

INTERWAR AND POST-WAR APPARATUSES OF DISPLACEMENT  
RESPONSE IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

A thesis submitted to The University of Manchester for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the Faculty of Humanities

2019

REBECCA F. VINEY-WOOD

SCHOOL OF ARTS, LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

## Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations .....	5
List of Illustrations and Maps.....	7
Abstract .....	9
Declaration and Copyright Statement.....	10
Notes on Translations and Conventions of Presentation .....	11
Acknowledgements.....	12
Dedication .....	14
Introduction .....	15
Statement of Question .....	15
Historiography and Concepts .....	17
Methodology.....	27
Project Origins .....	32
Aims and Research Questions .....	36
Methods.....	39
Chapter Outline.....	42
I: The Interwar Nansen Apparatus from Geneva to Kirin, Harbin, and Shanghai .....	48
The Stimulus of Displacement and the Institutional Structure of the Apparatus .....	50
The Patterns and Challenges of Russian Displacement in China .....	59
‘The time is past for such temporary charity’: Dr James A. Greig and the Establishment of a Delegation in China, 1923-1926 .....	63
The Legal Status of Refugees, Welfare Provisions and a New Delegate in China, 1925-1931.....	71
‘A very difficult refugee problem’: Charles E. Metzler and the Delegation in Shanghai, 1933-1937 .....	78
Conclusion.....	85
II: Objects Which Acted: The Unpredictability of Nansen passports within the Interwar Apparatus .....	87
The Authority and Agency of Passports .....	90
The Introduction of Nansen passports in a World of Increased Passportisation .....	95
‘Typewritten on a plain piece of paper’: Non-Standardised Nansen passports in the Context of Iraq, 1930 .....	101

Unexpected Encounters: How Nansen passports brought together Jewish Russian Refugees in the United Kingdom with Other Actors from the Apparatus .....	105
‘No crime other than to be born and to exist’: Nansen passport Bearers and Western European Criminal Justice Systems .....	116
Conclusion .....	120
III: The Bridging Period: Responses to Displacement from the Latter Half of the Interwar Era to the Establishment of the UNHCR .....	123
The Protection of Refugees Cannot Go on Forever: Attitudes towards Displacement in the 1930s.....	125
Ad hoc Responses to Displacement during the Second World War.....	132
At War’s End: Divisive and Divided Responses to European Displacement in the Early Post-War Period.....	141
Conclusion.....	151
IV: ‘No great plan’: International Law, Voluntary Agencies, and Refugee ‘Passports’ in the post-1950 Apparatus .....	153
A ‘degree of independence and prestige’: The Return of a High Commissioner for Refugees .....	155
Legal ‘fonctionnaires’: International Lawyers and the Further Cultivation of Expertise in Refugee Law .....	160
‘Bad cases make bad law, no cases make no law’: The Importance of Individual Cases and Actors in the post-1950 Apparatus .....	165
Voluntary Agencies at the Boundaries of the Apparatus .....	174
Separating the Identity and Travel Functions of Documents for Refugees and Stateless People .....	180
Conclusion.....	194
V: ‘What Are You Going to Do About the Chinese Refugees?’ The UNHCR and Yunnanese ‘Refugees’ in Post-Independence Burma, 1953-1954 .....	196
The Context of Burma and Chinese Displacement in the Early 1950s.....	198
Meiktila Camp .....	204
Aamir Ali and the Tentative Moves of the Agency of the Western Apparatus in Burma .....	207
Colonial Era Mentalities and Internationalist Ideas: Heterogeneous Opinions within the Apparatus.....	215
‘Refugees Should Be Treated as POWs’: The Limits of the Western Apparatus in Expanding Its Activities in Burma.....	219
Conclusion.....	224
Conclusion.....	227

Components of the Apparatuses: Context, Devices, and Actors .....	228
Significance, and Avenues for Future Research .....	235
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	239
Archival and Library Collections .....	239
Correspondence and Interviews.....	239
Online Collections .....	240
Newspapers and Media .....	240
Secondary Sources .....	241

Word count: 87,092

## List of Abbreviations

BRC	British Red Cross
DP	Displaced Person
CARE	Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere
CCOP	Consultative Committee of Private Organizations
CMHM	Cotter Medical History Museum
CRA	Christian Relief Association
CTD	Convention Travel Document
CER	Chinese Eastern Railway
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIM	Chinese Inland Mission
ECOSOC	UN Economic and Social Council
ERC	Ecumenical Refugee Commission
EU	European Union
ExCom	Executive Committee of the UNHCR
FDR	Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany)
GDR	German Democratic Republic (East Germany)
ICMC	International Catholic Migration Commission
ICEM	Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICRR	International Committee for Russian Refugees
IGCR	Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IRO	International Refugee Organisation
JDC	(American) Joint Distribution Committee
KRISY NET	Kosovo Refugee Information Systems and Network
KT	Kuomintang, name for the Chinese Nationalist Forces
LON	League of Nations (Also referred to as 'The League')
LONSEA	League of Nations Search Engine
LTD	London Travel Document
LNA	League of Nations Archive
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OPRFA	French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons
OXFAM	Oxford Committee for Famine Relief
PMC	Permanent Migration Committee
POW/POWs	Prisoner of War/ Prisoners of War
PRC	People's Republic of China (Communist)
ROC	Republic of China (Nationalist)
SHAEF	Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Force
SORO	Council of the United Russian Public Organisations at Shanghai
UKNA	United Kingdom National Archives
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNKRA	United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency
UNOG	United Nations Office in Geneva
UNRRA	United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration

UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine
UNSG	United Nations Secretary General
USHMM	United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (also referred to as ‘the Soviet Union’)
Volag	Voluntary Agency
WCC	World Council of Churches

## List of Illustrations and Maps

- Figure 1: Political Map of China, 2001 (edited for this thesis to pinpoint Xinjiang (Sinkiang), Beijing (Peking), Shanghai, Jilin (Kirin), Harbin and Vladivostok, and to broadly demonstrate the trajectories of Russian refugees into China). Source: University of Texas. .... 60
- Figure 2: Map showing the International Settlement and French Concession, drawn by Richard Feetham for the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1931. Source: Virtual Shanghai. .... 79
- Figure 3: Charles E. Metzler, undated. Source: Marcia Reynders Ristaino, 2001. .... 82
- Figure 4: A travel document issued to Catherine Fischmann by the Imperial Russian consulate in Brussels, 1921. Source: Jane and Peter Gatrell. .... 98
- Figure 5: Visit of Members of the Russian Duma to England, 1909 (Efremoff is pictured on the far left). Source: Benjamin Stone, National Portrait Gallery. .... 99
- Figure 6: Map ‘Growth of the Russian Empire in Europe’ showing that Livonia (Latvia) as part of the Russian Empire. Source: Philips' New Historical Atlas for Students. .... 111
- Figure 7: Lucien Wolf, 1907. Source: National Portrait Gallery, UK. .... 113
- Figure 8: ‘Yugoslavia political divisions 1942’. Source: American Geographical Society Library, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries. .... 134
- Figure 9: Map showing the Allied Occupation Zones in Central Europe, 1944. Source: edmaps.com. .... 171
- Figure 10: Henri Ponsot, ‘Délégué Général’ for the High Commissioner in France in 1944, photographed in Morocco, 1926. Source: Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF). .... 183
- Figure 11: Example of an IRO Travel Document issued to Stanislaw (Bill) Nowak on 28 July 1950. Source: Victorian Collections, Australia. .... 187
- Figure 12: IRO Certificate of Eligibility Issued to Bedrich Bisinger by IRO in Munich, Germany, 1950. Source: Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre. .... 188
- Figure 13: An example of a Convention Travel Document issued to ‘Alexis Bicsak’ on 17 May 1960. Source: J. Genovard. .... 192

Figure 14: Map edited to show Meiktila, central Burma, 2007. Source: The University of Texas ..... 206

Figure 15: Aamir Ali. Source, Aamir Ali, 'Now that We Are Old. .... 210

Figure 16: A girl, most likely from Yunnan province, pictured in civilian clothing during the 'Chinese Evacuation of Burma' in November 1953. Source: James Burke, Life Magazine..... 222



## Abstract

This thesis responds to two critiques of the contemporary historiography of displacement; Firstly, that existing histories of displacement are too narrow in scope, and secondly, that they are based on weak theoretical foundations. In comparison to other disciplines within the field of refugees and forced migration studies, the history of displacement is notable for its paucity of explicitly comparative, geographically broad, or theoretically grounded scholarship. This thesis provides an example of how to address these theoretical and spatial shortcomings by employing a framework built upon the concepts of apparatus and assemblage, in combination with microhistorical approaches to archival research. Through the comparison of the interwar ‘Nansen’ era and the beginnings of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the 1950s, this work offers new insights into the evolution of responses to displacement, highlighting and evidencing aspects of both continuity and change. The expansive geographical scope of this project, which ranges from South East Asia to Europe and the Middle East, also underscores the importance of smaller case studies for understanding the character and complexity of responses to displacement.

Taking Foucault’s notion of apparatus as its starting point, this thesis argues that responses to displacement in the interwar and early UNHCR period can be understood as being formed of a complex apparatus of networks, decision making, discourse and material objects which produced unpredictable and frequently uneven results, whilst maintaining a family resemblance. By applying the apparatus concept to two periods of displacement response patterns of both coherence and difference emerge, revealing two geographically diffuse systems which operated in many different contexts. Seemingly unconnected responses to displacement such as the Nansen Offices presence in interwar China, and the UNHCR’s attempt and failure to offer assistance to Chinese refugees in post-war Burma highlight the devices which hold it together, and which if missing allow it to fall apart. This project is further enriched by the notion of assemblage, which incorporates more diverse elements such as material agency. By engaging with the question of material agency, this work intervenes in ongoing debates about Nansen Passports, going beyond binary distinctions of whether they were a ‘success’ or a ‘failure.’ Furthermore, this project offers new research into the separation of the mobility and identification functions of refugee passports in the post-war era, shedding light on why contemporary refugee documents lack the imagination of interwar Nansen Passports. In using the apparatus/assemblage concepts, this thesis challenges teleological accounts of responses to displacement, offering new research into often unknown episodes which speak to contemporary processes that shape how refugees are perceived and assisted.

## Declaration and Copyright Statement

No portion of the work referred to in this thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

1. The author of this thesis (including any appendices and/or schedules to this thesis) owns certain copyright or related rights in it (the “Copyright”) and s/he has given The University of Manchester certain rights to use such Copyright, including for administrative purposes.
2. Copies of this thesis, either in full or in extracts and whether in hard or electronic copy, may be made only in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (as amended) and regulations issued under it or, where appropriate, in accordance with licensing agreements which the University has from time to time. This page must form part of any such copies made.
3. The ownership of certain Copyright, patents, designs, trademarks and other intellectual property (the “Intellectual Property”) and any reproductions of copyright works in the thesis, for example graphs and tables (“Reproductions”), which may be described in this thesis, may not be owned by the author and may be owned by third parties. Such Intellectual Property and Reproductions cannot and must not be made available for use without the prior written permission of the owner(s) of the relevant Intellectual Property and/or Reproductions.
4. Further information on the conditions under which disclosure, publication and commercialisation of this thesis, the Copyright and any Intellectual Property and/or Reproductions described in it may take place is available in the University IP Policy (see <http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=24420>), in any relevant Thesis restriction declarations deposited in the University Library, The University Library’s regulations (see <http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/about/regulations/>) and in The University’s policy on Presentation of Theses.

## Notes on Translations and Conventions of Presentation

All translations are my own unless otherwise indicated. In translating archival documents from French I have tried as far as possible to uphold the style of the author, including the original phrasing and grammar. I have also attempted to maintain the spellings and terms as given in the documents, such as place names which have changed over time.

This thesis follows the referencing system outlined in the Modern Humanities Referencing Association (MHRA) 2013 third edition style guide:  
<http://www.mhra.org.uk/pdf/MHRA-Style-Guide-3rd-Edn.pdf>.

The form of the thesis departs from the MHRA guidelines by omitting the term 'Ibid' in favour of including the authors' names, and an abbreviated title of each secondary source. Additionally, in the case of multiple short quotations from the same source, the footnote is given at the end of the last quotation in a given paragraph.

For clarity, the full form of the abbreviations will be given with their acronyms when first mentioned within each chapter.

## Acknowledgements

I have been looking forward to writing these acknowledgements for a long time, and so have left them to be my last, important, bit of writing. The past three years have been filled with tremendous highs and lows, throughout which I have relied upon the guidance of my two supervisors. Bertrand Taithe challenged me from the off, giving me the freedom to follow my instincts whilst maintaining a steady and supportive presence. With his never ending curiosity and ability to cut to the heart of an argument, he has been a wonderful supervisor and colleague. Peter Gatrell supported me in this endeavour from before it had even really begun, and has proven to be an irreplaceable source of wisdom and kindness. Peter is an example of the very best parts of academia; a person of great intellect who is also enormously generous towards other scholars. I also owe an enormous debt of gratitude to my third panellist, Roisin Read, who so generously gave her time and attention to many draft chapters of this thesis. Roisin is not only thorough but extremely perceptive, and much of the fine tuning in this thesis has stemmed from our discussions.

I have been extremely fortunate to be part of the excellent HCRI community. Huge thanks go to my HCRI PhD room crew; Isabelle, Eric, Lou, Ben, Jenny, Kristina, Margot, Nicola, Brigid, Maria, Anisa, Linda, Sam, Margaux, Ingri, Rana and Dalita, you guys are the best. Thanks also go to my fantastic reading group, the ‘troika’... which is now six people! Thank you Ria, Kasia, Margot, Joe and Peter for the thought provoking and ‘interesting’ conversations. Additional thanks go to all of those who gave me their time, both professional and pastoral; Eleanor Davey, Jessica Hawkins, and Jean Marc Dreyfus.

None of this would have been possible without the generous studentship and additional grants given to me by the Economic and Social Research Council, for which I am very grateful. I have also been lucky to encounter many excellent archivists on this journey; Jacques Oberson and his team at the UN archives in Geneva, Anna Haward at the UNHCR, Sarah Rhodes at the Weis Collection, and Fabrizio Bensi at the ICRC.

Thanks also go to all of the people who have provided me with a home from home. In Geneva; Patrick Taran, Olga Kadysheva and Socks the cat; Jane Royston, Susie Spring, and my Swiss canine research assistants Bongey and Sally. In London, Ali and Tony, who have always provided me with a comfy bed, great food and even better company whenever it was needed.

There have been times when I have thought that this PhD was simply too hard a mountain to climb. In these moments I have been supported by incredible friends. Thanks go to the ex-LSMC lot, particularly Holly, Mary, Lauren and Ray, for taking me up actual mountains and showing me that they can be climbed! Thanks also go to my amazing Wirral friends; Max, Helen, Liz, Sarah, Kate, Chloe, Claire, and Andy. Fiona and Katie have been my constant cheerleaders, surrounding me with love and reminding me not to take life too seriously.

My family have been with me on this journey every step of the way. My deepest love and thanks go to my father, Andy, who valiantly edited my grammar. My sister, Emily, and my brother, Nick, are two of the kindest and most supportive people I know, and I cannot thank them enough. My mum, Frankie, is my core of steel. She has taught me to be strong, to work hard, and to trust my instincts. My thanks also go to the wonderful Debbie and Chris, and the extended Baxter and John clans for all of their support. My boys, Brae and Bram have been my constant companions, my warmth, my snuggle buddies, my perspective.

Finally, Phil. My rock, my love. I can never thank you enough for your enormous love and support throughout this whole crazy process. Thank you for being understanding, for listening, for feeding me when I forgot to eat, for insisting that I take breaks, and for keeping our household running. It has meant more than you will ever know.

## Dedication

To all the fierce, sparky, and formidable women that I am privileged to call friends and family. In particular to Gene John, my grandmother, who led an incredible early life yet had limited academic opportunities despite her intelligence; this thesis is dedicated to you.

## Introduction

### *Statement of Question*

It is full one year we have not asked anybody for help, believing [in] our own forces, but when the struggle against Bolsheviks is straightened, we admit that without foreign assistance we shall be lost. We have already sold all, and we have nothing now. Winter is coming and we have not home, clothes, linen and we are deprived of possibility to gain our bread, which is very expensive here on account of poor crops. We believe that you will not refuse to help us.<sup>1</sup>

The question of Chinese refugees is the most important one in Burma. Everywhere the first question I was asked was: What are you going to do about the Chinese refugees?<sup>2</sup>

Written more than thirty years apart, the passages above concern two different groups of refugees in two distinct settings. The first was written in 1922 by three representatives from a small grouping of ‘White’ Russian refugees from the Volga and Ural regions of Russia who had fled to Chinese Turkestan in 1921.<sup>3</sup> These refugees were amongst the estimated 60,000 who crossed Sino-Russian borders in the wake of tumultuous civil war, revolution and famine. The letter from the three representatives was addressed to the High Commissioner for Russian Refugees over five thousand miles away in Geneva, and whose assistance at that point only extended as far East as Constantinople (now Istanbul). In 1922, the High Commissioners’ office had been functioning for less than two years, and the proliferation of a formal Western apparatus of displacement response

---

<sup>1</sup> League of Nations Archive (LNA)/R1740/19165: Letter from Tratskeff, Colonel Papingut and Tshelokoff to the High Commissioner for Russian Refugees, undated (circa autumn 1922).

<sup>2</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Extract from Aamir Ali’s Report on his Mission to Burma, 30 April 1953.

<sup>3</sup> ‘White Russians’ was the term applied to those people who were formerly subjects of the Russian empire and who objected to the revolutionary climate which resulted in the deposition of the Tsar and an ensuing civil war between 1917 and 1923. Furthermore, Chinese Turkestan is today Xianjing Province See: Aaron Cohen, ‘‘Our Russian Passport’’: First World War Monuments, Transnational Commemoration, and the Russian Emigration in Europe, 1918-39’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 49, 4 (2014), pp. 627-651.

composed of the agency, policies, administrative measures, international legislation and more was still in its infancy.<sup>4</sup> In contrast, by 1953 when Aamir Ali, a representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), encountered a group of Chinese refugees in Burma formal international responses to refugees rooted in the West had existed for over three decades. The displaced population in Burma represented just a small portion of the hundreds of thousands of Chinese civilians and soldiers who became refugees as a result of the conflict between Nationalist and Communist forces and eventual Communist victory in China in 1949. Once in Burma, they lacked both formal recognition as refugees and international assistance, relying predominantly on themselves to survive, with limited assistance from the Burmese government who viewed the incomers as a challenge in their navigation of the encroaching Cold War.<sup>5</sup>

These two groupings, firstly of Russian refugees in China during the interwar period, and secondly of Chinese refugees in Burma in the early 1950s, serve as bookends for this research. Based upon often small but rich pieces of information gleaned in various archives, each speaks to central concerns of this thesis with the overarching contours of responses to displacement. They both capture the often messy manner in which these processes played out, and the complex ways in which refugees and responses to them were both part and cause of wider socio-political processes. Such processes included revolution, civil war, and Cold War.

The many threads which inform the focus of this research are gathered together and analysed through the comparison of two historical periods of responses to displacement; the interwar era from 1918 to 1939, and the first few years of the period marked by the founding of the UNHCR in 1950. In comparing these two periods, this thesis explores how historical responses to displacement defy the neatness of the single narrative which emerges in institutional histories of the UNHCR, and were instead the result of manifold, context specific processes.<sup>6</sup> Methodologically, it does this by

---

<sup>4</sup> See: Sir John Hope Simpson, *The Refugee Problem: A Report of a Survey* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939), pp. 495-513; LNA/R1740/19165: Tratskeff, Papingut and Tshelokoff to ICRC, undated.

<sup>5</sup> See: UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Ali Report Burma, 30 April 1953; Laura Madokoro, *Elusive Refuge: Chinese Migrants in the Cold War* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2016), pp. 1-18; Weng-Chin Chang, 'From War Refugees to Immigrants: The Case of the KMT Yunnanese Chinese in Northern Thailand', *The International Migration Review*, 35, 4 (2001), pp. 1086-1105.

<sup>6</sup> See 'Historiography and Concepts' for a more in depth discussion of the UNHCR's institutional narrative.



analysing primary resources through a framework based upon the concepts of ‘apparatus’ and ‘assemblage’.<sup>7</sup> Scholars who make use of these concepts, such as geographer Stephen Legg, contend that apparatus is a heterogeneous ensemble of many different elements, including planning, policies, administrative measures and laws through which power circulates, whilst an assemblage is a looser constellations of these different components which also incorporates the agency of material objects.<sup>8</sup>

### *Historiography and Concepts*

Exploring the history of displacement with contemporary crises in mind requires an acknowledgement that all historical periods are contextually unique, and that previous practices of response are thus both precursors and contrasts to modern approaches. Scholars such as J. Olaf Kleist note that as a field, refugee and forced migration studies has been sensitive to external developments of new refugee crises and policy world responses.<sup>9</sup> Although there are notable examples of writings concerning refugees throughout the twentieth century, including John Hope Simpson’s detailed survey of displacement published in 1938, it was only in the 1980s that ‘refugee studies’ as a defined field of academic inquiry really took shape.<sup>10</sup> With a shared interest in displacement, this new field of research drew scholars from across the disciplinary spectrum, including anthropology, politics, law, international relations, sociology, development studies, psychology, environmental science, communications, gender and culture studies, and history.

---

<sup>7</sup> See: Gilles Deleuze, ‘Qu’est-ce qu’un dispositif?’ in *Michel Foucault philosophe : Rencontre internationale*, ed. by Collectif (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1989), pp. 185-195; Giorgio Agamben, *What is an Apparatus?*, trans. by David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009); Jeffrey Bussolini, ‘What is a Dispositive?’, *Foucault Studies*, 10 (2010), pp. 85-107.

<sup>8</sup> Stephen Legg, ‘Assemblage/Apparatus: Using Deleuze and Foucault’, *Royal Geographical Area Society*, 43, 2 (2011), pp. 128-133.

<sup>9</sup> See: J. Olaf Kleist, ‘The History of Refugee Protection: Conceptual and Methodological Challenges’, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 30, 2 (2017), p. 162; Laura Madokoro, Elaine Lynn-ee Ho and Peterson, Glen, ‘Questioning the Dynamics and Language of Forced Migration in Asia: The experiences of Ethnic Chinese Refugees’, *Modern Asian Studies*, 49, 2 (2015), p. 430; B. S. Chimni, ‘The Birth of a ‘Discipline’: From Refugee to Forced Migration Studies’, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 22, 1 (2009), p.23.

<sup>10</sup> See: Hope Simpson, *Report of a Survey*; Oliver Bakewell, ‘Introduction: Researching Refugees: Lessons from the Past, Current Challenges and Future Debates’, *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 26, 3 (2007), p. 6; Richard Black, ‘Fifty Years of Refugee Studies: From Theory to Policy’, *International Migration Review*, 35, 1 (2001), pp. 57-78; Jérôme Elie, ‘Histories of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies*, ed. by Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 23-35.

A characteristic of this field of studies is what Matthew Frank and Jessica Reinisch describe as an ‘overwhelming presentism’, as scholars seek to inform current policy and practice.<sup>11</sup> One consequence of this focus on contemporary responses is that history has often been what Gatrell describes as the unwanted and ‘invisible guest at the interdisciplinary feast.’<sup>12</sup> In his recent overview of the relationship between historians and studies of displacement, Dan Stone argues that in order to tackle the ongoing relative paucity of historical accounts of refugees both from mainstream refugee studies and historians themselves must take action. According to Stone, the interdisciplinary field of refugee and forced migration studies needs to ‘take cognizance of the past’, and that historians also need to acknowledge refugees’ significance in understanding the past.<sup>13</sup>

This is not to say that historians have entirely ignored instances of displacement and simply failed to include them into their mainstream inquiries. Frank and Reinisch argue that such literature does exist ‘if you know where to look’, citing the example of the integration and acknowledgement of refugee movements within the history of the two Germany’s throughout the Cold War.<sup>14</sup> In addition, histories of displacement are gaining traction in refugee studies, as exemplified by recent issues of the *Journal of Refugee Studies* entirely dedicated to historical accounts. However, there are still considerable blind spots in the historiography, both with the inclusion of displacement in broader historical narratives, and how historical accounts of refugees are framed. Specifically, Frank and Reinisch highlight that many studies of displacement are ‘packed away in national [or regional] boxes.’<sup>15</sup> The problem with a narrow focus on a defined grouping of refugees is that it isolates them from other actors, interests and processes, thus overlooking key aspects of individual refugees’ experiences, and the

---

<sup>11</sup> See: Phillip Marfleet, ‘Refugees and History: Why we Must Address the Past’, *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 26, 3 (2007), p. 37; Madokoro, Ho and Peterson, ‘Dynamics and Language’, p. 430; Bakewell, ‘Introduction’, p. 6; Matthew Frank and Jessica Reinisch, ‘“The Story Stays the Same”’, in *Refugees in Europe, 1919-1959: A Forty Years’ Crisis?*, ed. by Matthew Frank and Jessica Reinisch (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), p. 8.

<sup>12</sup> Peter Gatrell, ‘Refugee Studies as Area Studies: A Historian’s Perspective’, in *Necessary Travel: New Area Studies and Canada in Comparative Perspective*, ed. by Susan Hodgett and Patrick James (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2018), p. 47.

<sup>13</sup> Dan Stone, ‘Refugees Then and Now: Memory, History and Politics in the Long Twentieth Century: An Introduction’, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 52, 2-3 (2018), p. 102.

<sup>14</sup> Frank and Reinisch, ‘Story’, p. 9.

<sup>15</sup> Matthew Frank and Jessica Reinisch, ‘Refugees and the Nations States in Europe, 1919-1959’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 49, 3 (2014), p. 479.

way in which their displacement interacted with the specific context in which it occurred. As Gatrell argues, refugee history cannot simply be about refugees, they belong in the mainstream as opposed to the margins.<sup>16</sup>

One means by which historians have sought to overcome the challenges of narrowly focussed historical narratives of refugees is by looking through the lens of the refugee regime concept. The notion of refugee regime is well established across the interdisciplinary field of migration research, and is based upon Stephen Krasner's widely accepted consensus definition of regimes as 'sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations.'<sup>17</sup> Amongst the first historians of displacement to incorporate the regime framework was Claudena Skran, who adapted the concept for her investigation into interwar responses to refugees. Skran argued that a regime is a governing arrangement created by a group of countries to deal with a 'particular issue in world politics', which is 'special' in that it is not driven by self-interest but rather by the assortment of principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures. Using this framework, Skran analysed the emergence of an 'international refugee regime' and traced the evolution of the institutions which she described as being at its centre, as well as focussing on state interests.<sup>18</sup>

In Skran's application of the regime concept, the focus is predominantly on states and institutions. Other scholars who employ the refugee regime approach have sought to incorporate more localised levels of response. For example, in their work on refugees in Asia after the Second World War, Laura Madokoro, Glen Peterson and Lynn-ee Ho define a refugee regime as: 'humanitarian structures shaped by humanitarian workers taking part in the cultural, political and ideological struggles that produce the legal mechanisms, institutional practices and categorical systems developed to administer aid to dislocated people'<sup>19</sup> This evolved definition of a refugee regime integrates elements of Foucauldian approaches by highlighting characteristics such as decision making

---

<sup>16</sup> Peter Gatrell, *The Making of the Modern Refugee* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 283.

<sup>17</sup> See: Stephen D. Krasner, 'Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables', *International Organisations*, 36, 2 (1982), pp. 185-205; James Milner, 'Introduction: Power and Influence in the Global Refugee Regime', *Refuge*, 33, 1 (2017), pp. 3-6.

<sup>18</sup> Skran, Claudena, *Refugees in Inter-war Europe: The Emergence of a Regime* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 65.

<sup>19</sup> Madokoro, Ho and Peterson, 'Dynamics and Language', p. 13.

procedures by humanitarian workers, with a plethora of different elements which bears a resemblance to notions of apparatus and assemblage discussed earlier.<sup>20</sup>

A second concept which can enable scholars to conduct comparative and multi-level research is the notion of ‘refugeedom’ as outlined by Peter Gatrell. ‘Refugeedom’ is Gatrell’s translation of the Russian word ‘bezhenstvo’ which first gained currency during the First World War, drawing attention to a new category of people who did not fit into any pre-existing social category in the dying days of the Russian Empire. Gatrell defines refugeedom as a ‘matrix involving administrative practices, legal norms, social relations and refugees’ experiences, and how these have been represented in cultural terms.’<sup>21</sup> In effect, refugeedom refers to a broad set of relations and practices pertaining to refugees which can be understood across different contexts and at many different levels, from the local to the inter-governmental and non-governmental. In using this wide ranging concept, Gatrell is one of a small number of refugee historians whose work spans both the interwar and post-war periods of displacement response, and is implicitly comparative in character. In his comprehensive historical account of refugees in the twentieth century, *The Making of the Modern Refugee* (2013), Gatrell explores refugeedom in the aftermath of the First World War, post-1946 and during

---

<sup>20</sup> For the purpose of clarity this thesis understands humanitarianism in the same manner as the definition of ‘humanitarian aid’ which Davide Rodogno, Francesca Piana and Shaloma Gauthier describe as ‘an altruistic action that, according to the agent undertaking it, is intended to contribute to the improving the moral well-being and political, social and economic standards of other human beings’, in: ‘Shaping Poland: Relief and Rehabilitation Programmes Undertaken by Foreign Organisations, 1918-1922’, in *Shaping the Transnational Sphere: Experts, Networks and Issues from the 1840s to the 1930s*, ed. by Davide Rodogno, Bernhard Struck and Jakob Vogel (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2015), p. 259; For an indicative bibliography of the debates around humanitarianism see chapters by Hugo Slim, Mark Duffield, Bertrand Taithe, David Chandler and others in Bertrand Taithe and Jenny H. Peterson, eds., *The Routledge Companion to Humanitarian Action* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2015).; See also: Michael Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2011); Michael Barnett and Thomas G. Weiss, eds., *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics* (Ithaca and New York: Cornell University Press, 2008); Didier Fassin, *La raison humanitaire. Une histoire morale du temps présent* (Hautes Etudes-Gallimard-Seuil, 2010); Hugo Slim, *Humanitarian Ethics: A Guide to the Morality of Aid in War and Disaster* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); David Rieff, *A Bed for the Night: Humanitarianism in Crisis* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002); For a discussion of apparatus see: Gregory Feldman, *The Migration Apparatus: Security, Labor, and Policymaking in the European Union* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), pp. 12-16.

<sup>21</sup> Gatrell, *Modern Refugee*, p. 7.

decolonisation.<sup>22</sup> Although not a direct comparison, Gatrell weaves together the histories of these two periods, demonstrating how each was important in its own right.<sup>23</sup>

Explicitly comparative histories of displacement are still relatively rare, although they abound in other disciplines within the field of refugee studies.<sup>24</sup> Comparisons of refugees are easily found in the social and medical sciences, politics and law, amongst other disciplines. There are recurring themes within this research which reflect the disciplines from which they stem, such as comparisons of mental well-being amongst certain groups of refugees, how well refugees settle in new contexts, the reception of refugees in national settings, and how policies and laws diverge across different countries and regions. Set against the richness of comparative research in other disciplines, there is a relative paucity of similar analyses in histories of refugees.<sup>25</sup>

Those historical works which do seek to compare refugees tend to focus on very specific aspects of displacement, such as changing discourses and representations, and developments in international refugee law.<sup>26</sup> An example of research which expertly compares displacement in historical perspective is Emma Haddad's book *The Refugee in International Society: Between Societies* (2008), which examines the relationship between the concept of 'the refugee' and broader changes in international society.<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> There are a few examples of such works which seek to offer a broad history of refugees in the twentieth century. See: Gatrell, *Modern Refugee*; Tony Kushner and Katherine Knox, *Refugees in an Age of Genocide: Global, National, and Local Perspectives during the Twentieth Century* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 1999); Michael Marrus, *The Unwanted: European Refugees in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 1985).

<sup>23</sup> See: Peter Gatrell, *Free World? The Campaign to Save the World's Refugees, 1956–1963* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Peter Gatrell, 'The World-Wide Web of Humanitarianism: NGOs and Population Displacement in the Third Quarter of the Twentieth Century', *European Review of History*, 23, 1-2 (2016), pp. 101-115.

<sup>24</sup> One example is Shelly Pitterman, 'A Comparative Survey of Two Decades of International Assistance to Refugees in Africa', *Africa Today* 31, 1 (1984), pp. 25-54.

<sup>25</sup> See: Susan Kneebone, 'Comparative Regional Protection Frameworks for Refugees: Norms and Norm Entrepreneurs', *International Journal of Human Rights*, 20, 2 (2016), pp. 153-172; Maja Korac, 'Integration and How We Facilitate it: A Comparative Study of the Settlement Experiences of Refugees in Italy and the Netherlands', *Sociology*, 37, 1 (2003), pp. 51-68; Jennifer Moore, Karen Musalo and Richard A. Boswell, *Refugee Law and Policy: A Comparative and International Approach*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn. (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2011); Birgit Lie, 'The Psychological and Social Situation of Repatriated and Exiled Refugees: A Longitudinal, Comparative Study', *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health* 32, 3 (2004), pp. 179-187.

<sup>26</sup> See: Liisa Malkki, 'Speechless Emissaries: Refugees, Humanitarianism, and Dehistoricization', *Cultural Anthropology*, 11, 3 (1996), pp. 377-404; Binoy Kampark, "'Spying for Hitler' and 'Working for Bin Laden': Comparative Australian Discourses on Refugees", *Journal of Refugee Studies* 19, 1 (2006), pp. 1-21.

<sup>27</sup> Emma Haddad, *The Refugee in International Society: Between Sovereigns* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

Rogers Brubaker's work on the aftermaths of Empire and the unmixing of peoples published in 1995 is another rich example of the comparison of a specific element of refugee history, in this case the process of post-Soviet migration of ethnic Russians to Russia and refugees produced by desires to 'unmix' continental European populations in the wake of imperial collapse after the First World War.<sup>28</sup> Another example of work which seeks to compare and contrast aspects of displacement in the interwar and post-war periods is Evan Elise Easton-Calabria's article which explores what she describes as the 'pre-history' of 'refugees livelihoods assistance', from the 'bottom-up' policies of the League to the more authoritarian approaches developed by UNHCR.<sup>29</sup>

The relatively small body of work comparing interwar and post-war responses to displacement is not reflective of the body of scholarship which compares the League and the UN more generally, with scholars contrasting areas such as minority protection, anti-slavery policies, and human rights.<sup>30</sup> Additionally, several scholars have also sought to address the crossover between the two periods, ranging from 1938 to the early 50s. Examples of this include Ludovic Tournès's 2014 study of the role of the Rockefeller Foundation in this transition, and M. Patrick Cottrell's examination of League of Nations legacies.<sup>31</sup> By far the most important work on this is Patricia Clavin's detailed discussion of the economic agencies of the League through the war and into the post-war period. Whilst specific in her focus on the economic organs, Clavin's book is the most comprehensive piece of scholarship which seeks to move

---

<sup>28</sup> See: Rogers Brubaker, 'Aftermaths of Empire and the Unmixing of Peoples', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 18, 2 (1995), pp. 189-218; Matthew Frank, 'Fantasies of Ethnic Unmixing: Population Transfer and the Collapse of Empire in Europe', in *Refugees and the End of Empire: Imperial Collapse and Forced Migration during the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Panikos Panayi and Pippa Virdee (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 81-101.

<sup>29</sup> Evan Elise Easton-Calabria, 'From Bottom-Up to Top-Down: The 'Pre-History' of Refugee Livelihoods Assistance from 1919 to 1979', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 28, 3 (2015), pp. 412-436.

<sup>30</sup> Jean Allain, *The Slavery Conventions: The travaux préparatoires of the 1926 League of Nations Convention and the 1956 United Nations Conventions* (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff, 2008); Mark Mazower, 'The Strange Triumph of Human Rights, 1933-1950', *The Historical Journal*, 47, 2 (2004), pp. 379-398; Aleksander Momirov, 'The Individual Right to Petition in Internationalized Territories. From Progressive Thought to an Abandoned Practice', *Journal of the History of International Law*, 9 (2007), pp. 203-231; Simon Jackson and Alanna O'Malley, eds., *From the League of Nations to the United Nations: New Approaches to International Institutions* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2017).

<sup>31</sup> See: Ludovic Tournès, 'The Rockefeller Foundation and the Transition from the League of Nations to the UN (1939-1946)', *Journal of Modern European History* 12, 3 (2014), p. 323; M. Patrick Cottrell, *The League of Nations: Enduring Legacies of the First Experiment at World Organisation* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2018).

through the period rather than jumping straight from 1939 to 1945 as many other accounts have done.<sup>32</sup>

Cottrell's and Clavin's work on the League of Nations is part a broader historiographical trend which moves on from what Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo and José Pedro Monteiro describe as the 'failure narrative', namely the League's failure to prevent war which dominated the scholarship of the League until the mid-1980s.<sup>33</sup> According to Magaly Rodríguez García, Davide Rodogno and Liat Kozma, the increased accessibility to archival resources of the League of Nations and its various agencies has resulted in the development of a diverse range of approaches and methodologies. For example, Rodríguez, Rodogno and Kozma, along with other scholars such as Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo and Sandrine Kott have drawn attention to the importance of actors within the League, with Susan Pedersen arguing that international organisations such as the League should be thought of as heterogeneous 'force fields' rather than monoliths.<sup>34</sup> Amongst this increasingly diverse scholarship of the League are a range of scholars seeking to examine responses to displacement. Spearheaded by the work of Claudena Skran on the inter-war 'regime', this historiography includes Rebecka Lettevall's work in which evaluates Nansen passports in terms of cosmopolitanism; Dzovinar Kévonian's account of the international lawyers who worked alongside the League on refugee and minority law; and Keith David

---

<sup>32</sup> Patricia Clavin, *Securing the World Economy: The Reinvention of the League of Nations, 1920-1946* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

<sup>33</sup> See: Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo and José Pedro Monteiro, 'Pasts to Be Unveiled: The Interconnections Between the International and the Imperial', in *Internationalism, Imperialism and the Formation of the Contemporary World: The Pasts of the Present*, ed. by Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo and José Pedro Monteiro (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), p. 5; Magaly Rodríguez García, Davide Rodogno and Liat Kozma, 'Introduction', in *The League of Nations' Work on Social Issues: Visions, Endeavours and Experiments*, ed. by Magaly, Rodríguez García, Davide Rodogno and Liat Kozma (Geneva: United Nations, 2016), p. 14.

<sup>34</sup> See: Rodríguez, Rodogno and Kozma, 'Introduction', pp. 13-30; Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo, 'A League of Empires: Imperial Political Imagination and Interwar Internationalism', in *Internationalism, Imperialism and the Formation of the Contemporary World: The Pasts of the Present*, ed. by Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo and José Pedro Monteiro (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), pp. 87-126; Sandrine Kott, 'Towards a Social History of International Organisations: The ILO and the Internationalisation of Western Social Expertise (1919-1949)', in *Internationalism, Imperialism and the Formation of the Contemporary World: The Pasts of the Present*, ed. by Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo and José Pedro Monteiro (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), p. 33-58; Pedersen, Susan, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 5.

Watenpaugh's discussion of the League's response to Armenian refugees fleeing persecution in Turkey.<sup>35</sup>

The richness and scope of scholarship exploring refugee movements and displacement response in the post-war period is even greater than that of the interwar period. The breadth of this research is reflective of the complexity and high level of activity in the area of refugee response in the post-war period. Much of this work is narrow in focus, owing to the sheer complexity of the period. A substantial number of these post-war accounts of refugees foreground the institutional bodies created in response to the mass displacement which followed the conflict. One particular body looms large in the literature of post-war responses to refugees; the UNHCR. Louise Holborn was the first to write a history of the organisation at the behest of staff at the UNHCR itself in 1972, and more recently in 2001 Gil Loescher laid down an authoritative account of the institution in *The UNHCR and World Politics: A Perilous Path*.<sup>36</sup> The depth of scholarship discussing post-war refugees beyond the early origins of the UNHCR is too great to recount here, which in itself demonstrates the degree of historical interest in this particular period.<sup>37</sup> Given the relative paucity of historical comparisons of displacement responses across and between the post-war and interwar periods, this historiography underscores that there is significant room for exploring the two periods using a framework which traverses the multiple levels of responses to displacement.<sup>38</sup>

Whilst scholars such as Loescher, Jérôme Elie, Jussi Hanhimäki, Gilad Ben-Nun, Howard Adelman, Anne Hammerstad and Glen Peterson have taken an analytical

---

<sup>35</sup> See: Skran, *Inter-War Europe*; Rebecka Lettevall, 'Cosmopolitanism in Practice: Perspectives on the Nansen Passports', in *East European Diasporas, Migration and Cosmopolitanism*, ed. by Ulrike Ziemer and Sean P. Roberts (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2012), pp. 13-24; Dzovinar Kévonian, *Réfugiés et diplomatie humanitaire : les acteurs européens et la scène proche-orientale pendant l'entre-deux-guerres* (Paris : Publications de la Sorbonne, 2004) ; Keith David Watenpaugh, 'Between Communal Survival and National Aspiration: Armenian Genocide Refugees, the League of Nations, and the Practices of Interwar Humanitarianism', *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism and Development*, 5, 2 (2014), pp. 159-81.

<sup>36</sup> See: Holborn, *A Problem of Our Time: The Work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees 1951-1972*, vols. 1 and 2 (Metuchen: The Scarecrow Press, 1975); Gil Loescher, *The UNHCR and World Politics: A Perilous Path* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

<sup>37</sup> Further discussion of historians treatment of the UNHCR can be found in Chapter IV.

<sup>38</sup> A non-exhaustive sample of scholars whose work is referenced in the bibliography and who specialise in histories of refugees after the Second World War includes: Pamela Ballinger, G. Daniel Cohen, Juliette Denis, Silvia Salvatici, Matthew Frank, Anna Holian, Laure Humbert, Tony Kushner, Michael Marrus, Katarzyna Nowak, Jessica Reinisch, Miriam Rürup, Kim Salomon, Rainer Schulze, Tamás Stark and Barbara Stelzl-Marx, Mark Wyman, and Tara Zahra.



approach to the early years of the UNHCR, the agency itself continues to articulate its own history in terms of a single and continuous narrative.<sup>39</sup> The digital narratives of the UNHCR's early years generally begins with the founding of the organisation because 'governments needed help', and the creation of the refugee convention, and then skips forward to the Hungarian refugee crisis in 1956.<sup>40</sup> A global report released in 2000 to mark fifty years of the UNHCR's humanitarian action made the statement that 'the range of UNHCR's beneficiaries has steadily increased'.<sup>41</sup> UNHCR's use of words such as 'steadily', and its repetition of a sanitised, reduced narrative of its origins creates what Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie terms a 'single story' of the agency during the 1950s.<sup>42</sup> Several scholars of the UNHCR such as Loescher and Ben-Nun, who in many ways have taken a more nuanced approach, continue to use terms such as 'evolution' when discussing the early years of the agency. In seeking to move beyond the UNHCR's teleological articulation of its origins, this thesis is mindful of any terms which imply the development of refugee responses are sequential.<sup>43</sup>

One aspect of the historiography only briefly mentioned above is the substantial scholarship dedicated to the question, 'who is a refugee'?<sup>44</sup> The answer to this question

---

<sup>39</sup> See: Loescher, *UNHCR and World Politics*; Jussi M. Hanhimäki, 'Introduction: UNHCR and the Global Cold War', *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 27, 1 (2008), pp. 3–7; Gilad Ben-Nun, 'The Expansion of International Space: UNHCR's Establishment of its Executive Committee ('ExCom')', *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 36, 1 (2017), pp. 1-19; Anne Hammerstad, *The Rise and Decline of a Global Security Actor: UNHCR, Refugee Protection and Security* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Glen Peterson, 'The Uneven Development of the International Refugee Regime in Post-war Asia: Evidence from China, Hong Kong and Indonesia', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 25, 3 (2012), pp. 326-343.

<sup>40</sup> See: UNHCR, 'The UN Refugee Agency: Our Story', in *YouTube* (2015). Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ymxq7D2DfA> [accessed 1 October, 2019]; UNHCR, 'History of the UNHCR', UNHCR UK (undated). Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/uk/history-of-unhcr.html> [accessed 1 October, 2019]; Matthias Sundholm, 'Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees', in *UN Youth Envoy* (undated). Available at: <https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/2013/09/office-of-the-united-nations-high-commissioner-for-refugees/> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

<sup>41</sup> UNHCR, 'The State of The World's Refugees 2000: Fifty Years of Humanitarian Action', in *UNHCR* (2000). Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/uk/publications/sowr/4a4c754a9/state-worlds-refugees-2000-fifty-years-humanitarian-action.html> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

<sup>42</sup> Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, 'The Danger of a Single Story', Ted (2009). Available at: [https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story/transcript?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story/transcript?language=en) [accessed 1 October, 2019].

<sup>43</sup> This can be understood as part of broader understanding which Clavin argues put forth 'a teleological history of globalisation in which modern societies grow increasingly enmeshed', for the better. See: Patricia Clavin, 'Defining Transnationalism', *Contemporary European History*, 14, 4 (2005), p. 424.

<sup>44</sup> See: Prem Kumar Rajaram, 'Humanitarianism and Representations of the Refugee', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 15, 3 (2002), pp. 248-64; Yoosun Park, 'Making Refugees: A Historical Discourse Analysis of the Construction of the 'Refugee' in US Social Work, 1900–1957', *The British Journal of Social Work*, 38, 4 (2008), pp. 771-787; Roger Zetter, 'Labelling Refugees: Forming and Transforming a Bureaucratic Identity', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 4, 1 (1991), pp. 39-46; Roger Zetter, 'More Labels, Fewer

is contingent upon who is asking it, when, and in what context. As Gatrell notes, the definition of a refugee cannot be detached from political imperatives and legal constructs which evolve over time.<sup>45</sup> Many key terms in the field of forced migration including ‘refugee’, as well as ‘displaced person’ and ‘forced migration’ are also frequently, although not exclusively, determined by contemporary policy categories.<sup>46</sup> As this thesis primarily seeks to explore the contours and impact of displacement response in two distinct periods, it does not in and of itself seek to answer the question of who constitutes a refugee, nor to offer fixed definitions of other key terms. Nevertheless, this research accepts Dan Stone’s contention that writers of refugee history must be ‘alive to the process of constructing refugees’, and not simply to take these terms as a pre-existing categories that simply exists in the world.’<sup>47</sup>

With this in mind, this thesis uses the terms ‘refugee’ and ‘displaced persons’ fairly interchangeably, whilst using the term ‘displacement’ as a flexible and umbrella term, incorporating both physical and metaphysical forms.<sup>48</sup> There are multiple readings of ‘displacement’ posited by different academic disciplines as well as by practitioners and policy makers, which poses a challenge in using it as a descriptive term.<sup>49</sup> Additionally, Oliver Bakewell cautions that the ambiguity arising from loose theoretical definitions can result in scholars talking at cross purposes.<sup>50</sup> For clarity, displacement here is characterised both by movement across and within borders, and by the more metaphysical displacement arising from statelessness. The non-exhaustive definition of statelessness is the state in which a person is denationalised, stripped of citizenship, and no longer entitled to political protection. These two facets of displacement are not

---

Refugees: Remaking the Refugee Label in the Era of Globalisation’, *Journal of Refugee Studies* 20, 2 (2007), pp. 172-192.

<sup>45</sup> Gatrell, ‘Area Studies’, p. 46.

<sup>46</sup> Oliver Bakewell, ‘Research Beyond the Categories: The Importance of Policy Irrelevant Research into Forced Migration’, *Journal of Refugee Studies* 21, 4 (2008), p. 432.

<sup>47</sup> Stone, ‘Then and Now’, p. 103.

<sup>48</sup> See: Kristy A. Belton, ‘Rooted Displacement: the Paradox of Belonging among Stateless People’, *Citizenship Studies* 19, 8 (2015), p. 908; Stephen C. Lubkemann, ‘Involuntary Immobility: On a Theoretical Invisibility in Forced Migration Studies’, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 21, 4 (2008), p. 454.

<sup>49</sup> This discussion concerns displacement in regards to mass movement and the social upheaval of people. However, there are several other meanings of displacement in different fields, from psychology and politics to physics and botany. See: Lubkemann, ‘Involuntary Immobility’, pp. 454-475; Mateja Celestina, ‘“Displacement” before Displacement: Time, Place and the Case of Rural Urabá’, *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 48 (2015), pp. 367-390; Jennifer Hyndman, *Managing Displacement: Refugees and the Politics of Humanitarianism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

<sup>50</sup> Oliver Bakewell, ‘Conceptualising Displacement and Migration: Processes, Conditions, and Categories’, in *The Migration-Displacement Nexus: Patterns, Processes and Policies*, ed. by Khalid Koser and Susan Martin (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2011), pp. 14-28.

mutually exclusive, and it is possible for people to experience one or both of them. The purpose of these loose theoretical conceptualisations is to move away from strict legal and political categorisations, thus capturing the complex ways in which people experience displacement.<sup>51</sup>

### *Methodology*

From the discussion above it is clear that there is a thriving scholarship pertaining to histories of displacement. A commonality shared by historians of refugees and other marginal populations is the challenge of tracing these individuals who are so often absent from official records, having fallen through the cracks of bureaucracy. As Katarzyna Nowak notes, as migrations are defined by movement they are fundamentally at odds with institutionalised archives which ‘strive to be fixed and immobile.’<sup>52</sup> Tony Kushner argues that what studies of displacement need are methods and methodologies which embrace this sense of movement, thus capturing the experiences of lives often in flux.<sup>53</sup> As a historical inquiry, this thesis relies upon traditional methods of historical research, including a close reading of primary sources in physical and digital archives and wider readings around the sources to place them into context. This thesis seeks inspiration from microhistorical approaches, which direct attention to how historical actors understood the times in which they lived, whilst also observing the deeper societal structures at work.<sup>54</sup>

The worlds which are contained in archives are complex and multifaceted.

Microhistorical approaches argue that in this context, historians working on histories of marginalised peoples who had sporadic encounters with bureaucracy are in need of methods which encourage and enable us to slow down and embrace the atypical nature of these interactions. This approach enables historians to explore individuals and

---

<sup>51</sup> See: Kathleen R. Arnold., ‘Statelessness’, in *The Encyclopaedia of Political Thought*, ed. by Michael T. Gibbons (London: Wiley and Sons, 2015), p. 1; Linda K. Kerber, ‘Presidential Address: The Stateless as the Citizen’s Other: A View from the United States’, *American Historical Review* (2007), p. 7; Eric Lohr, *Russian Citizenship* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2012), pp. 132-176.

<sup>52</sup> See: Katarzyna Nowak, ‘Voices of Revival: A Cultural History of Polish Displaced Persons in Allied-Occupied Germany and Austria, 1945-1952’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Manchester, 2018).p. 36; Marfleet, ‘Refugees and History’, p. 37.

<sup>53</sup> Tony Kushner, *Remembering Refugees: Then and Now* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 2006), p. 1.

<sup>54</sup> Thomas Robisheaux, ‘Microhistory and the Historical Imagination: New Frontiers’, *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 47, 1 (2017), p. 2.

overlooked histories which potentially offer an insight into people seldom seen and difficult to trace. More broadly, hunting down small things such as the nuance in words, actions and material conditions, is one means by which historians explore larger phenomena and processes. In this way, an archival approach based on microhistorical understandings cultivates an appreciation of both the micro and the macro. It acknowledges that people who lived in past times were not simply ‘puppets on the hands of great underling forces of history’ but were conscious actors navigating unseen societal structures.<sup>55</sup>

The challenge for historians is to piece together ‘incomplete accounts’, and to recognise how our own positionality shapes the stories we choose to tell.<sup>56</sup> As the result of an encounter between sources and their interpreters’ own later times, histories of refugee response can only ever convey a ‘plausible and fair description’ of historical understandings and events.<sup>57</sup> Microhistorians such as Lynée Lewis Gaillet caution that scholars should be aware of the preconceived notions, experiences, and perspectives they have in regard to their topic, and that a healthy dose of respect is required when studying cultures which are different from our own. Gaillet further states that documents grow through the process of narration, but that the path from archive to narrative is a ‘treacherous one’ through which writers must navigate their own inbuilt prejudices.<sup>58</sup> An awareness of positionality and acknowledgement of privilege as a white researcher in a Western academic institution has been an essential aspect of this research. Applying the concept of replacing judgement with curiosity whilst conducting archival research greatly enriched the scope and direction of this work.

The narrative which has emerged in this research was highly contingent on what is available and recoverable in the archives. Gesa E. Kirsch and Liz Rowan argue that the outcome of many archival research projects is influenced by chance and serendipity,

---

<sup>55</sup> See: Thomas Robisheaux et al., ‘Microhistory Today: A Roundtable Discussion’, *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 47, 1 (2017), p. 14; Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon and István M. Sziujártó, ‘Introduction: Against Simple Truths’, in Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon and István M. Sziujártó (eds.), *What is Microhistory? Theory and Practice* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2013), pp. 502-536.

<sup>56</sup> Hilary Mantel, ‘The Day is for the Living’, *The Reith Lectures in BBC iplayer* (2017). Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08tcbrp>

<sup>57</sup> Thomas V. Cohen, ‘The Macrohistory of Microhistory’, *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 47, 1 (2017), p. 54.

<sup>58</sup> Lynée Lewis Gaillet, ‘(Per)Forming Archival Research Methodologies’, *College Composition and Communication* 64, 1 (2012), p. 51.

along with the positionality, skills and creativity of the researcher.<sup>59</sup> The primary direction of this research was determined by which archives were accessible, geographically, financially and linguistically. Some of the most abundant records pertaining to refugees are located in and pertain to a relatively limited area, namely Europe.<sup>60</sup> In addition, given a paucity of language skills in a range of languages applicable to this research such as Russian, Mandarin, Cantonese, and Burmese, the scope of this research was limited to Francophone and Anglophone archives only. Given these restrictions, the next question which arose was which archives to visit. Gatrell notes that histories of displacement often reflect a bias towards histories of international organisations and nation states, whose personnel have left written records. This focus on states and international organisations is problematic in that their records become the focus of ‘meaning-making’, elevating their narratives which are then made and remade.<sup>61</sup> The reason that historians of displacement have relied upon a grouping of institutional archives supplemented by national archives is that displaced persons encountered and therefore left traces within these bureaucracies in the process of moving from place to place, when they sought or were granted humanitarian assistance, or when they faced problems associated with statelessness. The challenge here therefore is how to utilise these available resources whilst privileging voices, groupings and contexts overlooked in the current historiography.

Microhistorical approaches hold that there are many ways to conduct archival research, to read the documents found there, and to narrate this in a way which is accessible and significant to readers. This is where the role of methodology gains credence, as methodologies shape the decisions made, from which archives to explore to the many small selections made whilst reading through the sources themselves.<sup>62</sup> The methodology for this research based on ideas of apparatus and assemblage evolved from reading Gregory Feldman’s book *The Migration Apparatus: Security, Labor, and Policymaking in the European Union*. In Feldman’s work the concept of an ‘apparatus’

---

<sup>59</sup> Gesa E. Kirsch, and Liz Rohan, eds., *Beyond the Archives: Research as a Lived Process* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2008).

<sup>60</sup> There is also a notable collection of archives pertaining to diaspora and other international organisations based in North America, including but not exclusive to; the American Joint Distribution Committee, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), the United Nations (UN) archives, and the American Friends Service Committee.

<sup>61</sup> Peter Gatrell, ‘Population Displacement in the Baltic Region in the Twentieth Century: From Refugee Studies to Refugee History’, *Journal of Baltic Studies* 38, 1 (2007), pp. 33- 45.

<sup>62</sup> See: Robisheaux, ‘New Frontiers’, p. 1. Robisheaux, et al., ‘Roundtable Discussion’, p. 22.

is applied to capture the intricate constellations of human relationships, policies, administrative measures and other elements which together represent a European Union (EU) ‘migration apparatus.’<sup>63</sup> Reading historical resources through the lens of an apparatus involves incorporating both accounts already at the forefront of the historiography alongside more marginalised voices and locating both within broader social structures. The concept of an apparatus was initially coined by Michel Foucault, and whilst he never actually offered a complete definition he referred to it in a 1977 interview as:

...a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble, consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural planning, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements [...] – in short, the said as much as the unsaid. Such are the elements of the apparatus. The apparatus itself is the network that can be established between these heterogeneous elements [...] I understand the term ‘apparatus’ [dispositif] a sort of – shall we say - formation which has at its major function at a given historical moment that of responding to an urgent need.<sup>64</sup>

Foucault’s statement that the ‘said as much as the unsaid’ are central aspects of an apparatus is thought provoking in the context of researching displacement which is a history of silences and gaps.<sup>65</sup> Methodologically, it invites analysis of the whole framework around these silences, and what this tells us about displacement at a given moment in time. In particular, applying the concept of an apparatus encourages the researcher to understand how it came to be, how it is sustained, what its defining features are and how power circulates amongst its various elements. A particularly powerful analytical tool of the apparatus concept is the notion of specific devices which makes complex and disparate systems work across vast distances between people who often never meet but who nevertheless engage in abstract cooperation. In regards to the EU migration apparatus, Feldman argues that the devices such rationales of governance

---

<sup>63</sup> Feldman, *Migration Apparatus*, pp. 12-16.

<sup>64</sup> Michel Foucault, ‘Le jeu de Michel Foucault’ in *Dits et Écrits* ed. by Daniel Defert and François Ewald (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), p. 299.

<sup>65</sup> Foucault, ‘Le jeu de Michel Foucault’, p. 299.

and technical standards create a network effect, in that they vary depending on the different context in which they are applied but they retain common identifiable features. For the human agents within an apparatus, these devices require very little abstract thought to apply whilst those in a central body take no role in their operation. In exploring the devices which hold a structure together and in appreciating the many and varied relationships between micro and macro processes, the apparatus concept is connective rather than reductive and speaks to microhistorical methods which seeks the answers to large questions in small places.<sup>66</sup>

Both microhistorical methods and the concept of an apparatus place an emphasis on the agency of human actors. This anthropocentricity began to prove problematic during analyses of interwar refugee passports known as ‘Nansen passports’ which are discussed in Chapter II, which often seemed to act far beyond the intentions of human agency. In response to the need to explore the material agency of these objects, this research expanded the methodology to incorporate the concept of assemblage as articulated by Gilles Deleuze. There is no single consensus definition of assemblage, although Tania Murray Li succinctly encapsulates it as a ‘gathering of heterogeneous elements consistently drawn together as an identifiable terrain of action and debate.’<sup>67</sup> The interconnections between apparatus and assemblage have been widely noted, particularly given the close collaboration of Foucault and Deleuze in the late 1960s and early 1970s and the likelihood that they shared both vocabularies and concepts in their work on translations and ‘research symposia.’<sup>68</sup>

Through his focus on ‘transcendental empiricism’ Deleuze emphasised the agency of all things in comparison to Foucault who was concerned with the network of power which forms a framework for genealogy.<sup>69</sup> For Deleuze this meant an assemblage is capable of accommodating material, biological, social and technological components, and he

---

<sup>66</sup> See: Feldman, *Migration Apparatus*, pp. 12-16; Magnusson and Szijártó, ‘Against Simple Truths’, pp. 502-536; Kai Eriksson, ‘Foucault, Deleuze, and the Ontology of Networks’, *The European Legacy* 10, 6 (2005), pp. 595-610.

<sup>67</sup> Tania Murray Li, ‘Practices of Assemblage and Community Forest Management’, *Economy and Society*, 36 (2007), p. 266.

<sup>68</sup> Legg, ‘Assemblage/Apparatus’, p. 130.

<sup>69</sup> See: Michael Drolet, ‘Michel Foucault and the Genealogy of Power and Knowledge’, in *A Companion to Intellectual History*, ed. by Richard Whatmore and Brian Young (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2016), pp. 89-91; Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977*, ed. by Colin Gordon, trans. by Colin Gordon et al (New York: Pantheon, 1980).

sought to move away from the ‘anthropocentrism’ that characterises the majority of historical and political writing, replacing it with a form of materialism that places emphasis on the creative capacities of matter and energy.<sup>70</sup> The ambiguity of an assemblage is one of the reasons political geographer Stephen Legg argues for an approach which brings together the conceptual depth of assemblage with the more practical and concretising apparatus. Legg contends that apparatus and assemblage should ‘be thought of dialectically, both as concepts and as actually-existing things in the world’, an approach he utilises in his analysis of colonial era India.<sup>71</sup> In this reading, the strength of the apparatus as concerned with social relations and the diversity of the assemblage work together to allow scholars to cut across ‘distinctions of thought, practice and materiality.’<sup>72</sup>

### *Project Origins*

The stimulus for exploring this topic came in the form of a Ted Talk which given by a Norwegian journalist named Anders Fjellberg in October 2015. In his talk, Fjellberg recounted the stories of two Syrian men, Mouaz Al Balkhi and Shadi Kataf, who drowned in the English Channel whilst trying to swim to Britain from France, and whose bodies eventually came ashore in Norway and the Netherlands. Neither man carried any form of identification excepting the wetsuits they were wearing, which were fitted with data chips traceable to a shop in Calais. With this information, Fjellberg began an investigation and pieced together the identities of the two men.<sup>73</sup> The immediacy and rawness of Al Balkhi and Kataf’s stories which testified to the ongoing relationship between refugees and the tokens of ‘identity’ they carry stimulated a number of research questions, including if there were specific passports issued to

---

<sup>70</sup> Michele Acuto and Simon Curtis, ‘Assembling Thinking and International Relations’, in *Reassembling International Theory: Assemblage Thinking and International Relations*, ed. by Michele Acuto and Simon Curtis (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 2.

<sup>71</sup> Legg, ‘Assemblage/Apparatus’, p. 128.

<sup>72</sup> See: Stephen Legg, ‘Of Scales, Networks and Assemblages: the League of Nations Apparatus and the Scalar Sovereignty of the Government of India’, *Transactions of the Institutes of British Geographers* 35 (2009), p. 239; Tom Baker and Pauline McGuirk, ‘Assemblage Thinking as Methodology: Commitments and Practices for Critical Policy Research’, *Territory, Politics, Governance*, 5, 4 (2017), pp. 425-442.

<sup>73</sup> Anders Fjellberg, ‘Two Nameless Bodies Washed Up on a Beach: Here are Their Stories’, *TEDTalks* (2015). Available at: [https://www.ted.com/talks/anders\\_fjellberg\\_two\\_nameless\\_bodies\\_washed\\_up\\_on\\_the\\_beach\\_here\\_are\\_their\\_stories/transcript#t-104495](https://www.ted.com/talks/anders_fjellberg_two_nameless_bodies_washed_up_on_the_beach_here_are_their_stories/transcript#t-104495)



refugees, and if so what their history was.<sup>74</sup> This line of enquiry led directly to Nansen passports, the travel and identity documents which were issued to refugees during the interwar period, and then on to more questions regarding broader assistance given to refugees in the interwar period. It also invited comparison with the travel and identity documents which were introduced after the Second World War.

In examining the secondary literature of travel and identity documents during both the interwar and post-war periods, it became apparent that there was a lack of comparative studies between refugees and the assistance extended to them in the first half of the twentieth century. This paucity is part of a trend in the broader scholarship of international institutions and humanitarianism which treats the interwar primarily as a stepping stone for the development of more permanent post-war structures.

Understanding the interwar as a simple precedent for the post-war jarred with the pattern emerging in regard to refugee ‘passports.’ It was evident from the secondary literature that there was progression between these two eras of displacement response, but it also seemed that there were processes through which innovation appeared to have been lost.

This research therefore evolved in response to the dearth of current scholarship which seeks to understand compare and contrast how responses to displacement modified during two periods of seismic political, social, economic and ideological change. In order to conduct this comparison, it was necessary to consider the matter of

---

<sup>74</sup> There is a substantial existing literature which discusses what is meant by the concepts of ‘identity’ and ‘identification’. For example, Jane Caplan and John Torpey argue that the terms identity and identification are closely interdependent as the question ‘who is this person?’ (identification) seeps into the query ‘what kind of person is this?’ (identity). Whilst this thesis does explore the effect of understandings and practices identity and identification (see Chapter II on Nansen passports; Chapter IV on changing identities of ‘refugees; Chapter V on the perception of identity in Burma in the 1950s), it does not seek to intervene in the theoretical discussions of the concepts, which is beyond the scope of this project. For further reading on identity, identification and historical practices see; Jane Caplan and John Torpey, ‘Introduction’, in *Documenting Individual Identity: the Development of State Practices in the Modern World*, ed. by Jane Caplan and John C. Torpey (Princeton, : Princeton University Press: 2001), pp. 1-12; Rogers Brubaker and Frederik Cooper, ‘Beyond Identity’, *Theory and Society*, 20 (2000), pp. 1-47; Andreas Fahrmeir, ‘Governments and Forgers: Passports in Nineteenth Century Europe’, in *Documenting Individual Identity: the Development of State Practices in the Modern World*, ed. by Jane Caplan and John C. Torpey (Princeton: Princeton University Press: 2001), pp. 218-234; Valentin Groebner, ‘Describing the Person, Reading the Signs in Late Medieval and Renaissance Europe: Identity Papers, Vested Figures, and the Limits of Identification, 1400-1600’, in *Documenting Individual Identity: the Development of State Practices in the Modern World*, ed. by Jane Caplan and John C. Torpey (Princeton: Princeton University Press: 2001), pp. 15-27; Edward Higgs, *Identifying the English, A History of Personal Identification 1500 to the Present* (London, 2011).

periodisation. Because of their heterogeneous nature, apparatuses rarely have a clearly defined beginning or end. Similarly, Zara Steiner argues that it is difficult to establish a linear connection between various successive refugee crises, which also lack clear chronological boundaries.<sup>75</sup> Consequently, this research avoids applying rigid temporal parameters. The first apparatus is referred to throughout as the ‘interwar apparatus’, meaning that it loosely developed between the First and Second World Wars. In contrast, the second apparatus is assigned the starting year of 1950 when the institutional cornerstone of the post-war apparatus was established. This serves to separate it for analytical purposes from the assemblage of responses which cropped up towards the end of the interwar period, throughout the war and in the immediate post-war. The discussion of the post-1950 is roughly the end of the decade, which is intended to focus the comparison on the establishment of the apparatus rather than its expansion in the 1960s, which is a PhD thesis in its own right.<sup>76</sup>

The relative lack of comparative histories of responses to displacement highlights an ongoing concern for historians such as Pamela Ballinger that academic studies of displacement are too narrow in scope and based on weak theoretical foundations.<sup>77</sup> In the early 2000s a number of scholars including Stephen Castles and David Turton critiqued the field of refugees and forced migration studies for its limited theoretical framings.<sup>78</sup> Nearly twenty years later, historians such as Peter Gatrell, Tony Kushner, Matthew Frank and Jessica Reinisch continue to call for an interdisciplinary, nation-transcending methodology in historical approaches to displacement.<sup>79</sup> As this research project progressed and became more tangential, it required a framework which could incorporate and synthesise a wide variety of displaced populations, sites of displacement, and forms of assistance. The imperative to develop a methodological

---

<sup>75</sup> Zara Steiner, ‘Refugees: The Timeless Problem’, in *Refugees in Europe, 1919-1959: A Forty Years’ Crisis?*, ed. by Matthew Frank and Jessica Reinisch (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), p. 22.

<sup>76</sup> Jérôme Elie and Jussi Hanhimäki, ‘UNHCR and Decolonization in Africa: Expansion and Emancipation, 1950s to 1970s’, *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, 48 (2008), p. 54.

<sup>77</sup> Pamela Ballinger, ‘Borders and the Rhythms of Displacement, Emplacement and Mobility’, in *A Companion to Border Studies*, ed. by Thomas M. Wilson and Hastings Donnan (London: Blackwell, 2012), p. 390.

<sup>78</sup> Stephen Castles, ‘Towards a Sociology of Forced Migration and Social Transformation’, *Sociology*, 37, 1 (2003), pp. 13-34; David Turton, ‘The Meaning of Place in a World of Movement: Lessons from Long-term Field Research in Southern Ethiopia’, *Journal of Refugee Studies* 18, 3 (2005), pp. 258-280; Bakewell, ‘Introduction’, p. 7; Lubkemann, ‘Involuntary Immobility’, p. 454.

<sup>79</sup> See: Peter Gatrell, ‘Refugees: What’s Wrong with History?’, *Journal of Refugee Studies* (2016), pp. 1-20; Frank and Reinisch, ‘Story’, p. 10.

structure to embrace the complexities and broad scope of this project therefore converged with a continuing need for an ‘interdisciplinary and nation-transcending’ framework in histories of displacement more generally.<sup>80</sup> In applying a framework which embraces the messy realities of responses to displacement across various temporal and geographical contexts, this thesis offers one example of how to address theoretical and spatial shortcomings in histories of displacement more generally, at the same time as generating new research questions about two specific periods.

There are many advantages to applying a theoretical framework such as the one that has shaped this research. However, by its nature, a framework excludes that which is not directly relevant, meaning lines of inquiry are either deliberately excluded or left behind. This research began with a strong focus on identity and technologies of identification, which included the Kosovo Refugee Information Systems and Network (KRISY NET) project which took place in June 1999.<sup>81</sup> As far as could be ascertained from brief research, the KRISY NET project represented one of the first instances in which identifying features of refugees, including name, date of birth, last place of residency and current location, were recorded in a centralised computer database. The KRISY NET case study was a strong example of collaboration between corporate and humanitarian actors, as well as being an example of experimentation in humanitarian settings. It is possible that KRISY NET represents the watershed between non-digitised and digitised recordings of refugee identities, although further research would be required to confirm this. KRISY NET was not featured in this thesis for two reasons. Firstly, the UN archival records pertaining to Kosovo were not due to be released until 2019 which would delay the research process, and secondly, the case study did not fit with the temporal parameters of the apparatus and assemblage framework as applied to this research.<sup>82</sup>

---

<sup>80</sup> See: Stone, ‘Then and Now’, p. 102.

<sup>81</sup> See: ‘KRISYS NET Kosovo Refugee Information System and Network An Interprofessional Project (IPRO) of Chicago-Kent College of Law, Illinois Institute of Technology Prospectus 1998-1999’, *Nationbuilding in the Balkans* (1999) <http://pbosnia.kentlaw.edu/projects/kosovo/oldstuff/prospectuspre42199.htm> [accessed 1 October, 2019]; ‘Trip Report and Project Summary: Kosovo Refugee Information Systems and Network’, *An Inter-professional Initiative of the Chicago-Kent College of Law, Illinois Institute of Technology* (1999). Available at: [http://pbosnia.kentlaw.edu/projects/kosovo/tripreports/june99\\_albania.htm](http://pbosnia.kentlaw.edu/projects/kosovo/tripreports/june99_albania.htm) [accessed 1 October, 2019].

<sup>82</sup> Bruno Giussani, ‘New Technologies Employed to Trace Kosovar Refugees’, *The New York Times: Technology: Cybertimes* (1999). Available at:

In addition to KRISY NET, the parameters of the conceptual framework led to a neglect of other archives and actors, which could be expanded with further research. In particular, tracing apparatus and assemblage through the institutional archives excluded the role and narratives of Volags. For example, Chapter 1 focuses on responses to displacement in China where the Rockefeller Foundation ran one of the most important international projects of the interwar period, yet this was left out of this thesis owing to the way in which the framework directed attention to the institutional archives. Although the application of the apparatus and assemblage concepts directed the focus of this research therefore leaving certain case studies behind, it remains a flexible tool which can be used to explore many of these neglected avenues in the future.

### *Aims and Research Questions*

This thesis seeks to identify and trace apparatuses of displacement responses, which were formed of many different elements from decision making, policies, individual actors, and material objects to international legislation, and which produced unpredictable and often uneven results across two time periods. The overall intention is to demonstrate how the complex, multi-dimensional nature of both displacement and responses to it defies the neatness of a single narrative which the UNHCR in particular continues to articulate. In order to do this it focusses on processes rather than just outcomes, beginning with exactly how the interwar and post-war apparatuses came into existence. In the Foucauldian understanding of apparatuses they emerge as a response to an urgent need. Both apparatuses under investigation developed as a response to the urgent need of mass displacement. This thesis highlights how the diverging character of this displacement, along with the structural precedents and global context of each period strongly informed the nature of the apparatuses, explaining many of their consistencies and differences.<sup>83</sup>

---

[http://politics.nytimes.com/1999/06/08/technology/08eurobytes.html?\\_r=0](http://politics.nytimes.com/1999/06/08/technology/08eurobytes.html?_r=0) [accessed 1 October, 2019]; ScreenCheck, 'Kosovo Refugee Registration Project', *YouTube* (2016). Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QHwIcn1Z1M0> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

<sup>83</sup> It should be noted that this thesis foregrounds the impact of Russian displacement in particular as a response to the voices and episodes which came through most strongly during the archival research.

As well as seeking to understand how the interwar and post-war apparatuses of responses to displacement formed, this thesis is interested in what happens once an apparatus begins to fall apart, and who or what moves into the vacuum it left behind. The notion of assemblage, which whilst formed of heterogeneous elements lacks the structural and centralising impulses of an apparatus, is applied in order to understand the variety, breadth and nature of responses during the latter part of the interwar, the Second world war and early post-war period. Exploring the assemblage which bridges the two apparatus serves the purpose of furthering the idea that responses to displacement in the interwar period were not just a stepping stone to a post-war apparatus but that responses in each period had a unique character, with consistencies and divergences between the two. Furthermore, understanding how the interwar apparatus fell apart and the nature of the assemblage which followed speaks to another contention of this research, namely that today's apparatus of Western responses to displacement is a complex composite of historical successes and failures, wrong turns, dead ends and unpredictable events.

Thirdly, this project is concerned with the specific devices which acted like 'ghosts in the machine' of the apparatuses. In other words, it seeks to understand which particular elements held the whole framework together, or if lacking would allow it to fall apart. Such devices had a concretising effect, meaning that they could be applied across a whole range of contexts resulting in a wide range of results, but ultimately retain a 'familial resemblance' which lent a sense of legitimacy to the apparatus.<sup>84</sup> Drawing upon the recent literature of material agency, this project seeks to explore the role of Nansen passports as an important device in the interwar apparatus, but one which was unpredictable and created a plurality of results for their refugee bearers. In doing so, it intends to place refugees into broader histories and processes of passportisation and identification. It asks why refugee passports did not play the same role as a key device in the post-1950 apparatus, and investigates how other devices such as the cultivation of international legal expertise were more applicable in the changed context of the post-war.

---

<sup>84</sup> Feldman, *Migration Apparatus*, pp. 12-16.

The focus on international legal expertise as a device of the post-war apparatus highlights another aspect of the apparatuses which will be explored, namely the importance of individual actors. In examining the actions of specific agents within the apparatus from staff of the various institutions to refugees, the intention is to incorporate both the well-known histories of refugee bodies along with more localised and personal histories. Seeking to ascertain how staff within the apparatus understood refugees and responses to displacement, as well as the challenges they faced is one means of capturing the framework in which displaced persons were required to operate. In addition, by foregrounding the voices of refugees where possible, the aim is to underscore how displaced individuals experienced and interacted with the apparatus, how they understood it, sought to utilise it, or even to resist it.

