

## Refugees in the Yugoslav Space: An Overview of the Historiography

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### ABSTRACT

The article challenges the common view of the Yugoslav space as an area producing rather than receiving refugees by providing an overview of the main historiographic works dealing with refugees within and into the territories of the former Yugoslavia. It identifies two main conceptual foci that revolve around the understanding of refugees as either “national” or “international.” In the case of “national refugees,” scholars have frequently stressed the existence of supposedly pre-existing ethnic ties between the refugees and the territories where they found refuge, but the scholarship also explores the entanglement of diverse population movements—both compulsory and voluntary—in the multinational areas that experienced a process of unmixing of peoples since the second half of the nineteenth century. On the contrary, historiography on “international refugees” displays a more prominent interest in the management of refugees by both state and non-state actors, including their spatial distribution. Furthermore, these scholars have addressed the relationship between the refugee flows from abroad and the country’s geopolitical constellation, demonstrating how foreign policy shapes the reception of refugees, but also how refugee influx reframes international allegiances. While the so-called “Balkan route” has put the region in the international spotlight as an important avenue of transit, an overview of historical thinking related to refugees into and within the former Yugoslavia provides tools to reflect upon the way people on the move have been and are conceptualized.

**KEYWORDS:** Yugoslavia, refugees, historiography, twentieth century, categorization, national refugees, international refugees

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Given the number of persons displaced in the 1990s by the wars in Yugoslavia, scholars have tended in recent decades to regard its territory as a space that has produced refugees to an extent unseen in Europe since World War II. This perspective is reinforced by the extensive literature on structural patterns of socio-economically and politically motivated out-migration that have occurred throughout the region's modern history.<sup>1</sup> Examining the entirety of the twentieth century, however, reveals that Yugoslavia has been a crossroads of diverse migration trajectories, including internal displacement of peoples as well as influxes of refugees from abroad.

This article analyzes the historiography of refugee flows within and into Yugoslavia and weaves a number of conceptual threads together in the thinking about the Yugoslav space as a refuge. It will systematically analyze the fragmentary and uneven historical research on refugee movements across and into Yugoslavia, drawing on a distinction between national and international refugees. Along the way, it will also suggest directions for further research.

With regard to population displacement within the former Yugoslavia, the region's national historiographies overemphasize the ethnic factor. Historians working in socialist Yugoslavia ascribed wartime displacement to political and ideological conflicts between fascist occupiers and the anti-fascist population, but, since the 1990s, historians in the post-Yugoslav area have increasingly attributed the displacement of national refugees within the former Yugoslavia to structural discrimination and violence based on ethnicity and nationality. The management of national refugees by the supposed homeland is considered self-evidently harmonious. Such interpretation is an important building block in the national identities of many of the ethnic groups within the Yugoslav space. This article critically examines this image of a "national refugee" in the historiography.<sup>2</sup>

Historical research on refugee movements into the Yugoslav space from abroad, on the other hand, defies such a predominantly national perspective, even though from an outside perspective such groups would ostensibly fit into a national framework (e.g., Russian interwar refugees to Yugoslavia in the Russian national narrative). The lack of an overwhelmingly ethnicized perspective in research on international refugees brings social questions to the fore. As the welcoming in the host state is not taken for granted, historical research analyzes the implementation of humanitarian protection, as well as the spatial dimension

<sup>1</sup> VLADIMIR IVANOVIĆ: *Geburtstag pišeš normalno: Jugoslovenski gastarbajteri u SR Nemačkoj i Austriji, 1965–1973* [Geburtstag Is Written Normally: Yugoslav Guest Workers in the Federal Republic of Germany and Austria, 1965–1973], Beograd 2012; ULF BRUNNBAUER: *Globalizing Southeastern Europe: Emigrants, America, and the State since the Late Nineteenth Century*, Lanham 2016; SARA BERNARD: *Deutsch Marks in the Head, Shovel in the Hands and Yugoslavia in the Heart: The Gastarbeiter Return to Yugoslavia (1965–1991)*, Wiesbaden 2019; BRIGITTE LE NORMAND: *Citizens without Borders: Yugoslavia and Its Migrant Workers in Western Europe*, Toronto et al. 2021.

<sup>2</sup> PAMELA BALLINGER: *Entangled or "Extruded" Histories? Displacement, National Refugees, and Repatriation after the Second World War*, in: *Journal of Refugee Studies* 25 (2012), 3, pp. 366–386.

of the refugees' trajectories. Furthermore, although refugees are represented as members of a particular group, some attention is devoted to their personal experiences.

This paper provides an overview of the historiography on refugees in the Yugoslav space during the existence of a united Yugoslavia, as well as during World War II, with brief excursions into the decades preceding 1918 and the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s. The first section reviews the research into the history of national refugees and identifies its central conceptual assumptions. The second section examines the entanglements between the forced displacements that produced national refugees, other means of population management, and factors aside from nationhood that motivated refugees' flight. The third and fourth sections of the paper then examine the scholarship on international refugee movements into the Yugoslav space. Section Three addresses the management of international refugee flows by state and non-state actors. Section Four looks at the influence of geopolitical constellations on international refugee movements. This article will identify and juxtapose the conceptual foci of research into the history of displaced persons within and into the Yugoslav space. In so doing, it will explore the entangled history of refugeedom in the former Yugoslavia, whose social space has not only produced refugees but in many ways has also been produced by their presence.

## 1 Consolidating the Nation Around the History of Co-Ethnic Refugees

National refugees produced by population displacements within the Yugoslav space are prominent in the various national historiographies that have taken form in Yugoslavia since its disintegration. Four periods of political disruption and war feature prominently in the national histories of population displacement: the Eastern Crisis of 1875–1878, the Balkan Wars and World War I (1910s), World War II and its aftermath (1940s), and the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s.<sup>3</sup> The population displacement generated by these events serves as an important “symbolic resource” in various processes of national consolidation in the successor states.<sup>4</sup> The refugee experience binds and consolidates the nation around a shared motif of victimhood, lost territory, and the protective new nation-state. Although different historical experiences and political contingencies mark the various approaches to historical thinking about national refugees, they share important conceptual assumptions.

Let us begin with the example of the Serbian historiography of national refugeedom, which is grounded in two assumptions: continuous Serbian national victimhood resulting in repeated instances of expulsion, and a link be-

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<sup>3</sup> HOLM SUNDHAUSSEN: *Geschichte Südosteuropas als Migrationsgeschichte: Eine Skizze*, in: *Südost-Forschungen* 65/66 (2006/2007), pp. 422–477.

<sup>4</sup> OLIVER ZIMMER: *Boundary Mechanisms and Symbolic Resources: Towards a Process-Oriented Approach to National Identity*, in: *Nations and Nationalism* 9 (2003), 2, pp. 173–193.

tween Serbian national refugees and the nation-state of Serbia. The Serbian refugee experience is generally considered to date back to the structural, ethnically and religiously motivated discrimination and violence that Serbs experienced under the Ottoman Empire. This persecution resulted in the so-called great migrations from the central Balkans to the borderlands of the Habsburg Empire in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>5</sup> In the national historiography, modern Serbian refugee crises are only variations on this theme, with the added element of the existence of a Serbian state that can take care of “its” refugees.

The Serbian refugee crisis of World War I in particular has taken on a mythical status in Serbia’s collective memory. When the Serbian army withdrew from Serbian territory in the winter of 1915, Serbian civilians fled their homes in two large refugee movements: one group moved southward and ended up in refugee camps in northern Greece, while another group withdrew along with the Serbian army through Montenegro and Albania to the Adriatic coast, from where it ultimately made its way to France and North Africa. Because of the difficult terrain in Albania, harsh weather, and the hostility of the local mountain peoples, the Serbs’ flight has become known as the “Albanian Golgotha,” reflecting its biblical proportions in the national narrative. In addition to the flight itself, the historiography of Serbia has described the exiled Serbian government’s management of refugees, basically assuming that the relationship between the Serbian state and its refugees was naturally harmonious.<sup>6</sup> Unlike the Serbian case, the historiography of the movement of national refugees during World War I in the Habsburg parts of what would become Yugoslavia features a slightly different narrative: Since these refugees were managed by the central Austrian (and to a lesser extent Hungarian) authorities, there was no “supposed national homeland” and no nation-building mission to which they might refer. Historians have thus been less inclined to treat them as a homogeneous mass.<sup>7</sup>

The nationalist perspective on refugee movements that clearly features in the Serbian historiography emerges in other national historiographies as well. For the Muslim nations of the former Yugoslavia, primarily Bosniaks and Albanians, the history of the forced displacement of Muslims from the Christian nation-states emerging from the Ottoman Empire is an essential resource for nation-building. Their displacement constitutes a shared experience of vic-

<sup>5</sup> DIMITRIJE BOGDANOVIĆ: *Knjiga o Kosovu* [The Book on Kosovo], Beograd 1986; ATANASIJE UROŠEVIĆ: *Etnički procesi na Kosovu tokom turske vladavine* [Ethnic Processes in Kosovo during the Turkish Rule], Beograd 1987.

<sup>6</sup> DUŠICA BOJIĆ: *Srpske izbeglice u prvom svetskom ratu 1914–1921* [Serbian Refugees in World War I, 1914–1921], Beograd 2007.

