

Searching for a “Clean Population”: A Study of Canada’s Group Processing Program

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**A Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.**

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York University, Toronto, Ontario**

January 20th, 2017

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the historical development, from the interwar years to 2015, of large-scale refugee resettlement to Canada -- or what in recent years has come to be known as the “Group Processing Program”. Beyond various discussions of the humanitarian and foreign policy dynamics of such programs, there has been little scholarly attention to the ways in which large-scale resettlement of refugee groupings operate. The dissertation aims to fill this scholarly gap by asking: how are such resettlement decisions made? What criteria are used in deciding which groupings of refugees are selected for resettlement in Canada? To answer these questions, the dissertation relies on a mixture of archival research, document analysis, and interviews with key UNHCR and Canadian government officials. In addition, it examines Canadian practices in a comparative context, with particular attention to the equivalent program in the United States, the Priority-2 Group Referral, as well as the UNHCR’s group methodology approach.

Group resettlement decisions are typically framed in humanitarian language and Canadian officials have long been uneasy with discussing the exclusion, or even the assessment, of refugee groupings. Secrecy is thus integral to the decision-making process. The dissertation examines this secrecy as well as unease in relation to biopolitical practices whereby officials sort what they view as homogeneous and vulnerable grouping of refugees with clear boundaries from heterogeneous, messy, porous, and risky ones. At work in group resettlement programs are risk management techniques that examine the risk, health, settlement potential, and admissibility of groupings of refugees. Group processing decisions rely on the biopolitical management of refugees, whether in camps or elsewhere, making them visible, ordering refugees, and permitting the carving out of groups of refugees.

The dissertation begins to address the absence of discussion in the literature over how resettlement decisions are made. In doing so, it provides an opportunity to critically reflect on how biopolitics, risk management techniques, and border practices are employed in the crafting and sorting of groupings of refugees for resettlement.

Dedication

In memory of my late father, Sam John Batarese, whose wisdom, guidance, patience, and fundamental belief in social justice have shaped me as an individual.

Acknowledgements

Writing a dissertation is a long and challenging process. Without the tremendous support of my family, colleagues, friends, and supervisory committee I could not have gotten through it.

My interest in group resettlement and more generally Refugee Studies can be traced back to 2008 when I took a course with Gerald Kernerman entitled 'Theorizing Refugees: Nation-State Exceptions.' Gerald became my supervisor and has played an invaluable role in guiding me through the process of researching, writing, and fine-tuning this dissertation. I want to thank him for his incredible insight, commitment, and patience as a mentor. I would also like to thank my committee members Anna Pratt and Robert Latham for their excellent feedback and suggestions on the various drafts of the dissertation. Both Anna and Robert pushed me to develop my arguments and introduced me to a literature that I was unfamiliar with. In these ways, they have played a critical role in strengthening the dissertation.

Throughout the process of researching the dissertation I had the opportunity to meet many wonderful people involved with the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR). I want to thank them for providing insight into group processing and other aspects of Canada's resettlement program. I have learned a great deal from attending various CCR meetings and consultations. I would also like to thank Michael J. Molloy, James C. Simeon, and the staff at the journal *Refuge, Canada's Journal on Refugees* for their feedback on my article for the special issue entitled 'The Indochinese Refugee Movement and the Launch of Canada's Private Sponsorship Program.' This feedback, along with my attendance at the conference on the Indochinese refugee movement, helped me further develop the first part of the dissertation. I could not have completed this dissertation without the willingness of a number of Canadian government and UNHCR officials to discuss group resettlement with me. I want to thank these individuals for taking the time from their busy schedules. I would also like to thank the staff at Library and Archives Canada for their assistance.

While researching and writing the dissertation I had many informal conversations with family, friends, and colleagues on various aspects of it. I would like to thank everyone for their advice and suggestions. A special thanks to Donna Schatz, John Carlaw, Baris Karaagac, Trevor Rous, and Amin Asadollahi in this regard. I am forever grateful to my mother Beatrice, late father Sam, and brother Chris for their tremendous support, words of encouragement, and advice. I would also like to thank my father-in-law Rick, mother-in-law Sharron, brother-in-law Scott, sister-in-law Elissa and my nephews Ben and Max. And to my daughter Madelyn, whose energy, laughter, and curiosity have brought so much happiness and meaning to my life. Finally, my partner Jaymie: words cannot express how thankful I am for her support and encouragement during this process. Without it, I simply would not have been able to finish this dissertation.

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Introduction

Contemporary refugee resettlement schemes are, by their very nature, highly selective and this is especially pronounced when it comes to settling refugees in groups. Of the many groupings of refugees identified by the UNHCR as being in need of resettlement, only a few are selected by the small number of countries that have these programs, such as Canada, the United States, and Australia. What is the nature of the selection process? Why -- and how -- are some groupings of refugees chosen over others? To answer these questions, in this dissertation I draw on a mixture of archival research, policy analysis and interviews with key individuals in the Canadian government and the UNHCR.

Whereas most refugee selection and resettlement processes are individualizing,¹ group resettlement really is about the “group” -- or, more precisely, the process of grouping. With group resettlement, officials attempt to determine or gage the quality and degree of groupness. They worry about fluid and messy groupings. Officials do not take the boundaries of refugee “groups” presented to them -- whether by NGOs or the refugees themselves -- for granted. Rather, they examine the firmness of boundaries and commonalities of individual members of groupings, sorting what are perceived as vulnerable and self-contained groupings from seemingly messy and tainted ones. In the case of the latter, this might include groupings made up of people believed to be rebels, terrorists, subversives, or individuals considered imposters.

Refugees are subjected to multiple types of border practices under group resettlement, from risk management practices that operate remotely to biopolitical practices in camps based on ideals of homogeneity, order, and visibility. The dissertation aims to contribute to the dynamic

¹ A quick perusal of the UNHCR Resettlement Handbook demonstrates this point. UNHCR, *Resettlement Handbook*, (Geneva: UNHCR, November, 2011). <http://www.unhcr.org/46f7c0ee2.html>

scholarship in critical border studies by examining how borders operate in overseas resettlement programs. It draws attention to how the border intersects with the bureaucratic construction of collective narratives by the UNHCR and through the reification of refugee “groups.”

My focus on group resettlement schemes provides an opportunity to consider the complex practices surrounding the grouping of refugees by governments. On the one hand, government officials are extremely reluctant to publicly discuss such practices. Officials are uneasy with the practice of selecting groupings of refugees for resettlement; there is always the concern that they will be accused of discriminating against one grouping in favour of another. I draw attention to those moments in which state officials are uneasy with such grouping and selection of refugees. I consider the various contexts in which this unease manifests itself, revealing the particular form that it takes, whether it is the government’s fear that it will be accused of discrimination or the perception that the grouping of refugees presents additional security concerns. Besides government officials, NGO and refugee advocates have reservations when it comes to the grouped selection of refugees. NGOs have long questioned the Canadian government’s varying responses to the resettlement of Hungarian refugees in 1956, Ugandan Asian refugees in 1972, Chilean refugees in 1973, and Indochinese refugees in the late 1970s. Since the 1970s the Canadian government has been increasingly sensitive to these sorts of criticisms. The unease that surrounds group resettlement leads to considerable secrecy and the dissertation illustrates how the Canadian government conceals what it perceives as the more contentious elements of the selection process. I demonstrate how secrecy operates in official discourses and biopolitical selection practices under Canada’s group processing and the US’s Priority 2 (P-2) group referral program. On the other hand, government officials wish to publicize the selection of groupings of refugees already approved for group processing.

Moreover, the grouping of refugees affords governments more leeway to consider the health, integration potential, and security risk of refugees under consideration for resettlement. I demonstrate how the carving out of groupings of refugees allows the Canadian government to circumvent legislation such as IRPA as well as UNHCR priorities which require that resettlement decisions be based on protection concerns and needs.

The seemingly mundane bureaucratic rationales employed within official discourses can give the appearance that group resettlement programs are merely designed to create efficiencies in the selection of groupings of refugees that are genuinely in need of protection. This dissertation suggests otherwise. Group resettlement decisions enlist a broad range of actors and institutions from the UNHCR, International Organization of Migration (IOM), Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA), and Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAIT), to the US State Department and Department of Homeland Security. I highlight the network of actors, techniques, forums, and expertise that are enlisted in the mapping, profiling, assessment, and selection of groupings of refugees. Rather than bracket resettlement as a rare positive story in an otherwise bleak geopolitical situation for refugees, I demonstrate that group resettlement schemes provide an opportunity to consider unique types of biopolitical and risk management practices that sort what are perceived to be risky and heterogeneous groupings of refugees, from those deemed internally homogenous and vulnerable. In this way, I begin to peel away the secrecy and mystery surrounding group resettlement.

