

Introduction

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The global map of forced migration in its myriad forms, causes and circumstances is testament to the extent of refugee flight and exile in the world today. The planet is covered with a network of lines – a familiar image for the visualisation of global migration, representing not only escape routes but also nodes where the movement of fleeing people has been delayed or brought to a halt. Whereas the lines represent migration paths between countries of origin and receiving nations, the nodes represent places of (often forced) accommodation and detention in camps. There are some striking regional differences within this map: some of the lines are broken, others end abruptly, seemingly in the middle of nowhere; some of the nodes are densely clustered, others stand in isolation. Yet, overall, the map leaves no doubt that we are living in an age of forced migration, a “century of camps.” (Zygmunt Bauman)¹.

The detention, often through force, of refugees and asylum-seeking individuals in camps is not a recent phenomenon: states have long used the practice to regulate and control the movement of humans across borders. During the First World War, for example, tens of thousands of so-called “enemy aliens” were kept in internment camps. Before and during the Second World War, Jewish refugees and other individuals persecuted by the National Socialist regime were subjected to even worse treatment. Shortly after the end of that war in 1945, countless camps for Displaced Persons – including Jewish survivors of the Shoah – were established. Since then, camps of various types have been used to restrict and control the movement of refugees.

Indeed, the internment of refugees and asylum-seekers continues to this day. Both inside and outside Europe, the authorities are currently discussing, trialling and establishing different types of camps on a massive scale. Yet, the objective is always the same: to detain refugees. Historical and contemporary immobilisation and “encampment”² practice reflects the fact that states and governments often perceive individuals who seek protection and asylum as potential sources of danger. It is for

1 Zygmunt Bauman, “A Century of Camps?”, in *The Bauman Reader*, edited by Peter Beilharz (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2001), 230–280.

2 Michel Agier, *Managing the Undesirables. Refugee Camps and Humanitarian Governance* (Cambridge: Polity 2010).

this reason that the incarceration and subsequent forced deportation of refugees and Displaced Persons have become so commonplace around the world, even though such measures often violate fundamental human rights and hinder NGOs' efforts to support and help refugees.

The origins of this book can be traced back to December 2020, when the Austrian Society for Exile Research (öge) held a conference that addressed both the history and recent developments in state-organised (forced) accommodation of refugees. The society is an independent association of people who work in the field of exile research.³ Although its original focus was on exile from Austria during Austro-Fascism and National Socialism, it has since broadened its remit to encompass current forms of flight and exile. Therefore, the conference aimed to bring historical and contemporary experiences and perspectives into dialogue with one another. This volume presents a selection of thoroughly revised contributions to the conference, including in-depth analyses of local phenomena, case studies and comparative discourses from an international and historical perspective. All of the papers have undergone a rigorous two-step internal and external peer-review process.

From a variety of disciplinary angles, the articles in this book explore the organised, state-led and forced placement of past and present refugees and ask how their fates have unfolded within internment camps. They draw parallels – and highlight contrasts – between different types of detention while also considering each camp's unique historical context. Moreover, they investigate the social, relational and organisational context that characterise these camps in their function as transitory spaces.

Any book that attempts to bring historical and contemporary analyses into dialogue requires clear, unequivocal definitions. Hence, all of the articles in this collection construe “camp” solely as a place where refugees and asylum-seekers are held in custody; they do not discuss forced labour camps, re-education camps, concentration camps, or extermination camps. This distinction is crucial given the ongoing debate over the term in the historical and social sciences. With reference to Hannah Arendt's famous article “We Refugees,”⁴ a prominent argument describes camps “as the hidden matrix and nomos of the political space in which we are still living.”⁵ According to Giorgio Agamben, camps represent a state of emergency, based on a blurring of demarcation lines between right and wrong, inclusion and exclusion, legitimacy and exception. Far beyond the use and function of camps in colonial warfare, the role played by concentration and extermination camps under National Socialism

3 <https://exilforschung.ac.at>.

4 Hannah Arendt, “We Refugees”, in *Hannah Arendt, The Jewish Writings*, edited by Jerome Kohn and Ron H. Feldman (New York: Schocken Books, 2007), 264–274.

5 Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer. Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 166.

and the Soviet Gulag, the refugee camp has become a means of biopolitical control in modern world. This is why, following this argument, every single camp, in whatever form, carries the potential to become a concentration (and extermination) camp.

However, from the editors' perspective, it is imperative to draw a distinction between refugee camps, on the one hand, and forced labour and concentration camps, on the other. Although a clear differentiation may be difficult in some cases, especially as some camps may transition from one form to the other, in general they can be distinguished on the basis of their respective underlying agendas. All camps represent an organizational arrangement, tracing back to military origins, that are evident in their spatial, legal and organisational structure. However, whereas imperial, colonial and totalitarian regimes have long used camps as instruments for the imprisonment, submission, deportation, or even extermination of their own and other populations, refugee camps are committed to a specific humanitarian agenda, established during the First World War and institutionalised after the Second through international law (most notably the Geneva Conventions and the UN Declaration of Human Rights). This embeddedness in international law and humanitarian action is crucial when studying and comparing historical and current examples of refugee internment.