<sup>7</sup> PETRA SVOLJŠAK: *Slovenski begunci v Italiji med prvo svetovno vojno* [Slovenian Refugees in Italy during World War I], Ljubljana 1991; MARTA VERGINELLA: *Displacement and Cultural Borders in the Great War: Bitterness of the Refugee Experience in the Native Country or Abroad*, in: *Acta Histriae* 23 (2015), 3, pp. 357–376.

timhood and loss of territory, based on a sense of ethnic and religious togetherness. To them, it also explains the concentration of Bosniaks and Albanians in the rump territories of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Sandžak, Kosovo, and western Macedonia, where they found shelter. Like the Serbian national refugee, the *muhadžir* (Bosnian) or *muhaxhir* (Albanian) epitomizes communal and geographic ties. The experience of victimhood is also a recurring feature of the nation's history. From this perspective, the ethnic cleansing of the 1990s is a continuation of long-standing acts of Muslim displacement in Southeastern Europe.<sup>8</sup>

In many cases, former refugees became involved in irredentist associations and shared knowledge of their areas of origin and flight. This was the case with Lado Čermelj, a former refugee who published extensively in a variety of languages about the experiences of the Croatian and Slovenian minorities in Italy in the early interwar years.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, Slavic-speaking Greek refugees who came to socialist Yugoslavia during the Greek Civil War were actively engaged in consolidating a Macedonian national and cultural identities around the image of the Aegean Macedonian refugees.<sup>10</sup> The *deca begalci* ("child refugees," in Macedonian) were institutionalized as prominent voices among the Aegean refugees and symbols of the Macedonian national struggle. Their case serves as a powerful indictment of Greek terror against Slavic Macedonians.<sup>11</sup> Anthropological studies indicate, however, that the feelings of exclusion and isolation of the refugees in Yugoslav Macedonia, their hesitation to adopt Yugoslav citizenship despite being offered considerable incentives (including land) to do so, and their longing to return to their lost homeland in Greece do not support the ethnopolitical master narrative.<sup>12</sup>

World War II displaced massive numbers of people within the Yugoslav space. The interpretation of this topic has been radically reframed since Yugo-

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<sup>8</sup> SAFET BANDŽOVIĆ: *Iseljavanje Bošnjaka u Tursku* [The Bosniak Emigration to Turkey], Sarajevo 2006; SABIT UKA: *Dëbimi i Shqiptarëve nga Sanxhaku i Nishit dhe vendosja e tyre në Kosovë (1877/1878–1912)* [The Expulsion of Albanians from the Sancak of Niš and Their Settlement in Kosovo (1877/1878–1912)], Prishtinë 1994.

<sup>9</sup> LADO ČERMEJ: *Life-and-Death Struggle of a National Minority (The Yugoslavs in Italy)*, Ljubljana 1936.

<sup>10</sup> KONSTANTINOS KATSANOS: *U novoj domovini: Izbeglice iz Grčke u NR Makedoniji* [In a New Homeland: Refugees from Greece in the People's Republic of Macedonia], in: *Istorija 20. veka* 33 (2015), 2, pp. 105–129; BASIL C. GOUNARIS: *Victims and Avengers of the Nation: The Politics of Refugee Legacy in the Southern Balkans*, in: *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans* 8 (2006), 3, pp. 313–325.

<sup>11</sup> KEITH BROWN: *Macedonia's Child-Grandfathers: The Transnational Politics of Memory, Exile, and Return, 1948–1998*, Seattle 2003; GIORGIOS LIMANTZAKIS: *Refugees of the Greek Civil War in Yugoslav Macedonia and the Contribution of "Aegean Macedonians" in Its Nation Building Project*, in: LAMBROS BALTSIOTIS, IVANKA DODOVSKA et al. (eds.): *Balkan Crossroads: Historical Dialogue between Scholars in Southeast Europe*, New York 2017, pp. 104–115.

<sup>12</sup> MILADINA MONOVA: *De l'historicité à l'ethnicité: Les Egéens ou ces autres Macédo-niens*, in: *Balkanologie* 5 (2001), 1–2, pp. 179–197.

slavia's demise, from an ideological to a "groupist" reading focused on national determinants.<sup>13</sup> The official historiography and memory politics of socialist Yugoslavia emphasized the political and ideological confrontation underlying forced displacements and tried to forge a common Yugoslav identity around the shared experience of suffering and resistance. Hence, it focused its attention exclusively on the displacement of Yugoslavs—regardless of nationality or religion—at the hands of the fascist occupiers and collaborating local regimes. In a classic study published in 1981, the historian Slobodan D. Milošević highlight two interrelated features of the displacements of different populations during World War II.<sup>14</sup> First, the German, Bulgarian, Italian, and Hungarian occupying regimes deported Yugoslav populations, including Jews, and colonized their homes with non-Yugoslavs in order to expand their ethno-racial territory. One prominent example was a Nazi plan to deport Slovenes from German-occupied Lower Styria (a region of Slovenia) to the Serbian rump state in order to create space for German settlers. This plan was ultimately realized in much smaller numbers than planned, and, in the end, most Slovenes were sent to the Independent State of Croatia instead of Serbia. Second, domestic collaborationist regimes deported their local minority populations to achieve ethnic homogeneity in their part of the Yugoslav space. The most notorious example was the deportation, assimilation, and murder of Serbs living in the Independent State of Croatia, which interlocked with the Nazi plan to deport the Slovenes from Lower Styria. The end result was that Catholic Slovenes were expelled from Lower Styria to the Independent State of Croatia, while Orthodox Serbs from Croatia were banished to Serbia.

There are, however, obvious flaws in the socialist Yugoslav historians' approach to this entanglement of various refugee and colonization movements during World War II. Responsibility for displacement was solely ascribed to the occupying regimes and domestic collaborators. Reporting on the suffering of people identified as fascist collaborators was, as a rule, suppressed. Intra-Yugoslav ethnic polarization was downplayed in favor of emphasizing ideological cleavages. Still, the ethnic and racial logic behind population displacements during World War II could not be entirely discounted in the historical analysis. Milošević, for example, structured his book according to zones of occupation, but within that structure broke down his analysis according to the ethnicity of the refugees. These shortcomings are rectified in the more recent national historiography of World War II-era refugee movement, although in many cases the pendulum has swung to the other extreme.

In step with a broader effort at revisionism in the dominant memory framework related to World War II, post-Yugoslav historiography increasingly focuses on the ethnopolitical motives behind intra-Yugoslav population displace-

<sup>13</sup> For a critique of "groupism," see ROGERS BRUBAKER: *Ethnicity Without Groups*, Cambridge, MA 2006.

<sup>14</sup> SLOBODAN D. MILOŠEVIĆ: *Izbeglice i preseljenici na teritoriji okupirane Jugoslavije 1941–1945* [Refugees and Temporary Forced Migrants in the Territory of Occupied Yugoslavia, 1941–1945], Beograd 1981.

ments instead of the ideological cleavages that the socialist Yugoslav historiography had deemed most important. Building on Milošević's book, a 1994 study by Miloš Hamović on refugees in Bosnia-Herzegovina during World War II reflects the turbulent times in which it was written. It sheds light on the experiences of Muslim refugees fleeing from Chetnik violence, who Milošević had overlooked, and it called for revision of the earlier dogmatic interpretations of the events occurring during World War II. In particular, Hamović ascribes major responsibility for the displacement of refugees to local actors rather than to the occupying forces, and reintroduces the topic of displacement caused by the Yugoslav partisans against those they perceived as their opponents.<sup>15</sup> These first attempts at revisionism were, however, not free of nationalistic connotations. In his description of the genocidal policies of the Independent State of Croatia, Hamović ranks the Serbs highest in the hierarchy of suffering and the Jews second, which coincides with Serbian nationalist historical thinking of the period that prioritized Serbian victims.<sup>16</sup>

Marica Karakaš Obradov has also revised the work of Milošević in several ways. Her analysis focuses on "Croatian territory"—i.e., the Independent State of Croatia, which corresponds to present-day Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. She provides a comprehensive overview of wartime and postwar refugee flows and colonization movements, categorizing the different population movements according to the nationality of those who were displaced. She particularly highlights the displacement of ethnic Croatians from areas controlled by partisans and Serbian monarchist forces and thus breaks the silence surrounding those people whom socialist Yugoslavia's historiography treated as "ideological others."<sup>17</sup>

While these two authors challenge the ideological fault lines underlying socialist Yugoslav historiography, other national histories of intra-Yugoslav refugee movements more clearly tend to adhere to a framework of national units when analyzing the tangled trajectories of refugee and migration movements during World War II. These historians emphasize the continuities of their own nation's refugee experiences over place and time, while discounting both the value of comparisons across ethnic boundaries as well as regional differences within the contemporary nation-states. Slovenian historiography, for example, presents the planned deportation of Slovenes from Lower Styria to Croatia and Serbia as evidence of the exceptionally difficult position in which the Slovenian people found themselves during World War II. Slovenian historians see this

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<sup>15</sup> MILOŠ HAMOVIĆ: *Izbjeglištvo u Bosni i Hercegovini: 1941–1945* [Refugees in Bosnia and Herzegovina: 1941–1945], Beograd 1994.

<sup>16</sup> JOVAN BYFORD: When I Say "the Holocaust," I Mean "Jasenovac," in: *East European Jewish Affairs* 37 (2007), 1, pp. 51–74.

