prisoners were subject to torture, solitary confinement, propaganda, hard labour, and wretched living conditions and mass killings were carried out in order to pressure exiles into signing statements of repentance to renounce their ideological beliefs.

Resistance and Civil War: Female Empowerment (1941-1949)

The Second World War and the Axis Occupation (1941–1944) changed Greek society profoundly. The extraordinary conditions created by the Occupation radicalized a large segment of the destitute population and gave the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) the opportunity to lead one of the most massive resistance movements in occupied Europe. During the Occupation, more than one third of Greek women participated in the political, cultural, and military organizations of the Resistance, even though they had no political rights. The war facilitated the massive entrance of women into the public sphere for the first time because it blurred the boundaries between the public and the private, challenging the traditional family values of Greek society.

Indicatively enough, women's presence in mass demonstrations in 1943 was impressive. Although the gender division was clearly reproduced in the resistance movement, the war gave women the opportunity to act as historical subjects and gain self-respect and self-confidence through their resistance activities. In the Resistance, the ideology of the patriarchal family was breached, the role of the family and the control of men over women were weakened, and women undertook traditionally male tasks; there was considerably more gender equality than before. Ultimately, the resistance movement proclaimed its support for women's rights and empowered women to vote for the first time in Greek history in local elections, as well as in the general elections for its parliament, the National Council in Free Greece, and encouraged them to stand up for their rights and freedoms.

The advent of the civil conflict marked a shift in the gendered division of military labour, as the female soldier of the earlier Resistance period gave way to the fully integrated female combatant. During the Greek Civil War, women constituted half of the Democratic Army of Greece, dominated by the Communist Party; thirty percent of its fighters and seventy percent of its personnel in support services were women. As polarization intensified, these women were either lauded as heroes within the rhetoric of partisan men and women or derided in the mainstream press, whose more extreme elements sought to dehumanize

partisan women and portray them as national traitors and ruthless hyenas. The Right accused left-wing women of being dishonourable and called them prostitutes because, rather than focusing solely on their families, their main focus was on political issues. For the first time in Greek history, women were executed. Women also began to be arrested, sentenced, and transported to island detention camps on the grounds that they were "dangerous for public order". Not all of the women sent into exile had participated in the resistance movement or in the Civil War; there were also female relatives – mothers, grandmothers, aunts, daughters, and sisters – of men who were politically engaged on the Left, based on an alleged "collective family responsibility", a sort of "political DNA". At the end of the armed conflict, thousands of women, along with their children, were sent to the concentration camp established specifically for women on the island of Trikeri. Women were exiled first to Chios, then to Trikeri and Makronisos, sometimes moving to Ikaria and, later, to the island of Ai Stratis, where many were sent after the closure of the Trikeri camp in 1953.

The case of the Trikeri camp (1949-1953)

Trikeri is a tiny island in the Pagasetic Gulf in the north of Greece, isolated and inaccessible due to its geographical position – an excellent site for the establishment of a concentration camp. From 1949 to 1953, nearly 5,000 women were exiled to this deserted island. When the women, many carrying babies, landed on Trikeri, they were pleasantly surprised by the stunning views and the green landscape. Nevertheless, they quickly realized that they would be living in conditions of extreme deprivation and constant physical and psychological pain. The exiles in Trikeri faced extreme hardship, ranging from the lack of water and medical treatment to malnutrition and forced labour, all while subject to military discipline and constant pressure to sign statements of repentance.

The irrational camp regulations imposed unnecessary hardships on them, such as by requiring them to carry all the food supplies and building materials from the port to their tents. They were forced to make circles around the island, rather than being allowed to take the most direct route, and had to carry all the provisions themselves – firewood, cement, and bricks and mortar for 5,000 women – going uphill. «We hadn't the courage to see the nature of April, nor the enchanting sea that we longed for. Because our heads were bent towards the earth and our minds were on how to climb uphill without stumbling on the rocks. Since then, the women called it 'Calvary'. […] Nor did we have the freedom to wash

ourselves in the sea, because we felt the eyes of the guards everywhere.»[3] The most exhausting and needless chore was to carry sand, pebbles, and seawater to make an enormous crown on a slope so it could be seen by passing ships.