Bringing together elite and less privileged voices within the same framework serves as one means of opening a discussion about the relationship between micro and macro processes. This thesis also aims to bring more localised experiences into grander narratives by exploring how both displaced persons and responses were both part and cause of wider socio-political change, which also demonstrates how refugees are irremovable from broader histories. The purpose of relocating displacement into mainstream history both recovers the role of marginalised people, and also offers a unique insight into processes such as the development of passportisation, decolonisation and Cold War, changing ideas about nation states, the development of international organisations and law, and a new humanitarian form of what James L. Hevia terms the 'pedagogy of imperialism', defined as 'the imperialist goal to educate colonial or semi-colonial subjects' in the 'lessons of the contemporary international world'.<sup>85</sup> A related aim of exploring the relationship between displacement, responses to it and broader processes is to reinforce the idea that any use of past refugee responses for contemporary purposes must take into account the very specific environments in which they took place.

---

<sup>85</sup> See: James L. Hevia, *English Lessons: The Pedagogy of Imperialism in Nineteenth-Century China* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003), p. 146; Margherita Zanasi, 'Exporting Development: The League of Nations and Republican China', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 49, 1 (2007), p. 146.

This stance is intended to navigate the tension between the dual imperative inherent in research of refugees to produce rigorous research, whilst at the same time speaking to contemporary policy and practice. Although it was not the primary motivation for research, critical reflection on the lack of consistency, contingency and unexpected results of historical responses to displacement may offer some conclusions which are relevant to contemporary practice.<sup>86</sup>

### *Methods*

The main method for exploring the research questions outlined above was archival research. The first important archive for this project is the League of Nations Archive at the *Palais des Nations* in Geneva where there are 615 boxes amounting to 85 linear metres in the Refugees Mixed Archival Group (also known as the Nansen Fonds). These boxes cover a period from 1919 to 1947, and incorporate three sub-fonds; the 'Registry files', the 'Commission files' and the 'Section files.' The Registry, Records and Mailing Section represented 'the central processing unit of the Secretariat of the League of Nations', and was utilised by the High Commissioner between 1921 and 1930 when the body itself did not have a separate processing unit.<sup>87</sup> This archive is a product of its time, whilst also being invested with contemporary relevance. Fundamentally, the League archive records the activities of a body long since wound down, and which from the beginning was intended to serve as the organisations institutional memory. Gaillet contends that when a record is designated as archival it gains a special status and is 'circled, framed, or privileged for a particular type of viewing' whilst being suffused with community aspirations.<sup>88</sup> The records of the League can be understood to reflect both the values and aspirations of the League itself as an experiment in world governance, and the contemporary role of the contemporary United Nations (UN) as a 'an instrument of international understanding.'<sup>89</sup>

---

<sup>86</sup> See: Stone, 'Then and Now', p. 103; James Souter, 'Refugee Studies: The Challenge of Translating Hope into Reality', in *Open Democracy* (2013). Available at: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/5050/james-souter/refugee-studies-challenge-of-translating-hope-into-reality>

<sup>87</sup> See: 'Refugees Mixed Archival Group (Nansen Fonds), 1919-1947 (Fonds)', in *United Nations Archives Geneva* (2017). Available at: <http://biblio-archives.unog.ch/detail.aspx?ID=256>

<sup>88</sup> Gaillet, '(Per)Forming', p. 49.

<sup>89</sup> Blandine Blukacz-Louisfert, 'The Library of the United Nations Office at Geneva - Custodian of League of Nations and United Nations Heritage', *Paper given to the International Federation of Library Associations' World Library and Information Congress*, Lyon, 16-22 August 2014. Available at: <http://library.ifla.org/945/1/201-blukacz-louisfert-en.pdf>

The archival resources within the League's records speak to its nature as a bureaucratic body, including such documents as letters, telegrams, financial statistics, accounts and budgets, official policy documents, minutes of committee meetings and internal minutes of the office. Letters in particular have proven to be important resources for this project, both between elite actors and as a means of expression for displaced persons. By the twentieth century letter writing was a mainstream social practice, accessible to those who were literate and could afford the cost of paper, ink and a stamp. One collection which stands out in the League archives are five boxes of individual correspondence with Russian and Armenian refugees predominantly written around 1930. It is unclear why only the letters from 1930 survive, but this collection reveals the wide range of social origins, trajectories and experiences of individual refugees. Even letters which were not 'personal' in content revealed complex narratives of the different agendas and understandings of specific agents within the apparatus.<sup>90</sup>

A material difference between the League archives and the archives of the UNHCR which were also central to this research was the post-war increase in the use of telegrams, reflecting a general growth in the convergence between the telegraph, telephone and radio in the late 1930s.<sup>91</sup> Other documents of value in the UNHCR archive included reports and internal memoranda which circulated between staff in Geneva, New York and further afield. These records form part of an archive that occupies approximately ten kilometres of shelving space on two basement floors in Geneva. In contrast to the League archives, the archives at the UNHCR form a living history of an organisation still very much in existence. Practically, this means that the archival section of the UNHCR competes for funds with operational parts of the organisation. A consequence of this is that regardless of the professionalism of the archivists, the catalogue lacks the accessibility of the League archives, being counterintuitive and difficult to navigate.

---

<sup>90</sup> Rebecca Earle, *Epistolary Selves: Letters and Letter-Writers, 1600–1945* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2016), pp. 1-7.

<sup>91</sup> Ken Beauchamp, *History of Telegraphy* (London: The Institution of Engineering and Technology, 2008), pp. 399-402.



The opaqueness and lack of flexibility encountered in the UNHCR archives led this research in an unexpected direction. Accidentally calling up seemingly irrelevant documents by misreading the catalogue led to an encounter with a single file on Chinese refugees in Burma, upon which the final chapter in this thesis is now based. A conversation with another researcher led to a collection of partially hidden oral interviews which were available but uncatalogued.<sup>92</sup> There are eight interviews in total with five different interviewees, including former High Commissioner for Refugees Auguste Lindt, recounting the exact time period which is the subject of the second part of this thesis. These interviews were recorded four decades after the events of the 1950s, and are thus subject to the ongoing processes of creating meaning which are intrinsic to memory. In addition, the interviewees all represent elite personnel of an international organisation, which reflects the general paucity of ‘ego-documents and oral testimony’ of refugees.<sup>93</sup> Nevertheless, these interviews have proven an invaluable resource for understanding the contours of displacement response in the 1950s.

Another archive which has been important for this research is the Paul Weis Collection held at the Bodleian library in Oxford which houses a number of legal documents including a series of eligibility bulletins circulated by the central UNHCR office in Geneva in the late 1950s. Historically, there has been an assumption that legal documents offered a window onto reality and that they were an unproblematic source of information. Such an assumption arises from the narrative of legal positivism which holds that law is disassociated from politics, that it is neutral and positive and imbued with a moral superiority. In reality, they are complex and carefully constructed documents. A roundtable of micro historians agreed that it is important to understand how legal documents were created, and to take note of the people who crafted them. International legal documents such as treaties, arrangements and conventions can actually serve to obscure the displaced persons they are intended to assist. In contrast, the eligibility bulletins in the Weis archives which were updates of decisions in individual legal cases collated and circulated by the UNHCR’s legal team recount the

---

<sup>92</sup> See: UNHCR, ‘Archives and Records’ in UNHCR.org (2018). Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/uk/archives-and-records.html>; Alexis E. Ramsey, ‘Viewing the Archives: The Hidden and the Digital’, in *Working in the Archives: Practical Research Methods for Rhetoric and Composition*, ed. by Alexis E. Ramsey et al (Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 2009), p.79; UNHCR/Oral testimonies (OT).

<sup>93</sup> John Morgan, ‘“Counterfeit Egyptians”: The Construction and Implementation of a Criminal Identity in Early Modern England’, *Romani Studies*, 26, 2 (2016), p. 107.

stories of non-elite refugees whose voices would otherwise be absent from the historical record.<sup>94</sup>

Based on a methodology grounded in apparatus and assemblage and employing the methods of microhistories, this research has largely been contingent upon what was accessible in physical archives. The use of digital archives stemmed largely from a need to contextualise and expand upon narratives first encountered in one of the archives visited in person.<sup>95</sup> The accessibility of these repositories proved to be an extremely useful resource in the process constructing the interwoven patchworks of individual cases and sweeping structures which form this thesis.

### *Chapter Outline*

The structure of this thesis reflects the comparison between the two periods of displacement response. Chapters I and II pertain to the apparatus which formed in the interwar period, whilst Chapters IV and V explore the beginnings of the contemporary apparatus of displacement response in the 1950s. Chapter III serves as bridge between these two periods.

#### *Chapter I: The Interwar 'Nansen' Apparatus: From Geneva to Kirin, Harbin, and Shanghai*

The first chapter explores the heterogeneous shape of the interwar Nansen apparatus from its institutional centre in Geneva to its most geographically remote delegation which was first located in the Chinese city of Kirin during the 1920s, before moving to Harbin and finally Shanghai in the 1930s. Prior to engaging with the specificity of the delegation in China, the chapter outlines how the apparatus began as part of the wider development of international cooperation in the interwar period, and the institutionalisation of this collaboration through the League of Nations. It contends that

---

<sup>94</sup> See: Robisheaux, et al., 'Roundtable', p. 31; Roger Cotterrell, *The Politics of Jurisprudence: A Critical Introduction to Legal Philosophy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

<sup>95</sup> The digital collections accessed for this research are: the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Library Online; Cotter Medical History Museum; Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum Online Archival Collection; Internet Archive; League of Nations Photo Archive; League of Nations Search Engine (LONSEA); National Archives of Australia (NAA); Nobel Prize.Org; Refworld, UNHCR; The Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names, Yad Vashem; USHMM Online Archival Collection; Wisconsin Historical Society; World Digital Library, Library of Congress.

a formal response to refugees was stimulated by the mass displacements which followed the First World War, and that without any direct predecessor, the office of the new High Commissioner for Russian Refugees (also referred to as the High Commission) drew upon and was shaped by imperial precedents. Having established the broad brush strokes of the interwar apparatus, the chapter turns to the specific context of interwar China, exploring how its volatile political climate rendered it an extreme locality for a delegation in terms of distances, resources and socio-political challenges.

Tracing the evolution of the delegation in China demonstrates that the interwar displacement apparatus was cobbled together over time from a wide range of different agents, bodies of knowledge, discourses and mechanisms which were available and useful at particular moments. The chapter focuses on three of the agents in China whose individual actions, perceptions and perspectives served as a lens through which responses to refugees in China were filtered. Firstly, the case of the first delegate, a medical missionary named James A. Greig demonstrates the link between refugee assistance and a new form of imperial pedagogy, as well as the importance of a delegate's pre-existing networks and experience. The challenges which Greig's successor Jacques Cuénod experienced underscore the uneven application of the legal status of refugees in the interwar period, and what this meant in terms of access to welfare in an era of increasing social reforms. Thirdly, the geographical relocation of the delegation to Shanghai and Cuénod's replacement with a Russian named Charles E. Metzler exemplifies the multidirectional nature of power, and the impact of external forces in the shaping of the apparatus.

### *Chapter II: Objects Which Acted: The Unpredictability of Nansen passports within the Interwar Apparatus*

Having explored in Chapter I the role individual actors played, the second chapter highlights the importance of material objects within the apparatus by examining 'Nansen passports' which were travel and identity documents issued by states on behalf of the League of Nations. This chapter claims that Nansen passports acted as a concretising device within the apparatus which were applied across different contexts with a wide range of results whilst maintaining a familial resemblance. This chapter makes use of more traditional understandings of passports as a means of population control as well as the recent mobilities and material turns in international relations and

the social sciences to argue that individual Nansen passports acted in unexpected ways independently of their creators. Following a discussion of the methodological framework for the chapter, attention turns to why the need for Nansen passports arose by examining the increased passportisation in the immediate aftermath of the First World War.

The main part of the chapter centres on several case studies which demonstrate both the agency and impact of Nansen passports during a period in which border apparatuses grew ever more sophisticated, and the changing economic and political climate served to restrict mobility. Firstly, the example of non-standardised Nansen passports in Iraq in 1930 evidences how irregular formats of individual documents created specific moments of distrust for their bearers, and traces the source of this non-standardisation to the specific context of mandated Iraq. Secondly, the cases of two Russian Jewish Refugees in the United Kingdom, Rabbi Israel Eiserman and Mendel Bernberg, indicate how the circulation of Nansen passports created various possibilities for different subject positions, bringing diverse actors within the apparatus into contact. In addition, Eiserman and Bernberg poignantly demonstrate how discussing the same material document could act both for and against its bearer. Finally, the story of Russian refugee Nicholas Perchine takes this further by establishing how Nansen passports could gain momentum in acting against their bearer, as exemplified by Perchine's escalating his encounters with the French and Swiss criminal justice systems. These case studies which exhibit the unpredictability of Nansen passports all testify to the contingent nature of the apparatus itself, and therefore the difficulties inherent in trying to predict outcomes for refugee documents.

### *Chapter III: The Bridging Period: Responses to Displacement from the Latter Half of the Interwar Era to the Establishment of the UNHCR in 1950*

A central aim of this thesis is to demonstrate that responses to displacement in the interwar period were not just a stepping stone to a post-war apparatus. In order to understand the complex dynamics of both the divergence and continuity between these two periods it is imperative to analyse the temporal space which bridged them. The chapter unfolds chronologically, tracing the international machinery of displacement response from the second half of the interwar period until the late 1940s. Through this

chronological structure, the chapter discerns how understandings of displacement and displacement response underwent copious changes whilst retaining many of the ideas, institutions, actors, practices and policies of the interwar period.

Primarily, the decision to wind down the central refugee institutions in the late 1920s and the subsequent refusal of League member states to reverse this despite multiple new refugee crises in the 1930s demonstrates how the interwar apparatus began to disintegrate. Following this, an examination of refugee responses during the Second World War demonstrates how numerous voluntary agencies (volags) as well as state, regional and local actors sought to fill the vacuum left by institutional decentralisation. Plans for war's end and the development of temporary refugee bodies in the immediate post-war period underscore the relationship between broader socio-political processes and narrowing definitions of 'refugees.' The chapter lays the groundwork for the discussion of the post-1950 apparatus by outlining the deep ideological conflict surrounding ideas of individual freedoms, collective responsibility and citizenship which developed in the 1940s, and which would greatly impact the context in which the post-war apparatus of displacement response emerged.

*Chapter IV: 'No great plan': International Law, Voluntary Agencies, and Refugee 'Passports' in the post-1950 Apparatus*

Following on from the ad-hoc assemblage which manifested during the bridging period, Chapter IV establishes that whilst localised responses to displacement continued, in the 1950s an apparatus of discourses, policies, actors, administrative measures and laws with the UNHCR as its cornerstone was well on its way to establishing dominance by the end of the decade. The chapter argues that examining what devices enabled the post-1950s apparatus to be established and to become embedded, and which did not, in the apparatus of Western responses to displacement which remains intact, if much modified, today. Firstly, the chapter examines the beginnings of the apparatus, including the decision to return to the format of a 'High Commissioner', delineating the particular set of financial and political limitations which would shape the means by which the apparatus was established in the 1950s.

The following section explores this further by examining the role of the legal 'fonctionnaires' within the UNHCR who exploited its ostensibly limited legal mandate by further carving out a reputation for expertise in international refugee law. The next

section explores how these lawyers sought to impact the lives of refugees whilst respecting the non-operational mandate by involving themselves in specific cases in which refugees challenged and sometimes changed interpretations of international law. Finally, the chapter asks what the devaluation of ‘refugee passports’ reveals about the way in which the post-war apparatus developed. In exploring the contingent process by which the identity and mobility functions of refugee documents were separated, Chapter IV moves away from the single story narrative put forward in the institutional account refugee responses by accentuating the messy and unpredictable way in which the apparatus developed.

*Chapter V: ‘What Are You Going to Do About the Chinese Refugees?’ The UNHCR and Yunnanese ‘Refugees’ in Post-Independence Burma, 1953-1954*

The final chapter centres upon a specific encounter between the post-war apparatus and particularly the refugee agency, and a group of ‘refugees’ which is almost completely unknown in the existing literature on the UNHCR, refugees in South East Asia in this period, and the broader socio-political processes occurring regionally. Primarily it underscores the importance of context for structuring responses to displacement, outlining the backdrop of Burma in the early 1950s as a country which was caught simultaneously in the throes of state formation, decolonisation, and the beginning of the Cold War in the early 1950s when the issue of Yunnanese ‘refugees’ arose. It also outlines who these ‘refugees’ were, and the impact of this dynamic population in the context of the fledgling Burmese state.

The chapter then recounts and analyses different stages of the UNHCR’s brief engagement with the question of Yunnanese ‘refugees’, exploring the internationalism and enthusiasm of staff such as Aamir Ali in comparison to the more cautious strategic imperatives of long-standing staff in Geneva. It examines the probable motivations of other actors, from the politicians in the Burmese government and the Nationalist Chinese in Taiwan to the American actors with a vested interest in Burma as a buffer to communism. Following this, the chapter explores how and why the UNHCR did not become operationally involved in the case of Yunnanese ‘refugees’, and what happened to the specific group in question, as well as to the Yunnanese population in Burma after 1953. Through the case study of Chinese refugees in Burma, the chapter demonstrates

that looking beyond outcomes to processes renders a nuanced picture of responses to displacement which supports the contention that the post-1950 apparatus developed in unpredictable ways.

## I: The Interwar Nansen Apparatus from Geneva to Kirin, Harbin, and Shanghai

In February 1924, James A. Greig, a Northern Irish Presbyterian missionary doctor and delegate of the High Commissioner for Russian Refugees in China travelled over 200km from his base in the North Eastern province of Kirin (modern day Jilin) to the city of Harbin in Manchuria. Greig's task in Harbin was to assess the conditions of a community of Russian refugees who had made their way to the city in the years following the Russian revolution. According to his correspondence with the High Commissioner's office in Geneva and local newspaper reports, Greig worked hard to make connections with local Chinese politicians, consul officials from various countries including Japan, Great Britain, the United States and France, and a number of 'local organisations engaged in refugee work.'<sup>96</sup> The White Russian English language newspaper the *Harbin Daily News* wrote glowingly that, with his fluent knowledge of the Russian language and 'acquaintance with the character of the Russian people', Greig was 'well fitted to handle in a manner satisfactory to the refugees themselves the delicate and difficult task for which the august body he represents has seen fit to choose him.'<sup>97</sup>

In contrast to Greig's energetic networking and apparent approval from the Russian refugee community in Harbin, Charles E. Metzler, the High Commissioner's (then the Nansen International Office for Refugees or 'Nansen Office') China delegate in the mid-1930s struggled to establish his authority. A former Imperial Russian bureaucrat, Metzler faced considerable challenges both from the highly factional Russian community in Shanghai where he worked and lived, and from the Nansen Office in Geneva who doubted his suitability for the role. The significant changes to the delegation's geographical location and to the perception of the delegate by Russian refugees in China is reflective of how the interwar displacement apparatus was not pre-determined, but was stitched together over time from a wide range of different agents,

---

<sup>96</sup> See: LNA/R1740/25682: 'League Delegate Arrives in Harbin', *Harbin Daily News*, 23 February 1924; LNA/R1740/25682: Letter from James A. (J.A.) Greig to Fridtjof Nansen, 24 March 1924.

<sup>97</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: 'Delegate in Harbin', 23 February 1924.



bodies of knowledge, discourses and mechanisms which were available and useful at particular moments.<sup>98</sup>

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the heterogeneous shape of the interwar Nansen apparatus from its institutional centre in Geneva to its most geographically remote delegation which was located at different times in the Chinese cities of Kirin, Harbin and Shanghai. Whilst the successive institutional bodies of the High Commissioner and Nansen Office were based in the new hub of internationalism of Geneva, the broader apparatus reached across Western and Eastern Europe, to the Middle East, South East Asia and South America. Through an examination of the apparatus in China with additional contextualisation from delegations located in other countries, this chapter seeks to pinpoint the elements within the apparatus which made the system work between people who rarely if ever met but rather engaged in ‘abstract cooperation’ through remote communication.<sup>99</sup> China’s volatile political climate throughout the interwar period rendered it one of, if not the most extreme localities in terms of distances, resources and socio-political challenges. Not only were the various delegates in China at the greatest geographical reach from the institutional centre of the apparatus, Russian refugees themselves were scattered across huge distances in cities as far apart as Harbin to the far North East, the coastal city of Shanghai to the South East, and Sinkiang (now Xinjiang) in China’s inhospitable North Western desert region.<sup>100</sup>

Before engaging with the case study of China, this chapter firstly identifies why the apparatus came about in the first place. It examines how the mass displacement of Russians served as a strong stimulus for the replacement of the existing loose assemblage of displacement responses with a concretised apparatus. It argues that the decision to create the role of a ‘High Commissioner’ and a system of delegates grounded in both imperial and humanitarian traditions served as one means of legitimising the apparatus throughout the interwar period. The second part of the chapter examines how the agency and ideas of the individual delegates in China played an important role as a lens through which to interpret, apply, or neglect the policies and

---

<sup>98</sup> LNA/C1527/80456: Shanghai Municipal Council Memorandum on Russian Refugees, 28 March 1936; LNA/C1527/80456: Report by the Manging Committee and the Finance Commission on the work of the 10th Joint session held at Geneva, circa 1935.

<sup>99</sup> Feldman, *Migration Apparatus*, p. 122.

<sup>100</sup> Hope Simpson, *Report of a Survey*, pp. 495-505.

aims of the central body, creating a plurality of results. In the case of James A. Greig, his own position as a ‘China expert’, his pre-existing networks, and the High Commissioner’s struggle with the lack of funds all impacted what form the apparatus took in China between 1923 and 1925. In contrast, Greig’s successor Jacques Cuénod was an experienced International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) delegate with little knowledge of Chinese politics, culture or language. Cuénod’s tenure as the delegate based mostly in Harbin highlights the uneven application of refugee legal status in the interwar period, and the implication of this in terms of access to welfare provisions. Finally, the controversial appointment of Charles E. Metzler in Shanghai and his eventual replacement with the Swiss businessman Albert Loonis reveals the multidirectional nature of power and external forces which undermined the apparatus in China.

### *The Stimulus of Displacement and the Institutional Structure of the Apparatus*

Prior to the First World War there was a loose assemblage of displacement response which constituted an identifiable terrain of action and debate. The ideas surrounding who constituted a ‘refugee’ were multifarious and diffused, and responses to individual cases of displacement were contingent upon the actions of private voluntary bodies, unilateral actions by governments or instances of locally grounded assistance. Liisa Malkki argues that what differentiates the interwar period from this earlier assemblage is the ‘encompassing apparatus of administrative procedures’ which developed in correspondence with the growth of international institutions spearheaded by the League of Nations.<sup>101</sup> In the Foucauldian understanding, an apparatus forms in response to an ‘urgent need’ created by a specific historical problem.<sup>102</sup> The interwar apparatus composed of institutions, policies, laws, and devices was a direct response to the mass displacement generated by the dissolution of empires across the area today known as the Middle East, as well as Asia and North Africa, and the ensuing creation of new nation states in Eastern and Central Europe.

---

<sup>101</sup> See, Liisa Malkki, ‘Refugees and Exile: From ‘Refugee Studies’ to the National Order of Things’, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24 (1995), p. 498.

<sup>102</sup> Foucault, ‘Le jeu de Michel Foucault’, p. 255.

In particular, concerns regarding Russian refugees who left Soviet Russia in large numbers between 1917 and 1922 served as a stimulus for the Western based response apparatus. The movement of this mixed demographic transpired over a number of years in response to several different events, from the Bolshevik Revolution of November 1917 and the collapse of the White Guard armies in Russia in 1919, to the famine of 1921. As well as ethnic Russians, Poles, Latvians, Ukrainians, and Georgians fled from the East into Western Europe, exiting from the North West provinces of Estonia. Many refugees settled in temporary camps in Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Greece, although those of sufficient means made their way to Paris, Prague, Warsaw, and Berlin. By 1922 nearly a quarter of Russian refugees settled in Germany by 1922, and one fifth resided in Poland. As the majority of the territory of the Russian empire was geographically located in Asia, a significant number of refugees also left towards the East into China.<sup>103</sup>

Although many exiles believed they were leaving Russia temporarily, by 1921 it was apparent that their displacement was likely to be of a longer duration, and the significant problems presented by the mass movement of refugees had outstripped existing resources, such as the wartime system operated by the ICRC. There was a large demand for immediate humanitarian relief and a concurrent threat of epidemic disease, as well as a need for employment from those abandoning homes, jobs and businesses. Many refugees found themselves lacking the sorts of papers which were increasingly necessary to traverse the post-war bureaucracy. In addition, after four years of war, refugees represented a potentially disruptive force to political and economic systems which required an international response. A number of voices called for the League to address the situation, including Swiss politician and president of the ICRC Gustave Ador who had written to the League of Nations about the condition of 800,000 Russian

---

<sup>103</sup> See: John Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport: Surveillance, Citizenship and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1999), p. 125; Peter Gatrell, 'War, Population Displacement and State Formation in the Russian Borderlands, 1914-24', in *Homelands: War, Population and Statehood in Eastern Europe and Russia 1918-1924*, ed. by N.P. Baron and Peter Gatrell (Bath: Anthem, 2004), pp. 26-27; 'Modern Refugee', pp. 56-57; Keith David Watenpaugh, 'Communal Survival and National Aspiration', p. 168; International Labour Organisation Archives (ILO)/R201/10: M. Chachivichily, 'Statement on the Situation of Georgian Refugees Abroad' in League of Nations, 'Information Provided by the Members of the Conference of Enquiry held at Geneva from August 22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>, 1921, and Memoranda Submitted to that Conference', 14 September 1921; Michael Dillon, *China: A Modern History* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010), p. 171.

refugees who were ‘without legal protection and living in desperate poverty.’<sup>104</sup> The Council of the newly formed League of Nations heeded these requests to investigate the ‘problem’ of Russian refugees and charged its Secretary General with circulating a questionnaire to member states to establish the extent of the problem. The ‘numerous replies’ to the questionnaire ‘emphasised the necessity for the co-ordination of efforts and the centralisation of action on behalf of Russian refugees.’<sup>105</sup>

Consequently, the Norwegian adventurer turned humanitarian Fridtjof Nansen was invited by the President of the League Council to become High Commissioner for Russian Refugees on 22 August 1921, which he accepted on 1 September. Nansen had a long career as a scientist and explorer before becoming a Norwegian diplomat, and his first foray into humanitarian work had been negotiating the relaxation of the Allied blockade which hindered shipments of essential food to Europe at the end of the war. Secondly, he had sought to soothe diplomatic relations in order to repatriate prisoners of war from Russia. It was on the basis of his major international reputation as a scientist and neutral diplomat upon which he began his work as High Commissioner. On behalf of the member states, the Council instructed Nansen to carry out three tasks. Firstly, Nansen was to create a legal position for refugees within international law. Secondly, Nansen was charged with either resettling or repatriating those who had been displaced, which went hand in hand with his third role to coordinate other actors in these efforts. Finally, he was given the somewhat vague responsibility of offering ‘general assistance’ to refugees.<sup>106</sup>

In addition to laying out these three tasks, the Council provided Nansen and his staff with the template for the organisation by giving him the status of a High Commissioner.

---

<sup>104</sup> See: Martyn Housden, *The League of Nations and the Organization of Peace* (Oxford: Taylor and Francis, 2011), p. 58; Katy Long, ‘When Refugees Stopped being Migrants: Movement, Labour and Humanitarian Protection’, *Migration Studies* 1, 1 (2013), p. 8.

<sup>105</sup> See: ‘History of the League of Nations (1919-1946)’, in *UNOG Library, Registry, Records and Archives Unit*. p. 3; LNA/Assembly Records: Official Journal/3rd assembly: Report Submitted to the Assembly by the Fifth Committee, Rapporteur M. Ador, p. 172; Vincent Chetail, ‘Fridtjof Nansen and the International Protection of Refugees: An Introduction’, *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 22, 1 (2003), pp. 1-6.

<sup>106</sup> See: Gilbert Jaeger, ‘On the History of the International Protection of Refugees’, *International Committee of the Red Cross*, 83, 843 (2001), p. 728; William F. Fuller, ‘Peace Profile: Fridtjof Nansen’, *Peace Review*, 20, 2 (2008), pp. 239-243; Carl Emil Vogt, Carl Emil, ‘An Internationalist Pioneer: Fridtjof Nansen and the Social Issues of the League of Nations’, in *The League of Nations’ Work on Social Issues: Visions, Endeavours and Experiments*, ed. by Magaly Rodríguez García, Davide Rodogno and Liat Kozma (Geneva: United Nations, 2016), pp. 187-200.

Without a direct preceding organisation to borrow from, the new refugee body and subsequent apparatus drew upon a range of examples from Western diplomacy to empire to create a relatively broad based response on an extremely limited budget.<sup>107</sup> The architects of the High Commissioner in 1921, who included members of the League Council, Nansen and his administrative staff, all drew on the particular episteme, or body of knowledge of the time.<sup>108</sup> Foucault described an episteme as a system of thoughts of a particular period that ‘allowed for a specific kind of knowledge – its very possibility – to exist’, further articulating it as a very particular basis which dictated ‘what ideas could appear, what sciences constituted, what experiences contemplated in philosophies, what rationalities formed, in order, perhaps, to crumble and soon vanish.’<sup>109</sup> For example, Magaly Rodríguez García, Davide Rodogno and Liat Kozma contend that the League inherited the ‘logic of Western supremacy’, which Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo argues conditioned a ‘new imperial geopolitical landscape’ throughout the interwar period.<sup>110</sup> That the League drew heavily upon not only imperial understandings, concepts and norms, but also the practices of empire is evident in the construction of the refugee body. The precedent for the High Commissioner for Russian Refugees and other High Commissioners created within the League was directly derived from the French and British empires. Traditionally High Commissioners were diplomats who had been bestowed the title in series of particular circumstances, such as managing recently liberated, colonised and other overseas territories from protectorates to mandates in both the French and British Empires. Many of these appointments were politically sensitive, for example in the French empire the title ‘High Commissioner’ could be conferred ‘on persons with sensitive temporary duties during certain troubled periods.’<sup>111</sup>

---

<sup>107</sup> The High Commissioner for Russian Refugees was granted just £4000 to complete his work in the year 1922. See: LNA/Assembly Records: Official Journal/3rd assembly: Report, p. 81.

<sup>108</sup> For a contemporaneous account of the precedents the league as a whole drew upon, see Charles Howard-Ellis, *The Origin, Structure and Working of the League of Nations* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1928).

<sup>109</sup> Michel Foucault, *Les mots et les choses* (Paris: Gallimard, 1966), p. 13.

<sup>110</sup> See: Rodríguez García, Rodogno and Kozma, ‘Introduction’, p. 20; Bandeira Jerónimo, ‘League of Empires’, p. 89.

<sup>111</sup> There were two original ‘High Commissions’ established within the League of Nations, namely the High Commissioner for Russian Refugees and the High Commissioner for the Free City of Danzig, who became the first High Commissioner appointed in a resolution adopted by the council on 13 February 1920. See: LNA/C387: Free City of Danzig, Danzig-Polish Relations: Report by the Representative of Great Britain, January 1931; Lorna Lloyd, ‘“What’s in a Name?”, The Curious Tale of the Office of High Commissioner’, *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, 11, 1 (2000), pp. 47-78; Marc Frangi, ‘Le Haut-Commissaire: Vers la Résurrection d’une Fonction Traditionnelle dans la République Française?’, *Revue Française de*

This ‘temporary’ aspect of imperial High Commissioners was reflected in discussions surrounding the creation of the High Commissioner for Russian Refugees, as Nansen was specifically charged with reaching a ‘definite settlement of the [Russian] refugee questions.’<sup>112</sup> Even more telling is that many of the administrative staff working for the High Commissioner were only granted temporary contracts of six months to one year. The temporary nature of the post affected the finances and precarious position of the refugee body throughout the interwar period. The High Commissioner was not amongst the big bureaucratic institutions such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO) which emerged from the First World War. In the early 1920s the High Commissioner was granted a meagre budget of just 250,000 Swiss Francs per year. Although the High Commissioner was intended to be a short term response to a temporary problem, the challenges associated with mass displacement showed no signs of abating quickly.<sup>113</sup> Less than six months after the High Commissioner was appointed problems for Russian refugees were compounded by an act of ‘long distance vengeance’ in the form of the Soviet Government's *Denationalisation Decree* of 15 December 1921. This rendered all refugees who had left Russia before and during the Revolution and Civil War stateless *de jure* rather than just *de facto*.<sup>114</sup> In 1922 the final collapse of the counter-revolution in Siberia also resulted in further movement of refugees.<sup>115</sup>

Furthermore, Russians were far from the only group displaced in this period. The international recognition of the particular problem of Russian displacement soon led to calls for similar recognition of other groups. One of the largest groups affected by displacement in this period were the Armenians who had been subjected to genocide during the First World War. Other attacks took place between 1917 and 1918 when the Young Turk armies reached Russian Armenia, where 300,000 survivors of the genocide in 1915 had sought refuge. Armenians who survived these atrocities were then subject

---

*Droit Constitutionnel*, 1, 73 (2008), pp. 27-40; Raymond A. Jones, *The British Diplomatic Service, 1815-1914* (Gerrards Cross: Smythe, 1983).

<sup>112</sup> Michael Hughes explores the temporary nature of posts within British diplomacy in his work listed below. See: LNA/ Assembly Records: Official Journal/3rd assembly: Report, p. 172; Michael Hughes, ‘The Peripatetic Career Structure of the British Diplomatic Establishment, 1919-39’, *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, 14, 1 (2003), pp. 29-48.

<sup>113</sup> LNA/C1486/17040: Draft letter by Boris Nicolsky at the Nansen Office, 15 July 1930.

<sup>114</sup> Egidio Reale, ‘The Passport Question’, *Foreign Affairs*, 506 (1930-1931), p. 125.

<sup>115</sup> George Ginsburg, ‘The Soviet Union and the Problem of Refugees and Displaced Persons 1917-1956’, *The American Journal of International Law*, 51 (1957), pp. 326-327.

to a 'juridical offensive' on their existence, as the Young Turks sought to strip them of their residency rights which rendered many Armenians stateless.<sup>116</sup> By the mid-1930s approximately 340,000 Armenians were displaced, of whom roughly half were living in a mixture of refugee camps, orphanages, or shantytowns 'near the big cities of the Levant.'<sup>117</sup>

By the late 1920s, the Russians and Armenians were joined by many other groups of refugees who were identified in a 1926 report by the High Commissioner for Refugees to the Council of the League. The High Commissioner outlined the displacement of 150 Turks in Greece who were 'Friends of the Allies', a very small number of Montenegrins in France, 9,000 Ruthenes in Czechoslovakia and Austria, 16,000 Jews in Romania, 100,000 refugees in Central Europe, which included around 10,000 former Hungarian citizens in Romania, France and Austria, and 150 Assyrians.<sup>118</sup> Despite being acknowledged in this report, few of these groups were officially recognised as refugees by the League. It is difficult to quantify the impact that between being officially recognised as a refugee versus being part of an excluded group had for individuals in the interwar period, given the vast range of geographical, political and social contexts in which they were displaced. However, broadly being recognised as a refugee by the League meant that individuals could apply for a Nansen passport, given that the country

---

<sup>116</sup> The term 'genocide' in relation to the Armenians is still a highly political issue, as seen in July 2016 when French MPs voted to pass a law banning the denial of crimes against humanity, including the Armenian Genocide (still rejected by Turkish politicians in Ankara). See: League of Nations, *Plan for the Issue of a Certificate of Identity to Armenian Refugees*, 31<sup>st</sup> May 1924. Submitted for the Consideration of Dr Nansen, High Commissioner for Russian Refugees in Execution of the Resolution of the Council of the League, Adopted September 28<sup>th</sup>, 1923 (Geneva, 31 May 1924); Marrus, *Unwanted*, p. 94; Rachael Pells, 'French MPs Vote to Criminalise Denial of Armenian Genocide', in *The Independent* (2016). Available at: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/armenian-genocide-french-mps-vote-denial-crime-criminalise-a7117091.html> [accessed 1 October, 2019]; Ben Kiernan, 'Twentieth Century Genocides', in *The Specter of Genocide: Mass Murder in Historical Perspective*, ed. by Robert Gellately and Ben Kiernan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 34; Maud S. Mendel, *In the Aftermath of Genocide: Armenians and Jews in Twentieth Century France* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003), p. 1.

<sup>117</sup> See: Hope Simpson, *Report of a Survey*, p. 169; Peter Gatrell and Joanne Laycock 'Armenia: The 'Nationalisation, Internationalisation and Representation of the Refugee Crisis' in *Homelands: War, Population and Statehood in Eastern Europe and Russia 1918-1924*, ed. by N.P. Baron and Peter Gatrell (Bath: Anthem, 2004), pp. 179-200.

<sup>118</sup> As well as those named in the report, there was a small number of Polish people who had fled to Germany during Polish-Soviet War in 1920, and a number of Kurds who had faced Turkish persecution and settled in Upper Jezira along the then border of Turkey and Syria. See: Hope Simpson, *Report of a Survey*, p. 458; LNA/C1238/112: Letter from Thomas Frank Johnson to Mr Schesinger at the Delegation in Germany (Berlin), 28 October 1928; White p. 7; Jochen Oltmer, 'Protecting Refugees in the Weimar Republic', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 30, 2 (2016), p. 11; Benjamin Thomas White, 'Refugees and the Definition of Syria, 1920-1939', *Past and Present* (2017), pp. 1-38.

in which they were displaced had signed up to the various legal Arrangements. In theory, a refugee with a Nansen passport was able to travel for work and family reunification.<sup>119</sup>

One group mentioned in the League's report that were designated refugee status were the 19,000 Assyro-Chaldeans who had made their way to Iraq following violent confrontations with the Ottoman Empire during the First World War. Along with Assyrians and 'assimilated refugees', Assyro Chaldeans were officially recognised as refugees in an Arrangement in 1926.<sup>120</sup> The League defined 'assimilated refugees' as people of Syrian or Kurdish origin who no longer 'possessed a nationality', and also any 'person of Turkish origin' who was no longer protected by the Turkish state but who had not yet gained another nationality.<sup>121</sup> Examining why exactly member states agreed to recognise these groupings whilst overlooking others is beyond the focus of this research. In brief, the extension of the Arrangement to Assyro-Chaldeans, Assyrians and assimilated refugees in 1926 is reflective of colonial interests in the Middle East. These include French concerns regarding the Muslim Arab minority in the protectorates of Syria and Lebanon, and the British dispute with Turkey regarding Mosul in 1924.<sup>122</sup>

Refugee movements in the interwar period were geographically dispersed, as exemplified by both the official and unofficial groups above. With no single centre of displacement, the institutional refugee bodies of the High Commission and its successor the Nansen Office set up shop in the burgeoning capital of internationalism, Geneva. Geneva was not necessarily the natural home of internationalism with its reputation for being provincial, culturally isolated and politically conservative. Additionally, Switzerland was not actually a founding member of the League of Nations. However,

---

<sup>119</sup> Nansen passports are discussed in depth in the following chapter.

<sup>120</sup> For a contemporaneous account of the Assyro-Chaldeans, see: Major F. F. Rynd, 'The Assyro-Chaldeans', *Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society*, 10 (1923), pp. 241-242.

<sup>121</sup> According to John Hope Simpson's 1938 report, assimilated refugees only referred to stateless people of Syrian or Kurdish nationality, not as an umbrella term for all stateless people. See: Hope Simpson, *Report of a Survey*, p. 227; Arrangement relating to the Legal Status of Russian and Armenian Refugees, 1926, p. 65.

<sup>122</sup> For further reading on Assyrian, Assyro-Chaldean and assimilated refugees in the Middle East during the 1920s, see: Stavros T. Stavridis, 'The Assyrian Issue 1914-35: Australian Documents and Press', in *Genocide in the Ottoman Empire: Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks, 1913-1923*, ed. by George N. Shirinian (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2017), pp. 158-186; Sargon Donabed, *Reforging a Forgotten History: Iraq and the Assyrians in the Twentieth Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015); N. E. Bou-Nacklie, 'Les troupes spéciales: Religious and Ethnic Recruitment, 1916-46', *International Journal of the Middle East*, 25 (1993), pp. 645-660.



Switzerland did have a history of wartime neutrality, as well as being home to one of the earliest icons of international institutions, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Unlike an imperial High Commissioner who responded to a crisis in one region or country, Nansen was faced with a problem which had no single geographical centre.<sup>123</sup> Nansen spent much of his time in his native Oslo, but his staff were distributed across several offices in Geneva, where they benefited from ready access to the representatives of various member states as well as the staff of an increasing number of international volags which Davide Rodogno describes as ‘the ancestors’ of today’s NGOs.<sup>124</sup>

Nansen and his team had to formulate a means of managing the geographically dispersed displaced population from Geneva. In order to do this Nansen drew upon another aspect of nineteenth century international bureaucracy by instigating a consular like system of delegates which echoed the British, French and American consular systems.<sup>125</sup> Speaking to the Assembly of the League in 1921, Nansen stated that he wished to provide ‘a certain sort of organisation in the various countries where refugees are established.’<sup>126</sup> He proposed to do this firstly by asking interested governments to appoint an official to liaise with himself and his staff at the High Commission, and secondly by appointing his own delegate ‘who will keep in touch on his behalf with the officials appointed by governments.’ These delegates were to bear an official title which clearly denoted their ‘special relationship’ to the High Commissioner for Russian Refugees in Geneva.<sup>127</sup> Nansen’s choice of a consular like system of delegates most likely stemmed from his own experience of the diplomatic corps, having been the

---

<sup>123</sup> Details of League covenant indicate the ambivalence of its drafters to Geneva being a new international hub as it gave the League’s council the option to relocate the HQ ‘at any time.’ See: Glenda Sluga, *Internationalism in the age of Nationalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press), pp. 56-57; LNA/R1731/16056: Letter from T.F. Johnson to Mr Hutson, 11 May 1922.

<sup>124</sup> Davide Rodogno, ‘The American Red Cross and the International Committee of the Red Cross’ Humanitarian Politics and Policies in Asia Minor and Greece (1922-1923)’, *First World War Studies*, 5, 1 (2014), p. 84.

<sup>125</sup> See: Donna Hamilton, ‘The Transformation of Consular Affairs: The United States Experience’, in *Discussion Papers in Diplomacy*, ed. by Ingrid d’Hooghe and Ellen Huijgh (Netherlands Institute of International Relations ‘Clingendael’, 2009), 1-33; Charles Stuart Kennedy, *The American Consul: A History of the United States Consular Service, 1776-1924* (Washington: New Academia Publishing, 2015); D. C. M. Platt, *The Cinderella Service: British Consuls Since 1825* (London: Longman Group, 1971); Jörg Ulbert, ‘A History of the French Consular Services’, in *Consular Affairs and Diplomacy*, ed. by Jan Melissen and Ana Mar Fernández (Leiden and Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 2011), pp. 303-324.

<sup>126</sup> LNA/Assembly Records: Official Journal/3rd assembly: Report, pp. 80-84.

<sup>127</sup> LNA/R1713/15220: Note for the Conference on Russian Refugees: Organisation of work, 14 September, 1921.

Norwegian Ambassador to London charged with arranging a ‘territorial guarantee’ for Norway, a role he resigned from in May 1908.<sup>128</sup> The delegations in the Nansen apparatus mirrored a consular structure, with a ‘representative’ or ‘delegate’ the equivalent to a consul-general, a deputy delegate often serving the role of deputy consul-general or vice-consul, and several administrative staff in roles similar to consular agents.<sup>129</sup>

For his delegates Nansen repeated the same recruitment process he had used in repatriating prisoners of war by utilising the machinery of the ICRC. In 1921 Nansen established delegations in Belgium, Bulgaria, Constantinople, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, the Serb-Croat-Slovene State and Yugoslavia, the majority of whose delegates were also employees of the ICRC.<sup>130</sup> One advantage of employing ICRC staff in the role of delegate was that they often possessed pre-existing social capital, which helped to ‘maintain good relations with local authorities.’<sup>131</sup>

However, soon after the High Commissioner began work, the Red Cross made it clear to Nansen that it did not have the funds to continue this system. As a result, staffing of the delegations expanded to include several delegates who either worked in

---

<sup>128</sup> See: Roland Huntford, *Nansen: The Explorer as Hero* (London: Duckworth, 1997), pp. 522-599; Bruno Cabanes, *The Great War and the Origins of Humanitarianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 155.

<sup>129</sup> It is likely that the term ‘delegate’ was derived from the ICRC system discussed by Brigitte Troyon and Daniel Palmieri. See: Brigitte Troyon and Daniel Palmieri, ‘The ICRC Delegate: An Exceptional Humanitarian Player?’, *International Review of the Red Cross*, 89, 865 (2007), pp. 97-111; G. R. Berridge and Lorna Lloyd (eds.), *The Palgrave Macmillan Dictionary of Diplomacy*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 79; LNA/C1486/80009: Letter to the President of the Nansen Office under the subject ‘Letters of renewal of contracts of the honorary and salaried Representatives’, 17 January 1933.

<sup>130</sup> Davide Rodogno outlines the role of ICRC delegate’s in the context of Asia Minor in the early 1920s. As well as discussing how the delegates themselves understood their mission, Rodogno’s article offers an insight into the types of work ICRC delegates might undertake. Aside from the advantages of their social capital, ICRC delegates also faced challenges (such as lack of financial resources), which would have competed for their attention along with becoming a delegate for the High Commissioner. See: Rodogno, ‘Asia Minor and Greece’, pp. 83-99; Thomas Frank Johnson, *International Tramps: From Chaos to Permanent Peace* (The Mayflower Press: Plymouth, 1938), p. 157; LNA/R1713/15220: Note for the Conference, 14 September, 1921; LNA/R1731/28411: Letter from P. J. Baker to Colonel Corfe in Athens, 14 March 1922; LNA/R1713/15220: Note for the Conference, 14 September, 1921.

<sup>131</sup> Lord E. N. Plowden, ‘Miscellaneous no. 5 (1964). Report of the Committee on Representational Services Overseas appointed by the Prime Minister under the chairmanship of Lord Plowden’, pp. 1-184. Available at: <https://parlipapers-proquest.com/manchester.idm.oclc.org/parlipapers/result/pqpdocumentview?accountid=12253&groupid=101492&pgId=52c62389-a284-486c-bb80-2a5092f5e5a7#372> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

governments or had diplomatic backgrounds. In 1930 two delegates, Moritz Schlesinger in Germany and Victor Kehren in Belgium, held ‘responsible official positions under their respective governments’, whilst Gabriel Couteaux in Constantinople hailed from a diplomatic background.<sup>132</sup> In France, the delegate Marcel Paon was the Head of the Department of Agricultural Labour and Immigration at the Ministry of Agriculture, Assistant Secretary General of the Immigration Commission at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Member of the Board of Agriculture amongst other roles. The increasing diversity of the delegates reflects the heterogeneous and evolving nature of the apparatus itself. Each delegate faced a range of different geographical, political, temporal and economic factors, with delegates in countries outside Europe facing very unique circumstances. One delegation which underwent a range of challenges was the delegation in China which was established in 1923 nearly two years after its European counterparts.<sup>133</sup>

### *The Patterns and Challenges of Russian Displacement in China*

The delay between the establishment of various delegations in Europe and a delegate in China reflects the geographical distribution of the ‘technical’, meaning ‘non-political’, work of the League more generally.<sup>134</sup> In the 1920s the League’s technical activities focussed predominantly on Europe territories previously encompassed by the Ottoman Empire, and not on countries further to the East such as China. Although the High Commission did not consider establishing a delegation in China until 1923, Russian refugees had been arriving in China in significant numbers for a number of years previously. The largest movement of Russians into China in the 1920s followed the defeat of White Russian troops by the Soviets in 1922. By early 1923 it was estimated that there were about 60,000 in the Chinese Republic.

---

<sup>132</sup> LNA/C1486/17040: Note from T.F. Johnson to the Treasurer, 3 October 1930.

<sup>133</sup> See: LNA/C1500/28055 : Délégations du haut-commissariat de la Société des Nations pour les Réfugiés, 23 April 1932 ; Feldman, *Migration Apparatus*, p. 16.

<sup>134</sup> See: Mira L. Siegelberg, ‘Neither Right nor Left: Interwar Internationalism between Justice and Order’, *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism and Development*, 6, 3 (2015), p. 469; ILO/R 201/20/5: Letter from Director of the ILO Albert Thomas to the T. F. Johnson, 4 April 1924.



Figure 1: Political Map of China, 2001 (edited for this thesis to pinpoint Xinjiang (Sinkiang), Beijing (Peking), Shanghai, Jilin (Kirin), Harbin and Vladivostok, and to broadly demonstrate the trajectories of Russian refugees into China). Source: University of Texas.

Russian refugees arrived in China partly for geographical reasons given the shared border between Russia and China, but also because there were pre-existing Russian communities in several Chinese cities. The largest and original Russian community in China was Harbin, located in what was then known as Manchuria to Europeans and Dongbei to the Chinese (see Figure 1 below). The establishment of the Chinese Eastern Railway (CER) drew workers from all over the Russian empire, with Harbin becoming

an ‘open city’ with a Russian influence by 1917.<sup>135</sup> Another pre-war community was the group of approximately 700 Russians in Shanghai, whose population had increased tenfold to around 7,000 by 1923.<sup>136</sup>

Despite the attractiveness of geographical proximity to Russia and the presence of pre-existing communities of Russians, Russian refugees often found 1920s China to be a hostile place in which to seek refuge. The political climate of China was highly volatile, with a weak central government after years of internal dissensions and civil wars. The Chinese state was fast decentralising in the years leading up to the 1920s, and by 1923 a central government had virtually ceased to exist.<sup>137</sup> Nansen’s first delegate in China James A. Greig described a ‘considerable conflict of authority between Provinces’ which meant that the Central Government was ‘often unable to carry out its own decisions.’<sup>138</sup> Greig added that the ‘well-known’ financial difficulties of the Chinese government arising from their lack of economic resources only served to compound their powerlessness.<sup>139</sup>

So-called ‘warlords’ stepped into the power vacuum left by the government, effectively devolving political control into the hands of these regional militarists.<sup>140</sup> The relationship between competing warlords was complex, and the extent of territory under their control varied over years and even month by month. Gene John (née Sinton), the daughter of Scottish and Canadian missionaries from the Chinese Inland Mission (CIM) based in Szechuan recalled that the 1920s in China was a ‘time of violence, of War Lords who crashed around the country taking what they wanted, killing each other and each other’s soldiers, and as always happens, unarmed civilians.’<sup>141</sup> Although historical interpretations of what is sometimes termed the ‘warlord era’ have sought to offer a

---

<sup>135</sup> See: Zanasi, ‘Exporting Development’, pp. 143-148; Søren Clausen and Stig Thøgersen, *The Making of a Chinese City: History and Historiography in Harbin* (New York: East Gate, 1995), p. 23.

<sup>136</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: Letter and Report from Mr Wolfe of the Refugee Relief Advisory Committee in Shanghai to Fridtjof Nansen, 21 August 1923.

<sup>137</sup> See: LNA/C1558/16809: Confidential Report: Situation of Russian Refugees in China, 5 March 1929; Madeleine Yue Dong, ‘Introduction: State, Society and the Individual in Wartime China during the 1930s and 1940s’, *Journal of Modern Chinese History* 11, 2 (2017), p. 175; Pierre Fuller, ‘North China Famine Revisited: Unsung Native Relief in the Warlord Era, 1920–1921’, *Modern Asian Studies*, 47, 3 (2013), p. 822; Lloyd E. Eastman et al, *The Nationalist Era in China, 1927-1949* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2001), p. 1.

<sup>138</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: Letter from J. A. Greig to Nansen, 12 November 1923.

<sup>139</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: Letter from J. A. Grieg to Johnson, 19 December 1923.

<sup>140</sup> Dillon, *China*, p. 191.

<sup>141</sup> Gene John, *By Many Waters* (Southampton: Unpublished Autobiography, 1996).

more nuanced view of the actions of local power holders, it is unlikely that these leaders would have been particularly concerned with the public welfare of incoming refugees.<sup>142</sup>

In addition to the unstable political climate, Russian refugees faced significant challenges in seeking employment. The instability of the political system had also served to undermine China's economy and there was significant poverty amongst the indigenous population. In the 1920s approximately 75% of the Chinese population lived and worked on the land, eking out a living through grinding repetitive manual work, although the quality of life ranged from region to region and within village hierarchies.<sup>143</sup> Aside from soldiers in the defeated White Russian forces, the majority of Russians in China were agricultural workers from Siberia who struggled in a country so 'densely populated and overstocked with labourers as China.'<sup>144</sup>

The staff at the High Commissioner's office in Geneva had been receiving reports about the difficult circumstances under which Russians were living in China long before the delegation was established, reflecting a dissonance between the daily reality of life for refugees and the comprehension of geographically removed actors. One example of this is the correspondence between a representative of the approximately 2,300 refugees from Russia's Volga and Ural regions highlighted in the introduction, who had fled eastwards into Sinkiang (contemporary Xianjing as seen in Figure 1) in North West China in 1922.<sup>145</sup> Although the letter did not detail why the refugees had fled into Russia, it is likely that they had left to escape famine and the ensuing outbreaks of disease, including typhus, cholera, typhoid fever and smallpox. The famine was most acute in the former 'oasis of prosperity' the Volga Black Earth region, as well as the Don basin, Bashkiria, Kazakhstan, western Siberia and southern Ukraine.<sup>146</sup>

---

<sup>142</sup> See: Eastman et al, *Nationalist Era*, p. 1; Fuller, 'North China Famine', p. 822; Pierre Fuller, *Famine Relief in Warlord China* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2019).

<sup>143</sup> See: Eastman et al, *Nationalist Era*, p. 1; Dillon, *China*, p. 200.

<sup>144</sup> See: LNA/R1740/25682: Letter from Morgan Palmer, Director of American Red Cross Operations in China to the chairman of the Advisory Committee of Relief Organisations for Russian Refugees, 10 July 1923; LNA/C1558/16809: Confidential Report, 5 March 1929.

See: LNA/R1740/19165: Letter from D. E. Hoste of Chinese Inland Mission (CIM) to L. T. Chen, 21 January 1922; LNA/R1740/19165: Letter from L. T. Chen to Karl Fries at the World's Committee in Geneva, 7 February 1922.

<sup>146</sup> See: Serguei Adamets, 'Famine in Nineteenth- and Twentieth- Century Russia: Mortality by Age, Cause and Gender', in *Famine Demography: Perspectives from the Past and Present*, ed. by Tim Dyson and Cormac Ó Gráda (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 158; Hakan Kirimli, 'The Famine of

The representatives of these refugees wrote that they were a group of men, women and children ‘already living in China one and half year, making great efforts to gain livelihood for us and our families. But we cannot compete with the native people, because we are treated in an off-hand manner as strangers and all create obstacles for us.’<sup>147</sup> Nansen’s Deputy Thomas Frank Johnson demonstrated a lack of understanding for the precarious economic and political situation in China when he wrote that the High Commissioner could not offer any material assistance, but could ‘endeavour to place them in profitable employment.’<sup>148</sup> Facing hostility from the local Chinese population and with no help forthcoming from the High Commissioner, the refugees in Sinkiang were dependent on the assistance of missionaries from the CIM.<sup>149</sup> The reliance of these refugees on missionaries was a pattern repeated across China in the early 1920s, as Morgan Palmer from the ICRC noted, ‘little interest has been manifested in this problem in the Orient however, save among professional philanthropists (the Missionaries, Y.M.C.A workers etc.)’<sup>150</sup> By 1923 many missionary organisations felt the strain of the relief work which they believed could not ‘go on much longer.’<sup>151</sup>

*‘The time is past for such temporary charity’: Dr James A. Greig and the Establishment of a Delegation in China, 1923-1926*

One such missionary who understood that the temporary response offered by the central and regional Chinese government bodies and voluntary agencies (volags) was

---

1921-22 in the Crimea and the Volga Basin and the relief from Turkey’, *Middle Eastern Studies*, 1, 39 (2010), pp. 39-40.

<sup>147</sup> LNA/R1740/19165: Tratskeff, Papingut and Tshelokoff to the ICRC, undated.

<sup>148</sup> LNA/R1740/19165: Letter from Johnson to Gregori Stefanovitch, 25 February 1922.

<sup>149</sup> The relationship between missionaries (including medical missionaries such as James A. Greig) and humanitarianism has a long lineage, and has been the subject of significant scholarship. For an indicative selection of this scholarship see: Tony Ballantyne, ‘Humanitarian Narratives: Knowledge and the Politics of Mission and Empire’, *Social Sciences and Missions*, 24, 2-3 (2011), pp. 233-264; Kevin Grant, ‘Christian Critics of Empire: Missionaries, Lantern Lectures, and the Congo Reform Campaign in Britain’, *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 29, 2 (2001), pp 27-58; David Hardiman, ed., *Healing Bodies, Saving Souls: Medical Missions in Asia and Africa* (Amsterdam: Clio Edica, 2006); Bertrand Taithe, ‘Pyrrhic Victories? French Catholic Missionaries, Modern Expertise, and Secularizing Technologies’, in *Sacred Aid: Faith and Humanitarianism*, ed. by Michael Barnett and Janci Gross Stein (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 166-187; Aud V. Tønnessen, ‘Faith-based NGOs in International Aid: Humanitarian Agents or Missionaries of Faith?’, *Forum for Development Studies*, 34, 2 (2007), pp. 323-342.

<sup>150</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: Palmer to the chairman, 10 July 1923.

<sup>151</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: Letter from John Young Thomson (J. Y. T) Greig to Johnson, 29 May 1923.

unsustainable was Dr James A. Greig, who was based in the Irish Presbyterian Mission, Kirin in Manchuria, Northern China (seen in Figure 1 as Jilin). Greig had joined the attempts of other missionaries and the Red Cross to offer assistance to the refugees who had arrived in Kirin in the winter of 1922. According to Greig's son, his father had stated that approximately four or five thousand destitute Russian refugees had arrived in Kirin from Vladivostok and other parts of Eastern Siberia, many of whom were the 'remnants of Koltchak's White army.' The refugees in Kirin were relatively fortunate to be initially offered housing and a 'meagre daily ration of bread' by local Chinese officials. However, this assistance was very limited and soon expats formed a local relief committee to help organise 'emergency hospitals, dispensaries, [and] clothing depts.'<sup>152</sup>

As a man of standing in the missionary community of Kirin, Greig assumed the role of Chairman of the local relief committee. A medical doctor, Greig had worked in China for over thirty years, during which time he had experienced both widespread outbreaks of cholera and anti-Christian sentiment. A statement issued by the Presbyterian Church of Ireland upon his retirement described him as a 'skilled doctor, a gifted evangelist, a great linguist,' who had 'occupied a conspicuous place in the missionary life of Manchuria.'<sup>153</sup> In addition to speaking Mandarin, Greig was fluent in Russian having also lived in Russia and Siberia, a skill which would prove fortuitous during the influx of Russian refugees.<sup>154</sup> From the mission hospital which he had established in Kirin Greig exercised a 'thoroughly scientific' approach as a doctor, which included introducing saline drips during an epidemic of cholera.<sup>155</sup> This resulted in his being awarded 'special decorations' from the Chinese Government and had a reputation as a healer amongst the local Chinese population.<sup>156</sup>

The impression of Greig both from his own correspondence and from others assessment of him that he was a man of action, energy and strong character. Therefore, whilst Grieg

---

<sup>152</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: J. Y. T. Greig to Johnson, 29 May 1923.

<sup>153</sup> Cotter Medical History Museum (CMHM): Telegram to the members of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland from Reverend William James Lowe, Clerk of the Assembly and General Secretary, 18 November 1926.

<sup>154</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: 'Delegate in Harbin', 23 February 1924.

<sup>155</sup> F. W. S. O'Neill, *The Call of the East: Sketches from the History of the Irish Mission to Manchuria, 1869-1919* (London: James Clarke and Co, 1919), p. 23.

<sup>156</sup> Cui Dan, 'The Cultural Contribution of British Protestant Missionaries to China's National Development during the 1920s' (unpublished doctoral thesis, London School of Economics, 1996).



became Nansen's local delegate in China and thus an actor within the greater apparatus, he maintained his independence of spirit throughout, grounded in his extensive experience as a medical missionary and his local knowledge of China. By 1923, Greig had been applying his industriousness and experience to the issue of Russian refugees in Kirin for 'more than a year.'<sup>157</sup> Upon witnessing the scale of Russian displacement first hand, Greig had quickly come to the conclusion that there was no future in the type of temporary voluntary assistance offered by missionaries. Writing to Morgan Palmer, the director of American Red Cross operations in China in July 1923, Greig expressed the belief that 'the time is past for such temporary charity. It is the big question of the permanent solution of the problem of what to do with the thousands of Russians.' Although he did not specify, it is likely that Greig thought the most obvious way forward was to engage the attention of the new international institution the League of Nations, which he stated had no 'raison d'être if it shirks such a problem that clearly comes under its jurisdiction.'<sup>158</sup>

Some months earlier in Geneva, Nansen had emphasised the serious situation of Russian refugees in the Far East, but no decisive action had been taken.<sup>159</sup> Deputy High Commissioner Johnson expressed his frustration with this lack of action, writing that the High Commission was 'seriously handicapped' in this matter 'by reason of the fact that it has no delegate acting in China in cooperation with the local government.' It is likely that Johnson's desire to appoint a delegate combined with the fortuitous introduction of Greig who had extensive knowledge of the context, plus fluency in both Chinese and Russian, that led Johnson to invite Greig to become the delegate. In a letter to Greig's son on 12 July 1923, Johnson wrote that 'in view of the sympathetic interest manifested in the question by Dr Greig, I venture to enquire whether he would be prepared to act as Dr Nansen's accredited delegate.'<sup>160</sup> Johnson evidently took this decision without consulting Nansen, who wrote to his Deputy in January 1924 more than six months after Greig had been engaged as the delegate in China stating that 'the question of paying a special delegate to deal with this difficult problem in China would, I am afraid, be put

---

<sup>157</sup> LNA/R1740/19165: J. A. Greig to Nansen, 5 Feb 1924.

<sup>158</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: Letter from J. A. Greig to Morgan Palmer, Director of American Red Cross Operations in China, July 1923.

<sup>159</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: Monthly summary of the League of Nations, VIII: Social and Humanitarian Questions, I: Refugees, a) Russian refugees. April 1923.

<sup>160</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: Johnson to J. Y. T. Greig, 12 July 1923.

out of court by our lack of means.’<sup>161</sup> Shortly afterwards, Johnson revealed in a letter to a colleague how he had managed to pay Greig, explaining that by ‘making drastic cuts at headquarters and among other delegations, we have been able to squeeze a sufficient sum for administrative purposes for this delegation.’<sup>162</sup> With Nansen often absent from the central body in Geneva, it appears that Johnson made some important decisions independently.

After Greig had accepted the position of delegate in China, and before Nansen was aware of his existence, Nansen’s representative in Moscow John Gorvin wrote to his colleague Thomas G. Eybye describing the main activities that Greig would undertake in China. Greig’s interpretation and application of the tasks assigned to him is revelatory of how delegates of the High Commissioner became local agents. Furthermore, this accounts for the plurality of results across different contexts. Greig’s first task was to liaise with an official appointed by the Chinese government, which was standard procedure for all of the High Commissioner’s delegates, regardless of the country in which they were located. How Greig managed this task demonstrates that power was multidirectional within the apparatus, and not simply controlled by the central actor and organ. Rather, delegates such as Greig displayed a degree of autonomy and exerted their own will within the apparatus, thus shaping certain actions and outcomes.<sup>163</sup>

Throughout his correspondence with the office in Geneva Greig made his position as a ‘China expert’ clear. For example in March 1924 Greig wrote that ‘the attitude and policy of the Chinese government is one which only those long resident in the Far East can fully appreciate. I will not attempt to define it further than that it is one of patient tolerance.’<sup>164</sup>

Greig’s leverage as an expert shaped his interpretation of his role, as seen in his questioning of the viability of only liaising with an official from the government given the fragmented Chinese political structure. Greig stated it was apparent ‘that some time

---

<sup>161</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: Abstract of letter from Nansen to Johnson, 7 January, 1924.

<sup>162</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: Letter from Johnson to Phillip Barker, 25 January 1924.

<sup>163</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: Letter from John Gorvin to Thomas G. Eybye, circa 1923.

<sup>164</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: J. A. Greig to Nansen, 24 March 1924.

will elapse before I can have a conversation with the Official which the Chinese Government will appoint'. He queried whether he had to confine his 'dealings strictly to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Peking' or was he 'at liberty to deal directly with the Governments of the affected provinces when [he considered] it advisable?'<sup>165</sup> Greig's interpretation of the Chinese government's weak political and economic status also limited the extent to which he was willing to press them for material assistance, arguing that it was 'utterly futile to expect the Chinese government to give any more substantial help' beyond offering free rail passes to refugees wishing to return to Russia.<sup>166</sup>

This unwillingness to persist in requesting material assistance from the Chinese government is also demonstrative of how the delegate's role derived from the imperial diplomatic precedent of High Commissioners. The device of diplomacy was one of the many elements of the Nansen apparatus which served as a 'ghost in the machine', requiring no abstract thinking and easily applied by local actors with little intervention from agents in the central body.<sup>167</sup> On one occasion that Johnson articulated a need for political tact, Greig's response confirmed the extent to which he understood diplomacy to be an intrinsic part of his role. In 1924, the Chinese government signed its first treaty with the Soviet Union, which included transferring Russian diplomatic institutions in China to Soviet authorities.<sup>168</sup> Aware of these developments with the Soviet Union which had increased the tension in regards to White Russian refugees in China, Johnson cautioned that it was necessary to 'steer a very careful course in communication with the refugee questions'.<sup>169</sup> Greig stated that he realised 'very fully how necessary it is to steer a very careful course.'<sup>170</sup>

For Greig, League assistance to Russian refugees in China was a much greater project than simply offering relief, it was also about educating the Chinese government and its people about the new Western project of international governance. In addition to liaising with the official appointed by the Chinese government as laid out in his first task, for Greig this involved much broader educational work. Writing to Nansen in

---

<sup>165</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: J. A. Greig to Nansen, 12 November 1923.

<sup>166</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: J. A. Greig to Nansen, 24 March 1924.

<sup>167</sup> Feldman, *Migration Apparatus*, p. 16.

<sup>168</sup> See Hope Simpson, *Report of a Survey*, p. 500; Marcia Reynders Ristaino, *Port of Last Resort: The Diaspora Communities of Shanghai* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), p. 291.

<sup>169</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: Letter from Johnson to J. A. Greig, June 1924.

<sup>170</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: Letter from J. A. Greig to Johnson, 22 July 1924.

November 1923, Greig recounted that he had ‘undertaken a considerable amount of educational work through the newspapers [...] and in the near future [intended] to give a few lectures in large educational centres.’ Greig evidenced a belief of the time in the ‘pedagogy of imperialism’ which was the imperialist goal of educating colonial or semi-colonial subjects in the ‘lessons of the contemporary international world.’<sup>171</sup> Continuing in his letter to Nansen, Greig outlined his imperial pedagogical approach, stating that ‘in my opinion the Refugee Work affords us a unique opportunity of impressing the peoples of the Far East with the value and significance of the League.’<sup>172</sup> Greig serves as one example of a person whose actions were underpinned by the contemporaneous ideals of social reform and scientific progress which Davide Rodogno, Shaloma Gauthier and Francesca Piana argue imbued many actors with a deep conviction of their ‘civilizing mission’ both within and beyond Europe.<sup>173</sup>

Greig’s second task of cooperating with and coordinating voluntary relief activities spoke of the High Commissioner’s chronic lack of funds which somewhat undermined Greig’s idealistic interpretation of the League as a new form of Western governance which could enlighten the people of China. The office of the High Commissioner did not actually receive funds from the League for its work in this period, with the League Secretariat decreeing that the High Commissioner’s activities should be funded privately. The High Commissioner and other delegations within the apparatus relied upon private organisations to deliver material assistance to refugees and sought to cultivate a reciprocal relationship which included the creation of an advisory committee of sixteen bodies. This included the ICRC, the Society of Friends (Quakers), the Save the Children Fund, Near East Relief and Zemgor, the main refugee organisation for Russian refugees.<sup>174</sup>

The confusion that Greig experienced regarding what type of work he was expected to undertake was reflective of a general ambiguity arising from the unprecedented nature

---

<sup>171</sup> Zanasi, ‘Exporting Development’, p. 146.

<sup>172</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: J. A. Greig to Nansen, 12 November 1923.

<sup>173</sup> Davide Rodogno, Shaloma Gauthier and Francesca Piana, ‘What Does Transnational History tell us about a World with International Organisations?’, in *Routledge Handbook of International Organisation*, ed. by Bob Reinalda (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2013), p. 4.

<sup>174</sup> Elizabeth White, ‘A Category ‘Easy to Liquidate’: The League of Nations, Russian Refugee Children in the 1920s and the History of Humanitarianism’ in *The League of Nations’ Work on Social Issues: Visions, Endeavours and Experiments*, ed. by Magaly Rodríguez García, Davide Rodogno and Liat Kozma (Geneva: United Nations, 2016), pp. 201-216.

of this international response to widespread displacement.<sup>175</sup> A year before Greig was appointed as the delegate in China the International Rescue Committee (IRC) wrote to Johnson explaining that Russian refugees had high expectations of material assistance. The IRC urged the High Commissioner to declare that delegates were ‘in reality some sort of consul’ whose only ‘relief duty is limited to coordination work.’<sup>176</sup>

The back and forth between Greig and Geneva over funds shows how aspects of the apparatus were transmitted between different actors. Early on in his role Greig did not appear to have been informed about the paucity of funds in which ‘any idea of substantial relief from League sources is hopeless.’<sup>177</sup> Greig wrote to request an interim sum of ‘even £5000’ to ‘keep the refugees from starving’ before more long term solutions such as repatriation or resettlement could be employed.<sup>178</sup> The astonished reaction of staff in Geneva to Greig’s apparent lack of understanding regarding a basic characteristic of the apparatus is clear in the internal correspondence between staff in Geneva which declared Greig has ‘somewhat large ideas, as he says that ‘even’ £5,000 would help!’<sup>179</sup> As an incoming actor, Greig gleaned his knowledge and unconscious understanding of the apparatus sporadically through long distance correspondence. It is clear from the letters that initially at least, Greig did not perceive that his task in cooperating with other relief actors was a means of overcoming his fiscal limitations, to the exclusion of other means of assisting refugees.

Greig threw himself into this aspect of his work and wasted no time in networking with ‘Red Cross Societies, Relief Committees and others competent to give me suggestions.’ His actions in regards to coordinating with other relief actors also demonstrates the usefulness of prior networks and social capital for delegates within the apparatus. Greig remained in frequent contact with the representative of the American Red Cross in Kirin, with whom he had previously worked alongside through conducting ‘in Russian Relief work in this city during this year.’ Greig wrote to Nansen that he had the ‘utmost

---

<sup>175</sup> See: Alessandra Roversi, ‘The Evolution of the Refugee Regime and Institutional Responses: Legacies from the Nansen Period’, *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 22, 1 (2003), p. 26; Housden, *League of Nations*, p. 57. Skran, *Inter-War Europe*.

<sup>176</sup> See: LNA/R1731/21425: Letter from International Refugee Committee to Johnson, 26 June 1922 (trans. From French); Johnson, *International Tramps*, p. 158; LNA/R1740/25682: J. A. Grieg to Johnson, 19 December 1923.

<sup>177</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: Letter from an unnamed member of staff to Johnson, 4 April 1924.

<sup>178</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: J. A. Greig to Nansen, 24 March 1924.

<sup>179</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: Unnamed staff to T.F. Johnson, 4 April, 1924.

confidence' in the judgement of the Red Cross representative, and would 'continue in close co-operation with him.'<sup>180</sup> However, Greig was as keen to emphasise the finite nature of the assistance from private organisations as the High Commission had been to underscore their limited funds. In 1924, he reported that whilst 'charitable organisations of all kinds have given very generous help [...] this valuable temporary assistance has now almost entirely ceased, as their reserves are exhausted.'<sup>181</sup>

Given that funds for relief were unforthcoming, this lent a greater importance to another of Greig's tasks which was to open negotiations with Soviet diplomats regarding the repatriation of Russian refugees from China. Nansen had already attempted to facilitate negotiations regarding Russian repatriation between the Soviets and the Chinese before 1923, and whilst some refugees had chosen to return, Greig soon found that many refugees were 'very much concerned at the prospect of being sent back to Russia.'<sup>182</sup> According to Greig, the conflicting reports of the treatment of returnees meant that only around 2% of refugees in China were willing to go back, regardless of what amnesties were granted by the Soviets and despite their ongoing hardship in China. Greig had publicly declared repatriation as one solution to the problems of refugees in early 1924, after 'exploring the subject and exchanging ideas' with 'the best informed minds of the Far East.'<sup>183</sup> Greig came under fire from the right-wing newspaper *Russkii golos* 'Russian Voice' for his 'Anglo-Saxon idealism.'<sup>184</sup>

Despite general opposition from Russians in China, Greig continued to tentatively explore the possibility of repatriation, writing in March 1924 that he was 'pretty certain to get free transport of refugees on Chinese and Manchurian Railways under our repatriation and migration conditions.'<sup>185</sup> However, Greig's pursuit of repatriation is striking in terms of its timing. As early as August 1923 reports had begun to trickle out of Moscow that politicians were uncomfortable with being monitored in regards to the returnees and 'beginning to feel their own strength' and were 'jealous of their sovereign

---

<sup>180</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: J. A. Greig to Nansen, 12 November 1923.

<sup>181</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: Memorandum by I. C. Arnould on the work done by Dr Greig, Delegate of High Commission in 1924.

<sup>182</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: Johnson to J. Y. T. Greig, 12 July 1923.

<sup>183</sup> LNA/R1740/19165: J. A. Greig to Nansen, 5 Feb 1924; LNA/R1740/25682: J. A. Greig to Nansen, 12 November 1923.

<sup>184</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: Translated extract from 'Russky Golos', Harbin, 28 February, 1924.

<sup>185</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: J. A. Greig to Nansen, 24 March 1924.

rights and independence.’<sup>186</sup> Any chance for repatriation had actually come to a halt in November 1923, months before Greig was speaking to the ‘best informed minds’ he could find.<sup>187</sup> This is indicative of how devices such as policy direction within the apparatus were susceptible to external forces, and how long it took for the various actors to adapt and change direction.

### *The Legal Status of Refugees, Welfare Provisions and a New Delegate in China, 1925-1931*

As the superintendent of a large hospital with considerable responsibilities beyond refugee work, and nearing the end of his missionary career, Greig handed over the role of delegate to Swiss ICRC worker Henri Cuénod between the summer and autumn of 1925, and retired to New Zealand in 1926.<sup>188</sup> In comparison to Greig, Cuénod represented what Margherita Zanasi terms a ‘new expert’, being less geographically specialised than the imperial officers or missionaries who had long worked in China.<sup>189</sup> Although Cuénod lacked Greig’s intricate knowledge of Chinese politics, geography, culture and language, he had extensive experience in humanitarian issues as a delegate of the ICRC and likely shared Greig’s belief in the appropriateness of scientific approaches such as data collection.<sup>190</sup> His roles for the ICRC had included being active in the exchange of prisoners between Germany and Poland, as well as working on the ‘administration of funds’ during a famine in Albania in 1924.<sup>191</sup> As the delegate of the High Commissioner and the delegate of the ICRC in China between 1925 and 1933 Cuénod took up the role during a period of enormous transition of the High Commissioner, the country in which he now found himself, and global politics more generally.