<sup>17</sup> MARICA KARAKAŠ OBRADOV: *Novi mozaici nacija u "novim poredcima": Migracije stanovništva na hrvatskom području tijekom drugoga svjetskog rata i poraća* [New Mosaics of Nations in the "New Orders": Population Movements within the Croatian Territory during World War II], Zagreb 2014.

as the culmination of a long history of Slovenian victimhood, and pay little attention to the interconnected nature of displacements in the Yugoslav area during World War II. The prominent Slovene historian Božo Repe speaks of ethnocide as a unifying experience and an important building block of Slovenia's national identity.<sup>18</sup>

The national historiographies of the successor states are far from homogeneous in their “groupist” approach, however, especially as regards sensitive topics. For example, Filip Šiljan in his study of the deportation of Serbs from the Independent State of Croatia goes beyond the ethnic master narrative and brings the ideological framework back into the picture. He stresses the demonization of “internal enemies” as a precursor to their annihilation, which was a tactic of both the Nazi and Ustaša regimes. He devotes an entire chapter to appeals to the Ustaša authorities submitted by members of communities threatened with deportation. Their poignant voices provide a qualitatively different understanding of the experience of refugeedom. They testify to the deportees' persisting attachment to their local communities and their tenacious attempts to resist deportation even when faced with increasingly ominous threats.<sup>19</sup> Recent research also demonstrates the stratification of consecutive displacements in the same territory. Slovenes evicted from Styria and resettled in the Independent State of Croatia, for example, often found accommodation in the houses of deported Serbs and Jews and took over their economic activities.<sup>20</sup>

## 2 Entangled Population Movements and the Making of Borderlands

The whole of Southeastern Europe, especially its borderlands, has been subject to a complex process of unmixing mixed populations ever since the decline of the multinational empires. These processes have taken the forms of coerced displacement, colonization, and economic migration, sometimes all at once. National historiographies have focused on the particular qualities of their own national refugees, and have often had difficulties in coming to terms with the tangled nature of these population movements. Comparative studies that unveil

<sup>18</sup> BOŽO REPE: *Izgon (usoda slovenskih izgnancev med leti 1941–1945)* [Exile (the Fate of the Slovenian Exiles in the Years 1941–1945)], in: PETER ŠTIH, BOJAN BALKOVEC et al. (eds.): *Migracije in slovenski prostor od antike do danes*, Ljubljana 2010, pp. 245–255. The first historical study of Slovenian refugees during the war was written by Fran Roš, himself a refugee in Serbia: FRAN ROŠ: *Slovenski izgnanci v Srbiji 1941–1945* [Slovenian Exiles in Serbia 1941–1945], Maribor 1967.

<sup>19</sup> FILIP ŠKILJAN: *Organizirana prisilna iseljavanja Srba iz NDH* [Organized Forced Migration of Serbs from the Independent State of Croatia], Zagreb 2014.

<sup>20</sup> BARBARA RIMAN, FILIP ŠKILJAN: *Slovenski prognanici u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj* [Slovene Displaced Persons in the Independent State of Croatia], in: *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* (2020), 3, pp. 869–898.



the political motivations behind migration policy in the borderlands have proved more capable of grasping their complexity than strictly national ones.

The disintegration of the Ottoman Empire in the wake of the Oriental Crisis of 1875–1878 generated the first modern refugee crisis in Southeastern Europe. For the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian imperial governments, management of the mass flight of Christians to the Habsburg Empire and of Muslims to the remnants of the Ottoman Empire resulted in the redefinition of the “refugee,” the introduction of new ways to provide aid to them, and new claims of political loyalty.<sup>21</sup> For the newly established or expanded nation-states of Southeastern Europe, the displacement of Muslims from their territories was central to their sovereignty claims and the process of creating a national community they initiated. The displacement of Muslims continued, although in fewer numbers, throughout the first half of the twentieth century. The new nation-states in the former Ottoman space accommodated Slavic Muslims as ambiguous nationals, but they marginalized non-Slavic Muslims and singled them out for emigration.<sup>22</sup> What emerges from this is the nationalizing function and social impact of the way the new states managed migration. In the case of Yugoslavia, there were also significant impacts on the new country’s bilateral relations with the countries to which minorities were supposedly ethnically related.

The redrawing of the borders in Southeastern Europe after 1918 was another watershed in the history of unmixing the populations of Central and Eastern Europe. After the Kingdom of Italy took control of the Upper Adriatic, Slovenes and Croats migrated from Venezia Giulia to the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes in several waves. They left Italy for a combination of economic and political reasons.<sup>23</sup> A similar but smaller movement of people took place among Carinthian Slovenes after their home area was annexed to

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<sup>21</sup> JARED MANASEK: Protection, Repatriation and Categorization: Refugees and Empire at the End of the Nineteenth Century, in: *Journal of Refugee Studies* 30 (2017), 2, pp. 301–317.

<sup>22</sup> JUSTIN MCCARTHY: *Death and Exile: The Ethnic Cleansing of Ottoman Muslims 1821–1922*, Princeton 2014; WOLFGANG HÖPKEN: *Flucht vor dem Kreuz? Muslimische Emigration aus Südosteuropa nach dem Ende der osmanischen Herrschaft (19./20. Jahrhundert)*, in: *Comparativ* 6 (1996), 1, pp. 1–24; ISA BLUMI: *Ottoman Refugees, 1878–1939: Migration in a Post-Imperial World*, London 2013; VLADAN Z. JOVANOVIĆ: *In Search of Homeland? Muslim Migration from Yugoslavia to Turkey 1918–1941*, in: *Tokovi istorije* (2008), 1–2, pp. 56–67; EDVIN PEZO: *Zwangsmigration in Friedenszeiten? Jugoslawische Migrationspolitik und die Auswanderung von Muslimen in die Türkei (1918 bis 1966)*, München 2013. See also the special issue of *Journal of Genocide Research* (2016), 4: *Ethnic Homogenizing in Southeastern Europe*.

<sup>23</sup> ALEKSEJ KALC: *L’emigrazione slovena e croata dalla Venezia Giulia tra le due guerre ed il suo ruolo politico*, in: *Annales: Histoire Sciences Sociales* (1996), pp. 23–60; MIHA ZOBEC: *Salvaging the “Unredeemed” in Italy: The Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the Julian March Émigrés*, in: MICHAL PALACZ, BASTIAAN WILLEMS (eds.): *A Transnational History of Forced Migrants in Europe: Unwilling Nomads in the Age of the Two World Wars*, London 2022, pp. 59–74.

Austria following a plebiscite in 1920.<sup>24</sup> Slovenian and Croatian historiography tends to focus on the poor living conditions that forced the South Slavs to leave Istria and Carinthia as well as nationalistic persecution by the Italian fascist regime. It also emphasizes, however, the destitution in which the refugees lived after their arrival in Yugoslavia, which it deems a “betrayal” by the central government in Belgrade.<sup>25</sup> Although there is no academic agreement on the extent to which these movements were compulsory, the literature shows that both Italy and Yugoslavia attempted to benefit from the migration of Slovenes and Croats. The Italian authorities modified the ethnic balance of their border areas by resettling Italians in Venezia Giulia, while the Yugoslavs encouraged the Istrian refugees to colonize ethnically mixed areas of Vojvodina and “Southern Serbia” (today’s North Macedonia and Kosovo).<sup>26</sup>

Since the 1990s, the migration of Slovenes and Croats from areas occupied by Italy after World War I has frequently been compared to the migration of Italians from Yugoslav-occupied areas after World War II. Some scholars have applied the word “exodus,” originally used by Italian sources, to both phenomena.<sup>27</sup> As in the case of the Serbs passing through Albania in the Serbian historiography of World War I, the use of words with a biblical connotation strengthens feelings of victimization and disconnects the phenomenon from the

<sup>24</sup> DANIJEL GRAFENAUER: Koroški Slovenci—begunci in njihova družbena integracija v osrednji Sloveniji [Carinthian Slovenes—Refugees and Their Social Integration in Central Slovenia], in: ŠTIH/BALKOVEC, pp. 474–487.

<sup>25</sup> MARINO MANIN: Talijanska uprava na hrvatskom prostoru i egzodus Hrvata (1918.–1943.) [The Italian Administration in the Croatian Territory and the Exodus of Croats (1918–1943)], Zagreb 2001; NEVIO ŠETIĆ: Istra za talijanske uprave: O istarskoj emigraciji i njenom tisku u Zagrebu 1918.–1941. [Istria during the Italian Administration: Istrian Emigration and its Press in Zagreb 1918–1941], Zagreb 2008; MIRKO JURKIĆ: Borba Istrana u Zagrebu za očuvanje hrvatskoga identiteta u Istri 20-ih i 30-ih godina 20. stoljeća [The Struggle of the Istrians in Zagreb to Preserve Croatian Identity in Istria in the 1920s and 1930s], in: Kroatologija: Časopis za hrvatsku kulturu 2 (2011), 1, pp. 59–77.

<sup>26</sup> ZDENKA ŠIMONČIĆ-BOBETKO: Kolonizacija u Hrvatskoj 1919–1941. godine [Colonization in Croatia, 1919–1941], in: Povijesni prilozi 9 (1990), pp. 85–164, here p. 102; JERNEJ MLEKUŽ: “Ne Srbi ne Slovenci, ne katoličani in ne pravoslavci, pa tudi ne italijanski in naši državljani”: Slovensko časopisje o slovenski koloniji v Bistrenici v letih 1930–1940 [“Neither Serbs nor Slovenes, neither Catholics nor Orthodox, not even Italians nor our Citizens”: The Slovenian Newspapers on the Slovenian Colony in Bistrenica in the Years 1930–1940], in: Dve domovini 52 (2020), pp. 131–146.