Although there was room for them to be housed in the facilities of the monastery, where the administrative personnel were located, their oppressors obliged them to stay in worn-out tents: «Our life in Trikeri was horrible. We stayed outside in tents. In the summer, we suffered from the heat. And, of course, there were terrible flies. It was terribly hot, and the canvas absorbed the heat, and we couldn't do much about it. When the first rains started […] and they blew away our tents, we were forced to request that they let us rebuild our tents up on the hill, close to the monastery, where it was more sheltered from the wind. So, we did that, and they came a couple of times and destroyed these tents, forcing us to rebuild them again each time. And they beat us around, and made us sleep in the mud, even with the children, to force us to give in and sign statements.»[4]

The abduction of their children was another tactic used to press them to sign. Children were considered national property, and the role of the nation in their upbringing was therefore vital to save them: «Your children belong to Greece. Anyone who wants her child must first become Greek.»[5] The presence of the children was a source of both comfort and torture for their mothers. The Red Cross did not recognize the children as prisoners, so there were no food supplies for them. The growing number of children – 224 in total – were fed with food provided by their mothers. The women always made sure to take food for the children from the large cauldron of the breadline, keeping this a secret from the administration, thus reducing their own portions. Women gave birth in the camp and watched their children fall ill or die: «In September 1949, a woman gave birth to twins on the ground. One baby died after two days and the other was christened Eleftheria, which means freedom in Greek. She, too, died a week later.»[6] Because soap and water were so scarce and expensive, the children were soiled, tattered, and pale, «shadows like child ghosts. For these children, above all, some mothers made a statement and left the cursed island.»[7]

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3   Association of Women Political Exiles, *Stratopeda Ginaikon. Xios, Trikeri, Makronisos, Ai Stratis 1948-1954* [Women's camps], Athens: Alfeios, 2006, pp. 156-157, 160.

4   Janet Hart, *New voices in the nation. Women and the Greek Resistance, 1941-1964*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1996, p. 262.

5   Ourania Staveri, *To martiriko trigono ton exoriston gynaikon. Xios-Trikeri-Makronisi* [The torturing triangle of the exiled women. Xios-Trikeri-Makronisi], Athens: Paraskinio, 2006, pp. 100-101.

6   Marigoula Mastroleon-Zerva, *Exoristes. Xios, Trikeri, Makronisi* [Exiles. Xios, Trikeri, Makronisi], Athens: Sixroni Epoxi, 1986, pp. 70.

7   Association of Women Political Exiles, *Stratopeda Ginaikon*, p. 154.

Diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis, typhus, dysentery, and scabies frequently ripped through the camp, while healthcare for the women and children was non-existent: «Paraskevi, a young exiled woman, as soon as she arrived in Trikeri, after the sufferings, she started to grow pale and melt. Later, she bled continuously in her tent in front of the terrified women. Shortly, exhausted as she was, and desperate, she signed a statement of repentance and left on a stretcher. Did she live? […] Vagelitsa, a small 18-year-old village girl, died of tuberculosis a few days after she arrived at the camp. She was buried there as an animal, but I must not forget her.»[8] During these terrible outbreaks of disease, the administration did not provide any rice, sugar, lemons, or even medicine. The camp doctor kept the medicines provided by the Red Cross and sold them to the exiles at a high price.

A starvation diet was imposed, with insufficient food rations; they normally ate beans and chickpeas with a slice of bread. But the women found ways of surviving: «Fortunately for us, there were a lot of olive trees around there and we would gather them and soak them in sea-water brine […] Also, there were wild mushrooms growing around the bases of the olive trees and we would pick those. I would say to the children, 'Come on, you are going to eat liver'. And those few olives and mushrooms helped us get through the hunger.»[9] The lack of water was also stated to be a major problem. The men who were exiled to Trikeri before it was transformed into a female camp had constructed four wells. However, only one worked, and the water was very muddy. The women had to rise very early, form never-ending queues, and wait for hours to have some water for their daily needs, in addition to queuing in long breadlines under the military system. They described their daily lives as a constant queue: «We got up secretly before dawn to go to the wells in the hope that we would be the first ones. And yet again, under the trees, we found women awake, pale and wild, waiting for the water.»[10] After 8 p.m., they were not permitted to have any light in their tents and all movement was strictly prohibited.

Physical abuse in the form of beatings or even attempted rape was also present: «There was a lot of torture, with threats and all, that you're all going to die now, we're going to cut off your food and make you eat snakes, etc.»[11] «They were looking for a reason to hit us, to assault us with unspeakable curses, and finally to lock us up, starved, in the dungeon in the monastery.»[12] However, it was the national and religious indoctrination, censorship, and

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8   Association of Women Political Exiles, *Stratopeda Ginaikon*, p. 153.