Refugee camps perform a dual function: they provide emergency aid and a minimal level of care for fleeing people and/or Displaced Persons, yet they are also state-led surveillance centres that endeavour to control those people. Various aspects of this Janus-like character are addressed in this book. One interesting example, from both historical and sociological perspectives, refers to the creation of new categories of state-driven and humanitarian intervention. In their article on internment practices during the First and Second World War, *Matthew Stibbe* and *Kim Wünschmann* describe the coining of the term "enemy aliens." This category became particularly significant for Jewish and political refugees from National Socialist Germany who were often detained in camps in isolated regions, such as the Isle of Man, a British Crown Dependency lying in the Irish sea, roughly halfway between Great Britain and Ireland, which became one of the emblematic places of this experience. In his article, *Christian Cwik* investigates another such place, the British colony of Trinidad, where 500 Austrian citizens were interned as "German enemy aliens" after the so-called "Anschluss" in 1938. Similar examples in this book – such as *Rachel Blumenthal's* paper on the Displaced Persons camp in Bad Gastein and *Michael Meyer's* article on asylum-seekers who arrived in Germany after 1945 and were placed under the mandate of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) and then the International Refugee Organisation (IRO) – underline the (ambivalent and shifting) relations between categories formulated by state (mostly securitarian) and humanitarian logics. Many of the cases discussed in this book demonstrate that this tension also frames the behaviour of the internees themselves. For instance, according to *Michel Agier*, internment camps for refugees and Displaced People are charac-

terised by ever-increasing contradictions that open up new opportunities for bottom-up processes of collective action and solidarity.

Research into refugee camps has identified three key structural features that have varied historically according to political and/or legal context:⁶ specific territorial situation (refugee camps are often established in liminal areas that are difficult to access); exceptional legal status (protection by international law but outside the legal framework that applies in the state where the camp is located); and social exclusion (regulation and control of external contacts). Throughout the world, refugees, asylum-seekers and Displaced People have testified that detention in a camp brings only short-term relief as their supposedly temporary status becomes permanent, their hopes of a free life in exile are frustrated and their human rights are ignored.

Both autobiographies and historical and ethnographic research indicate that support from outside the camps is an important means of overcoming the always difficult and often hopeless plight of stranded internees. Such support may be provided by voluntary organisations (as *Lilly Meyer* demonstrates in her paper on social workers who lived within the French camp of Rivesaltes), local (Jewish) advocacy groups, transnational non-governmental organisations (see the articles by *Anat Kutner* and *Jean-Michel Turcotte*), or professional refugee aid and care networks (see the contributions of *Birgit Behrensen*, *Maximiliane Brandmaier* and *Clara Bombach*). Some of the articles focus on specific groups (e.g. children: see *Lilly Meyer* and *Clara Bombach*), others concentrate on a particular task (e.g. rehabilitation and integration in the local labour market: see *Rachel Blumenthal* and *Anat Kutner*), while still others explore the internees' self-organisational activities (see *Michel Agier* and *Ioannis Christidis*). Decisive factors for self-organisation are socio-cultural and/or political homogeneity, access to and control of communication, the nature and extent of formal regulations, and the wider local environment. While some detainees have expressed their resistance through theatre, music, art, or even handicrafts (see the papers of *Pinna Rosenberg* and *Ioannis Christidis*), a politically hostile environment, such as that of South Korea in the early 1950s, may thwart such activities (see *Jean-Michel Turcotte's* article). External refugee and care workers may gain an empowering role if they display a commitment to partisanship (see *Clara Bombach*), although this may equally bring them into conflict with their professional or societal environment.

6 Michel Agier, *Un Monde de Camps* (Paris: La Découverte, 2014); Bettina Greiner and Alan Kramer (eds.), *Die Welt der Lager. Zur "Erfolgsgeschichte" einer Institution* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2013); Christoph Jahr and Jens Thiel (eds.), *Lager vor Auschwitz: Gewalt und Integration im 20. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Metropol Verlag, 2013); Joël Kotek and Pierre Rigoulot, *Das Jahrhundert der Lager. Gefangenschaft, Zwangsarbeit, Vernichtung* (Berlin/München: Propyläen, 2001).

Refugee camps can vary significantly in terms of form and function: organised and permanent; informal and mobile; socially isolated and woven into the urban fabric. From the perspective of the refugees, too, each camp establishes a different reality: between protection and deprivation of rights, marginalisation and self-assertion, recognition and rejection. However, analysing internment from a time-comparative angle reveals changing conceptualisations of refugees and Displaced People depending on the prevailing political system and the dominant migration/asylum and welfare regime. Since the end of Second World War, there is evidence of increasing differentiation (also in legal terms) between “refugees,” “asylum-seekers,” “people under subsidiary protection”, “returnees”, “unlawful migrants”, “undocumented foreigners” etc. Today, in a context where the erratic circulation of “wandering strangers”⁷ is challenging the world’s migration and refugee regimes, those categories are eroding and becoming arbitrary in the use. While state agencies respond with ever more restrictions, increased surveillance and/or militarised border control, humanitarian action and social assistance have become entangled in a vicious cycle of disempowerment (see the articles by *Birgit Behrensen* and *Maximiliane Brandmaier*).