<sup>27</sup> VLADIMIR ŽERJAVIĆ: Doseljavanja i iseljavanja s područja Istre, Rijeke i Zadra u razdoblju 1910.–1971. [Immigration and Emigration from the Territories of Istria, Rijeka and Zadar in the Period 1910–1971], in: Društvena istraživanja 2 (1993), pp. 631–656; DARKO DUKOVSKI: Egzodus talijanskog stanovništva iz Istre 1945.–1956. [The Exodus of the Italian Population from Istria, 1945–1956], in: Časopis za suvremenu povijest 33 (2001), 3, pp. 633–667; DARKO DUKOVSKI: Dva egzodusa: hrvatski (1919.–1941.) i talijanski (1943.–1955.) [Two Exoduses: The Croatian (1919–1941) and the Italian One (1943–1955)], in: Adrias: Zbornik radova Zavoda za znanstveni i umjetnički rad Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti u Splitu 15 (2008), pp. 129–165.

wider context. The comparability of these exoduses is a bone of contention in the public discourse of Italy and Slovenia.<sup>28</sup> In the conciliatory climate that has followed Slovenia's accession to the EU, bilateral projects with Italian and Slovenian institutions have looked into the history of those times.<sup>29</sup> Such efforts have identified a combination of factors behind the "exodus" of Italians from Yugoslavia. The Italian population was often associated with the fascist regime. Furthermore, stigmatization also targeted particular social strata, such as the urban middle class, which had been strongly Italianized in the previous decades. This resulted in an oppressive atmosphere of daily discrimination that thwarted the Yugoslav government's attempts to integrate "loyal" segments of the Italian community into its postwar ideological framework.

Historians' preoccupation with their own national refugees, however, continues to hinder research into the tangle of population movements in the Upper Adriatic. One of the main controversies among historians is whether the mass departure of Italians from Yugoslavia was voluntary or involuntary. The differences are illustrated by the use of the term *esuli* (exiles) by Italian historians and *optanti* (optants) by Croatian and Slovenian historians. While the former emphasizes the forced nature of the out-migration, the latter stresses the individual choice in opting for either Italian or Yugoslav citizenship.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, Slovenian historians have investigated a plan for "ethnic reclamation" on the part of the Italian government, effectuated by the resettlement of Italian refugees in the border areas of Italy populated by the Slovenian minority.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, in the multilingual areas, national boundaries continued to be blurred after World War II. This had to be acknowledged even by relief agen-

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<sup>28</sup> PAMELA BALLINGER: *History in Exile: Memory and Identity at the Borders of the Balkans*, Princeton 2018; KATJA HROBAT VIRLOGET, CATHERINE GOUSSEFF et al. (eds.): *At Home but Foreigners: Population Transfers in 20th Century Istria*, Ljubljana 2016; FRANKO DOTA: *Zaračeno poračće: Konfliktni i konkurentski narativi o stradanju i iseljavanju Talijana Istre [Conflicting Postwar Period: Conflicts and Competing Narratives on the Suffering and Emigration of the Italians from Istria]*, Zagreb 2010; MILA ORLIĆ: *Javni diskursi, nacionalne memorije i historiografija na sjevernojadranskom prostoru [Public Discourses, National Memories and Historiography in the Upper Adriatic Space]*, in: *Časopis za povijest Zapadne Hrvatske* (2012), 6–7, pp. 13–22; VANNI D'ALESSIO: *Ponad egzodusa i fojbi: Nova talijanska literatura o "Istočnoj granici"* [Beyond the Exodus and Foibe: New Italian Literature on the "Eastern Border"], in: *Časopis za povijest Zapadne Hrvatske* (2012), 6–7, pp. 55–75.

<sup>29</sup> TULLIA CATALAN et al. (eds.): *Dopoguerra di confine: Progetto Interreg IIIA/Phare CBC Italia-Slovenia / Povojni čas ob meji: Projekt Interreg IIIA/Phare CBC Italia-Slovenija*, Trieste 2007.

<sup>30</sup> JURE GOMBAČ: *Esuli ali optanti? Zgodovinski primer v luči sodobne teorije [Exiles or Optants? A Historical Case Study through Contemporary Theory]*, Ljubljana 2005.

<sup>31</sup> SANDI VOLK, DUŠAN NEČAK: *Ezulski skrbniki: Vloga in pomen begunskih organizacij ter urejanje vprašanja istrskih beguncev v Italiji v luči begunskega časopisja 1945–1963 [Protectors of Exiles: The Role and Importance of the Refugees' Organizations and the Management of the Question of the Istrian Refugees in Italy Through the Refugees' Press, 1945–1963]*, Koper 1999.

cies in charge of refugees, which felt compelled to establish the category of Venezia Giulians based on their regional provenance rather than on ethnicity.<sup>32</sup> As in the case of other nationally sensitive topics, social scientists have tended to be more eager than historians to engage with the deconstruction of national discourses. Drawing on first-hand testimonies, a cutting-edge study by the Slovenian anthropologist Katja Hrobat Virloget problematizes the coexistence of different, often conflicting, memories related to the departure of Italians from Istria. In particular, Hrobat Virloget notes that local informants often felt uncomfortable with the official nation-centered discourse in both Slovenia and Italy.<sup>33</sup>

Historical research that looks at national refugee movements in the borderlands of Southeastern Europe from a more long-term perspective, and prioritizes localities over the nation-state, reveals the dynamic entanglements of various practices of population management, including forced displacement, resettlement of refugees, and colonization. The Vojvodina region is a telling example. After World War II, the *volksdeutsche* population living in the northern border regions of Yugoslavia was charged with collective guilt for wartime misdeeds and was subjected to repressive measures, ranging from the prevention of return of displaced persons to internment and expulsion. Under socialism, the historiography focused exclusively on the Germans' resettlement by the German authorities in the Third Reich and regarded their movement as "emigration." However, after the demise of Yugoslavia, scholars in both Serbia and Croatia have stressed the compulsory and violent nature of the process on the part of the Yugoslav authorities.<sup>34</sup> A fate similar but not identical to that of the Germans befell Yugoslavia's Hungarian minority, which was partly evacuated during the war. When they returned to Yugoslavia, they encountered repression by the Yugoslav authorities, albeit not as harsh as that meted out against the Germans.<sup>35</sup> Since the 1990s, the literature has addressed the retaliations and discriminatory measures taken by the new communist authorities against minorities and consequent displacements with new élan, a development that is hardly detached from contemporary political trends. Historical revisionism has gained momentum. The extensive use of the concept of "totalitarian-

<sup>32</sup> ALEKSANDER PANJEK: Ricostruire Trieste: Politiche e pratiche migratorie nel secondo dopoguerra, Trieste 2006; PAMELA BALLINGER: The World Refugees Made: Decolonization and the Foundations of Postwar Italy, Ithaca—London 2020.

<sup>33</sup> KATJA HROBAT VIRLOGET: V tišini spomena: "Eksodus" in "Istra" [In the Silence of Memory: "Exodus" and Istria], Koper—Trst 2021.

<sup>34</sup> VLADIMIR GEIGER: Folksdojčeri: Pod teretom kolektivne krivnje [Volksdeutsche: Under the Burden of Collective Guilt], Osijek 2002; ZORAN JANJETOVIĆ: Between Hitler and Tito: The Disappearance of the Vojvodina Germans, Beograd 2005.

<sup>35</sup> ENIKO SAJTI: Hungarians in the Voivodina, 1918–1947, Boulder, Colo. 2003.

ism” is opening the door for the equation of communism with Nazism and fascism.<sup>36</sup>

The retaliatory forced migrations of the postwar period should not be studied in each territory in isolation because they are an inherent part of long-term, shifting efforts to unmix and adjust the ethnic structure of particular regions for the benefit of the constitutive peoples of Yugoslavia. In Vojvodina and Slavonia, the postwar repression of Germans and, to a lesser extent, Hungarians cannot be disconnected from South Slav colonization in the interwar and socialist periods. It is also related to the fact that members of minority groups opted to move to their “national homelands” in the aftermath of both World Wars.<sup>37</sup> Localized entanglements of colonization and forced migration also exist in the history of the southern regions of Yugoslavia during the interwar period, in which the non-Slavic Muslim population was forced into emigration.<sup>38</sup> Kosovo Albanian mainstream national historiography is in fact very explicit about the parallel nature of Serbia’s and Yugoslavia’s wartime and interwar colonization policies and the expulsion of (Albanian) Muslims, which they see as two sides of an overarching policy intended to ethnically cleanse the region of Albanians.<sup>39</sup> In both the northern and the southern regions, interwar colonists were the prime targets of displacement during World War II that aimed to reverse the population policies of the interwar period.

The case of Kosovo brings us to another problematic type of migratory entanglement, which is only indirectly referred to in historical accounts of intra-Yugoslav population movements, namely the correlation of ethnopolitical and socioeconomic migration. The emigration of Serbs from Kosovo has been a matter of scholarly and public debate since the 1980s. The party line of the Yugoslav and Kosovo communist leadership up to the early 1980s was that Serb emigration from Kosovo was simply an aspect of a broader phenomenon of economic migration out of less-developed regions of Yugoslavia, in which

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<sup>36</sup> VLADIMIR GEIGER: Josip Broz Tito i sudbina jugoslavenskih Nijemaca [Josip Broz Tito and the Fate of Yugoslav Germans], in: *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* 40 (2008), 3, pp. 789–818; CARL BETHKE: Ponovno otkriće povijesti Nijemaca u zemljama bivše Jugoslavije—prva bilanca poslije 15 godina [The Rediscovery of the History of Germans in the Territories of the Former Yugoslavia—Taking Stock after 15 Years], in: VERA KATZ (ed.): *Revizija prošlosti na prostorima bivše Jugoslavije: Zbornik radova*, Sarajevo 2007.