Literature Review

While formal group resettlement programs are relatively new, group-based resettlement has a long history.² During the interwar years and immediately following the Second World War, resettlement decisions were based on racial preferences, economic needs, and labour shortages. Western governments did not make a consistent distinction between refugees and immigrants. As the Cold War took hold in the late 1940s, political ideology also began to drive resettlement selection.³ Throughout this period the assumption was that the resettlement of refugees was the preferred durable solution.⁴ For Aleinikoff, resettlement was the “exilic” approach to dealing with forced displacement and both he and Chimni chart its decline as beginning in the mid-1970s and taking hold in the 1980s.⁵ For Chimni, the move away from resettlement towards an emphasis on first voluntary and then later forced repatriation reflected the interests of dominant states. From their perspective, the absence of labour shortages meant that largescale resettlement was no longer warranted.⁶ In explaining the new emphasis on repatriation in the 1990s, Aleinikoff notes:

From a liberal, human rights approach, the fundamental wrong done to refugees was a denial of their right to live freely in their home countries. Furthermore, forced exile violated the internationally recognized right of citizens to return to their countries of origin. From this perspective, resettlement can never be the primary remedy because it does not restore this right.⁷

² See Gerald E. Dirks for an extensive discussion of various groupings of refugees historically selected by the Canadian government, including Hungarians, Ugandan Asians, and Indochinese. Gerald E. Dirks, *Canada's refugee policy: indifference or opportunism?* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1977).

³ See Reg Whitaker, *Double Standards: The Secret History of Canadian Immigration* (Toronto: Lester and Orpen Denys Ltd, 1987).

⁴ T Alexander Aleinikoff, “State-Centered Refugee Law: From Resettlement to Containment,” *Michigan Journal of International Law* 120, (1992-93).

⁵ Ibid, 125; B.S. Chimni, “From Resettlement to Involuntary Repatriation: Towards a Critical History of Durable Solutions to Refugee Problems,” *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 23, no. 3 (October 2004); “The Geopolitics of Refugee Studies: A View from the South,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 11, no. 4 (1998).

⁶ Chimni, “From Resettlement to Involuntary Repatriation,” 58.

⁷ Aleinikoff, “State-Centered Refugee Law,” 127.

In contexts where the nation state -- or what Malkki calls the “national order of things”⁸ -- is dominant, repatriation has been viewed as the ideal “durable solution” because, following Nyers, it restores refugees to statist identities and communities.⁹

Coinciding with the push towards repatriation in the 1990s was what Aleinikoff refers to as “policies of containment”—the imposition of visas, reductions in resettlement, pushbacks, and returns. One result of such tactics by Western governments is the growth of what are now referred to as “protracted refugee situations” in the Global South. Hyndman explains:

Asylum has been respatialized, by which I mean that the geopolitical valence of refugees has changed since the Cold War, resulting in efforts to assist refugees closer to their homes in ‘regions of origin’. This occurred first in the early 1990s through a policy of ‘preventive protection’ and then in the 2000s through the externalization of asylum.¹⁰

The intensification and delocalization of border control practices by Western governments, including airline carrier sanctions, the imposition of visas on refugee-producing or hosting countries, offshore processing or transit centers, and other measures to deter refugees, play a role in exacerbating situations of protracted displacement. The effects of shutting down “legitimate” routes for refugees is now on display in media images of “boatloads” of people crossing the Mediterranean sea from Libya to Italy, with many of them drowning.

In this context, one of the goals of contemporary resettlement is to help resolve situations of protracted displacement. From the perspective of the UNHCR, it is “a tangible expression of international solidarity and a responsibility sharing mechanism, allowing States to help share responsibility for refugee protection, and reduce problems impacting the country of asylum.”¹¹

⁸ Liisa H. Malkki, “National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees,” *Cultural Anthropology* 7, no. 1 (1992).

⁹ Peter Nyers, *Rethinking Refugees: Beyond States of Emergency* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

¹⁰ Jennifer Hyndman, “A Refugee Camp Conundrum: Geopolitics, Liberal Democracy, and Protracted Refugee Situations,” *Refuge* 28, no. 2 (2011): 12.

¹¹ UNHCR, *Resettlement Handbook*, 3.

More strategically, contemporary group resettlement schemes attempt to mitigate the effects of state practices of containment, externalization, and pre-emptive border practices noted above.

Few scholars have paid much attention to overseas refugee selection (or resettlement) in the broader Refugee Studies literature. This is true both within Canada¹² and beyond.¹³ Fewer still consider group resettlement.¹⁴ One of the rare scholars to comment on Canadian group processing in a sustained manner is Shauna Labman. Labman suggests “selection seems to focus on small, resolvable situations of protraction that garner international attention and agreement,”¹⁵ such as the Bhutanese who she points out are considered desirable in terms of employment skills and educational levels. She goes on to say that,

With the resettlement of groups, considerations of efficiency, lessened expense, and the resolution of certain camp populations gets privileged over protection when the focus is on the strategic use of resettlement. Ease of management ultimately overrides protection concerns.¹⁶

¹² Exceptions include: Jennifer Hyndman, “A Refugee Camp Conundrum”; “Second-Class immigrants or First Class Protection? Resettling Refugees to Canada” in *Resettled and Included? Employment Integration of Refugees*, ed. Bevelander, Hagstrom, and Ronnqvist (Malmo: Malmo University, 2009); Shauna Labman, “At Law’s Border: Unsettling Refugee Resettlement” (PhD diss., University of British Columbia, December 2012); “Queue the Rhetoric: Refugees, Resettlement and Reform,” *University of New Brunswick Law Journal* 62 (2011); “Resettlement’s Renaissance.”

¹³ Exceptions include: Don Barnett, “A New Era of Refugee Resettlement,” *Center for Immigration Studies* (December 2006): 2, URL: <http://www.cis.org/sites/cis.org/files/articles/2006/back1006.pdf>; Heidi Boas, “The New Face of America’s Refugees: African Refugee Resettlement to the United States,” *Georgetown Immigration Law Journal* 21 (Spring 2007); John Fredriksson, “Reinvigorating resettlement: changing realities demand changed approaches,” *Forced Migration Review* 13 (2002); David A. Martin, *The United States Refugee Admissions Program: Reforms for a New Era of Refugee Resettlement* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State, Migration Policy Institute and the Bertelsman, 2004), <http://2001-2009.state.gov/g/prm/refadm/rls/rpts/36958.htm>; Margaret Piper AM, Paul Power, Dr. Graham Thom, “Refugee resettlement: 2012 and beyond,” *Policy Development and Evaluation Service, Research Paper* 253, (Geneva: UNHCR, February 2013); Kristin Bergtora Sandvik, “Blurring Boundaries: Refugee Resettlement in Kampala—between the Formal, the Informal, and the Illegal,” *Political and Legal Anthropology Review (Polar)* 34, no. 1 (2011); “A Legal History: the Emergence of the African Resettlement Candidate in International Refugee Management,” *International Journal of Refugee Law* 22, no. 1 (2010); Joanne Van Selm, “The Strategic Use of Resettlement: Changing the Face of Protection?,” *Refuge* 22 no. 1 (2004); Gary Troeller, “UNHCR Resettlement: Evolution and Future Direction,” *International Refugee Law* 14, no. 1 (2002).

¹⁴ For Canada’s group processing see: Labman, “At Law’s Border,”; “Resettlement’s Renaissance.” For the US P-2 group referral program (similar to group processing) see: Boas, “The New Face of America’s Refugees”; Martin, *The United States Refugee Admissions Program*.

¹⁵ Labman, “At Law’s Border,” 226.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 232.

Labman does not provide much elaboration. Instead her argument is that both the former ‘Source Country Class’ designation and group processing are intentional maneuvers away from the law designed to permit more discretion for the state.¹⁷ Labman suggests that “group resettlement enables Canada to address protracted situations in a strategic manner by removing a large and cohesive group from the protraction.”¹⁸ She draws attention to the administrative and managerial influences on programs such as group processing.¹⁹ Notwithstanding the contributions of Labman, which I find compelling, I approach group resettlement schemes from a different angle, with greater attention to *how* discretion operates under these programs as well as *how* official narratives are employed to frame these practices of selection.