Owing to a chronic lack of funds, the office of the High Commissioner temporarily handed administrative control of their work to the ILO in 1925. Prior to this transfer, the

---

<sup>186</sup> Which politicians in Moscow were uncomfortable and beginning to feel their own strength was not specified in the letter sent between Johnson and Gorvin which is cited in Katy Long, *The Point of No Return: Refugees, Rights and Repatriation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 56.

<sup>187</sup> LNA/R1740/19165: J. A. Greig to Nansen, 5 Feb 1924.

<sup>188</sup> LNA/C1323/18: Office in Geneva to Henri J. Cuénod, July 1925.

<sup>189</sup> Zanasi, ‘Exporting Development’, p. 144.

<sup>190</sup> For further discussion of ‘experts’ and ‘expertise’ see: Rodogno, Gauthier and Piana, ‘Transnational History’, pp. 94-105.

<sup>191</sup> LNA/C1486/17040: Henri J. Cuénod alias MARTIGNIER CV.

staff at the central office and within the various delegations had been closely collaborating with the ILO in the matter of transporting refugees to countries ‘where they might be in productive employment’<sup>192</sup> The ILO agreed to share the economic responsibility for finding work for refugees, and in exchange the High Commissioner’s administrative structure was internally transferred. I. C. Arnould from the High Commission wrote to Greig reminding him that the office was to ‘be transferred to the International Labour Office as from January 1<sup>st</sup> next’ but that he would not ‘fail to communicate the plan of work for the task which may have to be accomplished next year in the Far East as soon as it has been decided upon’<sup>193</sup> Cuénod therefore took over from Greig whilst the central body of the apparatus was in a state of flux. The archival sources of the delegate in China fall silent between 1925 and 1930, so it is difficult to ascertain to what extent the work of the delegate was affected by this administrative change thousands of miles away.

What is clear is that although the High Commissioner for Refugees had faced financial difficulties and increasingly strict immigration systems in the 1920s, it had also been a period of immense innovation for the League’s response to refugees.<sup>194</sup> By contrast, the 1930s was a decade of significant challenges for the League in general, and for the refugee bodies more specifically. By 1929 the ILO had divested itself of operational responsibilities for refugees, and Nansen had announced that he believed the League’s refugee work could be concluded within ten years, with the proviso that the Secretariat of the League agreed to long term planning in this area. However, Nansen died in May 1930 before he could secure this guarantee. In the wake of Nansen’s death the position of ‘High Commissioner’ was abolished and replaced with the Nansen International Office for Refugees (hereafter the Nansen Office) which instead had a president, a chairman, and a secretary general. On 23 September 1929 the Assembly decided that the Nansen Office could accomplish its work within a set time and would therefore be wound up in a maximum period of ten years.<sup>195</sup>

---

<sup>192</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: Johnson to J. A. Greig, June 1924.

<sup>193</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: I. C. Arnould J. A. Greig, 10 November 1924.

<sup>194</sup> Skran, *Inter-War Europe*, p. 117.

<sup>195</sup> This is discussed at length in Chapter III.



The late 1920s and early 1930s were also a period of marked turbulence for China. Beginning in 1926, supporters of the Nationalist Kuomintang (KMT) and the Commander Chiang Kai-Shek participated in the 'Northern Expedition' anti-warlord military campaign.<sup>196</sup> By 1927 the incumbent Chinese government had been ousted by a new KMT government, sparking a power struggle for leadership within the Nationalist movement. Chiang Kai-shek eventually took control of the Nationalist party, government and military in 1928, leading to an unstable period in which the values, attitudes, and practices of warlord regimes were injected into the new government administration via bureaucrats who transferred their allegiance to the central government. As well as domestic problems, the new KMT government faced difficulties internationally, amongst which was a dispute with the Soviet Union over the Eastern Sino-Soviet border between September and December 1929. On 23 September, Soviet troops crossed the Argun border into the Barga territory which was then home to 23,000 Russian refugees who were predominantly agricultural workers in the three rivers area.<sup>197</sup> The Soviet forces destroyed several villages inhabited by refugees, resulting in hundreds of deaths and a new wave of displacement as survivors fled along the CER to Harbin.<sup>198</sup>

Another major problem for Russians in China stemmed from their lack of legal status and the repeal of any extra-territorial rights they had enjoyed prior to the revolution. One of Nansen's central tasks when he was appointed High Commissioner was to regulate the legal status of Russian refugees. Given the growth of international law in the first half of the interwar period and the limited budget of the High Commissioner, working to improve the status of refugees through law was an appealing avenue for the refugee body. Dzovinar Kévonian argues that a group of Russian jurists living in France, including Jacob Rubinstein, André Mandelstam, and Constantin Gulkevich, brought their experience to bear in the interwar period through the Consultative Committee of Private Organizations (CCOP), which assisted the High Commissioner in regards to refugee law.<sup>199</sup> The ability of create a legal status for refugees, albeit within

---

<sup>196</sup> See: Sally Marks, *The Ebbing of European Ascendancy: An International History of the World, 1914-1945* (London: Hodder Arnold, 2002), p. 217; LNA/C1558/16809: Confidential Report, 5 March 1930.

<sup>197</sup> Eastman et al, *Nationalist Era*, pp. 1-8

<sup>198</sup> LNA/C1558/16809: Confidential Report, 5 March 1930.

<sup>199</sup> Jacob Rubenstein would go on to become the legal advisor to the Israeli United Nations legation in New York in 1949. Many of the Russian jurists of the interwar period were also Jewish. James Loeffler explores what he describes as 'Jewish legal exceptionalism' in his chapter of a forthcoming edited

strict categorisations determined by nationality, was one means by which the central agency and other legal actors in the western apparatus sought to respond to displacement in the interwar period.<sup>200</sup>

The need to create a legal status for Russian refugees was a response to both the increasingly narrow categorisations of ‘citizens’ based on a ‘nation state’ system and the concurrent expansion of international law.<sup>201</sup> An exploration of what developing conceptualisations of citizenship and states meant for refugees and stateless people in the interwar period is beyond the scope of this research, so for the purpose of this thesis any discussion of citizenship refers predominantly to legal citizenship, which is here understood to be the formal status of national membership bound to the concept of the nation state. The ideology of nation states and nationalism is understood as ‘imagined communities’ grounded in notions of territorial sovereignty.<sup>202</sup>

Glenda Sluga argues that the rise of the liberal ideology of nationalism during the interwar was inextricably linked to a corresponding growth of internationalism.<sup>203</sup> One important aspect of the internationalism in this period was the growth of international law which drew on revised notions of nineteenth century legal positivism. According to B. S. Chimni, positivism views international law as ‘an abstract system of rules which can be identified, objectively interpreted, and enforced.’<sup>204</sup> That which exists beyond the system of rules is labelled as politics, thus effectively separating the legal from the

---

volume. See: Dzovinar Kévonian, ‘Les juristes juifs russes en France et l’action internationale dans les années vingt’, *Archives Juives*, 34 (2001), pp. 72-94 ; James Loeffler, ‘Promise and Peril: Reflections on Jewish International Legal Biography’, in *Émigré Lawyers and International Law*, ed. by Annette Weinke and Leora Bilsky (Forthcoming). Available at:

[https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3454558](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3454558) [accessed 1 October, 2019].

<sup>200</sup> For a selection of the scholarship which discusses international jurists, refugees and rights in the interwar period see: Helmut Philipp Aust, ‘From Diplomat to Academic Activist: André Mandelstam and the History of Human Rights’, *European Journal of International Law*, 25, 4 (2014), pp. 1105–1121; Dzovinar Kévonian and Philippe Rygiel ‘Introduction – ‘Faiseurs de droit’ : les juristes internationalistes, une approche globale située’, *Monde(s)*, 7 (2015), pp. 9-24 ; Kévonian, *Réfugiés et diplomatie humanitaire*; W. Wesley Pue, *Lawyers’ Empire: Legal Professions and Cultural Authority, 1780-1950* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2016), pp. 3-35; Elizabeth White, ‘The Legal Status of Russian Refugees, 1921-1936’, *Comparativ. Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und Vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung* (2017), pp. 18-32.

<sup>201</sup> Audrey Macklin, ‘Who Is the Citizen’s Other? Considering the Heft of Citizenship’, *Theoretical Inquiries in Law* 8, 2 (2007), p. 335.

<sup>202</sup> Benedict R. O’G. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006), pp. 199-200.

<sup>203</sup> Sluga, *Internationalism*, pp. 1-3.

<sup>204</sup> B. S. Chimni, ‘The Geopolitics of Refugee Studies: A View from the South’, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 11, 4 (1998), p. 552.

political. In the depoliticised positivist tradition law is understood to be of a higher standard and therefore distinct from politics. Instead, law is considered by its proponents to be a positive and secular means for bargaining above the ‘murkier world of political intrigue’.<sup>205</sup> Stephen C. Neff notes that the early interwar period was a time of ‘ferment, experiment, and excitement’ for this depoliticised conceptualisation of international law.<sup>206</sup> In the aftermath of war, opportunities began to open up that many lawyers and legal scholars had previously thought impossible. The profession associated with international law therefore developed in correspondence with institutions which were subjects of law, including international tribunals, courts and quasi-judicial mechanisms.

In the context of the rise of nation states and international law, the High Commission and later the Nansen Office sought to stabilise the legal status of refugees and stateless people through legislation. These included the various Legal Arrangements concerning Nansen passports, and the 1933 Convention Relating to the International Legal Status of Russian and Armenian Refugees. As will be discussed in Chapter IV, law and legal expertise the 1950s served an important role as a central device within the displacement response apparatus during the post-war high of international law more generally. By contrast in the interwar period, although positivist views of legislation were pushed forward by a specific group of lawyers within the apparatus sought to utilise law in relation to refugees, it did not play quite as powerful a role in sustaining and concretising the apparatus as it would do after 1950. In part, the lesser role that law played in the Nansen apparatus was a result of interwar challenges towards more traditional understandings of normative legal positivism, which posited that it was not possible to draw a line between law and politics. Pragmatism arising from the tumultuous political and economic climate particularly during the 1930s directly questioned the utility of positivism.<sup>207</sup>

---

<sup>205</sup> Shirley V. Scott, ‘The Decline of International Law as a Normative Ideal’, *Victoria University Wellington Law Review*, 49 (2018), p. 629.

<sup>206</sup> See: Stephen C. Neff, ‘A Short History of International Law’, in *International Law*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edn., ed. by Malcolm D. Evans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 23; Stephen Wertheim, ‘The League of Nations: A Retreat from International Law?’, *Journal of Global History*, 7 (2012), p. 214-228.

<sup>207</sup> Nansen passports are discussed further in the next chapter. See: Skran, *Inter-War Europe*, p. 109; Kristian Wohlström, ‘On Disillusionment and its Limits: Images of the Interwar Legal Project in International Relations and International Law’, *British Yearbook of International Law*, 80, 1 (2009), p. 375; Neff, ‘International Law’, p. 23.

Nevertheless, a group of Russian legal experts continued to apply legal approaches grounded in positivism to push for more clarity in the legal status of refugees through formal Conventions between states. In 1926, several Russian lawyers including Andre Mandelstam, Jacques Rubinstein, Baron Boris Nolde and Konstantin Gulkevitch founded a Central Commission for the Study of the Condition of Russian and Armenian Refugees within the High Commission. This group advocated for refugees to be considered on the same terms as ‘most favoured foreigners’ and for limits to be placed on expulsion.<sup>208</sup> After 1930, a number of these lawyers gained positions within the Nansen Office and were instrumental in formulating the 1933 Convention which despite its many shortcomings was the first legally binding multilateral instrument to attempt to clarify the refugees’ legal status and offer protection.<sup>209</sup> A great deal of energy was thus directed at better defining legal status of refugees and stateless people in the interwar period. However, the results of this industriousness were a series of nationality-centric definitions of refugees, and no official definition of statelessness. According to Claudena Skran the nationality centric definitions were a result of the lack of consensus during debates on terms.<sup>210</sup>

The ambiguity of legal definitions of refugees and stateless people was a distinguishing feature of the interwar period, despite the efforts of Russian legal scholars in Geneva. The example of Russian refugees in China demonstrates how efforts such as the 1933 Convention did not necessarily reach national policy. There were two national decrees which defined the legal status of refugees in China. The first laid down that persons without nationality would be subject to the law of their place of domicile, whilst the second abolished the extraterritorial privilege enjoyed by all former Russian subjects, both refugees and pre-war communities.<sup>211</sup> Extraterritoriality referred to the ‘right of foreigners to govern and legally control themselves’, which was of particular historic importance to the Russian community in Shanghai, as outlined in a letter to the High Commissioner from a representative of the Refugee Relief Advisory Committee in

---

<sup>208</sup> White, ‘Legal Status of Russian Refugees’, p. 22

<sup>209</sup> Arthur K. Kuhn, ‘International Measures for the Relief of Stateless Persons’, *The American Journal of International Law*, 30, 3 (1936), pp. 495-499.

<sup>210</sup> See: White, ‘Legal Status’, p. 32; ‘Plan for the Issue of a Certificate of Identity to Refugees from the Saar, 30 July 1935’, *LON Treaty Series*, 10-12 (1935), pp. 1681-1682; Will Hanley, ‘Statelessness: An Invisible Themes in the History of International Law’, *The European Journal of International Law*, 25, 1 (2014), p. 322; Skran, *Inter-War Europe*, p. 110.

<sup>211</sup> LNA/C1558/16809: Confidential Report, March 1929.

Shanghai in 1923.<sup>212</sup> When Cuénod arrived in China in 1925, he was particularly struck by the problematic lack of legal status of Russians there in comparison to Europe. As summarised in a report by the Nansen Offices' Managing Committee and Finance Commission in 1934, having recently spent time in France and Switzerland Cuénod believed that 'the situation of Russian refugees in the countries of Europe and China [was] fundamentally different. Whereas in Europe, with a Nansen passport, refugees [were] in the same situation as other foreigners, especially with regard to different birth certificates, marriage, etc.'<sup>213</sup>

What was not articulated in the report was the difference being legally recognised as a 'foreigner' might have in China versus European countries.<sup>214</sup> China at that time had little in the way of state sponsored social policies, and a vast proportion of the indigenous population lived in poverty, without adequate access to health care, education or other benefits of social care. In contrast, concerns for welfare had taken hold across particularly Western Europe in the early part of the twentieth century, stemming from changes in social structure, growth in wage labour, increased population movement as well as new varieties of insecurity, which had stimulated 'new thinking' about the social role played by states.<sup>215</sup> The benefits which came with the development of policies such as basic health care provisions were increasingly understood through the context of citizenship, meaning *étrangers* including refugees did not necessarily have automatic access.<sup>216</sup> A 1933 report by le Comité d'Assistance aux Étrangers de la Croix-Rouge de Belgique highlighted the uneven access to welfare provisions of 'foreigners' and particularly refugees in several European countries.<sup>217</sup>

After the report was published the 1933 Convention pushed forward by Russian refugee lawyers sought to address this by stating that refugees should be given the 'most

---

<sup>212</sup> LNA/R1740/25682: Wolfe to Nansen, 21 August 1923.

<sup>213</sup> LNA/C1527/80456: Report by the Managing Committee and the Finance Commission on the work of the 10th Joint session held at Geneva, 1934.

<sup>214</sup> ICRC/CR128, 9, *Assistance aux étrangers : rapport présenté par l'International Migration Service*, Genève, Juin 1933, p. 1.

<sup>215</sup> Stein Kuhlne and Anne Sander, 'The Emergence of the Western Welfare State', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Welfare State*, ed. by Francis G. Castles et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 61-80.

<sup>216</sup> For further discussion of the relationship between citizenship and social rights see: John D. Stephens, 'The Social Rights of Citizenship', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Welfare State*, ed. by Francis G. Castles et al (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 511-525.

<sup>217</sup> ICRC/CR128, 9, 'Assistance aux étrangers', p. 1.

favourable' treatment that states gave nationals of foreign countries.<sup>218</sup> Elizabeth White argues that there was a perceptible effort by many state governments to provide more social provision to refugees after this point, demonstrating that there was a degree of impact between the legal positivism within the apparatus and the daily lives of refugees. However, this success was limited.<sup>219</sup> As John Hope Simpson noted in his 1938 survey, whilst these provisions were 'generous in theory' in several European countries, practically the 'overcrowding of hospitals and scarcity of resources made little material difference to the lives of refugees and stateless people.'<sup>220</sup> For refugees in China, their lack of legal status completely restricted any access to very limited welfare resources. The positivist attempts of some actors within the apparatus to push forward international law were limited by the pragmatic realities of the interwar context, as witnessed by Cuénod in China.

*'A very difficult refugee problem': Charles E. Metzler and the Delegation in Shanghai, 1933-1937*

Cuénod based his operations in China in the North Eastern city of Harbin until 1932, when he moved the delegation to the port city of Shanghai. In 1931, Japanese troops had invaded and formally occupied Manchuria, which had effectively been a Japanese colony since their forces had defeated Russian troops in the Russo-Japanese war of 1904. The Japanese army set up a puppet 'Manchukuo' which was independent in name but run by the Japanese. After the invasion of Manchuria, many of the Russian refugees living in that part of China left and headed west, whilst others either chose to remain or were unable to leave the occupied areas. The relocation of the delegate in China from Harbin to Shanghai reflected the ongoing volatility of political events, and further demonstrates the limitations China's physical geography placed on the apparatus there.<sup>221</sup>

---

<sup>218</sup> Hope Simpson, *Report of a Survey*, p. 285.

<sup>219</sup> White, 'Legal status', p. 23.

<sup>220</sup> Hope Simpson, *Report of a Survey*, pp. 286-288.

<sup>221</sup> See: LNA/C1323/18: Letter from Johnson to Cuénod, 11 July 1925; Rana Mitter, *The Manchurian Myth: Nationalism, Resistance and Collaboration in Modern China* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2000), pp. 1-2.

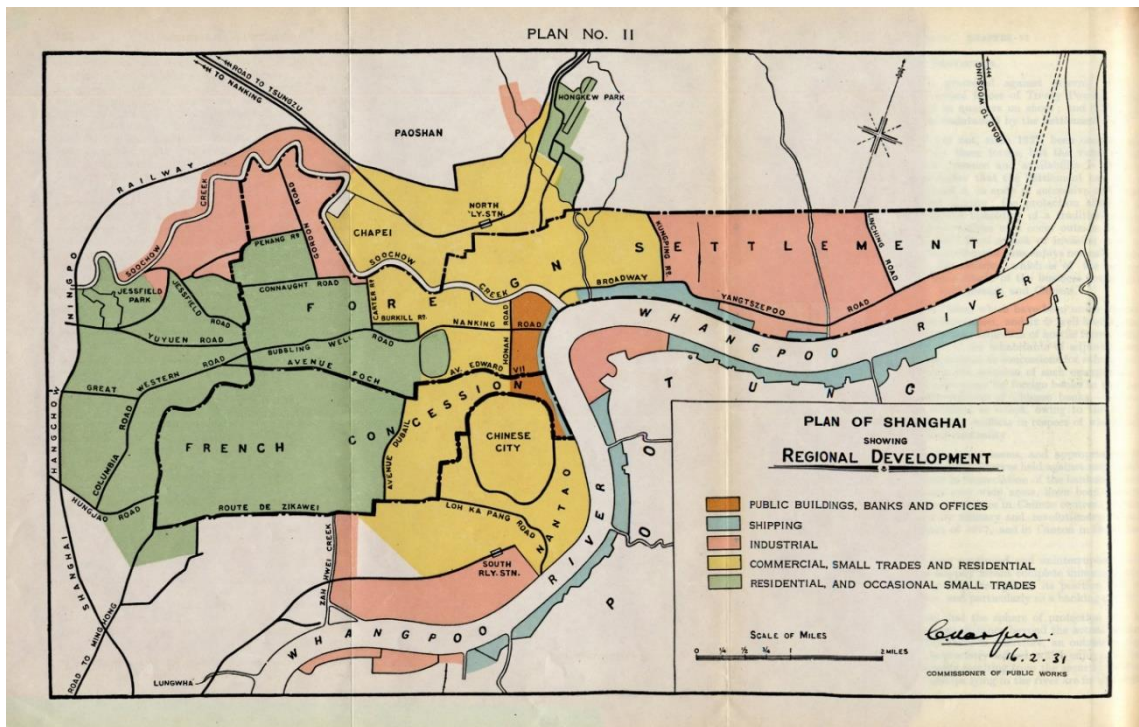


Figure 2: Map showing the International Settlement and French Concession, drawn by Richard Feetham for the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1931. Source: Virtual Shanghai.

Throughout the interwar period, refugees in cities which were distant from the delegation received less ongoing attention. Therefore one outcome of the particular topographical challenges was the cultivation of local refugee committees, who in theory kept in regular contact with the delegate concerning places with a concentration of Russian refugees. From his new base in Shanghai Cuénod struggled to communicate with the committees in places such as Harbin, with a member of the committee complaining to the Nansen Office in 1932 that the ‘distance between Harbin and Shanghai’ had resulted in an almost complete lack of personal contact with the delegate.<sup>222</sup> In reality, refugees in places with no delegate were left to organise themselves, only occasionally encountering the apparatus through the delegate. The minimal influence of the apparatus in refugee communities across China played a central role in the developments regarding the delegate in China in the 1930s. The events which took place in Shanghai exposed how poor communication, competition from external actors, and the struggle for control between the centre and the periphery undermined the apparatus in China.

<sup>222</sup> LNA/C1527/80456: Note on a conversation with Mr. Gratcheff, 15 November 1932.

Prior to Cuénod arriving in Shanghai, the Russian refugee community there had a significant and complex history of self-organisation. The Russians in Shanghai were very mixed demographically and politically as well as in terms of their displacement, with some Russians being both refugees and stateless, whilst others becoming stateless from their homes in China. As mentioned above, there had already been a pre-existing Russian community in Shanghai before the influx of refugees at the end of the war. These Russians had thrived in the enterprising atmosphere of nineteenth century Shanghai, which through the ‘unequal treaties’ between China, France and Britain had been forced to open for trade.<sup>223</sup> Shanghai had subsequently become a thriving centre of commerce. Its status as an ‘open port’ granted foreign powers the right of ‘extra-territoriality’ for their merchants, their staff and families.<sup>224</sup> The British and Americans established separate settlements which merged into the international settlement in 1863, alongside the French Concession and the area under Chinese jurisdiction. As well as Russian traders, the pre-war community included diplomats and emissaries of the Russian empire based in the international settlement or the French Concession. This fairly small group of merchants and diplomats was joined by former aristocrats and wealthy businessmen, servicemen from the White Russian forces, former politicians from pre-revolutionary political parties, monarchists of different alliances, as well as artists, journalists, peasants, and their dependents. Many of these refugees crowded into small, unsanitary houses in the most densely populated and deprived parts of Shanghai and its surrounding areas.<sup>225</sup>

According to Marcia Reynders Ristaino, the diversity in the refugee community led to ‘constant quarrelling and petty infighting’ between refugee leaders and organisations throughout the interwar period.<sup>226</sup> Cuénod highlighted these problems in 1932, when he wrote to Geneva describing how there was a ‘very difficult refugee problem to handle’ in Shanghai, with ‘political and other intrigues.’<sup>227</sup> The two main factions of refugees were the former imperial civil servants and White Russian military forces. The imperial

---

<sup>223</sup> Ristaino, *Port of Last Resort*.

<sup>224</sup> Sarah Abrevaya Stein, *Extraterritorial Dreams: European Citizenship, Sephardi Jews, and the Ottoman Twentieth Century* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2016), p. 97.

<sup>225</sup> See: Ristaino, *Port of Last Resort*, pp. 7-9; 50; Haochen Wang, ‘Citizens of No State: Daily Life of Shanghai White Russians, 1920s-1930s’, *Primary Source*, IV, I (2013), pp. 30-34.

<sup>226</sup> See: Ristaino, *Port of Last Resort*, p. 50; LNA/R1740/25682: Wolfe to Nansen, 21 August 1923

<sup>227</sup> See: LNA/C1527/80456: Gratcheff, 15 November 1932; Fraser Newham, ‘The Russians of Shanghai’, *History Today*, 55, 12 (2005), pp. 20-28; LNA/C1527/80456: Letter from Cuénod to Johnson, 4 March 1933.



civil servants were the dominant faction, having established the Russian Emigrants Committee as the ‘administrative heart of the Shanghai Russian community.’<sup>228</sup> The Committee was founded by former imperial Russian consul-general in Shanghai Victor Fedorovich Grosse and his deputy Charles E. Metzler (seen in Figure 3 below) in 1926, and maintained a ‘quasi-diplomatic’ function.

The second faction of former military forces was spearheaded by the Council of the United Russian Public Organisations at Shanghai (SORO), which was established in 1932 by Lieutenant General Fedor Lvovich Glebov, former commander of the Siberian Cossack units in Chita. Glebov had held a very powerful position in the White Russian armed forces, and from his actions upon arrival in Shanghai appeared to be a man of swift action with a less traditional approach to authority, refusing to surrender his weapons and entering Shanghai surreptitiously. SORO were less organised than the Emigrants Committee, but still represented a competitive alternative source of authority in the early 1930s.<sup>229</sup>

---

<sup>228</sup> Ristaino, *Port of Last Resort*, p. 50.

<sup>229</sup> Metzler was a former imperial civil servant first was appointed to the Chinese Mission in Beijing, where he remained until Sept 1917, at which time he was sent to Shanghai to become Vice-Consul, a post he held until the consulate closed. He was therefore technically stateless but not a refugee. See: Ristaino, *Port of Last Resort*, pp. 41-43; 295.



Figure 3: Charles E. Metzler, undated. Source: Marcia Reynders Ristaino, 2001.

Shortly after moving to Shanghai, Cuénod wrote to the office in Geneva stating that he could not ‘contemplate remaining much longer in China’, and his imminent departure prompted the Nansen Office to ‘effect economies on its budgetary expenditure in China, and, if possible, arrange for the appointment of an honorary [delegate].’<sup>230</sup> Unlike a delegate, in the interwar apparatus an honorary delegate was an unsalaried position. The Geneva office under Johnson was clear about its preference for a ‘Westerner’, or more explicitly the importance of not employing a Russian in the role.<sup>231</sup> In the early 1920s Nansen had pledged not to appoint any Russians to be his representatives, but in the ensuing years a considerable number of Russians were employed in the delegations of various countries. For example, in 1930 former Russian industrialist Jean Tchoumakoff served as the delegate in Buenos Aires, and by 1938, Russian refugees Władimir

---

<sup>230</sup> LNA/C1527/80456: Letter from Johnson to Rajchman, 14 September, 1933

<sup>231</sup> LNA/C1527/80456: Johnson to Rajchman, 14 September, 1933.

Elisaroff and Boris Serafimov were serving as delegates in Danzig and Bulgaria respectively, whilst former refugees also served as representatives in Greece and Lithuania.<sup>232</sup> Therefore it was not a simple case that Johnson did not want a Russian refugee in the role at all, but rather because he believed it would be impossible to find a Russian who was ‘agreeable to all refugee parties’ given the intense factional rivalries.<sup>233</sup>

Despite this, neither Cuénod nor the office in Geneva were able to find a representative by June 1934, at which point Cuénod put forward Charles E. Metzler who was by then the head of the Russian Emigrants Committee.<sup>234</sup> Whilst this position lacked the stability of the role of representative, Metzler possessed some leverage. The British consul-general in Shanghai pointed out to Johnson that it would be very difficult to locate a non-Russian willing to undertake the ‘difficult task’ of working as the representative in China ‘without payment of a substantial salary.’<sup>235</sup> The objections of Johnson and the central office were therefore overridden by pragmatic realities and Metzler took up the role after the departure of Cuénod in mid-1934. Metzler was not instructed to become the delegate by the office in Geneva, another example of how the apparatus unfolded and adapted rather than conforming to a pre-determined plan. Without officially becoming the delegate, Metzler’s activities were constrained by his lack of financial resources, restricting his work to Shanghai rather than to the communities of refugees across China. After Metzler had held the role for a year without any real recognition he wrote to Geneva to request that his role be formalised and that a budget be issued to the delegation. The governing committee of the Nansen Office agreed to grant Metzler the official status of delegate, demonstrating that power moved in both directions throughout the apparatus, with individual technocrats able to exert a degree of influence on the centre.<sup>236</sup>

---

<sup>232</sup> See: LNA/C1491/387: Record of conversation by E.W. from the League Treasury with Nansen, 27 September 1929; Władimir Elisaroff (also known as Władimir Jelizarow/Elizarow) was a former diplomat for the Tsarist Government. See: Wojciech Skóra, ‘Iwan Iwanowicz Bielaniin, wygnaniec rosyjski w Gdańsku. Przyczynek do „międzynarodowki szpiegowskiej” Wolnego Miasta lat 1920–1939’, *Studia Historica Gedanensia*, 5 (2014), p. 316; LNA/C1597/ 81387: List of Representatives, Honorary Representatives and Correspondents, 28 October 1938.

<sup>233</sup> LNA/C1527/80456: Johnson to Somervell, 22 January 1934.

<sup>234</sup> LNA/C1527/80456: Report by the Manging Committee and the Finance Commission on the work of the 8th Joint session held at Geneva, 3 September, 1934.

<sup>235</sup> LNA/C1527/80456: Letter from the Consul-General in Shanghai to the Nansen Office, 1 April 1936.

<sup>236</sup> See: LNA/ C1527/80456: Certificate of Employment of Charles E. Metzler issued by the Nansen International Office for Refugees, 25 May 1935; Wendy Larner and Nina Laurie, ‘Travelling

However, in a move which proved this circulation of power was truly multidirectional, just six months later in December 1935, the Governing Body of the Nansen Office asserted itself by abruptly stating that it would be ‘unable to renew [Metzler’s] engagement as honorary representative of the Office in China’, claiming in a letter that they believed Metzler’s position to be ‘incompatible with certain activities undertaken by [him] as a member of Russian refugee Committees in China.’<sup>237</sup> Metzler attempted to hold onto the role, protesting that he had followed the instructions of the office ‘to the utmost of my ability’ and ‘tried to be useful to the refugees and as such to the Russians residing in Shanghai and in other towns in China.’ Despite Metzler’s claim that his ‘activities [coincided] fully with the aims of the office’, and despite the existence of other Russians in representative positions in other locations, Metzler was ultimately powerless to retain the role of representative given the local context.<sup>238</sup>

By the end of 1937 the Nansen Office had appointed a Swiss businessman named Albert Loonis to the role of delegate who as a long term resident of Shanghai claimed to be ‘personal friends’ with Metzler, from whom he sought advice.<sup>239</sup> Therefore, although the Nansen Office had officially removed Metzler from a position of power within the apparatus in China, he continued to maintain his influence there until political events overran the refugee community in Shanghai. In November 1937 Shanghai also fell to the Japanese who establishment of puppet municipal government. Although records show Loonis remained in Shanghai or its environs, the occupation of Shanghai significantly curtailed any existing influence of the Western displacement response apparatus in China. As will be discussed in Chapter IV, displacement response returned to a more ad hoc local assemblage in Shanghai and other parts of China, international relief next arriving in 1945.<sup>240</sup>

---

Technocrats, Embodied Knowledges: Globalising Privatisation in Telecoms and Water’, *Geoforum*, 41 (2010), pp. 218–226.

<sup>237</sup> LNA/ C1527/80456: Nansen Office to Metzler 12 November 1935.

<sup>238</sup> LNA/ C1527/80456: Charles Metzler to the Nansen Office, 7 December 1935.

<sup>239</sup> Metzler also continued to represent Russian community in Shanghai, but was assassinated in 1940 having ‘run afoul of his Japanese patrons’ during Japanese occupation. See: LNA/C1527/80456: Albert Loonis to Straetmans, 1 April 1936; LNA/C1597/6809: Philip King, ‘White Russians Hit by Chinese Ban’, *Shanghai Evening Post*, 4 March 1937; Irene Eber, *Wartime Shanghai and the Jewish Refugees from Central Europe: Survival, Co-Existence and Identity in a Multi-Ethnic City* (Berlin and Boston: Walter de Gruyter GmbH and Co. 2012), p. 26.

<sup>240</sup> See: Eastman et al, *Nationalist Era*, p. 115; Ristaino, *Port of Last Resort*, p. 247.

## *Conclusion*

The case of the delegation in China explored in this chapter demonstrates several important aspects of the Western based displacement response apparatus which emerged from the widespread displacement of Russians in the aftermath of revolution, civil war, and famine. Firstly, the political, economic and social instability of the Chinese context between the wars is a powerful example of the different settings in which the apparatus was required to operate. In order for the apparatus to concertise and survive, its actors, policies, devices, administrative procedures and other assembled components adapted to the context in which they found themselves, whilst maintaining familial characteristics with other parts of the apparatus in different locations. Secondly, a more specific examination of the different actors who served as delegates in China highlights the agency, power and influence individual agents could wield within the broader apparatus. James A. Greig's belief in the pedagogy of imperialism to enlighten the Chinese, his prior network of *volag* contacts, his fluency in both Chinese and Russian, and his considerable knowledge of China all played a significant part in shaping the actions of the delegation in China in the mid-1920s. The energy which Greig brought to the role established a Western presence of displacement response which was ultimately limited by the lack of funds which characterised the apparatus as a whole. Nevertheless, Greig laid the groundwork for the continuation of the apparatus in China.

The tenure of his replacement, Henri Cuénod, points to further aspects of the interwar apparatus, namely the ongoing challenges for refugees stemming from their lack of legal status, and the attempts of specific actors within the apparatus to address this. In China, legislation stripped all Russians of their legal status, a situation which was not realistically improved by the 1933 Convention designed to offer better protection to displaced persons through a more clearly defined status. This effectively limited their right to access already very scarce welfare resources, although this did not reflect the situation of refugees in Europe who benefitted to a greater extent from the rise of interwar welfare policies. The efforts of a group of Russian legal scholars to push forward legislation in this area is demonstrative of legal positivist thought within the apparatus, which would gain much greater precedence in the post-war apparatus. Finally, the case of Charles E. Metzler in Shanghai exemplifies how power circulated between the different actors and locations of the apparatus, and how the push and pull

dictated the work of the apparatus on the ground. The examples of all the delegates in China underscore how there was no single architect who formulated and oversaw the establishment and concretisation of the apparatus, rather it emerged in response to a specific need and was cobbled together over time from a range of different policies, actors, administrative measures and devices. Understanding the randomness of the development of the apparatus explains the often unexpected events and turns taken. The contingent and unpredictable nature of the apparatus will be explored in the next chapter through an examination of a specific device in the form of Nansen passports.

## II: Objects Which Acted: The Unpredictability of Nansen passports within the Interwar Apparatus

The history of the delegation in China discussed in the previous chapter outlines the evolution of the Nansen apparatus across the interwar period. By the late 1930s the actors, institutions, policies and procedures of the apparatus were facing increased pressure both from new groups of refugees and increasingly volatile global geo-politics. In 1937, the delegate of the Nansen Office in China, Albert Loonis, found himself in a difficult position relating to the situation of a community of Russian refugees in the city of Tientsin (Tianjin). On 26 July, after months of escalating tensions and minor incidents between Japanese troops and the Chinese public in North Eastern China, Japanese forces had attacked the Chinese cities of Beiping (Beijing) and Tientsin.<sup>241</sup> Shortly afterwards, a representative of the approximately 1,500 Russian refugees living in Tientsin named G. A. Verjbitsky wrote to Loonis to outline the challenges they now faced and to request assistance. According to Verjbitsky, a former General in the imperial Russian forces and now President of the Russian National Association in Tientsin, one of the gravest problems facing the Russians in the city was their lack of access to passports which would enable them to evacuate the country. Verjbitsky described how the Chinese Municipal offices in Tientsin had been destroyed in the attack with the consequence that the passport bureau had ceased to function.<sup>242</sup>

Prior to the destruction of the passport bureau, the Chinese authorities in Tientsin as in other places in China had issued ‘passports’ to Russian refugees which were intended to enable them to leave China.<sup>243</sup> Although these Chinese-issued ‘passports’ had proven to be an imperfect solution for many refugees, Verjbitsky noted that without being able to obtain any kind of passport, Russian refugees in Tientsin had no means of evacuating China should the political situation deteriorate further. In search of a solution, Verjbitsky wrote that it had occurred to him that ‘if the so called ‘Nansen passports’

---

<sup>241</sup> The changed conditions of the 1930s are further in Chapter IV. See all: Rana Mitter, *China's War with Japan, 1937-1945: The Struggle for Survival* (London: Penguin Books, 2013).

<sup>242</sup> See: Boris Raymond, *The Last White General: Oral History Transcript* (Berkeley: University of California, 1975), p. 109. LNA/C1597/6809: Letter from G. A. Verjbitsky, President of Russian National Association in Tientsin, to Loonis, 16 October 1937.

<sup>243</sup> See: LNA/R1740/25682: Letter from the Peking Russian Benevolent Society to the League, July 1924; LNA/ C1533/22760: Letter from Chen Ting, Secretary of the Chinese Delegation to the League of Nations to Johnson, 27 September 1930.

were available in Tientsin, the situation might be ameliorated to not a small extent’, particularly given that ‘Consular Representatives of those Powers who are members of the League of Nations would probably more readily visa a Nansen passport rather than one issued by the local Authorities.’<sup>244</sup>

The Nansen passports that Verjbitsky was referring to were non-legally binding *Titres de Voyages* or identity certificates which were designed by the High Commissioner for Refugees to both regulate a refugees’ legal status and to enable them to leave their current country of residence in order to seek work or to reunite with family. Nansen passports were one of the most important devices within the interwar Nansen apparatus, and continue to be discussed predominantly in terms of being an innovative and ‘ground breaking’ solution to the problem of displacement.<sup>245</sup> In recent years the so-called ‘successes’ and ‘failures’ of Nansen passports have met with renewed scrutiny as scholars and other commentators assess their potential usefulness as a tool worth reviving or adapting to tackle contemporary refugee crises.<sup>246</sup> This speaks to a broader belief that scholarship of institutions and their systems’ need to move on ‘well beyond the mere assertion of failures and successes’.<sup>247</sup> This chapter argues that these discussions can be enriched by a more nuanced understanding of how Nansen passports worked in practice. It contends that Nansen passports acted through their own material agency as well as human action, and that this led to often unexpected outcomes which go beyond the success or failure binary.<sup>248</sup> As such, the chapter will show that

---

<sup>244</sup> The number of Russian refugees in Tientsin excludes the Jewish, Ukrainian and Tartar communities who according to Verjbitsky had their own registration systems. See: LNA/C1597/6809: Verjbitsky to Loonis, 16 October 1937.

<sup>245</sup> See: Cara Giaimo, ‘The Little-Known Passport That Protected 450,000 Refugees’, *Atlas Obscura* (2017). Available at: <https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/nansen-passport-refugees> [accessed 1 October, 2019]; Rebecka Lettevall, ‘Cosmopolitanism in Practice’, pp. 13-24; Otto Hieromyni, ‘The Nansen passport: A Tool of Freedom of Movement and of Protection’, *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 22, 1 (2003), p. 42; Vogt, ‘Internationalist Pioneer’, p. 194.

<sup>246</sup> See: Stefan Wallaschek, ‘The Nansen passport – Time to Revive a Realistic Utopia’, *Refugees Deeply* (2016). Available at: <https://www.newsdeeply.com/refugees/community/2016/08/19/the-nansen-passport-time-to-revive-a-realistic-utopia> [accessed 1 October, 2019]; ‘Climate Change, Migration, and International Justice’, *United Nations University* (2018). Available at: <https://unu.edu/news/news/climate-change-migration-and-international-justice.html> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

<sup>247</sup> Bandeira Jerónimo and Pedro Monteiro, ‘Pasts to be Unveiled’, p. 5.

<sup>248</sup> One example of passports are susceptible to human actions is the act of forgery. This is not discussed in this chapter as it was not an aspect of Nansen passports which emerged from the archives. For further discussion of forgery and mobility/identity documents see: Simon A. Cole, *Suspect Identities: A History of Fingerprinting and Criminal Identification* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2001); Fahrmeir, ‘Governments and Forgers’, pp. 218-234; B. Geller, J. Almog, P. Margot, and E. Springer, ‘A Chronological Review of Fingerprint Forgery’, *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 44, 5 (1999), pp. 963-968; Mahmoud Keshavarz, *The Design Politics of the Passport: Materiality, Immobility, and Dissent* (London:



unpredictability goes hand in hand with the circulation of material objects, and any assessment of their performance should take this into account. It also argues that as a central part of the interwar apparatus, Nansen passports serve as the ideal example of the contingent and heterogeneous nature of the apparatus itself.

The chapter begins with an introduction to the theories behind Nansen passports, outlining how the methodological framework for the chapter incorporates both more traditional understandings of passports as a means of managing a population with newer theories about mobility and material agency.<sup>249</sup> The chapter then provides essential context for broader trends in passportisation and the specific moment at which Nansen passports were introduced, highlighting how the time lapse between initial displacement and the issuing of Nansen passports is indicative of how passports work.

The second part of the chapter examines four examples of how individual Nansen passports acted in unexpected and unpredictable ways independently of its creators, governments, people interpreting it at the border, and its bearers, and to understand how their authority was perceived in different contexts. Each episode demonstrates the manifold ways in which Nansen passports both enabled certain possibilities but also exercised their own agency, creating dynamic situations. Firstly, the case of Russian refugees in Iraq highlights the anxiety engendered by non-standard Nansen passports whose form differed in localised contexts. Secondly, the stories of Rabbi Israel Eiserman and Mendel Bernberg demonstrates how the circulation of Nansen passports created various possibilities for different subject positions, bringing diverse actors within the apparatus into contact. These cases are also pertinent examples of the ways in which Nansen passports acted independently of human agency by structuring refugees' claims to certain rights, such as the right to travel or remain in a given country.<sup>250</sup>

---

Bloomsbury, 2019); Andrew Macdonald, 'The Identity Thieves of the Indian Ocean: Forgery, Fraud and the Origins of South African Immigration Control, 1890s–1920s', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 179 (2012), pp. 253-276; Mervyn Matthews, *The Passport Society: Controlling Movement in Russia and the USSR* (Boulder, San Francisco and Oxford: Westview Press: 1993); Craig Robertson, 'A Documentary Regime of Verification', *Cultural Studies*, 23, 3 (2009), pp. 329-354; Alison K. Smith, 'False Passports, Undocumented Workers, and Public (Dis)Order in Late-Eighteenth-Century Russia', *Journal of Social History*, Spring (2020), pp. 1-21; Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport*.

<sup>249</sup> Mimi Sheller, 'From Spatial Turn to Mobilities Turn', *Current Sociology Monograph*, 65, 4 (2017), p. 624.

<sup>250</sup> The focus of this chapter is on the ways in which Nansen passports acted in unexpected ways, and is therefore not primarily concerned with the concept of rights. There is an existing body of work pertaining

Finally, the case of Nicholas Perchine illustrates the ways in which Nansen passports could work both against and for their bearers.

### *The Authority and Agency of Passports*

The history of passports begins long before Nansen passports were introduced by member states of the League of Nations in the 1920s. Rather, documents allowing individuals to cross territories have existed in one form or another since the advent of the written word. In the Old Testament Nehemiah petitions King Artaxerxes for ‘letters’ to convey to the ‘governors across the river’, ensuring his safe passage to Judah, whilst in Medieval Europe the right to issue a passport was given by Kings through *ne exeat regno*.<sup>251</sup> The passage of passports through history is far from linear as these documents have developed in an ad hoc and diverse manner across different geographies and societies. Scholarship of histories and modern day systems of passportisation have increased in recent years as part of a greater turn towards the study of objects and bureaucratic practices. These include discussions of paperwork, birth certificates, organisational records and censuses, as well as investigations into naming practices, and state practices such as the compilation of statistics and data. Increasingly, scholars are expanding the geographical and temporal range of works which seek to show how people participated in ‘the emerging culture of documentary identification.’<sup>252</sup> In their work on bureaucratic practices Peter Becker and William Clark argue that it has only been in recent years that academics have come to see that ‘the little tools of

---

to refugees and social, political and human rights in the twentieth century, such as; Stefan-Ludwig Hoffman, ‘Introduction: Genealogies of Human Rights’, in *Human Rights in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Stefan-Ludwig Hoffman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 1-26; Bonny Ibhawoh, ‘Defining Persecution and Protection: The Cultural Relativism Debate and the Rights of Refugees’, in *Problems of Protection: The UNHCR, Refugees and Human Rights*, ed. by Niklaus Steiner, Mark Gibney and Gil Loescher (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2003), pp. 61-78; Long, *Point of No Return*; Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2010); Lindsey Stonebridge, *Placeless People: Writings, Rights and Refugees* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018); White, ‘Easy to Liquidate’, p. 202.

<sup>251</sup> See: Jane Doulman and David Lee, *Every Assistance and Protection: A History of the Australian Passport* (Sydney, Federation Press: 2008), p. 3; ‘Nehemiah, Chapter 2’ in *The King James Bible online* (2017). Available at: <https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Nehemiah-Chapter-2/> [accessed 1 October, 2019]; ‘50 Things that Made the Modern Economy: Passport’, *BBC Radio 4* (2017). Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08wqlmf> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

<sup>252</sup> See: John Torpey, ‘The Passport in America: The History of a Document. By Craig Robertson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. xii plus 340 pp. \$27.95)’, *Journal of Social History* 45, 3 (2009), p. 835. Doulman and Lee; Radhika Singha, ‘The Great War and a ‘Proper’ Passport for the Colony: Border-Crossing in British India c. 1882-1922’, *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 50, 3 (2013), pp. 289-315.

representation' are themselves in need of examination.<sup>253</sup> Taking this further, Craig Robertson contends that although the current literature recognises passports as a critical practice in our modern society they remain 'under theorised.'<sup>254</sup>

There is truth in Robertson's claim that there is much work still to be done in regards to the theorisation of passports, yet there is an existing body of scholarship which seeks to understand passports through concepts and theories of identity, identification, citizenship and governmentality upon which this chapter will draw. For example, from a governmentality perspective, passportisation and other similar practices turn a person's identity from a subjective claim into a verifiable and invariable object. Furthermore, stabilising a person's 'official identity' on paper serves the specific purpose of enforcing a single identity through which an individual must conduct his or her affairs.<sup>255</sup>

Regardless of the complexities of an individual's nationality and ethnicity, the emergence of passportisation and concomitant practices such as census taking reduce identity to a recordable object.<sup>256</sup> Valentin Groebner and Katja Jacobsen argue that practices such as the issuing of passports opened up former 'recalcitrant spaces' to the control and amendment of government actors at a time when the concepts of states and citizenship were undergoing significant changes.<sup>257</sup> James C. Scott develops this in his theory of legibility, stating that the recording of individual identity which renders people 'legible' and open to the scrutiny of officialdom is the 'hallmark of modern statehood.'<sup>258</sup>

Looking beyond specific discussions about citizenship and statehood, Andreas Fahrmeir argues that recognising what is considered proof of identity is ultimately 'indicative of

---

<sup>253</sup> Peter Becker, and William Clark, 'Introduction' in *Little Tools of Knowledge: Historical Essays on Academic and Bureaucratic Practices*, ed. by Peter Becker and William Clark (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), pp. 2-34.

<sup>254</sup> Robertson, 'Regime of Verification', p. 329.

<sup>255</sup> See Sankar as cited in Robertson, 'Regime of Verification', p. 331.

<sup>256</sup> This will be discussed further in relation to Burma in Chapter VI.

<sup>257</sup> See: Katja Lindskov Jacobsen, *The Politics of Humanitarian Technology: Good Intentions, Unintended Consequences and Insecurity* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2015). pp. 36-54; Valentin Groebner, 'Describing the Person, Reading the Signs in Late Medieval and Renaissance Europe: Identity Papers, Vested Figures, and the Limits of Identification, 1400-1600', in *Documenting Individual Identity: the Development of State Practices in the Modern World*, ed. by Jane Caplan and John C. Torpey (Princeton: Princeton University Press: 2001), p.16.

<sup>258</sup> James C. Scott cited in Jane Caplan, and John Torpey, 'Introduction', in *Documenting Individual Identity: the Development of State Practices in the Modern World*, ed. by Jane Caplan and John C. Torpey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), p. 1; James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (Yale: Yale University Press, 1998).

the way in which societies are organised.’<sup>259</sup> In discussing what may or not be considered as proof of identity Fahrmeir alludes to the notion of an object’s authority or legitimacy in delineating an individual’s identity. In order to stabilise a person’s identity to the exclusion of other identities and doubts, the document on which that identity is recorded must carry a recognisable authority. In the case of Nansen passports, unlike their state counterparts they lacked the legitimacy of a single source of authority, instead deriving this from a range of different sources. The rhetorical choice to associate this document with the first High Commissioner for refugees Fridtjof Nansen, and Nansen’s subsequent high profile involvement in the creation of the passport itself served as one source of authority. Officially these documents were codified in legislation as identity certificates or *Titres des Voyages*, but were commonly referred to at the international and local level as ‘passports’, which subjectively speaking further increased their legitimacy.<sup>260</sup>

As well as incorporating more traditional theories of passportisation, this chapter makes use of ideas arising from the recent mobilities and material turns to create a loose framework through which to analyse Nansen passports. The ‘mobilities turn’ visible in fields such as international relations and geography holds that management of global population flows is dispersed through a wide assemblage of spaces, actors, institutions and objects, rather than being held by states and more specifically through state actors at borders.<sup>261</sup> In his recent work on passport photos Mark B. Salter argues that passports act as a concretising force in this ‘global mobility assemblage.’<sup>262</sup> According to Salter, passports do this by acting as physical objects circulating with other physical objects, creating the possibility of different kinds of subject positions and politics. In this way, Salter’s work brings together the mobilities turn with recent discussions of material agency across the social and political sciences.

---

<sup>259</sup> Andreas Fahrmeir, ‘Governments and Forgers’, p. 218.

<sup>260</sup> See: Huntford, *Nansen*, pp. 522-599; Rebecka Lettevall, ‘Neutrality and Humanitarianism: Fridtjof Nansen and the Nansen passports’ in *Neutrality in Twentieth-Century Europe: Intersections of Science, Culture, and Politics after the First World War*, ed. by Rebecka Lettevall, Geert Somsen and Sven Widmalm (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2012), p. 326.

<sup>261</sup> Sheller ‘Spatial Turn’, p. 624.

<sup>262</sup> Mark B. Salter, ‘Passport Photos’ in *Making Things International 1: Circuits and Motion*, ed. by Mark B. Salter (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2015), pp. 18-35.

New materialism does not represent a single approach or set of ideas, but rather is defined by a series of ontological and conceptual shifts.<sup>263</sup> Scholars from a wide variety of theoretical backgrounds, including followers of Karl Marx, Thomas Hobbes, Baruch Spinoza and Friedrich Nietzsche, as well as Foucauldians and Deleuzians, and scholars of Bruno Latour and Pierre Bourdieu, have come together under the new materialist umbrella in a deliberate departure from the transcendental and humanist traditions that dominates most postmodernist works.<sup>264</sup> New materialists across the spectrum have challenged the anthropocentric focus and logocentricity of modernist and postmodernist paradigms, arguing that these perspectives fail to account for the material world that humans inhabit.<sup>265</sup> Scholars such as Svend Brinkmann and Karen Barad have criticised modernism for viewing matter as primarily static or inert, and postmodernism for understanding it to be ‘relatively passive and culturally constructed.’<sup>266</sup>

Whilst there is a great deal of diversity within the study of new materialism arising from the different theoretical backgrounds of its scholars, according to Diana Coole there are four central the shifts which define its parameters. Firstly, Coole argues that new materialism ‘is not about Being, but becoming’. In other words, new materialists understand material objects as being part of ongoing processes rather than being a fixed state or an end result. A second, interrelated, commonality is that material is not ‘dead’, ‘inert’, or ‘passive’ as described in modernism and postmodernism, but rather ‘lively, vibrant and dynamic’ which thus does not necessarily need to be set in motion by an external agent. Thirdly, if it does not require an external, and particularly a human, agent to set it in motion it is not pre-determined and ‘teleologically prefigured’.<sup>267</sup> Mark Salter states that an emergent understanding of causality is necessary in order to

---

<sup>263</sup> There are several names for this area of scholarship, including generative immanence/immanent generativity and vital materialism/materialist vitalism. See: Coole, ‘Agentic Capacities’, p. 453; Hillevi Lenz Taguchi, ‘New Materialisms and Play’, in *Play and Learning in Early Childhood*, ed. by Liz Brooker, Mindy Blaise, and Susan Edwards (Sage: London, 2014), pp. 79-91.

<sup>264</sup> See: Coole, ‘Agentic Capacities’, p. 453; Javier Monforte, ‘What is New in New Materialism for the Newcomer?’, *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 10, 3 (2018), pp. 378-390.

<sup>265</sup> See: Candace R. Kuby, ‘Why a Paradigm Shift of ‘More than Human Ontologies’ Is Needed: Putting to Work Poststructural and Posthuman Theories in Writers’ Studio’, *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 30 (2017), pp. 877-896; Monforte, ‘What is New in New Materialism for the Newcomer?’, p. 379.

<sup>266</sup> See: Svend Brinkmann, ‘Humanism after Posthumanism: or Qualitative Psychology after the ‘posts’’, *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 14, 2 (2017), pp. 109-130; Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2007), p. 151.

<sup>267</sup> Coole, ‘Agentic Capacities’, pp. 451-453.

distinguish between the agency of the things and the agency of the humans. Put simply, materialisation is not linear, and it is inherently unpredictable. Finally, whilst agency remains a controversial topic within new materialism, there is general agreement that the narrow, constructivist approaches associated with poststructuralism are no longer useful in the light of new challenges emerging from newer ways of understanding matter. In viewing matter as vibrant, alive, unpredictable and procedural, new materialism focuses attention on the locations where changes happen and highlights the diffuse nature of agency across matter. A Coole notes, one strength of new materialism is that it is 'able to decouple agency from humans while raising questions about the nature of life and of the place or status of the human within it'.<sup>268</sup>

This chapter draws upon this ability to draw conclusions about humans whilst focussing on the wider issue of the agency of matter. In doing so, it is able to intervene in postmodernist discussions of Nansen passports which predominantly discuss them in terms of 'success' or 'failure'.<sup>269</sup> More broadly in the area of passport studies, several scholars have begun to bring together new materialism with the material objects of passports and other identity documents. Traditional studies of passports have been anthropocentric and predominantly postmodernist in nature, focussing on statehood, sovereignty and citizenship whilst viewing passports as passive objects within human constructed systems. Recently, academics such as Salter have argued that by de-centring human agency and moving away from analyses which only view objects in terms of how they serve humans, we are able to see the way that passports relate to both people and infrastructures, and how they themselves act or enable particular results. In accepting that matter is vibrant and lively, Salter traces the new occasions for difference and dispute passports can trigger as they circulate within the global mobility assemblage, thus making certain circuits impossible and opening up alternative routes.<sup>270</sup> This chapter builds on the work of Salter and remedies the paucity of new materialist approaches to Nansen passports, positing that whilst they were designed to

---

<sup>268</sup> See: Salter, 'Passport Photos', pp. 18-35; Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2010); Coole, 'Agentic Capacities', pp. 451-453.

<sup>269</sup> Wallaschek, 'The Nansen passport – Time to Revive a Realistic Utopia.'

<sup>270</sup> Aside from Salter, Georgia Cole explores the relationship between material objects, specifically documents such as handbooks and manuals, and the behaviour of the UNHCR, there is as yet no research which seeks to understand the relationship between the material agency of passports and refugees. See: Georgia Cole, 'How Friends Became Foes: Exploring the Role of Documents in Shaping UNHCR's Behaviour', *Third World Quarterly*, 39, 8 (2018), pp. 1491-1507.

regulate displaced people who were the ‘targets’ of the displacement apparatus, but that they behaved in unexpected ways independently of their creators, governments, people interpreting them at the border, and their bearers. In tracing the agency of Nansen passports, this chapter demonstrates how the tangential, diffuse and unpredictable nature of matter affects and underscores human behaviour.

### *The Introduction of Nansen passports in a World of Increased Passportisation*

As stated above, Nansen passports were a device within the interwar displacement apparatus which acted in unpredictable ways to enable or prevent certain possibilities. In order to understand how and why Nansen passports became such an important part of the apparatus it is necessary to appreciate the world of increased passportisation in which Russian refugees found themselves displaced. The refugees who left Russia in large numbers after 1917 often arrived in their first country of refuge with little but the tattered documents issued to them by the now defunct Tsarist bureaucracy. On encountering the ever developing bureaucracies of immigration, many refugees struggled to procure the visas necessary to leave their place of first asylum. The period preceding the First World War has gained a reputation amongst historians as a an era of relatively free mobility in Western Europe, a trend which can be traced to the end of feudalism and the subsequent encouragement of freer movement of people and goods.<sup>271</sup> Although during this period passports were considered ‘superfluous’ for those travelling ‘between civilised countries’, the number of identification documents in circulation actually ballooned in the nineteenth century as a function of the expansion of imperialism, travel, technologies, literacy, imperialism and the world economy.<sup>272</sup> The experience of free travel was far from universal, as exemplified by the extensive use of internal passportisation in imperial Russia.<sup>273</sup> From the eighteenth century to the early

---

<sup>271</sup> See: Marrus, *Unwanted*, pp. 93-94; Torpey, *Invention of the Passport*, pp. 17-18; Will Hanley, *Identifying with Nationality: Europeans, Ottomans, and Egyptians in Alexandria* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), p. 178; Martin Lloyd, *The Passport: The History of Man’s Most Travelled Document* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2003).

<sup>272</sup> See: Hanley, *Identifying with Nationality*, p. 178; Hieromyni, ‘Nansen passport’, p. 42.

<sup>273</sup> For more information regarding the Russian imperial passport system see: Eugene M. Avrutin, *Jews and the Imperial State: Identification Politics in Imperialist Russia* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2010), pp. 91-94; Matthews, *The Passport Society*; David Moon, ‘Peasant Migration, the Abolition of Serfdom and the Internal Passport System in the Russian Empire, c.1800-1914.’, in *Coerced and Free Migration: Global Perspectives*, ed. by David Eltis (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), pp. 324-357.

twentieth century in Russia internal migration of peasants and other groups such as the Jewish minority, but not the nobility, were controlled with a strict passport system. Passports were also very much in use in the British Indian Empire where they were used as a 'colour bar' to regulate the movement of Indians within India.<sup>274</sup> However, for many the pre-war period of relatively unenforced passportisation allowed many to travel freely or 'for those with ambiguous citizenship status to 'comfortably occupy legal grey zones' for years.<sup>275</sup>

The period which ostensibly encouraged the free movement of both people and goods came to an abrupt end with the outbreak of the First World War when wartime controls had breathed new life into bureaucracies governing mobility in Western Europe. The state of emergency during the war led to a dramatic increase in the surveillance of aliens, civilians and soldiers through the documents they carried. As a means of both mobility and identification, passports were increasingly utilised as a source of knowledge over civilian and military populations to render them amenable to control for the purposes of security.<sup>276</sup> Salter argues that the period immediately following the conflict was a 'watershed' in which the desires for ever greater control and porous borders were in direct competition.<sup>277</sup> Many economists including John Maynard Keynes voiced concerns about passportisation, arguing that the inflexibility of a restrictive passport regime could have a negative impact on economic growth.<sup>278</sup> In a speech at the League's Conference of Passports, Customs Formalities and Through Tickets organised by the newly formed Provisional Committee of Communications and Transit in 1920, the French Minister of Public Works Yves Le Troquer acknowledged the needs of governments to maintain 'national security and rights' but argued that

---

<sup>274</sup> See: Singha, 'Proper Passport', p. 291; Radhika Viyas Mongia, 'Race, Nationality, Mobility: A History of the Passport', *Public Culture*, 11, 3 (1999), pp. 527-556

<sup>275</sup> Stein, *Extraterritorial Dreams*, p. 74.

<sup>276</sup> Soldiers carried other forms of identification than passports. For example, in the German army soldiers carried a 'Soldbuch' which functioned both as a pay book and as personal identification, whilst the German authorities retained the same information in a 'Wehrstammbuch' in case the 'Soldbuch' was lost or destroyed. Civilians and personnel such as nurses were issued with passports, or in rare cases a document signed by a high ranking government official See: British Library, 'EMIL BÖCHER. Vol. IV A. Official record of Böcher's military service ('Wehrstammbuch'), with related personal documents; 1914-1944 and Vol. IV B. Pay-book ('Soldbuch'); 1915-1918'; Marjorie Seldon, *Poppies and Roses: A Story of Courage* (Sevenoaks: Economic and Literary Books, 1985).

<sup>277</sup> See: Mark B. Salter, *Rights of Passage*, p. 78; Hanley, *Identifying with Nationality*, p. 178.

<sup>278</sup> Critics of passportisation included Italian journalist and scholar Egidio Reale, who described it as a 'despotic device.' See: John Maynard Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of Peace* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe Inc., 1919), pp. 6-7. 'Reale, Egidio', in *Historisches Lexikon der Schweiz* (2010). Available at: <http://www.hls-dhs-dss.ch/textes/d/D27947.php> [accessed 1 October, 2019].



passports were a hindrance to economic development, and that a return to ‘pre-war conditions’ was to be hoped for in the near future.<sup>279</sup>

However, not everyone agreed that free movement would aid economic growth. Jochen Oltmer argues that there was a school of thought which held that, given Europe’s weakened post-war economic position, the reduction of free movement could serve as a macroeconomic tool of government to regularise the labour market.<sup>280</sup> Regardless of their economic stance, many actors across the political spectrum agreed that passports were a necessary inconvenience in order to manage the ‘marginal and dangerous’ elements in society.<sup>281</sup> Subsequently, in the early 1920s passportisation practices were extended and concretised through the agreements of states at the League of Nations.<sup>282</sup>

Three years elapsed between the end of the war and the decision taken by League member states to issue a passport for Russian refugees. One of the reasons for this delay exemplifies the different means by which passports can wield authority. Long before the revolutionaries in Russia abolished the monarchy and established the Soviet Union, the Tsarist imperial system of consuls and embassies issued documents to Russians who found themselves outside the empire. Despite the end of Romanov rule in 1917, these diplomatic satellites continued to operate beyond Russian territory.<sup>283</sup> In June 1921 a former member of the Progressive Party in the pre-revolutionary Russian Duma Jean Efremoff wrote to the Council of the League describing how ‘non-Bolshevist’ Russians were able to request identification and travel documents from several diplomatic and consular services which were established under the ‘last legal government.’<sup>284</sup> For a while it was possible for refugees who were displaced outside Russian boundaries to be

---

<sup>279</sup> See: Provisional Committee of Communications and Transit, ‘Conference of Passport, Customs Formalities and Through Tickets’, *League of Nations Official Journal* (1920), p. 58; Provisional Committee of Communications and Transit, ‘Conference of Passport, Customs Formalities and Through Tickets’, *League of Nations Official Journal* (1926), pp. 52-54.

<sup>280</sup> Oltmer, ‘Weimar Republic’, pp. 1-19.

<sup>281</sup> Salter, *Rights of Passage*, p. 80.

<sup>282</sup> ‘Conference of Passport, Customs Formalities and Through Tickets’ (1926), pp. 52-54.

<sup>283</sup> Marrus, *Unwanted*, pp. 93-94.

<sup>284</sup> Jean Efremoff was also known as Ivan Efremoff or Efremov. See: ILO/R201/10: Jean Efremoff, ‘Information regarding the Diplomatic Protection of Non-Bolshevist Russians’, 28 June 1921, in League of Nations, ‘Russian Refugees: Further Communications Completing Council Document no. C. 126 M. 72. 1921 VII’, *Communique to the Council and Members of the Society*, 1 August 1921; Daniel Laqua, ‘Internationalism and Nationalism in the League of Nations’ Work for Intellectual Cooperation’, in *Internationalism, Imperialism and the Formation of the Contemporary World: The Past of the Present*, ed. by Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo and José Pedro Monteiro (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), p. 73.

issued with documents, as seen in Figure 4 which shows a certificate of identity issued to a Russian refugee named Catherine Fischmann by the Imperial Russian consulate in Brussels in 1921.<sup>285</sup>



Figure 4: A travel document issued to Catherine Fischmann by the Imperial Russian consulate in Brussels, 1921. Source: Jane and Peter Gatrell.

<sup>285</sup> The text reads, 'By the authority of the Provisional Government of Russia: all those to whom it may concern are advised that the bearer of this passport, the Russian citizen Catherine Fischmann, aged 15 years, is continuing her stay abroad. Place of birth Brussels 23 April 1906. In witness thereof the present passport for free passage was issued in Brussels on 29 June 1921 on behalf of the Consul General of Russia in Brussels'. Translated by Jane and Peter Gatrell. See: Peter Gatrell, 'Email to Rebecca Viney Wood' (27 September 2019).

Efremoff (pictured in Figure 5 with then British Prime Minister Herbert Asquith) wrote in his letter to the League Council that alongside the issuance of ‘consular documents and passports visas etc.’, the diplomatic services were continuing to attempt to resolve ‘questions affecting the legal protection of the interests of their nationals.’<sup>286</sup> Despite his claims that these services were continuing, Efremoff’s letter also reveals that by the summer of 1921 in reality the imperial consuls and embassies had already reduced by a half, with some ceasing to exist altogether. Without finance from a home government these satellites were unable to sustain themselves on contributions from the Russian diaspora, many of whom had also lost their source of wealth. In the immediate aftermath of the revolution other countries had been willing to continue to accept the legitimacy of documents issued by a pre-revolutionary authority, but by 1921 the Soviet government was gaining international acceptance and several governments such as China and Persia began refusing to recognise documents issued by Russian imperial sources. The authority of the documents issued by the diplomatic arm of a now defunct empire did not cease immediately, but rather degraded slowly as the likelihood of a return to a Russian monarchy diminished.<sup>287</sup>



Figure 5: Visit of Members of the Russian Duma to England, 1909 (Efremoff is pictured on the far left). Source: Benjamin Stone, National Portrait Gallery.

<sup>286</sup> ILO/R201/10: Efremoff, 28 June 1921.

<sup>287</sup> See: Marrus, *Unwanted*, p. 176; ILO/R201/10: Efremoff, 28 June 1921.

The combination of increased practices of passportisation and the decreased authority of documents issued to Russian refugees by imperial bodies reached a critical point by the summer of 1921. The problem of passports was a central motivation for the first conference held by the League to explicitly discuss the Russian refugee crisis in August of that year. After Fridtjof Nansen accepted the position of High Commissioner in September, he and his staff recognised refugees' lack of papers as one of their most pressing problems given their need to traverse the post-war border apparatus to cross borders looking for work and family. It took less than a year for the High Commission to secure the agreement of sixteen member states to turn the idea of Nansen passports into legislation.<sup>288</sup> In July 1922, the first 'Arrangement with Regard to the Issue of Certificates of Identity' stipulated that Nansen passports were to be issued to Russian refugees by member states on behalf of the League.<sup>289</sup> Unlike a Treaty, League Arrangements were not legally binding, but instead recommended a 'standard of conduct for signatory states.'<sup>290</sup>

In 1924 member states of the League agreed to extend Nansen passports to Armenian refugees, then on the recommendations of a Committee of Experts in 1928 issued a third arrangement extending Nansen passports to Assyrians, Assyro-Chaldeans and 'assimilated refugees.'<sup>291</sup> By 1935 over fifty states worldwide had signed up to the first arrangement, although substantially less signed up to the later Arrangements. In theory, therefore, Russian refugees at least were entitled to a Nansen passport in any country which had signed up to the 1922 Arrangement which should ease their passage to a different country of asylum. However as the case studies below demonstrate, in practice the sometimes dubious authority of Nansen passports and the unpredictability of their material agency created a much more complex reality.

---

<sup>288</sup> 'Conference on the Questions of the Russian Refugees. Resolutions Adopted by the Conference on August 24th, 1921', *League of Nations Official Journal* (1921), 2(8), pp. 899-902.

<sup>289</sup> 'Arrangement with Regard to the Issue of Certificates of Identity to Russian Refugees, signed at Geneva, July 5, 1922', *League of Nations Treaty Series* (1922), XXX (855), pp. 238-242.

<sup>290</sup> Arrangement of Identity Certificates to Russian Refugees, 1922.

<sup>291</sup> 'Arrangement Concerning the Extension to Other Categories of Refugees of Certain Measures taken in Favour of Russian and Armenian Refugees. Signed at Geneva, June 30, 1928', *League of Nations Treaty Series* (1929), LXXXIX (2006), pp. 65-67; 'Arrangement relating to the Legal Status of Russian and Armenian Refugees: Supplementing and amending the previous Arrangements Dated July 5, 1922, and May 31, 1924. Signed at Geneva, May 12, 1926', *League of Nations Treaty Series* (1929), LXXXIX (2004), pp. 48-52

*'Typewritten on a plain piece of paper': Non-Standardised Nansen passports in the Context of Iraq, 1930*

One such example of how the reality of Nansen passports diverged from the path set for them by their initial creators through a combination of human action and material agency is the difficulties experienced by Russian refugees in Iraq. In 1930, a man called Nicholas Haliutine who described himself as the president of a place named the 'Russian House' in Baghdad wrote to the Russian Section of the League, complaining that the 'Nansen Certificates' issued to White Russians residing in Iraq by the police authorities were simply 'typewritten on a plain piece of paper with no heading or marks.'<sup>292</sup> In his letter, Haliutine described how such a document was met with 'distrust and on many instances foreign consuls have refused to consider it as a passport or a valid certificate of identity.' The case of Russians in Iraq highlights the problems arising from the lack of standardisation of Nansen passports which made them difficult to read at a time when reading skills and specific technologies of passports had significantly developed and standardised. This instability stemmed from the nature of the legal 'Arrangements' themselves which laid out the terms for Nansen passports.<sup>293</sup> As discussed above, Arrangements did not legally compel the actions of states, rather they recommended a standard of conduct for which there was no regulatory mechanism. In addition, whilst the 1922 Arrangement outlined a standard material form for Nansen passports akin to national passports, in reality the High Commissioner's office had little control over the material format of these documents, effectively granting full discretion to the issuing authorities.

The result of Nansen passports being issued by state authorities such as the police or a government agency was that they lacked a standard form. Salter argues that the widespread standardisation of passports more generally in the interwar period produced citizens who worried about reproducing themselves as readable bodies when encountering border apparatus.<sup>294</sup> In the context of prolific standardisation, the irregular format of Nansen passports created specific moments of distrust for their bearers. The

---

<sup>292</sup> LNA/C1487/ 17273: Letter from the President of the Russian House in Baghdad N. Haliutine to the Russian Section of the League of Nations, 20 November, 1930.

<sup>293</sup> 'Arrangement with Regard to the Issue of Certificates of Identity to Russian Refugees, signed at Geneva, July 5, 1922', *League of Nations Treaty Series* XXX, 855 (1922), pp. 238-242.

<sup>294</sup> Salter, 'Passport Photos', p. 19.

way in which Nansen passports served to undermine the possibility of Russian refugees leaving Iraq was the result of the very particular administrative structure and actors through which they were issued. When the creators of member states discussed the Nansen passports in Geneva in 1922 they agreed that they should be issued by state authorities on the behalf of the League of Nations, seemingly taking for granted the stability of those authorities and their ability to issue passports to the recommended standard or at the very least willing to accept non-standardisation. The case study of Iraq provides a pertinent example of what happens when the ideas emanating from the centre of an apparatus meet with the sometimes chaotic context of the peripheries. The interwar years were a time of enormous political change in the Middle East. By 1920 the British had been in Iraq for six years, having taken control of Mesopotamia after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and established a basic administration akin to the structure in place in India. British plans to incorporate their share of the region into the British Empire were rapidly revised after an Iraqi revolt in 1920, the suppression of which cost them forty million pounds, as well as resulting in the loss of hundreds of British and Indian soldiers and up to 10,000 Iraqis.<sup>295</sup> Struggling after a lengthy and costly war in Europe, the British government chose to abandon an expensive occupation and instead establish rule within the League of Nations mandate system, with an Arab government under King Faisal bin Husain (also referred to as Faysal Ibn Al-Husayn).<sup>296</sup>

The mandate system was officially legislated in the April 1922 San Remo agreement which divided the Greater Syrian and Iraqi provinces of the Ottoman empire into five states; Lebanon, Iraq, Palestine, Syria, and Transjordan. Each of these states was assigned to either France or Britain in a new form of semi-independence. Following this the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty legitimised the partial devolution of power into Iraqi hands under

---

<sup>295</sup> The British first occupied Basra 1914 and captured Baghdad in 1917. See: Peter Sluglett, 'The Urban Bourgeoisie and the Colonial State: The Iraqi and Syrian Middle Classes Between Two World Wars', in *The Role of the State in West Asia*, ed. by Annika Rabo and Bo Utas (Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute, 2006), p. 84; Toby Dodge, *Inventing Iraq: The Failure of Nation Building and a History Denied* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005) p. 7; Rosie Llewellyn-Jones, 'The British Raj and the British Mandate in Iraq', *Asian Affairs*, 46, 2 (2015), p. 275; Benjamin Thomas White, 'Humans and Animals in a Refugee Camp: Baquba, Iraq, 1918–20', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 32, 2 (2018), p. 228; Pedersen, *The Guardians*.

<sup>296</sup> Husain was in fact not Iraqi and had recently been expelled from Syria by the French. See: Reeva Simon and Eleanor Tejrjian, *The Creation of Iraq, 1914–1921* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), pp. 42–47; Susan Pedersen, 'Empire, States and the League of Nations', in *Internationalisms: A Twentieth Century History*, ed. by Glenda Sluga and Patricia Clavin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp. 113–138.

the Faisal government, after which a British High Commissioner became the only point of official British control over the Iraqi political system. The first British High Commissioner Sir Percy Cox actively sought to encourage the promotion of Arabs to administrative positions in Iraq, moving the administration even further away from the previous Indian inspired structure. Despite this, the Iraqi state continued to rely heavily on British advisors during the first few years of devolution.<sup>297</sup> Prior to the Iraqi revolt, British administrators had envisaged the creation of a self-consciously ‘modern state’ that was to be established as quickly and efficiently as possible.<sup>298</sup> However, the British desire to rid themselves of responsibility for Iraq as soon as possible led to the creation of a ‘quasi-state’ with a half-finished bureaucracy.

It was throughout these administrative changes and with a half-established bureaucracy that the Iraqi government agreed to issue Nansen passports to the Russian refugees within its territory. Iraq had housed a very transient refugee population throughout the later years of the war and the beginning of the interwar period, from the Armenians and Assyrians escaping wartime Ottoman violence into what was then British Mesopotamia to the White Russians fleeing south after the 1917 revolution. Whilst the Assyrians and Armenians were initially housed in camps such as Baquba refugee camp near Baghdad, by the end of 1920s the British and the Iraqi government had re-settled the majority to Northern Iraq. In comparison the number of Russians in Iraq was very small, with approximately just 147 present in the country in 1926 according to then British High Commissioner Sir Henry Dobbs.<sup>299</sup>

Based on Haliuntine’s letter it is likely that this small colony of Russians lived in Baghdad, in a similar manner to communities of Russians in Damascus and Beirut. In 1930 approximately 70 per cent of the population of Iraq were rural, living on or near the poverty line, but there was a small urban middle class composed of civil servants,

---

<sup>297</sup> See: Sluglett, ‘Urban Bourgeoisie’, p. 77; Laura Robson, ‘Refugee Camps and the Spatialization of Assyrians Nationalism in Iraq’, in *Modernity, Minority, and the Public Sphere: Jews and Christians in the Middle East*, ed. by S. R. Goldstein-Sabbah and H. L. Murre-van den Berg (Leiden: Brill, 2016), p. 244; Llewellyn-Jones, ‘British Raj’, pp. 270-279.