<sup>37</sup> MICHAEL PORTMANN: “Ethnic Cleansing” in Peacetime? Yugoslav/Serb Colonization Projects in Vojvodina in the Twentieth Century, in: *Journal of Genocide Research* 18 (2016), 4, pp. 447–462; MARIO BARA, IVAN LAJIĆ: Prisilne, iznuđene i organizirane migracije u etnodemografskom oblikovanju Hrvatske: Primjer Slavonije [Forced, Impelled and Organized Migration in the Ethno-Demographic Shaping of Croatia: The Example of Slavonia], in: *Migracijske i etničke teme* (2009), pp. 337–363.

<sup>38</sup> VLADAN JOVANOVIĆ: Land Reform and Serbian Colonization, in: *East Central Europe* 42 (2015), 1, pp. 87–103.

<sup>39</sup> JUSUF OSMANI: *Kolonizimi serb i Kosovës* [The Serbian Colonization of Kosovo], Prishtinë 2000.

not only Serbs participated. In general, ethnic strife as a reason for emigration was believed to be isolated and non-structural. Intra-Yugoslav migration from less-developed to more-developed areas, as well as the effectiveness of regional development programs, was a major research topic in sociology and ethnography as long as socialist Yugoslavia existed.<sup>40</sup> Ethnic divisions, although not completely ignored by this research, were of marginal interest compared to divisions along urban–rural and regional lines. To be sure, it was difficult to downplay ethnopolitical tensions. By the 1980s, sociologists were increasingly pointing out that intra-Yugoslav migration had led to the concentration of national minorities in their “mother” republics.<sup>41</sup> Although no explicit ethnopolitical reasons were given, the scholars’ approach and their findings pointed the finger at ethnonationalism. The shift from socioeconomic to “groupist” readings of intra-Yugoslav migration is particularly evident in the political debate and in the academic research on Serbian emigration from Kosovo. Both increasingly made use of particular labels for emigration, *iseljavanje* (emigration) or *seoba* (migration), terms that directly alluded to the great premodern migrations of Serbs from Ottoman rule in the central Balkans.<sup>42</sup> An important sociological study commissioned by the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the mid-1980s found that the emigration of Serbs from Kosovo was unlike modern migration processes, which were defined by social and economic factors typical of developed societies. Instead, it was the result of “the residues of the dark past and a society which, unable to solve the demographic and economic problems it faces, resorts to pressure and violence.”<sup>43</sup> This ethnocentric view of the motives for migration has been consolidated in contemporary Serbian nationalist historiography, and in public memory as well. Any motivation beyond ethnic discrimination is denied.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> ANDREI SIMIĆ: *The Peasant Urbanites: A Study of Rural-Urban Mobility in Serbia*, New York 1973; RADOSLAV STEVANOVIĆ, DUŠAN BREZNIK: *Unutrašnje Migracije* [Domestic Migration], in: *Jugoslovenski Pregled* (1986), 12, pp. 557–586.

<sup>41</sup> RUŽA PETROVIĆ: *Migracije u Jugoslaviji i etnički aspekt* [Migration in Yugoslavia and the Ethnic Aspect], Beograd 1987.

<sup>42</sup> For one explicit example of such a direct connection between pre-modern and modern emigration from Kosovo, see BOGDANOVIĆ. For an analysis, see PETAR RISTANOVIĆ: *Kosovsko pitanje, 1974–1989* [The Kosovo Question, 1974–1989], Novi Sad—Beograd 2019, pp. 328–379.

<sup>43</sup> RUŽA PETROVIĆ, MARINA BLAGOJEVIĆ: *Seobe Srba i Crnogoraca sa Kosova i iz Metohije: Rezultati ankete sprovedene 1985–1986. godine* [The Migration of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo and Metohija: The Results of a Survey Conducted in the Years 1985–1986], Beograd 1989, p. 7.

<sup>44</sup> DUŠAN BATAKOVIĆ: *Kosovo and Metohija: Serbia’s Troublesome Province*, in: *Balkanica* (2008), 39, pp. 243–276.

### 3 The Institutional Matrix: State Management of Migration and Humanitarianism

The historiography of the Yugoslav successor states takes the link between national refugee communities and their national state for granted. Research on refugees who came to Yugoslavia from abroad pays more attention to the way the Yugoslav state managed refugee flows. In the “first incarnation” of an international refugee regime within the framework of the League of Nations,<sup>45</sup> Yugoslavia played an important role as a refuge for Russians who had sided with the White Armies during and after the Russian Civil War. The scope of the Russian migration and its overwhelmingly positive portrayal in Yugoslav historiography and the mainstream public narrative must be contextualized with the long-standing bonds between the Serbian and Russian royal dynasties, the alliance between Serbia and Czarist Russia, notions of brotherhood between Orthodox co-religionists, and Pan-Slavism. Russian emigration became increasingly interesting to Yugoslav historians in the 1990s, as happened in regard to other topics previously ostracized in socialist Yugoslavia. The extensive historiography on Russian refugees in Yugoslavia builds upon the rich publishing activities of Russian refugees in Yugoslavia themselves.<sup>46</sup> The positive contribution of educated and affluent Russian émigrés to the culture, arts, and economy of Yugoslavia is an important strand in the historiography.<sup>47</sup>

The complicated relationship between inter-governmental, national, and non-state actors in managing refugees figures prominently in the research. During the first waves of Russian emigration to Yugoslavia after the Bolsheviks seized power, a Yugoslav-Russian committee was established to provide urgent humanitarian aid and organize the reception of refugees. The committee not only provided aid but also managed the distribution of Russian refugees

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<sup>45</sup> PETER GATRELL: *The Making of the Modern Refugee*, Oxford 2013, p. 5.

<sup>46</sup> VLADISLAV A. MAEVSKIĬ: *Russkie v Jugoslavii: Vzaimootnosheniya Rossii i Serbii* [Russians in Yugoslavia: Relations between Russia and Serbia], New York 1966.

<sup>47</sup> LJUBODRAG D. DIMIĆ: *Ruska emigracija u kulturnom životu građanske Jugoslavije* [The Russian Emigration in the Cultural Life of Bourgeois Yugoslavia], in: *Istorija 20. veka* 8 (1990), 1–2, pp. 7–38; JOVAN KAČAKI: *Ruske izbeglice u Kraljevini SHS/Jugoslaviji: Bibliografija radova 1920–1944: Pokušaj rekonstrukcije* [Russian Refugees in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes/Yugoslavia: A Bibliography 1920–1944: An Attempt at Reconstruction], Beograd 2003; VESNA MATOVIĆ, STANISLAVA BARAĆ (eds.): *Časopis Ruski arhiv (1928–1937) i kultura ruske emigracije u Kraljevini SHS/Jugoslaviji: Zbornik radova* [The Journal Ruski arhiv (1928–1937) and the Culture of the Russian Emigration in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes/Yugoslavia: Proceedings], Beograd 2015; IRENA LUKŠIĆ: *Ruski emigranti u Hrvatskoj između dva rata* [The Russian Emigrants in Croatia Between the Two World Wars], Zagreb 2006; FILIP ŠKILJAN, MIRJANA ILIĆ, NADEŽDA BARANOVSKI: *Tragovima ruskih emigranata: Povijesni vodič po mjestima i gradovima Hrvatske* [On the Trail of the Russian Emigrants: A Historical Guide in Croatian Towns and Cities], Zagreb 2019; RADOVAN PULKO, JANEZ J. ŠVAJNCER: *Ruski emigranti na Slovenskem: 1921–1941* [The Russian Emigrants in Slovenia: 1921–1941], Logatec 2004.

across Yugoslavia. It was made up of prominent and influential civilian actors, but worked independently from the state. As the number of Russian refugees increased, however, the Yugoslav state established an official council consisting of Yugoslav and Russian representatives to channel the arrival of refugees to Yugoslavia, including their spatial distribution.<sup>48</sup> The relationships between the state's efforts and non-state and inter-governmental humanitarianism influenced the institutionalization of refugee management in Yugoslavia. As the state's role became more and more important, the ambiguous relationship between protection and control of the refugees became apparent.

The dynamics of local and international non-governmental humanitarianism is evident in the historiography of Jewish refugees from Central Europe who used Yugoslavia both as a transit country and a refuge during the 1930s.<sup>49</sup> The Yugoslav state left responsibility for the care of the refugees and the organization of their transit to the Jewish confessional communities in Yugoslavia and local and international Zionist aid societies. In the course of 1938, as the number of Jewish refugees was strongly increasing, liberal immigration policies gave way to restrictive visa requirements, considerably limiting those organizations' room for maneuvering. Still, local Jewish aid committees managed to negotiate the admission of Jewish refugees stranded in no man's land on the Austrian-Yugoslav border through bribery, smuggling, and personal contacts with government officials. Those contacts included local officials, high government functionaries, and even the royal family. The fact that the Yugoslav state in this case transferred responsibility for the refugees' care almost completely to non-state actors indicates the agency of the latter, but also the anti-Jewish atmosphere in the country.<sup>50</sup> The historiography on Yugoslavia as a transit country for Jewish refugees from Central Europe during the 1930s also

<sup>48</sup> MIROSLAV JOVANOVIĆ: *Doseljavanje Ruskih izbeglica u Kraljevinu SHS, 1919–1924* [The Immigration of the Russian Refugees in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, 1919–1924], Beograd 1996; MIROSLAV JOVANOVIĆ: *Ruska emigracija na Balkanu (1920–1940)* [The Russian Emigration in the Balkans (1920–1940)], Beograd 2006.