Beyond Canadian practices, several authors have commented on the United States Priority 2 (P-2) group referral program,²⁰ which is similar to Canada’s group processing and will be discussed throughout this dissertation. These authors point to the US’s desire to select what it believes are self-contained and homogenous groupings of refugees, which is of particular interest to my analysis of Canada’s group processing program. Commenting on the future of the US’s P-2 group referral process, Martin argues:

Resettlement initiatives will be marked by the need to draw clear lines around the group to be admitted, so as to minimize fraud and discourage future migration of others who might hope to be included in the resettlement. The quest will be for finite groups, and resettlement will work best if much solid work on identification and line-drawing can be completed before resettlement plans become known in the refugee camp or settlement.²¹

The desire for groupings of refugees with what are perceived as firm boundaries is reflected in Heidi Boas’s analysis of the gradual shift towards African resettlement and the types of

¹⁷ Ibid., 228-229

¹⁸ Ibid, 218.

¹⁹ Ibid, 232.

²⁰ The United States operates a priority system that determines eligibility for resettlement. The referral of groupings of refugees by the UNHCR for resettlement occurs under the P-2 category understood as “groups of special humanitarian concern.” See Martin, *The United States Refugee Admissions Program*, Chapter III.

²¹ Ibid, Chapter one, executive summary, <http://2001-2009.state.gov/g/prm/refadm/rls/rpts/35999.htm>

groupings of refugees selected under the United States P-2 designation. Boas draws on the examples of the resettlement of the Sudanese “lost boys” and Somali “Bantu” to demonstrate that this shift cannot be reduced to humanitarian concerns. The end of the Cold War meant that resettlement was no longer dominated by the selection of anti-Communist refugees in the US. Added to this, the signing of the Comprehensive Plan Action in 1989, something discussed in chapter two, reduced the number of Indochinese refugees while the US became increasingly involved in African conflicts in places such as Somalia.²² In terms of the Somali “Bantu” these factors provided an opening in which decision-makers responded to pressures from Christian organizations as well as traditional players in the resettlement process such as World Vision and the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society. With the Sudanese “lost boys”, Boas argues that they:

also appealed to refugee advocates and decision-makers because they fit the profile that was at the center of U.S. interests at the time. The Lost Boys were a prime example of a protracted refugee situation, as they spent their entire adolescence living in a refugee camp with no durable solutions available.²³

Importantly, Boas highlights the fact that they “were also an easily identifiable, discrete group that could be processed and resettled relatively quickly.”²⁴ She goes on to explain that the:

Somali Bantu were an ideal group for P-2 resettlement status because they were physically identifiable and because their persecution claims were, in some sense, already familiar to the US government. The Somali Bantu share distinct physical features which make them easily identifiable, including a kinkier hair texture than dominant-clan Somali and a distinctly-shaped nose.²⁵

Boas suggests that “during the mid-1990s, the State Department began to focus on finding new large, *self-contained* groups of individuals with persecution claims for P-2 referral, which was

²² Boas, “The New Face of America’s,” 431-468.

²³ Ibid, 451-452.

²⁴ Ibid; see also Sara L. McKinnon, “Unsettling Resettlement: Problematizing ‘Lost Boys of Sudan’ Resettlement and Identity,” *Western Journal of Communication* 72, no. 4 (2008): 404

²⁵ Boas, “The New Face of America’s,” 454.

considered easier and more efficient.”²⁶ In the wake of the winding down of large-scale resettlement for the Indochinese and former Soviet Union, according to Boas, the US turned to P-2 processing for practical purposes.²⁷

In contrast to the work of Martin and Boas, this dissertation analyzes the assumptions underpinning the construction of collective narratives associated with purportedly self-contained and homogenous groupings of refugees. As such, it is more in line with the work that Catherine Besteman has done on the identity of the Somali “Bantu” selected for the United States P-2 group referral stream. Besteman examines the ethnogenesis of this collective identity highlighting the role of bureaucratic mandates, political strategizing, and histories of discrimination. She points to “essentialized notions of racial difference” at work in the identification and verification practices of the Somali “Bantu” for P-2 processing.²⁸ Besteman’s work is helpful in analyzing the UNHCR’s role in creating collective narratives in group profiles examined by resettlement states such as Canada.

The dissertation builds on Besteman’s work by situating the contested construction of collective narratives of displacement and vulnerability within the resettlement decision-making process. I shed light on the calculations of states in determining the risk, internal sameness, firmness of boundaries, and the ease of processing refugee “groups” under consideration for resettlement. I trace the emergence for the preference of what are taken to be self-contained and finite refugee “groups.”

Many authors have investigated what motivates resettlement decisions. Most notably in the Canadian context, Reg Whitaker has highlighted the Canadian state’s ideological and

²⁶ Ibid, 446.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Catherine Besteman “Translating Race across Time and Space: The Creation of Somali Bantu Ethnicity,” *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 19, no. 3 (May 2012), 291,295.

political criteria for the selection and exclusion of immigrants and refugees during the Cold War. Whitaker points to the secrecy surrounding attempts to limit the number of refugees from the Soviet bloc. The rationale behind these measures was the fear of highly trained agents being deliberately planted in refugee flows for the purposes of espionage and sabotage.²⁹ This is similar to the current discourse surrounding the Syrian refugee movement and the concern by some politicians and security experts that terrorists might pose as refugees to gain entry into Western countries. Cold war politics also influenced determinations of refugee status in the United States. Ashutosh and Mountz argue that geopolitical relations were reflected in interpretations of the Convention:

Asylum claimants fleeing communist regimes such as Cuba and Nicaragua had much higher rates of acceptance than those fleeing non-communist regimes supported by the US government, such as El Salvador and Guatemala.³⁰

The grouping of refugees based on Cold War ideology, therefore, cut across the distinction between inland and offshore refugee practices, something that this dissertation considers. Boas suggests that “beginning in the 1950s, U.S. resettlement shifted along foreign policy and ideological lines to focus on resettlement from Communist countries.”³¹ Boas further identifies what motivated US resettlement decisions suggesting that:

Four main factors have traditionally impacted the U.S. government’s decision to accept or deny a particular refugee group for resettlement, and how many refugees to accept overall: foreign policy objectives, domestic immigration goals, pressure from interest groups, and humanitarian concerns. Each of these factors has historically influenced the United States’ decisions regarding refugee admissions to varying degrees, based on the particular historical and political context of the time.³²

²⁹ Whitaker, *Double Standards*.

³⁰ Ishan Ashutosh and Alison Mountz, “The Geopolitics of Migrant Mobility: Tracing State Relations Through Refugee Claims, Boats, and Discourses,” *Geopolitics* 17, no. 2 (2012): 337.

³¹ Boas, “The New Face of America’s,” 435

³² *Ibid*, 438.

Similarly, Mathew Gibney argues that US resettlement policy is tied to foreign policy considerations and is influenced by lobbying groups.³³ Foreign policy concerns continue to influence US resettlement decisions. Harkins explains that “according to the U.S. Department of State, the current U.S. resettlement operations in Thailand are being conducted both as a humanitarian response to the displacement situation in Thailand as well as a strategic intervention to support the long-term foreign policy goal of a transition to democracy within Burma.”³⁴ For Kamal Raj Sigdel, geopolitics has influenced the US government’s differential response to Bhutanese and Tibetans refugees in Nepal. Sigdel argues that while the Tibetans have been in a protracted situation in Nepal much longer than the Bhutanese, the US did not prioritize their resettlement. Sigdel suggests the Tibetan’s political aspirations for independence serve the interests of both India and the US to act as a bargaining chip to counterbalance undesirable Chinese actions in the region. With the Bhutanese, struggles for repatriation are viewed as a risk that could spark regional tensions.³⁵ For this reason, the US pushed for large-scale Bhutanese resettlement. Both the Bhutanese and Karen Burmese were selected for the US P-2 group referral and Canada’s group processing. While these sorts of motivations behind resettlement decisions are not the focus in what follows, I do consider those moments when there are tensions between foreign policy goals, political priorities, bureaucratic objectives, and security concerns under group resettlement schemes. I discuss the issue of motivations behind resettlement decisions in more detail in the theoretical section below.