While the term “refugee detention centre” suggests a static institution with a stable function, several of the contributors describe a more dynamic reality for both the internees and the places where they are detained. For many of the Jews and other refugees who fled persecution and extermination in the 1930s and 40s, the weeks or months they spent in refugee camps were relatively brief interludes during their journeys to new lives in exile (see *Andrea Strutz’s* article on refugees in Canada). For others, detention ended with deportation to a German concentration camp (see *Christoph Jahr’s* exploration of Jewish refugees and volunteers who fought on the side of the Republic in the Spanish Civil War and were subsequently interned in Gurs Camp in southern France). Gurs exemplifies the way in which a refugee camp’s function may change over time: in this case, from a detention centre for members of the International Brigades (including many Jewish left-wing activists from Germany and Austria), to a prisoner-of-war camp and a prison for Vichy collaborators, and finally to a “lieu de memoire” – a place of Holocaust remembrance – today. Other papers discuss the societal context of the detention of Jewish refugees, for example under colonial regimes (see the articles by *Roni Mikel-Arieli* on Mauritius, *Andrea Strutz* on Canada and *Christian Cwik* on Trinidad) or in the Deep South of the United States (see the contribution of *Andreas Kranebitter* and *Peter Pirker*). Finally, many of the articles address the long-term impacts of refugee internment practices. As *Marilyn G. Miller* puts it in her paper, “With the benefit of hindsight [...] it is clear that the Enemy Alien Control Program [...] set a precedent for subsequent US policies

7 Didier Fassin, *Life, A Critical User’s Manual* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018), 40.

and practices that have routinely treated non-citizens arriving from Latin America as dangerous criminals.”

The articles in this book touch upon a wide range of interesting topics that merit further historiographical, sociological and anthropological investigation,⁸ including: living conditions, hygiene and medical provision within detention centres; mortality rates among Displaced Persons; the specific issues faced by refugee women, children, and ethnic and sexual minorities; conflicts and struggles between different social and political groups; the fear of spies and “fifth columnists,” especially in times of war; camp administration and security management; the ongoing tension between accommodation and regulation; the roles played by external support agencies, self-organised cultural and political activities, and vocational training in terms of helping refugees cope with the pressures of internment and preparing them for post-camp life; the prevalence of camps under colonial administrations and during the Cold War; and, finally, “Alija Bet” – the highly organised yet illegal migration of hundreds of thousands of Jews from Europe to the British Mandate of Palestine between 1938 and the founding of the state of Israel in 1948.

The articles in this collection

Part I: The polysemic function (character) of camps

The article by historians Matthew Stibbe and Kim Wünschmann is a cross-temporal exploration of internment in the first half of the twentieth century. In their analysis, they demonstrate that the mass incarceration of non-combatants, including “enemy aliens,” deportees, refugees, internally Displaced Persons, political suspects and social outcasts, began in earnest during the First World War. Under the guiding principle of national security, imperial states (especially Great Britain and France) implemented internment policies that were coordinated throughout their metropolitan, dominion and colonial territories, and across their land and sea borders. Internment thus became an integral part of a global war culture and laid bare global class, race and gender inequalities.

The authors then focus on the lessons “learned” from the practice of detaining “enemy aliens” between 1914 and 1918 and their impact on policy-making during the century’s second major conflict. In particular, they stress the much greater scale of exile, expulsion and flight that characterized the Second World War, while also

8 See also the volume edited by Gabriele Anderl, *Hinter verschlossenen Toren. Die Internierung von Geflüchteten von den 1930er Jahren bis in die Gegenwart* (Wien: Verlag der Theodor Kramer Gesellschaft 2022).

highlighting a significant change in the application of the term “enemy alien” itself. As ever more people were categorized in this way, it became increasingly necessary to differentiate between “real enemy aliens” and “technical enemy aliens.” The latter, much larger group consisted of (mostly Jewish) refugees who had fled National Socialist persecution. In Great Britain, tribunals were established to distinguish “friendly enemy aliens” from “dangerous enemy aliens.” At first only the latter were interned. However, the official policy took a sharp turn after the German invasion of the Netherlands, Belgium and France in the late spring of 1940 brought the threat of invasion ever closer. A state of panic and heightened anxiety over national security not only supplanted careful attempts to separate enemy agents from refugees but also had a direct impact on internment policy as unprecedented numbers of men, women and children were detained in civilian internment camps, and over 7,000 men were deported to Canada and Australia. Yet the option of detaining all or nearly all “enemy aliens” was only practiced for a relatively short period (a few months at most), and many “loyal” refugees were subsequently released from internment or given the option of enlisting in the Pioneer Corps, a unit in the British armed forces.

Finally, Stibbe and Wünschmann show that the internment of white German and Austrian settlers in the colonies led to racial role reversals similar to those that had taken place in the First World War. Indeed, their detention challenged a well-established colonial order that was otherwise firmly based on white “European” dominance.