<sup>298</sup> Dodge, ‘Inventing Iraq’, pp. 2; 10.

<sup>299</sup> See: White, ‘Humans and Animals’, p. 230; Karol Sorby Jr., ‘The last years of King Faysal I. (1930-1933)’, *Asian and African Studies*, 19, 2 (2010), p. 268; United Kingdom National Archives (UKNA)/ Colonial Office (CO) 323.944.15: Telegram from British Acting High Commissioner for Iraq to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, April 1926.

retail merchants and professionals in addition to an ex-pat community.<sup>300</sup> It is possible that the Russian refugee community was amongst their number and had little economic reason to leave at that time. Despite this, the unpredictable political climate may have proved a strong incentive for Russians in Iraq to request travel documents.

Prior to the introduction of Nansen passports, refugees within Iraq had been able to apply for an Iraqi identity certificate, yet this document did not enable them to travel outside of Iraq.<sup>301</sup> In 1926 the British instigated the introduction of Nansen passports, with High Commissioner Dobbs writing to the Secretary of State for the Colonies that he was ‘taking steps for the issue of Nansen passports.’<sup>302</sup> Despite British involvement in Nansen passports in Iraq in 1926, by 1930 Iraq was at a low point in terms of its administration, which resulted in non-standard Nansen passports issued by the Iraqi police.<sup>303</sup> The 1922 Arrangement pertaining to Nansen passports recommended that they contain some anthropometric data, including an individual’s age, hair type, eye colour, face shape, nose shape and ‘special peculiarities’, as well as information about the person’s place of origin, the date of the document, and place of issue, in keeping with other passports of that era.<sup>304</sup> But Haliutine specifically complained that the Nansen passports in Iraq were noticeably non-standardised, lacking in any ‘heading or marks.’ The instability of the material form of Nansen passports meant that their bearers could not predict how their passport might be read by border agents, and whether it may in fact act against them. Haliutine inferred this unpredictability when he stated that ‘foreign consuls have refused to consider it as a passport’ in ‘many instances’, but not on every occasion.<sup>305</sup>

Nansen passports derived their authority from various sources, not least the endorsement of multiple states through the administration of a single state. The unclear origins of this authority in combination with the material agency of Nansen passports could create as much confusion and anxiety for interpreters as bearers, leading to a plurality of results. In other words, some refugees would be allowed to enter a new

---

<sup>300</sup> See: Sluglett, ‘Urban Bourgeoisie’, pp. 77-83; Phebe Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. (Boulder: Westview Press, 2012).

<sup>301</sup> UKNA/CO 323.944.15: High Commissioner, Iraq to Sec. of State for Colonies, April 1926.

<sup>302</sup> UKNA/CO 323.944.15: High Commissioner, Iraq to Sec. of State for Colonies, April 1926.

<sup>303</sup> Sluglett, ‘Urban Bourgeoisie’, p. 86.

<sup>304</sup> Arrangement of Identity Certificates to Russian Refugees, 1922.

<sup>305</sup> LNA/C1487/ 17273: Haliutine to the Russian Section, 20 November 1930.



country on the basis of their Nansen passport, whilst others would not. In not being able to foresee whether their Nansen passport would enable or prevent them from crossing a border, Russian refugees in Iraq experienced anxiety about their ability to produce themselves as readable when encountering border apparatuses, which was heightened by their concern that the document they were being read against was itself unstable.<sup>306</sup>

*Unexpected Encounters: How Nansen passports brought together Jewish Russian Refugees in the United Kingdom with Other Actors from the Apparatus*

As the case of Russian refugees in Iraq demonstrates, the material agency of Nansen passports in conjunction with the confusion about their legitimacy served to trigger instances of dispute and differences of interpretation. Whilst Nansen passports as envisioned by their creators could validate and structure an individual's right to traverse a border, they could also act against their bearer. A second example of the ways in which Nansen passports exercised agency and made possible certain situations is the case of Israel Eiserman, a Russian Rabbi who arrived in Whitechapel in London's Jewish East End in the early 1930s. Eiserman's correspondence with the Nansen Office amongst others provides an insight into the ways in which these documents exercised agency beyond the purpose for which they were intended, such as the sometimes surprising ways in which they brought various actors into contact. Eiserman's experiences with his French and British Nansen passports also provide a valuable snapshot of the immigration experience of Jewish Russian refugees in Paris and London during the interwar period.<sup>307</sup>

Eiserman's journey with his Nansen passports began in 1930 when he was living in Paris under the threat of expulsion. He was one of approximately 400,000 immigrants and refugees who transited through Paris between the wars.<sup>308</sup> It is unclear exactly when or why Eiserman arrived in Paris, but he seems to have carved out a role within the substantial Jewish immigrant community there, participating in rabbinical duties such as

---

<sup>306</sup> Salter, 'Passport Photos', p. 19.

<sup>307</sup> LNA/ C1564/22543: Various correspondence pertaining to Rabbi Israel Eiserman.

<sup>308</sup> Jérémy Guedj, 'Les Juifs français face aux Juifs étrangers dans la France de l'entre-deux-guerres', *Migration et religion en France II*, 78 (2009), pp. 43-47.

conducting marriage ceremonies.<sup>309</sup> Despite this, his position in France was precarious. In November 1930, Johnson wrote to the delegate of the office in Paris, Marcel Paon, to ask why M. de Navailles, the French Minister for the Interior, had issued an expulsion decree to Eiserman.<sup>310</sup> Johnson's concern reflected the rarity of this action on behalf of the French authorities, who in the early 1930s had not yet implemented strict immigration quotas, unlike the United States and Great Britain.<sup>311</sup> Paris where Eiserman was living did have the most developed immigration control in France, which Clifford Rosenberg claims was the largest and most sophisticated in the world at that time.<sup>312</sup> Despite this, very few foreigners in Paris were served with an expulsion order, and even fewer actually left the country. The rivalry and overlapping jurisdictions of the Parisian police meant that it was difficult to achieve the level of consensus required to expel someone. Additionally, as Johnson pointed out in his letter to Paon, Minister de Navailles himself had at a recent Inter-Government Advisory Commission meeting emphasised 'the serious consequences which might result from expulsion measures taken against refugees who had not received visas to enter another country.'<sup>313</sup>

It is unclear given these obstacles why the French authorities were so keen to expel Eiserman no reply from Paon survives in the correspondence. One possibility is that Eiserman drew the ire of French authorities through political activism. According to Rosenberg, French authorities granted immigrants the same civil liberties enjoyed by the French population as long as they didn't criticise or question the Republic.<sup>314</sup> At the same time, following the events in Russia which had resulted in the murder of the Romanov family, there was an understandable undercurrent of anxiety across Europe about the threat of the 'internal other' who sought to cause political chaos.<sup>315</sup> It is

---

<sup>309</sup> We know that Eiserman conducted at least one wedding owing to an item which recently came up at auction in Paris of a marriage certificate signed by 'Rabbin Eiserman, Rabbin officiel des étrangers à Paris.' See: 'Judaïca: livres, manuscrits et documents, photographies, objets de culte, tableaux et gravures', *Drouot* (2016), p. 9. Available at: <https://www.gazette-drouot.com/telechargement/catalogue?venteId=24783> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

<sup>310</sup> LNA/ C1564/22543: Letter from Johnson to Marcel Paon, 12 November 1930.

<sup>311</sup> Vicki Caron, *Uneasy Asylum: France and the Jewish Refugee Crisis, 1933-1942* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), p. 15.

<sup>312</sup> Clifford D. Rosenberg, *Policing Paris: The Origins of Modern Immigration Control between the Wars* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006), p. xiv.

<sup>313</sup> LNA/ C1564/22543: Letter from Johnson to Paon, 30 November 1930.

<sup>314</sup> Jean Laloum, 'Le consistoire de Paris et les commerces de bouche : l'enjeu de l'abattage rituel (années 1930 - années 1950)', *Archives Juives* 47, 1 (2014), p. 69

<sup>315</sup> Events such as the assignation of the exiled Ukrainian politician Symon Petliura by Ukrainian born Scholem Schwarzbard, who rumoured to be a Soviet agent, in Paris in 1926 only heightened these fears.

possible that Eiserman was either an outspoken critic of the French government or had joined an organisation that was considered radical.

Eiserman was certainly unafraid of voicing his opinions within his own community, as seen by his decision to debate the French Jewish establishment. In 1928 under the title of *le rabbin officiel des Israélites étrangers à Paris* or official rabbi of Foreign Jews in Paris, Eiserman undermined the control of the French Chief Rabbi of Paris.<sup>316</sup> He did this to support the increasing number of butchers in the Jewish quarter of Paris, who had entrusted the *shekhita* (or *shehita*) ritual slaughter of their poultry to immigrant rabbis, who the French Jewish community claimed did not observe correct religious procedure. Whether or not Eiserman's outspoken persona was the reason he attracted the attention of the French authorities, he lived under the threat of expulsion in France for a 'long time' while awaiting a Nansen passport, during which time he wrote to the Nansen office 'continually.'<sup>317</sup> France had signed up to the 1922 Agreement and Eiserman was therefore theoretically entitled to a Nansen passport, but it appears that he struggled to obtain one from the relevant authorities. The difficult situation Eiserman faced without the physical document in his hands whilst under the threat of expulsion underscores the material power of Nansen passports.

One year later in November 1931, Eiserman had 'apparently succeeded in finally getting a Nansen passport from the French authorities and was living in the 'Jewish East End' of London.'<sup>318</sup> By the time Eiserman arrived in Whitechapel Jewish immigration to the UK had slowed owing to the 1905 Aliens Act and the tighter controls resulting from the First World War. It appears that Eiserman entered Britain on his Nansen passport on the understanding that he was passing through to take up a 'big position in Uruguay.' Importantly, his French issued Nansen passport had a one year expiry date.<sup>319</sup> The 1922 Arrangement stipulated that Nansen passports should be valid for at least one year, although in reality this varied. In Poland a Nansen passport was issued for two years as

---

See: David Engel, *The Assassination of Symon Petliura and the Trial of Scholem Schwarzbard, 1926-1927* (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2016); Mark B. Salter, *Rights of Passage*, p. 81.

<sup>316</sup> Laloum, 'Les commerces de bouche', pp. 69-70

<sup>317</sup> LNA/ C1564/22543: Johnson to Paon, 30 November 1930.

<sup>318</sup> See: LNA/ C1564/22543: Letter from Rabbi Israel Eiserman to Johnson, 23 November 1931; David Cesarani, 'A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Suburbs: Social Change in Anglo-Jewry Between the Wars, 1914-1945', *Jewish Culture and History*, 1, 1 (1998), p. 6.

<sup>319</sup> LNA/ C1564/22543: Eiserman to Johnson, 23 November 1931.

standard practice, whilst in Estonia it had unlimited validity, and in France the authorities opted for the minimum period of validity.<sup>320</sup>

In November 1932 Eiserman was still in London, at which point his French Nansen passport expired, rendering it effectively useless. He wrote to the Secretary General of the League requesting a 'Nansen Pass.'<sup>321</sup> His letter beseeched the League for help as he had 'nowhere to apply, having no home' and 'just roaming about from place to place.' He claimed that his motivation for requesting a Nansen passport at that moment was that he had been offered 'a post in South America, but [he had] got not pass for admittance, and the Consul wants a pass.' In another letter to Johnson, Eiserman stated that whilst passing through London on his way to South America he 'became ill, and during the time I was ill, my passport expired, and now I require a fresh one.'<sup>322</sup> The materiality of the date written on his French Nansen passport acted against Eiserman in this instance, closing down the possibility of travel until a new document could be procured.

Eiserman's Nansen passport also acted at this juncture by creating the possibility for an encounter between specific actors. The expiration of Eiserman's Nansen passport in London in 1932 led to the involvement of another seemingly unrelated agent from within the displacement response apparatus; the General Secretary of the *Save the Children Fund* Lewis Bernard (L. B.) Golden. After Eiserman had contacted him regarding his expired passport, Johnson advised him to request a new one from the British Home Office, who he believed to be 'extremely liberal to refugees in the matter of passports.'<sup>323</sup> However, two months later in January 1932, the Home Office had not been forthcoming with a Nansen passport. In an attempt to resolve the issue from Geneva, Johnson contacted Golden who was based in London.<sup>324</sup> Golden had been born in Saratov, Russia, to English parents. He had lived through the revolution in St Petersburg as a correspondent for the British newspaper the *Daily Mail*. Perhaps owing to his first-hand experience of fleeing Russia, Golden had taken a particular interest in

---

<sup>320</sup> Hope Simpson, *Report of a Survey*, p. 267.

<sup>321</sup> LNA/ C1564/22543: Letter from Eiserman to the 'Secretary General of the League of Nations', 5 November 1931.

<sup>322</sup> LNA/ C1564/22543: Eiserman to Johnson, 23 November 1931.

<sup>323</sup> LNA/ C1564/22543: Letter from Johnson to L. B. Golden, 15 January 1932.

<sup>324</sup> LNA/ C1564/22543: Johnson to Golden, 15 January 1932.

the treatment of refugees and represented the SCF as the vice president of the Nansen Offices governing body. In addition, Golden had also previously worked in the British Ministry for Information, where he is likely to have cultivated some useful contacts and knowledge of the British civil service.<sup>325</sup> On these grounds, Johnson requested that Golden as an ‘altogether exceptional measure’, to invite Eiserman ‘to come and see you and to explain his case to you’, adding that he would ‘personally be very grateful’ as he considered the matter ‘too obscure and delicate for me to write to the Home Office direct.’<sup>326</sup> Golden wrote to Johnson to inform him that following ‘considerable correspondence and a number of interviews’ he was able to obtain a new British issued Nansen passport for Eiserman in February 1932.<sup>327</sup>

Although Eiserman’s expired French Nansen passport had led to the involvement of Golden, he did not take advantage of his new British issued Nansen passport. In May 1933 Eiserman wrote to Johnson again from Whitechapel, imploring him to ‘take an interest in the terrible persecutions and bloodshed which is taking place in Germany amongst the Jewish people.’<sup>328</sup> Despite his claims a year before that he required a Nansen passport to travel to South America, in 1933 Eiserman remained in London where it is likely that he may have found community and assistance in and around the Mile End New Town Synagogue on Dunk Street just off Fieldgate Street, from where he wrote his letters.

The case of Eiserman’s Nansen passports demonstrates the power of their material form, both in terms of their needing to be in the hands of their bearer and in their sudden change from enabling possibilities to closing them down. The way in which various actors were brought together through the expiration of Nansen’s passport perfectly demonstrates the often surprising ways in which the displacement apparatus operated.

Another case in which actors within the apparatus intersected in unexpected ways is that of Mendel Bernberg, who was also a Jewish Russian refugee in Britain in the 1930s. Bernberg’s story similarly highlights the messiness of Nansen passportisation, and their

---

<sup>325</sup> Rodney Breen, ‘Golden, Lewis Bernard (1878–1954), Charity Administrator’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2007).

<sup>326</sup> LNA/ C1564/22543: Johnson to Golden, 15 January 1932.

<sup>327</sup> LNA/ C1564/22543: Letter from L. B. Golden to Johnson, 16 February 1932.

<sup>328</sup> LNA/ C1564/22543: Letter from Eiserman to Johnson, 12 May 1933.

limitations. Additionally, in delineating their bearers as refugees and also potentially stateless people Nansen passports could act in unanticipated ways to escalate relatively small issues into much larger problems. Bernberg was born in Latvia, in 1903 which was then a province of the Russian Empire known as Livonia as seen in the map in Figure 6. In 1909 his father emigrated from Livonia to the United States where he intended to save money and then send for his children. However, his plan was interrupted by the outbreak of the First World War. At just five years old Bernberg and his brother Samuel were sent to relatives in Berlin who placed them in the *Israelitisches Waisenhaus* orphanage at Pappendam 3 in Hamburg.<sup>329</sup> In 1918, Latvia gained its independence from the former Russian empire, and Bernberg was forced to choose between Latvian and Soviet Russian citizenship. As he intended to join his father in the United States he chose not to opt for either, which rendered him stateless.

Initially, Bernberg's statelessness did not appear to have a great impact. In 1919 as the top student in his class Bernberg was hired by a benefactor of the *Israelitisches Waisenhaus* Julius Philipps to work as an apprentice in his metal trading company in Hamburg, where he stayed for two years. According to an interview Bernberg gave in 1978 he left Phillips in Hamburg for 'health reasons' and went to work on a farm.<sup>330</sup> In 1928 he applied for and was granted a Nansen passport by the German authorities, which enabled him to travel to London where he began working for another branch of the Phillips Company.<sup>331</sup>

---

<sup>329</sup> According to Mendel Bernberg, Samuel disappeared on a trip to buy metal or scrap in Odessa in 1919 aged 21 and was never heard from again. See: Leo Baeck Institute (LBI), Center for Jewish History (CJH), Phillips Brothers Collection (PBC)/1/14: Interview with Mendel Bernberg, 25 August 1978.

<sup>330</sup> LBI/CJH/PBC/1/14: Bernberg, 1978.

<sup>331</sup> Mendel Bernberg's case was recorded both in the correspondence of the High Commissioner and anonymously as the 'case of B', in a 1933 report by le comité d'assistance aux étrangers de la croix-rouge de Belgique, which directed attention to the uneven access to social welfare, and particularly health care, by 'foreigners' in several European countries. See: LNA/ C1563/20757: assorted correspondence; International Committee of the Red Cross Archives (ICRC), Geneva, CR128, 9, 'Assistance aux étrangers', pp. 1-61.

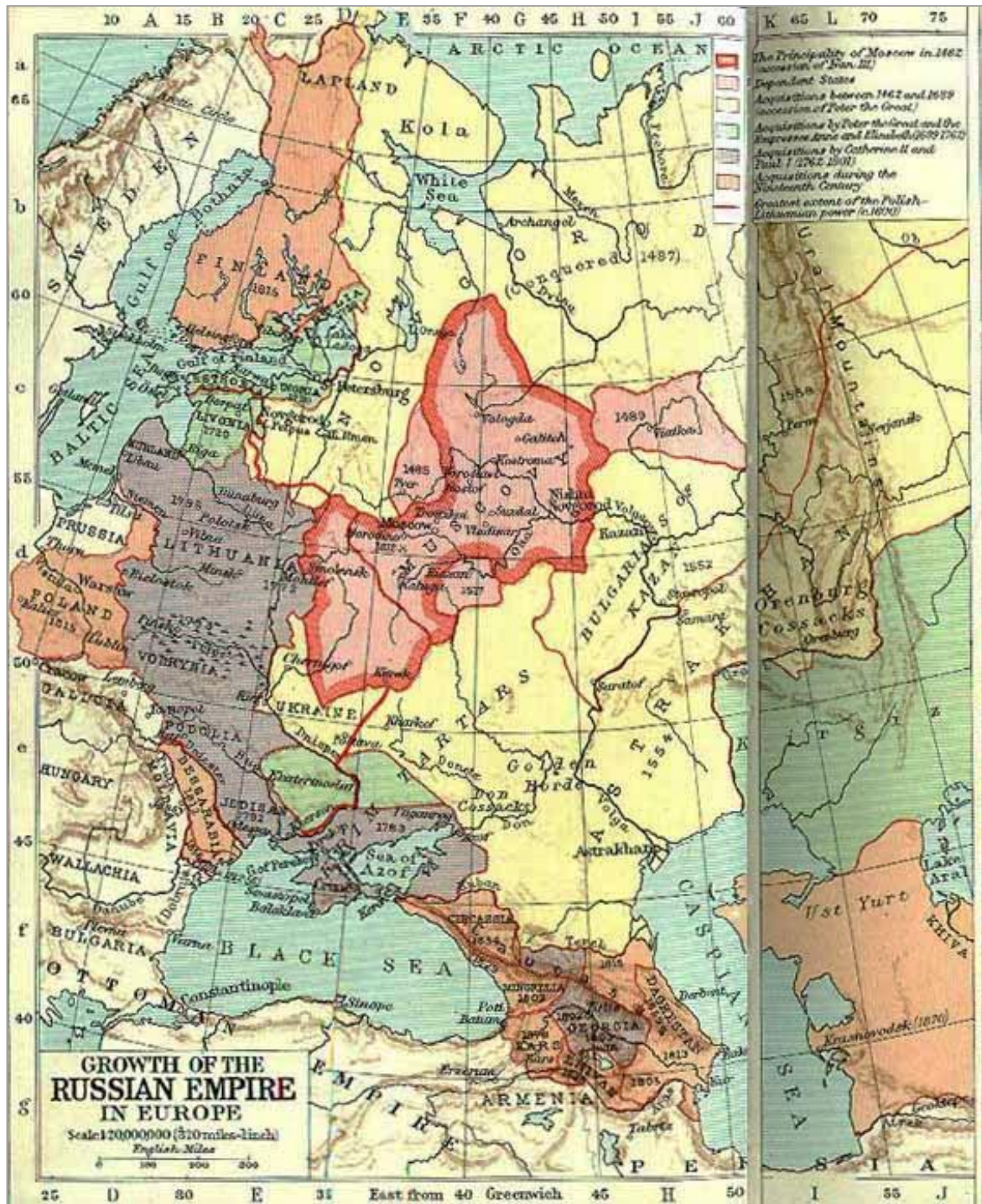


Figure 6: Map ‘Growth of the Russian Empire in Europe’ showing that Livonia (Latvia) as part of the Russian Empire. Source: Philips' New Historical Atlas for Students.

In April 1928 Bernberg was granted a three month permit to enter Britain ‘as a student’, which was renewed twice before his Nansen passport was also renewed by the British Home Office in April 1929. It is unclear how Bernberg was able to gain a student visa when he was working for the Phillips Company, but nevertheless he was granted

another six month visa which expired in December 1929. Bernberg stayed in Britain without a permit to remain until his Nansen passport expired in April 1930. The British authorities once again issued Bernberg with a Nansen passport that was ‘capable of being visé by Germany, France, Belgium, Holland or Switzerland’, but refused him a visa and forbade him from accepting employment in Britain, indicating that Bernberg had been working for two years without their knowledge or permission. Bernberg then approached the German, Belgian and Dutch consulates who all refused him a visa. The German consulate in fact took the step of confiscating his original German Nansen passport, thus removing the material evidence of any responsibility they might have had towards him. The French and Swiss consulates both referred Bernberg’s case to their governments, who ultimately refused to issue visas. To add to Bernberg’s difficulties, on 16 June 1930 he received a letter from the British Foreign Office stating that if he failed ‘to leave the United Kingdom at once’ he would ‘be incurring the risk of prosecution.’<sup>332</sup>

As in the case of Eiserman, the expiration of Bernberg’s British Nansen passports and the removal of his German Nansen passport created a situation which made it possible for him to encounter another actor within the apparatus. Less than one month after Bernberg was issued with a threatening letter by the British Home Office, Johnson was contacted by an influential figure in British Jewry, Lucien Wolf.<sup>333</sup> Wolf was a prominent historian of Anglo-Jewry, a journalist, diplomat, opponent of Soviet Russia, and an advocate for Jewish refugees and stateless people in the UK. During and after the First World War Wolf had actively worked to help Jews in Ukraine, Poland, Hungary and Romania and had represented the Anglo-Jewish community at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. According to Chimen Abramsky, Wolf’s concern for displaced Jews stemmed from his own background as an immigrant from Bohemia to England as a result of the failure of the 1848 Revolution.<sup>334</sup> A polyglot, Wolf had spent his school years in both France and Germany and adhered to the contemporaneous liberal belief in the inevitable triumph of broad democratic principles, the breakdown of barriers

---

<sup>332</sup> LNA/ C1563/20757: Report ‘The Case of Mendel Bernberg’, 4 July 1930.

<sup>333</sup> LNA/ C1563/20757: Letter from Lucien Wolf to Johnson, 2 July 1930.

<sup>334</sup> Chimen Abramsky, ‘Lucien Wolf’s efforts for the Jewish Communities in Central and Eastern Europe’, *Jewish Historical Studies*, 29 (1982), pp. 281-295.



between nations, and the ultimate attainment of equality for the Jews in those countries.<sup>335</sup>

Wolf had actually played a central part in the founding of the High Commission's 'Advisory Committee' of volags and took an influential role, for example by setting forward resolutions which were unanimously accepted by the committee.<sup>336</sup> Nansen had respected Wolf's opinion and expertise, as exemplified by his invitation to Wolf to speak at the 'Conference of Representatives of the Governments Interested in the question of Russian Refugees in Europe' to provide information on Russian Refugees of Jewish persuasion now in Lithuania, Poland and Roumania.'<sup>337</sup> Nansen kept Wolf abreast of progress within the High Commission and provided him with legislative updates regarding national laws affecting refugees in Europe.<sup>338</sup>



Figure 7: Lucien Wolf, 1907. Source: National Portrait Gallery, UK.

<sup>335</sup> 'Lucien Wolf Collection', *University College London*. Available at: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/library/special-collections/a-z/wolf-lucien> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

<sup>336</sup> LNA/R1714/21041/12319: Resolution Proposed by Wolf of the Jewish Colonisation Association and Adopted Unanimously by the Advisory Committee of Voluntary agencies for Relief of Russian Refugees, 30 May 1922.

<sup>337</sup> LNA/R1721/15119: Letter from Fridtjof Nansen to Wolf, 9 September 1921.

<sup>338</sup> LNA/ R1731/30928/16024: Letter from Fridtjof Nansen to Wolf, 20 September 1923.

Wolf, seen in Figure 7, was therefore an actor who regularly interacted with other actors through the institutional body, and who was able to exercise a degree of agency in the shaping of the apparatus. The expiration of Bernberg's Nansen passports led him to face pressure from British authorities, and this caught the attention of Wolf and the Joint Foreign Committee of the Jewish Board of Deputies and the Anglo-Jewish Association. Wolf wrote to Johnson that the Board of Deputies had;

... lately been seized by the case of a refugee who, through a series of unfortunate accidents, has become a stateless person. He is now stranded in England without any possibility of obtaining a permit to enter any other country, and liable for prosecution by the British Authorities if he remains here. [...] I wonder whether you can do anything to regularise the situation of this man.<sup>339</sup>

Johnson replied to Wolf that the only way to 'regularise the legal situation' of Bernberg was to obtain a British issued Nansen passport with a return visa which would allow Bernberg to obtain a visa for another country and to ultimately leave Britain.<sup>340</sup> Wolf wrote back on 16 July that Bernberg was an 'outcast in every country in Europe', and that whilst British authorities were 'anxious to be rid of Mr Bernberg' they were unwilling to grant him a Nansen passport with a return visa because 'the final effect would be to give him a country of origin in England, and thus to regularise his residence here, if he chose to return.'<sup>341</sup> In other words, whilst outgoing authorities affixed a return visa to national passports as routine, they were not required to attach them to Nansen passports at that moment in time. In lacking a return visa, Bernberg's Nansen passport prevented him from leaving the country.

The very specific and seemingly random actions of Bernberg's collective Nansen passports directly impacted the choices he was able to make at a pivotal point in the history of Jews in Europe. The expiration of his British Nansen passport had drawn the attention of Wolf, who had then spoken on his behalf to actors within the central body

---

<sup>339</sup> LNA/ C1563/20757: Wolf to Johnson, 2 July 1930.

<sup>340</sup> LNA/ C1563/20757: Letter from Johnson to Wolf, 19 July 1930.

<sup>341</sup> LNA/ C1563/20757: Letter from Wolf to Johnson, 23 July 1930.

of the apparatus. These actors subsequently took up his case, and on 8 August 1930, Henri Reymond wrote to Mr Gallati the High Commissioner's delegate for Latvia who was actually based in Warsaw to ascertain whether the Latvian authorities would consider granting Bernberg Latvian citizenship.<sup>342</sup> As Lucien Wolf died on 23 August 1930, Johnson wrote to the new secretary for the Board of Deputies in October advising that Bernberg could apply for Latvian citizenship through the Latvian consulate in London at the cost of 100 to 500 Lat for an entry visa.<sup>343</sup> Upon gaining Latvian citizenship it appears that Bernberg was given leave to remain in Britain. He applied for British citizenship in 1947, working in London and Derby until he retired to Haifa, Israel in 1970.<sup>344</sup>

Without his original German Nansen passport which enabled him to enter Britain, and without the actors in the apparatus who he encountered through the expiration of his British Nansen passport, Bernberg's life could have taken a very different path. If he had not possessed his passport which enabled him to leave Germany, or if his British Nansen passports had facilitated his re-entry into Germany, or resettlement in France, Belgium or the Netherlands then he would have been caught up in the persecution of Europe's Jews.<sup>345</sup> Approximately 69% of Germany's Jews were killed in the Holocaust, including Bernberg's former employer Julius Phillip, who along with his family was transported to Bergen Belsen Concentration Camp in 1943.<sup>346</sup> In this way, Bernberg's case testifies to how Nansen passports acted in ways their human creators did not anticipate, creating possibilities for encounters between actors and changing the course of the lives of individual refugees. It also demonstrates that discussing Nansen passports

---

<sup>342</sup> LNA/ C1563/20757: Letter from Johnson to the Secretary of the Board of Deputies, 25 October 1930.

<sup>343</sup> 100 Latvian lats [1930-1940] in year 1930 could buy 29.050754350362148 gram gold. The price of 29.050754350362148 gram gold in year 1930 was 3.9703640084251917 UK pound. 100 lat amounted to approximately 60 hours of work in average wages for a male worker 1930, whilst 500 lat amounted to 300 hours work. See: Rodney Edvinsson, 'Historical Currency Converter (test version 1.0)', in *historicalstatistics.org* (2016). Available at: <https://www.historicalstatistics.org/Currencyconverter.html> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

<sup>344</sup> LBI/CJH/PBC/1/14: Bernberg, 1978.

<sup>345</sup> According to USHMM approximately 72,900-74,000 (22%) of French Jews, 24,387 (27%) of Belgian Jews, and 102,000 (73%) of Dutch Jews were killed by the Nazis in the Holocaust. See: USHMM, 'Jewish Losses during the Holocaust: By Country', *Holocaust Encyclopaedia*. Available at: <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/jewish-losses-during-the-holocaust-by-country> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

<sup>346</sup> Julius Philipp and his family fled Germany for the Netherlands in 1936, where they remained until 1943. See: 'Stolperstein Oberstraße 107 (Julius Philipp) in Hamburg-Harvestehude', in *Wikimedia Commons* (2019). Available at: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stolperstein\\_Oberstra%C3%9Fe\\_107\\_\(Julius\\_Philipp\)\\_in\\_Hamburg-Harvestehude.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stolperstein_Oberstra%C3%9Fe_107_(Julius_Philipp)_in_Hamburg-Harvestehude.JPG) [accessed 1 October, 2019]; USHMM, 'Jewish Losses: By Country.'

in terms of successes or failures serves to oversimplify the complex relationship they had with their bearers. Examining Nansen passports through the lens of materiality exposes the futility of seeking to assess Nansen passports as wholly good or bad. As seen in the case of Bernberg, Nansen passports were highly unpredictable, and the same Nansen passport could act both for and against its bearer.

*'No crime other than to be born and to exist': Nansen passport Bearers and Western European Criminal Justice Systems*

The last example which evidences the different ways in which these unique travel and identity documents themselves acted is the story of individuals whose Nansen passports structured their interactions with European criminal justice systems. In particular, the case of a Russian refugee named Nicholas Perchine highlights how the othering properties of Nansen passports could act by delineating refugees as 'foreigners' at a moment when the importance of belonging to a state had gained considerable credence.<sup>347</sup> With refugees seen as a sub-category of economic migrant, their being identifiable as such in material form could strongly impact upon individual refugees. In providing evidence of a refugee's identity as a 'foreigner', Nansen passports sometimes acted against their bearers by causing the person to passively break successive laws, thus escalating the scale of an individual's initial offenses and their consequences as seen in the case of Perchine.

In the spring of 1938, Nicholas Perchine wrote to the Nansen Office in Geneva from *Le château d'Aubonne*, a provincial prison in in the Canton of Vaud, Switzerland. In his letter, Perchine related a complex history of employment and movement from Estonia to France, Spain and Switzerland which he described as his 'sad story.'<sup>348</sup> According to his letter, Perchine had fled Russia into Estonia which geographically provided the first place of refuge for refugees from Petrograd and from an area extending as far as Moscow. It is highly possible that Perchine was a soldier in the North Western White Russian army headed by General Nikolai Yudenich who were interned in Estonia after

---

<sup>347</sup> See: LNA/C1375/271: Assorted correspondence; ICRC/CR128, 9, 'Assistance aux étrangers', p. 1.

<sup>348</sup> 'Le château d'Aubonne et sa barbacane', in *Aubonne tourisme*. Available at: <http://aubonne-tourisme.ch/monuments/> [accessed 1 October, 2019]; LNA/C1375/271: Letter from Nicholas Perchine to the director of the Nansen Office, 23 February 1938.

their retreat from Soviet forces in 1920.<sup>349</sup> Yudenich's troops arrived in Estonia at a formative moment of Estonian identity, reconstruction and regeneration which did not lend itself to welcoming perceived outsiders. The Russian soldiers received little relief in Estonia which resulted in many dying from typhus or choosing to return to Russia. Of the approximate 20,000 Russian soldiers who entered Estonia in 1920, by 1924 just 11,000 remained.<sup>350</sup>

Dr A. Stoupnitzky the High Commissioner's delegate in Poland wrote in a report into the conditions of refugees in the 1930s that the standard of living for refugees in Estonia was 'perhaps as low as in any country.'<sup>351</sup> According to Stoupnitzky the majority of refugees in Estonia worked in quarries or forests for significantly lower wages than their Estonian counterparts and were 'exploited by certain foreign enterprises.' Although many of the refugees came from what Stoupnitzky describes as the 'professional class', they were forced into 'heavy' occupations through a permit system which required them to get permission from the police before they could commence employment. Stoupnitzky noted that the police rarely issued permits for factories, offices, and shops. Even if Russian refugees in Estonia applied to become Estonia citizens, they were considered part of the poor rural Russian minority.

The hostile conditions for Russian refugees in Estonia undoubtedly contributed to Perchine's decision to apply for a Nansen passport with which he was able to leave the country. Estonia was one of a handful of countries that issued Nansen passports without an expiry date, therefore whilst Perchine was issued one in 1924 he did not have to apply for another one in subsequent years either in Estonia or in other countries, meaning that his whereabouts are unknown for the next five years. However, on 15 May 1929 Perchine arrived in France, which at that time was encouraging the immigration of

---

<sup>349</sup> The Estonian government was amongst the first to conclude peace agreement with Soviet Russia through the Tartu Peace Treaty in February 1920. Andres Kasekamp, *The Radical Right in Interwar Estonia* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), p. 11.

<sup>350</sup> A significant proportion of the 24,800 immigrants registered in the 1922 census comprised refugees from Russia following the 1917 revolution. By 1934 the total number was just 12,200. See: Hope Simpson, *Report of a Survey*, p. 365; Kalev Katus, Allan Puur and Luule Sakkeus, 'The Demographic Characteristics of National Minorities in Estonia', in *The Demographic Characteristics of Immigrant Populations*, ed. by Werner Haug, Paul Compton and Youseef Courbage (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2002), p. 147.

<sup>351</sup> Dr A. Stoupnitzky cited in Hope Simpson, *Report of a Survey*, pp. 369-370; Kasekamp, *Interwar Estonia*, p. 19.

workers to fill the many roles available in the growing French economy. Having been enabled to enter France by his Nansen passport, Perchine became an itinerant seasonal worker, starting off as a labourer and factory worker in Ugines, Haute Savoie before moving to and fro between Grenoble and Marseilles. In 1930 he fell ill and was hospitalised for eight months near Grenoble. This period of illness was not uncommon for refugees in Europe in the interwar period.<sup>352</sup> As John Hope Simpson noted in his 1938 report, vast numbers of refugees suffered from ill health ‘owing to the strain caused by the work they are forced to undertake in order to earn a meagre livelihood. It is often the most difficult, dangerous and disagreeable tasks which are open to foreigners.’<sup>353</sup>

From his lengthy hospitalisation and his statement that his is ‘state of health required a warm climate’ it is likely that Perchine was suffering from tuberculosis (TB) which was rife in interwar Europe.<sup>354</sup> Without the widespread use of medications used to treat TB today, interwar treatment most often involved a long stay in a temperate climate where ‘sun baths’ were taken on large terraces.<sup>355</sup> As Perchine was in France when he required hospital treatment he benefited from the rapid development of French social services and the proliferation of sanatoria designed to treat TB. From his account Perchine indicated that he was sent to recuperate in *les Petites-Roches Plateau* sanatorium outside Grenoble. *Les Petites-Roches* was state funded and attached to the hospital of Grenoble which had a long history of assisting the most vulnerable in French society, including ‘immigrants’ amongst whom refugees were included.<sup>356</sup>

---

<sup>352</sup> See: John Salt and James Clarke, ‘Europe’s Migrant Groups’, in *The Demographic Characteristics of Immigrant Populations*, ed. by Werner Haug, Paul Compton and Youseef Courbage (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2002), pp. 17-56; LNA/C1375/271: Perchine to the director of the Nansen Office, 23 February 1938.

<sup>353</sup> Hope Simpson, *Report of a Survey*, p. 313.

<sup>354</sup> LNA/C1375/271: Perchine to the director of the Nansen Office, 23 February 1938.

<sup>355</sup> M. Martini et al, ‘The History of Tuberculosis: The Social Role of Sanatoria for the Treatment of Tuberculosis in Italy between the End of the 19th Century and the Middle of the 20<sup>th</sup>’, *Journal of Preventative Medicine and Hygiene*, 59, 4 (2018), p. E324.

<sup>356</sup> In 1930 the hospital in Grenoble specifically assisted the most underprivileged of French society, such as the homeless, the elderly, immigrants and refugees. See: C1375/271: Perchine to the director of the Nansen Office, 23 February 1938; Jacques Grosset and Arnaud Trébucq, ‘Tuberculosis in France Before, During and After World War II’, in *Tuberculosis and War: Lessons Learned from World War II*, ed. by J. F. Murray J. F. and R. Loddenkemper (Basel: Karger, 2018); M. C. Vanneuville, ‘De la charité aux soins : l’histoire de l’hôpital à Grenoble’, *Société française d’histoire des hôpitaux*, 20 (1996).

Although interwar France had developed advanced treatment for TB, patients often lacked support once they left the sanatoria and were left with little option but to return to work.

Unfortunately for Perchine, in August 1932 a new French law restricted the number of foreign workers certain businesses could employ, which Mary Dewhurst Lewis contends had a converse effect on Russian refugees in France.<sup>357</sup> Because of this context and his ongoing ill health, Perchine struggled to find employment after he left *Les Petites-Roches* in 1932. In January 1933 with just eleven francs to his name, he was arrested and sentenced to fifteen days imprisonment for ‘vagrancy and begging.’<sup>358</sup> It was at this point that his Estonian Nansen passport acted against him by confirming his identity as an *étranger* and escalating the action taken against him by the French bureaucracy. The French authorities evidently took the opportunity to rid themselves of someone who through his homelessness was considered undesirable. They confiscated Perchine’s documents and sentenced him to expulsion. As outlined in the case of Rabbi Israel Eiserman, expulsion was a serious administrative move made by the police with the authority of the government executive to compel a person to leave and only return ‘on pain of punishment.’<sup>359</sup>

Yet like Bernberg, Perchine did not leave the country and the problems precipitated by his Nansen passport only escalated as he was repeatedly sentenced for deportation offenses ranging from eight days to one year of imprisonment. In an attempt to escape this cycle of arrests he went to Spain without his Nansen passport which was still in the hands of the French authorities. The physical lack of his Nansen passport ultimately led Spanish police to send him back to France when they discovered he had no identity papers.<sup>360</sup> Perchine then moved back and forth between Italy, France and Switzerland, serving prison time in both Switzerland and France for violating deportation orders. In 1938 when Perchine once again crossed from France into Switzerland without his

---

<sup>357</sup> Mary Dewhurst Lewis, *The Boundaries of the Republic: Migrant Rights and the Limits of Universalism in France, 1918-1940* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), p. 171.

<sup>358</sup> LNA/C1375/271: Perchine to the director of the Nansen Office, 23 February 1938.

<sup>359</sup> Hope Simpson, *Report of a Survey*, p. 246.

<sup>360</sup> Mary Dewhurst Lewis cites a similar case of a man named Boris M. who was imprisoned by French authorities at least nine times between 1932 and 1936 for vagrancy and failing to honour his expulsion order. See: Dewhurst Lewis, *Boundaries of the Republic*, p. 172; LNA/C1375/271: Perchine to the director of the Nansen Office, 23 February 1938.

Nansen passport he was arrested for ‘violating the Aliens Police Act’ and sentenced to three months imprisonment in the small provincial prison then housed in the *Chateau de l’Aubonne*. At Aubonne Perchine appears to have been encouraged to write to the Nansen Office by a sympathetic jailer, G. Delacratex, who then co-signed the letter.<sup>361</sup>

The response of actors in the institutional centre of the apparatus reinforced just how far the agency of Perchine’s Nansen passport had taken him from what was intended by its human creators. Technically, the staff in the Nansen Office were not tasked with protecting individual refugees, but rather with coordinating volags and regulating their legal status.<sup>362</sup> In fact, the Nansen Office had interceded in many expulsion cases in France before, with James E. Hassell estimating that the Office intervened on behalf of at least 1,596 Russian refugees who had been issued expulsion orders by French authorities.<sup>363</sup> In Perchine’s case the president of the Nansen Office, Michael Hansson, contacted the Estonian delegate to the League of Nations to request that they allow for this ‘unfortunate’ to return to settle permanently in Estonia. The delegate M. A. Schmidt requested an account of Perchine’s history after he left Estonia, and after receiving this information refused to grant permission to Perchine to re-enter Estonia. Dismayed, Hansson appealed to the Estonian authorities on the grounds that the only crimes Perchine had committed was one occasion of drunkenness ‘which is quite excusable in such circumstances’, and ‘to be born and to exist.’<sup>364</sup> This poignantly underscores the tremendous difficulty for refugees such as Perchine who did not fit within the rigid interwar system of states which placed great value on the concept of citizenship. In the case of Perchine, instead of simply enabling him to move to another country to seek work, his Nansen passport acted against him and instead enabled various border apparatuses to move him to another jurisdiction by use of force.

### *Conclusion*

When faced with the recent attack on Tientsin in 1937 and the subsequent destruction of any means of obtaining a travel document, G. A. Verjbitsky considered Nansen

---

<sup>361</sup> LNA/C1375/271: Perchine to the director of the Nansen Office, 23 February 1938.

<sup>362</sup> White, ‘Easy to Liquidate’, p. 201.

<sup>363</sup> James E. Hassell, ‘Russian Refugees in France and the United States between the World Wars’, *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, 81, 7 (1991), p. 20.

<sup>364</sup> LNA/C1375/271: Letter from Michael Hansson to M. A. Schmidt, 5 March 1938.



passports to be an attractive solution. His letter to Albert Loonis, the delegate of the Nansen Office in China expressed a hope that these Nansen passports would be more acceptable than the documents that had previously been issued by Chinese authorities.<sup>365</sup> Verjbitsky was not alone in his impression that Nansen passports represented a straightforward solution to the mobility problems of refugees, and even in contemporary discussion Nansen passports are interpreted predominantly as a success. This examination of individual interwar Nansen passports demonstrates that there is a divergence between the human intentions, and the material processes of implementing passports for displaced people, which moves the conversation away from binary understandings of success or failure.

Through both traditional theories of passportisation and contemporary discussions of materialism and mobility this chapter has outlined the highly complex ways in which Nansen passports themselves acted in unpredictable ways. The case of Russian refugees in Iraq in 1930 exemplifies how this unpredictability affected those who had been furnished with non-standardised Nansen passports. The complex political history of Iraq led to a disorganised bureaucracy. This resulted in Nansen passports which did not conform to the recommended format at a time when the global mobility apparatus required passports to be standardised, and which consequently led to concerns regarding the replication of codified identities.<sup>366</sup> The lack of standardisation of Iraqi Nansen passports only compounded the anxiety of the Russian refugee community, who could not rely upon their documents to enable them to traverse national borders.

The second set of case studies of Jewish refugees in Britain provides the most poignant example of how Nansen passports did not simply act for or against their bearers, but in random combinations of both. In the case of both Eiserman and Bernberg, their Nansen passports acted in ways which the original drafters of the Nansen passport legislation could not have imagined, creating the possibility for the meeting of unconnected actors and completely changing the trajectory of refugee lives both positively and negatively. Bernberg's case in particular highlights the impact of the dynamism of Nansen passports which ultimately enabled him to survive the Holocaust.

---

<sup>365</sup> LNA/C1597/6809: Verjbitsky to Loonis, 16 October 1937.

<sup>366</sup> Salter, 'Passport Photos', p. 19.

By contrast, the example of Nicholas Perchine demonstrates how the agency of Nansen passports could gain momentum in a way which acted against the bearer, ultimately escalating his encounters with the French and Swiss criminal justice systems far beyond his original 'misdemeanour' of homelessness.<sup>367</sup> In each of these cases it was not possible to predict how the Nansen passports would act or what possibilities they would enable based on any other antecedents. A commonality amongst the examples of the Iraqi Russians, Rabbi Israel Eiserman, Mendel Bernberg and Nicholas Perchine is that much of what unfolded was based on chance and contingency, not a plan laid out by human hands. This lack of a pre-determined pattern speaks to a broader analysis of the displacement apparatus as a whole, namely that it is fruitful to recognise the differences between original human intentions and the vibrant process which ensues. The following chapter also speaks to the idea that responses to displacement were highly contingent on external factors by tracing the ad hoc assemblage which bridged the interwar and post-1950 apparatuses.

---

<sup>367</sup> LNA/C1375/271: Michael Hansson to M. A. Schmidt, 5 March 1938.

### III: The Bridging Period: Responses to Displacement from the Latter Half of the Interwar Era to the Establishment of the UNHCR

In the 1930s, even those refugees who were eligible for a Nansen passport such as those discussed in the Chapter II faced increasingly strict immigration policies as a result of growing political and economic tensions. By the time that war broke out in 1939, the Western based apparatus of displacement response was already on the way to being significantly dismantled, soon to be replaced by a disparate assemblage of responses emanating from both old and new institutions, state and regional actors, and a multitude of well-established and new voluntary bodies. This chapter traces the continuities, modifications and ruptures in responses to displacement throughout the period which bridged the interwar refugee apparatus, characterised by international cooperation within the League system with a central office based in Geneva, and the apparatus which would be established in 1950. Describing this period as a ‘bridge’ is a deliberate means of avoiding characterising it as a vacuum or a gap, of which it is neither. International responses to displacement did not end in 1938 with the closing of the Nansen International Office for Refugees (hereafter Nansen Office) and begin again in 1950 with the founding of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). From the flurry of activity resulting from the economic and political upheaval of the 1930s and the hot then cold conflicts of the 1940s there emerged a fledgling response apparatus which began to take shape from 1950 onwards.

The purpose of this chapter is to highlight the importance of the bridging period as an era in which both international and more local understandings of displacement, and therefore responses to it, underwent manifold changes whilst maintaining many of the ideas, institutions, actors, practices and policies of the interwar. Fundamentally, an understanding of the complex dynamic of both divergence and continuity which characterises the bridging period allows for a clearer apprehension of the relationship between the interwar and the post-war. Noting what was gained but also what was lost in responses to displacement during the messy assemblage of the bridging period moves away from the conceptualisation of the interwar as a mere stepping stone for the post-war, instead re-asserting the importance of each as a period in their own right.

The matter of periodisation is central when appraising the historiography of this era which bridged the dominant interwar and post-war apparatuses. The years which span from the significant institutional and contextual changes of the 1930s to the new era signalled by the founding of UNHCR in the early 1950s have rarely if ever been treated as a single entity by historians. Instead, scholarship has tended to fall into specific temporal camps, focussing on the interwar period, the Second World War or on the entrenching Cold War. Institutionally speaking, there has been a paucity of research which seeks to examine the crossover from League to United Nations, covering the entire period from 1938 to the early 50s, particularly in regards to policies towards refugees, excepting Cottrell's discussion of the legacies of the League. Recent exceptions to this include Patrick Cottrell's examination of League of Nations legacies, Tournès's study of the Rockefeller Foundation and Clavin's discussion of the economic organs of the League highlighted in the introduction.<sup>368</sup>

In the field of refugee and forced migration studies scholars such as Peter Gatrell, Emma Haddad, Ben Cohen, Matthew Frank, Jessica Reinisch and others have focussed on the early post-war period in particular. This specific focus reflects firstly that the early post-war period was a time of tremendous activity worthy of historical attention, and secondly represents a concerted effort amongst historians of refugees and statelessness to improve understandings of displacement in the aftermath of the second world war in order to bring it in from the margins of simply being what Cohen describes as a 'side show in the transition from war to peace in Western Europe.'<sup>369</sup> Therefore, whilst few scholars discuss the bridging period as a single entity with little scholarship conceptualising this time period in the same manner as set out here, this chapter is able to draw upon a rich, diverse and sometimes scattered historiography of responses to displacement between the 1930s and beginning of the 1950s.

One scholar of displacement in the early post-war Kim Salomon, argued in his work which followed the transition from the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) to the International Refugee Organisation (IRO) that

---

<sup>368</sup> See: Tournès, 'The Rockefeller Foundation', p. 323; M. Patrick Cottrell, *The League of Nations: Enduring Legacies of the First Experiment at World Organisation* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2018).

<sup>369</sup> G. Daniel Cohen, *In War's Wake: Europe's Displaced Persons in the Postwar Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). p. 7.

‘focusing on evolution and change demands a chronological perspective.’<sup>370</sup> Taking this cue from Salomon, this chapter traces the processes and patterns in refugee responses chronologically in order to argue that an understanding of the bridging period is essential in appreciating the approaches taken towards displacement in 1921 and 1950.

The chapter begins by turning back to the decision taken in the relative peace of the 1920s to close the Nansen Office within a decade. Examining why this decision was not reversed despite crippling economic depression and the rise of fascism from Europe to Asia highlights how refugees were considered a subcategory of migrant in this period, whilst also underscoring the important role played by private organisations. The role of private bodies is also highlighted in the proceeding discussion of the Second World War, which traces the failure of refugee institutions to function and the subsequent formation of an archipelago of seemingly random, often unconnected responses which arose out of the immediate needs of displaced populations, and which lacked the norms, discourse, policies, and attitudes of a dominant apparatus. The argument here is that the particular context of the war led to a decentralisation of displacement responses, which created a distinct space for NGOs to intervene, which would have ramifications for the development of a post-war apparatus. The focus on wartime responses to displacement also highlights the significance of a bureaucratic destruction of paper records in helping to save lives. The final chronological juncture begins with wartime plans for a more coordinated response to post-war displacement, as embodied by UNRRA. This section highlights the relationship between broader socio-political processes such as entrenching Cold War and the hardening understanding of nation states, and the narrowing definition of ‘refugees.’

### *The Protection of Refugees Cannot Go on Forever: Attitudes towards Displacement in the 1930s*

On 23 September 1929 the Assembly of the League of Nations decided that the new refugee organisation, the Nansen Office, brought in to replace the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees could accomplish its work within a set time period and

---

<sup>370</sup> Kim Salomon, ‘The Cold War Heritage: UNRRA and the IRO as Predecessors of UNHCR’, in Göran Rystad (ed.), *The Uprooted: Forced Migration as an International Problem in the Post-War Era* (Lund: Lund University Press, 1990), p. 163.

would therefore be wound up in a maximum period of ten years. This decision to ensure that the Nansen Office was closed within ten years is reflective of the relatively stable socio-economic situation of the late 1920s as well as an ongoing belief that the refugee ‘problem’ was temporary.<sup>371</sup> André François-Poncet, the French delegate to the Eleventh Assembly of the League in 1929, captured this belief when he stated that ‘the protection of refugees, by very nature, cannot and must not go on forever’, rather, François-Poncet stated, protection should ‘last only as long as may be necessary to enable the great majority of the refugees to find a refuge and obtain stable employment and create for themselves a second native land.’<sup>372</sup> A consummate diplomat, François-Poncet captured the perspective of the French government when he also declared that ‘Dr Nansen himself [had] asked to be relieved of this task, the most urgent and difficult part of which had already been accomplished.’ These statements were grounded in the belief clearly held by the French government of the time amongst others that once the refugees who found themselves displaced by the First World War and its subsequent upheavals were settled, this would be the end of the entire refugee problem.

The notion that refugees were a finite problem proved unfounded during the 1930s, a decade in which socio-political and economic problems led new groups of refugees to seek protection away from their countries of residence. Beginning in late 1928 and then cemented by the Wall Street Crash on 29 October 1929, the great depression crept across the globe. By the end of 1931 the misery caused by the Depression was almost universal as governments’ retreated inwards as international trade collapsed. Many governments made moves away from traditional economic policies by abandoning the gold standard which devalued their currencies, as well as intervening in the economy in contravention of the prevailing liberal economic orthodoxy. The global economic decline had both political and social ramifications, serving to heighten pre-existing tensions and enmities. Extreme, predominantly right-wing, political movements took

---

<sup>371</sup> See: LNA/ Records of the Tenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly, Meetings of the Committees. Minutes of the Fifth Committee (general and Humanitarian Questions) (September 1929); Zara Steiner, *The Lights That Failed: European International History, 1919-1933* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

<sup>372</sup> LNA/Records of the Eleventh Ordinary Assembly/Plenary Meetings/Text of the Debates: Russian, Armenian, Assyrian, Assyro-Chaldean and Turkish Refugees: Report of the Sixth Committee: Resolutions (30 September, 1930).

hold in countries from Asia to Europe, leading some threatened governments to harness the nationalist rhetoric espoused by their far-right rivals.<sup>373</sup>

Although the decision of the League Assembly to close the Nansen Office by 1939 can be partly attributed to the relative social, political and economic stability of the late 1920s, it did not follow that turbulence of the 1930s led to a reverse in policy. This came as a surprise to some commentators, as exemplified in an article in *The Times* in 1936 which remarked that;

[...] the original decision to disband [the Nansen Office] was taken as far back as 1929, when a term of ten years was set upon its life. On the other side a decision possibly justifiable in 1929 is not necessarily justifiable or irrevocable today. Within the last seven years the plight of refugees has grown worse at almost every point. The world economic crisis put a stop to several promising schemes of settlement and also bred in many lands a new jealousy against foreign intruders. Then the increasing tide of dictatorships swelled the numbers of those who had to choose between probable misery abroad and certain misery at home.<sup>374</sup>

As *The Times* article noted, an increasing number of people had become refugees as a result of political events in the 1930s, whilst economic hardships increased the barriers for resettlement. Given this context, the decision to ‘disband’ the Nansen Office seemed somewhat counterintuitive.<sup>375</sup> Yet the motivations behind the collective and continued desire to close down the central body tasked with solving the so-called refugee ‘problem’ are manifold.<sup>376</sup> This unwillingness of the League’s member states to extend the responsibilities and lifespan of the Nansen Office can be partly attributed to the ongoing conceptualisation of refugees as a special category of economic migrant. Throughout the interwar period refugees were considered to be a sub-category of migrant, best demonstrated by the fact that the International Labour Office (ILO)

---

<sup>373</sup> See: Sally Marks, *Ebbing of European Ascendancy*, pp. 305-316; Steiner, ‘Triumph of the Dark’, pp. 9-11.

<sup>374</sup> ‘Broken People’, *The Times* (9 December 1936), p. 15.

<sup>375</sup> ‘Broken People’, p. 15.

<sup>376</sup> Hope Simpson, *Report of a Survey*.

accepted operational responsibility for refugees between 1925 and 1929. This understanding of refugees as akin to impoverished migrants allowed state actors to frame their displacement response in terms of immigration quotas, absolving them to a great extent of moral responsibility for allowing refugees asylum on purely humanitarian terms.<sup>377</sup>

Whilst refugees began to be discussed by League members states as a 'political' rather than just a 'Social and Humanitarian Question' from 1933 onwards as a result of refugees fleeing Nazi persecution, this did not detract from their principal framing as migrants.<sup>378</sup> For example, in the 1930s some policy makers and civil servants discussed refugees in terms of their being able to make a choice when leaving their countries of residence. This sentiment was captured by the British Treasury under Secretary Sir Frederik Phillips who stated that 'the more facilities are provided the more refugees there will be to provide for.'<sup>379</sup> The reluctance of state actors to spend money and 'establish machinery for dealing with refugees [which] would risk perpetuating the problem' as the British Foreign Office put it, placed greater responsibility in the hands of private organisations. Although private organisations worked hard on behalf of refugees, without state support they were limited to helping the displaced find jobs but could not take action on bigger problems such as admission to specific countries.

The existing conception of refugees in statist terms as a form of economic migration took on a new meaning in the harsh economic conditions of the 1930s. The construction of the refugee 'problem' reinforced a sense of 'us' and 'them', with 'they', refugees, posing a threat which had could potentially undermine the existence of 'us', groupings within states.<sup>380</sup> As Haddad notes, in the eyes of European governments in particular refugees were considered as the 'alien from an enemy country' who presented a strain on already stretched resources. Michael Hansson, the President of the Nansen Office, criticised this belief in his Nobel Lecture given less than a month before the Office was closed in December 1938. Hansson observed that 'the economic crisis hit everyone.

---

<sup>377</sup> Long, 'Refugees Stopped Being Migrants', pp. 10; 21.

<sup>378</sup> LNA/Records of the Eleventh Ordinary Assembly/Plenary Meetings/Text of the Debates: Resolutions, 30 September, 1930.

<sup>379</sup> Cited in Louise London, *Whitehall and the Jews: 1933-1948* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 86.

<sup>380</sup> Haddad, *Between Two Sovereigns*, p. 115; 130.



Restrictive policies were inaugurated on all sides, and every country surrounded itself with practically impenetrable barriers. Now nobody wanted to accept refugees; on the contrary, everybody suddenly wanted them to leave, and therefore often deprived them of the right to work.<sup>381</sup>

The ‘us’ and ‘them’ mentality and the framing of refugees as economic migrants certainly informed responses to Jewish refugees who attempted to leave Germany in increasing numbers after Hitler came to power in 1933.<sup>382</sup> André François-Poncet, the French diplomat who had presented the view on behalf of the French government in the late 1920s that refugees were a problem of the past was a key witness to the unfolding refugee crisis caused by National Socialism. As French ambassador in Berlin, a role which he held from 1931 to 1938, François-Poncet identified the problem facing German Jews soon after Hitler’s ascension to power in 1933. According to Jean-Marc Dreyfus, François-Poncet was not personally an anti-Semite, and wrote at length criticising the German approach to the Jewish people throughout the 1930s.<sup>383</sup>

Whilst diplomats and politicians such as François-Poncet may not have held anti-Semitic views, this did not necessarily mean that they welcomed Jewish refugees with open arms. For example, in his daily reports sent from Berlin to Paris, François-Poncet warned about the dangers of emigration by increasing numbers of Germans into neighbouring France.<sup>384</sup> Beyond France, many other countries were unwilling to admit new refugees and raised their barriers to immigration, which was often reinforced by a latent undercurrent of anti-Semitism. Before Hitler withdrew Germany from the League in 1933 he brokered an agreement which further reinforced the ‘otherness’ of those fleeing the Third Reich, demanding that refugees leaving Germany would not be placed under the auspices of the Nansen Office.<sup>385</sup> Instead refugees from Germany were to be dealt with by an entirely separate body based in Lausanne, at both a physical and metaphorical distance from the Nansen Office in Geneva. The American High Commissioner for Refugees coming from Germany James G. McDonald found his work

---

<sup>381</sup> Michael Hansson, *Nobel lecture given to the Norwegian Nobel Institute*, 10 December 1938. Available at: <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1938/nansen/lecture/> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

<sup>382</sup> Haddad, *Between Two Sovereigns*, p. 115.

<sup>383</sup> Jean-Marc Dreyfus, ‘Telephone Interview with Rebecca Viney-Wood’ (8 February 2019).

<sup>384</sup> Dreyfus, ‘Telephone Interview.’

<sup>385</sup> Haddad, *Between Two Sovereigns*, p. 115.

complicated by this separation from the League, in addition to a chronic lack of funds and heavy dependence of private networks and finance, which proved disadvantageous when attempting to negotiate immigration quotas with various state actors.<sup>386</sup>

Voluntary agencies (volags) took on a particularly important role in relation to the High Commissioner for Refugees coming from Germany given its limited funds and mandate to coordinate the role of private organisations. It is important to state at this point that ‘voluntary’ of ‘private’ organisations are far from a homogenous category.<sup>387</sup> As Peter Gatrell notes, these organisations differed in their practical experience, profile and longevity, and whilst they often cooperated with one another and with international bodies they also competed to carve out a distinct place for themselves in the humanitarian landscape.<sup>388</sup> A report written by the High Commissioner in July 1935 noted that ‘admirable work’ had been undertaken by ‘Jewish organisations – both national and International’, who had raised approximately fifteen thousand pounds for relief and resettlement.<sup>389</sup> The same report highlighted the divergence in responses to Jewish and non-Jewish refugees, noting that the dependence of the High Commissioner on volags who were predominantly Jewish meant that there was an uneven response to all refugees coming from Germany. In his letter of resignation in 1935, McDonald noted that despite the central role private organisations had taken in the structure of his work, their efforts could ‘only mitigate a problem of growing gravity and complexity.’<sup>390</sup> In his resignation, McDonald also lamented the lack of international will to work on the issue of refugees coming from Germany, and admonished that the ‘doors of most countries are closed against impoverished fugitives.’ In the 1930s, prevailing anti-Semitism, widespread othering of refugees and protective immigration quotas resulting

---

<sup>386</sup> See: World Digital Library, Library of Congress, *Letter of Resignation of James G. McDonald, High Commissioner for Refugees (Jewish and Other) Coming from Germany Addressed to the League of Nations* (27 December 1936), p. vi. Available at: <https://www.wdl.org/en/item/11604/> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

<sup>387</sup> See: Elizabeth G. Ferris, ‘The Role of Non-Governmental Organisations in the International Refugee Regime’ in *Problems of Protection: The UNHCR, Refugees, and Human Rights*, ed. by Niklaus Steiner, et al. (New York: Routledge, 2003), pp. 117-137; Math Noortmann, ‘NGOs in International Law: Reconsidering Personality and Participation (Again)’, in *Routledge Handbook of NGOs and International Relations*, ed. by Thomas Davies (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2019), pp. 179-192.

<sup>388</sup> Gatrell, ‘World Wide Web’, p. 102.

<sup>389</sup> LON/ C1614: High Commissioner for Refugees (Jewish and Other) Coming from Germany, ‘The Plight of the Non-Jewish Refugees Coming from Germany’, 27 July 1935.

<sup>390</sup> Letter of Resignation of James G. McDonald, pp. v-ix.

from economic precarity contributed to the ongoing reluctance of state actors to take meaningful, international action on the matter of refugees fleeing Germany.<sup>391</sup>

The number of refugees attempting to leave Germany increased dramatically after Jewish homes and businesses were targeted during two nights of violence on the 9 and 10 November 1938, an act known as 'Kristallnacht.'<sup>392</sup> They joined many others already on the move, from those fleeing civil war in Spain to Chinese refugees moving westward following the Japanese invasion in China.<sup>393</sup> A little over a month after Kristallnacht on the 31 December both the Nansen Office and the High Commissioner for Refugees coming from Germany closed their doors. The closure of these offices and their replacement with a skeletal body, as well as the deliberate move away from international response to refugees through the League framework with the creation of the Intergovernmental Committee for Refugees (IGCR), signalled a sea change in responses to displacement. The IGCR was created following the Evian conference in March 1938, which American president Franklin Roosevelt called for in an attempt to encourage states to take a greater share of refugees. However, despite the creation of the IGCR, the conference was widely regarded as a failure. Although the United Kingdom and the United States agreed to foot the bill for the IGCR, it faced a chronic lack of funds and support throughout its existence. The political instability which followed its inception proved an almost insurmountable challenge to the IGCR. Yet it persevered to become one part of displacement responses alongside private organisations which bridged the gap between intergovernmental action regarding refugees during the Second World War and early post-war activity.<sup>394</sup>

---

<sup>391</sup> See: Letter of Resignation of James G. McDonald, pp. v-ix; Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (London: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1976).

<sup>392</sup> Alan. E. Steinweis, *Kristallnacht 1938* (London and Harvard: Belknap Press and Harvard University Press, 2009), pp. 1-8.

<sup>393</sup> See: Hope Simpson, *Report of a Survey*, p. 164; Rana Mitter, *China's War with Japan*, p. cxcvii.

<sup>394</sup> See: Phil Orchard, *A Right to Flee: Refugees, States, and the Construction of International Cooperation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 140; Salomon, 'UNRRA and IRO', p. 160; Gatrell, *Modern Refugee*, p. 77; Jaeger, 'International Protection of Refugees', p. 731; Tommie Sjöberg, *The Powers and the Persecuted: The Refugee Problem and the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees (IGCR), 1938-1947* (Lund: Lund University Press, 1991).

## *Ad hoc Responses to Displacement during the Second World War*

On 1 September 1939 German tanks rolled into Poland, supported from the air by the German Luftwaffe, an action which served as the opening volley of World War Two which officially began two days later when Great Britain declared itself at war with Germany. Upon hearing about the German Blitzkrieg of Poland unfolding on 1 September from his base in London, the High Commissioner of the High Commissariat for Assistance to International Refugees under the Protection of the League (hereafter High Commissariat) and Director of the Intergovernmental Committee for Refugees (IGCR), Sir Herbert Emerson, wrote to the Secretary of the League of Nations, reflecting that it was ‘of course not possible to foresee how events [would] develop’ for refugees in the likely event of war’ and therefore ‘what scope there will be for refugee work during a war, and how its character will be changed, restricted and extended.’<sup>395</sup> Over the course of the next six years as international relations broke down between states, the central institutions of refugee response were unsurprisingly unable to organise comprehensive assistance to the millions who were displaced.

Whilst there had been a variety of responses to displacement in the interwar period, it had been remarkable for its coordination of different actors through institutions in Geneva. The bridging period by contrast was marked by the breakdown of a dominant response apparatus centred in Geneva. Instead, responses to refugees were decentralised and effectively left to the initiative of numerous volags as well as state, regional and local actors in an archipelago of seemingly random, often unconnected responses, not following the norms, discourse, policies, attitudes of a dominant apparatus. This decentralisation also reflected the global dispersal of ‘new’ refugees fleeing violent conflict in occupied Europe and Asia, who were scattered from Kampala to Teheran.<sup>396</sup> The actors who stepped forward to offer assistance to refugees did so with varying degrees of success, but nonetheless constituted the main response to displacement throughout the Second World War.

---

<sup>395</sup> LNA/R5635/39022: Letter from Sir Herbert Emerson, High Commissioner for Refugees, to Joseph Avenol, Secretary General of the League of Nations, 1 September 1939.

<sup>396</sup> Pamela Shatzkes, *Holocaust and Rescue: Impotent or Indifferent? Anglo-Jewry 1938-1945* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), pp. 100-133.

The first four years of war before UNRRA was created in 1943 are often skipped over in institutional histories of displacement responses. This reflects a more general attitude in the historiography which skips over the narrative of institutions during the war itself. The outbreak of war in Europe on the 3 September 1939 is often regarded as the end of the League, yet in formal and practical terms the League and many of its institutions continued functioning. Its various component parts were in fact dispersed across continents, with a skeleton staff remaining in Geneva. The treasury and aforementioned displacement response bodies continued their operations in London, whilst the drug trafficking unit moved to the United States in 1941, shortly followed by the League Secretariat's Economic, Financial and Transit Department which relocated to Princeton University with the assistance of the Rockefeller Foundation. For the League, the early part of the war was a period marred by internal conflict as well as external conflict as Secretary General of the League Joseph Avenol praised the fascist powers.<sup>397</sup>

Given the breakdown of international relations and internal strife, the various bodies of the League, including the High Commissariat, struggled to function in the roles for which they had been created. Instead, these institutions placed a high value on protecting the material objects of records and documents as tools for the post-war organisations, proving a particular priority for Sean Lester who replaced Joseph Avenol in July 1940. For Lester, the main legacy of the wartime League was to preserve a record of the functioning of the institution 'so that the organisation or its successor could be of use again after war ended.' Lester's determination to preserve a material record of the League was validated after the war ended and the drafters of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the new United Nations recognised the special and ongoing significance of the League's records in Article II, Section 4 which stated that '[t]he archives of the United Nations, and in general all documents belonging to it or held by it, shall be inviolable wherever located.'<sup>398</sup> Preserving the records was no small feat. The main records moved first to Nantua in Eastern France, then to Vichy in 1940, and at some point after that were moved to the United States. Despite these

---

<sup>397</sup> The League continued this existence until the Council and League Assembly officially reconvened in April 1946, shortly after which the League of Nations was dissolved in an official ceremony. See: Clavin, *Securing the World Economy*.

<sup>398</sup> See: Sigrun Habermann-Box, 'From the League of Nations to the United Nations: The Continuing Preservation and Development of the Geneva Archives', in Madeleine Herren (ed.), *Networking the International System: Global Histories of International Organizations* (Cham: Springer, 2009), p. 20; Clavin, *Securing the World Economy*.

moves, approximately 90% of the records of the central body of the League remained intact.<sup>399</sup> The same could not be said for the many external records, such as those of the various refugee delegations, which were either lost or destroyed.



Figure 8: ‘Yugoslavia political divisions 1942’. Source: American Geographical Society Library, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries

Like Lester, Emerson viewed the preservation of the refugee bodies’ records as a priority given the inability of the organisation to actually offer assistance to refugees. On the outbreak of war Emerson instructed his in-country representatives to continue their work ‘as far as possible, and to take measures for the safety of their records.’<sup>400</sup> What actually happened to the many of the records held by the various representatives reflects both the destruction and chaos of war, and the breakdown of what remained of the pre-war network of delegates. One example of this is the case of the representation

<sup>399</sup> United Nations Library, *Guide to the Archives of the League of Nations 1919-1946* (United Nations Publications: Geneva, 1999).

<sup>400</sup> LNA/R5635/39022: Letter to Avenol from Emerson, 1 September 1939.

of the High Commissariat in Yugoslavia. In 1945 Kosta Petrovtich the former delegate in Yugoslavia wrote to Emerson to describe how despite the orders to preserve the records he had destroyed a substantial portion of the documents held in Belgrade. According to his letter, Petrovtich alongside many other Yugoslavs attempted to flee after the invasion of Germany, Italy, Hungary, and Bulgaria on 6 April 1941.<sup>401</sup>

After the invasion by the four powers, the former Kingdom of Yugoslavia was partitioned and occupied, as seen in Figure 8. Serbia was placed under German military administration; Macedonia was annexed to Bulgaria; Montenegro and Yugoslavia's Adriatic coast came under Italian control; Hungary took the Backa region; and the territories of Croatia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina were merged to form the Independent State of Croatia, under the Ustaša Croatian fascist nationalist movement.<sup>402</sup> Petrovtich was unsuccessful in attempting to flee the German invasion of Serbia, and rather than be interned by the Italian army in Montenegro, he returned to Belgrade at the end of May 1941.<sup>403</sup> By the time Petrovtich had made his way back to Belgrade the German military had begun their persecution of Jews in Serbia, ordering them to register and enacting anti-Jewish laws. In the neighbouring State of Croatia the *Ustaša* government created 'special racist legislation' based on Nuremberg laws. The statutory ordinance of *Poglavnik* of April 30, 1941 clearly outlined who was considered to be either a Gypsy or a Jew.<sup>404</sup>

In the context of German persecution and rapid enactment of discriminatory laws in Croatia, Petrovtich took steps to protect the identities of the 'Jewish emigrants' whose

---

<sup>401</sup> LNA/ R5636/44028: Letter from Kosta Petrovtich former Representative in Yugoslavia to Emerson, 27 March 1945.

<sup>402</sup> Yad Vashem, 'Yugoslavia', in *Yad Vashem.org*. Available at: [https://www.yadvashem.org/odot\\_pdf/Microsoft%20Word%20-%206379.pdf](https://www.yadvashem.org/odot_pdf/Microsoft%20Word%20-%206379.pdf) [accessed 1 October, 2019]

<sup>403</sup> LNA/ R5636/44028: Petrovtich to Emerson, 27 March 1945.

<sup>404</sup> Davide Rodogno and Emil Kerenji have shown that the Italians 'de facto protected' Jews from the Germans and the *Ustaša* in their zone of occupation by placing them under 'protective internment'. According to Rodogno and Kerenji, this reflected a desire to keep the *Ustaše* at bay and to appease the local population of anti-communist Serbs rather than any direct concerns for the Jewish population. See: Davide Rodogno, *Fascism's European Empire: Italian Occupation during the Second World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 362–385; Emil Kerenji, 'Your Salvation is the Struggle Against Fascism': Yugoslav Communists and the Rescue of Jews, 1941-1945', *Contemporary European History*, 25, 1 (2016), pp. 57-74; See also: Damir Mirković, 'Victims and Perpetrators in the Yugoslav Genocide 1941–1945: Some Preliminary Observations', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 7, 3 (1993), pp. 325-326.

records were held by the office in Belgrade.<sup>405</sup> Directly contravening Emerson's order to protect the records, Petrovtich destroyed all documents relating to Jewish refugees under the care of the League of Nations. This move proved auspicious, as Petrovtich reported that;

...towards the end of August 1941, an officer of the German Gestapo/Secret Service/ entered my office with a written order to confiscate the office and turn it over [to them.] I protested energetically against this in view of the fact that the Representation of the High Commissioner enjoyed diplomatic immunity, according to the High Commissioner for Refugees statute. The Gestapo officer threatened me with imprisonment in case I [refused] to obey their orders. So I had to give in before gross violence.<sup>406</sup>

It is unclear if any Jewish refugees were saved or helped by the actions of Petrovtich, with approximately 66,000 of the Jews who resided in Yugoslavia perishing in the holocaust, including Russians refugees such as Mirjam Abraham, a widow living in Zagreb who perished in Auschwitz.<sup>407</sup> Although it is difficult to quantify the impact of Petrovtich's choice to destroy the records, it serves as a poignant example of the material power of these documents beyond their preservation for future organisations. Petrovtich deliberately chose to ignore the orders from the centre of an apparatus which no longer really functioned, and instead chose to carry out the protection of a group of displaced people through the destruction of documents.

This case in which Emerson lost contact with his representative and therefore refugee response in Yugoslavia was far from unique. In a report written in 1941, Emerson recounted how he lost contact with representatives and therefore refugees in Belgium and France after the German 'invasion of the Low Countries and France' in May and June 1940, and that the 'conquest by the axis powers of Yugoslavia and Greece',

---

<sup>405</sup> LNA/ R5636/44028: Petrovitch to Emerson, 27 March 1945.

<sup>406</sup> LNA/ R5636/44028: Petrovitch to Emerson, 27 March 1945.