<sup>49</sup> GABRIELE ANDERL, WALTER MANOSCHEK: *Gescheiterte Flucht: Der “Kladovo-Transport” auf dem Weg nach Palästina 1939–1942*, Wien 2001; ŽELJKO DRAGIĆ: *Die Reise in die Ewigkeit: 70 Jahre Kladovo-Transport / Putovanje u večnost: 70 godina Kladovskog transporta*, Wien 2013; MILAN KOLJANIN: *Poslednje putovanje Kladovskog transporta* [The Last Trip of the Kladovo Transport], in MILICA MIHAILOVIĆ, ANDREJ MITROVIĆ (eds.): *Kladovo Transport: Zbornik radova sa okruglog stola*, Beograd 2006, pp. 65–101; ŽENI LEBL: *Tragedija transporta Kladovo—Šabac Odbor za pomoć emigrantima* [The Tragedy of the Kladovo Transport—Šabac Committee for the Aid of Emigrants], in MIHAILOVIĆ/MITROVIĆ, pp. 102–163.

<sup>50</sup> ANNA MARIA GRÜNFELDER: *Medimurje u izbjegličkoj krizi u osvitlu Drugoga svjetskog rata* [Medimurje and the “Refugee Crisis” on the Eve of World War II], in: *Podravina: Časopis za multidisciplinarna istraživanja* 8 (2009), 16, pp. 115–140; MILAN RISTOVIĆ: *Jugoslavija i jevrejske izbeglice 1938–1941*. [Yugoslavia and Jewish Refugees, 1938–1941], in: *Istorija 20. veka* 14 (1996), 1, pp. 21–43; MARIJA VULEŠICA: *Yugoslavia as a Hub for Migration in the 1930s: Local Zionist Networks and Aid Efforts for Jewish Refugees*, in: *Dubnow Institute Yearbook* 16 (2017), pp. 199–220.



addresses the transnational regime of treaties and doctrines that shaped the refugee as a person and as a category. Increasingly restrictive laws on granting residence and citizenship to Jews in the surrounding countries and the pressure of population displacement led to racially-based restrictions on the admission of Jews to Yugoslavia. The historiography captures the institutional dynamics between various ministries, different levels of decision-making, and non-state actors such as the tourism sector,<sup>51</sup> each with different interests in the movement of Jewish refugees.<sup>52</sup> During World War II, Yugoslav Jews fled the German-occupied areas of the country to less dangerous areas under Italian and Bulgarian control. Most Jewish survivors of the Holocaust in Yugoslavia were interned in camps in Italian-occupied territories and were liberated after the Italian capitulation in 1943.<sup>53</sup>

The role of international humanitarianism was particularly prominent on the occasion of the Hungarian Revolt of 1956. Initially, the Yugoslav authorities pushed would-be refugees back into Hungary, except for deposed officials of the communist regime. Only after Hungary reestablished control over its border with Austria did the number of refugees at the Yugoslav border increase dramatically. In December 1956 and especially in January 1957, the Yugoslav authorities were forced to organize the reception of Hungarian refugees and accept assistance from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Because the UNHCR did not have its own operational arm, it called on international non-governmental organizations such as the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration, the Red Cross, and CARE to provide aid for the Hungarian refugees. The Yugoslav Commissariat for Refugees, a joint body of federal ministries of internal and external affairs, was established as Yugoslavia's liaison office with the UNHCR and other international aid organizations.<sup>54</sup> Again, the institutionalization of refugee management in Yugo-

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<sup>51</sup> Jews constituted a large number of the Central European and Palestinian tourists on the Adriatic Coast.

<sup>52</sup> GRÜNFELDER, Medimurje; ANNA MARIA GRÜNFELDER: *Von der Shoa eingeholt: Ausländische jüdische Flüchtlinge im ehemaligen Jugoslawien 1933–1945*, Wien 2013; RISTOVIĆ, Jugoslavija; MILAN RISTOVIĆ: *Turisti pod sumnjom (O jednom vidu politike Kraljevine Jugoslavije prema jevrejskim izbeglicama 1938–1941. godine)* [Tourists under Suspicion (On One Aspect of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia's Policy toward Jewish Refugees 1938–1941)], in: MIHAILOVIĆ/MITROVIĆ, pp. 170–189.

<sup>53</sup> MILAN RISTOVIĆ: *U potrazi za utočištem: Jugoslovenski Jevreji u bekstvu od holokausta 1941–1945* [In Search of a Refuge: Yugoslav Jews Fleeing the Holocaust, 1941–1945], Beograd 1998; DAVIDE RODOGNO: *Fascism's European Empire: Italian Occupation during the Second World War*, Cambridge 2006.

<sup>54</sup> KORNELIJA AJLEC: *Vloga ZDA pri oskrbi mađarskih beguncev v Jugoslaviji v letih 1956 in 1957* [The Role of the US in Aid to Hungarian Refugees in Yugoslavia during 1956 and 1957], in: KORNELIJA AJLEC, BOJAN BALKOVEC et al. (eds.): *Nečakov zbornik: Procesi, teme in dogodki iz 19. in 20. stoletja*, Ljubljana 2018, pp. 755–776; KATARINA KOVAČEVIĆ: *Mađarske izbeglice u Jugoslaviji, 1956–1957. godine* [The Hungarian Refugees in Yugoslavia, 1956–1957], in: *Tokovi istorije* (2003), 1–2, pp. 91–124; ATTILA KOVÁCS, DUŠAN NEČAK, MATEJA REŽEK, SARA BREZIGAR: *Mađarska begunska proble-*

slavia took place in response to international and non-governmental humanitarian initiatives.

The distribution of refugees across the space of Yugoslavia was an important part of the state's scheme for management of the refugee crisis. It was a particularly sensitive issue in light of the Yugoslav state's composite character. The historiography pays notable attention to the spatial management of Russian refugees, focusing on the various trajectories by which they were evacuated to interwar Yugoslavia and their distribution and legacies across the country.<sup>55</sup> The connection between the spatial distribution of Russian emigrants, who are generally considered cultural and political allies of the Serbs, and questions of state-building and national identification among the South Slavs in interwar Yugoslavia, remains a research desideratum.

The spatial distribution of the refugees from Greece who fled to Yugoslavia during and after World War II and the subsequent Greek Civil War respected the ideological and ethnonational differences within the refugee collective, and sharpened them as well. Gradually, the Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia became the primary settlement area for Slavic Aegean Macedonian refugees, where they were firmly integrated as national refugees in accord with conceptions of Macedonian nationhood. This process was strengthened after Slavic-speaking Greek refugees who had been sent to the Soviet Bloc countries were relocated to Yugoslav Macedonia in the wake of de-Stalinization in the second half of the 1950s.<sup>56</sup> The Greek refugee communities that settled in former German villages in Vojvodina primarily consisted of ethnic Greeks. The village of Buljkes was particularly notorious as a hardline Greek communist refugee settlement that enjoyed considerable autonomy and exerted great influence within the Greek communist movement. Social relations in the settlement were, however, also characterized by ideological and ethnopolitical tensions. After the Stalin-Tito split of 1948, the community migrated to Stalinist Czechoslovakia.<sup>57</sup> The refugee community from Greece also included people who had collaborated with the Bulgarian wartime government in Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, then fled to Bulgaria after World War II and subsequently moved to Yugoslav Macedonia after the communists took power in Bulgaria. These individuals were viewed with suspicion after 1948 due to their pro-Bulgarian orientation. They were settled in the formerly German villages of Gakovo and Kru-

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matika leta 1956—primer Jugoslavije in Slovenije [Hungarian Refugee Issues in 1956—The Case of Yugoslavia and Slovenia], in: *Razprave in gradivo* 58 (2009), pp. 196–247.

<sup>55</sup> JOVANOVIĆ, Doseljavanje; ŠKILJAN/ILIĆ/BARANOVSKI; PULKO/ŠVAJNCER.

<sup>56</sup> KATSANOS; MOMČILO MITROVIĆ: Izbeglice iz Grčke u Jugoslaviji 1945–1960. god. [Refugees from Greece in Yugoslavia, 1945–1960], in: *Tokovi istorije* (1997), 3–4, pp. 185–199.

<sup>57</sup> MILAN RISTOVIĆ: Eksperiment Buljkes: Grčka utopija u Jugoslaviji, 1945–1949 [The Experiment Bulkes: A Greek Utopia in Yugoslavia, 1945–1949], Novi Sad 2007; MILAN RISTOVIĆ: The Bulkes Experiment: A “Greek Republic” in Yugoslavia 1945–1949, in: *Balkan Studies* 46 (2012), pp. 125–143.