In his case study, historian and Latin America specialist Christian Cwik explores the integration and internment of European émigrés on Trinidad from the so-called “Anschluss” until the end of the Second World War. More than 500 Austrian citizens – most of them Jews from Vienna who had arrived on the Caribbean island prior to the beginning of the war – were interned in camps as “German enemy aliens” between 1940 and 1945. Among their number were members of the Stecher family. In 2013, Cwik interviewed Hans Stecher about his escape from the National Socialists, arrival in Trinidad, eventual detention and post-war life on the island. His article not only chronicles the fate of Hans and the rest of the Stecher family but places their experiences within a broad historical context. Supplemented with research conducted in Britain’s National Archives, the author explains how and why many emigrants from Central Europe ended up in Trinidad, their pre-war integration within island society and the British colonial administration’s subsequent introduction of its internment policy. Furthermore, he looks at the topic from a global perspective, with reference, for example, to migration from China and Syria during the 1920s and 30s due to the increasing importance of the oil industry and the proposal to use Trinidad as a reception centre for evacuees from war-torn Malta and Gibraltar.

In her article, the historian Rachel Blumenthal uses the example of everyday life in an internment camp for Jewish Displaced Persons in the Austrian spa town of

Bad Gastein between 1945 and 1948 to illustrate the contradictions that characterise so many refugee camps: on the one hand, they are places of sanctuary, welfare and care; on the other, they are sites of surveillance and control. Blumenthal sketches the working and living conditions within the camp as well as the inmates' relationships with the inhabitants of Bad Gastein, which at the time was in the US occupation zone. Forced labour was not official policy for interned non-repatriable residents in this zone. Moreover, the US government specifically exempted Jewish refugees from the local requirement that able-bodied Displaced Persons must accept any offer of employment. Nevertheless, the military governor and the camp administrator strongly encouraged the camp's residents to work, as officers and relief workers alike viewed this as an essential component of their rehabilitation. Consequently, UNRRA established workshops within the camp to "inculcate workmen to disciplined, high-quality work and honest shop conduct." In order to maintain a high rate of employment, the welfare organisation also stipulated that only workers would receive extra food rations – a policy that ignored the fact that many Jewish survivors were still recovering from years of forced labour during the war. Blumenthal thus traces the lines of conflict that ran between the internees' personal and often traumatic war experiences and their desire to re-establish independent lives, on the one hand, and the UNRRA's determination to oversee the residents' rehabilitation through tight control and hard work, on the other.

The historian Michael Mayer also investigates the complexity of the asylum issue in the chaotic aftermath of the Second World War. Many asylum-seekers who reached West Germany at that time had been victims of the National Socialists; others had been collaborators. Those who arrived prior to 30 June 1950 were placed under the mandate of UNRRA and its successor organisation, the IRO (founded in 1946). However, the IRO officially ceased all operations in West Germany at the beginning of 1952, at which point the Federal Republic assumed full responsibility for the recognition process, establishing the Federal Agency for the Recognition of Alien Refugees (Bundesdienststelle für die Anerkennung ausländischer Flüchtlinge) the following January. This state-run asylum system obliged all new arrivals to report to a camp for political screening purposes. In addition, the government initially intended to institute a second recognition process for those who were already in the country (many of whom were still under IRO mandate), although that scheme was later abandoned. Previously, around 75 per cent of the country's refugees had lived outside of the country's camps. Now, though, Camp Valka in Bavaria was chosen as the sole location for implementation of the new policy. Guided by the requirements of the Geneva Refugee Convention, every case had to be individually considered.

Mayer highlights the contrasting approaches of the IRO and the West German authorities towards the processing of asylum-seekers and the granting of asylum. The former organisation – which was founded primarily to provide social benefits to foreign refugees and, if possible, prepare them for resettlement abroad – saw no

need to investigate whether any refugee's claims of persecution were genuine. It was usually sufficient for the applicant simply to declare their opposition to the government of their home country. This approach, which was backed by the Western Allies, has to be seen in the context of mounting East–West tension, when numerous people sought protection under the IRO's mandate by claiming to be anti-communists after fleeing from the Soviet sphere of influence. By contrast, the West German authorities felt that the arrival of ever more refugees was placing an intolerable burden on the still war-stricken country. Moreover, they often perceived foreign refugees as a security problem. As a result, whereas the IRO had viewed camps simply as a means to accommodate people who would otherwise lack shelter, the West German government initially saw an opportunity to utilise them as a control mechanism. However, there was a gradual realisation that the disadvantages of enforcing mandatory internment – most notably the high costs – outweighed the supposed security “benefits.” This eventually led to a change of policy that not only allowed but actively encouraged refugees to find alternative accommodation.