³³ Matthew J. Gibney, *The Ethics and Politics of Asylum: Liberal Response to Refugees* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 159-160; see also Van Selm. “The Strategic Use of Resettlement,” 46.

³⁴ Benjamin Harkins, “Beyond “Temporary Shelter”: A Case Study of Karen Refugee Resettlement in St. Paul, Minnesota,” *Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies* 10 (2012): 91

³⁵ Kamal Raj Sigdel, “Refugees and geopolitics: Exploring the US and Indian influences in the treatment of Bhutanese and Tibetan refugees in Nepal,” *International Conference on International Relations and Development (ICIRD)* (2013).

There is plenty of literature on resettlement that is critical of how Western governments frame the relationship between offshore refugee selection and inland asylum practices. Labman argues that resettlement is used by states to obfuscate their unwillingness to meet their legal obligations under the Refugee Convention through a replacement of refugee protection by migrant selection.³⁶ Casasola points to how Bill C-31, an important precursor to Canada's new Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (2001), was sold to the public by presenting resettlement initiatives "as a counter to some of the more punitive actions the government planned in order to limit access to the refugee determination system in Canada."³⁷ Hyndman and Giles argue that refugees in long term camps and protracted situations are feminized based on their location and lack of rights, while refugees on the move are positioned as threatening to the security and welfare of Western states. The distinction relates to a sedentary bias that persists in spite of the celebration of increased mobility in the present period.³⁸

In this dissertation, I build on these important insights by revealing how biopolitical practices produce similar distinctions between "groups" of overseas refugees framed as "real" and "deserving." As such, this dissertation demonstrates that we need to exercise caution in interpreting the rhetoric of governments on the relationship between "asylum seekers" and overseas refugees in camps. Julien Reid demonstrates this in his critical analysis of the biopolitics of the 'War on Terror', which draws attention to how official rhetoric can be far removed from the actual practices of governing.³⁹ The narrative that pits onshore refugees

³⁶ Labman, "Resettlement's Renaissance," 2007, 36; see also "Queue the Rhetoric: Refugees, Resettlement and Reform," 55-63.

³⁷ Michael Casasola, "Current Trends and New Challenges for Canada's Resettlement Program," *Refuge* 19, no. 4 (2001): 79.

³⁸ Jennifer Hyndman and Wenona Giles, "Waiting for What? The feminization of Asylum in Protracted Situations," *Gender, Place and Culture* 18 no. 3 (June 2011): 361-379.

³⁹ Julien Reid, "The Biopolitics of the War on Terror: a critique of the 'return of imperialism' thesis in international relations," *Third World Quarterly* 26, no. 2 (2005): 242-43.

against resettled refugees works to not only justify draconian and exclusionary practices on the former, but it also obscures security practices that act on refugees in overseas camps. In the eyes of Western governments, resettled refugees are more than just passive recipients of humanitarian aid that wait patiently for resettlement. Not all refugee “groups” are seen as deserving of Canada’s generosity, yet this fact must be concealed since this would challenge official rhetoric that draws a distinction between inland and offshore refugees.

The critiques of resettlement programs have led to a variety of recommendations for their reform. For example, Fredriksson argues that in order to avoid the international refugee protection regime becoming completely dependent on the discretionary character of resettlement, states need to view resettlement and “asylum” as part and parcel of the same international refugee protection regime administrated and overseen by the UNHCR.⁴⁰ Similarly, Troeller argues, “resettlement must remain a complement to, and not a substitute for, the right to seek asylum.”⁴¹ Some of the scholarly recommendations suggest specific areas where resettlement practices need improvement. Fredriksson argues for a coherent global system for resettlement that has transparent eligibility criteria and is applied consistently.⁴² Troeller emphasizes the need for “quality control”, “integrity”, “credibility”, and further harmonization of resettlement criteria between states and the UNHCR.⁴³ Casasola argues that the Canadian resettlement program needs to develop priorities that are in keeping with the protection needs model developed by the UNHCR.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Fredriksson, “Reinvigorating resettlement,” 29.

⁴¹ Troeller, “UNHCR Resettlement: Evolution,” 92.

⁴² Fredriksson, “Reinvigorating resettlement,” 31.

⁴³ Troeller, “UNHCR Resettlement: Evolution,” 95.

⁴⁴ Mike Casasola, “Current Trends and New Challenges,” 82.

In this dissertation, I take a more critical approach. The proposals above aim to lessen discretionary power under resettlement and yet this is precisely why states prefer this method in dealing with refugees. It is unlikely that they would voluntarily give up this discretion. Attempts to further base resettlement decisions on UNHCR priorities ignore how this organization works in the interests of states, something I discuss throughout this dissertation. Furthermore, I question, and critique, the taken for granted assumption that internally homogenous and self-contained refugee “groups” exist and can be separated from what are viewed as messy, fluid, and tainted “groups.” I draw on critical refugee work in highlighting how sovereign logics based on visibility, ordering, grouping, and homogeneity are expressed in group resettlement schemes.

The brevity of the review above is itself a reflection of the paucity of research on contemporary group resettlement schemes. I believe there are several reasons for this. To begin with, as noted above, there is considerable secrecy surrounding group resettlement decisions, making it difficult to conduct research on this topic. In my interviews and discussions with both government officials and NGOs familiar with group resettlement, at times, I encountered the perception that programs such as Canada’s group processing are merely a bureaucratic method for resettling refugees. In the US and Australia there is virtually no public promotion of group resettlement.⁴⁵ Rather, the group method is absorbed into the general resettlement programs of these respective countries.⁴⁶ While there is some publicity around the announcement by the Government of Canada that a particular grouping of refugees will be selected, there is very little attention to the process through which that decision was made. Beyond this, there is an understandable focus of the refugee studies literature on the expansion and delocalization of border practices, externalization efforts, detention practices, and other facets of inland

⁴⁵ Labman, *At Law’s Border*, 267-68.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

determinations of “asylum.” In the area resettlement, a substantial portion of the literature focuses on the settlement and integration aspects⁴⁷ of this process as opposed to selection practices. For example, some authors examine the role of faith-based organizations in helping refugees settle into communities.⁴⁸

This dissertation aims to reduce the gap in the scholarly literature on group resettlement (and refugee resettlement selection practices in general) by exploring a complex process that is mostly hidden from public and indeed, scholarly view.

Theoretical Interventions

Governmentality and Group Resettlement

Many studies of resettlement examine why particular decisions are made. This leads to a focus, as noted above, on the role of foreign policy, domestic lobbying groups, geopolitics, political priorities, and other motivations behind resettlement decisions. While these factors continue to matter in resettlement decision-making, an exclusive focus on *why* questions makes it difficult to get at the knowledge, expertise, and techniques at work in group resettlement programs. Registration, verification, and profiling techniques play an important role in the decision-making process under these programs. Studies that consider why resettlement states responded positively, for example, to the Bhutanese or Burmese tell us little about the bureaucratic methods and rationale of processing these groupings of refugees. Moreover, ‘why’ questions presuppose the existence of national, racial, cultural, and ethnic “groups” from which

⁴⁷ See Benjamin Harkins, “Beyond ‘Temporary Shelter’”; Randy Lippert, “Rationalities and refugee resettlement”, *Economy and Society* 27 no. 4 (1998); Jennifer Hyndman, “Research Summary on Resettled Refugee Integration in Canada,” *Center for Refugee Studies* (Toronto: York University, May 2, 2011).

⁴⁸ Jessica Eby, Erika Iverson, Jenifer Smyers, and Erol Kekic, “The Faith Community’s Role in Refugee Resettlement in the United States,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 24 no. 3 (2011); Stephanie J. Nawyn, “Faith, Ethnicity, and Culture in Refugee Resettlement”, *American Behavioral Scientist* 49 no. 11 (July 2006).

resettlement states can choose. Omitted in the analysis therefore is how states' craft groupings of refugees for resettlement. That being said, this dissertation still considers conventional motivations behind group resettlement decisions since an exclusive focus on how questions may not capture the broader geopolitical context of decisions. It examines how these motivations both intersect with, and sometimes challenge the bureaucratic and security logics under group resettlement schemes.