ševlje near the Hungarian border, which had served as internment camps for ethnic Germans until 1948.<sup>58</sup> The Yugoslav Red Cross, finally, also organized homes for the reception of child refugees from the Greek Civil War in Vojvodina, Croatia, and Slovenia.<sup>59</sup>

#### 4 Refugees, Yugoslavia, and Geopolitical Constellations

A final element that stands out in the historical writing on international refugee flows into Yugoslavia is that the modern refugee is shaped by, and at the same time shapes, international political constellations. The first point is relatively straightforward, in that international refugee movements into Yugoslavia were the product of international power relations. Political emigration to interwar Yugoslavia, for example, took place in the context of the post–World War I geopolitical constellation in Southeastern Europe. The example of Bulgarian political emigrants who arrived in Yugoslavia after the ousting of the Agricultural Union of Aleksandăr Stambolijski is illustrative. In a way, they were a countermovement to the much more numerous Macedonian emigrants who settled in Bulgaria and had an enormous impact on political and social developments there in the interwar period. The historiography of Yugoslavia focuses on the political, ideological, and military organization of Bulgarian political refugees and the support they received from the Yugoslav government. The research also shows that emigrants tended to be deemed “political” when their cause overlapped with the national interests of the host country. When geopolitical relations change, their status as political refugees is often revoked, as happened to the Bulgarian emigrants when they lost the political support of the Yugoslav government in 1925.<sup>60</sup> In the context of tensions between the communist leaderships of Yugoslavia and Albania following the Tito-Stalin split of 1948, emigrants from Albania were actively supported and organized by Tito’s regime in the areas bordering Albania. When diplomatic relations between both countries were normalized in 1953, the Albanian emigrants lost their value to Tito and were disbanded as a political force.<sup>61</sup> The strategy of supporting highly politicized groups of emigrants as a tool to put pressure on their country of origin was not unique to Yugoslavia. Anti-Tito Yugoslav emi-

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<sup>58</sup> KATSANOS, pp. 113–114; RISTOVIĆ, *The Bulkes Experiment*, p. 134.

<sup>59</sup> MILAN RISTOVIĆ: *A Long Journey Home: Greek Refugee Children in Yugoslavia, 1948–1960*, Thessaloniki 2000.

<sup>60</sup> IVAN RISTIĆ: *Bugarska politička emigracija u Kraljevini SHS [The Bulgarian Political Emigration in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes]*, in: *Istorija 20. veka 30* (2012), 2, pp. 41–62; TOMA MILENKOVIĆ: *Politička emigracija iz Bugarske u Jugoslaviji 1923–1944 [Political Emigration from Bulgaria to Yugoslavia, 1923–1944]*, Beograd 2018.

<sup>61</sup> BOGUMIL HRABAK: *Albanski emigranti u Jugoslaviji 1948–1954 [Albanian Emigrants in Yugoslavia, 1948–1954]*, in: *Tokovi istorije* (1994) 1–2, pp. 77–104.

grants in Czechoslovakia after the 1948 rift within the communist movement were politicized in the same way.<sup>62</sup>

The relationship between refugee movements and international political constellations goes in both directions, however. Not only do international political constellations produce refugee movements, but refugees shape international political constellations. The so-called *Controesodo* (counterexodus) of 1947, in which around 5,000 Italian communists living in the Upper Adriatic region briefly fled to Yugoslavia, is a prominent example. Although it paralleled the exodus of Italians from Yugoslavia, this population displacement was triggered by the internationalist creed of the migrants, which prevailed over their national loyalties. The label “counterexodus” is therefore somewhat confusing, as it implies a reaction against the exodus of Italians from new Yugoslav territories. Pro-Yugoslav Italian communists left postwar Italy for a variety of political and socioeconomic reasons, ranging from disagreement with political developments back home to widespread discrimination against people who had fought as partisans in the war. Although political loyalty to the receiving state was required, the boundaries between political and economic triggers of emigration were not always clear. For example, Yugoslavia actively recruited specialized labor abroad.<sup>63</sup> In some cases, a hybrid ethnicity made the move to Yugoslavia easier, but the decision to take flight was often individual and spontaneous. Migrants made good use of the porous border that was in place before the Monfalcone area was handed over to Italy in September 1947. These movements were heavily politicized in the context of the emerging Cold War and thus contributed to the polarization and territorialization of the conflict.<sup>64</sup>

The management of international refugees in socialist Yugoslavia played an important role in the relations between the Yugoslav communists and the West. Yugoslavia’s neutral position between the two political blocs did not determine its position in the international regime for dealing with refugees in Europe, but its attitude towards refugees did contribute to reframing its foreign policy. Recent historiography pays attention to the joint management of refugee camps set up to accommodate Yugoslav Dalmatians in British-administered Egypt after the capitulation of fascist Italy. The refugees’ treatment impacted the shape

<sup>62</sup> ONDŘEJ VOJTEČHOVSKÝ: *Iz Praga protiv Tita! Jugoslavenska informbiroovska emigracija u Čehoslovačkoj* [From Prague against Tito! Yugoslav Cominform Emigration in Czechoslovakia], Zagreb 2016.

<sup>63</sup> SAŠA ILIĆ: *Stranci “gastarbajteri”: Strana stručna radna snaga u privredi Jugoslavije 1945–1950. godine* [Foreign “Guest-Workers”: Foreign Labor in the Yugoslav Economy, 1945–1950], Beograd 2020.

<sup>64</sup> LUKE GRAMITH: *Liberation by Emigration: Italian Communists, the Cold War, and West–East Migration from Venezia Giulia, 1945–1949*, PhD dissertation, Eberly College of Arts and Sciences at West Virginia University, 2019; MARCO ABRAM: *Internationalism and Cominformist Dissidence in Socialist Yugoslavia: The Case of the Italian Immigrant Workers in Rijeka*, in: *Journal of Cold War Studies*, forthcoming.

of relations between the Yugoslav partisans and the Allies.<sup>65</sup> Similarly, historical scholarship has contextualized the vicissitudes of the child refugees of the Greek Civil War, pointing to the impact of instable geopolitical constellations. When the question of the repatriation of these children came before the United Nations, the debate served to catalyze the crystallization of Cold War polarization. The child refugees were also caught in the middle of the 1948 split between Yugoslavia and the Soviet bloc. The split complicated the children refugees' trajectories but was ultimately instrumental in socialist Yugoslavia's positioning as a non-aligned state and its adopting of a constructive position in repatriation and reunification cases working with those on both sides of the Iron Curtain.<sup>66</sup>

Yugoslavia's reluctant participation in the post-World War II international refugee regime is illustrated by its attitude toward refugees from the Hungarian revolt of 1956. As mentioned above, the arrival of Hungarian refugees at the end of 1956 forced the Yugoslav authorities to accept the assistance of the UNHCR.<sup>67</sup> In March 1957, the UN established a temporary secretariat of the High Commissioner in Belgrade after Yugoslavia made clear that it did not have the means to deal with the large number of refugees crossing its border with Hungary. The secretariat was charged with facilitating a solution to the Hungarian refugee crisis by transferring most of the refugees to Western countries. Although the secretariat was closed down in early 1958, this episode ultimately led to the opening of an office of the UNHCR in Belgrade, which helped to integrate socialist Yugoslavia into the international refugee regime.<sup>68</sup>

Yugoslavia continued to serve as a transit country for East European refugees not only during the refugee crises of 1956 and 1968, but throughout the Cold War period. The ambivalent attitude of the Yugoslav Federation, which had signed the 1951 Refugee Convention but only selectively applied it, is illustrated by the treatment of Czechoslovak citizens who escaped through Yu-

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<sup>65</sup> KORNELIJA AJLEC: Jugoslovanski begunci v Egiptu in njihova politična opredeljenost 1943–1946 [Yugoslav Refugees in Egypt and Their Political Affiliation, 1943–1946], in: *Zgodovinski časopis* (2013), 3–4, pp. 428–448; FLORIAN BIEBER: Building Yugoslavia in the Sand? Dalmatian Refugees in Egypt, 1944–1946, in: *Slavic Review* 79 (2020), 2, pp. 298–322; MATEO BRATANIĆ: Hrvatski zbjegovi u Egiptat 1943.–1946. [Croatian Refugee Camps in Egypt, 1943–1946], PhD dissertation, University of Zadar, 2009; MATEO BRATANIĆ: Hrvatski zbjegovi u Italiji od 1943. do 1945. godine [Croatian Refugee Camps in Italy from 1943 to 1945], in: *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* 48 (2016), 1, pp. 161–196.

<sup>66</sup> RISTOVIĆ, A Long Journey; KATERINA MIRČEVSKA: The Children Evacuated from Greece in 1948: To the Eastern-European Countries and Yugoslavia, in: *Politeja* (2014), 30, pp. 79–88.

<sup>67</sup> AJLEC, *Vloga*; KOVAČEVIĆ; KOVÁCS/NEĆAK/REŽEK/BREZIGAR.