<sup>407</sup> 'Mirjam Abraham', *The Central Database of Shoah Victims Names, Yad Vashem*. Available at: <https://yvng.yadvashem.org/nameDetails.html?language=en&itemId=1380443&ind=0> [accessed 1 October, 2019].



Romania and Bulgaria also severed connections.<sup>408</sup> Emerson noted that he lost connection with the representatives in Lithuania and Estonia when ‘Soviet Russia incorporated the Baltic States into her own territory.’ In a letter written around 1945, Emerson stated that the work of the representatives had required;

...the maintenance of normal relations between that government and the High Commission, on the one hand, and with my representative on the other hand. Thus I was able to exercise effective administration control over the Representative’s administration. By *force majeure* this double connection was broken off, so that it was no longer possible for me to exercise my mandate in those countries.<sup>409</sup>

Not only did Emerson lose contact with his established representatives in countries across Europe, he also lacked the networks and mandate to create representatives in countries with high numbers of refugees beyond Europe. With international institutions such as the High Commissariat and the IGCR in a state of paralysis and unable to play anything but a token role in displacement response, the immediate and necessary assistance for refugees was taken up by a host of ad hoc actors, from volags to regional and even colonial authorities, working independently of international coordination. As such, this period is remarkable for the lack of a dominant apparatus which harnessed and set the standards, practices, policies and behaviours in regards to displacement. Instead, the practical task of offering relief to those who had been physically displaced formed an assemblage of private organisations, unilateral state action, regional and even colonial authorities.

The extent of diverse assemblage of responses to refugees which manifested at this juncture is beyond the scope of this chapter. However, the assistance which was offered in various forms to Polish refugees moving eastwards during the war is indicative of the spontaneous and disparate nature of displacement responses in this period. In particular, the response of regional and colonial actors to displaced Poles in Uganda speaks to the global ‘colour line’, described by African American Scholar W.E.B Du Bois as a ‘tidal

---

<sup>408</sup> LNA/ R5636/41406: Report, 1941.

<sup>409</sup> LNA/ R5636/41406: Report, 1941.

wave of whiteness' that served to shape relationships between 'darker' and 'lighter races', which would also shape the development of the post-war apparatus.<sup>410</sup>

The movement of Poles eastward was a multi-layered process, which first began with refugees and members of the Polish government fleeing into Hungary and Romania shortly after the German invasion of Poland in 1939. Prior to the invasion of Poland, the Nazi government had signed a non-aggression treaty with the Soviet Union which contained a secret protocol specifying the new projected borders of Poland. In the weeks after the Nazi invasion, Soviet forces moved in and took administrative control of Eastern parts of Poland, and numbers of refugees from Western Poland continued to move eastwards.<sup>411</sup> According to John Goldlust, the Soviets grew increasingly suspicious of these refugees who were a potential security risk and source of German espionage, and by the spring of 1940 had begun what some historians' have traditionally termed the 'forced deportation' of Poles to the Soviet interior and Central Asia.<sup>412</sup> Recently scholars of the Jewish Polish experience in particular have sought to re-assess the role of the Soviet government in offering 'unintentional' assistance to refugees. Goldlust along with Atina Grossman, Mark Edele, and Sheila Fitzpatrick argue that in the context of the Holocaust, Stalin's state in fact became 'the greatest (although inadvertent) rescue organization' for Jewish refugees during the war.<sup>413</sup> They contend that whilst the Polish refugees who were forced into the Soviet interior experienced difficult, uncomfortable and dangerous deportations, many did survive as a result of the actions of the Soviet government, who thus served as an unlikely and unintentional source of assistance. David Lautenberg, a director of an orphanage for

---

<sup>410</sup> DuBois wrote that wrote pf this as 'the problem of the [colour] line – the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea'. According to Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, Du Bois was 'keenly aware' of the global dimensions of this line, and that a relatively recent discovery of 'personal whiteness' had resulted in whiteness amounting to 'ownership of the earth'. See: W.E.B. Dubois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Dayboro: Emereo Pty Limited, 1903. Reprinted 2012); John Hope Franklin, *The Colour Line: Legacy for the Twenty-First Century* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1993), p. 5; Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men's Countries and the Question of Racial Equality* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2008), p. 2.

<sup>411</sup> Nowak, 'Voices of Revival', p. 21.

<sup>412</sup> See: John Goldlust, 'A Different Silence: The Survival of More than 200,000 Polish Jews in the Soviet Union during World War II as a Case Study in Cultural Amnesia', in *Shelter from the Holocaust: Rethinking Jewish Survival in the Soviet Union*, ed. by Mark Edele, Sheila Fitzpatrick and Atina Grossman (Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 2017), pp. 43-44; Mark Edele et al, 'Introduction' in *Shelter from the Holocaust: Rethinking Jewish Survival in the Soviet Union*, ed. by Mark Edele, Sheila Fitzpatrick and Atina Grossman (Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 2017), p. 5.

<sup>413</sup> Edele et al, pp. 1-28.

Jewish children in Tehran stated after the events that the ‘Soviet deportations were not planned to save Jewish lives. However, that is what transpired.’

On 30 July 1941 the Soviet government signed an agreement with the Polish government-in-exile to free Polish prisoners and deportees in the USSR. The release of Poles from containment in Russia unleashed a diverse set of trajectories, with many heading to the Central Asian republics, others progressing through Iran and Iraq and across the Middle East, into India and even to Central, Eastern and Southern Africa.<sup>414</sup> As Katarzyna Nowak notes, the only continent Poles did not reach was Antarctica.<sup>415</sup> A decentralised assemblage of displacement response in the form of a myriad of relief organisations stepped in to provide immediate assistance to refugees scattered across these various localities. For example, Grossman notes of relief to Jewish Poles that the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) alongside the Bombay Jewish Relief Association and other groups from Palestine and the local region stepped in to assist Polish refugees in Central Asia, where a lifeline of aid ran through the Persian corridor from Tehran across the Iranian-Soviet border.<sup>416</sup> The JDC orchestrated a major fundraising campaign in the United States and ran a parcel program with outposts in Cairo, Beirut, and Jerusalem and even what was then British India. Organisations such as the JDC who took on a key role in this assemblage would also go on to play an important part in the post-war apparatus alongside many other large volags who had further developed their expertise throughout the war.<sup>417</sup>

Aside from large private organisations, Polish refugees were also assisted by regional and even colonial bodies. In 1942, the British government established the ‘East African Refugee Administration’, with headquarters in Nairobi.<sup>418</sup> The purpose of the Refugee

---

<sup>414</sup> Goldlust, ‘A Different Silence’, p. 51.

<sup>415</sup> Nowak, ‘Voices of Revival’, p. 18.

<sup>416</sup> See: Atina Grossman, ‘Remapping Relief and Rescue: Flight, Displacement, and International Aid for Jewish Refugees during World War II’, *New German Critique*, 117 (2012), pp. 61-79; Martha Stroud, ‘Atina Grossman Lecture Summary’, *USC Shoah Foundation* (2016). Available at: <https://sfi.usc.edu/news/2016/05/11429-atina-grossmann-lecture-summary> [accessed 1 October, 2019]; Efraim Zuroff, ‘Rescue Priority and Fund Raising as Issues during the Holocaust: A Case Study of the Relations between the Vaad Ha-Hatzala and the Joint, 1939–1941’, *American Jewish History*, 68, 3 (1979), pp. 305-326.

<sup>417</sup> See Chapter IV for further discussion.

<sup>418</sup> There has been a growing history examining the different trajectories of Polish refugees. Most recently Jochen Lingelbach has researched Polish refugees in British colonial East and Central Africa during and after World War Two as part of his PhD research. See: Jochen Lingelbach, ‘Refugee Camps as Forgotten

Administration was to take responsibility for the refugees who had made their way to British colonies in East and Central Africa, and also to the Belgian colony of Rwanda-Urundi. Structurally, below the regional headquarters were refugee offices which were headed up by ‘Directors of Refugees’, who were tasked with supervising the running of local camps. These camps were run on the ground by camp commandants, who were mostly British colonial officers seconded from the local civil service. The case of the 7,000 Polish refugees in Uganda who sought refuge between 1942 and 1948 demonstrates how assistance also went beyond these official bodies whilst still reflecting the unequal colonial and racial structures at play.<sup>419</sup> S. Lwanga Lunyiigo notes that Polish refugees in Uganda were offered material aid by elite local actors in the white expat community, and that such assistance was offered on the grounds of ‘racial superiority.’<sup>420</sup>

Jochen Lingelbach concurs that assistance to Polish refugees in Uganda was perceived by both the expat community and the local Ugandans as a European endeavour, with the camps seen as ‘institution of the colonial state.’<sup>421</sup> Lingelbach argues that whilst the Poles in Uganda were ‘less discriminating’ than colonial Europeans, the assistance extended to them through informal and formal colonial structures positioned them alongside the Europeans rather than the Africans. The very clear differentiation between white displaced people and the local Ugandan population is demonstrative of ongoing prevalence of a ‘colour line’ in the 1940s, which would shape responses to refugees in the post-war period, and the way in which the apparatus developed. After the war the majority of Polish refugees did not remain in Uganda, but were instead resettled in Britain, Canada and Australia with the help of two new organisations tasked with first repatriating and then resettling the displaced; UNRRA and IRO.<sup>422</sup>

---

Portals of Globalization: Polish World War II Refugees in British Colonial East Africa’, *Comparativ*, 27, 3-4 (2017), pp. 78-93.

<sup>419</sup> Lingelbach, ‘Forgotten Portals’, p. 79.

<sup>420</sup> S. Lwanga Lunyiigo, ‘Uganda’s long connection with the problem of refugees: From the Polish Refugees of World War II to the Present’, in *Makerere Institute of Social Research* (1993). Available at: <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/5693> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

<sup>421</sup> Jochen Lingelbach, ‘Polish refugees in Africa – Central Europeans and Their Position within Colonial Society’, *Central Europe and Colonialism Conference*, Wrocław, Poland (21-23 September 2016). Available at: <http://temp.acadeuro.wroclaw.pl/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Lingelbach-Polish-refugees-in-Africa-paper.pdf> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

<sup>422</sup> Lingelbach, ‘Forgotten Portals’, p. 78.

*At War's End: Divisive and Divided Responses to European Displacement in the Early Post-War Period*

Throughout the Second World War, responses to refugees and displaced people were ad hoc and carried out at regional, state and local levels by state actors, volags and others. Lacking any substantial international coordination, these responses were grounded in specific crises and political and military contexts, rather than as part of an apparatus of responses with common policies, devices, actors and attitudes. By 1943, Allied planners had turned their thoughts to more centralised responses to the challenges of providing relief after the conflict ended, including, but certainly not exclusive to, the new groups of refugees and displaced people that war generated. Refugees were recognised early on as an urgent 'United Nations problem', and as such were both shaped by and a shaping factor for the landscape of international politics in the post-war.<sup>423</sup> As Katy Long argues, the conceptualisation of refugees was at the centre of conflicting political philosophies about the post-war, and as such assumed a new importance as an indicator of the deep ideological conflicts surrounding ideas of individual freedoms, collective responsibility and citizenship.<sup>424</sup> These ideological underpinnings of displacement subsequently dictated the changing structure and nature of responses in the immediate post-war period. Whilst volags such as the AJDC, the Quakers and others continued to offer a great deal of material assistance to displaced people as they had done throughout the war, the top level political decisions being made about who was considered eligible for relief reverberated through the assemblage of displacement response.

Contextually speaking, a major difference between the aftermath of the First World War and the Second World War was the global nature of the conflict. World War one was global in the sense that troops were brought to the main theatre of war in Europe from different parts of the various empires. By contrast, World War Two brought together two regional conflicts, one in Europe as before, and a second conflict in Asia. This multi-theatre conflict profoundly affected the lives of people on multiple continents, rendering it truly global in scale. In the post-1945 era the challenge of reconstructing war-torn societies after the defeat of fascism stretched from Germany to Burma and beyond. The scorched earth policies of Germany and Japan created a need for

---

<sup>423</sup> Cohen, *In War's Wake*, p. 13.

<sup>424</sup> Long, *Point of No Return*, p. 65.

substantial material and economic reconstruction. Displacement went hand in hand with the destruction of societies across Europe and Asia, resulting from both the active conflict of wartime and the ‘violent’ peacetime which accompanied Allied victory.<sup>425</sup>

As a result the post-war period was characterised by people who were ‘out of place’ across Europe, Asia and the Middle East. Despite the global nature of the conflict and therefore the ensuing displacement, Western states were principally concerned with the refugees displaced within Europe. As Peter Gatrell notes, the focus on Europe was blinkered but understandable, given the scale and proximity of displacement to Western decision makers.<sup>426</sup> The magnitude of the challenge displacement would pose was unfolding in front of planners in Europe, as each allied advance brought a ‘crescendo of refugees.’<sup>427</sup> By drawing attention of the UN to the crisis in their occupation zones, France, UK and USA ‘Europeanised the focus of post war global displacement’, and the first post-war organisations charged with responding to displacement would reflect this Euro-centricity.<sup>428</sup>

The beginnings of post-war responses to displacement in Europe began before the end of the conflict with the establishment of UNRRA under the command of the Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) in 1943. The idea for UNRRA arose from Allied discussions of the increasing warnings by a number of British and American politicians, social scientists and military planners who spoke of an incipient disaster. For example, Francis B. Sayre, who later became the special assistant to UNRRA’s Director General, warned in 1943 that ‘the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse are riding through Europe and Asia today’, which would result in ‘unparalleled death, destruction and suffering.’<sup>429</sup> Allied planners were keen to avoid what they considered as a ‘serious gap in post-war preparedness after 1918’, which led to a delay in getting assistance to devastated areas and the exacerbation of political and

---

<sup>425</sup> See: Anna Holian and Ben Cohen, ‘Introduction’, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 25, 3 (2012), p. 320; Gatrell, ‘World Wide Web’, p. 101. Peterson, ‘Uneven Development’, p. 326; Gatrell, *Modern Refugee*, p. 85.

<sup>426</sup> Gatrell, *Modern Refugee*, p. 86.

<sup>427</sup> Haddad, *Between Two Sovereigns*, p. 129.

<sup>428</sup> Cohen, *In War’s Wake*, p. 14.

<sup>429</sup> See: Cohen, *In War’s Wake*, p. 3; George Woodbridge, *UNRRA: The History of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, Volumes I-III* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950), p. 469; Susan Armstrong-Reid and David Murray, *Canada and the UNRRA Years* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), p. 4.

economic breakdown in those territories. Those concerned with post-war relief therefore stressed that the ‘mistakes’ in relief and reconstruction made after the last war would not be repeated.<sup>430</sup> The notion of resurrecting the old League was rejected early on, and planners instead began to voice ideas for a new international organisation that could keep the peace. In January 1943 twenty six governments signed the ‘Declaration by the United Nations’, leading to the first official blueprint of the UN being agreed at Dumbarton Oaks in 1944.<sup>431</sup> Mark Mazower argues that despite the new name, the UN was in many ways a continuation of the League, representing an ‘evolution rather than a revolution’, developing from pre-existing institutions, personnel and ideas.<sup>432</sup> There were fundamental differences, namely American participation, an abandonment of collective rights, greater emphasis on sovereignty and reduced confidence in international law. However, the founding of the UN effectively preserved the interwar socio-political order.

As the first organisation of this ostensibly ‘new’ United Nations system, UNRRA was widely regarded as an ‘instructive model for future and more permanent international organizations.’<sup>433</sup> International collaboration and the creation of a new international body made sense in the context of the issues post-war would bring, from displacement to material and economic destruction of national infra-structures across Europe. The purpose of UNRRA was to provide both emergency relief alongside private organisations and to help reconstruct various economic apparatuses, channelling much needed resources to countries damaged by wartime occupation. UNRRA was also charged with coordinating measures with the activities of private organisations on the ground, and to relieve ‘victims of war’ in all areas now under Allied control.<sup>434</sup>

---

<sup>430</sup> See: Gatrell, *Modern Refugee*, p. 86; Jessica Reinisch, ‘Old Wine in New Bottles? UNRRA and the Mid-Century World of Refugees’, in *Refugees in Europe, 1919-1959: A Forty Years’ Crisis?*, ed. by Matthew Frank and Jessica Reinisch (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), p. 148.

<sup>431</sup> See: Reinisch, ‘Old Wine in New Bottles?’, p. 148; J. Simon Rofe, ‘Prewar and Wartime Planning: Antecedents to the UN Moment in San Francisco, 1945’, in *Wartime Origins and the Future United Nations*, ed. by Dan Plesch and Thomas G. Weiss (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2015), p. 29.

<sup>432</sup> Mazower has led the charge in recent scholarship to look at the complex reasoning behind the founding of the UN, detailing how imperial thought, great power politics and universalising internationalism all played a role in the founding of the UN. See: Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), p. 17.

<sup>433</sup> This was the name given for the joint Allied war effort, the institution of the United Nations itself had not yet been founded in 1943. See: Armstrong-Reid and Murray, ‘Canada and UNRRA’, p. 7; Gatrell, *Modern Refugee*, p. 86.

<sup>434</sup> Haddad, *Between Two Sovereigns*, p. 130.

The population under Allied control included refugees and displaced people, with whom UNRRA was charged with repatriating 'home.'<sup>435</sup> Notably, UNRRA had no powers to organise third country resettlement for those who did not wish to return to the 'home' designated to them. The decision to include refugees and displaced people in the UNRRA remit was the – result of realisation that the various visions of a new international system with the UN at its institutional core would struggle to come to fruition in a world where 'millions remained uprooted.' In 1943 leading demographer Eugene Kulischer wrote a report for the ILO which was later turned into a book. In the report Kulischer declared that 'more than thirty million of the inhabitants of the continent of Europe have been transplanted or torn from their homes since the beginning of the war.'<sup>436</sup> Kulischer's report also formed part of Project 'M' (for migration), which was an American initiative consisting of more than 600 studies on the issue of migration and settlement. Project 'M' reflected the concern of then President Franklin D. Roosevelt for the potentially negative consequences of European displacement in particular. The creation of Project 'M' and the new institution of UNRRA demonstrated that many believed the ad hoc responses which had developed throughout the war would not be sufficient in the face of mass post-war displacement.<sup>437</sup> In a report published by the Fabian Society in London, Kenneth G. Brooks argued that the piecemeal responses of volags were no longer appropriate given the magnitude of the problem at hand. Brooks stated that the 'work of the voluntary agencies has been mostly of a case work nature and although the need for the sympathetic and individual help they have been able to give will continue, it is clear the time has come for international direction on a government level.'<sup>438</sup>

The plans being made for a more formalised coordinated response to mass displacement co-existed with the problematic consensus that because refugees were the creation of war, once the war ended refugees and displaced people would be able to return home, thus ending the problem. More specifically, because the European fascist regimes were perceived to be the principal cause of refugee production, the defeat of these regimes

---

<sup>435</sup> Reinisch, 'Old Wine in New Bottles?', p. 148

<sup>436</sup> See: Eugene Kulischer, *Europe on the Move: War Population Changes, 1917-1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948); Cohen, *In War's Wake*, p. 4.

<sup>437</sup> Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*, pp. 111-112.

<sup>438</sup> See: Kenneth G. Brooks. 'The Re-establishment of Displaced Peoples', in *When Hostilities Cease: Papers on Relief and Reconstruction Prepared for the Fabian Society* (London: Gollancz, 1943), p. 99; Reinisch, 'Old Wine in New Bottles?', p. 152.



was expected to also put a stop to the creation of new refugee populations. In addition, there was a widespread belief that because the majority of those displaced were suffering from physical rather than political separation from their home state, repatriating these people was seen as the obvious solution which represented a logistical rather than a political challenge. The belief that repatriation was the natural solution to post-war displacement rested on the assumption that the vast majority would want to return home as soon as possible, and thus repatriation was pursued to the exclusion of any other alternative.<sup>439</sup> Jessica Reinisch argues that the notion of resettling refugees to new countries was never entirely off the table, but that in the latter stages of the Second World War repatriation was considered the most desirable and realistic opinion for the majority of refugees.<sup>440</sup>

The Soviet government was a key driving force behind the policy of repatriation. According to G. Daniel Cohen, Stalin signalled his determination to ensure the return of Soviet citizens from the rest of Europe, regardless of their own desires.<sup>441</sup> Cohen argues that for the Soviet government, this population was both a desirable target for labour in assisting with the rebuilding of Soviet infrastructure, and also presented a serious concern as a potentially 'renegade' group who raised the spectre of counter-revolution. As a result, the Soviets actually took the opposite stance to the one taken in 1921. Instead of depriving displaced Soviet citizens of their nationality, the government required nationals to return to the USSR in an act of 'renationalisation.' This required renationalisation rested on the underlying political ideology upheld by the Soviets in the mid-1940s that a citizen could not choose to break his obligations to his state. Early on in plans for the post-war the British and Americans were willing to accept the Soviet prioritisation of renationalising its citizens, not least to maintain good relations with the USSR. Consequently all three Allied powers agreed to formalise the Soviet plan of repatriation at the Yalta conference in February 1945.<sup>442</sup>

Initially, many displaced Europeans were willing and able to reach their former homes with relative ease, with around 80,000 people being repatriated each day in May and

---

<sup>439</sup> Haddad, *Between Two Sovereigns*, p. 129.

<sup>440</sup> Reinisch, 'Old Wine in New Bottles?', p. 157.

<sup>441</sup> Cohen, *In War's Wake*, p. 22.

<sup>442</sup> Long, *Point of No Return*, pp. 63-64.

June 1945, totalling around 2.5 million.<sup>443</sup> However, the rate of repatriation began to crawl by the beginning of 1946, and simultaneously the top level political consensus on pursuing repatriation began to weaken as relations between the USSR and its allies began to deteriorate. A new ‘cold’ war had begun to gain momentum with the dropping of the atomic bomb at the end of the war with Japan, Stalin’s speech predicting a future clash between capitalist and socialist nations, the release of George Kennan’s ‘long telegram’, Churchill’s iron curtain speech and the outbreak of the Greek civil war. The death of Roosevelt in April 1945 and Winston Churchill’s defeat in the general election of 1946 also changed the personalities of wartime alliance.<sup>444</sup> Against this backdrop of strained Allied relations, the majority of the remaining Displaced People (DPs) in Europe began to express reluctance to return to the USSR in particular. This group was composed of Soviet prisoners of war (POWs), Soviet citizens who had been forced to work behind German lines as labourers, and also Soviets who had collaborated with the Germans and thus feared returning home to face persecution. It was increasingly clear that Soviets displaced in Europe considered themselves as ‘refugees’ from the USSR.

Although UNRRA officials continued to believe in repatriation, the British and American governments began to consider offering humanitarian assistance to those resisting repatriation.<sup>445</sup> Katy Long argues that it was ideologically difficult for British and American decision makers to reconcile forced repatriation with the notion that the Second World War was fought for liberal freedoms.<sup>446</sup> Long further contends that the crux of the matter was the different ways in which the Soviets and the Western allies understood the relationship between citizens and the state. For the USSR and other Eastern European countries national citizenship meant accepting the state as the embodiment of national sovereignty. In this understanding, a ‘good’ citizen would not refuse to return, therefore those who were left were not refugees. A ‘refugee’ was a person who could not be repatriated, but all ‘citizens’ could and should be repatriated if their state acknowledged their right to return. On the opposite side of the debate, Western powers also identified a refugee as a person who could not be repatriated.

---

<sup>443</sup> Haddad, *Between Two Sovereigns*, p. 130.

<sup>444</sup> Amanda Melaine Bundy, ‘There was a Man of UNRRA: Internationalism, Humanitarianism, and the Early Cold War in Europe, 1943-1947’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, Ohio State University, 2017), pp. 4-5.

<sup>445</sup> Haddad, *Between Two Sovereigns*, p. 131.

<sup>446</sup> Long, *Point of No Return*, p. 68.

However, with an increasing support for freedom of individual dissent from a collective whole, these states asserted that citizens of so-called ‘tyrannical or authoritarian states’ had the right to seek asylum as refugees in order to reject the state which sought to curtail their liberal freedoms. This fundamental, ideological split served as the root for diverging responses to displaced people after 1946.

Somewhat paradoxically, the Western Allies did not have the same impulse to protect the liberal freedoms of the millions of German citizens who were forcibly transferred from Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary to Germany.<sup>447</sup> Beginning as a result of the Potsdam Protocol agreed to by Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union in August 1945, an estimated fifteen million ethnic Germans were expelled with great violence from Central and Eastern Europe.<sup>448</sup> This ‘orderly transfer’ of Germans was reminiscent of the earlier Greco-Turkish exchange, and was intended to secure peace through the interwar concepts of harmonising political territory and national identity. As such, the programme of German expulsions served to underline the group-based assumption which was also foundational in notions of ‘repatriation’ more generally.<sup>449</sup> The forced transfer was heavily criticised by groups such as the Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees, which was the forerunner of World Council of Churches (WCC). The Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees condemned the lack of humane practice in the transfer of the German population as ‘an offence to the Christian conscience.’<sup>450</sup> Fieldworkers for the Ecumenical Refugee Commission (ERC), which would later be absorbed into the Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees, also criticised the transfers, stating in a monthly report in February 1947 that ‘peace will be lost unless the spirit of discrimination (spirit of Potsdam) be overcome by a more humane and Christian approach to ‘my neighbours in need’.<sup>451</sup> By the end of 1947 the transfers of Germans had largely come to an end, echoing the move away from repatriation in displacement response more generally.

---

<sup>447</sup> See: Long, *Point of No Return*, p. 66; R. M. Douglas, *Orderly and Humane: The Expulsion of the Germans after the Second World War* (Yale: Yale University Press, 2012), p. 1.

<sup>448</sup> Douglas, ‘Orderly and Humane’, p. 1.

<sup>449</sup> Long, *Point of No Return*, p. 66.

<sup>450</sup> David P. Gaines, *The World Council of Churches: A Study of its Background and History* (New Hampshire: Richard R. Smith Co Inc., 1966), p. 178.

<sup>451</sup> World Council of Churches (WCC) Archive, 425/1/031: Ecumenical Refugee Commission Fieldworkers (ERC) 1947-1948.

In 1946 the American administration officially withdrew from UNRRA, and instead advocated for another temporary agency to resettle rather than repatriate refugees; IRO.<sup>452</sup> IRO inevitably differed from its predecessors given the dynamic context of the post-war world, from the changing scope of displacement itself to the ramping up of both decolonisation and Cold War. Although Harry S. Truman's government had taken considerably less interest in refugee issues than the former Roosevelt administration, the American representative in discussions at the UN about refugees in January 1946 was former President Franklin D. Roosevelt's wife, Eleanor Roosevelt. She described the political tug of war over displacement as 'the battle of the refugees', and Cohen argues that this battle actually represented the first direct confrontation regarding political dissidents between the two Cold War powers of the United States and the USSR which illuminated their starkly different ideologies.<sup>453</sup>

Despite this 'battle' Katy Long asserts that the Western powers attempted to balance concerns about refugee rights with issues of state sovereignty by claiming that repatriation would remain an important task.<sup>454</sup> Nevertheless the Soviet bloc rejected the final constitution of IRO and therefore the organisation as a whole, a decision which would later carry through to the early UNHCR.<sup>455</sup> On 15 December 1946 an Agreement on Interim Measures to be taken in Respect of Refugees and Displaced Persons (also known as the 1946 Agreement) was concluded. The 1946 Agreement established the Preparatory Commission of the IRO (IRO Preparatory Commission or PCIRO). PCIRO was designed to ensure continuity in relief and resettlement activities on behalf of refugees and displaced persons up until mid-1947 when UNRRA, and the IGCR were officially wound up, with the High Commissariat having already closed in December 1946.<sup>456</sup>

---

<sup>452</sup> Gatrell, *Modern Refugee*, p. 107.

<sup>453</sup> See: Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*, p. 112; Cohen, *In War's Wake*, p. 17; José H. Fischel de Andrade, 'Brazil and the International Refugee Organisation', *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 30, 1 (2011), p. 67.

<sup>454</sup> Long, *Point of No Return*, p. 69.

<sup>455</sup> In fact, Russia only signed the 1951 Refugee Convention after the end of the Cold War in February 1993 whilst many former Soviet bloc countries did not sign until the end of the 1990s and early 2000s. See: UNHCR, 'States Parties to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol' (undated). Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/protect/PROTECTION/3b73b0d63.pdf> [accessed 1 October, 2019]; Salomon, 'UNRRA and IRO', p. 162; Andreas Zimmerman, Jonas Dörschner and Felix Machts *The 1952 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol: A Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

<sup>456</sup> Fischel de Andrade, 'Brazil and IRO', p. 69.

Despite the turmoil at the international level, with the closing of UNRRA and the IGCR and the slow start to IRO's operations, volags continued their work on the ground assisting with the daily needs of displaced people scattered across Europe. Louise Holborn estimated that as many as 35 voluntary societies worked closely with IRO and up to 200 assisted in field 'operations' in one way or another.<sup>457</sup> Gatrell notes that each of these organisations had to work to establish their own legitimacy in working with the displaced, whether on the grounds of 'compassion', religious impulse, or ethnic affiliation.<sup>458</sup> Although they worked closely with UNRRA and then IRO, these organisations were often critical of their operational chaos and lack of funding. For example, an article written in 1953, the former chief of the volags liaison division of IRO in Austria Julius A. Elias argued that volags built 'more intimate' relationships with displaced people than the international bodies, and as such represented an accountability mechanism in instances where refugees suffered 'against arbitrary or unjust treatment at the hands of public officials in IRO.'<sup>459</sup> Elias also described how volags did not necessarily toe the line of decisions made at the higher levels, stating that as the 'machinery for determination of hardship' was 'arbitrary and subject to abuse', the 'relative informality and the more intimate associations of the voluntary agencies' allowed them to act in more 'appropriate' ways that suggested by IRO.<sup>460</sup>

An example of one organisation that was concerned with protecting Russians with lingering fears of repatriation the Central Representation of the Russian Emigration (Tsentral'noe Predstavitel'stvo Rossiiskoi Emigratsii or TsEPRE), which was set up in 1948 by Serge Yourieff a former Russian refugee who had worked as the Representative of the Nansen Office in Yugoslavia in the 1930s, and as a 'Legal Adviser' in the Munich Office of the High Commissariat until 1946. More broadly, at a meeting in Copenhagen in March 1947 members of the ERC deplored that there was a lack of top-level solutions for 'the plight of Displaced Persons, Refugees and Expellees'

---

<sup>457</sup> Louise Holborn, *The International Refugee Organisation, A Specialized Agency of the United Nations: Its History and Work, 1946-1952* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 323.

<sup>458</sup> Gatrell, 'Trajectories', p. 11.

<sup>459</sup> See: Julius A. Elias, 'Relation between Voluntary Agencies and International Organisations', *Journal of International Affairs*, 7, 1 (1953), p. 33; Sherry Fisher, 'Julias Elias, Former Dean, Dies at 82', *Advance* (3 March 2008). Available at: <http://advance.uconn.edu/2008/080303/08030303.htm> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

<sup>460</sup> Elias, 'Voluntary Agencies', p. 33.

and that IRO did not have an adequate budget with which to tackle this issue.<sup>461</sup> Both the statements from the ERC and Elias demonstrate how volags were willing and able to work with international bodies despite the chaos, but that many understood their role to be intermediaries between displaced people and organisations such as IRO, meaning that in practice the high level discussions about who should be assisted were not always followed to the letter.

A commonality between many of the volags and the public bodies of UNRRA and IRO was the consistency in personnel between the interwar and post-war periods. IRO and the volags were not starting from scratch but rather drawing on the past experiences of their forerunners.<sup>462</sup> The transference of legal personnel from interwar refugee response organisations to the post-war bodies is noteworthy in relation to transference of legal norms formed in the context of colonialism. As Glen Peterson argues, from its inception international law was grounded in the imperial task of governing non-European peoples.<sup>463</sup> The Imperialist roots of international law which constructed non-Westerners as ‘other’ threaded through refugee responses in the interwar period and served as an underpinning legal understandings in the post-war through legal staff trained in the norms of international law.<sup>464</sup> One example of a staff member whose understanding of law was grounded in interwar norms was the Swiss jurist Gustave Kullman who had served as the Deputy High Commissioner in the High Commissariat and Assistant Director of the IGCR under Emerson throughout the war.<sup>465</sup> Kullman went on to take up an important role both as a legal adviser in IRO, and as one of the three men from the IRO’s legal office who prepared a template for the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.<sup>466</sup>

---

<sup>461</sup> Gaines, *WCC*, p. 206.

<sup>462</sup> ‘Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees: Report of the Fourth PLENARY Session, August 15-17, 1944’, *Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library* [undated]. Available at: <http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/resources/images/wrb/wrb1241.pdf> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

<sup>463</sup> Glen Peterson, ‘Sovereignty, International Law, and the Uneven Development of the International Refugee Regime’, *Modern Asian Studies*, 49, 2 (2015), p. 445.

<sup>464</sup> See Chapter II.

<sup>465</sup> LNA/ R5635/35482: List of staff of the High Commissariat enclosed in a letter from Emerson to the Secretary-General of the United Nations received 12 September 1948.

<sup>466</sup> See: Gilad Ben-Nun, *Seeking Asylum in Israel: Refugees and the History of Migration Law* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2017), p. 107; Jill I, Goldenziel, ‘The Curse of the Nation-State: Refugees, Migration and Security in International Law’, *Arizona State Law Journal*, 48 (2016), p. 616.

Although there was a degree of continuity in legal norms carried through by personnel, there were significant changes during the IRO period in the normative understanding of what it meant to be a ‘refugee’ and how the refugee ‘problem’ could be resolved.<sup>467</sup> From the inter-war conception of nationality through which people and borders could be moved to align nation and state, by the latter half of the 1940s the dominant response was to focus on the state within firm, fixed boundaries. The result of this change was that the stability of borders now became of paramount importance, often at the price of congruency between states. A simultaneous shift occurred in the perception and representation of refugees and displaced people as being in ‘genuine’ need because they found themselves ‘outside the national boundaries of their country.’<sup>468</sup> This was demonstrated in the definition of displaced persons in the IRO charter, which also stated that they must have ‘valid objections’ and be unwilling to return to their territory of origin.<sup>469</sup> It was whilst IRO was operating, and not after the creation of UNHCR, that justifications were being made on the separation between migrants and refugees based on whether the movement was voluntary or forced.<sup>470</sup> Throughout the interwar period, the war and the early part of the bridging period, refugees had essentially been considered a subcategory of migrants. Fluid understandings of refugees, migrants and unemployed nationals all filled a similar place in society as part of a ‘surplus population.’<sup>471</sup> It also turned a refugee’s claim into a moral one, as an individual who needed and potentially deserved admission, as opposed to a migrant who wanted it but was not in need. These changes were formally acknowledged by international protection actors towards the end of the bridging period, and would become essential characteristics of the UNHCR apparatus.

### *Conclusion*

At the end of the 1940s responses to mass displacement had undergone significant changes. The bridging period was an era of development and discontinuity, in which responses to displacement underwent modifications as both the geopolitical context and

---

<sup>467</sup> Haddad, *Between Two Sovereigns*, pp. 35; 135-136.

<sup>468</sup> See: Haddad, *Between Two Sovereigns*, p. 136; Cohen, *In War’s Wake*, p. 90.

<sup>469</sup> Gatrell, *Modern Refugee*, p. 107.

<sup>470</sup> See: Rieko Karatani, ‘How History Separated Refugee and Migrant Regimes: In Search of Their Institutional Origins’, *International Journal of Refugee Law*, 17, 3 (2005), p. 517; Long, ‘Refugees Stopped Being Migrants’, p. 7.

<sup>471</sup> Long, ‘Refugees Stopped Being Migrants’, pp. 4; 21.

the nature of refugee crises themselves changed. The attitude towards refugees in the 1930s which conceptualised them as an undesirable subcategory of economic migrant was largely responsible for the significant dismantling of the institutional framework of the interwar refugee response apparatus which led to an ad hoc assemblage of actors assisting refugees during the war itself. The paralysis of the refugee institutions was underscored by the emphasis placed on the necessity to preserve documents to build a new organisation in the post-war world, whilst the decision of the Yugoslav representative to destroy refugee files reflects how far the needs of refugees on the ground diverged from the priorities of the wartime central institutions of the League.

Lacking an overarching, centralised apparatus centred in Geneva, volags in particular developed a strong role in providing a response to the diverse need of those who found themselves uprooted and scattered across the globe. The case of Polish refugees in Uganda provides an insight into how even colonial actors stepped into 'humanitarian' roles, albeit within the racial imperial hierarchy. The plans for the post-war, including the creation of UNRRA, highlights the impact of conflicting ideologies on broader refugee responses. Although volags continued their work with displaced people, and even envisaged their role as intermediaries between UNRRA, IRO and the displaced, in Europe the entrenching Cold War and increasing 'battle for refugees' dictated the structure of displacement response. The following chapter explores the characteristics of the new apparatus of displacement responses which emerged towards the end of the 1940s, tracing the impact of the ruptures, continuities and modifications which took place during the bridging period.



#### IV: ‘No great plan’: International Law, Voluntary Agencies, and Refugee ‘Passports’ in the post-1950 Apparatus

I had no great plan, great design in my head.

*Auguste Lindt, 1998.*<sup>472</sup>

We were all lawyers.

*John Kelly, 1998.*<sup>473</sup>

A result of the tumultuous events during the latter part of the 1930s, the Second World War and its immediate aftermath discussed in the previous chapter was that responses to refugees had become an ad hoc assemblage, emerging, dissipating or persevering at a localised level without any of the overarching aims, centralisation or standardisation which characterise an apparatus. Today, the institution of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and its accompanying Western centric apparatus of policies, rationales and administrative measures are widely accepted as the dominant and stable framework of displacement response. In contrast to this seemingly ineradicable apparatus, the durability of the institution and the accompanying elements which emerged in the early 1950s were far from inevitable. The uncertainty which characterised the early days of the apparatus is evident in a series of oral interviews undertaken by UNHCR advisor Bryan Deschamp with former members of staff who had worked for the organisation during the 1950s. The interviewees included the former High Commissioner for Refugees Auguste Lindt who assumed the role in 1956, as well as lawyers John Kelly, Ivor Jackson and Franz J. Homann-Herimberg, and one economist, Gilbert Jaeger. The transcripts of these interviews offer a rare insight into the memories of individuals who played a part in the development of international responses to refugees in the 1950s.

Despite the benefit of hindsight, which provides an opportunity to retroactively assign an orderliness that may not have been evident at the time, the recollections of these five men evoke a sense of uncertainty and messiness of responses in the early years of the

---

<sup>472</sup> UNHCR/OT: Interview with Dr Auguste R. Lindt, 4 February 1998.

<sup>473</sup> UNHCR/OT: Interview with John Kelly, 1 April 1998.

UNHCR.<sup>474</sup> As Lindt noted in relation to the action taken by the organisation in regards to refugees in Algeria in the late 1950s, he had ‘no great design’ for how he expected or desired the response to unfold.<sup>475</sup>

This chapter firstly argues that the success of the UNHCR and the broader post-war apparatus was far from a certainty in the early 1950s. In discussing the decision of UN member states to reinstate a ‘High Commissioner’ to manage refugee matters, the chapter highlights the lack of consensus surrounding the agency and displacement more broadly. It points to the limitations for the agency which arose from these disagreements and how these challenges significantly shaped the development of the apparatus in the post-war world. Secondly, the chapter contends that in response to these limitations, the seeds of international pre-eminence were sown through the UNHCR’s necessary cultivation of expertise in international law. It argues that whilst law was also used for leverage by the High Commissioner, Nansen Office and other proponents of displacement response during the interwar period, this tool became particularly useful in the post-war owing to a spirit of ‘euphoria’ which surrounded international law.<sup>476</sup> That is to say, international law played an important role within the refugee agencies in both periods owing to its cost-effectiveness, and just as the interwar apparatus was in part sustained through the legal material objects of Nansen passports, the particularly restrictive mandate of the UNHCR as the cornerstone also resulted in a reliance of international refugee law. The chapter contends that expertise of the UNHCR was built by the small but significant cadre of lawyers who according to John Kelly in the quote above dominated the UNHCR in the 1950s.

In the following part of the chapter the importance of individual refugees and their legal cases are brought to the fore, demonstrating the malleability of international law and the importance of its interpretation at a key juncture in the development of the apparatus. In addition to the championing and refining of international law through the UNHCR, the

---

<sup>474</sup> See: James Grant and Barbara Burge, ‘Obituaries: Dr Bryan Deschamp, 3 June 1943-28 February 2017’, *Trinity Today*, 85 (2017), p. 43; United Nations Secretary General (UNSG) Kofi Annan, ‘UN SG releases findings of Iraq Accountability Panel Report, Decides on Disciplinary Measures: SG/SM/9230, IK/425: 29 March 2004’, *Relief Web* (2019). Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/un-sg-releases-findings-iraq-accountability-panel-report-decides-disciplinary-measures> [accessed 1 October, 2019]; UNHCR/ Oral testimonies (uncatalogued)/ Bryan Deschamp: February-May 1998.

<sup>475</sup> UNHCR/OT: Lindt, 4 February 1998.

<sup>476</sup> See Chapter I; Neff, ‘International Law’, p. 24

chapter argues that the more pragmatic actions of voluntary agencies (volags) at the geographical limits of the apparatus played a central role in its concretisation. Finally, the chapter discusses a component of the apparatus which proved significant for its interwar counterpart; namely refugee ‘passports.’ In asking why the post-war successors to Nansen passports do not appear to have been as central to the post-war apparatus, the chapter asserts that during the creation of several different post-war documents there was a gradual separation between mobility and identification functions which underscores how the apparatus unfolded.

*A ‘degree of independence and prestige’: The Return of a High Commissioner for Refugees*

In both the interwar and post-war apparatuses, institutional bodies have played an important role in providing a geographical centre and for being the most visible element. Furthermore, both the first institutional body of the Nansen era, and the institution of the post-war period were given the name of ‘High Commissions.’ Despite these similarities, the refugee bodies which served as the institutional cornerstones of the apparatuses were in fact formed in very distinct environments and concretised by diverging discourses, policies and devices specific to these contexts. For example, the political, social and economic landscape of the late 1940s and early 1950s was a very different one to that which greeted those concerned with refugees in the aftermath of the First World War. The post-war period represented a very specific moment in global history, as the aftershocks of a world war continued to reverberate and another ‘colder’ war began to gain traction, whilst in the colonial territories the rumblings of decolonisation began to be heard.<sup>477</sup> The responses to displacement through the creation of specialist agencies and the increasing focus on resettlement over repatriation differed significantly from previous practices of population transfers and exchanges. Given the fundamentally different episteme of the two post-war periods, it is unsurprising that the post-1950 apparatus formed with a different structure and purpose.<sup>478</sup>

---

<sup>477</sup> Gatrell, ‘World-Wide Web’, p. 102.

<sup>478</sup> Howard Adelman, ‘From Refugees to Forced Migration: The UNHCR and Human Security’, *The International Migration Review* 35, 1 (2001), p. 23.

The creation of a High Commissioner for refugees was far from preordained after the Second World War, as by the 1940s there were multiple precedents in the form of a UN based refugee agency could take. For example, the new body could have been designated as an agency without the clear figurehead of a High Commissioner in the mould of the interwar Nansen Office, and the post war agencies of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) and International Relief Organisation (IRO). Alternatively, it could have taken on a new form altogether, departing from the status quo and the formats of all its predecessors. The decision to return to the form of a High Commissioner, the very first international organisation dedicated to refugees under the League of Nations, reflects a broader trend observed by Mazower in which the UN structure took on much of the form of the League of Nations.<sup>479</sup> Gilad Ben-Nun describes the UN as ‘stepping into the shoes’ of the League, by inheriting and largely accepting an ‘entire ecosystem’ of international bureaucracy, volags, associations, and other well-established actors.<sup>480</sup> The process of inheriting and shaping a refugee agency was far from smooth for the member states of the UN, and it took an entire year of negotiations to decide upon what type of body would replace IRO. The length of these negotiations is partly explained by the fact that they took place across three different sections of the UN, namely the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the plenary sessions of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) and the Third Committee. The lengthy discussions revolved around tensions in what form the relationship between the UN Secretary General and the new refugee body should take, and therefore what the format of the agency itself should be.

On the one hand, the United States favoured a temporary agency with a clear and narrow remit which required little financing for its limited objectives, which would mainly involve offering legal protection to the remaining IRO refugees. The United States also argued that the new agency should work close with the secretariat to achieve its limited objectives.<sup>481</sup> According to Loescher, the rationale behind American desires to restrict the remit of the new refugee agency was that in the context of rapidly escalating Cold War with the Soviet Union, American leaders considered refugee

---

<sup>479</sup> Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*, p. 4.

<sup>480</sup> Ben-Nun, ‘ExCom’, *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 36, 1 (2017), p. 5.

<sup>481</sup> Loescher, *UNHCR and World Politics*, p. 50.

matters to be too important to be left in the hands of the UN.<sup>482</sup> At the other end of the spectrum were the states who bore the brunt of the post-war refugee burden in Europe, along with Pakistan and India who were each hosting millions of post-Partition refugees. The representatives of these countries expressed a preference for a strong, permanent, multipurpose refugee agency, arguing for an independent High Commissioner who would be empowered to raise funds and then to distribute these funds to assist refugees.<sup>483</sup>

The most vocal proponents of this perspective were the various French representatives to the UN, who claimed that this body should maintain its own independent stature and prestige, which they believed could only be achieved by the direct election of a figurehead High Commissioner with independence from the central UN organs. The French representatives argued that too close a relationship with the Secretariat would simply serve to reduce the agency of the new body and that this would reduce its future flexibility and potential usefulness in the instance of a renewed refugee influx.<sup>484</sup> This argument altered very little considering the frequently changing government of the Fourth French Republic. Greg Burgess argues that French attitudes towards refugees in the post-war period were closely tied to the assertion of asylum as a central component of French cultural identity, and as a means by which to recover lost prestige within international affairs. The successive governments of the Fourth Republic held the line on refugee matters at the international level because French post-war attitudes to asylum transcended party politics. The republican ideal of asylum had gained traction through the pragmatic actions of remaking law after the Vichy period and in responding to the large scale problems associated with displacement, and served as one means of moving on from the practices of exclusion in the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>485</sup>

The High Commissioner format, as championed by the French, also won the support of the UN Secretary-General Trygve Lie who articulated that a High Commissioner for refugees should ‘enjoy a special status within the UN’ and ‘possess the degree of

---

<sup>482</sup> Loescher ‘UNHCR’s Origins and Early History: Agency, Influence, and Power in Global Refugee Policy’, *Refuge* 33, 1 (2017), p. 78.

<sup>483</sup> Irial Glynn, ‘The Genesis and Development of Article of the 1951 Refugee Convention’, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 25, 1 (2011), p. 140.

<sup>484</sup> Holborn, *UNHCR*, pp. 65-66.

<sup>485</sup> Greg Burgess, ‘Remaking Asylum in Post-War France, 1944-52’, *Journal of Contemporary History* 49, 3 (2014), pp. 556-575.

independence and prestige which would seem to be required for the effective performance of his functions.<sup>486</sup> With the approval of the UN Secretary-General, by autumn 1949 there was a degree of consensus amongst decision makers that the High Commissioner was the preferable form for the new agency. The precedent of a High Commissioner in the post-war period drew as much upon the interwar refugee bodies as on the examples found in empire as discussed in Chapter I. One strong characteristic of imperial High Commissioners which had been intrinsic to the League's High Commissioner was the temporary nature of the post. High Commissioners in empire were deployed to take up 'temporary duties during certain troubled periods', and whilst the existence of the High Commissioner and its successor body the Nansen Office spanned the interwar period, they were considered 'temporary' throughout.<sup>487</sup> On the surface therefore, the decision to create another High Commissioner with a three year mandate only appears to confirm that state representatives at the UN in the late 1940s believed the new agency would also be a temporary measure.<sup>488</sup>

Whilst it is true that the UNHCR was only given a three year mandate subject to renewal, whether or not the creators of the UNHCR believed it would actually be a temporary measure is debatable. By the late 1940s there were several voices amongst those drafting the Statute that an agency for refugees would be required long beyond three years. There was a strong difference of opinions during the meetings of the Third Committee, in which the French representative pushed for no termination date whilst the American representative argued for a three year mandate. Holborn notes that there was in fact a general consensus amongst those attending the Third Committee meetings that even if the agency's role was restricted to the somewhat vague duty of 'legal protection', it would need to work for considerably longer than three years.<sup>489</sup> Therefore, whilst the belief that the refugee problem was transitory still remained, there was a feeling amongst some drafters of the Statute that the UNHCR would be required long beyond its three year mandate.

---

<sup>486</sup> Holborn, *UNHCR*, p. 66.

<sup>487</sup> See: Frangi, 'Le Haut-Commissaire', p. 5; LNA/C1486/17040: Draft letter by Nicolsky, 15 July 1930.

<sup>488</sup> Loescher, *UNHCR and World Politics*, p. 50.

<sup>489</sup> Holborn, *UNHCR*, p. 67.

Once UN member states had agreed on the format of a High Commissioner, and finally come to an agreement on a three year mandate, disagreements began over who should be appointed to the role. As with the appointment of Fridtjof Nansen in the interwar period, member states of the UN required a High Commissioner of international standing who would, in theory, allow the office of the High Commission to cultivate financial support for the agency and act diplomatically when required. The United States had exercised control over the appointment of the three Directors General of the IRO and of the UNRRA, and sought to similarly influence the appointment of the first High Commissioner. This plan was thwarted by the British government who expressed through their representative a preference for a High Commissioner from a 'neutral' country, such as the Netherlands, resulting in the appointment of politician and former refugee Gerrit Van Heuven Goedhart.<sup>490</sup> In failing to procure their first choice of High Commissioner, representatives of the United States attempted to marginalise and bypass the UNHCR at every opportunity, which Peterson argues 'coloured every aspect of the organisation's early existence.'<sup>491</sup>

Goedhart was faced with personal hostility not just from the Americans but also from the French, after appointing James Read, an American educationalist and Quaker, to the role of deputy instead of French Foreign Minister Robert Rochefort. As the French representative on all bodies concerned with migration, Rochefort became a difficult opponent of Goedhart.<sup>492</sup> Therefore, at the outset the central body of the western apparatus was faced with hostility, financial restraints and narrow operational parameters. As will be shown below, these challenges actually served to foster an environment in which staff within the new refugee body were able to use international law as a form of authority. Furthermore, the lack of funding in particular led to a greater role for *volags*, who were central to turning the gaze of the apparatus beyond Europe in the 1950s.<sup>493</sup>

---

<sup>490</sup> Loescher, *UNHCR and World Politics*, p. 50.

<sup>491</sup> Glen Peterson, 'To Be or Not to Be a Refugee: The International Politics of the Hong Kong Refugee Crisis, 1949–55', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 36, 2 (2008), p. 177.

<sup>492</sup> Loescher, *UNHCR and World Politics*, pp. 50-51.

<sup>493</sup> Jérôme Elie, 'The Historical Roots of Cooperation between the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration', *Global Governance*, 16, 3 (2010), pp. 345-360.

*Legal 'fonctionnaires': International Lawyers and the Further Cultivation of Expertise in Refugee Law*

The limitations placed on the UNHCR as outlined above underscore the assertion that the success of the contemporary displacement apparatus, with the UN refugee body as its flagship institution, was not an ineluctable process. This section argues that one means of understanding how an apparatus works is to examine who the actors are within it, and reasons and means by which those actors craft documents, reproduce rhetoric, and detect and interpret political leanings.<sup>494</sup> Specifically, it outlines the actions of lawyers within the UNHCR, who, like their interwar counterparts, harnessed international law as a tool through which to embed and concretise the apparatus throughout the 1950s. The UNHCR has since been criticised for being a 'timid, non-operational guardian of international refugee law', whose staff were reliant on the norms and principles laid out in the 1951 Refugee Convention and the UNHCR's own Statute, given the context of the ongoing large scale need for material assistance in the early 1950s.<sup>495</sup> However, this enforced non-operative period coincided with a moment of 'euphoria' in international law, which the strong legal personnel in the UNHCR were able to capitalise upon.<sup>496</sup>

After the Second World War, international law entered what Stephen C. Neff describes as a period of 'unprecedented confidence and prestige', for which 'euphoria might not be too strong a word.'<sup>497</sup> In the wake of a second, global conflict, international cooperation greatly increased, with seemingly all aspects of social, economic, and political life being internationalised in one way or another. The legal profession, which had developed considerably in the interwar period, continued to grow in correspondence with developments in international cooperation and law. Neff argues that the international attention garnered by the post-war trials of war criminals in Nuremberg and Tokyo even raised some lawyers to the position of 'heroic crusaders.'<sup>498</sup> The basic positivist outlook which had characterised international law in the interwar period continued to have great staying power, and according to Neff, international lawyers

---

<sup>494</sup> Johnson, *International Tramps*, p. 162.

<sup>495</sup> Hammerstad, *Global Security Actor*, p. 97.

<sup>496</sup> Neff, 'International Law', p. 24.

<sup>497</sup> Neff, 'International Law', pp. 24-24

<sup>498</sup> See: Neff, 'International Law', p. 24; Kévonian, 'Les juristes juifs russes', pp. 72-94.



found that they were able to achieve more in areas which were designated as non-political. In the fraught political environment of the early Cold War and beginnings of decolonisation the nineteenth century positivist notion that law should be above politics gained a particular potency.

The drafters of the Statute of the UNHCR drew upon this positivist tradition when they designated it as a specifically ‘non-political’ agency.<sup>499</sup> In treading a careful line of Cold War politics, the UNHCR was careful to use the neutral language of humanitarianism in public statements to avoid any political confrontations.<sup>500</sup> According to Gilbert Jaeger who joined the office in the 1950s, it was evident to the staff within the office that ‘the very material’ that they ‘worked with is a political material’, but that they should ‘not operate from a party politic point of view.’ One of the ways in which the agency was adept at navigating this non-political mandate was that it was principally staffed by lawyers who trained in international law during the formative interwar period. Jaeger stated that when he arrived at UNHCR in 1952 there was an atmosphere of confidence which he described as a ‘spirit of the people’ stemming from the legal ‘fonctionnaires [who] had had first-hand experience.’<sup>501</sup> Legal personnel had not played a central role in the counterpart institutions of the interwar period. Under Nansen and throughout the 1930s, the central office in Geneva had been composed of a fairly small staff of bureaucrats, accountants, secretaries and typists, whilst its branch offices were staffed by delegates who predominantly worked for the Red Cross or in a diplomatic capacity.<sup>502</sup> By contrast, the largest department in the UNHCR throughout the 1950s was its legal division, and there was also a strong contingent of lawyers in the field branches. Several members of the legal department of IRO, including Paul Weis, Gustave Kullman, Jacques Rubinstein, John Kelly and Michael Hacking, moved directly to UNHCR and were determined to avoid being marginalised as they had been in IRO with its focus on resettlement rather than matters of international law.<sup>503</sup>

Whilst IRO’s principal focus on resettlement had left its legal staff frustrated, it had actually required a strong body of trained eligibility experts and semi-judicial tribunals

---

<sup>499</sup> See: Chimni, ‘Geopolitics’, p. 353; Holborn, *UNHCR*, p. xvi.

<sup>500</sup> Chimni, ‘Geopolitics’, p. 353.

<sup>501</sup> UNHCR/OT: Interview with Gilbert Jaeger, 15 April 1998.

<sup>502</sup> LNA/R1731/28411: Baker to Corfe in Athens, 14 March 1922.

<sup>503</sup> Loescher, *UNHCR and World Politics*, p. 53.

to determine refugee status.<sup>504</sup> There was a general desire by UN member states during the drafting of the Statute to streamline the ‘elaborate legal machinery’ of IRO.<sup>505</sup> In order to ensure the UNHCR was a smaller organisation with a minimal legal team a simplified and easy to apply definition of a refugee was formulated. Despite these intentions, law and the legal department of UNHCR played a central role from the beginning. As former eligibility and desk officer, John Kelly, stated, the office in the early 1950s was ‘all lawyers.’ Many of the legal protection staff were what Miriam Rürup terms ‘migrant lawyers.’<sup>506</sup> These men not only wielded personal experience in the drafting of international law, but they also had a personal understanding of refugeedom, having themselves experienced displacement or having felt the effects of displacement through close friends or spouses. That these lawyers had ‘lived throughout the period which made refugees’ was captured by Jaeger, who whilst himself an economist, had worked amongst the lawyers of the UNHCR. Jaeger described how having been schooled with ‘Russian refugees from the Bolshevik revolution’ in Brussels, he felt that he had experienced ‘contact with these refugee things, [both] physical contact and mental contact.’<sup>507</sup>

The first High Commissioner was also a refugee, having fled the occupied Netherlands in 1944 after actively resisting the Nazis in 1944. Goedhart had trained as a lawyer before becoming a diplomat and a politician, and subsequently served as the Minister of Justice for the Dutch government in exile between July 1944 and February 1945.<sup>508</sup> Goedhart had participated in planning post-war criminal legislation to address law and order in the post-war, and as such had a keen understanding of the Dutch legal system. After his appointment as High Commissioner, Goedhart hired a number of lawyers including Jacques Rubinstein, a Russian refugee who had left Russia after the revolution and subsequently helped author the 1928 League of Nations arrangement on Russian

---

<sup>504</sup> Holborn, *UNHCR*, p. 77

<sup>505</sup> Holborn, *UNHCR*, p. 77.

<sup>506</sup> Miriam Rürup, ‘Legal Expertise and Biographical Experience’, *Statelessness, Migrants, and the Shaping of New Legal Knowledge in the Postwar World*, *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 43, 4 (2017), p.p. 440.

<sup>507</sup> UNHCR/OT: Interview with Gilbert Jaeger, 20 April 1998.

<sup>508</sup> See: ‘Diplomatic Privileges (Extension) Acts, 1941 and 1944: Netherlands’, *London Gazette*, 21 September 1945. Available at: <https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/37278/page/4708/data.pdf> [accessed 1 October, 2019]; Mieke Meiboom, *Foute Groningers? Berechting van Collaboratie, Oorlogsgereleerde Misdaden en Internationale Oorlogsmisdaden in Groningen*, 1945-1952 (Groningen: Uitgeverij Passage, 2019); Gerrit J. van Heuven Goedhart, ‘The Responsibility of the International Community for Refugees’, *Ecumenical Review* (1946), pp. 447-449.

refugees and the 1933 Convention. He also hired the Swiss legal expert and former employee of the Nansen Office Gustave Kullman and former IRO employee Bernard Alexander, who were both married to Russian refugees.

Paul Weis, the head of the UNHCR's legal section who played a central role in the juridification of the post-war apparatus was also a former refugee. Weis was a former Doctor of Law in Vienna who had survived Dachau concentration camp and subsequently been granted Asylum in the UK. After working as a legal advisor for the World Jewish Congress during the war, Weis joined IRO and quickly rose to Head of the Protection (Policy) Division.<sup>509</sup> Barbara Harrell-Bond, Eftihia Voutira and Mark Leopold describe Weis's contribution to legal development in the field of refugees as 'numerous and legend', especially during the time he served with the UNHCR.<sup>510</sup> As the head of the UNHCR legal department, Weis wrote widely about the international laws affecting refugees and also served as a consultant for concerned parties.

Weis played a role in promoting the importance of refugee law which would help to embed the post-war apparatus. For example, in 1954 M. Maunoir from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) consulted Weis on the matter of Korean refugees interned in a camp in Japan, who had been detained on the grounds that they entered Japan illegally after attempting to escape the civil war in Korea.<sup>511</sup> The Korean refugee crisis unfolded concomitantly to the ongoing crises in Europe, Southern Asia, the Middle East and Hong Kong. Following the end of the Second World War, the Korean peninsula had become embroiled in a bitter conflict and been partitioned into Communist North and democratic South Korea, with accompanying population displacement. By the end of July 1951 there were approximately 5.25 million refugees in South Korea, whilst a number of refugees remained in North Korea, including Russians who had fled into the North during the Japanese wartime occupation of

---

<sup>509</sup> Weis/PW/PR/IRO/6/1: Letter from Gustave Kullman to Martha H. Biehle, Operations Officer at IRO, 17 January 1950.

<sup>510</sup> See: Barbara Harrell-Bond, Eftihia Voutira and Mark Leopold. 'Counting the Refugees: Gifts, Givers, Patrons and Clients', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 5, 3-4 (1992), p. 282; Paul Weis, *Nationality and Statelessness in International Law* (London: Stevens and Sons, 1956).

<sup>511</sup> UNHCR/11/1/15/71: Paul Weis, Note for files: Conversation with Mr Maunoir of the International Committee of the Red Cross, 24 July 1954.

Manchuria and Shanghai.<sup>512</sup> Because Korean refugees were displaced as a result of events taking place outside Europe, Korean refugees did not fall within the terms of the Convention. As Jacques Vernant put it in his post-war survey of refugees, Korean refugees were ‘not to be dealt with by bureaucracy as beings belonging to an inferior category.’ Vernant tempered this sharp statement by contending that international assistance was extended to this group as they were considered ‘refugees in the wider sociological sense, because their social and economic integration into the national community which has accepted them is far from complete.’<sup>513</sup>

Technically, Maunoir from the ICRC should have consulted the United Nations Korean reconstruction Agency (UNKRA), which was the better funded and specifically focussed organisation tasked with providing relief to Korean refugees. The political imperative of Cold War had led the United States in particular to take a strategic interest in the Korean War and its resulting displaced persons.<sup>514</sup> Consequently, UNKRA received significant funding from the United States and its Director General was Donald Kingsley, who had been the Americans candidate for High Commissioner.<sup>515</sup> Kingsley had also served as the Director General of IRO, whose mandate had not expired until 1952 despite the UNHCR starting work in 1951. According to Loescher, during this period of overlap a ‘fierce inter-agency rivalry broke out’ between the two agencies.<sup>516</sup> In the context of this history of hostility between the UNHCR and the head of UNKRA which is likely to have been well known in the micro-climate of Geneva, it is striking that Maunoir at the ICRC chose to either bypass UNKRA entirely, or to seek a second opinion from the UNHCR. Whilst it is not possible to say definitely why Maunoir took this course, it is reflective of the value placed on the legal expertise of staff such as Weis at the UNHCR.

Weis obliged Maunoir’s request, expressing that in his legal opinion ‘the agreement between the Japanese and the South Koreans did not oblige the Japanese Government to

---

<sup>512</sup> Peter Gatrell, ‘Korean Refugees and Aid Work in International Perspective’, in *Über Grenzen: Migration und Flucht in globaler Perspektive seit 1945*, ed. by A. Bresselau von Bressensdorf (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2019), p. 290.

<sup>513</sup> Jacques Vernant, *The Refugee in the Postwar World* (Yale: Yale University Press, 1953), p. 142.

<sup>514</sup> Gatrell, ‘Korean Refugees’, p. 289.

<sup>515</sup> See: UNHCR/OT: Interview with Gilbert Jaeger, 21 April 1998; Loescher, *UNHCR and World Politics*, p. 52.

<sup>516</sup> Loescher, *UNHCR and World Politics*, p. 52.

hand these persons over to the South Korean authorities. Forcible repatriation was excluded under the General Assembly Resolution of 12 February 1946 and could also be opposed for humanitarian reasons.<sup>517</sup> This is a very small but indicative example of the manifest ways in which actors like Weis, the agency of the UNHCR and the broader apparatus mobilised international law to cultivate de facto authority despite political and other limitations. Although UNKRA was a Western-based agency tasked with providing relief to refugees, as an effectively bilateral measure taken by the United States with a limited mandate, it represented a challenge to the authority of the apparatus with the UNHCR at its centre. The Statute and the Convention had charged the UNHCR with responsibility for legal protection and the presence of many excellent legal minds in the central office allowed the apparatus to gain traction as its institutional cornerstone gained a reputation for legal expertise through the dissemination of legal tools, documents, speeches and advice.<sup>518</sup>

*'Bad cases make bad law, no cases make no law': The Importance of Individual Cases and Actors in the post-1950 Apparatus*

From the discussion above, it is clear that a strong cadre of lawyers with experience of both interwar refugee law and the realities of displacement were instrumental in cultivating the UNHCR's reputation for legal expertise which was necessary in the particular context of political and economic challenges.<sup>519</sup> There were many more actions taken at the more local level in individual cases of refugees which shaped international refugee law and contributed to the ongoing process of knowledge building in the UNHCR. The director of the office in Geneva Bernard Alexander stated to a colleague that it was enough for the UNHCR to create and uphold law, but that it had to be interpreted in a way that actually helped refugees in a practical sense, that 'just the legal phrases [would] not do.'<sup>520</sup> One means by which the staff in the UNHCR, both in the central office and at the branch level, sought to breach the gap between 'legal

---

<sup>517</sup> Gatrell, 'Korean Refugees', p. 289.

<sup>518</sup> Gerrit J. van Heuven Goedhart, 'Refugee Problems and Their Solutions, Nobel Lecture, 12 December 1955', in *Nobel Lectures: Including Presentation Speeches and Laureates Biographies: Peace, 1951-1979*, ed. by Frederik W. Haberman (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1999), pp. 97-112.

<sup>519</sup> Arguably, whilst international law was also a very important element in the development of the interwar apparatus, it was less central to the apparatus given the relative freedom of the central agency in the 1920s in particular, compared to the restrictions the UNHCR faced in the 1950s.

<sup>520</sup> UNHCR/OT: Jaeger, 20 April 1998.

phrases' and the actual needs of refugees was through the circulation of 'eligibility bulletins.' These bulletins were compilations of contemporaneous legal case studies from the latter part of the 1950s. The bulletins were circulated by the central office to the various branch offices which had been set up or re-established in the major European states, the US, Latin America, and Asia.<sup>521</sup> Bernard Alexander had played an important role in the establishment of these branch offices in his role as office director. Alexander implemented a 'desk system' to manage the branch offices which UNHCR had inherited from IRO. According to Gilbert Jaeger, UNHCR had 'Branch Offices in the various countries. In my case in Germany, Austria and in the UK' which were managed from Geneva. Jaeger also recalled that the desk officers were 'rather independent' and 'had enormous authority because you decided what was to be done about refugees in this or that country.'<sup>522</sup> Jaeger's contemporary John Kelly stated that each desk officer was the 'king pin of his area' in the matter of legal protection and refugees.<sup>523</sup> In theory, this desk system isolated the various branches from developments in other countries.

The eligibility bulletins can be seen as a means of addressing this system of isolation. In the words of the first bulletin they were 'intended, in future, to inform Branch Offices of important decisions or rulings given by the competent authorities of individual countries, either of a general nature of test cases which, in the view of UNHCR, constitute a correct interpretation of the relevant provisions of the Convention and Statute.' The bulletins were in and of themselves materially powerful as the means by which the central agency of the apparatus attempted to regulate its broader institutional arms through 'the exchange of information on eligibility decisions taken in individual countries.' By regulating the branches, the institutional centre of the apparatus was also seeking to exercise compliance from governments in recognising the legal status of refugees considered legitimate under the Convention. The first bulletin explicitly stated that in order to 'achieve the recognition of [decisions about refugee status] by other States it is desirable that the decisions be as uniform as possible.'<sup>524</sup> In other words, for states to accept a person as a refugee on the basis of a decision taken by another state,

---

<sup>521</sup> Loescher, *UNHCR and World Politics*, p. 74.

<sup>522</sup> UNHCR/OT: Jaeger, 15 April 1998.

<sup>523</sup> UNHCR/OT: Kelly, 1 April 1998.

<sup>524</sup> Weis/PW/PR/HCR/REF/16: Eligibility Bulletin Number 1, 29 March 1957.

the decision making process needed to match. In this way, the UNHCR could impact the lives of refugees without contravening its ‘non-operational’ mandate. In the process of attempting to standardise interpretations and applications of international refugee law, the UNHCR encountered contextual variations and challenges to the status quo of the law from refugees themselves.

The eligibility bulletins are also an example of how the various actors within an apparatus interact with each other and with other elements, both material and intellectual. Individual staff members at the UNHCR were aware of the importance of individual cases in shaping future interpretations of refugee law by actors in other countries and contexts. For example, Michael Hacking, who made the transition from IRO to UNHCR with Weis and Kullman highlighted the importance of individual cases, stating in a letter to Weis that ‘we all know bad cases make bad law, and no cases make no law.’<sup>525</sup> Legal staff in the various branch offices were not simply following orders as laid out in the eligibility bulletins, but also took their own decisions. Ivor Jackson, who had been a legal advisor at the Vienna branch in the 1950s, recalled that he and the other advisors based at regional offices in Graz and Klagenfurt had reported to the head of the Vienna Branch, Arnold Rörholt who was ‘responsible for the legal side’.<sup>526</sup> According to Jackson, the main legal preoccupation of the branch office in Austria was determining refugee status as the Austria government had issued a decree which held that ‘every single application’ for refugee status had to be shown to the UNHCR before a decision was taken. Jackson described this process, stating that;

...we got the protocol, each person asking for asylum, they had to take down a protocol; one of the points was name, place of origin, how you crossed the border [...] reason for flight, and then at the end there was an evaluation. So what one did in practice was, one read through the case files, now if a file was clearly negative, we put in the negative form; if it was a case which we thought was positive, we went to the local authorities and we said: ‘Look, you should recognise this person as a

---

<sup>525</sup> PW/PR/IRO/6/1: Michael Hacking to Weis, 27 January 1950

<sup>526</sup> UNHCR/OT: Ivor Jackson, 8 April 1998.

refugee’. If it was a sort of doubtful case one didn’t know what to do, we interviewed the person [...] Now if they couldn’t reach a decision, on a local level, the case was transferred to Vienna and then we discussed [it] with the Ministry.<sup>527</sup>

The legal advisors processing the requests for refugee status were evidently not just following unquestioningly, but using their own interpretation of ‘procedures’ to make decisions on individual cases. A key characteristic of apparatuses evidenced in Chapter I in relation to the apparatus in China is that the various localised manifestations share a familial resemblance but differ depending on context.<sup>528</sup> Jackson highlighted how interpretations of eligibility differed across the various branch offices, which nevertheless worked within the same framework, with the same ‘procedures’. According to Jackson, in 1959 he met with M. Lapena his legal counterpart from the Italian branch office, who informed him that the UNHCR in Italy had a substantially higher rate of refugee recognition than the Austrian branch. In order to understand this divergence, Jackson went on a ‘mission’ to follow cases in Trieste, stating that he ‘could not make head nor tail of it as to why some were recognised and some were not’.<sup>529</sup> Individual actors at the branch level played an important role in deciding whether or not a person should be assigned refugee status. The eligibility bulletins show that refugees were not simply passive recipients of these decisions, but were also capable of taking an active role in their own status determination.

One case in which a refugee used their own agency to affect not only their case but which also impacted the outcome of at least another 200 appeals by refugees was that of K. A., an Armenian refugee from Turkey. According to a 1957 eligibility bulletin, in August 1956 the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (OPFRA) rejected his claim to refugee status in France.<sup>530</sup> K. A., stated that during the riots in Istanbul of the 6 and 7 September 1955 he had been persecuted for being Armenian.<sup>531</sup> OPFRA rejected K. A.’s claim to refugee status on the basis that the

---

<sup>527</sup> UNHCR/OT: Jackson, 8 April 1998.

<sup>528</sup> Feldman, *Migration Apparatus*, p. 16.

<sup>529</sup> UNHCR/OT: Jackson, 8 April 1998.

<sup>530</sup> Weis/PW/PR/HCR/REF/16: Eligibility Bulletin Number 2, 5 August 1957.

<sup>531</sup> Ali Tuna Kuyucu, ‘Ethno-Religious ‘Unmixing’ of ‘Turkey’: 6-7 September Riots as a Case in Turkish Nationalism’, *Nations and Nationalism* 11, 3 (2005), p. 366.



definition of a refugee as laid out in the 1951 Refugee Convention required a person to have been subject to persecution as a result of events in Europe prior to 1951, and the riots had occurred in 1955. The consequence of this ruling was that K. A. was required to leave France. Instead K. A. appealed to the *Commission des Recours*, a committee comprising a member of the French *Conseil D'État*, a representative of the Board of the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons, and the representative of the UNHCR in France. In his appeal, K. A. argued that the persecution experienced by the Armenian minority in Istanbul in the 1950s could not be disassociated from longer term processes of persecution.

During the period of Ottoman rule, Istanbul was multi-ethnic and home to many different religions. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, hundreds of thousands of Muslim Ottoman subjects migrated from other parts of the empire to Anatolia and started to imagine a distinct Turkish nation defined by the Muslim faith. During the First World War as the Ottoman Empire collapsed, the Turkish 'state-in-the-making' sought ethnic homogenisation through mass expulsions, forced assimilation and massacres.<sup>532</sup> In 1915, nearly one million Armenians were killed during their deportation from Eastern Anatolia to the Syrian deserts by the Turkish army. In 1923, the signing of the Lausanne Treaty led to the exchange of 1.2 million Greeks from Turkey with 400,000 Muslims from Greece, furthering the ethnic homogenisation agenda. Upon the creation of the Republic of Turkey on 29 October 1923, any remaining non-Muslim minorities were given Turkish citizenship with rights guaranteed by a secular Turkish constitution. However, in the late 1940s the Turkish Democratic Party succeeded in forming a popular collective will and a populist front which stoked animosity towards non-Muslims. The rising tensions eventually led to the outbreak of the 1955 riots, which lasted two days and primarily targeted the Greek Christian minority, as well as the Armenian and Jewish communities. Several Greeks were killed and many more of all minorities were injured, and churches, synagogues, schools, houses and businesses were destroyed.<sup>533</sup>

---

<sup>532</sup> See: Joel Migdal, *State in Society: How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 21-22; Kale Başak, 'Transforming an Empire: The Ottoman Empire's Immigration and Settlement Policies in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 20, 2 (2014), pp. 252-271.

<sup>533</sup> Fulya Memisoglu, 'The Legacy of the Nation State Building Process: Minority Politics in Greece and Turkey', in *New Nation States and National Minorities*, ed. by Julien Danero Iglesias, Nenad Stojanović and Sharon Weinblum (Colchester: ECPR Press, 2014), p.180

After reviewing the context of the rise of Turkish nationalism and the long-term processes which led to the riot, the Commission des Recours decided to annul OPFRA's decision and ruled in favour of recognising Mr K. A.'s claim to refugee status. The UNHCR bulletin went on to conclude that such a decision was 'likely to affect 200 similar cases, of whom thirty have already appealed to the Review Commission.'<sup>534</sup> Mr K. A.'s application, rejection, appeal and final gaining of refugee status in France in 1956 demonstrates several key aspects of the post-1950 displacement response apparatus, not least the continuing impact of pre-war refugee generating processes. It underscores the power of interpretation regarding the legal instruments put in place in the 1950s, and the very real impact that this had on the lives of refugees and stateless people. In addition, it indicates that whilst the UNHCR was a central part of the post-1950 response apparatus, in this case with a member of its staff involved in the appeal procedure, it was just one element in a constellation of actors, institutional practices, legal mechanisms, and systems of categorisation.<sup>535</sup>

A more contentious case which exemplified how individuals shaped international refugee law was that of B. B., a Moroccan national who had deserted the French army at some point between 1942 and 1943. In 1956, B. B. made a claim to refugee status given that his decision to desert the French army was precipitated by his refusing to 'shoot his brothers in the case of incidents in Morocco.'<sup>536</sup> B. B. had been part of the French army in Morocco at a time when it depended upon indigenous soldiers to implement French colonial policies. In the late 1930s, the French paramilitary forces in Morocco had become 'political firefighters', sent in to contain unrest during industrial protests arising from economic crisis.<sup>537</sup> Although the French did not officially implement conscription in Morocco, oral accounts reveal that coercive measures were used to acquire troops. It is likely that B. B. either joined the French army under duress or for economic reasons during a period of high unemployment. Approximately 83% of colonial soldiers in Morocco were peasants who 'who reacted in a rather inconsistent way' towards their

---

<sup>534</sup> The identities of people in the case studies in this chapter have been omitted for purposes of data protection. See: Weis/PW/PR/HCR/REF/16: Eligibility Bulletin Number 2, 5 August 1957.