The emphasis on *how* questions in the governmentality approach, according to Dean, is more than a description of how authority operates; rather it means examining "all that which is necessary to a particular regime of practices of governments, the conditions of governing in the broadest sense of that word."⁴⁹ In this dissertation I examine the various forms of knowledge (e.g. biographical, demographic, security, intelligence, etc.) deployed in the practices of selection under group resettlement schemes. I consider how this knowledge allows authorities to map refugee movements and place refugees into "groups," "subgroups," and populations. For Dean, an analytics of government "wants to understand how different locales are constituted as authoritative and powerful, how different agents are assembled with specific powers, and how different domains are constituted as governable and administrable."⁵⁰ Census, mapping, profiling, and identification practices are connected to the exercising of expertise under group resettlement; they play a role in making certain actors and locales such as the UNHCR Working Group on Resettlement in Geneva, Switzerland, powerful and authoritative.

⁴⁹ Mitchel Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society*, (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, Second edition, 2010), 39.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 40.

Drawing on the governmentality approach, I emphasize aspects of governing that usually escape state-centric and institutional analysis.⁵¹ Rose and Miller suggest:

By means of inscription, reality is made stable, mobile, comparable, combinable. It is rendered in a form in which it can be debated and diagnosed. Information in this sense is not the outcome of a neutral recording function. It is itself a way of acting upon the real, a way of devising techniques for inscribing it in such a way as to make the domain in question susceptible to evaluation, calculation and intervention.⁵²

Hyndman's analysis of UNHCR operations in Kenya captures the importance of mobile inscription devices in governing refugee camps:

Refugee operations embody a language of arithmetical calculation and therapy that transposes particular events and activities in the field into standardized reports, statistics, and community development projects suitable for consumption at the UNHCR branch office in Nairobi and headquarters in Geneva. Information from a particular location and context is standardized and made comparable to reports from other places.⁵³

In a similar vein, I point to how census data, identification practices, and profiles attempt to capture and standardize specific types of information that are of interest to authorities in places such as Ottawa, Washington, and Geneva.

The governmentality approach has strong affinities with the genealogical method, which seeks to denaturalize objects and subjects, identities and practices that we tend to take for granted.⁵⁴ One way to achieve this, according to Walters, is through conceptual invention. Rather than reiterating official concepts and narratives, he suggests the creation of new concepts that still remain close to official ones yet change 'the angle' at which fields of activity are perceived.⁵⁵ To this end, I draw on statements made by government officials during interviews

⁵¹ Nikolas Rose and Peter Miller, "Political power beyond the State: problematics of government", *British Journal of Sociology* Vol. 43.2, June (1992).

⁵² *Ibid*, 185.

⁵³ Hyndman, Jennifer. *Managing Displacement: Refugees and the Politics of Humanitarianism*, (University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 122.

⁵⁴ William Walters, *Governmentality: Critical Encounters* (Abingdon/New York: Routledge, 2012), 118.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 124.

that are reflective of the logics of certain practices under group resettlement. These statements or expressions capture elements of the practices of selection under group resettlement that are not readily apparent in official literature and public announcements.

Unease and Secrecy

In this study of group resettlement, I consider the unease of officials surrounding the management of heterogeneity in camps and the grouping of refugees. I reflect on how those elements of group processing viewed as contentious are shrouded in secrecy. Secrecy relates to biopolitical practices at work in programs formally based on vulnerability and humanitarianism in the contemporary period. Several authors have highlighted how government officials mobilize, play, and manage unease. Most notably, Bigo points to a transversal and transnational field of unease management. Within this field, security and intelligence professionals play with, or use, the structural unease prevalent in societies that govern themselves according to risk and neo-liberal rationalities of rule. The effect of this is to affirm their position of authority to make truth claims in relation to a range of threats thereby deflecting attention away from their shortcomings.⁵⁶ Hyndman and Mountz's examination of externalization practices and what they call neo-refoulement in the EU and Australia draws on Bigo's work. They argue that:

The mobilization of fear to securitize asylum serves a politically powerful resource for states that need legitimate grounds for extraordinary measures, such as exclusion from their territories by potentially legitimate legal subjects, namely asylum seekers.⁵⁷

Huysmans and Buonfino examine how political framings of insecurity posit linkages between terrorism and migration in British parliamentary debates following the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

⁵⁶ Didier Bigo, "Security and Immigration: Toward a Critique of the Governmentality of Unease," *Alternatives* 27, (Special Issue) (2002).

⁵⁷ Jennifer Hyndman, "The Securitisation of Fear in Post-Tsunami Sri Lanka," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 97, no. 2 (2007) quoted in Jennifer Hyndman and Alison Mountz, "Another Brick in the Wall? Neo-Refoulement and the Externalization of Asylum by Australia and Europe," *Government and Opposition* 43, no. 2 (2008): 254.

These debates by political elites in the UK point to both a politics of exception and a politics of unease. In terms of the latter, Huysmans and Buonfino explain: “the politics of unease is a more continuous and technocratic debate that sustains or challenges the introduction of policing technologies for governing a wide range of societal questions.”⁵⁸

I approach the question of fear, insecurity, and unease from a slightly different angle. Rather than focus on the mobilization of fears and unease towards specific political and governmental objectives, I consider those moments when government officials express insecurities and anxieties surrounding the expectation of relatively homogenous and self-contained groupings. I draw attention to how secrecy operates through the tensions and relations of various binaries at work in group resettlement, including: visibility/invisibility, homogeneity/heterogeneity, boundaries/disorder, and “groups”/individuals. I also draw on the work of authors such Renisa Mawani and Barry Hindess in order to highlight similarities between earlier colonial anxieties within colonies, or white settler societies, and the concerns of officials under group resettlement schemes to ensure firm boundaries and homogeneity.⁵⁹

Group Resettlement and Border Practices

This dissertation draws on the literature related to critical border studies. It investigates risk management techniques and biometrics⁶⁰ associated with delocalized border practices.⁶¹ At the same time, an examination of group resettlement schemes provides an opportunity to

⁵⁸ Jef Huysmans and Alessandra Buonfino, “Politics of Exception and Unease: Immigration, Asylum and Terrorism in Parliamentary Debates in the UK,” *Political Studies* 56 (2008): 785.

⁵⁹ Renisa Mawani, *Colonial Proximities: Crossracial Encounters and Juridical Truths in British Columbia, 1871-21* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009); Barry Hindess, “Not at Home in the Empire,” *Social Identities* 7, no. 3 (2001).

⁶⁰ Louise Amoore and Markieke De Goede, “Governance, risk and dataveillance in the war on terror,” *Crime, Law & Social Change* 43 (2005).

⁶¹ See: William Walters, “Border/Control,” *European Journal of Social Theory* 9, no. 2 (2006); “Rethinking Borders Beyond the State,” *Comparative European Politics* 4 (2006); Hyndman and Mountz, “Another brick in the wall?”; Peter Andreas, “Redrawing the Line: Borders and Security in the Twenty-first Century,” *International Security* 28, no. 2 (2003).

examine how borders intersect with the bureaucratic and statist construction of collective identities. I highlight how the border materializes in biopolitical practices based on groupings. Most of the literature on critical border studies focusses on how border practices act on individual migrants, travelers, or refugees.⁶² Much of Salter's work, for instance, concentrates on the performative dimension of border examinations or interrogations at airports and other points of entry into states.⁶³ The focus is on the routinization of exceptional politics and the sovereign decision, subjecting migrants and travelers to a confessionary complex.⁶⁴ Salter argues that "the state of exception where law and force are indivisible remains the heart of the examination—even if there are policies, procedures, and risk algorithms that structure the representation of those decisions, the interpretation of the claimant's narrative is entirely discretionary."⁶⁵ With group resettlement, the sovereign decision is based on a grouping, not an individual. In many instances, groupings of refugees are unaware that UNHCR and government authorities are considering them for group resettlement. Biopolitical and risk management practices occur remotely and are shrouded in secrecy. Moreover, given that groupings of refugees may be crafted from wider refugee populations in camps, individual refugees may be unaware that they are members of a grouping under consideration. It is not until a refugee camp is selected for group

⁶² Some important exceptions include work done on the International Organization of Migration (IOM). See: William Walters and Rutvica Andrijasevic "The International Organization for Migration and the international government of borders," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28 (2010) and Ishan Ashutosh and Alison Mountz, "Migration management for the benefit of whom? Interrogating the work of the International Organization for Migration," *Citizenship Studies* 15, no. 1 (2011). While these analyses are important they focus on the IOM's role in the "voluntary" return of refugees, the management of detention centers, and production of expertise, norms, and 'best practices' related to the international government of borders informed by neo-liberal rationalities. In contrast to this, this dissertation focuses on the IOM's work within refugee camps where it prepares groupings of refugees for resettlement, verifies the identities of members of chosen groupings, mitigates fraud, and ensures clear dimensions of chosen groupings.