9   Virgo Vasileiou, *Ena klonari anthismeno reiki* [One blooming brunch of ericea], Athens: Themelio, 1999, pp. 55-56.

10   Association of Women Political Exiles, *Stratopeda Ginaikon*, p. 163.

11   Hart, *New voices*, pp. 263.

12   Association of Women Political Exiles, *Stratopeda Ginaikon*, p. 160.

isolation that have been described as the most painful aspects of their experiences. After the defeat of the Democratic Army in 1949, they received visits from "repentees" from the Makronisos camp who had been transformed through torture into tormentors. Nevertheless, many of the forcibly displaced women, relatives of persecuted dissidents, refused to sign statements of repentance – not due to communist ideological convictions, but because they considered it to be a betrayal of their own family members.

Additionally, the guards – besides censoring the letters they sent to their families – frequently kept or even burnt the letters that their families sent them as a punishment: «And then we saw the fires burning our letters. Thousands of letters, cards and books were burned last night.»[13] The guards read the letters the women received, and when news arrived about the death of a family member, they would save these letters for last, reading them in front of the poor mother, sister, or wife. In the letters that they were allowed to send to their families once a week, they could only write that they were well due to censorship. In their photographic testimony – pictures they took of themselves to send to relatives – the women are smiling, giving a misleading sense of happiness in order to reassure their families that they are well. Newspapers were banned in the camp, but «from time to time and in a thousand ways, we came across a newspaper that circulated secretly in our tents. […] The books they sent us were kept in censorship for months and they avoided giving us schoolbooks and foreign language books so that we would not take any lessons.»[14]

Despite all these hardships, women in Trikeri managed to form a collectivity and a society devoid of men. Within the confines of a concentration camp, a social organization was created and all tasks – both those traditionally considered men's work and those seen as women's – were undertaken by women. Everyday life was organized by means of an elaborate committee structure: «Trikeri became a hive of work and education, a peculiar nunnery, unique in the world.»[15] The women formed committees for the unloading and carrying of supplies, retrieving water from wells, carpentry, cleaning, cooking, food distribution, classes, recreation, and childcare, disencumbering the elderly women and the children. «Here was the shoe store where Kalliroi made sandals and patched shoes. Below, the Pontic Greeks made mattresses, quilts, and pillows. Next to them, Foto made tables and beds for the children. The tinsmiths made gas cans from cans. On the left was Evangelia, who remade Red Cross clothes. To the right was Katerina's studio.»[16] In their "free time"

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13 Association of Women Political Exiles, *Stratopeda Ginaikon,* pp. 193.

14 Association of Women Political Exiles, *Stratopeda Ginaikon,* pp. 164.

15 Association of Women Political Exiles, *Stratopeda Ginaikon,* p. 321.

16   Association of Women Political Exiles, *Stratopeda Ginaikon,* pp. 322.

they did crafts, knitting, and embroidery, and even volleyball, basketball, and pantomime: «We cut the olive wood and made spoons and other small tools. We embroidered with shells and made various ornaments, necklaces, and toys for the children.»[17]

In the camp, in addition to the children, there were 230 illiterate women, 380 who only knew how to write their names, and 52 teachers, among them the prominent education-alist and prewar feminist Rosa Imvrioti and the famous professor, educationalist, and art historian Liza Kotou. Secret classes were held daily all over the camp, while Imvrioti gave lectures on fine arts, history, folklore, and hygiene. The teachers prepared high school age girls for university. «Those middle-aged women who had never had the chance to see or hear a teacher, they learnt their first letters here. And those who wanted to learn a foreign language, they succeeded here in the camp. There were teachers to teach you accounting, shorthand, drawing, cutting, sewing, whatever job you wanted to make your living tomor-row.»[18] They taught classes for the children and also managed to build a day nursery, where they entertained children while their mothers were busy with chores. There the children did exercise, played, sung, and learnt to write in the sand: «There were 182 children in the day nursery. One Sunday, we all happily went up to the plateau where they would perform theatre. There was great emotion. They performed Little Red Riding Hood for us. […] How hard it was to do all this, and how difficult it was to discipline those little savages!»[19]