The anthropologist Michel Agier views refugee camps as places of socialisation and politics, and thus as potential sites for the creation of a “common world.” Based on extensive ethnographic research in numerous camps in contemporary Europe and Africa, he develops an understanding of these institutions that is marked by three dualisms: that between the camp as heterotopia and place of refuge; that between securitarian and humanitarian logics; and that between urgency and endlessness (the camp as a waiting zone). The fact that camp life is characterised by uncertainty, undesirableness and precarity should not lead to the conclusion that such places are doomed to anomie and destructive disintegration. According to Agier, most camps struggle with two opposite perspectives: the demolition and eradication of their facilities; or their transformation into permanent urban neighbourhoods. The latter transformation is possible because refugees are not passive objects of custody. Rather, they actively engage in creating new forms of autonomous self-governance, especially when their efforts are reinforced by support from civil society actors, NGOs, associations and volunteers.

Part II: The (dis)empowering role of humanitarian intervention

The historian Lilly Maier explores the international non-governmental aid organisations that sent social workers, doctors and nurses to internment camps in the south of France during the Second World War, and especially the role played by one remarkable young woman – Vivette Hermann – in these relief efforts. From 1941 onwards, Rivesaltes served the Vichy government as a state-run internment camp for refugees, political opponents (such as communists), Sinti, Roma, and especially Jews, many of whom had been deported from Baden and the Palatinate in Germany. It was considered as a “family camp,” since the majority of Vichy France's child in-

ternees were sent there with their parents. A shortage of supplies and inadequate sanitation meant conditions in the camp were catastrophic from the very beginning, and many of the detainees died. Then, in April 1941, most of the Jewish inmates were transferred to a separate section, where the living conditions were even worse.

The volunteers lived inside the camp to offer as much assistance as they could to the internees. They were engaged in a daily battle against hunger and malnutrition, struggled to improve sanitary conditions, started kindergartens and schools and provided medical and psychological assistance. Vivette Hermann arrived as a social worker in Rivesaltes in November 1941 and shortly thereafter started to coordinate the liberation of over 400 Jewish children from the camp. Initially, this involved persuading the parents to grant permission for their children's removal and preparing the children themselves for the separation. Later, with the blessing of the French Jewish humanitarian organisation Oeuvre de Secours aux Enfants (OSE), Hermann liberated about a dozen extra adolescents by falsifying their ages on the official forms.

In the summer of 1942, after Hermann had completed her mission, the camp became an "antechamber of Auschwitz" when the Vichy authorities started arresting Jewish families and sending them to Rivesaltes prior to transferring them to the SS-run Drancy internment camp and, from there, to the extermination camps.

In her paper, the historian Anat Kutner tells the story of survivors of the Shoah who were arrested on arrival in the British Mandate of Palestine in the summer of 1946 and forcibly transferred to camps on the island of Cyprus. Most of them were Displaced Persons who wished to start a new life in a Jewish state that they would help to establish less than two years later. Between August 1945 and July 1946, the British authorities had responded to the arrival of thousands of illegal immigrants on the coast of Palestine by holding them captive in the Atlit detention camp, near Haifa, and Latrun Prison, near Jerusalem. However, as these holding areas continued to fill, they decided to establish new camps on Cyprus, partly in the misguided hope that this would dissuade other potential illegal immigrants from making the trip. The internments on Cyprus symbolised the burgeoning conflict between the British officials in Mandate Palestine – who wanted to control immigration and therefore the demographic composition of the population – and migrating survivors of the Shoah who viewed settlement in the region as their natural right. Support for the detainees was provided primarily by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), as only an organisation with no political affiliation could hope to resolve the complex humanitarian crisis that the British authorities had created. It was allowed to operate freely as it was not perceived as a Zionist organisation, and it had the means and organisational ability to provide desperately needed basic humanitarian aid as well as cultural and educational programmes that not only gave life in the camps some meaning but also helped the detainees to prepare for their

future lives in Israel. In addition, it negotiated improvements in medical supplies and extra food rations, which the British had severely restricted.

Many children and teenagers were housed in the camps as they generally comprised a significant proportion of the illegal immigrants, and a “youth village” was established to house orphans who had travelled alone. The British authorities did not grant any special privileges to this children’s camp, but the JCD was granted permission to import study materials. Many of the children were illiterate because they had been deprived of a proper education during the war years. In the camps, they were taught solely in Hebrew and the school promoted Zionist values. Further educational programmes were established for adults in the other camps, and some of them received vocational training (although the primary purpose was simply to keep them occupied). Finally, in this period of escalating violence, mobilisation of the people and the economy for the war effort – and ultimately the transition from Jewish community to statehood – was paramount for the leaders of Jewish Palestine. The detainees on Cyprus played their part in this by donating thousands of valuable items – often of great sentimental value – to the cause.

In his contribution, the historian Jean-Michel Turcotte examines the role of international organisations in South Korean internment camps between 1950 and 1953. During the early Cold War, the efforts of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to provide relief to non-military captives in South Korea were frustrated by deep-rooted hostility towards the detainees’ alleged political ideology as well as the complexity of the internment system. The government and international aid agencies played significant and often overlapping roles. However, throughout the conflict, the ICRC’s attempts to deliver assistance to internees, refugees and political prisoners were hampered by the fiercely anti-communist policies of South Korean and US military and political authorities and the United Nations Command (UNC). Indeed, the UN authorities were unwilling to adhere to the Geneva Convention on the treatment of civilians; instead, the internees were considered as common criminals. As a result, they were held captive in South Korea’s prisons and prisoner-of-war camps, where they remained until the very end of the Korean War and sometimes far beyond.