⁶³ Mark. B. Salter, "When the exception becomes the rule"; "The Global Visa regime and the Political Technologies of the International Self: Borders, Bodies, Biopolitics" *Alternatives* 31 (2006).

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 376.

resettlement that the border materializes within this space, crafting a homogenous grouping framed as vulnerable, encapsulating it, and policing its boundaries.

At work in group resettlement schemes are risk management techniques that are reflective of Valverde's and Mopas's notion of "targeted governance."⁶⁶ These techniques operate at a distance from camps, testing the "inadmissibility patterns," settlement and economic outcomes, incidences of diseases, biodata, and intelligence information of prospective groupings of refugees. They sort what are presumed to be heterogeneous, messy, and risky groupings from the homogenous, self-contained, and vulnerable ones. In a context where the need for resettlement vastly outstrips the available spaces, the rationale of programs such as Canada's group processing is to strategically target limited resettlement offers. Even in those instances where relatively largescale resettlement occurs, as was the case with 5,000 Bhutanese refugees resettled in Canada between 2009 and 2012 and over 25, 000 thousand Syrian refugees from late 2015 through 2016, the reliance on risk management techniques and biometrics along with concerns over efficiency in resettlement processing reflects a targeted approach to governing. I highlight how governments exclude certain groupings of refugees on the basis that they ostensibly do not lend themselves well to expedited processing. They seek groupings they anticipate will not require lengthy security assessments. Valverde and Mopas note that the prevalence of "targeted governance" does not necessarily mean less governing, since "there are always more targets."⁶⁷ They point to a continuation of the utopian dream of total governance based on risk management techniques.⁶⁸ The 'targeted' carving up and encapsulation of what are

⁶⁶ Mariana Valverde and Michael Mopas, "Insecurity and the Dream of Targeted Governance" in *Global Governmentality: Governing International Spaces*, ed. William Walters and Wendy Larner (London: Routledge, 2004).

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 248.

⁶⁸ Valverde and Mopas note that in the field of medicine, for instance, "the modesty that speaks about lifelong management of one's own discrete, incurable but manageable health risks coexists with the (often-disavowed)

taken to be internally homogenous and finite groupings of refugees relies on practices of visibility that map global vulnerability and risk.

With group resettlement, unelected security, intelligence, and immigration experts exercise discretion over which groupings of refugees are included and excluded in group resettlement programs. These officials use rules and regulations under legislation such as IRPA as tactics aimed at realizing their governmental and biopolitical objectives. In some instances, they employ exclusionary elements of this legislation to deny resettlement to groupings of refugees considered problematic, whereas in others they suspend or overlook the same legislation to allow for the resettlement of groupings viewed as “desirable.” The approval of groupings of refugees for group processing requires the Immigration Minister to exempt individual members of these groupings from refugee status determinations normally required under IRPA.

Drawing on Fleur Johns, Mark Salter suggests that the exception at the border is based on sovereign decisionism “expressed through a bureaucratic governmentality of discretion.”⁶⁹ Under group resettlement, unelected officials exercise enhanced discretion as the sovereign decision at the border is fragmented amongst several institutions and actors, making it difficult to pinpoint. I draw attention to how unease and secrecy operate in the exercising of discretion under group resettlement. Officials are uneasy in making visible those practices that challenge the formally non-discriminatory character of group processing. They emphasize that the outright exclusion of refugee “groups” based on ethnicity and nationality does not occur; that individual resettlement always remains an option.

utopia of preventative therapies for everything, a governance utopia facilitated by the mapping of the human genome, with its attendant myth of ultimate biological knowledge.” Ibid, 246.

⁶⁹ Mark. B. Salter, “When the exception becomes the rule: borders, sovereignty, and citizenship,” *Citizenship Studies* 12, no. 4 (2008), 369.

Grouping, Naming, and Labelling

Given the focus of this study on the grouping process, I find it useful to engage with Rogers Brubaker's concept of *groupism*. This is “the tendency to take discrete, sharply differentiated, internally homogeneous and externally bounded groups as basic constituents of social life, chief protagonists of social conflicts, and fundamental units of social analysis.”⁷⁰

Brubaker argues that:

ethnicity, race and nation should be conceptualized not as substances or things or entities or organisms or collective individuals—as the imagery of discrete, concrete, tangible, bounded and enduring ‘groups’ encourages us to do—but rather in relational, processual, dynamic, eventful and disaggregated terms.⁷¹

Brubaker regards moments of extreme cohesiveness and solidarity amongst individuals as fleeting and contingent events that can easily dissipate. For this reason, he encourages us to consider the degree of what he calls groupness associated with categories, whether these are based on nation, race, or ethnicity. In doing so, we highlight the contingency behind the grouping process: we problematize the “group(s).”

Governments, NGOs involved in group resettlement -- and, indeed, those refugees who are being considered for resettlement -- engage in a parallel process of examining and problematizing “groups.” Such activity should not be characterized as groupism in any straightforward sense, but rather be seen as a variation of it. The officials are assuming “groups” but also that some “groups” are more group-like than others. Put another way, they are problematizing the idea of “groups” in an instrumental fashion, assessing how porous, risky, heterogeneous, homogenous, vulnerable, and risky they are. In contrast to this, Brubaker is critiquing the re-performance of groupism by social scientists, especially the assumption that

⁷⁰ Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).

⁷¹ Ibid.

ethnic “groups” are the driving force behind “ethnic conflicts.” Instead, Brubaker prefers to examine how conflicts become ethnically or racially framed.

This dissertation considers the relations between groupism and biopolitics. Government officials determine external biopolitical threats by assessing and sorting what are deemed as messy and risky groupings of refugees from internally homogenous and vulnerable ones. Practices based on vision, mapping, ordering, and drawing boundaries around prospective groupings of refugees reflect concerns over internal biopolitical threats to chosen groupings of refugees within camps. Authorities consider the potential presence of terrorists and imposters within chosen groupings, testing the groupings internal homogeneity, firmness of external boundaries, and the ease or difficulty of establishing membership. Moreover, they police the boundaries of chosen groupings in refugee camps.

Given my critical engagement with Brubaker’s notion of groupism, I am highly conscientious of the danger of reproducing the various refugee “groups” discussed throughout this study. For this reason, in what follows, the use of the term “group” is not taken for granted, but rather is based on considerable reflection over how to articulate the group resettlement process in a manner that does not presuppose the groupness of refugees. Consider for example the formal definitions of the terms grouping and group. According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, a group is defined as “a number of individuals assembled together or having some unifying relationship”, whereas grouping is “the act or process of combining people or things into groups.”⁷² The former assumes individuals with preexisting commonalities (i.e. “groups”), whereas the latter emphasizes the active process through which “groups” are formed in the first place. The very label “group resettlement program” presupposes the groupness of those that

⁷² “Grouping” and “Group”, *Merriam-Webster, Dictionary*, accessed April 10, 2016, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/grouping> and <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/group>

authorities aim to resettle. In contrast, this dissertation examines the ways in which resettlement selection practices operate to produce and reproduce “groups.” I will refrain from using the term “group” because I do not want to reinforce the sense that “groups” are there for resettlement states and their officials to discover. I want to get at how governments do not just choose between preexisting “groups,” but that the processes that they use to choose also serve to construct them at the same time.⁷³

In addition to forcing me to steer clear of the unreflective use of the term group in favour of the term grouping, the nature of my topic also requires me to navigate any empirical discussion of the “groups” and their naming. This relates to Roger Zetter’s discussion of Greek-Cypriot refugees and the effects of bureaucratic labels. Zetter highlights how labels shape identities, stereotype, and demand conformity from the groupings of refugees that they target in exchange for resources or humanitarian assistance.⁷⁴ Within institutional settings, he suggests that “labels assume a much more powerful significance. They serve as a linguistic shorthand for policies, programmes and bureaucratic requirements - practices which are instrumental in categorizing and differentiating between facets of an identity.”⁷⁵ Melissa Phillips’s critique of the label “African-Australian” demonstrates this. She views it as a convenient tool that homogenizes and denies diversity. For this reason, she prefers using the term ‘new entrants’ in describing the experiences of individuals from Southern Sudan.⁷⁶ Phillips argues that labelling practices in the context of resettlement warrant more attention. She suggests that an effort should

⁷³ This is not to imply that “groups” are *only* a product of the selection process, only that governments and humanitarian actors can play a role in shaping the collective narratives of flight, displacement, vulnerability, and risk surrounding groupings of refugees under consideration for resettlement. Catherine Besteman’s work on the Somali “Bantu,” discussed in the literature review section, demonstrates this. Besteman “Translating Race across Time and Space.”