<sup>535</sup> Peterson, 'Uneven Development', p. 440.

<sup>536</sup> Weis/PW/PR/HCR/REF/16: Eligibility Bulletin Number 3, December 1957.

<sup>537</sup> Martin Thomas, 'The Gendarmerie, Information Collection, and Colonial Violence in French North Africa Between the Wars', *Historical Reflections / Réflexions Historiques*, 36, 2 (2010), pp. 89-90.

colonisers, and desertion from the army was not uncommon.<sup>538</sup> Having deserted the army by 1943, B. B. somehow made his way to Germany by the early post-war period. It is not specified how he made the journey, but one possibility is that he deserted whilst serving with the French army in Europe and at the end of the war joined the millions of other displaced people in Germany which had been divided into four zones of occupation administered by the Americans, British, French and Soviets. B. B. was present in the American zone of occupied Germany between 1945 and 1949. It is possible that B. B. crossed from the French zones of Austria and Germany which bordered the American zone to the South West as seen on the map in Figure 9. B. B. remained in Munich until at least 1957 when his case was raised in the eligibility bulletin. This is evident from the report that B. B. was sentenced eighteen times for minor offences by both the American military courts and regional German courts.<sup>539</sup>



Figure 9: Map showing the Allied Occupation Zones in Central Europe, 1944. Source: edmaps.com

<sup>538</sup> Driss Maghraoui, 'Moroccan Colonial Soldiers: Between Selective Memory and Collective Memory', *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 20, 2 (1998), pp. 33-38.

<sup>539</sup> Andrew Szenajda, 'Restoring Administrations of Justice in Early Practice: American-Occupied Germany, 1945-1949', *Amsterdam Law Forum*, 6, 1 (2014), pp. 35-67.

After being sentenced multiple times in firstly the American military, and the West German courts, by 1957 B. B. had been issued with a domiciliary ban in Munich where he was residing, which he countered by attempting to claim refugee status with the UNHCR. Having assessed his case, this claim was denied by the UNHCR which potentially left B.B. in the position of being deported back to France or Morocco. However, although the Administrative court in Munich which handled B.B.'s appeal did not challenge the UNHCR's decision on his refugee status, it did state that there were 'special circumstances in this case in view of which the ground of desertion would constitute political persecution.' The court mused on the course of action to take given that there were 'no generally recognised rules of international law on the right of asylum, only indications as to the beginning of the development of such rules.' Whilst upholding the UNHCR's decision not to grant official refugee status, the Munich court declared that the domiciliary ban was not to 'be used for the expulsion of the appellant to France or territories under French protection', effectively offering B. B. part legal protection despite his lack of official status.<sup>540</sup>

It is debatable as to why the judges at the Administrative Court in Munich took steps to ensure B. B. could not be returned to either France or Morocco as a country loosely considered as being under French 'protection', having gained its independence from France in 1956.<sup>541</sup> By 1957 when B. B.'s case arose in the Munich administrative court, it is likely that regional judges as educated members of the bourgeoisie were aware of developments in German foreign policy which sought to distance the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) from increasingly unpopular French colonial policies. Mathilde Von Bülow contends that the West German government in Bonn had two central foreign policies in the 1950s, which were intended to isolate their Eastern neighbour and competitor the German Democratic Republic (GDR), and to uphold the FRG's claim to being the only legitimate German state. The first was the policy of *Westbindung* or Western integration, which in particular meant reconciliation with France. The second was to form good relationships with newly independent states in Asia, Southern,

---

<sup>540</sup> Weis/PW/PR/HCR/REF/16: Eligibility Bulletin Number 3, December 1957.

<sup>541</sup> For further reading on the history of the West German judiciary please see: Urs Kramer and Tim Hinrichsen, 'German Law of Administrative Court Procedure: An Overview', *Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities and Social Sciences*, 10, 8 (2015), pp. 2050-2061; Justin Collings, *Democracy's Guardians: A History of the German Federal Constitutional Court, 1951-2001* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

Eastern and Central Africa, and particularly the ‘Arab world’ in North Africa and the Middle East, which politicians in Bonn increasingly regarded as a ‘decisive front sector’ in their personal war against the GDR.<sup>542</sup> North Africa and the Middle East were strategically important to the head of the West German government Konrad Adenauer both as a buffer against communism and as a source of oil and export market.

The two policies of French appeasement and forming strong relationships with independent states became increasingly incompatible in the context of a growing and increasingly bloody war in Algeria between Algerian Nationalists and the French colonisers. The contradictions of West German foreign policy were further underscored during the 1956 Suez crisis of 1956, in which the French and the British attempted to wrestle back control of the Suez Canal after it was nationalised by the Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser. In the wake of the Suez crisis the Soviet Union became increasingly vocal in its criticism of French colonial actions in particular, and politicians in the GDR also took this as an opportunity to denounce West German ties to both France and Israel. In an official statement issued in April 1957 the foreign ministry of the GDR denounced the FDR for having ‘neo-colonial designs’ in the Arab world, and East German propaganda warmed to its theme of characterising West Germany as a ‘lackey of French imperialism’.<sup>543</sup>

Without written evidence, it is difficult to say for certain why the judges in Munich decided to explicitly protect B. B. from expulsion to French territory. However, in the context of the very personal Cold War between the GDR and the FDR and the increasing East German verbal attacks on West German relationships with colonial powers, it is possible that the ruling was a political rebuttal at a regional level. Both the case of K. A. and B. B. demonstrate that that far being a one way vertical process, interpretations of international law were complex, with refugees and regional courts making small but frequent challenges to the status quo. Furthermore, they once again underscore the importance of context in relation to how responses to refugees unfold.

---

<sup>542</sup> Mathilde Von Bülow, *West Germany, Cold War Europe and the Algerian War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 57-66.

<sup>543</sup> Von Bülow, *West Germany*, pp. 57-66.

## *Voluntary Agencies at the Boundaries of the Apparatus*

The manifold ways in which the UNHCR developed its expertise and international reputation in the field of refugee law represented only one means by which the apparatus expanded despite the many limitations of the early 1950s. Another important aspect of how the apparatus concretised throughout the first decade of the UNHCR was through the dynamism and actions of an increasing number of volags which pushed and expanded the boundaries. These volags worked both with and independently from the central refugee body, and were responsible for stepping beyond the legislative confines of the UNHCR to increase the reach of the apparatus. Many of the larger volags who were active in the 1950s had also played an important role in the interwar apparatus, providing material assistance and cooperating with the High Commissioner and then Nansen Office in Geneva as explored in Chapter I. Furthermore, the decentralisation of responses to displacement during the Second World War had created a space in which volags had expanded their role, as discussed in Chapter III. Building on this precedent and in the context of the increased limitations placed on the institutional body, volags were vital in expanding the focus of the apparatus by performing the role of the operational arm of the UNHCR, and by working beyond the narrow definition of a refugee. For example, volags worked beyond European boundaries long before the UNHCR took action in Africa in the 1960s, which is widely acknowledged amongst historians as the moment in which the Western ‘refugee regime’ expanded globally.<sup>544</sup>

At this point it is necessary to address the official western-led responses to specific episodes of displacement in the 1950s, and why these are not considered to be a part of the apparatus within this project. As stated previously, the Second World War was truly global in scale. The aftermaths of this global conflict reverberated throughout the ensuing ‘violent’ peacetime, with new episodes of displacement occurring in response to ongoing political and social instabilities. For example, in 1948 the British government renounced their mandate in Palestine, and the state of Israel was formed just one day before the mandate was due to end. The creation of this new state triggered a conflict which by 1949 had led 700,000 Palestinian refugees to flee to the Arab controlled areas of Palestine in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza, as well as to

---

<sup>544</sup> Frank and Reinisch, ‘Nation States’, p. 478.

Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan.<sup>545</sup> Concurrently, millions of Koreans were uprooted as a result of the civil war between the communist North and nationalist South. Both the displacement of Palestinians in the Middle East and Koreans in South East Asia were both strategically of interest to the United States, which led to the creation of specialist agencies which were both generously funded by United States administrations, namely the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the United Nations Korean Rehabilitation Administration (UNKRA). The creation of these separate bodies to respond to refugee crises outside Europe reflected the belief that ‘new’ refugee problems could not and should not be dealt with by the central UN refugee body.<sup>546</sup> Focused only on the particular displacement which they were tasked to assist, these two agencies were isolated from the broader UN system and were given temporary mandates. Whilst UNRWA continues to operate today, it remains apart from centralised responses to refugees. Therefore, whilst superficially it appeared that there were Western responses to refugees outside Europe in the early post-war period, this assistance was narrow in scope and isolated from the broader apparatus of displacement response which continues to dominate today.

There was a degree of convergence between the apparatus and these individual agencies through the volags who worked both in Korea and Palestine, as well as in many other parts of the world during the 1950s. As discussed in the previous chapter, these voluntary actors had also played an important part in the ad hoc assemblage of responses which sprang up during the Second World War. In the immediate post-war period approximately one hundred of these ‘voluntary societies’ formed informal working relationships with UNRRA and IRO and worked alongside them in Germany, Italy, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Spain.<sup>547</sup> The lack of formal agreements between the volags and the post-war agencies caused uncertainty for both the UNHCR and the voluntary societies themselves about how much they would be required to cooperate with the new agency. The representative of the UNHCR to the UN in New York Aline Cohn reported after a regional conference of volags held in Paris in 1951 that she had been ‘struck by the amount of interest expressed in this office by the

---

<sup>545</sup> Brenda Goddard, ‘UNHCR and the International Protection of Palestinian Refugees’, *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 28, 2-3 (2010), p. 479.

<sup>546</sup> Gatrell, ‘World Wide Web’, p. 103.

<sup>547</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/1/4/0/GEN: Report ‘Cooperation of voluntary societies in refugee work’, March 1950

various representatives’, although she cautioned that it remained to be seen ‘how effectively this interest can be translated into positive action on their part.’<sup>548</sup> Faced with a severe lack of funds, High Commissioner Goedhart sought to ‘enlist [the volags] support in general for his policies’, and more specifically hoped that they would act as ‘subsidiary organs for the practical action of the UNHCR’ by taking action in specific refugee cases allotted to them by the UNHCR branch offices based in different countries.<sup>549</sup>

According to Gilbert Jaeger, the office did in fact manage to ‘establish a good link’ with several major volags ‘from the start.’<sup>550</sup> It was with the support of four of these organisations, namely the World Council of Churches (WCC), the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) and the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), that the UNHCR applied for financial assistance from the American funding body the Ford Foundation in March 1952.<sup>551</sup> After meeting with representatives of the UNHCR and the four volags in New York, the Ford Foundation agreed to issue them with a three million dollar grant. The conditions of the grant designated the UNHCR as the fund administrator for the volags, who would carry out any practical operations. Jaeger claimed that ‘the existing theory that the Office was ‘non-operational’ was ‘largely fictional’, as the UNHCR worked closely with the volags and their implementation of material assistance from the early 1950s onwards. Jaeger also noted that the relationship between the central agency and the staff in the various volags was reciprocal, as the well-established and experienced organisations provided ‘advice’ and ‘support’ to the new refugee body.<sup>552</sup> The importance of these voluntary societies to the UNHCR in the early 1950s was captured by the deputy High Commissioner James Read when he stated that it ‘should not be forgotten that they are one of our main instruments and *raison d’être*’, meaning that

---

<sup>548</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/1/4/0/GEN: Aline Cohn to John Alexander, ‘Report on Attendance at Regional Conference of Non-Governmental Organisations, Paris, 30 October-2 November 1951’, 7 November 1951.

<sup>549</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/1/4/0/GEN: Internal Memo from John Alexander and G. Falchi, ‘Submission of concrete cases to N.G.Os for solution’, 11 January 1952.

<sup>550</sup> UNHCR/OT: Jaeger, 15 April 1998.

<sup>551</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/1/4/0/GEN: Ford Foundation Meeting, March 25 1952.

<sup>552</sup> UNHCR/OT: Jaeger, 15 April 1998.



cooperation with the volags provided both a means of operating, and a reason for the UNHCR to continue in its work.<sup>553</sup>

In the early 1950s there was no single point of liaison for the private agencies within the office, meaning that the majority of staff in the UNHCR had contact with volags ‘in one capacity or another.’<sup>554</sup> This is significant as it indicates the fluid manner in which knowledge moved between these different parts of the apparatus. That knowledge circulated in a fairly free and dynamic way between the agencies with their practical experience and the staff in the UNHCR is important in the context of the expansion of the apparatus. The UNHCR had to work within strict perimeters with regards to who were legally considered refugees, but the volags had no such restrictions. During the meeting with the Ford Foundation in 1952 who claimed to have a ‘world outlook’, the High Commissioner and Edgar Chandler from WCC explained that whilst the UNHCR’s mandate excluded Arab refugees and other groups, including 3 million Korean refugees, at ‘least three of the Agencies present [at the meeting were] trying to be of assistance’, and that the agencies who cooperated with the UNHCR ‘operated almost everywhere.’<sup>555</sup> The various agencies were able to offer assistance to refugees regardless of their nationality or ethnicity, when they became a refugee or where in the world they had been displaced.

Dr Stewart Herman from the LWF who attended the meeting with the Ford Foundation stated that whilst the volags weren’t ‘disinterested in political questions’ which were intrinsic to refugee issues, as ‘world organisations [they felt] obligated to help all persons who came to them.’<sup>556</sup> The LWF was founded in 1947 as a communion of Lutheran churches, and worked closely with another organisation which was also important to the UNHCR in 1952, the WCC.<sup>557</sup> Founded one year after the LWF, the WCC was the organisational descendent of the Department of Reconstruction and Inter-Church Aid, and the Ecumenical Refugee Commission (ERC).<sup>558</sup> Both Inter-Church

---

<sup>553</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/1/4/0/GEN: Inter office memo from James M. Read to Leonard Probst, 27 August 1951.

<sup>554</sup> UNHCR/OT: Jaeger, 15 April 1998.

<sup>555</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/1/4/0/GEN: Ford Foundation Meeting, March 25 1952.

<sup>556</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/1/4/0/GEN: Ford Foundation Meeting, March 25 1952.

<sup>557</sup> Lutheran World Federation, ‘About the Lutheran World Federation’, *The Lutheran World Federation Tenth Assembly, Winnipeg* (2003). Available at: <https://2003.lwfassembly.org/lwf-assembly/htdocs/aboutlwf.html> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

<sup>558</sup> The Inter-Church Agency was established in 1942, and the ERC in 1942. See: Gaines, *WCC*, p. 178.

Aid and the ERC had set a precedent for working with refugee populations who fell outside legal definitions by aiding ‘enemy’ populations such as ethnic Germans after the war. In 1946, Reverend Henry Carter from the ERC wrote that the churches ‘must act, as Christians, on a much larger scale, irrespective of the nationality of those in dire need.’<sup>559</sup> Similarly, the WCC expert on refugees Elfan Rees later argued that faith-based volags had a duty to advocate for refugees who were not recognised within the strict definitions of international refugee law.<sup>560</sup> One criticism levelled at religious organisations such as the LWF and WCC is that their humanitarianism derives from their impulse to convert non-believers to Christianity. Regardless of whether the motives of these organisations were predominantly altruistic or proselytising, they took pragmatic action to assist refugees outside the Western legal framework, a pattern that volags would repeat throughout the 1950s in different parts of the world.<sup>561</sup>

Although umbrella organisations and volags such as the WCC were a part of the Western based apparatus, as demonstrated by their close working relationship with the institutional agency of the UNHCR, they fundamentally challenged the legal, temporal and geographical boundaries.<sup>562</sup> For example, volags in the 1950s took no heed of the

---

<sup>559</sup> World Council of Churches (WCC): Henry Carter, ‘Hunger and Homelessness in a Desperate Europe’, in *The Lost Millions in Europe: How the Church can help Refugees and ‘Displaced Persons* (London: ERC, 1946).

<sup>560</sup> Gatrell, ‘World Wide Web’, p. 103.

<sup>561</sup> Firoze Manji and Carl O’Coill, ‘The Missionary Position’, *International Affairs*, 78, 3 (2002), pp. 567-583.

<sup>562</sup> Volags represented the only western presence during the largest post-war refugee crisis which took place on the Indian subcontinent during partition, when an estimated 18 million people. Politically, Indian and Pakistani refugees were of little strategic importance to Western powers, who understood the ‘refugee problem’ solely in terms of post-war European politics and the great ideological struggle between the liberal West and the authoritarian Soviet bloc. Cabeiri Debergh Robinson argues that as a result of limited international engagement with partition related displacement, a regional system for responding to mass displacement based on bilateral agreements and shared administrative practices between South East Asian states was able to evolve outside the developing western centric apparatus. In addition to domestic relief efforts from organisations such as the Indian and Pakistani Red Cross Societies, international voluntary agencies who had been operating in India prior to partition such as the Christian Relief Association (CRA) and the British Red Cross (BRC) attempted to offer assistance to ‘the most vulnerable groups of individuals’ and to draw international attention to the severity of the crisis. See: Zamindar Vazira Fazila-Yacoobali, *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), pp. 2-16; Gatrell, *Modern Refugee*, p. 85; Robinson, Cabeiri Debergh, ‘Too Much Nationality: Kashmiri Refugees, the South East Asian Refugee Regime, and a Refugee State, 1947-1974’, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 25, 3 (2012), p. 347; Sam Smith, ‘India Partition: Looking Back at the Red Cross Response to the Refugee Crisis’, in *British Red Cross* (2017). Available at: <http://blogs.redcross.org.uk/international/2017/08/india-partition-looking-back-red-cross-response-refugee-crisis/> [accessed 1 October, 2019]; Catherine Rey-Schyr, ‘The ICRC’s Activities on the Indian Subcontinent Following Partition (1947-1949)’, *International Review of the Red Cross*, 323 (1998). Available at: <https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/resources/documents/article/other/57jpcb.htm> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

legislative ‘colour line’ drawn between predominantly European refugees and non-European refugees from Asia, Africa and elsewhere.<sup>563</sup> Historically, the majority of charitable work by Europeans in other parts of the world had been undertaken by Christian missionaries and a small number of private charities who assisted with specific causes, such as famine relief. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century empires sought to control vast areas of the world through colonial rule. One part of the colonial mission was to ‘civilize’ indigenous populations according to contemporaneous Western morals and social norms. According to Firoze Manji and Carl O’Coill, missionaries and private charities were key agents in the ideological struggle to civilise colonial subjects, and to subdue resistance to colonial rule. Therefore, whilst Western organisations undertook philanthropic work beyond Europe prior to the Second World War, which included assisting populations displaced by natural disasters, this assistance served to reinforce the racial differences between the civilizers and the ‘natives.’<sup>564</sup> In the aftermath of the Second World War colonialism was ‘on its deathbed as a legitimate form of political organization’, and territorial decolonisation rapidly unfolded in Asia in the late 1940s and 1950s.<sup>565</sup>

A group of new organisations founded in the wake of war such as the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (OXFAM) and the Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere (CARE) represented a break with the older societies, having no undesirable associations with colonial regimes. Amidst the arrival of these new organisations who garnered widespread support for their internationalist humanitarian agendas and in the context of rising anti-colonialism movements, older charitable bodies and colonial missionary societies took steps towards decolonising their organisations. As well as beginning the process ‘indigenizing’ their staff in various developing countries, organisations such as WCC and LWF cultivated networks of ‘indigenous organisations’, through whom they were able to implement their welfare programmes, including those concerning refugees.<sup>566</sup> Furthermore, they began to change their ideology from the

---

<sup>563</sup> The ramifications of the global ‘colour line’ for the development of the apparatus will also be discussed in Chapter V. See: Laura Madokoro, ‘Surveying Hong Kong in the 1950s: Western Humanitarians and the ‘Problem’ of Chinese Refugees’, *Modern Asian Studies*, 49, 2 (2015), p. 514.

<sup>564</sup> Manji and O’Coill, ‘Missionary Position’, pp. 567-583.

<sup>565</sup> Peterson, ‘Uneven Development’, p. 327.

<sup>566</sup> See: Draft of minutes of meeting with Ford Foundation, March 25 1952; Ronald Webster, ‘Stewart W. Herman, Pastor of the American Church in Berlin 1935–42, and Hitler’s Persecution of the Jews’, in *Remembering for the Future*, ed. by J. K. Roth et al (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), pp. 1561-1575; Manji and O’Coill, ‘Missionary Position’, p. 571.

overtly racialized civilising discourse towards the language of development and humanitarianism that was just taking shape. As will be discussed in the following chapter, the ‘decolonisation’ of the mind which took place within the UNHCR unfolded slowly and unevenly across the organisation which remained predominantly focussed on European refugees throughout the 1950s.

In contrast, on the surface at least many of the older volags who worked alongside the UNHCR joined the new post-war bodies in embracing decolonisation. In reality, both new and old volags developed what Peter Gatrell describes as a ‘rhetoric of humanitarian benevolence’ in response to refugee crises such as that which followed the Korean civil war in the early 1950s.<sup>567</sup> The argument here is that the volags who worked alongside the UNHCR participated in a subtle form of humanitarian paternalism, and at the same time deliberately disregarded the racial and geographical limitations codified in international refugee law. The various agencies created a sense of normalisation particularly amongst UNHCR staff in regards to assistance to refugees in Africa, Asia and elsewhere. This contributed to the concretisation of the apparatus through changing mentalities which sought to expand the reach of the central agency and international legislation beyond Europe.

### *Separating the Identity and Travel Functions of Documents for Refugees and Stateless People*

The various actors, devices, policies, legislation and other elements which composed the post-war apparatus were able to overcome the financial and political limitations of the early 1950s, in part through the cultivation for international legal expertise at the macro and micro levels, and also through the further ascendance of volags who pushed at the geographical and metaphorical boundaries. Thus far this chapter has focussed primarily upon which devices enabled the post-war apparatus to gain a foothold and expand during the 1950s. In contrast, the following section explores how and why the refugee ‘passports’ which were an instrumental device within the interwar period lost their potency in the post-war. The reduced importance of refugee travel and identity documents is reflected in the disparity of scholarship between the interwar and post-

---

<sup>567</sup> Gatrell, ‘Korean refugees’, p. 290.

1950 period. Interwar Nansen passports have received a great deal of attention from scholars and those interested in citing it as an example for contemporary policy, and continues to be celebrated as one of the central achievements of responses in regards to refugees during the League of Nations era.<sup>568</sup> Similarly, more recent refugee identification practices such as biometric testing have received a great deal of scholarly attention from researchers and policy makers who question their viability, ethics and implications for refugees.<sup>569</sup> More specifically, Mark B. Salter has brought together discussions of biometrics with travel documents in his exploration of the securitisation of refugee travel documents in the developed world.<sup>570</sup>

Between the historiography of Nansen passports and more contemporary analyses beginning in the early 2000s there is a profound silence in the literature on the subject of refugee travel and identity documents.<sup>571</sup> That scholars have not focussed upon this period of changes in refugee passportisation only serves to underscore the devaluation of this device in the 1950s. An exploration of the transition from Nansen passports to London Travel documents, ICRC identity certificates, and finally Convention Travel Documents (CTDs) demonstrates the process through which the post-war apparatus grew away from this important interwar device. The swift and significant changes to the core functions of these documents reflect the broader developments in early Cold War political thinking regarding who should and should not be considered a ‘refugee.’

That the scholarship becomes muted on the matter of refugee travel and identity documents after the Second World War and particularly from 1950 onwards does not mean that they did not remain on the agenda. In June 1957 Paul Weis from the UNHCR wrote to the Chairman of the Committee of Minister of the Council of Europe that it was ‘difficult to over-emphasize the importance of a travel document to a refugee, refugees cannot travel outside the country in which they find themselves in without such

---

<sup>568</sup> Giaimo, ‘The Little-Known Passport’; Wallaschek, ‘The Nansen passport.’

<sup>569</sup> See: Btihaj Ajana, ‘Asylum, Identity Management and Biometric Control’, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 26, 4 (2013), 26, 4, pp. 576-595; Maren Behrens, ‘Identity as Convention: Biometric Passports and the Promise of Security’, *Journal of Information, Communication and Ethics in Society*, 12, 1 (2014), pp. 44-59; Kristin Bergtora Sandvik et al., ‘Humanitarian Technology: A Critical Research Agenda’, *International Review of the Red Cross*, 96, 893 (2014), pp. 219-242.

<sup>570</sup> Mark B. Salter, ‘International Cooperation on Travel Document Security in the Developed World’, in *Global Mobility Regimes*, ed. by Rey Koslowski (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 115-129.

<sup>571</sup> Amitava Kumar, *Passport Photos* (Berkeley: University of California Press: 2000).

a document.<sup>572</sup> On the one hand, Weis's statement indicates that for the UNHCR at least these documents were still considered a fairly important aspect of responses to displacement. On the other hand, it highlights a fundamental difference in the treatment of refugee documents in the interwar and post-war apparatuses, namely that the dual functions of identification and permission to travel had been separated.

Nansen passports, which had been fêted during the interwar period as an innovative solution to the problems of statelessness and the immobility of displaced populations, had fundamentally united these two functions, serving both as a means of identification and mobility. In contrast to the comprehensive purpose of interwar Nansen passports, the process of separating the travel and identity functions of refugee documents began in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War with the renewed issuing of Nansen passports.<sup>573</sup> The many 'new' refugees displaced by the war were to be issued with new documents, which will be discussed further below. Amongst the multitudes of refugees across Europe, the Middle East and Asia were so called 'old' groups of Russians, Armenians, Assyro-Chaldeans, Assyrians and assimilated refugees who had first been displaced in the interwar period and for whom the interwar Arrangements of 1922, 1924, 1926, and 1928 discussed in Chapter II had been created. Despite the widely perceived failure of the League of Nations and its associated organisations, policies and laws, Belgium, France, Italy, the Republic of Ireland, Switzerland, Britain and Norway all resumed the issuing of Nansen passports as early as 1944, using one of the only pre-existing measures available in the legal vacuum created by war.<sup>574</sup> The wide acceptance of passportisation which developed during the interwar period remained intact in the post-war era, reinforcing the urgency of addressing the large numbers of refugees who found themselves without identity or travel documents in the aftermath of war.<sup>575</sup>

---

<sup>572</sup> Weis/ PW/PR/IRO/12/ IRO/UNHCR: Letter from Paul Weis to the Chairman of the Committee of Minister of the Council of Europe, 6 June 1957.

<sup>573</sup> Gilbert Jaeger, 'Opening Keynote Address: The Refugee Convention at Fifty', in *The Refugee Convention at Fifty: A View from Forced Migration Studies*, ed. by Joanne van Selm et al (Maryland: Lexington, 2003), p. 10.

<sup>574</sup> Weis/PW/PR/IRO/12/IRO/UNHCR: Inter-office memo from Bella Berkowich to Kullman, 31 October 1949.

<sup>575</sup> Steffan Mau et al., 'The Global Mobility Divide: How Visa Policies have Evolved over Time', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 41, 8 (2015), p. 1202.

In some cases, the re-issuing of Nansen passports faithfully conformed to the form and functions of the interwar period. The most notable case of re-issuing Nansen passports in the exact mould of the interwar was that of France, where a number of ‘Nansen refugees’ still resided, having survived the wartime German occupation in the North and the Vichy government in the South. During the war the delegation of the Nansen Office had been forced to close under German pressure and in 1941 Prime Minister Admiral Darlan renounced the Franco-Belgian agreement of 30 June 1928 which enabled the High Commissioner’s delegates in France and Belgium to exercise quasi-consular functions, including the issuing of Nansen passports. Instead, the Vichy government had set up a ‘Bureau des Apatrides’ which performed a significantly reduced version of the delegations tasks.<sup>576</sup>



Figure 10: Henri Ponsot, ‘Délégué Général’ for the High Commissioner in France in 1944, photographed in Morocco, 1926. Source: Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF).

---

<sup>576</sup> United Nations (UN), ‘A Study in Statelessness, August 1949’, *Refworld* (2019). Available at: <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/3ae68c2d0.pdf> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

After the liberation of Paris in 1944, one of the first acts of the French Provisional Government was to announce the Franco-Belgian agreement to be null and void. In October 1944, the High Commissioner Herbert Emerson and his Deputy High Commissioner Gustave Kullman visited the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs who informed them of the intent to ‘restore fully the status ante quo as regards international protection of Nansen refugees on French Metropolitan territory.’ According to Emerson, the problems refugees in France faced in 1944 were ‘fully discussed by the French Authorities’ who ‘could not have been more helpful.’<sup>577</sup> Consequently, the High Commissioner re-established a delegation in France and appointed Henri Ponsot as his delegate. Ponsot had served as French High Commissioner to Syria and Lebanon in the interwar period and would have been familiar with ‘Nansen’ refugees given that there had been colonies of Russians and a smaller number of Armenians in Beirut and Aleppo.<sup>578</sup> Ponsot was supported in his new role by Marcel Paon, who had been the delegate throughout the interwar, ensuring a sense of continuity. For Ponsot, seeking a ‘fresh issue or renewal of the *carte d’identité*’ for Nansen refugees’ was a priority given the many requests for new documents by those refugees still in France or who wished to return to France from other European countries.<sup>579</sup>

Ponsot was aided in his task by the steps previously taken to conceal the delegations records in various towns across France. Chapter III highlighted the case of Kosta Petrovtich in Yugoslavia who destroyed all documents relating to Jewish refugees under the care of the League of Nations to protect their identities from the German Gestapo in Serbia and the Ustaša government in Croatia.<sup>580</sup> In contrast, the ability of members of the former French delegation to protect and conceal the records meant that by 1945 Emerson was able to garner that they had been;

...collected and regrouped; a few of which were damaged and have been restored. The result is that the records are complete, a matter of great importance, since many of them related to the status and personal interests of individual refugees. During the

---

<sup>577</sup> LNA/ R5636/41406: Report submitted by Sir Herbert Emerson, High Commissioner for Refugees to the League of Nations, 1944.

<sup>578</sup> LNA/R5636/41406: Report by Emerson, 1944.

<sup>579</sup> LNA/ R5636/41406: Report by Emerson, 1945.

<sup>580</sup> LNA/ R5636/44028: Petrovtich, to Emerson, 27 March 1945.



occupation many lost their certificates of status, or for reasons of safety had to destroy them, this being particularly the case in regard to those who were deported or had to flee from France. There have, therefore, been many applications for the issue of new certificates, the majority of them genuine, and these it has been possible to substantiate from old records.<sup>581</sup>

Whilst Petrovtich in Yugoslavia had been able to exercise agency through the destruction of records, in France the continued existence of material documents allowed the new delegate to swiftly re-establish the issuing of Nansen passports to refugees in the same manner as during the interwar period.

Although the existence of interwar records and the support of the new French government ensured that Nansen passports resembled their interwar form in France, the issuance of Nansen passports was far from uniform across Europe. It was the Nansen passports issued in the French and American occupation zones of Germany which first separated the travel and identity functions of refugee documents. Shortly after the end of the war the High Commissioner in London began to receive reports ‘that there were Nansen refugees among the displaced in the zones of Western Germany and that many of these were in need of assistance.’ Emerson, as High Commissioner and Director of the IGCR appointed Captain Yves Le Vernoy a former member of the French resistance with a ‘most distinguished record of service’ to conduct a survey of the situation. Le Vernoy found that there were ‘considerable groups of Nansen refugees in the American zones of Germany and Austria’, estimating that there were no less than 2,000 but possibly as many as 25,000 refugees displaced from Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Romania and the Balkan states, as well as from other parts of Austria and Germany. As these refugees found themselves displaced within occupied territories, the Intergovernmental Committee (IGCR) took responsibility for the issuance of new Nansen passports.<sup>582</sup>

---

<sup>581</sup> LNA/ R5636/41406: Report by Emerson, 1945.

<sup>582</sup> LNA/ R5636/41406: Report by Emerson, 1945.

Under the terms of the interwar Arrangements Nansen passports could only be issued for the purpose of travel by governments, and not international organisations such as the IGCR. Consequently, in theory the Nansen passports issued in the occupied zones of Austria and Germany were to be used for identification purposes only. However, in the context of the lack of other refugee travel documents in Germany immediately after the war, some countries did agree to grant visas on these Nansen passports, therefore allowing refugees to travel. When the staff of the then High Commissioner and director of the IGCR in London Sir Herbert Emerson heard about this misuse of the documents they ensured immediate steps were taken to stop the use of this certificate as a travel document. Firstly, the headquarters instructed its representatives to insert the phrase ‘not a travel document’, and secondly they required that the word ‘visa’ be obliterated.<sup>583</sup> The steps taken by the IGCR to ensure compliance with international law represent one of the first moves towards the separation of the travel and identification functions which would characterise future documents.

At the same time as the IGCR was issuing new Nansen passports to ‘old refugees’ in zones under occupation, Emerson’s staff were also turning their attention to the many ‘new’ refugees without papers in Europe and across Asia.<sup>584</sup> Taking the initiative, the IGCR called an international conference which was held in London on 15 October 1946. At the conference the delegates agreed to create a travel document colloquially known as a ‘London Travel Document’ (LTD) for refugees who were the concern of the IGCR. By 21 September 1948, 28 governments had officially, if not practically, agreed to issue and recognise the travel documents which by then were known as ‘IRO travel documents’, as seen in the document below.<sup>585</sup>

---

<sup>583</sup> Weis/ PW/PR/IRO/12/ IRO/UNHCR: Berkowich through Weis to Kullman, 20 October 1949.

<sup>584</sup> Roversi, ‘Refugee Regime’, p. 30.

<sup>585</sup> See: UNHCR/Fonds 3/Box 3/15/25(b): PCIRO, ‘Report by the Executive Secretary on Legal and Political Protection of Refugees’, 29 April 1947; Holborn, *IRO*, p. 323; Jaeger, ‘International Protection’, p. 162.

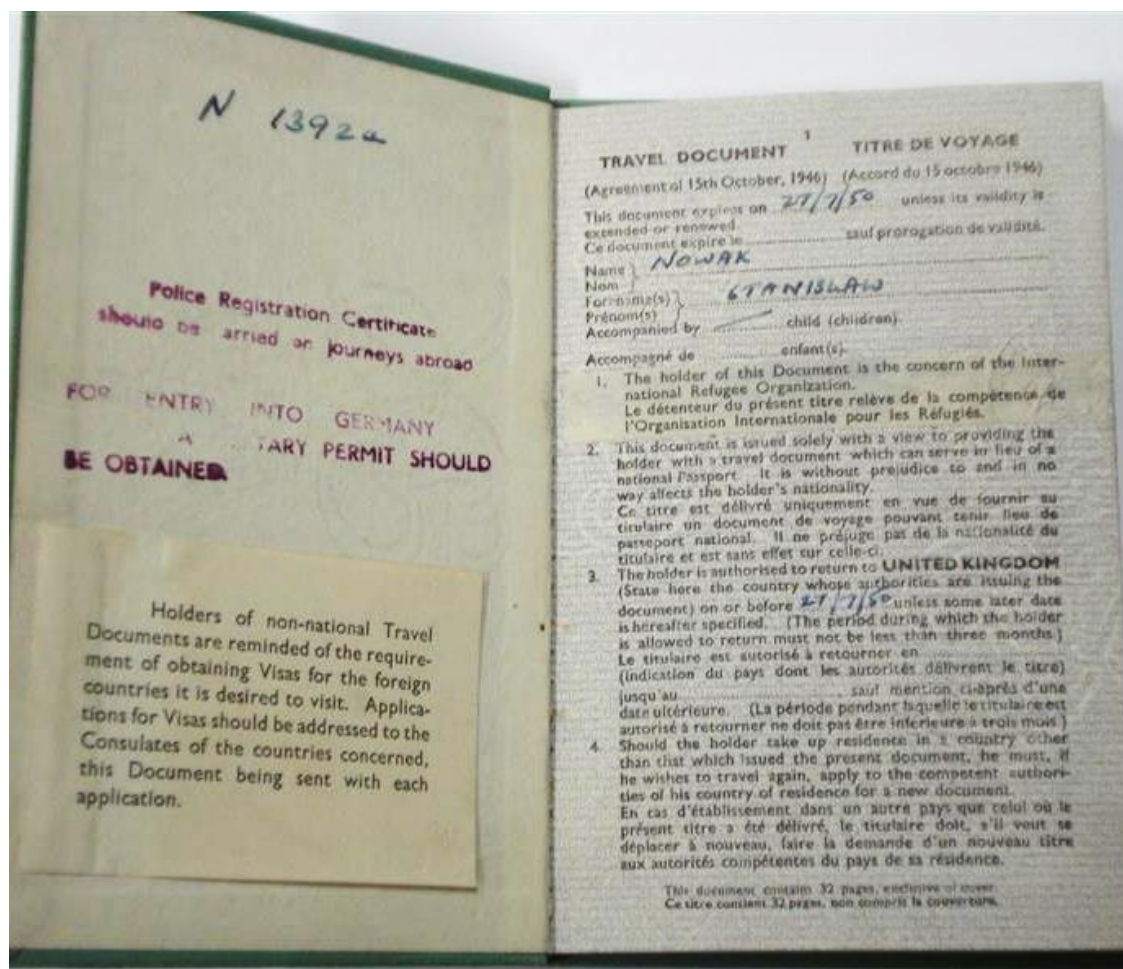


Figure 11: Example of an IRO Travel Document issued to Stanislaw (Bill) Nowak on 28 July 1950. Source: Victorian Collections, Australia.

When PCIRO (the administrative forerunner to IRO) took over activities from the IGCR in 1946 it also inherited responsibility for documents issued as a result of the London Travel Agreement (also referred to as IRO Travel Documents).<sup>586</sup> Refugees had to fulfil four criteria in order to qualify, namely that they were the concern of IRO, stateless in law or fact, lawfully residing in the territory in which they were displaced, and not subject to any other provision such as a Nansen passport.<sup>587</sup> LTDs were intended by the IGCR to follow the form and role of pre-war Nansen passports. A memorandum on refugee travel documents written by staff at UNHCR noted that LTD's were 'substantially similar' to Nansen passports. For example, they were to be issued by the 'contracting states' in which a refugee was then resident which meant that

<sup>586</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 3/Box 3/15/25(b): PCIRO, Report, 29 April 1947.

<sup>587</sup> IGCR, 'Final Act of the Intergovernmental Conference on the Adoption of a Travel Document for Refugees.'

practically these documents looked ‘different from country to country’, with all the ensuing problems that this had caused for refugees with Nansen passports in the interwar period discussed in Chapter II.<sup>588</sup>

THIS IS NOT AN IDENTITY CARD

PREPARATORY COMMISSION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE ORGANIZATION

CM/1 No. **M-20319**  
(969219)

AREA HQ. NO. **7**

**CERTIFICATE OF IRO ELIGIBILITY 1.2.50.**

**NOT CAMP CARE — KEINE LAGERBETREUUNG**

The individual hereby identified has been determined as falling within the category of persons with whom the Preparatory Commission of International Refugee Organization is concerned: —

<b>BISINGER</b>	<b>Bedrich</b>	Date of birth	<b>21.6.05.</b>
Name (Famille)	Vorname	Geburtsdatum	
Height <b>163</b>	CM Weight <b>61</b>	Kgs Hair <b>black</b>	Eyes <b>brown</b>
Größe	Gewicht	Haar	Augen
Nationality <b>C.S.R./Jew</b>	Sex <b>male</b>	Identifying Marks <b>none</b>	
Staatsangehörigkeit	Geschlecht	Besondere Merkmale	

*Bisinger Bedrich*

Holder's Signature      Inhabers Unterschrift

THIS IS NOT AN IDENTITY CARD

**LEGAL AND POLITICAL PROTECTION ONLY**

314 1d

Figure 12: IRO Certificate of Eligibility Issued to Bedrich Bisinger by IRO in Munich, Germany, 1950. Source: Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre.

However, unlike the pre-war Nansen passports and in direct opposition to the Nansen passports issued by the IGCR for identification, the new LTDs did not establish a person’s identity but only their right to travel, and only within strict confines of one journey to a person’s place of resettlement. Glossing over the fact that LTDs did not actually serve as identification, Louise Holborn instead noted that LTDs were an improvement on Nansen passports given the inclusion of a ‘return clause’, which allowed LTD holders to re-enter ‘any country in which the document has been valid for entry on the same terms as can the holder of a visaed passport.’<sup>589</sup> LTDs and the later IRO Travel Documents, could be issued to Displaced People (DPs) who had been

<sup>588</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Box 1:6/2/GEN: Inter office memo from Paul Weis to Kullman, 27 April 1951.

<sup>589</sup> Holborn, *IRO*, p. 323.

designated as eligible under UNRRA and then IRO screening processes, through which DPs could also be issued with a single page certificate which acknowledged their eligibility as seen in the image on the previous page of the IRO certificate of eligibility issued to Czech DP Bedrich Bisinger in February 1950.

The certificate of eligibility was neither a travel document nor a proof of identity, but specifically designated the holder as a person of concern to IRO. The two consecutive UN agencies were principally charged with the task of with distinguishing between who amongst the people in DP camps across Europe and Asia were entitled to assistance, and those who were to be excluded. Those excluded from assistance included all ethnic Germans, ‘collaborators’ with the Nazi regime, and war criminals.<sup>590</sup> This screening process was another important step in the transition between the amalgamated travel and identification documents of the interwar and post-war. The documents themselves issued to refugees by UNRRA and IRO served only to confirm that they were officially recognised as a DP for the purpose of assistance by UNRRA and then IRO. As such, these organisations treated screening as a practical or ‘technical’ matter, rather than one of legal recognition, to the frustration of those in their legal department such as Weis, Kullman and Hackman. To reinforce that these documents were not to be used in lieu of official identification these single page documents also bore the phrase ‘this is not an identity card’ as seen in Bedrich Bisinger’s IRO certificate of eligibility seen in Figure 13. The screening process and issue of London/IRO Travel Documents had effectively cemented the separation of the two functions, despite the fact that IRO certificates of eligibility were not officially identification papers.

The screening process followed what G. Daniel Cohen terms ‘victor’s justice’, in that all ethnic Germans, ‘collaborators’ with the Nazi regime and war criminals were excluded from assistance.<sup>591</sup> Despite the agreement between the ‘victors’ of the Western Allies and Soviet Union to exclude these groups, more generally screening served as a theatre for the bitter ideological battles regarding who should be counted as a DP (and later by extension a refugee). The agreement of UNRRA and IRO to offer material assistance to ‘unrepatriable’ refugees directly contradicted the beliefs of the Soviet

---

<sup>590</sup> It is worth stating here that the process and implications of screening are worthy of study beyond the confines of this chapter. See: Cohen, *In War’s Wake*, p. 445.

<sup>591</sup> Cohen, *In War’s Wake*, p. 445.

Union and other Eastern European polities who adhered to the belief that a ‘genuine’ refugee would choose to return to his or her country of origin, a pragmatic manifestation of the growing Cold War divide.<sup>592</sup> The exclusion of certain groups from eligibility for IRO assistance and LTDs Documents spurred the creation of another travel document, which, like the other papers issued in the post-war apparatus had only one function. The ICRC objected to the exclusion of a ‘non-recognised’ national grouping, and instead decided to intervene in what it termed a ‘humanitarian emergency’ by issuing ICRC travel documents. Writing to Sir Herbert Emerson, the ICRC president Max Huber stated that the ICRC wished to introduce a document for ‘non-recognised’ refugees and model them on Nansen passports. Huber stressed the humanitarian principle of neutrality, claiming that ‘the main feature of the [*titre de voyage*] is that it is for free for anybody asking for it’, and that it was ‘available to all without regard to race, religion, mother language, or political conviction.’<sup>593</sup>

As the ICRC travel document did not discriminate based on political conviction, Nazis were able to obtain one as easily as communists or those of no strong political belief. According to Gerard Steinacher, for the ICRC, allowing war criminals to obtain this document was a price they were willing to pay given ‘a greater injustice was inflicted when the innocent were punished together with the guilty.’<sup>594</sup> Human Rights lawyer Phillipe Sands also points to the greater context of the early Cold War in which Nazis were considered preferable to communists by some Western European and American policy makers.<sup>595</sup> To what extent the ICRC officials in Geneva colluded with these political objectives is unknown, yet it is irrefutable that these documents were used by many famous and lesser known Nazis to flee Europe through the Alps to Genoa and so on to South America.<sup>596</sup>

The reason so many Nazis and other war criminals were able to use ICRC travel documents was actually that they were neither passports nor official papers, lacking any

---

<sup>592</sup> Juliette Denis, ‘Complices de Hitler ou victimes de Staline ? Les déplacés baltes en Allemagne de la sortie de guerre à la guerre froide’, *Le Mouvement Social*, 244 (2013), pp. 81-98.

<sup>593</sup> See: Gerald Steinacher *Humanitarians at War: The Red Cross in the Shadow of the Holocaust* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 169-173; David, P. Forsythe, *The Humanitarians: The International Committee of the Red Cross* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

<sup>594</sup> Steinacher, *Humanitarians at War*, pp. 169-173.

<sup>595</sup> Phillipe Sands, ‘Intrigue: The Ratline Podcast’, *BBC Radio 4* (2018). Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p04sj2pt/episodes/downloads> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

<sup>596</sup> Steinacher, *Humanitarians at War*, p. 185.

consistency in issue and accepted at the discretion of diplomatic services of the countries of immigration. Many countries, such as those in South America shared the views of the ICRC regarding political orientation, and were thus willing to recognise the ICRC travel papers on the basis that the Europeans emigrating were anti-communist and skilled or highly educated. Therefore, despite signing up to the London agreement, some South American states accepted ICRC but not IRO travel papers. Consequently, IRO found itself in the position of repeatedly requesting travel papers for those going to South America. Even Swiss authorities questioned the validity of IRO travel documents, despite its headquarters being based in Geneva. In spite of the IGCR's and later IRO's responsibility to provide travel documents, their authority was often undercut by the easily obtained ICRC *titre de voyages*. According to Steinacher, IRO put up little objection to the issuing of ICRC travel papers which was most likely owed to both understaffing and other priorities.<sup>597</sup>

The CTDs which were created as part of the 1951 Refugee Convention were 'almost identical' to LTDs, rather than bearing any resemblance to the somewhat dubious ICRC *titre de voyages*, which had gained a negative reputation for their Nazi links.<sup>598</sup> Like the LTDs, the CTDs were conceived in purely functional terms, namely to enable refugees to travel, but more particularly to resettle.<sup>599</sup> This purpose was clearly stated on the front of the document itself, as seen in Figure 13 above.<sup>600</sup> In his commentary on the 1951 Refugee Convention written in the early sixties, prior to the 1967 Protocol, the international legal scholar Atle Grahl-Madsen noted that controversially, and unlike Nansen passports, CTDs as travel documents only did not 'amount to documentation of refugee status as such.'<sup>601</sup> Article 27 of the 1951 Convention did attempt to make provisions for identity certificates by suggesting that states issue separate papers for identification, but as Grahl-Madsen noted these identity papers legally conferred no

---

<sup>597</sup> Steinacher, *Humanitarians at War*, p. 179.

<sup>598</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Box 1:6/2/GEN: 'Note (for newspaper correspondent) concerning travel documents for refugees', Mr Probat through Kullman, 26 October 1951.

<sup>599</sup> James C. Hathaway, *The Law of Refugee Status* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 851.

<sup>600</sup> This passport is thought to have belonged to an unnamed Soviet Botanist with several aliases according to the artist J. Genovard who has dedicated an online project and multiple exhibitions to the unknown man. See: J. Genovard, 'Project Stanislav Dravoneg: The Tech-Botanist' (2019). Available at: <http://techbotanist.org/> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

<sup>601</sup> Atle Grahl-Madsen, *Commentary on the Refugee Convention 1951, Article 2-11, 13-37, circa 1960-1965* (Geneva: Division of International Protection of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 1997), p. 93.

rights to refugees. Nevertheless, at first glance, CTDs looked to be the obvious successor to the innovative interwar Nansen passports, and even an improvement on their interwar counterparts with the inclusion of the quality of the return clause which had first appeared in the LTDs. Furthermore, the codification of CTDs in the 1951 Refugee Convention established their place in the new Western framework of response to refugees whose modus operandi was enacting and upholding legal norms.

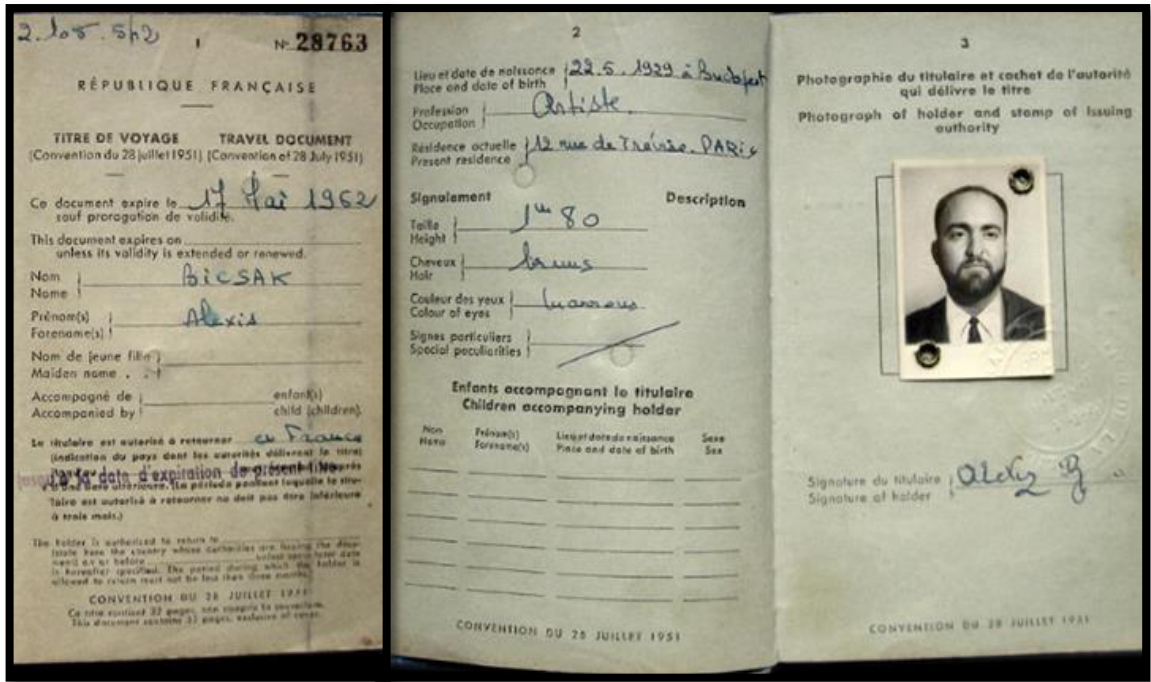


Figure 13: An example of a Convention Travel Document issued to ‘Alexis Bicsak’ on 17 May 1960. Source: J. Genovard.

In addition, the division of functions which rendered CTDs as travel documents only and which made no attempt to assign refugee status could in some cases work in refugees’ favour. One pertinent example of this is the case of Russian refugees in China who resettled in Brazil. Technically, as Nansen refugees Russians in China should have been able to access Nansen passports. However, the various Chinese governments did not issue Nansen passports between the wars and did not agree to do so in the post-war period. Consequently, refugees requiring new documents needed to apply for a CTD. The refugee status of many of those applying for CTDs in Manchuria could have been called into question by their possession of Soviet Russian passports. Some ‘White Russians’ had reluctantly accepted Soviet citizenship in the 1920s to retain their jobs on the Chinese Eastern Railway (CER), which came under Soviet control in 1924. Further



White Russians acceded to Soviet citizenship after the liberation of Manchuria by the Red Army in 1945. Laurie Manchester argues that many of the younger generation of Russians who had fewer if any memories of imperial Russia felt moved to take Soviet citizenship after feeling a 'kinship' to the Soviet liberators. Others had more pragmatic motivations, as only Soviet Russians were allowed to work for Soviet or Chinese businesses after 1946.<sup>602</sup> Having accepted Soviet citizenship, these former Nansen refugees had in theory forfeited their refugee status. However, the WCC reported that many 'refugees' with Soviet citizenship had applied for resettlement to Brazil through their organisation in the early 1950s. As former Nansen refugees who fell within the terms of the 1951 Convention they were able to apply for CTDs to travel to Brazil. The fact that CTDs did not officially designate refugee status allowed the UNHCR, the WCC and the refugees themselves to sidestep the issue of their having voluntarily taken Soviet citizenship.

Although the ambiguity around refugee status evident in CTDs worked in the favour of Russian refugees seeking resettlement from China, Grahl-Madsen argues that the deliberate omission of the identification function in CTDs led to problematic variation of interpretations in who constituted a refugee. The UNHCR attempted to standardise the variable process which interpreted and shaped international law throughout the 1950s, including the shape and form of CTDs. However, by the 1960s Grahl-Madsen was criticising the lack of an international eligibility procedure, with the decision about who was considered to be a refugee determined by each state on the narrative plausibility of a person seeking refugee status.<sup>603</sup> Whilst in practice most states who had signed the Convention accepted CTDs as representing refugee status, it offered no protection to those who found themselves in the position of being considered a refugee in one country, but ineligible in another.<sup>604</sup> Through the separation of functions, CTDs lacked the impact of their interwar counterparts. The process by which travel and identity documents decreased in value is indicative of the development of the apparatus in the early post-war period. This process took place across several different contexts,

---

<sup>602</sup> Laurie Manchester, 'Making Russian Émigrés into Soviet citizens: The Particularities of the Russian Diaspora in Manchuria and Repatriation to the USSR after Stalin's Death', in *Historian, Time, Society: A Collection Dedicated to the Ninetieth Year of Corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences*, ed. by Raphael Sholomovich Ganelin (Moscow: Novy Khronograf, 2017) pp. 478-480.

<sup>603</sup> Grahl-Madsen, *Commentary*, pp. 90-96.

<sup>604</sup> Hathaway, *Refugee Status*, p. 852

through a number of organisations and for a range of reasons. A point for further research raised by this discussion is the means by which these two functions have come back together through the introduction of biometrics into refugee travel documents. Although these documents remain principally for the purpose of travel and not to assign refugee status, they nonetheless possess an identification function which has been omitted from travel documents since the 1950s.

### *Conclusion*

The interviews with former UNHCR staff discussed at the outset of this chapter give an impression of the early apparatus as ad hoc and lacking what Auguste Lindt described as a ‘great plan.’ As the cornerstone of the future apparatus, the UNHCR started off as a small, non-operational body with a narrow mandate, limited financial resources, and surrounded by political hostility. In this context, the ability of the central agency and by extension the wider Western apparatus to thrive by the end of the 1950s was not guaranteed at the beginning of the decade. The new High Commission shared the same name as its interwar counterpart, but discussions regarding a central characteristic of imperial High Commissioners, namely their temporary nature, demonstrates a lack of consensus. UN member states were divided on what responses to refugees should look like, underscoring that how and why the apparatus developed in the 1950s was the result of manifold decisions, wrong turns, fortuitous circumstances and opportunities, rather than any pre-determination. Several key agents in this decision making process and who exploited presented opportunities were the legal ‘fonctionnaires’ who brought their interwar professional and personal experiences of displacement to bear within the UNHCR.<sup>605</sup> Upon being charged with predominantly legislative rather than pragmatic responsibilities, this group of lawyers including the influential Paul Weis cultivated a reputation for expertise and therefore authority in the field of refugee law.

One means by which these lawyers sought to impact the lives of refugees without contravening the non-operational aspect of the mandate was through the eligibility bulletins circulated from the mid-1950s onwards. Refugees were able to resist, challenge and shape the apparatus through questioning interpretations of the law in

---

<sup>605</sup> UNHCR/OT: Lindt, 4 February 1998.

regional courts. Another important aspect in the expansion and concretisation of the post-1950 apparatus were the volags who worked both with and independent from the UNHCR and were responsible for stepping beyond the racially restrictive legislative confines of the Convention and Statute. Although these volags participated in a new form of Western paternalism, their disregard for the limited definition of a refugee laid down in international law contributed to the concretisation of the apparatus by normalising assistance to non-Europeans. Finally, the discussion of separation of the identification and mobility functions of refugee 'passports' further demonstrates the ad hoc manner in which the post-war apparatus gained dominance, and the ever evolving processes within the apparatus today. The next chapter further develops the notion that the post-war apparatus developed in a non-linear fashion by exploring how the UNHCR attempted but ultimately failed to take action in the case of Chinese refugees in Burma in 1953.

## V: 'What Are You Going to Do About the Chinese Refugees?' The UNHCR and Yunnanese 'Refugees' in Post-Independence Burma, 1953-1954

The previous chapter highlighted that whilst voluntary agencies (volags) sought to expand the focus of the western apparatus beyond Europe in the early 1950s, the institutional cornerstone of the UNHCR remained predominantly Eurocentric in its focus. This Eurocentrism was at odds with the global character of displacement in the 'violent peacetime' which followed the Second World War.<sup>606</sup> One of the largest post-war refugee flows took place in Asia in the late 1940s and early 1950s following the defeat of Nationalist Kuomintang (KMT) troops by Communist forces in China in 1949. In the wake of this political upheaval, hundreds of thousands of people fled China into the adjacent polities of Taiwan, Hong Kong and Burma.<sup>607</sup> Many of those fleeing into Burma were 'Yunnanese' civilians from the bordering Chinese province of Yunnan.<sup>608</sup> Whilst the history of Chinese refugees in Hong Kong has recently benefitted from academic attention, the case of Chinese refugees in Burma remains almost entirely absent better known narratives of post-war refugee crises and responses, including the institutional history of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).<sup>609</sup> There is no mention of Chinese refugees in Burma in Louise Holborn's extensive study of the UNHCR between 1951 and 1972, nor in Gil Loescher's

---

<sup>606</sup> Gatrell, 'Trajectories', pp. 3-4.

<sup>607</sup> Peterson, 'To Be or Not to Be', p 171.

<sup>608</sup> The terms 'Chinese refugees' and 'Yunnanese refugees', are used interchangeably in this chapter as, as far as the sources reveal, all the civilians and soldiers who sought asylum in Burma fled through Yunnan province. In the specific case of Yunnanese displacement, Taiwanese anthropologist Wen-Chin Chang offers the most comprehensive scholarship of the history of the complex movements and settlement of Yunnanese in Burma and Northern Thailand from the post-independence period up until today. In addition, Tina Mai Chen has written an excellent article on the Chinese minority in Burma during World War Two. See: Weng-Chin Chang, *Home Away from Home: Migrant Yunnanese Chinese in Northern Thailand*, *International Journal of Asian Studies*, 1 (2006), pp. 49-76; Chang, 'War Refugees', pp. 1086-1105; Weng-Chin Chang, *Beyond Borders: Stories of Yunnanese Chinese Migrants of Burma* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2014); Tina Mai Chen, 'Chinese Residents of Burma as Refugees, Evacuees, and Returnees: The Shared Racial Logic of Territorialization in the Regulation of Wartime Migration', *Modern Asian Studies*, 49, 2 (2015), pp. 469-492.

<sup>609</sup> This group are referred to as 'refugees' throughout this chapter given as their status was disputed, as evidenced in the sections pertaining to the differing opinions within the UNHCR and the attitudes of Burmese government officials. See: UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Ali Report Burma, 30 April 1953; Loescher, *UNHCR and World Politics*.

comprehensive history of the early UNHCR.<sup>610</sup> This omission is perhaps unsurprising given the ostensibly Eurocentric focus of the agency in the early 1950s.

However, according to a case file in the UNHCR archives, the episode of Chinese refugees in Burma does have a place in the agency's institutional history. In March 1953, the UNHCR sent Aamir Ali to South East Asia as their first regional representative. In May of that year, Ali wrote to Amir Hoveyda, the regional desk officer in Geneva, describing how on a recent visit to Burma (modern day Myanmar) he had been asked repeatedly, 'what are you going to do about the Chinese refugees?'<sup>611</sup> The case file further reveals that over the next several months, the various actors within the refugee agency contemplated, discussed, disagreed over, and finally made a tentative approach in the case of Chinese refugees in Burma. And yet, the UNHCR did not take any concrete material or diplomatic action, and this episode has made no impact of the agency's institutional history. Traditionally, the historiography of the UNHCR and wider responses to displacement in the 1950s have focussed on episodes with a tangible outcome, from assistance to Hungarian refugees fleeing revolution in 1956, to the refugees escaping the Algerian civil war in 1958. By comparison, at first glance the operationally unsuccessful case of the Chinese refugees in Burma appears to have left no mark on the development of the western based apparatus.

This chapter argues that in fact, the process by which the UNHCR first engaged and then disengaged with this group over several months in 1953 is indicative of the ways in which the apparatus itself was functioning, evolving and strengthening throughout the 1950s. In seeking to understand how the post-war apparatus encountered and then disengaged from this group of Chinese refugees, it is firstly necessary to outline the long term of context of colonialism, decolonisation and discrimination against Indian and Chinese minority groups in Burma. In delineating the context, the chapter also examines the specific characteristics of Yunnanese displacement which was inextricably bound up with complex socio-political processes, such as the regional dynamics of the Cold War.

---

<sup>610</sup> Holborn did discuss Tibetan refugees in India and Nepal, and refugees in Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam and Hong Kong, but not Chinese refugees in Burma. See: Holborn, *UNHCR*, pp. 655-803.

<sup>611</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Ali Report Burma, 30 April 1953.

The main part of the chapter chronologically recounts the interaction between the UNHCR, Chinese refugees in Burma and other political actors, and draws several key conclusions. Firstly, the chapter contends that the internationalist outlook and advocacy of the regional representative Aamir Ali is indicative of the importance of individual actors in shaping the policies and actions apparatus. Secondly, it asserts that the range of reactions to Ali's communications in the Geneva office reveals the heterogeneity of stances in the UNHCR in the early 1950s, and the stark colonial era 'colour lines' which were still at work but increasingly challenged.<sup>612</sup> Thirdly, the chapter argues that the rejection of UNHCR assistance by the Burmese government served to underscore the fragility of the institutional part of the apparatus beyond Europe, and the fundamental necessity of a favourable socio-political environment in which to take action. Finally, the chapter argues that as well as forming a part of the history of the western apparatus, the disengagement of the UNHCR from Chinese refugees in Burma also played a part in the long term ramifications of actions taken towards this group.

### *The Context of Burma and Chinese Displacement in the Early 1950s*

As discussed in Chapter IV, the UNHCR faced many challenges in the early 1950s, from American hostility to a highly restrictive mandate. In attempting to assist in a very limited way in the case of Chinese refugees in Burma, staff of the UNHCR faced further challenges arising from the complex socio-political context. This particular episode speaks to the contention that the western apparatus was strongly shaped in the 1950s by the particular episteme of decolonisation and developing Cold War. The staff of the UNHCR who sought to offer a small token of assistance in Burma waded into a veritable minefield of regional politics and ethnic tensions, the roots of which stretch back far beyond the 1950s into the legacies of colonialism and regional history of Asia.<sup>613</sup>

---

<sup>612</sup> See: Franklin, *The Colour Line*, p. 5; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, p. 2.

<sup>613</sup> This chapter also benefits from the rich, diverse and specialised body of work on South East Asia and Burma in particular. This scholarship ranges from the roots of ethnic and political conflicts to the importance of Asia in the Cold War, and traditional regional routes of migration. See: Sunil S. Amrith, *Crossing the Bay of Bengal: The Furies of Nature and the Fortunes of Migrants* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2013); Sunil S. Amrith, *Migration and Diaspora in Modern Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Michael W. Charney, *A History of Modern Burma* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Michael Charney, 'U Nu, China and the 'Burmese' Cold War: Propaganda in Burma in the 1950s', in *The Cold War in Asia: The Battle for Hearts and Minds*, ed. by

The complexity of longer term processes which the UNHCR needed to navigate in Burma in the early 1950s are illustrated by the name ‘Burma’ itself. In contemporary discourse the stability of the terms ‘Burma’ (now ‘Myanmar’) and ‘Burmese’ are hardly ever questioned, and yet the state of Burma/Myanmar as we recognise it today only emerged towards the end of the nineteenth century. In 1885, the Kingdom of Burma was defeated by the British in the Third Anglo-Burmese war.<sup>614</sup> Queen Victoria accepted the Kingdom of Burma as a New Year’s gift from Parliament on 1 January 1886, and it was annexed to the British Indian Empire on 26 February 1886. As a backwater province of the Indian empire, the colonial regime in Burma was ‘peculiarly unrooted’, being treated as ‘essentially different’ from, and of less significance than, the rest of India.<sup>615</sup>

The annexation of Burma to the British Indian Empire resulted in a flow of Indians to take up posts in the colonial government and other professions. The influx of Indians fed the political momentum of rising Burmese nationalism in the 1920s, which resulted in the formation of the nationalist party the *Dobama Asiayoun* (DA) by a newly-arisen generation of urban, middle-class, colonially-educated elites.<sup>616</sup> During the colonial period the DA cultivated the term *thudo-bamas*, meaning ‘their Burma’, to describe people who collaborated with the British, those of ‘mixed blood’, and any Indians or Chinese who had entered Burma since the onset of colonial rule. The mentality of

---

Zheng Yangwen, Hong Liu and Michael Szonyi (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010), pp. 41-58; Thant Myint-U, *The Making of Modern Burma* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Kei Nemoto, ‘Burma’s (Myanmar’s) ‘Exclusive’ Nationalism’, in *Asian Nationalisms Reconsidered*, ed. by Jeff Kingston (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2016); Martin Smith, ‘Ethnic Politics and Citizenship in History’, in *Citizenship in Myanmar: Ways of Being in and from Burma*, ed. by Ashley South and Marie Lall (Chiang Mai: Chiang Mai University Press, 2018); David I. Steinberg, *Burma/Myanmar: What Everyone Needs to Know*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Shelby Tucker, *Burma: The Curse of Independence* (London: Pluto Press, 2001); Kenton Clymer, *A Delicate Relationship: The United States and Burma/Myanmar since 1945* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2015); Zheng Yangwen, Hong Liu, Michael Szonyi eds., *The Cold War in Asia: The Battle for Hearts and Minds* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010).

<sup>614</sup> Steinberg, *Burma/Myanmar*, pp. 9-11.

<sup>615</sup> See: Sugata Bose, *A Hundred Horizons: The Indian Ocean in the Age of Global Empire* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2006), pp. 54-55; Smith, ‘Ethnic Politics’, p. 31; Nemoto, ‘Exclusive Nationalism’, p. 221; Myint-U, *Making Modern Burma*, p. 245-252.

<sup>616</sup> The DA would later serve as an incubator for several important political leaders including Aung San the premier of Burma between 1947 and 1947 who was the father of the current and controversial State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, as well as Prime Ministers U Nu and Ne Win, and U Thant who became the Secretary General of the United Nations. The term ‘Dobama Asiayoun’ translated as ‘Our Burma Association’, with the term ‘Bama’ being chosen over the older and more generalised term ‘Myanma’ in order to refer to the Burmese people in a narrow sense, thus excluding other groups such as the Shan and the Karen. See: Nemoto, ‘Exclusive Nationalism’, pp. 221-224.

*dobama*, ‘Us’, and *thudo*, ‘them’ propagated by the DA in the 1930s led to numerous outbreaks of anti-Indian and anti-Chinese sentiment and violence.<sup>617</sup> These outbreaks of violence predicated on social and racial tensions set a troubling precedent for the future rights of minorities in Burma.<sup>618</sup>

Burmese nationalism continued unabated throughout the Second World War, an event which left Burma economically devastated by war and gripped by increasing racial tensions.<sup>619</sup> Much of Burma’s infrastructure was destroyed by the scorched-earth policy of the British when the Japanese invaded in 1942, and by the Japanese when Allied forces reoccupied the country in 1944. Thein Myatt estimates that up to half of Burma’s capital stock had been destroyed, with half of all cultivatable land being unusable after being abandoned by farmers whose export routes were disrupted by war.<sup>620</sup> The economic hardships in Burma only served to heighten existing ethnic, cultural and religious tensions. In the face of further nationalist Burmese sentiment and its own dwindling resources, the British government ‘gracefully’ granted impence to the Burmese in January 1948. Officially, the Anti-Fascist People’s Freedom League (AFPFL) took power in the newly independent Burma under the Prime Ministership of U Nu, beginning a period of ‘parliamentary democracy’ which lasted from 1948 until a military coup began a period of military dictatorship in 1962.<sup>621</sup>

Despite the election of the AFPFL, the fear of minority and formerly disenfranchised populations that they would continue to be suppressed by the Burmese majority favoured by the British soon led to conflict, and in March 1948 the Communist Party of Burma (CPB) began an armed insurrection. Within a year several different ethnicity-

---

<sup>617</sup> In January 1931 mounting racial tension led to an anti-Chinese riot in Rangoon sparked by a disagreement between a Cantonese noodle trader and a Burmese customer over payment. The *Canberra Times* reported that ‘two were killed and many injured when fierce rioting occurred between the Burmese and Chinese in Rangoon’, with ‘numerous street affrays’ manifesting throughout 2 January. See: ‘Riots at Rangoon’, *Canberra Times* (Monday 5 Jan 1931), p. 1.

<sup>618</sup> See: Smith, ‘Ethnic Politics’, 31; Yi Li, *Chinese in Colonial Burma: A Migrant Community in a Multiethnic State* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), pp. 206.

<sup>619</sup> David I. Steinberg, ‘Burma-Myanmar: The US-Burmese Relationship and its Vicissitudes’, in *Short of the Goal: U.S. Policy and Poorly Performing States*, ed. by Nancy Birdsall, Milan Vaishnav and Robert L. Ayres (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2017). p. 212.

<sup>620</sup> Myat Thein, *Economic Development in Myanmar* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies), p. 3.

<sup>621</sup> The AFPFL had strong links to the pre-war DA, including through its post-war leader Aung San (the father of the current Burmese premier Aung San Suu Kyi), who was assassinated before Burmese independence in July 1947. See: Smith, ‘Ethnic Politics’, p. 28.



based groups had armed themselves, including the Karen, Karenni, Mon, Pao and Rakhine, seeking to secede the U Nu government in Rangoon.<sup>622</sup> The climate of fear, discrimination and ethnic separatism which gripped Burma in the post-independence period is also reflected in the legal measures which drew a firm line between ‘citizens’ and ‘outsiders.’<sup>623</sup> The term *thudo-bama*, ‘their Burma’, which had been used to describe collaborators came to refer solely to the Chinese and Indian minorities in the post-independence period.<sup>624</sup> Even those of Chinese and Indian descent who were born in Burma were considered ‘kala’, a pejorative term used to describe a foreigner, and found themselves discriminated against in the 1947 citizenship laws which distinguished between citizens of Burmese descent and citizens by registration.<sup>625</sup> Thus in the period which followed the Second World War, what had previously been considered internal migration turned abruptly into international migration as new nations were formed, borders drawn, and strict definitions of citizenship laid down.

Historically there had been little distinction between internal and external migration, as many migrants practised ‘sojourning’ in which they maintained close ties with their home regions during their time away, and returned whenever possible.<sup>626</sup> One of the populations which had traditionally practiced the circular sojourning migration which characterised the region were the Yunnanese from the neighbouring Chinese province of Yunnan, who have traditionally been mobile across a large area of upper mainland Southeast Asia. This region of mountainous borderlands where the Yunnanese moved unrestricted remained free from physical borders and passport controls when the tide of the Chinese civil war turned in favour of the Communists in the late 1940s. Therefore, when thousands of soldiers and civilians sought shelter in Burma they followed familiar

---

<sup>622</sup> Ethnic tensions in Burma stemmed from the colonial period, when the colonial administrators of Burma brought with them an understanding that the previously fluid and multiple national, racial and ethnic identifications in Burma should be essentialised in order to fit classificatory schemes as required by the technology of the census. In fact the name ‘Burma’ was coined by the British in a mishearing of the word ‘Bama’, the name of the ethnic majority. The name Myanmar has a much more ancient lineage, being the local name traditionally used to describe the region. See: Journal Kyaw Ma Ma Lay, *A Man Like Him: Portrait of the Burmese Journalist Journal Kyaw U Chit Maung*. Translated by Ma Thanegi (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2008), p. 2; Charney, *History of Modern Burma*, pp. 5-8

<sup>623</sup> See: Smith, ‘Ethnic Politics’, p. 34; Charney, ‘U Nu and China’, p. 44; Amrith, *Bay of Bengal*, pp. 228-229.

<sup>624</sup> Nemoto, ‘Exclusive Nationalism’, p. 221.

<sup>625</sup> See: Smith, ‘Ethnic Politics’, p. 32; Amrith, *Migration and Diaspora*, p. 3.

<sup>626</sup> Amrith, *Migration and Diaspora*, pp. 1-4.

old caravan trade routes which allowed them to bypass main roads and evade Communist forces as they fled.<sup>627</sup>

As mentioned in the introduction, this population was just part of ‘one of the largest refugee flows in world history’, triggered by the defeat of nationalist KMT troops led by Chiang Kai-Shek and the establishment of the Communist People’s Republic of China (PRC) under Mao Zedong in 1949.<sup>628</sup> After defeat, the KMT government retreated to the island of Taiwan, also referred to contemporaneously as Formosa, whilst hundreds of thousands of Chinese people fled into the surrounding polities, with the largest majority entering the adjacent British colony of Hong Kong. A smaller number of Nationalist Chinese fled over the border to Burma from Yunnan province, the last province to be taken over by the Communist regime. The majority of the Yunnanese population fleeing across the border into Shan State and Kengtung State in Burma in 1949 were defeated KMT troops from the Eighth Army, comprising the 26th Division and the 93rd Division, who became known as the ‘Yunnan Anti-Communist Salvation Army’ under the command of General Li Mi.<sup>629</sup>

The lack of physical borders combined with the tradition of Yunnanese free movement in this terrain served to shape the KMT operations which overlapped areas of both Burma and Yunnan.<sup>630</sup> In the following few years KMT troops spread to contemporary Kayah and Mon states to the South, whilst keeping a presence in Shan state and the border areas with Yunnan with the intention of launching offensives against the PRC.<sup>631</sup> According to statistics from the Taiwanese ministry of defence cited in Weng-Chin Chang, by the end of 1951 there were approximately 14,000 KMT soldiers in Burma.<sup>632</sup>

Amongst the supposed 14,000 KMT soldiers supported by the CIA in Burma, but not distinguished in the official statistics, were non-combative family members of KMT troops, and other civilians fleeing from the state of Yunnan into Burma to escape the

---

<sup>627</sup> See: Chang, ‘Home Away from Home’ p. 50; Chang, *Beyond Borders*, p. 24.

<sup>628</sup> Chang, ‘From War Refugees to Immigrants’, p. 1087.