The sociologist Birgit Behrensen addresses the current accommodation of refugees in so-called “community shelters” – facilities that have become increasingly commonplace in Germany since 2008. These institutions come under the jurisdiction of the country’s federal states, so they are organised and managed in a variety of different ways. Often, however, they impose restrictions such as entry controls, bans on overnight visits and attendance checks that hinder the residents’ ability to lead independent lives. The article presents the results of a qualitative survey of refugees and social workers in the federal state of Brandenburg (eastern Germany) and compares them with the findings of an earlier study conducted in Lower Saxony (western Germany), with a particular focus on the psychosocial conse-

quences of living in shared accommodation. As Behrensen points out, the residents have to cope with the traumatic experience of escape, negotiate a path through the labyrinthine asylum procedure and address the challenges of life in a new society and an uncertain future. At the same time, the centralised accommodation system forces them into increasing dependency on the social (support) services by consolidating and deepening existing power asymmetries. One important consequence of these power asymmetries and related inequalities is that it has become increasingly difficult to establish alliances between social workers and refugees. The results of the survey also suggest that these negative dynamics are more prevalent in the post-socialist context of eastern Germany, where the effects of disempowerment are evident on individual and collective levels. A key aspect of this seems to be the lack of any tradition – or recognition – of migrant organisations, which has significant societal repercussions in terms of refugees' immobilisation, disempowerment and exclusion.

The social psychologist Maximiliane Brandmaier explores the long-term consequences of detention in a refugee camp today, with particular reference to the residents' mental health. Based on the findings of a qualitative social-psychological research project conducted in Austrian communal reception centres, the author discusses refugees' and asylum-seekers' capacity to manage their everyday lives in these institutions. In interviews, the residents were asked about their living conditions, how they were dealing with their uncertain status and the restrictions they faced (e.g. in relation to accessing the labour market and experiences of racism and discrimination). Three coping strategies emerged in their responses: adaptation; "meaningful action" (e.g. establishing a daily routine or defining and accomplishing self-imposed goals, such as language acquisition); and protest and resistance.

Informed by Erving Goffman's concept of "total institution," the author pays special attention to the social workers who operate within the reception centres. What sort of (social and/or professional) support do the refugees receive, and how is it perceived? Brandmaier points out that the social workers have to perform a delicate balancing between help and control in order to fulfil their "double mandate": while many of them seek to empower their clients, they also act on behalf of the state. In turn, this generates a sense of ambivalence among the refugees: their appreciation for the practical support they receive stands in stark contrast to an assumed lack of solidarity and commitment. Therefore, the asylum regime itself hampers the detainees' emancipation and restricts their individual (and collective) agency.

Part III: Strategies of coping and resistance

The historian Pnina Rosenberg explores daily life in Gurs Camp in France, where, among others, former Republican fighters from the Spanish Civil War and members of the International Brigades as well as many Jewish and non-Jewish refugees and

deportees from National Socialism were interned during the Second World War. The history of this camp, including the role played by the many artists who were interned there, has been well researched, but Rosenberg makes a valuable contribution to the literature with her study of the German-born artist Horst Rosenthal's satirical comic books *A Little Guide through Gurs Camp 1942*, *Mickey Mouse in Gurs Camp* and *A Day in the Life of a Resident*. Along with many other inmates of Gurs Camp, including fellow artists, Rosenthal was deported to Auschwitz in 1942 and became a victim of the Shoah. However, his comic books were preserved by the Swiss nurse Elsbeth Kasser, who worked in Gurs and supported the inmates by acquiring their art. These works now form part of the Elsbeth Kasser Collection in Zurich's Archive for Contemporary History.

Rosenberg convincingly argues that comic books can shed new light on camp life under the Vichy regime, with particular reference to Rosenthal's satirical view of the political situation and conditions within Gurs. His works are suffused with critical irony due to his deft use of omnipotent narrators and the tension he creates between text and image, both of which are placed into historical context through Rosenthal's allusions to cultural life in pre-war Berlin and French anti-Semitism.

The ethnomusicologist Ioannis Christidis presents a case study on singing and dancing as a form of resistance in a twenty-first-century camp in Greece. When calls were made to "shut down" the Balkan migration route in the spring of 2016, many of the migrants who were trying to cross the border between Greece and North Macedonia found themselves trapped close to the village of Idomeni. Over the course of the next few weeks, Greek police forcibly transferred some 15,000 people into hastily erected refugee camps. As the author demonstrates, these so-called "hotspot" camps soon became sites of resistance.

EU anti-migration measures and the manifold regulations of migration and asylum regimes explicitly target forced migrants. They are pushed into a limbo state where the absence of basic human, civil and political rights renders them completely subject to state power and leaves them susceptible to unaccountable institutional violence. However, these processes of victimisation and dehumanisation constitute only one aspect of the complex experience of forced confinement. Based on his ethnographic fieldwork and engagement with activists, Christidis highlights the important role played by music and musical practice in challenging the inhuman conditions in the hotspot camps of Thessaloniki. Whereas traditional protest techniques were strictly limited within the camps, a number of migrants – mostly from Syria – started to foster political participation, enthusiasm and empathy through music and dance performances. In this way, they succeeded in shifting the narratives around refugees from vulnerability and victimisation towards individual agency and collective resistance.