⁷⁴ Roger Zetter, “Labelling Refugees: Forming and Transforming a Bureaucratic Identity,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* vol. 4.1, 1991, 46

⁷⁵ *Ibid*, 51.

⁷⁶ Melissa Phillips, “Convenient Labels, Inaccurate Representations: Turning Southern Sudanese Refugees into ‘African-Australians,’” *Australian Review of African Studies*, vol. 32.2, 2011, 60-61.

be made to learn “about pre-arrival experiences and histories of new communities to understand their unique diversity.”⁷⁷ Phillips is also skeptical of the label refugee, arguing that once applied it “seems to adhere hard and fast, long after refugees have been displaced and resettled.”⁷⁸

Despite this valid concern, my own preference is to use the term ‘refugee’ over ‘asylum seeker’ since the latter term is often used by those aiming to deny, or put into doubt, a particular status.

Catch-all labels that are reductionist omit the heterogeneity, diversity, and fluidity of groupings of refugees. Michael Hutt, for instance, notes that the Bhutanese, selected for Canada’s group processing, is ethnically diverse. Those that have sought refuge in Nepal are sometimes referred to as Lhotshampa or Nepali Bhutanese located in the south of the country. Hutt explains that “the Bhutanese commonly make a distinction between the Buddhist ‘Drukpas’ of the north and the Nepali-speaking southerners, who are known as Hindu.”⁷⁹ I will not delve too deeply into the origins of violence, intimidation, and ultimately the flight of many Bhutanese to Nepal, except to say that labelling played an important role in this, in particular the 1988 Census in the south by the Bhutanese government.⁸⁰ The narrow definition of citizenship in the Census was designed to exclude many Nepali-speaking southerners that were categorized as non-nationals. As a result, the government stripped many of the Lhotshampa of their citizenship.⁸¹ The contentious nature of naming is reflected in a “group profile” (a document that will be discussed at great length below) on the Bhutanese refugees prepared for US authorities. Commenting on the 1993 verification exercise conducted by representatives of the governments of both Bhutan and Nepal, it explains that “the term ‘refugee’ was intentionally avoided in the bilateral process. However, Nepal is using the term ‘Bhutanese refugees’ in its various

⁷⁷ Ibid, 59-60.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 73.

⁷⁹ Michael Hutt, “The Bhutanese Refugees: Between Verification, Repatriation and Royal Realpolitik,” *Peace and Democracy in South Asia*, vol. 1.1, 2005, 44.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 46.

⁸¹ Ibid.

independent reports while Bhutan is using the term ‘people living in the camps in Nepal.’⁸² The group profile highlights the diversity and heterogeneity of the Bhutanese refugees, explaining that there are “over 50 ethnic or caste groups.”⁸³ On top of this, Shiva K Dhungana suggests that “the Bhutanese refugees in and outside the camps are sharply divided over the issues of TCR [Third Country Resettlement], which has been further aggravated by the lack of transparent communication by the actors involved in resettling the refugees.”⁸⁴ The contentious nature of the label Bhutanese is reflected in a 2014 report by the Asian and Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund (APIASF). It explains that some refugees in the US see themselves as Nepali before Bhutanese. The report quotes Bishnu Subba, president of the Bhutanese Community of Akron, Ohio, who explains:

The elderly population prefers to identify themselves with their ethnic group such as Nepali because of the historical and cultural ties that they have with the people of Nepal. On the other hand, [the] majority of the so-called 1.5 generation would like to identify themselves as Nepali because of the fact that they lived in Nepal all their life before arriving to the U.S. Then there is another group, [a] mostly educated and politically conscious lot, who prefer to identify themselves simply as Bhutanese, and as Bhutanese American once they become the U.S. citizens through naturalization.⁸⁵

The effects of labelling practices are reflected in some of the testimonies of young Bhutanese refugees. One person explains: “life in the camps is bad and it’s getting worse. Fifteen years ago we were enjoying a happy life in Bhutan. The Bhutanese government evicted us, labelling us Nepalese. This was because we spoke Nepali and we wore traditional Nepali dress. In 1990 the Government began to persecute us. They burnt and destroyed our house and chased us into the

⁸² UNHCR, *Group Profile and Proposal Document, Bhutanese Refugees in Nepal for Group Resettlement Referral to the United States*, submitted June 12, th 10, see footnote 44.

⁸³ *Ibid*, 3.

⁸⁴ See Shiva K Dhungana, “Third Country Resettlement and the Bhutanese Refugee Crisis: A Critical Reflection,” *Refugee Watch* 35 (June 2010), 17-19.

⁸⁵ Asian and Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund (APIASF), *Invisible Newcomers, Refugees from Burma/Myanmar and Bhutan in the United States*. 2014, 33-34.

night. I was 2 years old at the time.”⁸⁶ Another individual argues “I am a Bhutanese girl and I am proud of being Bhutanese.”⁸⁷

In the case of Burmese refugees, also selected for Canada’s group processing, a UNHCR official explained that these refugees get upset if authorities use the label Myanmar. Many refugees in Thailand associate it with the Military Junta that persecuted them.⁸⁸ The APIASF report discusses the issue of using the Myanmar and Burma labels; it is worth quoting at length:

The usage of the term “Burma” is consistent with reports released by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security as they track refugees to the United States. We recognize the sensitivity that exists regarding the use of the term. We use Burmese Americans and Burmese refugees to encompass all refugees with origins in Burma/Myanmar with the understanding that there are numerous ethnic groups who prefer to be identified by their respective ethnic identity. We are also sensitive to the use of the country’s current official name of The Republic of the Union of Myanmar. Many in the international community use Myanmar because they believe that nations should be referred to by the name that they prefer. We are aware of the recent changes in U.S. relations with the country and that in its May 15, 2013 statement regarding Myanmar President Thein Sein’s visit to the United States, the Obama Administration referred to the country as Myanmar, as a courtesy gesture of respect for a government that is pursuing a transformative reform agenda.⁸⁹

The statements highlight the tensions between refugees that prefer the label Burmese, or their particular ethnic grouping, and many state officials that feel compelled to use the country name of Myanmar, especially in the context of international diplomacy. The same report explains:

In the case of those from Burma, it is evident that opinions vary. Some people refer to their ethnic group and those who are from ethnic minority groups tend to not refer to themselves as Burmese. According to John Tinpe, “[the] community identifies itself as Burmese or from Burma. [As] there are many [ethnic groups] within Burma, each [i]dentifies] as their own: Shan, Kachin, Karen, Kaya, Arakan, etc.”⁹⁰

⁸⁶ “Bhutanese Refugees: The Story of a Forgotten People,” accessed July 18, 2016, <http://www.bhutanese-refugees.com/index.php?id=14>

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ UNHCR, Personal interview with the author, July 14, 2012.

⁸⁹ Asian and Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund (APIASF), *Invisible Newcomers*.

⁹⁰ Ibid, 33.