Various measures of resistance were collectively agreed upon and used for mutual en-couragement. These included lessons, plays, and singing: «There I learnt dances from all parts of Greece, and songs from all over. We would teach each other our native songs and dances. I danced, I was in plays, I joked my way through.»[20] When the women were caught singing or doing other forbidden activities, they paid for it with beatings or solitary confinement. The youngest women tried to cheer up the rest of the camp with their energy: «For the very old women, we would go stand outside their tents, where they sat down speechless, and sing to them. This was our help, no greater than that which they were giving us with their courage and patience when they heard that one of their children was dead.»[21] When "repentees" came to indoctrinate them, the women started to murmur, making the guards furious. «And the whole camp, then, with their mouths closed, they started to hum, 'Mmm-mmm-mmm…

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17   Vasileiou, *Ena klonari,* pp. 95.

18   Association of Women Political Exiles, *Stratopeda Ginaikon*, pp. 175-176.

19   Association of Women Political Exiles, *Stratopeda Ginaikon*, pp. 169, 177.

20   Eleni Lefka, *Gynaikes stin exoria* [Women in exile], 1964, p. 30.

21   Association of Women Political Exiles, *Stratopeda Ginaikon*, p. 170.

mmm-mmm', like that. And you can imagine hearing twelve hundred women doing that.»[22] Despite all the penury, on New Year's Eve 1950, the women found the courage to celebrate Santa Claus. They dressed a girl in white and red and put a bag full of old letters on her back, and she walked around the tents, breaking the terror and sadness.

The women adopted strategies of resistance which differed significantly from those of men, such as colour – their dresses were a river of colours. There was a tacit agreement not to wear black clothes, even though almost every woman in the camp could have done so on the grounds of mourning. Every day, they received news of executions: «Many women in mourning wanted to withdraw to remember their beloved dead unceasingly. They were melancholy, they wanted to commit suicide, that's why we never left them alone.»[23] Cleaning their bodies, their clothes, and taking care of their appearance was another strategy of survival and resistance. The women said farewell to those sentenced to death by «giving them a souvenir or some money and washing and combing their hair so that they would depart beautiful and optimist».[24] The women did not listen to anyone – only to the supreme voice of self-preservation and solidarity. Those who survived these difficult times later stated that their resistance activities provided a clear motivation to survive: «The life of each of us became the life of all.»[25]

According to their own accounts, when the women returned to their homes, they missed the communal life, the collectivity. For some, the environment was very hostile: «We were like lepers. Nobody was talking to me. I did not have a job. I was hungry. Do you understand? And then I felt the greatest misery of my life. Because outside [in exile] we were suffering, they beat us, but we could talk to each other. There I was alone.»[26] Years after the camp had been phased out, seven surviving notebooks, written by exiled women in Trikeri and buried under an olive tree, surfaced. The Association of Women Political Exiles published the notebooks, and they began to hold annual meetings at Trikeri to share memories together. In 1991, the Association of Women Political Exiles sought permission from religious authorities to place an honorary plaque in the monastery on the island of Trikeri. However, the bishop proclaimed that it was time to forgive past discord, in order to avoid repeating the mistakes of the past in the future. Finally, in 2017, the Federation of the Greek Women placed the honorary plaque in the monastery.

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22   Natalia Apostolopoulou, *Grothia sto skotadi* [Fist in the dark], Athens: Sixroni Epoxi, 1984, pp. 13-14, Lefka, *Gynaikes stin exoria*, p. 37.

23   Association of Women Political Exiles, *Stratopeda Ginaikon*, p. 168.

24   Association of Women Political Exiles, *Stratopeda Ginaikon,* p. 173.

25   Eirini Papadimitriou-Maroudi, *Gynaikes stin eksoria* [Women at exile], Athens: Kedros, 1979, p. 159.

26   Margarita Kotsaki, *Mia zoi gemati agones* [A life full of struggles], Athens, Sixroni Epoxi, 1987, p. 89.

Female Forced Displacement: Challenging or Reinforcing Traditional Gender Roles?

War and displacement gave women the opportunity to assume different gender roles, even if only for a short period of time. The camps, centres of detention, brought women from different backgrounds into contact with one another; gave them the opportunity to be educated, since lessons took place in a variety of places at these camps, which also functioned as "educational institutions"; and, in general, sparked their potential for mobilization. The Greek woman, before her participation in the war «was neglected, an inferior gender in relation to men, persuaded that she was destined only for the household, the closed life, that she had no rights».[27] On contrary, women's wartime experience and active role provided grounds for claims to equality and emancipation.