Social anthropologist Clara Bombach's article is based on field research she conducted in a "community shelter" that houses families of asylum-seekers in modern-

day Switzerland. In contrast to mainstream research that tends to emphasise the negative aspects of life in this type of accommodation (forced communities in a confined space with restricted privacy), the author highlights the ways in which the centre may enhance social integration and recognition, with particular reference to the roommates' interactions with one another: speaking the same language and coming from the same country of origin constitute basic elements for a supportive environment and the cultivation of friendships.

The article focuses on families who wish to leave the "shelter" as soon as possible and explains that their fates rest entirely on decisions made by the Swiss authorities. How do they cope with their lack of agency in this situation? And how are their children adapting to life in asylum accommodation? Bombach describes them as strong and proactive protagonists. Far from feeling any shame about their lack of resources or attempting to protect their privacy, these families welcomed the researcher into their accommodation, defined the centre as their "house" and talked candidly about their temporary, uncertain circumstances. According to Bombach, their routines enabled them to maintain family practices in a confined space, while the family room became a protected space of retreat for family members and friends alike. Although the children's scope of action and activity increased with age, the author emphasises that they all had at least some capacity to adapt it to their needs. The conclusion is that a camp may become a life world in which children learn to deal with restrictive circumstances without losing the dream of finding a new home that they can call their own.

Part IV: Pathways and transitions

In her article, the historian Roni Mikel-Arieli discusses the British authorities' deportation of around 1,500 Jewish refugees from Mandate Palestine to the island of Mauritius and their subsequent internment in a former prison that was hastily converted into a detention camp. Mikel-Arieli focuses specifically on a group of internees who were released from the National Socialist concentration camps of Dachau and Buchenwald on condition that they would leave the "German Reich" with immediate effect. Since most countries had already closed their gates to Jews who were attempting to flee from Central Europe, the British Mandate territory of Palestine became an increasingly important place of refuge. In response, the British authorities introduced ever-tighter restrictions on Jewish immigration, mainly for geostrategic reasons. The White Paper of May 1939 imposed a rigorously restricted quota on new arrivals prior to the introduction of a complete ban and the categorisation of Jewish refugees from "German Reich" territories as "enemy aliens" following the onset of the Second World War. Nevertheless, Zionist organisations and the Viennese Jewish businessman Berthold Storfer continued to organise illegal ship transports to Palestine on a large scale. The British response was so robust

that it ran the risk of triggering a “war within the war.” The punitive deportation of Jewish refugees to Mauritius – a remote outpost of the British Empire in the Indian Ocean – represented the culmination of that response. Although conditions in the Beau-Bassin detention camp were harsh and a significant number of the detainees died – mostly of tropical diseases – Mikel-Arieli acknowledges that the National Socialist concentration camps were far worse. Nevertheless, she highlights the paradox of hundreds of people from Central Europe being forced to live as internees in a society shaped by colonialism.

In her contribution, the historian Andrea Strutz investigates the life stories of refugees deported from Great Britain to Canada as “enemy aliens” during the Second World War. First, she describes the organisational framework of British and Canadian domestic policies. Then she explains that the internees dealt with the situation in which they found themselves in different ways. About two-thirds of the interned refugees were expellees from Germany, while the remaining third had fled Austria. The majority were Jewish in origin, unmarried and relatively young.

Strutz focuses on three members of this group: Joachim (Jim) Lambek (1922–2014), Fritz (Friedrich) Rothberger (1902–2000) and Gustav Reinhold Jacoby (1875–1965). Although their lives before their expulsion by the National Socialists had been very different, they were united by the challenges that followed: the traumatic experience of forced eviction from their homeland and their efforts to assert themselves both privately and professionally in Canada (or eventually admit defeat and return to Europe).

On the basis of these refugees’ biographies, Strutz demonstrates the important roles played by age, education and individual agency during and especially after their forced internment in Canada. She traces their life stories, explores the problems that arose during the integration process (e.g. encounters with anti-Semitism and a lack of job opportunities, especially for older refugees) and demonstrates the cultural, academic and professional contributions that former interned refugees eventually made to their new home.

In their contribution, the social and political scientists Andreas Kranebitter and Peter Pirker ask how European Displaced Persons adapted to life in the post-slavery society of the American South after 1945 and assess the impact of their resettlement on that society. In addition, they explore how these immigrants’ experiences in National Socialist forced labour and concentration camps, and subsequently in refugee camps, shaped their personal biographies.