<sup>629</sup> See: Denny Roy, *Taiwan: A Political History* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003), p. 76; Peterson, ‘To Be or Not to Be’, p. 171; Kaemmanee Charoenwong, ‘The Evacuation of the Nationalist Chinese (Kuomintang/KMT) Troops in Northern Thailand from the 1950s to Today’, *Asian Culture Research*, 30 (2004), p. 159.

<sup>630</sup> Charney, ‘U Nu and China’, p. 44.

<sup>631</sup> Charoenwong, ‘Evacuation of KMT’, p. 163.

<sup>632</sup> Chang, ‘War Refugees to Immigrants’, p. 1089.

Communist Chinese, including government officials. The mixed composition of the Yunnanese in Burma was further confused by the recruitment of refugees to the guerrilla troops once they had already left Yunnan.<sup>633</sup> Chang argues that the mixed composition of this population which included both official soldiers and armed refugees represented a 'Yunnanese refugee warrior community.'<sup>634</sup> In Aristide Zolberg's, Astri Suhrke and Sergio Aguayo's theory of refugee warrior communities, refugees find both social meaning and economic reward in joining in with the activities of military groups, gaining in political consciousness and activity which muddies the somewhat sanitary, apolitical modern label of attached to 'refugee.'<sup>635</sup> Chang claims that in the inhospitable conditions of the Yunnanese-Burmese borderland, ideological anti-Communism and with it the taking up of arms became a means of survival.<sup>636</sup>

According to Zolberg, Suhrke and Aguayo, warrior refugee communities such as those in Burma cannot survive for long without substantial partisan political support, not least because engaging in military activities on or across a border they draw their hosts into an act of war.<sup>637</sup> Materially too these communities require external help given that they are separated from their means of income in their home country. In the case of the Chinese warrior refugees in Burma, they were unofficially supported in large part by the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The chief American concern in Burma, as in the rest of South East Asia, was whether the 'international Communism' emanating from Moscow would gain footholds across the region. Thus the CIA viewed the 'irregular' Chinese Nationalists in Burma as a useful force in the containment of Chinese Communism, gaining approval to fund the KMT troops, their dependents and others in the warrior refugee community from the highest level of American government.<sup>638</sup>

---

<sup>633</sup> See: Chang, 'War Refugees to Immigrants', p. 1089; Charoenwong, 'Evacuation of KMT', p. 163.

<sup>634</sup> Chang, 'War Refugees to Immigrants', p. 1089.

<sup>635</sup> See: Aristide Zolberg, Astri Suhrke and Sergio Aguayo, 'International Factors in the Formation of Refugee Movements', *The International Migration Review* (1986), 20(2), pp. p. 166; Chang, 'War Refugees to Immigrants', p. 1089.

<sup>636</sup> Chang, 'War Refugees to Immigrants', p. 1089

<sup>637</sup> Zolberg, Suhrke and Aguayo, 'International Factors', p. 165.

<sup>638</sup> See: Victor S. Kaufman, 'Trouble in the Golden Triangle: The United States, Taiwan and the 93rd Nationalist Division', *The China Quarterly*, 166 (2001), p. 440; Kenton Clymer, *Delicate Relationship*, p. 83.

Supported by the Americans and problematic to the Burmese, the Yunnanese in Burma who joined in the activities of the KMT fit many of the criteria of a ‘warrior refugee community.’ The military and political activities of this Yunnanese warrior refugee community further exposes what Madokoro calls the ‘yawning silence’ between lived experiences of displaced populations in Asia and the rhetorical webs which external, Western actors imposed upon them. Family members of KMT troops and other civilians who joined in their activities in Burma were not considered to be ‘genuine’ and therefore deserving refugees.<sup>639</sup> This perception of displaced people as politicised warriors would later mean that these groupings did not register on the radar of the UNHCR when they took an interest in the issue in 1953. The UNHCR would instead pinpoint a particular group of Yunnanese who were not part of the ‘refugee warrior community’ which sought shelter in the mountainous border region and managed to elude the Burmese army.

### *Meiktila Camp*

Whilst many of those fleeing Yunnan remained in the borderlands, a small number of those entering Burma gave themselves up to the military and were subsequently interned by the Burmese government in makeshift camps. One example of these camps discussed in the UNHCR records are the approximately 180 civilians listed as being interned in a camp in Meiktila, central Burma in mid-1953 (located on the map below).<sup>640</sup> A camp in Meiktila is also recorded in the records of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) who were also present in Burma, but working with displaced people from the Karen minority who were displaced as a result of internal strife. According to ICRC records, Karens were also housed in a camp in Meiktila, although whether this was the same camp as the Chinese refugees is unclear.<sup>641</sup> Aside from the ICRC, the UNHCR account gives no indication that any of their partner volags

---

<sup>639</sup> Laura Madokoro, ‘Unwanted Refugees: Chinese Migration and the Making of a Global Humanitarian Agenda, 1949-1989’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of British Columbia, 2012), p. 3; Madokoro, *Elusive Refuge*, p. 208.

<sup>640</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Ali ‘[Note on the interview] Strictly Confidential: Chinese Refugees in Burma’, 4 August 1953.

<sup>641</sup> For further reading on the history of the Karen Minority see: David Brenner, ‘Inside the Karen Insurgency: Explaining Conflict and Conciliation in Myanmar’s Changing Borderlands’, *Asian Security*, 14 (2018), pp. 83-99; ICRC/B AG 280 141-003: Mission de Jean Courvoisier on Birmanie, rapport final, du 19 février au 31 mars 1951.

such as the World Council of Churches (WCC) were also involved in assisting Chinese refugees in Burma. It is of course possible that other western volags were present in Burma, but if so, their contribution was not great enough to have been recorded by UNHCR.

The UNHCR correspondence also reveals very little about life in Meiktila camp, although Ali did detail that the camp mates received a daily allowance from the Burmese government of six annas a day for children and twelve annas a day for adults.<sup>642</sup> In his contemporaneous book recording his travels across Burma the journalist Norman Lewis described that ‘yard-long tubes of bamboo, filled with a much sought-after variety of sticky rice’ cost six annas whilst a plain tea ‘served with a sediment of some kind of cereal’ poured into a ‘small dough pie’ cost four annas. He further described that a single glass of Mandalay pale ale cost three rupees.<sup>643</sup> Given these prices, it seems likely that the allowance of 12 annas for adults and 6 for children would not have stretched very far for the population in Meiktila camp. This supposition is supported by a second piece of information provided by Ali who noted that the local population in Meiktila had raised around 4000 rupees for the ‘relief of the internees.’<sup>644</sup> This admission is noteworthy both because it hints at the potentially difficult conditions in the camp for the internees, but also because it adds complexity to the notion that anti-minority and particularly anti-Chinese feeling was universal in Burma by the 1950s. Rather than reject the Yunnanese campmates on racial grounds as might have been expected, the local population in Meiktila felt enough sympathy for the Chinese internees that they raised a substantial amount of money to ease the conditions.

The lack of funds provided to the internees in Meiktila camp which led the local Burmese to raise money can be interpreted as a reflection of the hostility of the Burmese government to the population movement from Yunnan. In political terms government officials in the newly independent but politically and economically fragile Burma were ‘not pleased’ with the KMT presence with their subversive American funding, nor with

---

<sup>642</sup> Until the Union Bank of Burma Act was enacted in 1952 the official currency unit in Burma was the ‘rupee’, which was subdivided into ‘annas.’ After 1952 the Burmese ‘kyat’ and its subdivision of ‘pyas’ were the official currency, although clearly in 1953 the transition from rupees to kyat was still in process, hence Ali’s reference to annas. See: Fred Reinfeld, *A Catalogue of the World's Most Popular Coins* (New York: Sterling, 1956), p. 34;

<sup>643</sup> Norman Lewis, *Golden Earth: Travels in Burma* (Philadelphia: Readers Union, 1954), p. 232; 86.

<sup>644</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Ali Report Burma, 30 April 1953.

the unofficial refugees from Yunnan.<sup>645</sup> The ‘chief anxiety’ among the Burmese was fear of retribution in the form of invasion by their powerful neighbour the PRC if they were seen to be taking a side.<sup>646</sup> Whilst the Burmese government considered its army was a match for the KMT even with the backing of the CIA, a land war with PRC could only go badly for Burma. Burmese government officials appealed for American diplomatic aid in removing KMT troops and also requested the United Nations to take action on the KMT troops in the Shan States, but no action was taken by either party.<sup>647</sup>



Figure 14: Map edited to show Meiktila, central Burma, 2007. Source: The University of Texas

<sup>645</sup> See: Chang, ‘War Refugees to Immigrants’, p. 1089; Charoenwong, ‘Evacuation of KMT’, p. 161.

<sup>646</sup> Charoenwong, ‘Evacuation of KMT’, p. 165.

<sup>647</sup> Charney, ‘U Nu and China’, p. 44.

After multiple appeals and threats to lodge an official complaint, the Burmese Foreign Minister finally sent a telegram to the United Nations Secretary-General on 25 March 1953, requesting that a ‘Complaint by the Union of Burma Regarding Aggression against Her by the Kuomintang Government of Formosa’ be placed on the agenda of the Seventh Session of the General Assembly.<sup>648</sup> The issue was debated in April 1953, and in May 1953 a four power joint military committee ‘the joint military committee for the evacuation of Foreign Forces from Burma’ with representatives from Taiwan (ROC), Burma, Thailand and the United States began discussions under UN auspices in Bangkok.<sup>649</sup> These discussions were slow, not least because the Burmese government refused to meet with Nationalist Chinese officials directly. It was in early 1953, as Cold War and regional tensions reached breaking point over the issue of the Nationalist Chinese presence in Burma that the UNHCR first decided to engage with the issue of Chinese ‘refugees.’<sup>650</sup>

### *Aamir Ali and the Tentative Moves of the Agency of the Western Apparatus in Burma*

Why and how the UNHCR made a decision to act in a particular region at a specific historical moment has been a central preoccupation of many histories of the post-war refugee regime.<sup>651</sup> The case of the Yunnanese ‘refugees’ in Burma adds nuance to these inquiries by offering an example of a circumstance in which some actors within the UNHCR discussed taking action, but were unable to follow through with a limited offer of assistance in the face of complex regional processes. This episode highlights the central role played by specific actors within the apparatus in shaping the policies of the UNHCR. As argued elsewhere in this thesis, an examination of actors and how they

---

<sup>648</sup> According to Kenton Clymer, the USA did not take action on this as the CIA was covertly supporting KMT troops in Burma at this time. See: Clymer, *Delicate Relationship*, p. 83; Charoenwong, ‘Evacuation of KMT’, pp. 164-166

<sup>649</sup> See: Matthew Foley, *The Cold War and National Assertion in Southeast Asia: Britain, the United States and Burma, 1948-1962* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 111; Clymer, *Delicate Relationship*, p. 126.

<sup>650</sup> For further information on the Cold War in Southeast Asia, see: Foley, *National Assertion*, p. 111; Karl Hack, and Geoff Wade, ‘The Origins of the Southeast Asian Cold War’, *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 40, 3 (2009), pp. 441-448; Malcolm H. Murfett, ‘Introduction’, in *Cold War Southeast Asia*, ed. by Malcolm H. Murfett (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish, 2012), pp. 1-10; Immanuel Wallerstein, ‘What Cold War in Asia? An Interpretative Essay’, in *The Cold War in Asia: The Battle for Hearts and Minds*, ed. by Zheng Yangwen, Hong Liu, and Michael Szonyi (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010), pp. 15-24.

<sup>651</sup> Loescher, *UNHCR and World Politics*, pp. 77-86.

reproduce rhetoric, and detect and interpret political leanings is one means by which to understand how an apparatus actually works in practice. In the case of the UNHCR in Burma several key actors within the organisation shaped its response, beginning with the regional representative, Aamir Ali.

The important role that Ali played in this episode is underscored by the lack of UNHCR engagement with this group until 1953, despite the Yunnanese had first arriving in Burma *en masse* in 1949. Prior to spring 1953 the UNHCR did have a small presence in Asia working on very specific cases of displacement. Firstly, having inherited an estimated 20,000 European refugees in China from the International Relief Organisation (IRO), the UNHCR had established a 'special representative' in Shanghai, whose office served as the staging centre for European refugees leaving China.<sup>652</sup> Secondly, the UNHCR had established a joint office in Hong Kong with the US-funded International Committee for European Migration (ICEM), and in April 1952 the UNHCR's Advisory Committee had recommended that the High Commissioner conduct a survey on Chinese refugees in Hong Kong, although the survey had not yet commenced. These footholds in Asia were unsurprisingly small and narrow in scope given that UNHCR had been established in 1950 as a temporary organisation with a three-year lifespan and almost no budget to speak of, and its operations were restricted to providing 'legal protection' to European refugees who had acquired the 'refugee' status before 1951.<sup>653</sup>

The narrow and restricted focus of the UNHCR in Asia was challenged with the arrival in Bangkok in March 1953 of Ali, an Indian national and former International Labour Organisation (ILO), who was appointed the first UNHCR representative for the 'Far East.' Within a month Ali had begun his mission to 'visit as many of the countries of [the] region as possible before the end of the year'.<sup>654</sup> Once in Burma, Ali came across what he described as the 'question of Chinese refugees.'<sup>655</sup> Ali's initial encounter with this group would lead to a seven month period in which the UNHCR grappled with the

---

<sup>652</sup> Peterson, 'Uneven Development', pp. 329-330.

<sup>653</sup> Peterson, 'To Be or Not to Be', p. 176.

<sup>654</sup> See: UNHCR/Fonds 4/ Series 1/ Box G1/12/4/52: Letter from Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees James M. Read to Mr Palamadai S. Lokanathan, Executive Secretary for the UN Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) in Bangkok, 3 December 1952; Inter office memo 'Subject: Lack of Money' from Ali to Nicholas Groby, Chief of the UN Finance Division, Geneva, 30 April 1953; UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 268/1-15/27: Letter from Ali to Amir Hoveyda, 26 August 1953.

<sup>655</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Ali Report Burma, 30 April 1953.



question of assistance. In those seven months, the UNHCR contemplated offering ‘aid’ by stepping forward in a supervisory role and overseeing the evacuation of a small group of ‘refugees’ interned in a camp in Meiktila, central Burma, to Taiwan alongside KMT troops when an agreement could be reached on the broader issue.<sup>656</sup> According to Ali, the residents of Meiktila camp had been there since 1949 when they had crossed the border and been interned by Burmese troops.<sup>657</sup> Whilst no action was actually taken in regards to these ‘refugees’, letters and other correspondence reveal UNHCR’s debates on whether the organisation could or should offer ‘aid’, ‘supervision’ or an ‘intervention’ in the case of Yunnanese refugees.<sup>658</sup> These discussions alone, which have been omitted from any official histories of the UNHCR, are a window into the heterogeneous mentalities which existed within the adolescent organisation, and its vulnerability to broader, external pressures and processes.

It is clear from the correspondence that the brand new representative in the ‘Far East’ Aamir Ali (picture IN Figure 15) headed the charge on this issue, bringing an energy and perspective which seems quite different to the Eurocentric, end-of-colonial era mentality seen elsewhere in the UNHCR. In his work on the inadequate response of the UNHCR to the contemporaneous crisis of Chinese refugees in Hong Kong, Peterson argues that more work needs to be done on the ‘personal backgrounds and experiences of specific individuals’ within the UNHCR, in order to understand the decision making within the organisation in its early years.<sup>659</sup> In the case of Ali, the momentum which he brought to the case of the Yunnanese in Burma was rooted in the peculiarities of his background. Born to a Muslim family in Bombay, Ali was educated at the ‘Eton of India’, the Doon school in Dehradun which was modelled on elite British public schools.<sup>660</sup> The Doon school prided itself on admitting pupils regardless of social status, creed or caste, and on raising its pupils to be the new generation of leaders and civil

---

<sup>656</sup> See: UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI Ali Report Burma, 30 April 1953; Inter office memo from Ali to Hoveyda, 14 September 1953.

<sup>657</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Ali Report Burma, 30 April 1953.

<sup>658</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Ali to Hoveyda, 14 September 1953.

<sup>659</sup> Peterson, ‘Uneven Development’, p. 340.

<sup>660</sup> See: ‘India’s Eton’, in *BBC World Service* (24 November 2014). Available at <<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02c3zgg>> [accessed 14 December 2018]; Robert W. Cox, *Universal Foreigner: The Individual and the World* (London: World Scientific, 2013), p. 341; Aamir Ali, ‘Now That I am Old’, *The Himalayan Journal*, 66 (2010).

servants in a ‘free and democratic India.’<sup>661</sup> According to former pupil and renowned journalist George Verghese, the boys at the Doon School were told to remember that they were elites, but to remember ‘elite does not mean elitism. You are servants of those around you, and of those less fortunate than you. Not their superiors. Not their masters.’<sup>662</sup>



Figure 15: Aamir Ali. Source, Aamir Ali, ‘Now that We Are Old.’

---

<sup>661</sup> ‘Origins and History’, *The Doon School* (2019). Available at: <http://www.doonschool.com/about-us/origins-and-history/>

<sup>662</sup> ‘India’s Eton.’

In addition to this civic-minded schooling, Ali came of age at a pivotal moment in Indian nationalism. From the 1920s onwards, internationalism emerged as a central characteristic of Indian nationalism, which was itself a combination of ideas and principles. These principles included an opposition to colonialism, imperialism and racialism, a belief in non-alignment once Cold War polarisation took shape, and a sense of solidarity arising from the notion of a greater ‘Asian identity.’<sup>663</sup> A person who embodied this particular brand of internationally flavoured nationalism was Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of the newly established Indian state following partition in 1947. Nehru’s nationalism drew upon and deployed two different and yet intersecting understandings of internationalism. On the one hand, it utilised the ‘language of global citizenship and rights’, whilst on the other it conceptualised the international system as a ‘source of strength and support for state-directed programmes of national development.’<sup>664</sup> In other words, internationally minded Indian nationalism as propagated by Nehru adopted a belief in peaceful coexistence through the implementation and upholding of human rights, whilst asserting the inviolability of the nation state.

Indian nationalists were not alone in their belief in internationalism in this era. According to Glenda Sluga, the end of the Second World War represented an ‘apogee of internationalism’ in which for a brief moment mainstream opinion accepted internationalism as politically realistic rather than simply a discarded utopian ideal.<sup>665</sup> New institutions such as the UN represented a fresh take on ‘world government’, whilst some pre-existing bodies sought to embrace a more global focus. One such organisation was the International Labour Organisation (ILO), which abandoned its ‘general and Eurocentric character’ by increasingly specialising in different geographical and sectoral domains in the post-war period.<sup>666</sup> In 1947 the ILO held its very first Asian Regional Conference, at which Nehru explicitly called on the ILO to ‘shift its attention

---

<sup>663</sup>Sankaran Kalyanaraman, ‘Nehru’s Advocacy of Internationalism and Indian Foreign Policy’, in *India’s Grand Strategy: History, Theory, Cases*, ed. by Kanti Bajpai, Saira Basit, V. Krishnappa (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2014), pp. 153-158.

<sup>664</sup> See: Kalynaraman, ‘Nehru’s Advocacy’, p. 156; Sluga, *Internationalism*, p. 125.

<sup>665</sup> See: Sluga, *Internationalism*, p. 79; Jessica Reinisch, ‘Introductions: Agents of Internationalism’, *Contemporary European History*, 25, 2 (2016), pp. 195-205.

<sup>666</sup> Gert Van Goethem, ‘Phelan’s War: The International Labour Organisation in Limbo (1941-1948)’, in *ILO Histories: Essays on the International Labour Organization and Its Impact on the World during the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Jasmien van Daele, Magaly Rodriguez Garcia, and Geert van Goethem (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010), p. 338.

away from Europe.<sup>667</sup> Aamir Ali was also present at the conference, having been appointed as an administrator to the ILO specifically tasked with organising this ground breaking event. Although we can only speculate as to whether Ali witnessed Nehru's speech, he would undoubtedly have been affected by the internationalist undercurrents of the moment. Indeed, in his reflections fifty years later Ali recalled that there was a 'new mood' to the continent in the late 1940s.<sup>668</sup>

Thus when Ali began working for the UNHCR, he brought with him a particular outlook of a colonially educated internationalist who had worked as a bureaucrat in an increasingly global organisation. In addition to this background, the correspondence shows that Ali demonstrated an aptitude for how to engage the attention of key staff in the UNHCR in Geneva. He displayed an innate understanding of the need to frame an issue worthy of attention as a 'problem' and also the premium placed by the UNHCR on empirical evidence. He was clearly attuned to the underlying rationales and limitations of the organisation, as seen in his careful dialogue around what role the UNHCR could play in Burma. Although Ali's trip to Burma was his first undertaking as 'Far Eastern' representative of the UNHCR, he had actually begun working for the organisation officially in November 1952 which meant that he had prior experience of the office in Geneva and particularly the underlying assumptions and attitudes of the staff. The historian Laura Madokoro has noted in her research on Chinese refugees in Hong Kong that framing a particular situation as problematic implies that a solution is required.<sup>669</sup> Ali appeared to have implicitly understood the need to frame a situation as both urgent and problematic given the tone of his early communications about the Yunnanese in Burma. In his report compiled on the situation, Ali noted that when first visiting the country he found that '[the] question of Chinese refugees is the most important one in Burma.' Ali further noted that the 'Burmese government is saddled with this unwanted problem', and highlighted the unfolding nature of the situation by suggesting that the

---

<sup>667</sup> Gerry Rodgers, 'India, the ILO and the Quest for Social Justice since 1919', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 46, 10 (2011), p. 45.

<sup>668</sup> See: Aamir Ali, 'Fifty Years of the ILO and Asia', *International Labour Review* 99 (1969), p. 351; Aamir Ali, 'The International Civil Service: The Idea and the Reality', in *International Administration: Law and Management Practices in International Organisations*, ed. by Chris de Cooker (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1989), pp. xix-xxxvi; Aamir Ali, 'To Talk of Many things', *Friends Newsletter: International Labour Organisation*, 49 (2010), pp. 4-9.

<sup>669</sup> Madokoro, 'Surveying Hong Kong', 500.

UNHCR should ‘watch carefully’ the discussions regarding the evacuation of KMT troops.<sup>670</sup>

In addition to framing the situation as ‘urgent’ and ‘problematic’ Ali cited empirical evidence as a means of engaging the interest of staff in Geneva.<sup>671</sup> Madokoro has also noted that, in the contemporaneous case of Chinese refugees in Hong Kong, UNHCR actors placed a premium on empirical evidence, which functioned both as a means of understanding the size of a refugee ‘problem’ and later as a potential means for creating awareness and galvanizing support.<sup>672</sup> Ali was aware of the situation in Hong Kong which was unfolding concurrently in 1953, as he referred directly to the ‘the case of Chinese refugees in Hong Kong’ in his first letter to Hoveyda. Ali’s likely knowledge of the proposed survey in Hong Kong may account for his suggestion that ‘we would have to conduct some sort of study’, and that he ‘could undertake such an inquiry right away.’ In addition to the suggestion of a study somewhat akin but on a much smaller scale than the Hong Kong survey, Ali’s report included extensive statistics, from the ‘500 Chinese internees or refugees in a camp in Meiktila’, to the amount these refugees supposedly received from the Burmese government, amounting to ‘12 annas a day for adults and 6 annas a day for minors’ discussed above.<sup>673</sup> Although no survey was conducted and the statistics changed throughout the course of correspondence (by August the number of ‘refugees’ he claimed were in Meiktila had dropped to 178), the fact that Ali tried to engage statistics and empirical evidence in this case represents an attempt to work within the framework of assumptions, beliefs and methods which already existed in the UNHCR.<sup>674</sup>

One such limiting belief behind the UNHCR as the central institution of the post-war refugee response was that it was designed as a coordinating body to find solutions to the refugee situation in Europe, not globally. In 1953 it was in an extremely fragile position and needed to prove its relevance in order to justify existing beyond its initial three year remit. Ali’s understanding of this delicate situation and the non-operational mandate of the UNHCR were reflected in his suggestion that the organisation only take part in the

---

<sup>670</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Ali Report Burma, 30 April 1953.

<sup>671</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Ali Report Burma, 30 April 1953.

<sup>672</sup> Madokoro, ‘Surveying Hong Kong’, p. 496.

<sup>673</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Ali Report Burma, 30 April 1953.

<sup>674</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Note on the interview, 4 August 1953.

case of Yunnanese ‘refugees’ in an extremely limited capacity, namely ‘supervising’ the evacuation of one group of refugees from one camp. In a letter to Hoveyda, Ali was keen to emphasise that he had pointed out to the ROC Chinese delegate that ‘the case was a very difficult one and he should not be too optimistic about the help that the UNHCR could render.’<sup>675</sup>

In addition, Ali highlighted that this limited supervisory role could provide a much needed opportunity for the UNHCR to work without being challenged by the United States. Ali pointed out that if the joint military commission did extend an invitation for the UNHCR to supervise the evacuation of Yunnanese ‘refugees’ from Meiktila camp then the ‘U.S. Government as a member of that Commission will naturally not be able to challenge the UNHCR acceptance [...] As most of the major U.N. members are greatly interested in a satisfactory solution to the question of evacuating Chinese troops from Burma, I do not think that any of them would object to UNHCR participation’ That the United States would not be able to challenge UNHCR participation in Burma and moreover would have to implicitly support the organisation by not challenging its involvement was an enormous incentive in the context of ongoing American hostility.<sup>676</sup>

The root of American opposition to the UNHCR stemmed in part from the appointment of Gerrit Van Heuven Goedhart as the High Commissioner, who as a Dutchman was considered ‘neutral’ by the British delegation to the United Nations. Goedhart’s appointment thwarted American ambitions to install one of their countrymen in the role, as had previously been the case with the International Refugee Organisation (IRO). According to Gil Loescher, Goedhart supported the vision that Western European states had for the UNHCR which made him the ‘natural enemy’ of the United States.<sup>677</sup> As a result, the United States refused to participate in the UNHCR in favour of the Intergovernmental Committee of European Migration (ICEM) which it could more easily control. As outlined in the previous chapter, American animosity proved to be an enormous practical obstacle for Goedhart and the rest of the UNHCR in the early 1950s as the government in Washington opposed funding the organisation, refused to contribute American resources, and belittled the organisation wherever possible in

---

<sup>675</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Ali Report Burma, 30 April 1953.

<sup>676</sup> Peterson, ‘To Be or Not to Be’, p. 177.

<sup>677</sup> Loescher, *UNHCR and World Politics*, p. 52.

political discussions. Ali's identification of a way in which Goedhart and the UNHCR more generally could navigate the roadblock of American antipathy is just one of ways he sought, whether consciously or unconsciously, to shape the response of the UNHCR to these 'refugees.'

### *Colonial Era Mentalities and Internationalist Ideas: Heterogeneous Opinions within the Apparatus*

Whilst Ali did win some support from other actors within the UNHCR with regards to involvement in the case of the Yunnanese in Burma, the differences of opinion at work within the UNHCR office meant that there was far from universal agreement on what action to take. Far from being a monolithic bloc, the agency of the apparatus was characterised by a range of viewpoints.<sup>678</sup> These divergent approaches were visible in discussions of the sticky question of the eligibility of the group in Meiktila camp. Even Ali noted that the matter of eligibility was a 'difficult' one as the group in question had only 'doubtful' claim to refugee status.<sup>679</sup> In order to fall within the strict mandate of the UNHCR in 1953 a 'refugee' had to meet two criteria. Firstly, they had to have fled the country where they were legally considered a citizen for political reasons, or to be unwilling to return to said country for political reasons. Secondly, they had to be either unable or unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of their government because of a 'well-founded fear of persecution' by the government itself. In Asia the issue was further complicated by the duality of the Chinese governments, with some states recognising the PRC whilst others recognised the ROC. For countries who recognised the PRC, Chinese refugees could be said to fall within the UNHCR mandate given that they were unwilling to avail themselves of the legitimate national government of China. Somewhat ironically, for states that recognised the ROC as the majority of UNHCR member's states did, Chinese refugees in Hong Kong and Burma fell outside the UNHCR mandate because they could theoretically seek the protection of the ROC in Taiwan. This conundrum was contemporaneously referred to as 'relative eligibility.'<sup>680</sup>

---

<sup>678</sup> Pederson, *The Guardians*, p. 5.

<sup>679</sup> See: UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Ali Report Burma, 30 April 1953; Note on the interview] Strictly Confidential: Chinese Refugees in Burma, 4 August 1953; Letter from Hoveyda to Ali, 4 August 1953.

<sup>680</sup> See: Peterson, 'To Be or Not To Be', p. 174; Chi-Kwan Mark, 'The 'Problem of People': British Colonials, Cold War Powers, and the Chinese Refugees in Hong Kong, 1949–1962', *Modern Asian Studies*, 41, 6 (2007), pp. 1145-1181.

Technically, therefore, the Yunnanese ‘refugees’ in Meiktila camp fell outside the jurisdictional reach of the UNHCR. This ineligibility was one of the reasons given by Deputy Director of the UNHCR, the Frenchman Marcel Pagès, who voiced his objections to assisting the Yunnanese in Meiktila camp. According to John Kelly who had taken up the role of European Regional desk officer when the UNHCR was founded, Pagès was considered ‘number three’ in the Geneva office, after the High Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner James Read.<sup>681</sup> In a letter to the High Commissioner Gerrit Van Heuven Goedhart on 5 August 1953, he stated that the UNHCR should not take action, given that these were ‘refugees not falling under the mandate.’<sup>682</sup> In his letter Pagès also stated that ‘Read, Hoveyda and I’ all objected to UNHCR presence at the evacuation of Meiktila camp. Although Pagès cited Amir Hoveyda’s support in this matter, further correspondence reveals that Hoveyda may in fact have taken a more moderate view of this matter. For example, in June 1953, Hoveyda had sent a memo to Aline Cohn, the representative of the UNHCR at the UN in New York, which conveyed in markedly neutral tones the case of the ‘Chinese refugees’ in Burma, requesting that the information be referred to the High Commissioner and that the UN resolution regarding the disarming and evacuation of the Kuomintang troops in Burma ‘might provide an opportunity to include these Chinese refugees.’<sup>683</sup>

Like Ali, Amir Hoveyda the UNHCR desk officer for Asia in the 1950s was also non-European and elite-educated. Born in Tehran, Hoveyda was raised in Damascus amongst ‘colonial intrigues’ whilst his father worked for the Iranian civil service.<sup>684</sup> Hoveyda would later become a controversial figure in Iran as the second most powerful man during the monarchy’s last two decades, and was ultimately tried and executed during the Iranian revolution in 1979.<sup>685</sup> In the 1950s however, Hoveyda had temporarily left Iran following purges in the Iranian Foreign Ministry to work for the

---

<sup>681</sup> UNHCR/OT: Kelly, 1 April 1998.

<sup>682</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Inter office memo from Marcel Pagès to the Gerrit Van Heuven, 5 August 1953.

<sup>683</sup> See: UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Inter office memo from Hoveyda to Aline Cohn, 4 June 1953; UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Hoveyda to Aline Cohn, 4 June 1953.

<sup>684</sup> Abbas Milani, *The Persian Sphinx: Amir Abbas Hoveyda and the Riddle of the Iranian Revolution* (Washington DC: Mage Publishers, 2000), p. 38.

<sup>685</sup> Afshin Matin-asgari, ‘The Transparent Sphinx: Political Biography and the Question of Intellectual Responsibility’, *Journal for Critical Studies of the Middle East* 10, 9 (2001), p. 107.



UNHCR in Geneva.<sup>686</sup> Like Ali, Hoveyda had received a colonial education in a French Lycée in Beirut, and according to the biographer Abbas Milani was ‘a child of Beirut cosmopolitanism.’ Whilst Hoveyda was not European and spent his formative years in the Middle East, his wife later described him as ‘too European for the Iranians.’<sup>687</sup> Although both colonially educated internationalists, Ali and Hoveyda appeared to approach refugee matters from different perspectives, with Hoveyda’s outlook being potentially more Eurocentric given his strong personal identification with European, and particularly French, culture.

It is thus difficult to surmise the extent that Hoveyda and Read concurred with Pagès’s objections to involvement in Burma, yet he certainly articulated the colour line within UNHCR mentalities which would also arise in the case of refugees in Hong Kong.<sup>688</sup>

That is to say, Pagès expressed a concern that UNHCR ‘acceptance’ to act would endanger other operations in China, more specifically the ‘European refugees’ in Shanghai, and tellingly that it risked ‘jeopardizing any future actions used to facilitate our task in this country (possible dispatch of doctors, investigators, etc.).’ He added that, if the UNHCR were to be present at the evacuation of Yunnanese from Meiktila camp, it would have ‘very serious consequences’ for these other operations.<sup>689</sup>

According to Glen Peterson, unlike the territorial-political process of decolonisation which was well underway by 1953, the ‘decolonisation of the mind’ in the UNHCR was only in its infancy. In its early years, many of the staff at the UNHCR were still guided by a set of colonial ‘assumptions about the world and its peoples’ which are perhaps more commonly attributed to the 1930s than the 1950s.<sup>690</sup> Laura Madokoro concurs that many of the responses and perceptions of refugees in Asia by actors within western organisations such as UNHCR continued to be shaped by colonial assumptions and the global ‘colour line’.<sup>691</sup>

---

<sup>686</sup> Abbas Milani, *Eminent Persians: The Men and Women who made Modern Iran, 1941-1979: in Two Volumes. Volume One* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2008), p. 195.

<sup>687</sup> Milani, *The Persian Sphinx*, pp. 61-65.

<sup>688</sup> See: Madokoro, ‘Surveying Hong Kong’, p. 514.

<sup>689</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Pagès to Goedhart, 5 August 1953.

<sup>690</sup> Peterson, ‘Uneven Development’, p. 327.

<sup>691</sup> Madokoro further argues that the attempts of humanitarians to raise both awareness and support for Chinese refugees in Hong Kong actually served to reinforce hierarchies along racial grounds, othering these refugees as potential beneficiaries of Western generosity. See: Madokoro, *Elusive Refuge*, p. 218; ‘Writing the Histories of People in Motion: An Interview with Laura Madokoro’, in *Toynbee Prize Foundation* (14 November 2018). Available at: <http://toynbeeprize.org/interviews/laura-madokoro/> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

Rather, in addition to Pagès fear that assisting in Burma would undermine the UNHCR's other regional footholds and therefore affect the response to white European refugees, his letter also highlighted the role of broader Cold War processes in UNHCR decision making. Pagès cautioned the High Commissioner that the UNHCR should avoid being perceived as 'interfering in matters that do not concern us', though he did not specify what he meant by this. Furthermore Pagès argued that the ROC were keen for the UNHCR to offer assistance 'for purely political reasons.'<sup>692</sup> He also felt that the UNHCR would be participating in sending 'potential soldiers' back to Taiwan, assisting with the 'manufacture' of the military in the ROC. This was actually the opposite of the fears of the Burmese government, who in August 1953 suspected the Chinese Nationalists did not intend to evacuate the bulk of its fighting force. However, Pagès's perception of the group in Meiktila camp as potential soldiers reflects the homogenous labelling of displaced Yunnanese practised by all parties in this case.<sup>693</sup>

Pagès ended his letter by imploring the High Commissioner to send a letter to Ali, 'explaining our position', and also 'reassuring him about the future importance of his activities', referring to the work to be done with European refugees in the region.<sup>694</sup> Despite the arguments put forward by Pagès, just six days later, on 11 August, the High Commissioner sent a letter to Aline Cohn via Hoveyda, conveying 'that if he were invited unanimously by the members of the Joint Commission to supervise jointly the evacuation of the [Meiktila] camp, he would answer positively.' This information was communicated to the Joint Military Committee and brought to the attention of the Secretary General of the United Nations. Whether the High Commissioner was convinced by the arguments of Ali or saw this as an opportunity to push the boundaries of the UNHCR's restricted mandate is unknown. And whilst this represented a 'moral' rather than a pragmatic or material offer of assistance and was therefore extremely limited in scope, it was an important attempt by the High Commissioner and others in the UNHCR to push the limits of the mandate.<sup>695</sup> It also signifies a move away from the colonial era mentalities which drew a 'colour line' in the sand of displacement response,

---

<sup>692</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Pagès to Goedhart, 5 August 1953.

<sup>693</sup> Clymer, *Delicate Relationship*, pp. 127-128.

<sup>694</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Pagès to Goedhart, 5 August 1953.

<sup>695</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Letter from Hoveyda to Aline Cohn, 11 August 1953.

and an incremental step towards more internationalist understandings of refugee assistance.<sup>696</sup>

*'Refugees Should Be Treated as POWs': The Limits of the Western Apparatus in Expanding Its Activities in Burma*

Although there were a multitude of differing views at work in the UNHCR which impacted decision making in this case, it was processes beyond the control of the organisation and its staff which ultimately dictated the end of UNHCR engagement in Burma in 1953. The need to locate displacement and responses to refugees into broader processes is evident in this case in which multiple agendas were at work. Whilst events in Asia cannot simply be subsumed into the broader narrative of the Cold War, the bipolar geo-political struggle between the Soviet Union and the United States was global in proportions, shaping the context in which events unfolded in different regions as well as dictating the range of choices available to local actors. Michael Charney states that for most political actors in Asia, the Cold War served primarily as a 'backdrop in front of which their own strategies and issues were staged.'<sup>697</sup> Charney further argues that U Nu's (hereafter Nu) government successfully 're-imagined' the Cold War in Asia, allowing the government to largely shield the threat of PRC intervention from the Burmese public and simultaneously isolate their many domestic enemies.<sup>698</sup> Whilst Nu's neutrality has previously been interpreted by much of the historiography as weak or incompetent, in Charney's telling the Nu government's refusal to be drawn into the Cold War was in fact a way for them to re-imagine Burma's relationship with its powerful Communist neighbour. Through a range of strategies, tactics and official policies, Nu and his fellow governing politicians left the Americans, Soviets and Chinese 'bewildered' about where Burma stood within the conflict.<sup>699</sup>

One of the main points of contention between the PRC and Burma was the presence of KMT troops, which became a key area in which Nu's government practiced this re-

---

<sup>696</sup> Madokoro, 'Surveying Hong Kong', p. 514.

<sup>697</sup> Charney, 'U Nu and China', p. 41; Szonyi and Liu, 'New Approaches', p. 1.

<sup>698</sup> 'U' is a Burmese honorific prefix meaning 'Uncle.' Therefore whilst the leader of Burma was named 'U Nu', it is correct in referring to his government to remove the 'U' prefix. See: Donald M. Seekins, *Historical Dictionary of Burma (Myanmar)*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2017), p. xii.

<sup>699</sup> Charney, 'U Nu and China', pp. 41-42.

imagining of relations. The careful line trodden by Nu and his fellow decision makers explains the somewhat contradictory responses the UNHCR received to its offer of involvement. In Ali's initial report on the Chinese 'refugees' in Burma dated 30 April 1953, he recorded these conflicting messages coming from the Burmese government. On the one hand, Ali noted that he believed the Burmese government would be 'only too happy if someone would take the refugees or internees away' and therefore would be 'grateful if the UNHCR could help.' More specifically, in a meeting with a Burmese official named U Pe Than, Ali had felt that he 'seemed quite keen on the idea of appealing to the UNHCR for aid.' This initial keenness perhaps reflects some desires in Rangoon to expedite the removal of displaced Yunnanese from their territory, and possibly that some actors within the Nu government felt that UNHCR involvement may speed up this process. Yet in the same report Ali stated that the Burmese Chief Secretary of the Ministry of the Interior had expressed that he 'thought that these people in the camp were internees rather than refugees, and he was doubtful if they fell within [UNHCR's] terms of reference.'<sup>700</sup> It is likely that the Chief Secretary of the Ministry of the Interior and others in the government felt that the presence of the UNHCR, many of whose member states recognised the ROC, would be considered antagonistic by the PRC. These conflicting messages from different representatives of Nu's government indicate the intricate decision making taking place in Rangoon, as they sought to tread a tightrope of Cold War tensions.

On 14 September, in a move that confirmed the primacy with which Nu's government regarded avoiding aggravating the PRC, the Burmese representative at a joint discussion with Ali and a delegate from the ROC expressed that Nu's government were 'opposed to [extend an] invitation to UNHCR as [the Burmese Government felt] refugees should be treated as POWs', and that as such a 'unanimous invitation to UNHCR [was] unlikely.' Ali relayed that in addition to the Burmese rejection of UNHCR involvement, the evacuation of refugees from Meiktila was 'unlikely to begin for some months', in line with the negotiations which were ongoing between Burma, the ROC, the United States and Thailand.<sup>701</sup> According to Ali, the Nu government were insistent that the

---

<sup>700</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Ali Report Burma, 30 April 1953.

<sup>701</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Teleprinter message from Aline Cohn in New York, conveying cable sent in code by Ali in Bangkok to Hoveyda and Gerrit Van Heuven, 14 September 1953.

‘evacuation begin with troops not refugees to show good faith.’<sup>702</sup> The ‘good faith’ referred to highlights the Burmese government’s suspicions that the evacuation would not in fact resolve the problem of KMT troops in their territory which continued to be the cause of tension with the PRC. In Nu’s re-imagining of Cold War relations in Asia, privileging the return of soldiers over civilians can be interpreted as a gesture of goodwill to the PRC, as well as a desire to be rid of the many ongoing problems caused in Burma by KMT troops’ presence more generally.

The suspicions of the Nu government were not without foundation. Throughout the discussions held by the joint commission on the evacuation of troops, the Nationalist government planned ‘Operation Heaven’, in which they would evacuate a few thousand poorly trained personnel disguised as ‘real’ troops, including hired civilians from the Shan minority, whilst leaving their better forces in Burma to continue their activities with the support of the KMT government in Taiwan. After months of discussions in which the evacuations hung in the balance, on 22 September 1953 representatives from the ROC agreed to sign the evacuation plan put forward by the Burmese government, with the crucial caveat that they were not able to issue a blanket order for evacuation. The government in Rangoon agreed to the final plan on 10 October 1953, with the other three parties of the ROC, Thailand and the United States signing on 12 October. In the agreement the Nu government stated that they would suspend attacks on KMT positions until 15 November, allowing evacuees to cross to Thailand, from where they would be flown to Taiwan. Evacuations of displaced Yunannese, which included both KMT troops and civilians, proceeded in three parts between November 1953 and May 1954.<sup>703</sup>

The American photographic journalist James Burke captured images of Nationalist troops emerging from the Burmese jungle, being processed in Thailand and finally being flown to Taiwan during the first phase of evacuation which were published as a photo essay in LIFE magazine (7 December 1953). Burke’s photos captured a diversity of men, women and children, some dressed as civilians, such as the girl pictured in Figure 16, and some in battle fatigues. The text which accompanied the photos

---

<sup>702</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Ali to Hoveyda, 14 September 1953.

<sup>703</sup> Clymer, *Delicate Relationship*, p. 127.

demonstrates the aforementioned Western attitude towards the Yunnanese warrior refugee community which did not perceive this politically active population to be ‘refugees’ in anyway. Instead the text designated the KMT troops to be ‘squatters in Burma’s wilderness’, with non-combatants described as ‘hangers-on’ who according to the article only increased the numbers of ‘unwelcome immigrants’ from Yunnan into Burma.<sup>704</sup> The hostile attitude captured by the text in the article perfectly exemplifies the lack of understanding of the experience of displaced Yunnanese in the mountainous borderlands.



Figure 16: A girl, most likely from Yunnan province, pictured in civilian clothing during the ‘Chinese Evacuation of Burma’ in November 1953. Source: James Burke, *Life Magazine*

On the other hand, the photographs themselves do support the notion feared by the Burmese that the Chinese Nationalists in Burma put forward elderly and disabled people as well as women and children for the evacuations as planned in ‘Operation

---

<sup>704</sup> ‘Out of Burma to Join Chiang: Nationalist Agree to Quit Jungle’, *LIFE Magazine* (7 December 1953), p. 61.

Heaven.<sup>705</sup> Despite these possible tactics, the numbers of Yunnanese evacuated to Taiwan were in fact far greater than the 2,000 previously agreed to, with the American CIA stating in a report in September 1954 that in total officially 5731 troops and 874 ‘dependents’ were evacuated between November 1953 and May 1954.<sup>706</sup> As far as the records show, the group of ‘civilian refugees’ from Meiktila camp were amongst the last 820 people evacuated in the third phase of evacuations between 1 and 7 May 1954. No representative of the UNHCR was present at any stage of the evacuations, representing the end of any engagement the agency had with the displaced Yunnanese in Burma.

Although the UNHCR was not present as an international observer for any of the evacuations of the Yunnanese and therefore had to forego the opportunity to expand its mandate, this made little practical difference to the ‘civilian refugees’ from Meiktila camp who were eventually evacuated to Taiwan regardless of who observed them go. Despite the misgivings of members of Nu’s government, the Burmese in Rangoon were said to be ‘reasonably satisfied’ with the removal of KMT troops and civilians.<sup>707</sup> However, whilst the evacuations had resulted in the transfer of over 6,000 people, thousands more remained scattered across the eastern and southern parts of Burma. One of the long-lasting effects of Yunnanese displacement and KMT activities in the region is the contribution this population made to the narcotics industry in the so-called ‘Golden Triangle’ of South-East Asia, which includes parts of Burma, Thailand, Laos and Indo-China.<sup>708</sup>

Amongst the thousands who fled from Yunnan to Burma in 1949, Yunnanese opium farmers moved across the border to avoid Mao’s ban on the cultivation of opium in the PRC. These civilian farmers spread the cultivation of poppies used for opium across the hills to the west of Salween with the encouragement of the KMT. This established an industry which continues to dominate life in the ‘Golden Triangle’ today, including by contributing to the ongoing problem with statelessness in the rugged mountainous border zone between Yunnan, Burma and Thailand.<sup>709</sup> The continuing issue of

---

<sup>705</sup> Clymer, *Delicate Relationship*, p. 127.

<sup>706</sup> CIA records, CIA-RDP80R01731R003000010004-8, Evacuation of KMT Irregulars from Burma: Proposed use of Residual Funds, 14 September 1954.

<sup>707</sup> Clymer, *Delicate Relationship*, p. 135.

<sup>708</sup> Kaufmann, ‘Golden Triangle’, p. 440.

<sup>709</sup> See: Tucker, *The Curse of Independence*, pp. 167-168. Lucy Inglis, *Milk of Paradise: A History of Opium* (London: Macmillan, 2018), p. 648.

statelessness in the border zones of Myanmar and Thailand is highly complex and not simply a fall out of political manoeuvrings in the 1950s, with Thai nationalism, increasingly narrow definition of ‘Thai-ness’, derogatory narratives of highlanders in the Golden Triangle and their subsequent exclusion from Thai citizenship amongst other contributing factors in the statelessness amongst the hill tribes in Northern Thailand.<sup>710</sup> Yet the opium cultivation and guerrilla warfare fought in Burma and across the border into Thailand in the 1950s did establish an infrastructure which has played a role in the periodical outbreaks of violence, displacement and statelessness which continues to impact many in the region today.<sup>711</sup>

### *Conclusion*

It is evident from the establishment of the opium industry in the ‘Golden Triangle’ and the ongoing problems with statelessness in the region that Yunnanese displacement of both civilians and soldiers has played a role in long term political and social problems for Burma and its neighbouring polities.<sup>712</sup> Yet at first glance, the case of the ‘doubtful’ Yunnanese ‘refugees’ in Burma seems like a small and irrelevant part of the early history of the UNHCR and of the western apparatus.<sup>713</sup> However, the fact that a UNHCR response to Yunnanese civilians in Burma was touted but never came to fruition makes demonstrates the processes of decision-making rather than just the outcomes of refugee assistance. Given the strict legal mandate and tenuous position of the UNHCR in 1953, it appears that the energetic Ali in Bangkok is the principal reason why the Yunnanese in Burma were brought to the attention of the central office. With a few months experience in Geneva, Ali was attuned to the underlying rationales of the UNHCR, which enabled him to capture the attention of staff at the administrative centre of the apparatus, and to engage with regional protagonists on this issue, underscoring

---

<sup>710</sup> Rachel E. Rosenbloom, ‘From the Outside Looking In: U.S. Passports in the Borderlands’, in Benjamin N. Lawrance and Jacqueline Stevens (eds.), *Citizenship in Question: Evidentiary Birthright and Statelessness* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2017), pp. 150-151.

<sup>711</sup> The problem with statelessness in the region recently hit international headlines when a youth football team were rescued from Tham Luang Cave in Thailand, and it was reported that many of the young footballers were amongst the approximated 400,000 known stateless people living in Thailand, many of whom lack an official nationality as a result of socio-political strife in the Golden Triangle. See: Hannah Beech, ‘Stateless and Poor, Some Boys in Thai Cave Had Already Beaten Long Odds’, *New York Times* (2018). Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/10/world/asia/thailand-cave-soccer-stateless.html>

<sup>712</sup> Kaufmann, ‘Golden Triangle’, p. 440.

<sup>713</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Ali Report Burma, 30 April 1953.



the importance of individual actors in shaping the post-war apparatus. In framing the ‘question’ of the Yunnanese in Burma in terms of being an urgent ‘problem’, attempting to use the device of empirical evidence, suggesting that UNHCR involvement be kept within manageable dimensions, and highlighting this as an opportunity to quietly secure implicit American approval, Ali successfully registered the Yunnanese in Burma as an issue on the UNHCR’s agenda.

This near miss of refugee assistance is also a further illustration of the different approaches evident within the UNHCR and the broader apparatus of displacement response, which represented how particularly Western societies were grappling with the issues of decolonisation and the increasingly entrenched Cold War. The letter sent from the Deputy Director Marcel Pagès to the High Commissioner highlights the ‘colour line’ within the organisation, which purported a hierarchy of assistance with priority given to white Europeans.<sup>714</sup> Aamir Ali would later chafe against this ‘colour line’ on the issue of Chinese refugees in Hong Kong, when he accused the UNHCR in Geneva of ‘soft pedalling’ on the ‘only Asian refugee problem which might fall within its scope.’<sup>715</sup> Further objections of Pagès to the particular case of the Yunnanese also demonstrates the role Cold War dynamics played into UNHCR decision making, in so far as Pagès was reluctant to involve the UNHCR in the political manoeuvrings of the ROC and Burma.<sup>716</sup>

Given these preoccupations it is significant that the High Commissioner Goedhart chose to extend an unprecedented if very limited offer of assistance, representing a move away from the ‘colour line’ mentalities and an incremental step towards more internationalist understandings of refugee assistance. Yet, the lack of UNHCR involvement in the eventual evacuations of displaced Yunnanese to Taiwan illustrates the central importance of broader processes in the likelihood of refugee assistance. An examination of the concerns of the Nu government reveals that UNHCR supervision did not fit with the important ‘re-imagining’ of relations between Burma and the PRC as the government walked a Cold War tightrope. Overall, the case of Yunnanese in Burma

---

<sup>714</sup> Madokoro, ‘Surveying Hong Kong’, 514.

<sup>715</sup> See: UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 1, Folder 15/2/HK: Inter-Office memo, ‘Subject: Eligibility of Chinese’ from Ali to Hoveyda, 29 September 1953; Madokoro, ‘Surveying Hong Kong’, 514.

<sup>716</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Pagès to Goedhart, 5 August 1953.

counters the ‘single story’ of refugee responses in the early post-war period.<sup>717</sup> In casting a light on a case that might but did not involve the UNHCR, it moves the conversation away from the sequential narratives of the establishment of the UNHCR and the western apparatus, instead allowing for reflection and recognition of the complex dynamics at play.

---

<sup>717</sup> Adichie, ‘Danger of Single Story.’

## Conclusion

What is striking about the narrative contained in a folder entitled ‘Chinese refugees in Burma’ is that it has been completely omitted from histories of twentieth-century Western responses to refugees. Yunnanese refugees appear in the mainstream historiography of Cold War Burma, but both they and Western institutional attempts to assist them as ‘refugees’ have been left off the historical record. At first glance, the episode of Chinese displacement in Burma bears little resemblance to the interwar displacement of Russian refugees in China discussed in Chapter I, excepting their geographical similarities. After all, whilst the ‘doubtful’ status of Chinese refugees in Burma was an obstacle to UNHCR intervention, Russian refugees were officially recognised as such by the Western apparatus and consequently fell under the remit of the High Commissioner.<sup>718</sup> The narrative of Russian refugees in China and elsewhere forms an important part of the historiography, whilst as noted above Chinese refugees in Burma are notably absent.

And yet, through a comparative lens which appreciates the many elements which constitute an apparatus, it is evident that these episodes converge as two examples which embody the overarching and changeable contours of refugee responses. Each case highlights the importance of individual actors in shaping responses to displacement, from institutional personnel to refugees themselves. Both the episode of the Russian refugees in China and the Chinese refugees in Burma underscore the importance of context, which shapes the various ways in which refugees are received and understood. Furthermore, the two narratives demonstrate how specific devices, such as documents issued to refugees, as well as policies, beliefs and administrative measures, served to concretise and sustain the apparatuses.

These two episodes also reflect the overall structure of this research, which has been a comparison of two periods in which there were discernible apparatuses of displacement responses, namely the interwar era, and the first few years of the period marked by the founding of the UNHCR in 1950. In utilising a methodical approach grounded in microhistory and a methodology derived from the concepts of apparatus and

---

<sup>718</sup> UNHCR/Fonds 11/Series 1/Box 253/15/Burma/CHI: Ali Report Burma 30 April 1953.

assemblage, this thesis has embraced and captured the sense of disorder inherent in both displacement and responses to it.<sup>719</sup> The patchwork of narratives, episodes and objects charted in this chronological comparison of the interwar period, the post-1950 era and the bridge between the two all speak to the contentions at the centre of this thesis. Both individually and as a whole the various cases discussed in this research illustrate that historical responses to displacement defy the neatness of a single narrative which arises from institutional histories of UNHCR, and were rather the result of manifold and context specific processes. Secondly, this comparison of apparatuses has proven the assumption that an examination of processes as well as outcomes enriches histories of refugees and helps to locate them in broader histories. In other words, it has shown that there is value in understanding narratives of refugees both independently from and as part of wider socio-political processes. In weaving together seemingly unconnected microhistories across the two periods, this thesis has argued that responses to displacement were, and still are, characterised by plurality and disorder as opposed to any predetermined plan, which impacts individuals in often unpredictable ways.

### *Components of the Apparatuses: Context, Devices, and Actors*

The research questions articulated in the introduction have guided this thesis to reach the above conclusions that defied the neatness of a single narrative, and that a comparison of these two structures highlights the interplay between refugees and broader processes. Primarily, this research set out to understand exactly how the specific context of displacement shaped responses to it. This project rested upon the assumption that the consistencies or differences between the inter-war and post-1950 apparatuses would depend upon how they correlated contextually. Foucault posits that each moment in time has its own episteme, or body of knowledge, which was unique to that time and determined which ideas, rationalities and philosophies could appear and which would crumble and vanish. Broadly speaking, the stimulus of widespread mass displacement was the same for both of the apparatuses. In both cases, state representatives made a concerted effort at the international level to address the ‘problem’ of refugees who were a potentially disruptive force to political and economic systems.<sup>720</sup> A major difference

---

<sup>719</sup> Deleuze, ‘Dispositif?’, pp. 185-195.

<sup>720</sup> Housden, *League of Nations*, p. 58.

between displacement in the first and second apparatuses is that the Second World War had been truly global in scale, resulting in mass movements of refugees in Asia, as well as in Europe.

A good example of the ways in which the apparatuses converged and differed based on their contexts is the decision to create a ‘High Commissioner’ in both the early 1920s and 1950s. The first office of the High Commissioner was built upon the precedents of empire, for example by inheriting the temporary characteristic of the role. By the post-war period, the existence of an interwar High Commissioner for refugees had distanced the next High Commissioner from some of the more obvious comparisons, exemplified by the temporary nature of the organisation being up for debate in the discussions over the High Commissioner’s statute. As well as drawing more upon the body of knowledge of an interwar High Commissioner for refugees than its imperial predecessors, the differences in the character of the post-1950 High Commissioner reflected the changed political context and the fraught ideological battles over the definition of a ‘refugee’ as the Cold War between the Soviet Union and the Western allies took hold.<sup>721</sup>

A second, interrelated aim of this research was to explore the ways in which an apparatus can fall apart, and to identify what fills the vacuum left behind. The exploration of the ad hoc assemblage which bridged the gap between the two apparatuses discussed in Chapter III speaks to the discussion of episteme above, in that some knowledge was preserved and carried forward thus informing the post-war apparatus, whilst other knowledge crumbled away, no longer needed by provisional, localised responses. This thesis argues therefore that this so-called ‘bridging period’ was an era of both development and discontinuity, in which understandings of displacement and responses to it underwent manifold changes, whilst maintaining many of the ideas, institutions, actors, practices and policies of the interwar period. More specifically, the examination of the bridging period in Chapter III found that whilst the institutions of the interwar apparatuses were still technically functioning, it no longer constituted an apparatus as it did not amount to a dominant response to displacement. This was demonstrated in the chapter by tracing the changing attitudes towards

---

<sup>721</sup> Long, *Point of No Return*, pp. 68-69.

displacement and reduction of the institutional cornerstone of the apparatus throughout the latter half of the interwar period.

That the centralising facets of the interwar apparatus were no longer functioning was made evident in the loss of communication between the High Commissioner and his delegates during the Second World War. The decision of the delegate in Yugoslavia to destroy records pertaining to Jewish refugees as a protection measure against the policy of the High Commissioner materially symbolised the dissolution of the apparatus and its former dominance. Furthermore, Chapter III underscored the importance of the nature of displacement in the immediate post-war period and growing international tensions as a crucible for changing understandings of refugees, the creation and dissolution of new agencies, and the growth of voluntary agencies (volags).

A third question central to this thesis concerned one of the most powerful tools of analysis drawn from the apparatus methodology, namely the concept of devices which act invisibly like a ‘ghost in the machine’ to hold the structure together, and if absent allow it to fall apart.<sup>722</sup> This research sought to establish what types of device were important within the two apparatuses, thus further demonstrating the ways in which they converged and differed. Primarily, Chapter II explored interwar Nansen passports, substantiating the claim made at the outset that these documents were a key device between the wars. Nansen passports were devices in the sense that they varied depending upon the context in which they were used, the central body did not take an active role in their application which was done by actors at the state level, and in theory they required little abstract thought on the part of the actors who issued them to refugees. A somewhat unexpected outcome of this exploration of Nansen passports as a device of the apparatus was the strong impact they had upon their refugee bearers through their unpredictable material agency.

At the outset, it was clear from the secondary literature that Nansen passports were regarded contemporaneously and by many modern commentators as an innovative solution to displacement. Scholars have identified shortcomings, noting that the problems some refugees experienced with Nansen passports resulted from human

---

<sup>722</sup> Feldman, *Migration Apparatus*, pp. 12-16.

failures to push through more inclusive clauses in the legislation, or the human inability to get representatives of League member states to agree to certain aspects of the legal Agreements.<sup>723</sup> Nowhere had anyone questioned how the Nansen passports themselves as material documents structured refugees' interactions and experiences. The specific cases of refugees in Iraq, Rabbi Israel Eiserman, Mendel Bernberg, and Nicholas Perchine, poignantly underscore the decisive role these material objects had in cultivating uncertainty for their bearers and in creating opportunities for unexpected encounters between human actors. Furthermore, the case of Nicholas Perchine in particular demonstrates how the same Nansen passport could act both for and against its holder, depending on the context in which it was presented.<sup>724</sup> The nature of Nansen passports was highly contingent upon the context in which they were applied, which is indicative of the wider apparatus. The implication of this is that understanding and embracing the inherent complexity and nebulous nature of responses to displacement can shed light on processes and experiences which are otherwise overlooked.

Alongside the material agency of Nansen passports, another interrelated part of refugee history which has been overlooked is the way in which refugee travel and identity documents did not take on the same role in the interwar and post-war periods. As argued above, Nansen passports were an instrumental device within the interwar apparatus, but by the post-1950 apparatus they were no longer playing this role. As discussed in Chapter IV, the diminution of travel and identity documents within the apparatus did not reflect changes to passportisation more generally, as the infrastructure and standardisation of passports continued to solidify after the Second World War. Rather, this thesis has argued that post-war travel and identity documents did not behave as devices within the apparatus like their interwar counterparts for both contextual and coincidental reasons.

Chapter IV recounted the process by which the travel and identification purposes of refugee documents became separated in the post-war. On the one hand, this separation pointed to changes in broader political thinking about who should and should not be

---

<sup>723</sup> See: Lettevall, 'Cosmopolitanism in Practice', pp. 13-24; Nevzat Soguk, *States and Strangers: Refugees and Displacements of Statecraft* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), pp. 129-133; Marrus, *Unwanted*, p. 95; Isabel Kaprielian-Churchill, 'Rejecting 'Misfits': Canada and the Nansen Passport', *The International Migration Review*, 28, 2 (1994), pp. 281-306.

<sup>724</sup> See; Jacobsen, 'Humanitarian Refugee Biometrics', p. 6; Coole, 'Agentic Capacities', pp. 453-456.

considered a 'refugee.' Yet, on the other, this process seems to have unfolded slowly throughout the introduction of several new documents, from the Nansen passports issued in zones of occupation and issued by IRO, to the London Travel Documents (LTDs) and their successors the Convention Travel Documents (CTDs). This further demonstrates the lack of predetermination in regards to the post-war apparatus. When contrasted with the devices of Nansen passports in the interwar apparatus, the reduced impact of CTDs supports a central contention of this research that post-war responses to refugees did not solely represent progression, and that some elements were lost in the transition, reasserting that both periods are important in their own right.

Given that travel and identity documents were no longer a central device holding the apparatus together after 1950, the inevitable question is what devices did help to concretise and sustain the post-war apparatus? Chapter IV explored how the apparatus managed to gain a foothold despite the many challenges to its central agency by further cultivating a belief that the UNHCR centred apparatus was a key source of international legal expertise. This thesis has argued that the particular limitations placed upon the UNHCR in the 1950s served to stimulate this device, which in part enabled the apparatus from strength to strength. An important dimension of this device was the presence of legal expertise in the central and branch offices of the UNHCR itself. Practically, whilst in the interwar period Nansen passports had served as the material expression of the apparatus's legal power, in the post-war apparatus this device was manifested and developed through the dissemination of legal tools, advice and documents.

One such set of documents were the eligibility manuals which sought to overcome the isolation of different branches of the apparatus caused by the central office's desk system.<sup>725</sup> As well as representing a material aspect of the device of international legal expertise, eligibility manuals also speak to the question raised in the introduction; how did individual agents and other actors understand, navigate, impact and shape the two apparatuses? The eligibility bulletins offer a unique insight into one way in which refugees sought to navigate the post-1950 apparatus through resistance to decisions made about individual refugee status. The cases of K. A. and B. B. both exemplify how

---

<sup>725</sup> Neff, 'International Law', p. 24.



individual refugees were not just ‘speechless emissaries’ within the post-war apparatus, but agents who defied the blanket legal definitions inherent within the post-1950 apparatus.<sup>726</sup> Furthermore, both cases demonstrate the relationship between refugees and longer term socio-political processes. K. A. the Armenian refugee from Turkey resisted a decision to not grant him refugee status by successfully arguing that the political events of 1955 which triggered his displacement could not be disassociated from longer term processes of persecution against the Armenian minority in Anatolia. B. B. on the other hand did not successfully overturn the denial of refugee status, but his story charts both the rise of nationalist movements in Morocco, the beginnings of the end for colonial empires, and the highly political process of determining refugee status in the context of the Cold War.

Also in the post-war apparatus, the episode of refugees in Burma discussed in Chapter V exemplifies the relationship between the creation of displacement, and the impact that refugees themselves can have on socio-political structures. The displacement of these refugees ensued from the political upheaval of civil war, and the pattern of their movement into Burma was influenced by longer term processes of regional migration. Once in Burma these refugees were further impacted by decolonisation, as well as rising nationalism and political instability within their receiving state. One consequence of these broader processes was that many civilian refugees took up arms alongside the military groups who had also fled from China, transforming them into a warrior refugee community. The militarisation of the refugees in turn became a source of tension in the context of regional Cold War politics. This thesis also notes the longer term impact this group has played in the political and social problems of Burma and its neighbouring polities.<sup>727</sup> The case of Chinese refugees in Burma supports one of the overarching contentions of this project, that relocating refugees in broader processes adds nuance to these histories whilst simultaneously reclaiming marginalised voices.

In the interwar, the case of the delegation in China revealed the blurred lines between elite and marginalised actors. The actions of Charles E. Metzler demonstrate that, like in the post-war apparatus, displaced persons also took opportunities to exert their agency

---

<sup>726</sup> Malkkii, ‘Speechless Emissaries’, pp. 377-404.

<sup>727</sup> Kaufmann, ‘Golden Triangle’, p. 440.

between the wars. Metzler's communications with the Nansen Office in Geneva expose the delegate tug of war for power between the two, proving that power was multidirectional between the disparate branches of the apparatus. Metzler's inability to hold onto this power is also demonstrative of the dynamics within certain groupings of displaced populations, and the how the reverberations of these relationships could be felt within other parts of the apparatus.

The case of the delegation in China also exemplifies how individual agents could exert their own will and autonomy within the greater structure. Chapter I explored the ways in which James A. Greig the first delegate in China interpreted and applied the specific tasks assigned to him through the lens of his own expertise and beliefs, such as his perception that League assistance to Russian refugees in China was an opportunity to educate the Chinese about the new Western project of international governance, as well as offering assistance. The importance of Greig's beliefs in the interwar bears a striking similarity to the impact of Aamir Ali's internationalist outlook on the limited engagement of the UNHCR with Chinese refugees in Burma. Like Greig, Ali brought his own agenda to bear on a specific case of displacement, and regardless of the outcome was able to encourage the colonially minded actors of the central office to agree to offer assistance beyond the mandate of the organisation.

Where the central refugee body of the post-war apparatus was not able to engage, volags stepped in. This thesis has directed attention to the important role played by volags in the inter-war, bridging, and post-war periods, and argues that when set side by side these actors gained a particular importance after 1950 by working in a more formalised way with the refugee body, and consequently encouraging a more internationalist outlook. In contrast, in the interwar volags occupied a predominantly advisory role, although they notably came into their own in relation to the High Commissioner for Refugees coming from Germany. Volags also proved essential during the ad hoc assemblage of the bridging period, stepping in to provide immediate assistance to refugees scattered across various localities, including Polish refugees leaving Russia after being deported to Siberia. Chapter IV noted that in the wake of the war there was a significant growth in new organisations to meet the challenges of displacement.

This thesis has also argued that several large and influential volags formed a close working relationship, taking an advisory position and most important as the operational arm of the refugee body which could not itself offer material assistance. Consequently, an important assertion of this research is that contrary to accounts which trace the global expansion of Western refugees to African decolonisation in the 1960s, volags fundamentally challenged the legal, temporal and geographical boundaries of the apparatus throughout the 1950s.<sup>728</sup>

### *Significance, and Avenues for Future Research*

The backdrop to the writing of this thesis has been the increasingly ‘hostile environment’ towards migrants of any kind in the UK.<sup>729</sup> Disagreements about the policies and practices pertaining to migration are not new, yet the recent political tumult and concomitant rise of anti-immigration public discourse has heightened this sense of discord.<sup>730</sup> In the increasingly polarised and binary discussions regarding migration and refugees, opponents on all sides have sought to instrumentalise the past to support their own assertions.<sup>731</sup> In this context, the role of historians is to act as a moderating force on the binary nature of these debates by offering nuance and by demonstrating the many dimensions not only of displacement but of broader human experience. That is not to say that historians are solely responsible for acting as the moderators of contemporary debate, nor that a single thesis will significantly impact upon the character of these exchanges.<sup>732</sup> Rather, there is a sense of academic resistance in the act of conducting research which demonstrates that histories of displacement are rich,

---

<sup>728</sup> Frank and Reinisch, ‘Nation States’, p. 478.

<sup>729</sup> This has been particularly present for my research given my colleague Louise Tomkow’s work on geriatric refugees and their access to health care in Manchester. See: Cara Kang, Louise Tomkow and Rebecca Farrington, ‘Access to Primary Health Care for Asylum Seekers and Refugees: A Qualitative Study of Service User Experiences in the UK’, *British Journal of General Practice*, 685, 69 (2019), pp. e537-e545.

<sup>730</sup> Peter Gatrell, *The Unsettling of Europe: How Migration Reshaped a Continent* (New York: Basic Books, 2019), p. 14.

<sup>731</sup> See: Frank and Reinisch, ‘Story’, p. 3. Stone, ‘Then and Now’, p. 103; Tony Kushner, ‘Writing Refugee History – Or Not’, in *Refugees in Europe, 1919-1959: A Forty Years’ Crisis?*, ed. by Matthew Frank and Jessica Reinisch (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), p. 53; Bakewell, ‘Research Beyond the Categories’, p. 432.

<sup>732</sup> For an excellent discussion of the relationship between historians and ‘impact’ see: Bakewell, ‘Research Beyond the Categories’, pp. 439-450; Pedro Ramos Pinto and Bertrand Taithe, ‘Doing History in Public? Historians in the Age of Impact’, in *The Impact of History?: Histories at the Beginning of the Twenty-First Century*, ed. by Pedro Ramos Pinto and Bertrand Taithe (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2015), pp. 1-21.

complex, and not easily reduced to politically convenient paradigms. In terms of positionality, it is important to acknowledge the role that the current political climate has played in the writing of this thesis, and therefore its place within broader attempts to add much needed nuance to today's understandings of migration in the UK. Highlighting the complexity of historical accounts of displacement has been a somewhat indistinct impetus for, and an outcome of, this research.

In contrast, this thesis has sought to specifically intervene in discussions about refugee travel and identity documents, including interwar Nansen passports. As noted in the introduction and Chapter II, Nansen passports have recently met with scrutiny from various political and academic scholars seeking to assess their usefulness as a tool worth reviving or adapting to tackle contemporary refugee crises.<sup>733</sup> The discussion of Nansen passports in Chapter II acknowledged that these documents represented an innovative approach to tackling many of the problems inherent in displacement, including mobility and identification challenges, and are therefore worthy of renewed interest. The exploration of the material agency of individual Nansen passports in this thesis exhibits the unpredictable outcomes such documents are capable of, and as such encourages those seeking to assess the 'successes' and 'failures' of Nansen passports to take the contingent nature of material objects into account.

This thesis has argued that it is difficult to predict the outcome for documents based on the antecedent model of Nansen passports given the unanticipated ways in which their materiality interacted with broader structures and processes. In addition to speaking directly to feasibility studies for modern day Nansen passports, this project has identified a further avenue for research for scholars of contemporary biometrical refugee documents. There are a number of excellent studies which explore how biometric travel and identity documents structure refugee experiences, but they are largely ahistorical. The presentism of refugee biometrics on the surface reflects the modern nature of these technologies, yet it is the contention of this thesis that further

---

<sup>733</sup> The author is aware of at least one current proposal seeking funding which intends to explore this viability.

examination of the relationship between historical means by which refugees were identified is a rich area for further research.<sup>734</sup>

Perhaps the greatest outcome of this research is methodological in nature. Taking up the challenge of the continuing need for ‘interdisciplinary and nation-transcending’ frameworks in histories of displacement, this thesis has assembled and deployed an under-utilised set of methodological concepts in historical scholarship of refugees.<sup>735</sup> Drawing upon the work of Gregory Feldman and Stephen Legg, this thesis has brought together the Foucauldian and Deleuzian concepts of apparatus and assemblage in a historical approach.<sup>736</sup> The novelty and import of this thesis is that this particular methodology, combined with microhistorical methods, has not previously been applied to the study of refugee history.

Although the methodological framework is here used to compare two apparatuses of displacement response in the twentieth century, it has the flexibility to be of use to other historians of refugees seeking a framework which can accommodate both micro and macro elements. As a connective rather than reductive methodology, it works well with microhistorical methods which seek the answers to large questions in small places.<sup>737</sup> As outlined in the introduction there are several methodologies, from the concept of refugeedom to the refugee regime framework, which share some commonalities with the apparatus and assemblage methodology outlined in this thesis. Yet, there is space in the history of displacement for theoretically grounded methodologies that can ask new and different questions of the primary sources, which is what this thesis has accomplished.

Other avenues for research in which this methodology could be of service include an exploration of the period prior to the First World War, and further research in relation to the response of volags throughout the twentieth century. Regarding the former, this

---

<sup>734</sup> See for example Philippe Bonditti, ‘Homeland Security through Traceability: Technologies of Control as Critical Infrastructures’ in *Securing ‘the Homeland’: Critical Infrastructure, Risk and (In)Security*, ed. by Mirian Dunn-Cavelty and Kristian Sjøby Kristensen (Abingdon and New York, Routledge, 2008), pp. 130-152; Sandvik, Kristin Bergtora et al., ‘Humanitarian Technology’, pp. 219-242; Jacobsen, ‘Refugee Biometrics’, pp. 1-24.

<sup>735</sup> See: Gatrell, ‘Wrong with History?’, pp. 1-20; Frank and Reinisch, ‘Story?’, p. 10.

<sup>736</sup> See: Feldman, *Migration Apparatus*; Legg, ‘Apparatus/Assemblage’, pp. 128-133.

<sup>737</sup> Magnusson and Sziójártó, ‘Against Simple Truths’, pp. 502-536.

thesis posits that what came before the structured apparatus of the interwar period was an ad hoc assemblage of responses, meaning that it was a definable field of action, but it lacked any centralising or coordinating aspects such as the devices seen within the two apparatuses under investigation here. However, this is an assumption based on temporally limited research, and could prove a rich area for further contemplation. For example, how formalised were responses to refugees prior to 1914? Were there any examples of a dominant apparatus in any parts of the world beyond Europe, or was it as ad hoc as it first appears? And what can this tell us of our assumptions about perspectives of refugees prior to 1914? A second area ripe for further research is in relation to the role of volags, also referred to as private or charitable organisations. These bodies have already been the subject of some historical inquiries, including Ria Sunga's current research which explores the role of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in relation to refugees in the Philippines.<sup>738</sup>

Building on this body of scholarship, an approach based on the apparatus and assemblage methodology can enrich existing research by taking a broad transnational view, whilst also highlighting the interactions and agency of individual organisations and people, including the displaced. In the context of increasing polarisation in debates around migration, the power of this methodology as exemplified in this thesis is that it allows for the capturing of nuance and the location individual voices within broader processes, whilst reducing neither. This comparison of apparatuses of displacement response in the interwar and post-war periods proves that there is enormous value in utilising this methodology to bring lesser known histories and obscured voices together with more mainstream histories.

---

<sup>738</sup> Ria Sunga, "What Can the Churches Do – Except Pray for Us!": The World Council of Churches and its Rescue of White Russians in the Philippines', *HCRI PhD Symposium*, 30 May 2019.

## Bibliography

### *Archival and Library Collections*

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Archives, Geneva, Switzerland.  
Archives Générales (General Archive), 1951-1961.

International Labour Organisation (ILO) Archives, Geneva, Switzerland.  
Series L – League of Nations.  
Series RL – Relations (1920-).

Paul Weis Papers, Oxford, United Kingdom.

National Archives of the United Kingdom (UKNA), London, United Kingdom.  
Colonial Office Records  
Commonwealth Relations Office Records  
Foreign Office Records  
Home Office Records  
Labour Office Records

The British Library, London, United Kingdom.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Archives, Geneva, Switzerland.  
Records of the Central Registry.