The emancipation experienced by Greek women from 1941 to 1949 was short-lived, as it was interrupted by post-war right-wing government policies and philosophies. Women's massive participation in the Resistance did not win them political rights immediately after the war, as was the case in Italy and France.[28] The League of Women's Rights, a liberal feminist association, active since the 1920s; the Panhellenic Union of Women, founded in 1945 by communist women and supporters; and the Panhellenic Foundation of Women, established in 1946, all demanded the right to vote for women. Nevertheless, the Civil War sharpened and politicized women's associations and the question of the women's vote. In this context, some associations, such as the Union of Greek Women Scientists, believed that women should not be given the right to vote immediately, for reasons of high national interest. The dominant state ideology, *ethnikofrosini*, meant the defence of the nation, but also the defence of traditional Greek values. Those who believed in *ethnikofrosini* thought that women's suffrage would mean women's votes for the Left and, most importantly, would dissolve the unity of the family. For women, this ideology meant a return to domestic tasks and submission to the rules of the patriarchal family.

During the post-war era, women were demobilized as part of the return to exclusionary politics and traditional gender relations. This effort to push them back into their traditional roles was carried out not only through propaganda, but also through raw violence. In this political climate of constant persecution, women's struggle for the vote ceased to be a priority because their main concern was stopping right-wing violence. At the end of 1947,

27 Kotsaki, *Mia zoi gemati agones*, p. 40

28 On contrary, men had had the right to vote since the establishment of the Greek state in 1864.

all communist-influenced women's associations were dissolved as followers of the Communist Party, which was outlawed. Despite pressure from the United Nations and the Women's Committee, the victorious first post-war government did not grant women the right to vote. Right-wing women's associations exerted pressure for the right to vote by exploiting the power of male family members, while at the same time stressing that a woman's place was in the home. These women did not reject "everything Greek and everything womanly", as the left-wing women who were exiled or imprisoned did. In the local council elections of 1951, women exercised the right to vote, but with major restrictions. Women were not eligible to be elected as mayors or council presidents and they could not vote if they were under 25. Finally, in the general elections of 1956, Greek women voted on equal terms with men. The majority of women voted conservative.[29]

At the same time, women had to assume their traditional gender roles not only due to persecution, but also due to the "medieval perceptions" about women of their comrades, male communists. Communist leadership had aimed to mobilize women without challenging social consensus and gender hierarchies; thus, the Communist Party adopted rather conservative rhetoric on gender relations. This position emerged partly out of self-preservation, but also due to the party's structural conservative tendencies. For these women, emancipated and empowered during the Resistance and the Civil War, it was tragic to realize that, after the movement was defeated, comrades once again became masters. They had to abandon their previously active, engaged roles and re-assume traditional gender roles and power hierarchies linked to the patriarchal societal setting. An extreme patriarchal regime was once again in place, based on ascribed gender-specific social roles which relegated women to the private sphere as a means of ensuring family structure, continuity, and stability.

Recent research takes into account violations of women's human rights during conflict and in peacetime, both as a result of their active participation and political activism and as wives and mothers, thus gradually incorporating the experiences of displaced and refugee women. While there is a general consensus in the academic literature on the vulnerabilities faced by women in forced displacement, less is known about the opportunities they may have and the long-term impact. The impact of armed conflict on women is not always negative. For some women, it allows for greater mobility and gives them the opportunity to assume new roles, which may be an empowering experience. Thus, forced displacement may lead to women's empowerment as refugees from mainly patriarchal and male-dominated

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29   Tasoula Vervenioti, "Makronisi: martyria kai martiries gynaikon" [Makronisi: Martyrdom and testimonies of women], in: *Istoriko topio kai Istoriki Mnimi. To paradeigma tis Makronisou* [Historical landscape and Historical Memory. The example of Makronisos], Athens: Filistor, 2000, pp. 113-118.

societies renegotiate and redefine gender relations while in camps and settlements. On the other hand, other studies have pointed out that this empowerment can lead to increased tensions in gender relations, especially when men find it difficult to cope with their reduced ability to act as the main leader, provider, and protector in the family. Naturally, there are many other factors that have an impact on how women and men experience forced displacement, including class, age, race, ethnicity, and rural/urban differences, as well as wider political and socio-economic issues. In any case, displaced people must be seen as individuals with different identities and roles and their agency must be acknowledged, rather than considering them passive victims.