<sup>68</sup> On the concept of “humanist architecture,” drawing on the case study of a Yugoslav refugee shelter, see: ALEKSANDAR STANIČIĆ: Refugee Shelters Done Differently: Humanist Architecture of Socialist Yugoslavia, in: LUCE BEECKMANS, ALESSANDRA GOLA et al. (eds.): *Making Home(s) in Displacement*, Leuven 2021, pp. 173–196.

goslavia to the West during the Cold War. While increasing pressure from the Czechoslovak side convinced Yugoslavia to take a more restrictive approach in the early 1980s, Yugoslav authorities tended to turn a blind eye to individuals crossing the country to reach the West. Among other things, Yugoslav authorities were preoccupied with the negative publicity a tougher policy would generate. They wanted to avoid harming the country's reputation for "exceptionality," which was the source of its "soft power" in world affairs.<sup>69</sup>

Yugoslavia's position, as a neutral alternative to both blocs, was reflected in its unique role as both a country of first asylum and a producer of refugees. Refugee movements into and out of Yugoslavia were conditioned by Cold War politics, which affected Yugoslavia's implementation of the 1951 Refugee Convention. In the two decades before the borders were opened for prospective labor migrants to Western Europe in the mid-1960s,<sup>70</sup> thousands of Yugoslav citizens defected and sought asylum in the countries of the West.<sup>71</sup> While their political motivations for leaving gradually faded, they were still granted asylum, although in smaller numbers. Even so, they could be repatriated at will by both Italy and Austria, unlike refugees from other socialist countries.<sup>72</sup> When Yugoslavia made it legal for its citizens to look for work in the West, the status of Yugoslavs shifted from political refugees to economic migrants. This was especially true in West Germany, the country which hosted the majority of Yugoslav guest-workers.<sup>73</sup> The attitude of the Western countries toward escapees from socialist countries reveals the importance of Cold War allegiances. Especially after 1947, international humanitarian organizations temporarily overlooked the proliferation of émigré organizations claiming continuity with wartime collaborators in an attempt to strengthen the common front against communism. Radical right-wing political views were strong in the community of the Yugoslav diaspora. They peaked in the 1960s, which witnessed political

<sup>69</sup> JAN PELIKÁN, ONDŘEJ VOJTĚCHOVSKÝ: A Bridge to the West: Yugoslavia as a Transit Country for Czechoslovak Emigrants from the 1960s to 1980s, in: *Střed: Časopis pro mezioborová studia Střední Evropy 19. a 20. století* 12 (2019), 2, pp. 61–86.

<sup>70</sup> WILLIAM ZIMMERMAN: *Open Borders, Nonalignment, and the Political Evolution of Yugoslavia*, Princeton 1987.

<sup>71</sup> ROZINA ŠVENT: *Slovenski begunci v Avstriji: 1945–1950* [Slovenian Refugees in Austria: 1945–1950], Ljubljana 2007; TATJANA ŠARIĆ: *Bijeg iz socijalističke Jugoslavije—ilegalna emigracija iz Hrvatske od 1945. do početka šezdesetih godina 20. stoljeća* [Flight from Socialist Yugoslavia—Illegal Emigration from Croatia from 1945 to the Beginning of the 1960s], in: *Migracijske i etničke teme* 31 (2015), 2, pp. 195–220.

<sup>72</sup> FRANCESCA ROLANDI: *Escaping Yugoslavia: Italian and Austrian Refugee Policy toward Yugoslav Asylum Seekers after World War II*, in: WOLFGANG MUELLER, KARLO RUZICIC-KESSLER et al. (eds.): *The Alps-Adriatic Region 1945–1955: International and Transnational Perspectives on a Conflicted European Region*, Wien 2018, pp. 85–109.

<sup>73</sup> CHRISTOPHER A MOLNAR: *Memory, Politics, and Yugoslav Migrations to Postwar Germany*, Bloomington 2018.

violence by Croatian extremist émigré groups, as well as the brutal reaction of agents of the Yugoslav state security abroad.<sup>74</sup>

## Conclusion

The population displacements provoked by the violent disintegration of Yugoslavia in the 1990s have dramatically reshaped the demographic composition of the successor states. They have brought the figure of the national refugee to the center of public debate and scholarly research. The welcoming of co-ethnic refugees in their putative homelands during the wars of the 1990s was framed in a nation-centered narrative that confirmed and fostered ethnic identities across time. Public opinion and official accounts of the refugee crisis produced by the wars of the 1990s took for granted a natural link between national refugees and their national territories and communities. One recent work on the reception of Serb refugees in Serbia in the 1990s defined Serbia as a “country of refugees.”<sup>75</sup> In this interpretation, the national refugee epitomizes the communal, geographic, and temporal ties that shape the nation. Research on the discrimination against refugees and the complexity of integrating national refugees into their “national homelands,” however, problematizes such ethnocentric narratives.<sup>76</sup> The refugees’ access to citizenship is connected with the desire to consolidate the state and define its national boundaries. Extrajudicial practices and lived experience also contribute, however, to their inclusion in or exclusion from the nation.<sup>77</sup>

The refugee crisis of 2015 and the European Union’s policy of externalizing migration management turned the countries of Southeastern Europe into a bulwark of the European Union. They are nevertheless also a cul-de-sac where refugees are stranded, which complicates the thinking about the region as a

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<sup>74</sup> NIKOLINA ŽIDEK: A Day of Unfinished Mourning: Historicizing Commemorative Practices of Bleiburg among the Croatian Diaspora in Argentina, in: *Memory Studies* 13 (2020), 6, pp. 1081–1096; PINO ADRIANO, GIORGIO CINGOLANI: *Nationalism and Terror: Ante Pavelić and Ustasha Terrorism from Fascism to the Cold War*, Budapest—New York 2019; MATE NIKOLA TOKIĆ: *Croatian Radical Separatism and Diaspora Terrorism during the Cold War*, West Lafayette 2020; CHRISTIAN AXBOE NIELSEN: *Yugoslavia and Political Assassinations: The History and Legacy of Tito’s Campaign Against the Emigrants*, London 2020.

<sup>75</sup> DOBRICA VULOVIĆ: *Srbija, zemlja izbeglica* [Serbia, a Country of Refugees], Beograd 2018.

<sup>76</sup> JASNA ČAPO: *Strangers Either Way: The Lives of Croatian Refugees in Their New Home*, New York 2007; MILA DRAGOJEVIĆ: *The Politics of Social Ties: Immigrants in an Ethnic Homeland*, Farnham 2014.

<sup>77</sup> JELENA VASILJEVIĆ: Citizenship as Social Object in the Aftermath of the Yugoslav Break-up, in: *Nations and Nationalism* 24 (2018), 4, pp. 1142–1161.

refugee.<sup>78</sup> Anthropologists have pointed out that greater knowledge about the history of refugee management in the Balkans is key to debunking those strands of discourse that emphasize the unprecedented and exceptional nature of the refugee movements in the 2015 “summer of migration.”<sup>79</sup> Although scholarship has predominantly built on ruptures that were regarded as sparking the refugees’ movements, a joint look at different refugee groups would shed light on continuities in refugeedom in the two Yugoslavias and the post-Yugoslav states.

As is evident in the state of the historiography on refugee movements within and into Yugoslavia suggests, the various ways of thinking about refugees in contemporary historical debate reflect deeper complexities in conceiving of Yugoslavia as a site of refuge. The overview of the highly diverse body of scholarly work presented in this article shows the different angles from which scholars have approached national and international refugees within and into Yugoslavia. Differing approaches to national and international refugees are characteristic of national historiographies beyond those of the former Yugoslavia. However, in the historiographies of the post-Yugoslav states, the distinction between ethnic national and international refugees is particularly sharp. This reflects the fragmentation of historical thinking and the increased centrality of ethnonational lines of reasoning that has accompanied the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia. Scholarship in the different successor states has often taken advantage of their co-ethnic refugees to foster a national narrative that assumes a bond between the refugees and their putative homeland. They view the experiences of national refugees through a lens of national victimhood. The notion of “exceptionality” they attach to their own nation’s refugee experience has been challenged only partly by historical analysis of the entanglement of different triggers and events in population movements across ethnic lines in Yugoslavia.

The scholarship on international refugees to Yugoslavia has been less confined by these same ethnonational frameworks, although it remains fragmented and generally analyzes specific refugee groups separately. It has addressed the dynamics of refugee management by state and non-state actors as well as the role of the refugees’ spatial trajectories and distribution in their destinations. The ideological framework underpinning refugee management reveals the importance of geopolitical constellations, but also networks of international solidarity that determine which refugees are regarded as “deserving” a warm wel-

<sup>78</sup> EMINA BUŽINKIĆ, MARIJANA HAMERŠAK (eds.): *Formation and Disintegration of the Balkan Refugee Corridor: Camps, Routes, and Borders in the Croatian Context*, Zagreb—München 2018.

<sup>79</sup> DUŠKO PETROVIĆ: *Izbjeglištvo u suvremenom svijetu: Od političkoteorijskih utemeljenja do biopolitičkih ishoda* [Refugees in the Contemporary World: From the Political-Theoretical Foundations to the Biopolitical Outcome], Zagreb 2016; MARIJANA HAMERŠAK, SABINE HESS, MARK SPEER, MARTA STOJIC MITROVIĆ: *The Forging of the Balkan Route: Contextualizing the Border Regime in the EU Periphery*, in: *Movements: Journal for Critical Migration and Border Regime Studies* 5 (2020), 1, pp. 9–29.



come. The way such norms are applied contributes to the position of the state in the international community.

Some important questions about refugees in the Yugoslav space remain only partially addressed in the fragmented landscape of Yugoslav refugee and migration studies. These include the role of their displacement in state- and nation-building, the institutionalization of refugee management, the role of non-state actors, the entangled nature of modern population management, the spatial aspects of refugee management, social differentiation within refugee communities, and the shaping of international constellations. Such questions require an approach to refugeedom that cuts across ethnic, political, and conceptual categories. Attention to continuity, as well as to individual refugees' trajectories in the past will be key to understanding and deconstructing the complexity of the refugee experience. Research of this kind could potentially be complemented by the use of new sources, such as ego-documents produced by refugees themselves, and intensified interdisciplinary cooperation (from literature to anthropology). A critical approach to refugeedom from, in, and into Yugoslavia will contribute not only to a better understanding of the social history of the region, but also to an analysis of refugee management that goes beyond rigid categorizations of refugees. Such an approach would analyze emigration and immigration, political and economic migration, international and internal displacement, and both forced and voluntary movements of people as entangled sociopolitical phenomena.

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