United Nations Office in Geneva (UNOG), Geneva, Switzerland.  
Refugees Mixed Archival Group (Nansen Fonds) (1919-1947).  
Registry Records.  
Secretariat Records.  
League Assembly Records.

### *Correspondence and Interviews*

Dreyfus, Jean-Marc, 'Telephone Interview with Rebecca Viney-Wood' (8 February 2019).

Gatrell, Peter, 'Email to Rebecca Viney Wood' (27 September 2019).

### *Online Collections*

Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Library Online, United States.

Cotter Medical History Museum, New Zealand.

Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum Online Archival Collection, United States.

Internet Archive, United States.

League of Nations Photo Archive, Indiana University, United States.

League of Nations Search Engine (LONSEA), University of Heidelberg, Germany.

Leo Baeck Institute, Center for Jewish History (CJH), Phillips Brothers Collection (PBC), New York, London and Jerusalem.

National Archives of Australia (NAA), Australia.

Nobel Prize.Org, Sweden.

Refworld, UNHCR, Switzerland.

The Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names, Yad Vashem, Israel.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) Online Archival Collection, United States.

Wisconsin Historical Society, United States.

World Digital Library, Library of Congress, United States.

### *Newspapers and Media*

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), United Kingdom.

Canberra Times, Australia.

EU Observer, Belgium.

Humanitarian Practice Network, United Kingdom.

Jewish Telegraphic Agency, United States.

LIFE Magazine, United States.

London Gazette, United Kingdom.

Relief Web, Switzerland.



Ted: Ideas worth Spreading, United States.  
The Daily Telegraph, United Kingdom.  
The Economist, United Kingdom.  
The Independent, United Kingdom.  
The Lancet, United Kingdom.  
The Listener, United Kingdom.  
The London Gazette, United Kingdom.  
The Manchester Guardian, United Kingdom.  
The New York Times, United States.  
The Statesman, India.  
The Times, United Kingdom.  
The UConn Advance, United States.  
Trinity Today, New Zealand.

### *Secondary Sources*

Abramsky, Chimen, 'Lucien Wolf's efforts for the Jewish Communities in Central and Eastern Europe', *Jewish Historical Studies*, 29 (1982), pp. 281-295.

Acuto, Michele and Simon Curtis, 'Assembling Thinking and International Relations', in *Reassembling International Theory: Assemblage Thinking and International Relations*, ed. by Michele Acuto and Simon Curtis (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 1-16.

Adamets, Serguei, 'Famine in Nineteenth- and Twentieth- Century Russia: Mortality by Age, Cause and Gender', in *Famine Demography: Perspectives from the Past and Present*, ed. by Tim Dyson and Cormac Ó Gráda (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 158-180.

Adelman, Howard, 'From Refugees to Forced Migration: The UNHCR and Human Security', *The International Migration Review*, 35, 1 (2001), pp. 7-32.

Agamben, Giorgio, *What is an Apparatus?*, trans. by David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009).

Ajana, Btihaj, 'Asylum, Identity Management and Biometric Control', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 26, 4 (2013), pp. 576-595.

Allain, Jean, *The Slavery Conventions: The travaux préparatoires of the 1926 League of Nations Convention and the 1956 United Nations Conventions* (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff, 2008)

Ali, Aamir, 'Fifty Years of the ILO and Asia', *International Labour Review*, 99 (1969), pp. 347-361.

Ali, Aamir, 'Now That I am Old', *The Himalayan Journal*, 66 (2010).

Ali, Aamir, 'The International Civil Service: The Idea and the Reality', in *International Administration: Law and Management Practices in International Organisations*, ed. by Chris de Cooker (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1989), pp. xix-xxxvi.

Ali, Aamir, 'To Talk of Many things', *Friends Newsletter: International Labour Organisation*, 49 (2010), pp. 4-9.

Amrith, Sunil S., *Crossing the Bay of Bengal: The Furies of Nature and the Fortunes of Migrants* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2013).

Amrith, Sunil S., *Migration and Diaspora in Modern Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

Anderson, Benedict R. O'G., *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006).

Arendt, Hannah, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (London: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1976).

Armstrong-Reid, Susan and David Murray, *Canada and the UNRRA years* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008).

Arnold, Kathleen R., 'Statelessness', in *The Encyclopaedia of Political Thought*, ed. by Michael T. Gibbons (London: Wiley and Sons, 2015), pp. 1-6.

Aust, Helmut Philipp, 'From Diplomat to Academic Activist: André Mandelstam and the History of Human Rights', *European Journal of International Law*, 25, 4 (2014), pp. 1105–1121

Avrutin, Eugene M., *Jews and the Imperial State: Identification Politics in Imperialist Russia* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2010).

Baker, Tom and Pauline McGuirk, 'Assemblage Thinking as Methodology: Commitments and Practices for Critical Policy Research', *Territory, Politics, Governance*, 5, 4 (2017), pp. 425-442.

Bakewell, Oliver, 'Conceptualising Displacement and Migration: Processes, Conditions, and Categories', in *The Migration-Displacement Nexus: Patterns, Processes and Policies*, ed. by Khalid Koser and Susan Martin (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2011), pp. 14-28.

Bakewell, Oliver, 'Introduction: Researching Refugees: Lessons from the Past, Current Challenges and Future Debates', *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 26, 3 (2007), pp. 6-14.

Bakewell, Oliver, 'Research Beyond the Categories: The Importance of Policy Irrelevant Research into Forced Migration', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 21, 4 (2008), pp. 432-453.

Ballantyne, Tony, 'Humanitarian Narratives: Knowledge and the Politics of Mission and Empire', *Social Sciences and Missions*, 24, 2-3 (2011), pp. 233-264.

Ballinger, Pamela, 'Borders and the Rhythms of Displacement, Emplacement and Mobility', in *A Companion to Border Studies*, ed. by Thomas M. Wilson and Hastings Donnan (London: Blackwell, 2012), pp. 389-404.

Bandeira Jerónimo, Miguel, 'A League of Empires: Imperial Political Imagination and Interwar Internationalism', in *Internationalism, Imperialism and the Formation of the Contemporary World: The Pasts of the Present*, ed. by Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo and José Pedro Monteiro (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), pp. 87-126.

Bandeira Jerónimo, Miguel and José Pedro Monteiro, 'Pasts to Be Unveiled: The Interconnections Between the International and the Imperial', in *Internationalism, Imperialism and the Formation of the Contemporary World: The Pasts of the Present*, ed. by Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo and José Pedro Monteiro (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), pp. 1-29.

Barad, Karen, *Meeting the Universe Halfway* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2007).

Barnett, Michael, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2011).

Barnett, Michael and Thomas G. Weiss, eds., *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics* (Ithaca and New York: Cornell University Press, 2008).

Başak, Kale, 'Transforming an Empire: The Ottoman Empire's Immigration and Settlement Policies in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 20, 2 (2014), pp. 252-271.

Beauchamp, Ken, *History of Telegraphy* (London: The Institution of Engineering and Technology, 2008).

Becker, Peter and William Clark, 'Introduction' in *Little Tools of Knowledge: Historical Essays on Academic and Bureaucratic Practices*, ed. by Peter Becker and William Clark (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), pp. 2-34.

Behrens, Maren, 'Identity as Convention: Biometric Passports and the Promise of Security', *Journal of Information, Communication and Ethics in Society*, 12, 1 (2014), pp. 44-59

Belton, Kristy, A., 'Rooted Displacement: the Paradox of Belonging among Stateless People', *Citizenship Studies*, 19, 8 (2015), pp. 907-921.

- Ben-Nun, Gilad, *Seeking Asylum in Israel: Refugees and the History of Migration Law* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2017).
- Ben-Nun, Gilad, 'The Expansion of International Space: UNHCR's Establishment of its Executive Committee ('ExCom')', *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 36, 1 (2017), pp. 1-19.
- Bennett, Jane, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2010).
- Berridge, G. R. and Lorna Lloyd, *The Palgrave Macmillan Dictionary of Diplomacy*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).
- Black, Richard, 'Fifty Years of Refugee Studies: From Theory to Policy', *International Migration Review*, 35, 1 (2001), pp. 57-78.
- Blukacz-Louisfert, Blandine, 'The Library of the United Nations Office at Geneva - Custodian of League of Nations and United Nations Heritage', *Paper given to the International Federation of Library Associations' World Library and Information Congress*, Lyon, 16-22 August 2014. Available at: <http://library.ifla.org/945/1/201-blukacz-louisfert-en.pdf> [accessed 1 October, 2019].
- Bonditti, Philippe, 'Homeland Security through Traceability: Technologies of Control as Critical Infrastructures' in *Securing 'the Homeland': Critical Infrastructure, Risk and (In)Security*, ed. by Mirian Dunn-Cavelty and Kristian Sjøby Kristensen (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2008), pp. 130-152.
- Bose, Sugata, *A Hundred Horizons: The Indian Ocean in the Age of Global Empire* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2006).
- Bou-Nacklie, N. E., 'Les troupes spéciales: Religious and Ethnic Recruitment, 1916-46', *International Journal of the Middle East*, 25 (1993), pp. 645-660.
- Breen, Rodney, 'Golden, Lewis Bernard (1878–1954), Charity Administrator', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2007).
- Brenner, David, 'Inside the Karen Insurgency: Explaining Conflict and Conciliation in Myanmar's Changing Borderlands', *Asian Security*, 14 (2018), pp. 83-99.
- Brinkmann, Svend, 'Humanism after Posthumanism: or Qualitative Psychology after the 'posts'', *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 14, 2 (2017), pp. 109-130.
- Brooks, Kenneth G.. 'The Re-establishment of Displaced Peoples', in *When Hostilities Cease: Papers on Relief and Reconstruction Prepared for the Fabian Society* (London: Gollancz, 1943).
- Brubaker, Rogers and Frederik Cooper, 'Beyond Identity', *Theory and Society*, 20 (2000), pp. 1-47.

Brubaker, Rogers, 'Aftermaths of Empire and the Unmixing of Peoples', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* (1995), 18, 2, pp. 189-218

Bundy, Amanda Melaine, 'There was a Man of UNRRA: Internationalism, Humanitarianism, and the Early Cold War in Europe, 1943-1947' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Ohio State University, 2017).

Burgess, Greg, 'Remaking Asylum in Post-War France, 1944-52', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 49, 3 (2014), pp. 556-576.

Bussolini, Jeffrey, 'What is a Dispositive?', *Foucault Studies*, 10 (2010), pp. 85-107.

Cabanes, Bruno, *The Great War and the Origins of Humanitarianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

Caplan, Jane and John Torpey, 'Introduction', in *Documenting Individual Identity: the Development of State Practices in the Modern World*, ed. by Jane Caplan and John C. Torpey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), pp. 1-12.

Castles, Stephen, 'Towards a Sociology of Forced Migration and Social Transformation', *Sociology*, 37, 1 (2003), pp. 13-34.

Celestina, Mateja, "'Displacement' before Displacement: Time, Place and the Case of Rural Urabá", *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 48 (2015), pp. 367-390.

Cesarani, David, 'A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Suburbs: Social Change in Anglo-Jewry Between the Wars, 1914-1945', *Jewish Culture and History*, 1, 1 (1998), pp. 5-26.

Chang, Weng-Chin, *Beyond Borders: Stories of Yunnanese Chinese Migrants of Burma* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2014).

Chang, Weng-Chin, 'From War Refugees to Immigrants: The Case of the KMT Yunnanese Chinese in Northern Thailand', *The International Migration Review*, 35, 4 (2001), pp. 1086-1105.

Chang, Weng-Chin, 'Home Away from Home: Migrant Yunnanese Chinese in Northern Thailand', *International Journal of Asian Studies*, 1 (2006), pp. 49-76.

Charney, Michael W., *A History of Modern Burma* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

Charney, Michael, 'U Nu, China and the "Burmese" Cold War: Propaganda in Burma in the 1950s', in *The Cold War in Asia: The Battle for Hearts and Minds*, ed. by Zheng Yangwen, Hong Liu and Michael Szonyi (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010), pp. 41-58.

Charoenwong, Kaemmanee, 'The Evacuation of the Nationalist Chinese (Kuomintang/KMT) Troops in Northern Thailand from the 1950s to Today', *Asian Culture Research*, 30 (2004), pp. 159 - 175.

- Chen, Tina Mai, 'Chinese Residents of Burma as Refugees, Evacuees, and Returnees: The Shared Racial Logic of Territorialization in the Regulation of Wartime Migration', *Modern Asian Studies*, 49, 2 (2015), pp. 469–492.
- Chetail, Vincent, 'Fridtjof Nansen and the International Protection of Refugees: An Introduction', *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 22, 1 (2003), pp. 1-6.
- Chimni, B. S., 'The Birth of a 'Discipline': From Refugee to Forced Migration Studies', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 22, 1 (2009), pp. 11-29.
- Chimni, B. S., 'The Geopolitics of Refugee Studies: A View from the South', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 11, 4 (1998), pp. 350–374.
- Clausen, Søren and Stig Thøgersen, *The Making of a Chinese City: History and Historiography in Harbin* (New York: East Gate, 1995).
- Clavin, Patricia, 'Defining Transnationalism', *Contemporary European History*, 14, 4 (2005), pp. 421–439.
- Clavin, Patricia, *Securing the World Economy: The Reinvention of the League of Nations, 1920-1946* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).
- Clymer, Kenton, *A Delicate Relationship: The United States and Burma/Myanmar since 1945* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2015).
- Cohen, Aaron, "'Our Russian Passport': First World War Monuments, Transnational Commemoration, and the Russian Emigration in Europe, 1918-39', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 49, 4 (2014), pp. 627-651.
- Cohen, G. Daniel, *In War's Wake: Europe's Displaced Persons in the Postwar Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).
- Cohen, Thomas V., 'The Macrohistory of Microhistory', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 47, 1 (2017), pp. 53-73.
- Cole, Georgia, 'How Friends Became Foes: Exploring the Role of Documents in Shaping UNHCR's Behaviour', *Third World Quarterly*, 39, 8 (2018), pp. 1491-1507.
- Cole, Simon A., *Suspect Identities: A History of Fingerprinting and Criminal Identification* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2001).
- Coole, Diana, 'Agentic Capacities and Capacious Historical Materialism: Thinking with New Materialisms in the Political Sciences', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* (2013), pp. 451-469.

Cotterrell, Roger, *The Politics of Jurisprudence: A Critical Introduction to Legal Philosophy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

Cottrell, M. Patrick, *The League of Nations: Enduring Legacies of the First Experiment at World Organisation* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2018).

Cox, Robert W., *Universal Foreigner: The Individual and the World* (London: World Scientific, 2013).

Dan, Cui, 'The Cultural Contribution of British Protestant Missionaries to China's National Development during the 1920s' (unpublished doctoral thesis, London School of Economics, 1996).

Deleuze, Gilles, 'Qu'est-ce qu'un dispositif?' in *Michel Foucault Philosophe : Rencontre Internationale*, ed. by Collectif (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1989), pp. 185-195.

Denis, Juliette, 'Complices de Hitler ou victimes de Staline ? Les déplacés baltes en Allemagne de la sortie de guerre à la guerre froide', *Le Mouvement Social*, 244 (2013), pp. 81-98.

Dewhurst Lewis, Mary, *The Boundaries of the Republic: Migrant Rights and the Limits of Universalism in France, 1918-1940* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007).

Dillon, Michael, *China: A Modern History* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010).

Dodge, Toby, *Inventing Iraq: The Failure of Nation Building and a History Denied* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

Donabed, Sargon, *Reforging a Forgotten History: Iraq and the Assyrians in the Twentieth Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015).

Dong, Madeleine Yue, 'Introduction: State, Society and the Individual in Wartime China during the 1930s and 1940s', *Journal of Modern Chinese History* 11, 2 (2017), pp. 175-179.

Douglas, R. M., *Orderly and Humane: The Expulsion of the Germans after the Second World War* (Yale: Yale University Press, 2012).

Doulman, Jane and David Lee, *Every Assistance and Protection: A History of the Australian Passport* (Sydney, The Federation Press: 2008).

Drolet, Michael, 'Michel Foucault and the Genealogy of Power and Knowledge', in *A Companion to Intellectual History*, ed. by Richard Whatmore and Brian Young (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2016), pp. 83-96.

Dubois, W.E.B., *The Souls of Black Folk* (Dayboro: Emereo Pty Limited, 1903. Reprinted 2012).

Earle, Rebecca, *Epistolary Selves: Letters and Letter-Writers, 1600–1945* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2016).

Eastman, Lloyd E., et al, *The Nationalist Era in China, 1927-1949* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2001).

Easton-Calabria, Evan Elise, 'From Bottom-Up to Top-Down: The 'Pre-History' of Refugee Livelihoods Assistance from 1919 to 1979', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 28, 3 (2015), pp. 412-436.

Eber, Irene, *Wartime Shanghai and the Jewish Refugees from Central Europe: Survival, Co-Existence and Identity in a Multi-Ethnic City* (Berlin and Boston: Walter de Gruyter GmbH and Co. 2012).

Edele, Mark et al, 'Introduction', in *Shelter from the Holocaust: Rethinking Jewish Survival in the Soviet Union*, ed. by Mark Edele, Sheila Fitzpatrick and Atina Grossman (Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 2017), pp. 1-28.

Edele, Mark, Sheila Fitzpatrick, John Goldlust and Atina Grossman, 'Introduction: Shelter from the Holocaust: Rethinking Survival in the Soviet Union', in *Shelter from the Holocaust: Rethinking Jewish Survival in the Soviet Union*, ed. by Mark Edele, Sheila Fitzpatrick and Atina Grossman (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2017), pp. 1-28.

Edvinsson, Rodney, 'Historical Currency Converter (test version 1.0)', in *historicalstatistics.org* (2016). Available at: <https://www.historicalstatistics.org/Currencyconverter.html> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

Elias, Julius A., 'Relation between Voluntary Agencies and International Organisations', *Journal of International Affairs*, 7, 1 (1953), pp. 30-34.

Elie, Jérôme and Jussi Hanhimäki, 'UNHCR and Decolonization in Africa: Expansion and Emancipation, 1950s to 1970s', *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, 48 (2008), pp. 53-72.

Elie, Jérôme, 'Histories of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies', in *The Oxford Handbook of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies*, ed. by Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh et al (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 23-35.

Elie, Jérôme, 'The Historical Roots of Cooperation between the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration', *Global Governance*, 16, 3 (2010), pp. 345-360.

Engel, David, *The Assassination of Symon Petliura and the Trial of Scholem Schwarzbard, 1926-1927* (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2016).

Eriksson, Kai, 'Foucault, Deleuze, and the Ontology of Networks', *The European Legacy*, 10, 6 (2005), pp. 595-610.



Fahrmeir, Andreas, 'Governments and Forgers: Passports in Nineteenth Century Europe', in *Documenting Individual Identity: the Development of State Practices in the Modern World*, ed. by Jane Caplan and John C. Torpey (Princeton: Princeton University Press: 2001), pp. 218-234.

Fassin, Didier, *La raison humanitaire. Une histoire morale du temps présent* (Hautes Etudes-Gallimard-Seuil, 2010).

Feldman, Gregory, *The Migration Apparatus: Security, Labor, and Policymaking in the European Union* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012).

Ferris, Elizabeth G., 'The Role of Non-Governmental Organisations in the International Refugee Regime' in *Problems of Protection: The UNHCR, Refugees, and Human Rights*, ed. by Niklaus Steiner et al. (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2003), pp. 117-137.

Fischel de Andrade, José H., 'Brazil and the International Refugee Organisation', *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 30, 1 (2011), pp. 65-88.

Fosse, Marit and John Fox, *Nansen: Explorer and Humanitarian* (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016).

Foley, Matthew, *The Cold War and National Assertion in Southeast Asia: Britain, the United States and Burma, 1948-1962* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2010).

Forsythe, David, P., *The Humanitarians: The International Committee of the Red Cross* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

Foucault, Michel, 'Le Jeu de Michel Foucault', in *Dits et Écrits*, ed. by Daniel Defert and François Ewald (Paris: Gallimard, 1994).

Foucault, Michel, *Les mots et les choses* (Paris: Gallimard, 1966).

Foucault, Michel, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977*, ed. by Colin Gordon, trans. by Colin Gordon et al (New York: Pantheon, 1980).

Frangi, Marc, 'Le Haut-Commissaire: Vers la Résurrection d'une Fonction Traditionnelle dans la République Française?', *Revue Française de Droit Constitutionnel*, 1, 73 (2008), pp. 27-40.

Frank, Matthew, 'Fantasies of Ethnic Unmixing: Population Transfer and the Collapse of Empire in Europe', in *Refugees and the End of Empire: Imperial Collapse and Forced Migration during the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Panikos Panayi and Pippa Virdee (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 81-101

Frank, Matthew and Jessica Reinisch, 'Refugees and the Nations States in Europe, 1919-1959', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 49, 3 (2014), pp. 477–490.

Frank, Matthew and Jessica Reinisch, ‘“The Story Stays the Same”’, in *Refugees in Europe, 1919-1959: A Forty Years’ Crisis?*, ed. by Matthew Frank and Jessica Reinisch (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), pp. 1-20.

Franklin, John Hope, *The Colour Line: Legacy for the Twenty-First Century* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1993).

Fuller, Pierre, ‘North China Famine Revisited: Unsung Native Relief in the Warlord Era, 1920–1921’, *Modern Asian Studies*, 47, 3 (2013), pp. 820-850.

Fuller, Pierre, *Famine Relief in Warlord China* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2019).

Fuller, William F., ‘Peace Profile: Fridtjof Nansen’, *Peace Review*, 20, 2 (2008), pp. 239-243.

Gaillet, Lynée Lewis, ‘(Per)Forming Archival Research Methodologies’, *College Composition and Communication*, 64, 1 (2012), pp. 35-58.

Gaines, David P., *The World Council of Churches: A Study of its Background and History* (New Hampshire: Richard R. Smith Co Inc., 1966).

Gatrell, Peter and Joanne Laycock ‘Armenia: The ‘Nationalisation, Internationalisation and Representation of the Refugee Crisis’ in *Homelands: War, Population and Statehood in Eastern Europe and Russia 1918-1924*, ed. by N.P. Baron and Peter Gatrell (Bath: Anthem, 2004), pp. 179-200.

Gatrell, Peter, *Free World? The Campaign to Save the World’s Refugees, 1956–1963* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

Gatrell, Peter, ‘Korean Refugees and Aid Work in International Perspective’, in *Über Grenzen: Migration und Flucht in globaler Perspektive seit 1945*, ed. by A. Bresselau von Bressendorf (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2019), pp. 275-291.

Gatrell, Peter, ‘Population Displacement in the Baltic Region in the Twentieth Century: From Refugee Studies to Refugee History’, *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 38, 1 (2007), pp. 43-60.

Gatrell, Peter, ‘Refugee Studies as Area Studies: A Historian’s Perspective’, in *Necessary Travel: New Area Studies and Canada in Comparative Perspective*, ed. by Susan Hodgett and Patrick James (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2018), pp. 45-54.

Gatrell, Peter, ‘Refugees: What’s Wrong with History?’, *Journal of Refugee Studies* (2016), pp. 1-20.

Gatrell, Peter, *The Making of the Modern Refugee* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Gatrell, Peter, *The Unsettling of Europe: How Migration Reshaped a Continent* (New York: Basic Books, 2019).

Gatrell, Peter, 'The World-Wide Web of Humanitarianism: NGOs and Population Displacement in the Third Quarter of the Twentieth Century', *European Review of History*, 23, 1-2 (2016), pp. 101-115.

Gatrell, Peter, 'Trajectories of Population Displacement in the Aftermaths of Two World Wars', in *The Disentanglement of Populations: Migration, Expulsion and Displacement in Postwar Europe 1944–1949*, ed. by Jessica Reinisch and Elizabeth E. White (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 3-26.

Gatrell, Peter, 'War, Population Displacement and State Formation in the Russian Borderlands, 1914-24', in *Homelands: War, Population and Statehood in Eastern Europe and Russia 1918-1924*, ed. by N.P. Baron and Peter Gatrell (Bath: Anthem, 2004), pp. 10-34.

Geller, B., J. Almog, P. Margot, and E. Springer, 'A Chronological Review of Fingerprint Forgery', *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 44, 5 (1999), pp. 963-968.

Genovard, J., 'Project Stanislav Dravoneg: The Tech-Botanist' (2019). Available at: <http://techbotanist.org/> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

Ginsburg, George, 'The Soviet Union and the Problem of Refugees and Displaced Persons 1917-1956', *The American Journal of International Law*, 51 (1957), pp. 325-361.

Giussani, Bruno, 'New Technologies Employed to Trace Kosovar Refugees', *The New York Times: Technology: Cybertimes* (1999). Available at: [http://politics.nytimes.com/1999/06/08/technology/08eurobytes.html?\\_r=0](http://politics.nytimes.com/1999/06/08/technology/08eurobytes.html?_r=0) [accessed 1 October, 2019].

Glynn, Irial, 'The Genesis and Development of Article of the 1951 Refugee Convention', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 25, 1 (2011), pp. 134-148.

Goddard, Brenda, 'UNHCR and the International Protection of Palestinian Refugees', *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 28, 2-3 (2010), pp. 475-510.

Goedhart, Gerrit J. van Heuven, 'Refugee Problems and Their Solutions, Nobel Lecture, 12 December 1955', in *Nobel Lectures: Including Presentation Speeches and Laureates Biographies: Peace, 1951-1979*, ed. by Frederik W. Haberman (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1999), pp. 97-112.

Goedhart, Gerrit J. van Heuven, 'The Responsibility of the International Community for Refugees', *Ecumenical Review* (1946), pp. 447-449.

Goldenziel, Jill I., 'The Curse of the Nation-State: Refugees, Migration and Security in International Law', *Arizona State Law Journal*, 48 (2016), pp. 579-636.

Goldlust, John, 'A Different Silence: The Survival of More than 200,000 Polish Jews in the Soviet Union during World War II as a Case Study in Cultural Amnesia', in *Shelter from the Holocaust: Rethinking Jewish Survival in the Soviet Union*, ed. by Mark Edele, Sheila Fitzpatrick and Atina Grossman (Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 2017), pp. 13-60.

Grahl-Madsen, Atle, *Commentary on the Refugee Convention 1951, Article 2-11, 13-37, circa 1960-1965* (Geneva: Division of International Protection of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 1997).

Grant, Kevin, 'Christian Critics of Empire: Missionaries, Lantern Lectures, and the Congo Reform Campaign in Britain', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 29, 2 (2001), pp 27-58.

Groebner, Valentin, 'Describing the Person, Reading the Signs in Late Medieval and Renaissance Europe: Identity Papers, Vested Figures, and the Limits of Identification, 1400-1600', in *Documenting Individual Identity: the Development of State Practices in the Modern World*, ed. by Jane Caplan and John C. Torpey (Princeton: Princeton University Press: 2001), pp. 15-27.

Grosset, Jacques and Arnaud Trébuçq, 'Tuberculosis in France Before, During and After World War II', in *Tuberculosis and War: Lessons Learned from World War II*, ed. by J. F. Murray J. F. and R. Loddenkemper (Basel: Karger, 2018), pp. 116-123.

Grossman, Atina, 'Remapping Relief and Rescue: Flight, Displacement, and International Aid for Jewish Refugees during World War II', *New German Critique*, 117 (2012), pp. 61-79.

Guedj, Jérémy, 'Les Juifs français face aux Juifs étrangers dans la France de l'entre-deux-guerres', *Migration et religion en France II*, 78 (2009), pp. 43-73.

Habermann-Box, Sigrun, 'From the League of Nations to the United Nations: The Continuing Preservation and Development of the Geneva Archives', in *Networking the International System: Global Histories of International Organizations*, ed. by Madeleine Herren (Cham: Springer, 2009), pp. 15-30.

Hack, Karl, and Geoff Wade, 'The Origins of the Southeast Asian Cold War', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 40, 3 (2009), pp. 441-448.

Haddad, Emma, *The Refugee in International Society: Between Sovereigns* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

Hammerstad, Anne, *The Rise and Decline of a Global Security Actor: UNHCR, Refugee Protection and Security* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

Hamilton, Donna, 'The Transformation of Consular Affairs: The United States Experience', in *Discussion Papers in Diplomacy*, ed. by Ingrid d'Hooghe and Ellen Huijgh (Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael', 2009), 1-33.

Hanhimäki, Jussi M., 'Introduction: UNHCR and the Global Cold War', *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 27, 1 (2008), pp. 3–7

Hanley, Will, *Identifying with Nationality: Europeans, Ottomans, and Egyptians in Alexandria* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017).

Hanley, Will, 'Statelessness: An Invisible Themes in the History of International Law', *The European Journal of International Law*, 25, 1 (2014), pp. 321-327.

Hardiman, David, ed., *Healing Bodies, Saving Souls: Medical Missions in Asia and Africa* (Amsterdam: Clio Edica, 2006).

Harrell-Bond, Barbara, Voutira, Eftihia and Mark Leopold. 'Counting the Refugees: Gifts, Givers, Patrons and Clients', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 5, 3-4 (1992), pp. 205-225.

Hassell, James E., 'Russian Refugees in France and the United States between the World Wars', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, 81, 7 (1991), pp. 1-96.

Hathaway, James C., *The Law of Refugee Status* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

Hevia, James L., *English Lessons: The Pedagogy of Imperialism in Nineteenth-Century China* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003).

Hieromyni, Otto, 'The Nansen Passport: A Tool of Freedom of Movement and of Protection', *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 22, 1 (2003), pp. 36-46.

Higgs, Edward, *Identifying the English, A History of Personal Identification 1500 to the Present* (London, 2011).

Ho, Elaine Lynn-Ee, Laura Madokoro and Glen Peterson, 'Refugees, Displacement and Forced Migration in Asia: Charting an Inclusive Research Agenda', *Asia Research Institute Working Paper Series*, 236 (2015), pp. 1-15.

Hoffman, Stefan-Ludwig, 'Introduction: Genealogies of Human Rights', in *Human Rights in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Stefan-Ludwig Hoffman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 1-26.

Holborn, Louise, *Refugees: A Problem of Our Time: The Work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees 1951–1972*, vols. 1 and 2 (Metuchen: The Scarecrow Press, 1975).

Holborn, Louise, *The International Refugee Organisation, A Specialized Agency of the United Nations: Its History and Work, 1946-1952* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956).

Holborn, Louise, 'The League of Nations and the Refugee Problem', *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 203 (1939), pp. 124-135.

Holian, Anna and G. Daniel Cohen, 'Introduction', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 25, 3 (2012), pp. 313-325.

Holliday, Ian, *Burma Redux: Global Injustice and the Quest for Political Reform in Myanmar* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011).

Housden, Martyn, *The League of Nations and the Organization of Peace* (Oxford: Taylor and Francis, 2011).

Howard-Ellis, Charles, *The Origin, Structure and Working of the League of Nations* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1928).

Hughes, Michael, 'The Peripatetic Career Structure of the British Diplomatic Establishment, 1919-39', *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, 14, 1 (2003), pp. 29-48.

Humbert, Laure, 'French Politics of Relief and International Aid: France, UNRRA and the Rescue of European Displaced Persons in Postwar Germany, 1945–7', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 41, 3 (2016), pp. 606-634.

Huntford, Roland, *Nansen: The Explorer as Hero* (London: Duckworth, 1997).

Hyndman, Jennifer, *Managing Displacement: Refugees and the Politics of Humanitarianism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

Ibhawoh, Bonny, 'Defining Persecution and Protection: The Cultural Relativism Debate and the Rights of Refugees', in *Problems of Protection: The UNHCR, Refugees and Human Rights*, ed. by Niklaus Steiner, Mark Gibney and Gil Loescher (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2003), pp. 61-78.

Inglis, Lucy, *Milk of Paradise: A History of Opium* (London: Macmillan, 2018).

Jackson, Simon and Alanna O'Malley, eds., *From the League of Nations to the United Nations: New Approaches to International Institutions* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2017).

Jacobsen, Katja Lindskov, 'On Humanitarian Refugee Biometrics and New Forms of Intervention', *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* (2017), pp. 1-24.

Jacobsen, Katja Lindskov, *The Politics of Humanitarian Technology: Good Intentions, Unintended Consequences and Insecurity* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2015).

Jaeger, Gilbert, 'On the History of the International Protection of Refugees', *International Committee of the Red Cross*, 83, 843 (2001), pp. 727-737.

Jaeger, Gilbert, 'Opening Keynote Address: The Refugee Convention at Fifty', in *The Refugee Convention at Fifty: A View from Forced Migration Studies*, ed. by Joanne van Selm et al (Maryland: Lexington, 2003), pp. 9-21.

John, Gene, *By Many Waters* (Southampton: Unpublished Autobiography, 1996).

Johnson, Thomas Frank, *International Tramps: From Chaos to Permanent Peace* (The Mayflower Press: Plymouth, 1938).

Jones, Raymond A., *The British Diplomatic Service, 1815-1914* (Gerrards Cross: Smythe, 1983).

'Judaïca: livres, manuscrits et documents, photographies, objets de culte, tableaux et gravures', *Drouot* (2016), p. 9. Available at: <https://www.gazette-drouot.com/telechargement/catalogue?venteId=24783> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

Kalyanaraman, Sankaran, 'Nehru's Advocacy of Internationalism and Indian Foreign Policy', in *India's Grand Strategy: History, Theory, Cases*, ed. by Kanti Bajpai, Saira Basit, V. Krishnappa (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2014).

Kampark, Binoy, '“Spying for Hitler” and “Working for Bin Laden”: Comparative Australian Discourses on Refugees', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 19, 1 (2006), pp. 1–21.

Kaprielian-Churchill, Isabel, 'Rejecting “Misfits”: Canada and the Nansen Passport', *The International Migration Review*, 28, 2 (1994), pp. 281-306.

Karatani, Rieko, 'How History Separated Refugee and Migrant Regimes: In Search of Their Institutional Origins', *International Journal of Refugee Law*, 17, 3 (2005), pp. 517–541.

Kasekamp, Andres, *The Radical Right in Interwar Estonia* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000).

Katus, Kalev, Allan Puur and Luule Sakkeus, 'The Demographic Characteristics of National Minorities in Estonia', in *The Demographic Characteristics of Immigrant Populations*, ed. by Werner Haug, Paul Compton and Youseef Courbage (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2002), pp. 137-186.

Kaufman, Victor S., 'Trouble in the Golden Triangle: The United States, Taiwan and the 93rd Nationalist Division', *The China Quarterly*, 166 (2001), pp. 440-456.

Kaur, Amarjit, 'Introduction', in *Mobility, Labour Migration and Border Controls in Asia*, ed. by Amarjit Kaur and Ian Metcalfe (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

Kennedy, Charles Stuart, *The American Consul: A History of the United States Consular Service, 1776-1924* (Washington: New Academia Publishing, 2015).

Kerber Linda K., 'Presidential Address: The Stateless as the Citizen's Other: A View from the United States', *American Historical Review* (2007), pp. 1-34.

Kerenji, Emil, '“Your Salvation is the Struggle Against Fascism”: Yugoslav Communists and the Rescue of Jews, 1941-1945', *Contemporary European History*, 25, 1 (2016), pp. 57-74

Keshavarz, Mahmoud, *The Design Politics of the Passport: Materiality, Immobility, and Dissent* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019).

Kévonian, Dzovinar and Philippe Rygiel 'Introduction – ‘Faiseurs de droit’ : les juristes internationalistes, une approche globale située', *Monde(s)*, 7 (2015), pp. 9-24.

Kévonian, Dzovinar, 'Les juristes juifs russes en France et l'action internationale dans les années vingt', *Archives Juives*, 34 (2001), pp. 72-94.

Kévonian, Dzovinar, *Réfugiés et diplomatie humanitaire : les acteurs européens et la scène proche-orientale pendant l'entre-deux-guerres* (Paris : Publications de la Sorbonne, 2004).

Keynes, John Maynard, *The Economic Consequences of Peace* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe Inc., 1919).

Kiernan, Ben, 'Twentieth Century Genocides', in *The Specter of Genocide: Mass Murder in Historical Perspective*, ed. by Robert Gellately and Ben Kiernan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 29-52.



Kirsch, Gesa E., and Liz Rohan, eds., *Beyond the Archives: Research as a Lived Process* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2008).

Kleist, J. Olaf, 'The History of Refugee Protection: Conceptual and Methodological Challenges', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 30, 2 (2017), pp. 162-169.

Kirimli, Hakan, 'The Famine of 1921-22 in the Crimea and the Volga Basin and the Relief from Turkey', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 39, 1 (2003), pp. 37-52.

Kneebone, Susan, 'Comparative Regional Protection Frameworks for Refugees: Norms and Norm Entrepreneurs', *International Journal of Human Rights*, 20, 2 (2016), pp. 153-172.

Korac, Maja, 'Integration and How We Facilitate it: A Comparative Study of the Settlement Experiences of Refugees in Italy and the Netherlands', *Sociology*, 37, 1 (2003), pp. 51-68.

Kott, Sandrine, 'Towards a Social History of International Organisations: The ILO and the Internationalisation of Western Social Expertise (1919-1949)', in *Internationalism, Imperialism and the Formation of the Contemporary World: The Pasts of the Present*, ed. by Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo and José Pedro Monteiro (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), pp. 33-58.

Kramer, Urs and Tim Hinrichsen, 'German Law of Administrative Court Procedure: An Overview', *Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities and Social Sciences*, 10, 8 (2015), pp. 2050-2061.

Krasner, Stephen D., 'Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables', *International Organisations*, 36, 2 (1982), pp. 185-205.

'KRISYS NET Kosovo Refugee Information System and Network An Interprofessional Project (IPRO) of Chicago-Kent College of Law, Illinois Institute of Technology Prospectus 1998-1999', *Nationbuilding in the Balkans* (1999) <http://pbosnia.kentlaw.edu/projects/kosovo/oldstuff/prospectuspre42199.htm> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

Kuby, Candace R., 'Why a Paradigm Shift of 'More than Human Ontologies' Is Needed: Putting to Work Poststructural and Posthuman Theories in Writers' Studio', *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 30 (2017), pp. 877-896

Kuhlne, Stein and Anne Sander, 'The Emergence of the Western Welfare State', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Welfare State*, ed. by Francis G. Castles et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 61-80.

Kuhn, Arthur K., 'International Measures for the Relief of Stateless Persons', *The American Journal of International Law*, 30, 3 (1936), pp. 495-499.

Kulischer, Eugene, *Europe on the Move: War Population Changes, 1917-1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948).

- Kumar, Amitava, *Passport Photos* (Berkeley: University of California Press: 2000).
- Kushner, Tony and Katherine Knox, *Refugees in an Age of Genocide: Global, National, and Local Perspectives during the Twentieth Century* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 1999).
- Kushner, Tony, 'Writing Refugee History – Or Not', in *Refugees in Europe, 1919-1959: A Forty Years' Crisis?*, ed. by Matthew Frank and Jessica Reinisch (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), pp. 51-66.
- Kushner, Tony, *Remembering Refugees: Then and Now* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 2006).
- Kuyucu, Ali Tuna, 'Ethno-Religious 'Unmixing' of 'Turkey': 6-7 September Riots as a Case in Turkish Nationalism', *Nations and Nationalism*, 11, 3 (2005), pp. 361-380.
- Kyaw Ma Ma Lay, Journal, *A Man Like Him: Portrait of the Burmese Journalist Journal Kyaw U Chit Maung. Translated by Ma Thanegi* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2008).
- Laloum, Jean, 'Le consistoire de Paris et les commerces de bouche : l'enjeu de l'abattage rituel (années 1930 - années 1950)', *Archives Juives*, 47, 1 (2014), pp. 57-78.
- Larner, Wendy and Nina Laurie, 'Travelling Technocrats, Embodied Knowledges: Globalising Privatisation in Telecoms and Water', *Geoforum*, 41 (2010), pp. 218–226.
- Lake, Marilyn and Henry Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men's Countries and the Question of Racial Equality* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2008).
- Laqua, Daniel, 'Internationalism and Nationalism in the League of Nations' Work for Intellectual Cooperation', in *Internationalism, Imperialism and the Formation of the Contemporary World: The Pasts of the Present*, ed. by Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo and José Pedro Monteiro (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), pp. 59-86.
- 'Le château d'Aubonne et sa barbacane', in *Aubonne tourisme*. Available at: <http://aubonne-tourisme.ch/monuments/> [accessed 1 October, 2019].
- Legg, Stephen, 'Assemblage/Apparatus: Using Deleuze and Foucault', *Royal Geographical Society*, 43, 2 (2011), pp. 128-133.
- Legg, Stephen, 'Of Scales, Networks and Assemblages: the League of Nations Apparatus and the Scalar Sovereignty of the Government of India', *Transactions of the Institutes of British Geographers*, 35 (2009), pp. 234-253.
- Lenz Taguchi, Hillevi, 'New Materialisms and Play', in *Play and Learning in Early Childhood*, ed. by Liz Brooker, Mindy Blaise, and Susan Edwards (Sage: London, 2014), pp. 79-91.

Lettevall, Rebecka, 'Cosmopolitanism in Practice: Perspectives on the Nansen Passports', in *East European Diasporas, Migration and Cosmopolitanism*, ed. by Ulrike Ziemer and Sean P. Roberts (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2012), pp. 13-24.

Lettevall, Rebecka, 'Neutrality and Humanitarianism: Fridtjof Nansen and the Nansen Passports' in *Neutrality in Twentieth-Century Europe: Intersections of Science, Culture, and Politics after the First World War*, ed. by Rebecka Lettevall, Geert Somsen and Sven Widmalm (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2012), pp. 316-336.

Lewis, Norman, *Golden Earth: Travels in Burma* (Philadelphia: Readers Union, 1954).

Li, Yi, *Chinese in Colonial Burma: A Migrant Community in a Multiethnic State* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

Lie, Birgit, 'The Psychological and Social Situation of Repatriated and Exiled Refugees: A Longitudinal, Comparative Study', *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health*, 32, 3 (2004), pp. 179-187.

Lingelbach, Jochen, 'Polish refugees in Africa – Central Europeans and Their Position within Colonial Society', *Central Europe and Colonialism Conference*, Wrocław, Poland (21-23 September 2016). Available at: <http://temp.acadeuro.wroclaw.pl/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Lingelbach-Polish-refugees-in-Africa-paper.pdf> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

Lingelbach, Jochen, 'Refugee Camps as Forgotten Portals of Globalization: Polish World War II Refugees in British Colonial East Africa', *Comparativ*, 27, 3-4 (2017), pp. 78-93.

Llewellyn-Jones, Rosie, 'The British Raj and the British Mandate in Iraq', *Asian Affairs*, 46, 2 (2015), pp. 270-279.

Lloyd, Lorna, '“What’s in a Name?”', *The Curious Tale of the Office of High Commissioner*, *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 11, 1 (2000), pp. 47-78.

Lloyd, Martin, *The Passport: The History of Man’s Most Travelled Document* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2003).

Loeffler, James, 'Promise and Peril: Reflections on Jewish International Legal Biography', in *Émigré Lawyers and International Law*, ed. by Annette Weinke and Leora Bilsky (Forthcoming). Available at: [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3454558](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3454558) [accessed 1 October, 2019].

Loescher, Gil, *The UNHCR and World Politics: A Perilous Path* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

Loescher, Gil, 'UNHCR’s Origins and Early History: Agency, Influence, and Power in Global Refugee Policy', *Refuge* 33, 1 (2017), pp. 77-86.

Lohr, Eric, *Russian Citizenship* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2012).

London, Louise, *Whitehall and the Jews: 1933-1948* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

Long, Katy, *The Point of No Return: Refugees, Rights and Repatriation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Long, Katy, 'When Refugees Stopped being Migrants: Movement, Labour and Humanitarian Protection', *Migration Studies* 1, 1 (2013), pp. 4-26.

Lubkemann, Stephen C., 'Involuntary Immobility: On a Theoretical Invisibility in Forced Migration Studies', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 21, 4 (2008), pp. 454-475.

Lwanga Lunyiigo, S., 'Uganda's Long Connection with the Problem of Refugees: From the Polish Refugees of World War II to the Present', in *Makerere Institute of Social Research* (1993) <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/5693> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

Macdonald, Andrew, 'The Identity Thieves of the Indian Ocean: Forgery, Fraud and the Origins of South African Immigration Control, 1890s–1920s', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 179 (2012), pp. 253-276.

Madokoro, Laura, Elaine Lynn-ee Ho and Glen Peterson, 'Questioning the Dynamics and Language of Forced Migration in Asia: The experiences of Ethnic Chinese Refugees', *Modern Asian Studies*, 49, 2 (2015), p. 430-438.

Madokoro, Laura, *Elusive Refuge: Chinese Migrants in the Cold War* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2016).

Madokoro, Laura, 'Surveying Hong Kong in the 1950s: Western Humanitarians and the 'Problem' of Chinese Refugees', *Modern Asian Studies* 49, 2 (2015), pp. 493-524.

Madokoro, Laura, 'Unwanted Refugees: Chinese Migration and the Making of a Global Humanitarian Agenda, 1949-1989' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of British Columbia, 2012).

Maghraoui, Driss, 'Moroccan Colonial Soldiers: Between Selective Memory and Collective Memory', *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 20, 2 (1998), pp. 21-41.

Magnússon, Sigurður Gylfi and István M. Szijártó, 'Introduction: Against Simple Truths', in *What is Microhistory? Theory and Practice*, ed. by Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon and István M. Szijártó (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2013), pp. 502-536.

Malkki, Liisa, 'Refugees and Exile: From 'Refugee Studies' to the National Order of Things', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24 (1995), pp. 495-523.

- Malkki, Liisa, 'Speechless Emissaries: Refugees, Humanitarianism, and Dehistoricization', *Cultural Anthropology*, 11, 3 (1996), pp. 377-404.
- Manchester, Laurie, 'Making Russian Émigrés into Soviet citizens: The Particularities of the Russian Diaspora in Manchuria and Repatriation to the USSR after Stalin's Death', in *Historian, Time, Society: A Collection Dedicated to the Ninetieth Year of Corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences*, ed. by Raphael Sholomovich Ganelin (Moscow: Novy Khronograf, 2017) pp. 476-491.
- Manji, Firoze and Carl O'Coill, 'The Missionary Position', *International Affairs*, 78, 3 (2002), pp. 567-583.
- Mantel, Hilary, 'The Day is for the Living', *The Reith Lectures in BBC iplayer* (2017). Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08tcbrp> [accessed 1 October, 2019].
- Marfleet, Phillip, 'Refugees and History: Why we Must Address the Past', *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 26, 3 (2007), pp. 136-148.
- Mark, Chi-Kwan, 'The 'Problem of People': British Colonials, Cold War Powers, and the Chinese Refugees in Hong Kong, 1949–1962', *Modern Asian Studies*, 41, 6 (2007), pp. 1145-1181.
- Marks, Sally, *The Ebbing of European Ascendancy: An International History of the World, 1914-1945* (London: Hodder Arnold, 2002).
- Marr, Phebe, *The Modern History of Iraq*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. (Boulder: Westview Press, 2012).
- Marrus, Michael, *The Unwanted: European Refugees in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 1985).
- Martini, M. et al, 'The History of Tuberculosis: The Social Role of Sanatoria for the Treatment of Tuberculosis in Italy between the End of the 19th Century and the Middle of the 20<sup>th</sup>', *Journal of Preventative Medicine and Hygiene*, 59, 4 (2018), pp. E323-E327.
- Matin-asgari, Afshin 'The Transparent Sphinx: Political Biography and the Question of Intellectual Responsibility', *Journal for Critical Studies of the Middle East* 10, 9 (2001), pp. 87-108.
- Matthews, Mervyn, *The Passport Society: Controlling Movement in Russia and the USSR* (Boulder, San Francisco and Oxford: Westview Press, 1993).
- Mau, Steffan et al., 'The Global Mobility Divide: How Visa Policies have Evolved over Time', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 41, 8 (2015), pp. 1192-1213.
- Maul, Daniel Roger, 'The Rise of a Humanitarian Superpower: American NGOs and International Relief, 1917-1945', *Internationalism, Imperialism and the Formation of the Contemporary World: The Past of the Present*, ed. by Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo and José Pedro Monteiro (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), pp. 127-146.

Mazower, Mark, *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

Mazower, Mark, 'The Strange Triumph of Human Rights, 1933-1950', *The Historical Journal*, 47, 2 (2004), pp. 379-398

Meiboom, Mieke, *Foute Groningers? Berechting van Collaboratie, Oorlogsgereleateerde Misdaden en Internationale Oorlogsmisdaden in Groningen, 1945-1952* (Groningen: Uitgeverij Passage, 2019).

Memisoglu, Fulya, 'The Legacy of the Nation State Building Process: Minority Politics in Greece and Turkey', in *New Nation States and National Minorities*, ed. by Julien Danero Iglesias, Nenad Stojanović and Sharon Weinblum (Colchester: ECPR Press, 2014), pp. 169-190.

Mendel, Maud S., *In the Aftermath of Genocide: Armenians and Jews in Twentieth Century France* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003).

Migdal, Joel, *State in Society: How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Milani, Abbas, *The Persian Sphinx: Amir Abbas Hoveyda and the Riddle of the Iranian Revolution* (Washington DC: Mage Publishers, 2000).

Milner, James, 'Introduction: Power and Influence in the Global Refugee Regime', *Refuge*, 33, 1 (2017), pp. 3-6.

Mirković, Damir, 'Victims and Perpetrators in the Yugoslav Genocide 1941–1945: Some Preliminary Observations', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 7, 3 (1993), pp. 317-332.

Mitter, Rana, *China's War with Japan, 1937-1945: The Struggle for Survival* (London: Penguin Books, 2013).

Mitter, Rana, *The Manchurian Myth: Nationalism, Resistance and Collaboration in Modern China* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2000).

Momirov, Aleksander, 'The Individual Right to Petition in Internationalized Territories. From Progressive Thought to an Abandoned Practice', *Journal of the History of International Law*, 9 (2007), pp. 203-231

Mongia, Radhika Viyas, 'Race, Nationality, Mobility: A History of the Passport', *Public Culture*, 11, 3 (1999), pp. 527-556.

- Moon, David, 'Peasant Migration, the Abolition of Serfdom and the Internal Passport System in the Russian Empire, c.1800-1914.', in *Coerced and Free Migration: Global Perspectives*, ed. by David Eltis (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), pp. 324-357.
- Moore, Jennifer, Karen Musalo and Richard A. Boswell, *Refugee Law and Policy: A Comparative and International Approach*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn. (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2011).
- Monforte, Javier, 'What is New in New Materialism for the Newcomer?', *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 10, 3 (2018), pp. 378-390.
- Morgan, John, 'Counterfeit Egyptians': The construction and implementation of a criminal identity in early modern England', *Romani Studies*, 26, 2 (2016), pp. 105-128.
- Moyn, Samuel, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2010).
- Murfett, Malcolm H., 'Introduction', in *Cold War Southeast Asia*, ed. by Malcolm H. Murfett (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish, 2012), pp. 1-10.
- Murray Li, Tania, 'Practices of Assemblage and Community Forest Management', *Economy and Society*, 36 (2007), pp. 263-293.
- Myint-U, Thant, *The Making of Modern Burma* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
- Neff, Stephen C., 'A Short History of International Law', in *International Law*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edn., ed. by Malcolm D. Evans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 3-31.
- Nemoto, Kei, 'Burma's (Myanmar's) 'Exclusive' Nationalism', in *Asian Nationalisms Reconsidered*, ed. by Jeff Kingston (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2016), pp. 218-229.
- Newham, Fraser, 'The Russians of Shanghai', *History Today*, 55, 12 (2005), pp. 20-28.
- Noortmann, Math, 'NGOs in International Law: Reconsidering Personality and Participation (Again)', in *Routledge Handbook of NGOs and International Relations*, ed. by Thomas Davies (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2019), pp. 179-192.
- Nowak, Katarzyna, 'Voices of Revival: A Cultural History of Polish Displaced Persons in Allied-Occupied Germany and Austria, 1945-1952' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Manchester, 2018).
- Oltmer, Jochen, 'Protecting Refugees in the Weimar Republic', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 30, 2 (2016), pp. 1-19.
- O'Neill, F. W. S., *The Call of the East: Sketches from the History of the Irish Mission to Manchuria, 1869-1919* (London: James Clarke and Co, 1919).

Orchard, Phil, *A Right to Flee: Refugees, States, and the Construction of International Cooperation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

‘Origins and History’, *The Doon School* (2019). Available at: <http://www.doonschool.com/about-us/origins-and-history/> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

Park, Yoosun, ‘Making Refugees: A Historical Discourse Analysis of the Construction of the ‘Refugee’ in US Social Work, 1900–1957’, *The British Journal of Social Work*, 38, 4 (2008), pp. 771-787.

Pedersen, Susan, ‘Empire, States and the League of Nations’, in *Internationalisms: A Twentieth Century History*, ed. by Glenda Sluga and Patricia Clavin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp. 113-138.

Pedersen, Susan, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

Peterson, Glen, ‘To Be or Not to Be a Refugee: The International Politics of the Hong Kong Refugee Crisis, 1949–55’, *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 36, 2 (2008), pp. 171-195.

Peterson, Glen, ‘Sovereignty, International Law, and the Uneven Development of the International Refugee Regime’, *Modern Asian Studies*, 49, 2 (2015), pp. 439-468.

Peterson, Glen, ‘The Uneven Development of the International Refugee Regime in Post-war Asia: Evidence from China, Hong Kong and Indonesia’, *Journal of Refugee Studies* 25, 3 (2012), pp. 326-343.

Pitterman, Shelly, ‘A Comparative Survey of Two Decades of International Assistance to Refugees in Africa’, *Africa Today*, 31, 1 (1984), pp. 25-54.

Platt, D. C. M., *The Cinderella Service: British Consuls Since 1825* (London: Longman Group, 1971).

Plesch, Dan and Thomas G. Weiss, ‘Introduction: Past as Prelude, Multilateralism as a tactic and Strategy’, in *Wartime Origins and the Future United Nations*, ed. by Dan Plesch and Thomas G. Weiss (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2015), pp. 1-14.

Plowden, Lord E. N., ‘Miscellaneous no. 5 (1964). Report of the Committee on Representational Services Overseas appointed by the Prime Minister under the chairmanship of Lord Plowden’, pp. 1-184. Available at: <https://parlipapers-proquest-com.manchester.idm.oclc.org/parlipapers/result/pqpdocumentview?accountid=12253&groupid=101492&pgId=52c62389-a284-486c-bb80-2a5092f5e5a7#372> [accessed 1 October, 2019].



Pue, W. Wesley, *Lawyers' Empire: Legal Professions and Cultural Authority, 1780-1950* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2016), pp. 3-35.

Rajaram, Prem Kumar, 'Humanitarianism and Representations of the Refugee', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 15, 3 (2002), pp. 248-64.

Ramsey, Alexis. E., 'Viewing the Archives: The Hidden and the Digital', in *Working in the Archives: Practical Research Methods for Rhetoric and Composition*, ed. by Alexis E. Ramsey et al (Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 2009), pp. 79-90.

Raymond, Boris, *The Last White General: Oral History Transcript* (Berkeley: University of California, 1975).

'Reale, Egidio', in *Historisches Lexikon der Schweiz* (2010). Available at: <http://www.hls-dhs-dss.ch/textes/d/D27947.php> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

Reale, Egidio, 'The Passport Question', *Foreign Affairs*, 506 (1930-1931), pp. 506-509.

Reinfeld, Fred, *A Catalogue of the World's Most Popular Coins* (New York: Sterling, 1956).

Reinisch, Jessica, 'Introductions: Agents of Internationalism', *Contemporary European History*, 25, 2 (2016), pp. 195-205.

Reinisch, Jessica, 'Old Wine in New Bottles? UNRRA and the Mid-Century World of Refugees', in *Refugees in Europe, 1919-1959: A Forty Years' Crisis?*, ed. by Matthew Frank and Jessica Reinisch (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), pp. 147-176.

Rey-Schyr, Catherine, 'The ICRC's Activities on the Indian Subcontinent Following Partition (1947-1949)', *International Review of the Red Cross*, 323 (1998). Available at: <https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/resources/documents/article/other/57jpcb.htm> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

Rieff, David, *A Bed for the Night: Humanitarianism in Crisis* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002).

Ristaino, Marcia Reynders, *Port of Last Resort: The Diaspora Communities of Shanghai* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).

Robertson, Craig, 'A Documentary Regime of Verification', *Cultural Studies*, 23, 3 (2009), pp. 329-354.

Robinson, Cabeiri Debergh, 'Too Much Nationality: Kashmiri Refugees, the South East Asian Refugee Regime, and a Refugee State, 1947-1974', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 25, 3 (2012), pp. 344-365.

Robisheaux, Thomas, et al., 'Microhistory Today: A Roundtable Discussion', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 47, 1 (2017), pp. 7-52.

Robisheaux, Thomas, 'Microhistory and the Historical Imagination: New Frontiers', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 47, 1 (2017), pp. 1-6.

Robson, Laura, 'Refugee Camps and the Spatialization of Assyrians Nationalism in Iraq', in *Modernity, Minority, and the Public Sphere: Jews and Christians in the Middle East*, ed. by S. R. Goldstein-Sabbah and H. L. Murre-van den Berg (Leiden: Brill, 2016), pp. 237-257.

Rodgers, Gerry, 'India, the ILO and the Quest for Social Justice since 1919', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 46, 10 (2011), pp. 45-52.

Rodogno, Davide, 'Beyond Relief: A Sketch of the Near East Relief's Humanitarian Operations, 1918-1929', *Monde(s)*, 2, 6 (2014), pp. 45-64.

Rodogno, Davide, *Fascism's European Empire: Italian Occupation during the Second World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

Rodogno, Davide, Francesca Piana and Shaloma Gauthier, 'Shaping Poland: Relief and Rehabilitation Programmes Undertaken by Foreign Organisations, 1918-1922', in *Shaping the Transnational Sphere: Experts, Networks and Issues from the 1840s to the 1930s*, ed. by Davide Rodogno, Bernhard Struck and Jakob Vogel (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2015), pp. 259-278.

Rodogno, Davide, Shaloma Gauthier and Francesca Piana, 'What Does Transnational History tell us about a World with International Organisations?', in *Routledge Handbook of International Organisation*, ed. by Bob Reinalda (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2013), pp. 94-105.

Rodogno, Davide, 'The American Red Cross and the International Committee of the Red Cross' Humanitarian Politics and Policies in Asia Minor and Greece (1922-1923)', *First World War Studies*, 5, 1 (2014), pp. 83-99.

Rodríguez García, Magaly, Davide Rodogno and Liat Kozma, 'Introduction', in *The League of Nations' Work on Social Issues: Visions, Endeavours and Experiments*, ed. by Magaly Rodríguez García, Davide Rodogno and Liat Kozma (Geneva: United Nations, 2016), pp. 13-30.

Rofe, J. Simon, 'Prewar and Wartime Planning: Antecedents to the UN Moment in San Francisco, 1945', in *Wartime Origins and the Future United Nations*, ed. by Dan Plesch and Thomas G. Weiss (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2015), pp. 17-35.

Rosenberg, Clifford D., *Policing Paris: The Origins of Modern Immigration Control Between the Wars* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006).

- Rosenbloom, Rachel E., 'From the Outside Looking In: U.S. Passports in the Borderlands', in *Citizenship in Question: Evidentiary Birthright and Statelessness*, ed. by Benjamin N. Lawrance and Jacqueline Stevens (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2017), pp. 132-146.
- Roversi, Alessandra, 'The Evolution of the Refugee Regime and Institutional Responses: Legacies from the Nansen Period', *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 22, 1 (2003), pp. 21-35.
- Roy, Denny, *Taiwan: A Political History* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003).
- Roy, Rama Deb, 'The Great Trigonometrical Survey of India in a Historical Perspective', *Indian Journal of History and Science*, 21, 1 (1986), pp. 22-32.
- Rürup, Miriam, 'Legal Expertise and Biographical Experience', Statelessness, Migrants, and the Shaping of New Legal Knowledge in the Postwar World', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 43, 4 (2017), pp. 438-465.
- Rynd, Major F. F., 'The Assyro-Chaldeans', *Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society*, 10 (1923), pp. 241-242.
- Salomon, Kim, 'The Cold War Heritage: UNRRA and the IRO as Predecessors of UNHCR', in *The Uprooted: Forced Migration as an International Problem in the Post-War Era*, ed. by Göran Rystad (Lund: Lund University Press, 1990), pp. 157-178.
- Salt, John and James Clarke, 'Europe's Migrant Groups', in *The Demographic Characteristics of Immigrant Populations*, ed. by Werner Haug, Paul Compton and Youseef Courbage (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2002), pp. 17-56.
- Salter, Mark B., 'International Cooperation on Travel Document Security in the Developed World', in *Global Mobility Regimes*, ed. by Rey Koslowski (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 115-129.
- Salter, Mark B., 'Passport Photos' in *Making Things International 1: Circuits and Motion*, ed. by Mark B. Salter (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2015), pp. 18-35.
- Salter, Mark B., *Rights of Passage: The Passport in International Relations* (London, Lynne Rienner Publishers: 2003).
- Salvatici, Silvia, '“Help the People Help Themselves”: UNRRA Relief Workers and Displaced Persons', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 25, 3 (2012), pp. 428-451.
- Sandvik, Kristin Bergtora et al., 'Humanitarian Technology: A Critical Research Agenda', *International Review of the Red Cross*, 96, 893 (2014), pp. 219-242.

Sayward, Amy L., *The United Nations in International History* (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2017).

Scott, James C., *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (Yale: Yale University Press, 1998).

Scott, Shirley V., 'The Decline of International Law as a Normative Ideal', *Victoria University Wellington Law Review*, 49 (2018), pp. 627-644.

ScreenCheck, 'Kosovo Refugee Registration Project', *YouTube* (2016). Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QHWIcn1Z1M0> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

Seekins, Donald M., *Historical Dictionary of Burma (Myanmar)*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2017).

Seldon, Marjorie, *Poppies and Roses: A Story of Courage* (Sevenoaks: Economic and Literary Books, 1985).

Selth, Andrew, 'Modern Burma Studies: A Survey of the Field', *Modern Asian Studies*, 44, 2 (2010), pp. 401-440.

Shatzkes, Pamela, *Holocaust and Rescue: Impotent or Indifferent? Anglo-Jewry 1938-1945* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002).

Sheller, Mimi, 'From Spatial Turn to Mobilities Turn', *Current Sociology Monograph*, 65, 4 (2017), pp. 623-639.

Siegelberg, Mira L., 'Neither Right nor Left: Interwar Internationalism between Justice and Order', *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism and Development*, 6, 3 (2015), pp. 465-477.

Simon, Reeva and Eleanor Tejrjian, *The Creation of Iraq, 1914–1921* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

Singha, Radhika, 'The Great War and a 'Proper' Passport for the Colony: Border-Crossing in British India c. 1882-1922', *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 50, 3 (2013), pp. 289-315.

Sjöberg, Tommie, *The Powers and the Persecuted: The Refugee Problem and the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees (IGCR), 1938-1947* (Lund: Lund University Press, 1991).

Skóra, Wojciech, 'Iwan Iwanowicz Bielamin, wygnaniec rosyjski w Gdańsku. Przyczynek do „międzynarodówki szpiegowskiej” Wolnego Miasta lat 1920–1939', *Studia Historica Gedanensia*, 5 (2014), pp. 306-328.

Simpson, Sir John Hope, *The Refugee Problem: A Report of a Survey* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939).

Skran, Claudena, *Refugees in Inter-war Europe: The Emergence of a Regime* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

Sluga, Glenda, *Internationalism in the age of Nationalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press).

Sluglett, Peter, 'The Urban Bourgeoisie and the Colonial State: The Iraqi and Syrian Middle Classes Between Two World Wars', in *The Role of the State in West Asia*, ed. by Annika Rabo and Bo Utas (Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute, 2006), pp. 77-90.

Slim, Hugo, *Humanitarian Ethics: A Guide to the Morality of Aid in War and Disaster* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

Smith, Alison K., 'False Passports, Undocumented Workers, and Public (Dis)Order in Late-Eighteenth-Century Russia', *Journal of Social History*, Spring (2020), pp. 1-21.

Smith, Martin, 'Ethnic Politics and Citizenship in History', in *Citizenship in Myanmar: Ways of Being in and from Burma*, ed. by Ashley South and Marie Lall (Chiang Mai: Chiang Mai University Press, 2018), pp. 26-58.

Smith, Sam, 'India Partition: Looking Back at the Red Cross Response to the Refugee Crisis', in *British Red Cross* (2017). Available at: <http://blogs.redcross.org.uk/international/2017/08/india-partition-looking-back-red-cross-response-refugee-crisis/> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

Soguk, Nevzat, *States and Strangers: Refugees and Displacements of Statecraft* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

Sorby Jr. Karol, 'The last years of King Faysal I. (1930-1933)', *Asian and African Studies*, 19, 2 (2010), pp. 255-274.

Stavridis, Stavros T., 'The Assyrian Issue 1914-35: Australian Documents and Press', in *Genocide in the Ottoman Empire: Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks, 1913-1923*, ed. by George N. Shirinian (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2017), pp. 158-186.

Stein, Sarah Abrevaya, *Extraterritorial Dreams: European Citizenship, Sephardi Jews, and the Ottoman Twentieth Century* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2016).

Steinacher, Gerald, *Humanitarians at War: The Red Cross in the Shadow of the Holocaust* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

Steinberg, David I., *Burma/Myanmar: What Everyone Needs to Know*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Steinberg, David I., 'Burma-Myanmar: The US-Burmese Relationship and its Vicissitudes', in *Short of the Goal: U.S. Policy and Poorly Performing States*, ed. by Nancy Birdsall, Milan Vaishnav and Robert L. Ayres (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2017).

Steiner, Zara, 'Refugees: The Timeless Problem', in *Refugees in Europe, 1919-1959: A Forty Years' Crisis?*, ed. by Matthew Frank and Jessica Reinisch (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), pp. 21-32.

Steiner, Zara, *The Lights That Failed: European International History, 1919-1933* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

Steiner, Zara, *The Triumph of the Dark: European International History, 1933-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

Steinweis, Alan. E., *Kristallnacht 1938* (London and Harvard: Belknap Press and Harvard University Press, 2009).

Stephens, John D., 'The Social Rights of Citizenship', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Welfare State*, ed. by Francis G. Castles et al (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 511-525.

'Stolperstein Oberstraße 107 (Julius Philipp) in Hamburg-Harvestehude', in *Wikimedia Commons* (2019). Available at: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stolperstein\\_Oberstra%C3%9Fe\\_107\\_\(Julius\\_Philipp\)\\_in\\_Hamburg-Harvestehude.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stolperstein_Oberstra%C3%9Fe_107_(Julius_Philipp)_in_Hamburg-Harvestehude.JPG) [accessed 1 October, 2019].

Stone, Dan, 'Refugees Then and Now: Memory, History and Politics in the Long Twentieth Century: An Introduction', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 52, 2-3 (2018), pp. 101-106.

Stonebridge, Lindsey, *Placeless People: Writings, Rights and Refugees* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

Stroud, Martha, 'Atina Grossman Lecture Summary', *USC Shoah Foundation* (2016). Available at: <https://sfi.usc.edu/news/2016/05/11429-atina-grossmann-lecture-summary> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

Sundholm, Matthias, 'Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees', in *UN Youth Envoy* (undated). Available at: <https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/2013/09/office-of-the-united-nations-high-commissioner-for-refugees/> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

Sunga, Ria, '“What Can the Churches Do – Except Pray for Us!”: The World Council of Churches and its Rescue of White Russians in the Philippines', *HCRI PhD Symposium*, 30 May 2019.

Szenajda, Andrew, 'Restoring Administrations of Justice in Early Practice: American-Occupied Germany, 1945-1949', *Amsterdam Law Forum*, 6, 1 (2014), pp. 35-67.

Szonyi, Michael and Hong Liu, 'New Approaches to the Study of the Cold War in Asia', in *The Cold War in Asia: The Battle for Hearts and Minds*, ed. by Zheng Yangwen, Hong Liu, and Michael Szonyi (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010), pp. 1-14.

Taithe, Bertrand and Jenny H. Peterson, eds., *The Routledge Companion to Humanitarian Action* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2015).

Taithe, Bertrand, 'Pyrrhic Victories? French Catholic Missionaries, Modern Expertise, and Secularizing Technologies', in *Sacred Aid: Faith and Humanitarianism*, ed. by Michael Barnett and Janci Gross Stein (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 166-187.

Thein, Myat, *Economic Development in Myanmar* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies).

Thomas, Martin, 'The Gendarmerie, Information Collection, and Colonial Violence in French North Africa Between the Wars', *Historical Reflections / Réflexions Historiques*, 36, 2 (2010), pp. 76-96.

Tønnessen, Aud V., 'Faith-based NGOs in International Aid: Humanitarian Agents or Missionaries of Faith?', *Forum for Development Studies*, 34, 2 (2007), pp. 323-342.

Torpey, John, *The Invention of the Passport: Surveillance, Citizenship and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1999).

Torpey, John, 'The Passport in America: The History of a Document. By Craig Robertson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. xii plus 340 pp. \$27.95)', *Journal of Social History*, 45, 3 (2009), pp. 835-836.

Troyon, Brigitte and Daniel Palmieri, 'The ICRC Delegate: An Exceptional Humanitarian Player?', *International Review of the Red Cross*, 89, 865 (2007), pp. 97-111.

Tournès, Ludovic, 'The Rockefeller Foundation and the Transition from the League of Nations to the UN (1939–1946)', *Journal of Modern European History*, 12, 3 (2014), pp. 323-341.

'Trip Report and Project Summary: Kosovo Refugee Information Systems and Network', *An Inter-professional Initiative of the Chicago-Kent College of Law, Illinois Institute of Technology* (1999). Available at: [http://pbosnia.kentlaw.edu/projects/kosovo/tripreports/june99\\_albania.htm](http://pbosnia.kentlaw.edu/projects/kosovo/tripreports/june99_albania.htm) [accessed 1 October, 2019].

Tucker, Shelby, *Burma: The Curse of Independence* (London: Pluto Press, 2001).

Turton, David, 'The Meaning of Place in a World of Movement: Lessons from Long-term Field Research in Southern Ethiopia', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 18, 3 (2005), pp. 258-280.

Ulbert, Jörg, 'A History of the French Consular Services', in *Consular Affairs and Diplomacy*, ed. by Jan Melissen and Ana Mar Fernández (Leiden and Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 2011), pp. 303-324.

UNHCR, 'History of the UNHCR', UNHCR UK (undated). Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/uk/history-of-unhcr.html> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

UNHCR, 'States Parties to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol' (undated). Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/protect/PROTECTION/3b73b0d63.pdf> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

UNHCR, 'The State of The World's Refugees 2000: Fifty Years of Humanitarian Action', in *UNHCR* (2000). Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/uk/publications/sowr/4a4c754a9/state-worlds-refugees-2000-fifty-years-humanitarian-action.html> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

UNHCR, 'The UN Refugee Agency: Our Story', in *YouTube* (2015). Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ymxq7D2DfA>; [accessed 1 October, 2019].

United Nations Library, *Guide to the Archives of the League of Nations 1919-1946* (United Nations Publications: Geneva, 1999).

Van Goethem, Gert, 'Phelan's War: The International Labour Organisation in Limbo (1941-1948)', in *ILO Histories: Essays on the International Labour Organization and Its Impact on the World during the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Jasmien van Daele, Magaly Rodríguez García, and Geert van Goethem (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010), pp. 313-340.

Vanneuville, M. C. 'De la charité aux soins : l'histoire de l'hôpital à Grenoble', *Société française d'histoire des hôpitaux*, 20 (1996).

Vazira Fazila-Yacoobali, Zamindar, *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

Vernant, Jacques, *The Refugee in the Postwar World* (Yale: Yale University Press, 1953).

Vogt, Carl Emil, 'An Internationalist Pioneer: Fridtjof Nansen and the Social Issues of the League of Nations', in *The League of Nations' Work on Social Issues: Visions, Endeavours and Experiments*, ed. by Magaly Rodríguez García, Davide Rodogno and Liat Kozma (Geneva: United Nations, 2016), pp. 187-200.



Wallerstein, Immanuel, 'What Cold War in Asia? An Interpretative Essay', in *The Cold War in Asia: The Battle for Hearts and Minds*, ed. by Zheng Yangwen, Hong Liu, and Michael Szonyi (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010), pp. 15-24.

Wang, Haochen, 'Citizens of No State: Daily Life of Shanghai White Russians, 1920s-1930s', *Primary Source*, IV, I (2013), pp. 30-34.

Watenpaugh, Keith David, 'Between Communal Survival and National Aspiration: Armenian Genocide Refugees, the League of Nations, and the Practices of Interwar Humanitarianism', *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism and Development*, 5, 2 (2014), pp. 159-81.

Webster, Ronald, 'Stewart W. Herman, Pastor of the American Church in Berlin 1935-42, and Hitler's Persecution of the Jews', in *Remembering for the Future*, ed. by J. K. Roth et al (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), pp. 1561-1575.

Weis, Paul, *Nationality and Statelessness in International Law* (London: Stevens and Sons, 1956).

White, Benjamin Thomas, 'Humans and Animals in a Refugee Camp: Baquba, Iraq, 1918-20', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 32, 2 (2018), pp. 216-236.

White, Benjamin Thomas, 'Refugees and the Definition of Syria, 1920-1939', *Past and Present* (2017), pp. 1-38.

White, Elizabeth, 'The Legal Status of Russian Refugees, 1921-1936', *Comparativ. Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und Vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung* (2017), pp. 18-38.

Wohlström, Kristian, 'On Disillusionment and its Limits: Images of the Interwar Legal Project in International Relations and International Law', *British Yearbook of International Law*, 80, 1 (2009), pp. 361-408.

Woodbridge, George, *UNRRA: The History of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, Volumes I-III* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950).

'Writing the Histories of People in Motion: An Interview with Laura Madokoro', in *Toynbee Prize Foundation* (2018). Available at: <http://toynbeeprize.org/interviews/laura-madokoro/> [accessed 1 October, 2019].

Wyman, Mark, *DPs: Europe's Displaced Persons, 1945-51* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1998).

Yangwen, Zheng, Hong Liu, Michael Szonyi (eds.), *The Cold War in Asia: The Battle for Hearts and Minds* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010).

Zahra, Tara, ‘The Psychological Marshall Plan’: Displacement, Gender, and Human Rights after World War II’, *Central European History*, 44, 1 (2011), pp. 37-62.

Zanasi, Margherita, ‘Exporting Development: The League of Nations and Republican China’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 49, 1 (2007), pp. 143-169.

Zetter, Roger, ‘Labelling Refugees: Forming and Transforming a Bureaucratic Identity’, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 4, 1 (1991), pp. 39-46.

Zetter, Roger, ‘More Labels, Fewer Refugees: Remaking the Refugee Label in the Era of Globalisation’, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 20, 2 (2007), pp. 172-192.

Zimmerman, Andreas, Jonas Dörschner and Felix Machts *The 1952 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol: A Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

Zolberg, Aristide, R., Astri Suhrke and Sergio Aguayo, ‘International Factors in the Formation of Refugee Movements’, *The International Migration Review*, 20, 2 (1986), pp. 151-169.

Zuroff, Efraim, ‘Rescue Priority and Fund Raising as Issues during the Holocaust: A Case Study of the Relations between the Vaad Ha-Hatzala and the Joint, 1939–1941’, *American Jewish History*, 68, 3 (1979), pp. 305-326.