

Bastiaan Willems and Michał Adam Palacz (eds), *A Transnational History of Forced Migrants in Europe. Unwilling Nomads in the Age of Two World Wars* (London [etc.]: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022). xiv, 279 pp. ISBN 9781350281073.

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Despite a growing body of comparative scholarship, forced migrations have largely been researched within the confines of a methodological nationalism, leading to limited narratives of insularly conceived victimhood of migrant groups and – from the perspective of the host societies – to either whitewashed success stories of integration or negatively biased misrepresentations.<sup>5</sup> This diagnosis is what Bastiaan Willems and Michał Adam Palacz build upon (pp. 2–3, 245) and strive to counter with their explicitly *transnationally* designed volume on forced migrants in Europe in the first half of the twentieth century. Aiming at enhanced contextualization, they propose a four-dimensional model that adds to the established vectors of migrants, host societies, and homelands as another dimension to the interactions and interconnections with other diasporas. Wisely, the editors recognize that this model is “meant to guide – not to govern” (p. 5), as the various contributions display a wide range of adopting it, from thorough consideration to only partially, implicitly, or hardly engaging with the proposed framework. This flexibility, on the other hand, provides the freedom and space for individual chapters to foreground specific insights from their case studies, enabling the volume in its entirety to bring forth interesting perspectives and thought-provoking results.

The conventional chapter arrangement in four chronological sections plausibly structures the compilation, which covers a wide geographical and thematic range, even though some major cases of forced migrations lack representation (such as the population exchange between Greece and Turkey after the Lausanne Treaty of 1923, or mostly communist refugees from the Greek Civil War (1946–1949) taking refuge all across East Central Europe). Andreas Kossert opens the volume with a foreword that sets the scene and illustrates the “transitional nature of being a refugee” (p. xiii), while building a bridge from Europe’s predominantly

5 See also Michał Frankl, ‘East Central Europe as a place of refuge in the twentieth century. Introduction to the state and patterns of historical research’, *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropaforschung/ Journal of East Central European Studies* 71:4 (2022) 473–489, <https://doi.org/10.25627/202271411251>, as well as further articles of this special issue.

internal refugee history of the twentieth century to the extra-European refugee influx of a more recent past and present. Doing so, he suggests a possible expansion of the model to contemporary and future historical studies, even on a global scale as well.

As detailed by the editors in the introduction, the four-dimensional model primarily appears as an instrument to overcome traditional national or group narratives and to increase contextualization. However, the volume also offers approaches to more complexity, particularly in the de-construction of rigid categories and typologies. Accordingly, it opens up the terminology to relate to a heterogeneous group of people and explicitly calls for considering individual refugee experiences against intersectional factors (p. 5). Rather than assuming monolithic diasporic identities, this perspective is indeed indispensable for doing justice to the plurality of refugee experiences and voices.<sup>6</sup> The editors rightly acknowledge the boundary between “forced” and “voluntary” migration to be blurry and the de facto experiences as “a spectrum rather than as a dichotomy”. They therefore only uphold the traditional distinction to primarily “economic(ally) and environmental(ly)” induced displacement (p. 2), while still recognizing interconnections with labor migration. The key term “unwilling nomads” functions omit not so much as a specific concept, but rather as a variable that enables the volume to include case studies on “internees, evacuees, refugees, exiles, émigrés, displaced persons, expellees” (p. 3) and more. By bringing together various (self-) ascriptions of forced migrants, this broad design transcends narrow narratives and puts the cases it presents up for comparison and transnational analysis.

One noteworthy example is provided by Egor Lykov’s examination of Austro-Hungarian internment practices. Graphically reconstructing the realities of camp life while remaining mindful of intersectional factors, his “cross-national and intra-imperial” (p. 30) analysis shows the relevance of class/profession as paramount to ethnicity. In a similar vein, Diego Han’s vivid accounts from ego-documents of Istrian evacuees point to different intersectional aspects (youth viewing the evacuation as an opportunity; regular camp life versus privileged treatment, etc.). An interesting take-away from a gender perspective is offered by Katrin Sippel with her study on refugee women in Salazar’s Portugal after 1933. Even transcending the statement made in the

6 See also Peter Gatrell, Anindita Ghoshal, Katarzyna Nowak, and Alex Dowdall, ‘Reckoning with refugeedom. Refugee voices in modern history’, *Social History* 46:1 (2021) 70–95. doi:10.1080/03071022.2021.1850061.

introduction not to expect too much reflection in refugee accounts regarding their impact on the host society, her sources indicate refugees' awareness of the cultural disparities and their changing influences on Portuguese gender roles.