The SO-CLOSE Consortium

The SO-CLOSE Consortium are nine institutions located in five countries. They all have one mission. In the current global context of forced migrations, the most important for them is to contribute to social cohesion and fight refugee marginalization or exclusion by facilitating the encounters between similar life stories. These goals can be achieved through the mediation of innovative digital and artistic tools.

The Autonomous University of Barcelona

The Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) is one of the major public universities in Spain. It is located in Bellaterra, close to Barcelona city. UAB has over 37,700 students, almost 3,700 researchers and teaching staff, and it hosts more than 6,000 foreign students. In recent years, the UAB has seen recognition for its efforts in promoting quality in teaching, in attracting international talent and in obtaining a growing impact in research, together with a progressive improvement in its classifications in the most prestigious and influential international rankings. UAB coordinates the SO-CLOSE project and leads tasks for setting up the user engagement strategy, identifying focus groups, evaluating the pilots and managing the dissemination, implementation, and evaluation.

Lund University

Lund University was founded in 1666 and is ranked among the world's top 100 universities. The University has 40 000 students and 7 600 staff based in Lund, Helsingborg and Malmö. Lund is the most popular study location in Sweden. The University offers one of the broadest ranges of programmes and courses in Scandinavia, based on cross-disciplinary and cutting-edge research. The University has a distinct international profile, with partner universities in 67 countries.

Villa Decius Association

Villa Decius Association was established in 1995 by well-known representatives of the polish worlds of science, economy, and culture. Within several years Villa Decius has been defined as a cultural institution of international outreach. The renaissance palace and garden complex of Villa become a base for the Association's activities continuing the idea of a place for the dialogue of cultures and meeting point of people, artists and scientists.

Peace School Foundation of Monte Sole

The Peace School Foundation of Monte Sole, created in 2002, has its registered office and its operating facilities in the Historical Park of Monte Sole, founded in 1989 by a law of the Emilia Romagna Region. Its aim is to promote training and peace education projects, non-violent conflict resolution, respect of human rights, for a peaceful living together among different people and cultures, for a society without xenophobia, racism and any other kind of violence towards human beings and their environment.

Exile Memorial Museum Consortium

The Exile Memorial Museum Consortium is a public body constituted for the establishment and joint management, in the town of La Jonquera, of the Museum under this name, whose object is the exhibition, research, interpretation and dissemination of history and memory related to the Spanish Civil War, republican exile and Franco dictatorship, taking also into account the phenomenon of exile globally in the context of the twentieth century until today.

The Centre for Research and Technology-Hellas

The Centre for Research and Technology-Hellas (CERTH), founded in 2000, is the only research centre in Northern Greece and one of the largest in the country. CERTH has important scientific and technological achievements in many areas including: Energy, Environment, Industry, Mechatronics, Information & Communication, Transportation & Sustainable Mobility, Health, Agro-biotechnology, Smart farming, Safety & Security, as well as several cross-disciplinary scientific areas.

ENGINEERING Ingegneria Informatica S.p.A.

ENGINEERING Ingegneria Informatica S.p.A. is the head company of the ENGINEERING Group. Engineering was founded in 1980, and it is currently the first IT group in Italy, among the top 10 IT groups in Europe, quite 101.000 employees and 650 branch offices in Italy and abroad, with an established presence in Belgium, Norway, Republic of Serbia, Latin America and USA.

La Tempesta

La Tempesta is a professional consulting services and a digital and media production company. It is consulting services that involves strategy, management and digital transformation for public and private organisations.

As a digital and media production company, they specialize in giving cultural heritage (immaterial, historical, artistic, architectural, landscape, documents …) a digital expression.

The Greek Forum of Refugees

The Greek Forum of Refugees (GFR) is a registered non-profit making Association established in Athens, Greece, in 2012. Its overall aim is to support the unity of the refugee communities based in Greece and at the European level and to foster refugees' inclusion within their host society by encouraging their active participation and need to be recognized as skilled and knowledgeable individuals. GFR is therefore actively engaged in Empowerment, Advocacy, Awareness-raising and Rights protection.

The SO-CLOSE Project uses cultural heritage and innovative tools to improve social cohesion and promote mutual understanding. Smart management, creative ideas, international knowledge and cooperation helps to create tools to bring people and cultures together.

From so far to so close.

SO-CLOSE Project Consortium

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