Kranebitter and Pirker focus on two academic studies of Displaced Persons in three southern US states: *Displaced Persons in Georgia*, written in 1954 by the émigré Viennese social scientist Gregor Sebba, which supplemented statistical analysis of secondary data with in-depth interviews with selected individuals; and Rudolf Heberle’s *New Americans: A Study of Displaced Persons in Louisiana and Mississippi* (1951). After summarising Sebba’s and Heberle’s biographical experiences

and outlining their contrasting approaches to their work, the authors address the epistemological breaks and blind spots in the social-scientific research into European Displaced Persons after the Second World War. In addition, they highlight the fact that Heberle's upbeat, "positivist" assessment of the resettlement programme was warmly received, while the academic and political establishment ensured that Sebba's far more critical report remained unpublished. Finally, they link the two researchers' contrasting perspectives to their respective immigration experiences: whereas Heberle's story was one of "successful" integration, Sebba never considered himself as a fully acculturated US citizen.

In the collection's second exploration of Gurs Camp in southern France, the historian Christoph Jahr explains that all camps have a "life" and often an "afterlife," that they serve different purposes in different periods and that they are frequently "reused" in different contexts. For him, one of the main features of the "modern camp" is its adaptability, with changes repeatedly made to size and structure to meet the current needs of the camp authorities. The operational history of Gurs illustrates this point perfectly, as Jahr demonstrates before turning his attention to the camp's commemoration since the end of the war. For six and a half years – from early 1939 to late 1945 – Gurs fulfilled a variety of functions under three very different political regimes. It was a "cosmopolitan" place that housed internees from a number of different countries. At first, it was populated by political refugees (mostly members of the International Brigades and anti-fascists) who fled to southern France from February 1939 onwards in the wake of Franco's victory in the Spanish Civil War. The camp's second phase was heralded by the German–Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of August 1939 and the start of the Second World War the following month. By November, France was firmly in the grip of anti-communist hysteria, anti-Semitism and xenophobia, which prompted the mass internment of political opponents (including domestic communists) and especially "enemy aliens," many of whom were German or Austrian Jewish refugees. Following the German invasion in the spring of 1940, the French government interned as many as 15,000 so-called "indésirables" – unwanted foreigners and domestic political opponents – in Gurs. Then, in October 1940, after the collapse of the democratic Third Republic and the installation of the collaborationist Vichy regime in southern France, some 6,540 Jews from Baden and the Palatinate were deported from Germany and partly accommodated in Gurs. Living conditions were extremely harsh from the outset, due to poor sanitation, a constant risk of disease and perpetual food shortages. Nevertheless, the camp became a vibrant centre of intellectual and artistic activity, with classes for the children and lectures for the adults, a theatre group and an orchestra. In its fourth phase, between August 1942 and March 1943, almost 4,000 Jewish internees were handed over to the Germans, with the majority of them subsequently transported to death camps, primarily Auschwitz, via the Drancy transit camp, near Paris.

Gurs closed for the first time in November 1943. However, after the Allies liberated France in August 1944, they arrested and then needed to find accommodation for tens of thousands of actual and alleged collaborators as well as Italian and German civilians. As a result, they reopened the camp on a temporary basis. It ceased operations for the second and final time towards the end of 1945. Decades later, the site was transformed into a place of remembrance, which led to some discussion over whether the final group of internees (prisoners-of-war and collaborators) should be included in the commemoration or whether that would signal a lack of respect for the earlier inmates who had been victims of terror and anti-Semitism.

Marilyn G. Miller's article addresses the internment of non-citizen "enemy aliens" in New Orleans, Louisiana, during the Second World War. As Miller explains, these internees, most of whom were German or Austrian émigrés, were categorised as "Pro-Nazi," "Anti-Nazi," or "Jew" in a November 1944 report. Using this document as her starting point, Miller, an expert in Latin American literature and culture, sheds new light on a little-known and largely unexplored aspect of US internment policy: namely, New Orleans' unique role in the processing of European nationals who were deported from Latin America to the United States as part of a Washington-led hemispheric security initiative following the bombing of Pearl Harbor. In stark contrast to its famed reputation as the fun-loving "Big Easy," Miller demonstrates that the city was not only a "Gateway to the Americas" through which thousands of "enemy aliens" traversed en route to other internment camps throughout the country but also boasted its own "anti-Nazi" facility – Camp Algiers – where Jewish and other "problem" internees were detained for the duration of the war and beyond.

The editors would like to thank various people and institutions whose cooperation and support made the publication of this book possible: the authors of the individual contributions; the academic reviewers for their expertise and time; Kerstin von Lingen and Nora Walch for their invaluable cooperation and support while preparing the conference that preceded this publication; Juma Hauser for her sophisticated cover layout; Lena Coufal for her willingness, and enthusiasm, in carrying out administrative work and coordination; Philip Parr for his attentive, careful and accurate language editing; the transcript Verlag for an excellent support and cooperation; and finally, the institutions whose financial contributions facilitated the printing of this volume and subsequent open access, namely the Österreichische Gesellschaft für Exilforschung (Austrian Society for Exile Research), the Zukunftsfonds der Republik Österreich (Future Fund of the Republic of Austria), the Paul Grüninger Stiftung (St. Gallen, Switzerland), the Österreichische Forschungsgemeinschaft, and the Institut für historische Sozialforschung of the Arbeiterkammer Wien.