An important contribution is Jill Meißner-Wolfbeisser's research on an exiled librarian in New York, Stefi Kiesler. Beyond the merits regarding the analysis of the library as a space of cultural intermediation – or even as a “multicultural microcosm” (p. 114) – this study also exemplifies the connection of an originally career-related migration to a new refugee diaspora and thus bridges those seemingly separate forms of migration. New insights in the relation between ‘old’ and ‘new’ diasporas are offered also by the studies from Samantha K. Knapton, who researches Polish DPs in postwar Germany against the previously immigrated *Ruhrpolen*, and by the chapters on Spanish republicans in France from David A. Messenger and Aaron Clift, respectively.

Moreover, the notion of “homeland” is scrutinized in thought-provoking ways as “fluid, contextual and plural” (p. 215). Especially informative are the case studies by Cristian Cercel and Bradley J. Nichols, who challenge the traditional understanding of “home” in regards to two different diasporas: while both Danube Swabians as well as participants of the “Re-Germanization Procedure” (p. 165) were deemed part of the titular nations, their experiences and self-perceptions proved much more diverse and critical, thus raising questions of (negotiating) belonging.

Lastly, the role of ideology in a broad sense is pointed out by Messenger, who identifies Communism as a vehicle forming the “fourth dimension”, facilitating contacts among various diasporas across national lines. We find this dimension as well as in Lennart Onken's contribution on Jewish self-organization in the British Zone of Occupation following World War II.

He shows not only how the Jewish DPs created their “own ‘host society’” (p. 185), but – similar to Knapton's chapter – also how international actors such as the British occupation forces or international organizations shaped the “host society” for the DPs in the defeated *Reich*.

While the “Conclusion” written by the editors remains a bit schematic in its necessarily short form, the “Concluding Remarks” by Pertti Ahonen offer a profound overview that reiterates the main take-aways and questions raised by the volume. Encouraging further research along those lines or within an even more integrative migratory

framework, considering (international) humanitarian organizations as a potential “fifth dimension” (p. 264) or factoring in economic reasons to the “voluntary–forced” spectrum are promising avenues to be explored.

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Rory Naismith, *Making Money in the Early Middle Ages* (Princeton [etc.]: Princeton University Press, 2023). 544 pp. ISBN 9780691177403.

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Behind this gently alliterating title lurks an important study with implications that go far beyond monetary history. Over the last fifteen years, Naismith, Professor of Early Medieval English History at the University of Cambridge in the Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic Studies, has published extensively on early medieval British numismatics, broadening into its monetary and economic history, and to that of Western and Northwestern Europe. His studies are much inspired by the work of the Cambridge numismatists, including Philip Grierson (1910–2006), Mark Blackburn (1953–2011), and Martin Allen, and by that of the Cambridge monetary historian Peter Spufford (1934–2017). Naismith is also well-acquainted with the extensive coin collection of Cambridge’s Fitzwilliam Museum, for which he catalogued its British and Irish coins from c.400 to 1066. In this fruitful environment, he has become an important expert in his field.

Apart from mapping eloquently and extensively the monetary history of Western and Northwestern Europe between c.400 and 1200, Naismith also has a mission, which becomes clear by quoting at some length from his well-formulated conclusion (pp. 398–399):

Early medieval money has long been the victim of an inferiority complex. Because it was meagre in quantity and is hence not amenable to most quantitative methodologies, it often fades into insignificance, both in studies of the early medieval economy and in those of the long-term development of monetary history. [...] Even periods and areas of relative monetary plenty [...] were still very much in the foothills of peaks that had been reached in the Roman period and that would be scaled again in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. But