While official statements in Canada use the labels Karen and Burmese,⁹¹ the UNHCR group profile presented to Canadian authorities uses Myanmar.⁹²

In light of these complexities, an important question arises: how do we approach the issue of naming (or labelling) without reproducing that which we wish to examine and question? I suggest that there is no perfect answer to this. As Joy Moncrieffe notes in the introduction to the edited volume: *The Power of Labelling*:

Invariably, we all label ourselves and others to signal different aspects of our identities. We may accept some of the labels society assigned to us in childhood (black, white; Christian, Muslim; Hutu, Tutsi; poor, non-poor) and reject some or add to them. Labels impose boundaries and define categories. They are means to construct our social world; to define norms in relation to others who bear similar or different labels. Arguably, without labels, social interaction would be costly and cumbersome.⁹³

Labelling, therefore, is an inevitable part of social life. This does not mean that we should take labels for granted. The authors of the book emphasize the relations of power, unintended outcomes, diverse and political motivations surrounding the labelling process.⁹⁴ In a similar vein, this study critically interrogates the process of bureaucratic and statist labelling related to the grouping of refugees, revealing how it simplifies complexity, omits heterogeneity and fluidity, and can be exclusionary. Still, some level of re-performing labelling, naming, and grouping is unavoidable when discussing group resettlement practices. In these instances, I do my best to approach this issue from the perspective of the refugees themselves, using the names they prefer. For instance, I will use the terms Karen and Burmese, but not Myanmar for the reasons noted above. Throughout the dissertation I discuss groupings framed along national lines, whether the

⁹¹ Government of Canada, “Backgrounder—Karen Refugees,” accessed July 20, 2016, <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/media/backgrounders/2007/2007-02-09.asp>

⁹² UNHCR, *Group Profile & Proposal Document, Myanmar Refugees*.

⁹³ Joy Moncrieffe, “Introduction, Labelling, Power and Accountability: How and Why ‘Our’ Categories Matter” in *The power of labelling, how people are categorized and why it matters*, ed. Joy Moncrieffe and Rosalind Eyben (London: Earthscan, 2007), 1.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

Hungarians, Ugandan Asians, Baltics, or the Somalis, Congolese, and Afghans. All of these labels are problematic as they subsume heterogeneity and diversity, while reinforcing statist identities. One solution is to use “scare quotes” every time names and labels are used, but this would be cumbersome. Instead, I encourage readers to be cognizant of the fluid, processual, and contingent nature of national, ethnic, racial, and bureaucratic categories, labels, and names. When encountering these throughout this study envision quotes around them. This will serve as a reminder to the reader to avoid taking for granted the labels attached to groupings of refugees and to interrogate the active role that authorities play in crafting them.

Group Resettlement and the Management of Refugee Camps

An important element of group resettlement decision-making is the management of refugee camps selected for these schemes. For this reason, I draw on the work of Turner and Hyndman, as well as Malkki.⁹⁵ However, my analysis differs slightly from these works in that its focus is on the construction of collective narratives surrounding group resettlement and the refugee camp as a site of preparation for resettlement. While group resettlement practices sort the risky from the at-risk, they do not suppress political subjectivities. Rather, collective experiences of violence, flight, and in some instances political resistance, are written into UNHCR group profiles in ways that serve statist and bureaucratic interests. The construction of narratives in these profiles relies on abstraction, simplification, and teleological assumptions. Group resettlement practices present a unique set of challenges for critical approaches to refugees. Thomson argues that the resettlement selection process, based on individuals, constructs the subject positions of doubting experts (i.e. the UNHCR) and deceptive refugees. This in turn leads to an emphasis on individual narratives of persecution that are presumed to be verifiable

⁹⁵ Liisa H. Malkki, “Speechless Emissaries: Refugees, Humanitarianism, and Dehistoricization,” *Cultural Anthropology* 11, no. 3 (1996); “National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples.”

compared to conditions of generalized violence experienced by groupings of refugees. She argues that the emphasis on individual experiences of persecution depoliticizes the collective experience of violence in refugee situations.⁹⁶ This is similar to Malkki's argument that humanitarian practices that rely on visual evidence of trauma play a role in silencing refugees and contributing to their dehistoricization and de-politicization.⁹⁷ This silencing and de-politicization can be seen when authorities attempt to verify or identify individual members of chosen groupings of refugees for resettlement. It is present in the risk management techniques that focus on specific types of information related to fraud, security, health, and integration potential. However, biopolitical practices based on groupings of refugees articulate common, or collective, narratives of persecution. In these instances, the issue becomes one of how these narratives are constructed; towards what ends; what is omitted in them? Already mentioned is the work of Besteman on the Somali "Bantu" identity. Bram Jansen examines the effects of resettlement on refugee camps highlighting how refugee cheating should be viewed as "a form of identity politics or impression management in an environment where identity is the main determinant of obtaining access to the structure of the refugee regime."⁹⁸ Jansen notes that in the wake of the Somali "Bantu" group resettlement in Kakuma Kenya, "groups in the camps began to organize themselves in order to become eligible for this desirable durable solution. Identity became an issue of access to opportunities."⁹⁹ I build on this type of research by considering the grouping of refugees within the context of resettlement decision-making.

⁹⁶ Thomson, Marnie Jane. "Black Boxes of Bureaucracy: Transparency and Opacity in the Resettlement Process of Congolese Refugees". *Political and Legal Anthropology Review (Polar)*. Vol. 35.2 (2012).

⁹⁷ Malkki, "Speechless Emissaries."

⁹⁸ Jansen, "Between vulnerability and assertiveness," 577.

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 578.

Sovereign Power, Biopolitics, and the Governmentalization of Resettlement Decisions

While this study of group resettlement employs a governmentality approach, it takes seriously the exercising of sovereign power. Drawing on Agamben, Nyers explains that “sovereignty, based on the relation of the exception, is a violent relation in the sense that it is a practice that works to keep things apart, create boundaries, and maintain separateness.”¹⁰⁰ For this reason, it decides which groupings of refugees are worthy of inclusion in group resettlement schemes and which ones are excluded. It imposes boundaries on the spaces of refugee camps, attempting to encapsulate and separate what are deemed as vulnerable and therefore “deserving” groupings of refugees from the remaining refugees. Sovereign power reproduces the border through the examinations of group profiles remotely. The desire for what are presumed to be internally homogenous and bounded groupings of refugees reflects sovereign logics. As Goldberg argues in his analysis of how the “racial state” operates: “homogeneity is to be viewed as heterogeneity in denial, or more deeply yet as the recognition of heterogeneity at once repressed.”¹⁰¹ Group resettlement practices reinforce statist political imaginaries, simplify and abstract, and order disorder.¹⁰²

In *Society Must be Defended*, Foucault considers how the sovereign right to kill functions in a biopolitical system aimed at promoting the life of the species. Biopolitics inscribes racism into the mechanisms of the state that fragments or subdivides the species into subspecies

¹⁰⁰ Peter Nyers, *Rethinking Refugees*, 41.

¹⁰¹ David Theo Goldberg, *The Racial State* (Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 2002), 16. I also draw on the work of authors such as Mark Neocleous, James C. Scott, Hyndman, and Nevat Soguk. Mark Neocleous, “Off the Map, On Violence and Cartography,” *European Journal of Social Theory* 6, no. 4 (2003); James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition have Failed*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); Hyndman, “Managing Displacement”; Nevzat Soguk, *States and Strangers, Refugees and Displacements of Statecraft* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

¹⁰² Mark Neocleous, “Off the Map”; Scott, *Seeing like a State*; Hyndman, *Managing Displacement*.

understood as different races viewed as superior or inferior/threatening.¹⁰³ This form of racism, explains Foucault:

makes it possible to establish a relationship between my life and the death of the other that is not a military or warlike relationship of confrontation, but a biological-type relationship...the death of the other, the death of the bad race, of the inferior race (or the degenerate, or abnormal) is something that will make life in general healthier: healthier and purer.¹⁰⁴

When the state functions in the biopolitical mode this form of biological racism justifies techniques aimed at eliminating threats, both internal and external to the population, including murder, political death, expulsion or rejection.¹⁰⁵ It is in this manner that a form of power designed to promote the life of the species can sometimes kill.

Many authors have developed Foucault's notion of biopolitics and biopower. Simon Turner, for instance, points to a "caring biopower" at work in refugee camps in Tanzania concerned with the life and health of the refugee population. This "caring biopower" aims to de-politicize refugee camps, separating perceived trouble-makers from innocent victims.¹⁰⁶ Some authors have considered how changing conceptions of biological existence have altered security and risk practices. Dillon explains that this existence is now premised on circulation, connectivity, complexity and radical contingency.¹⁰⁷ The notion of catastrophic risk¹⁰⁸ is based on this conception of human existence embedded in what Braun calls a "global economy of exchange and circulation."¹⁰⁹ Cooper argues that "life understood in terms of radical contingency is linked to... catastrophic risk, which operates outside the calculative capabilities of traditional

¹⁰³ Michel Foucault, *Society Must be Defended, Lectures at the College De France, 1975 -76*, ed. Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana, trans. David Macey (New York: Picador, 1997), 254-255.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 255.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 256.

¹⁰⁶ Simon Turner, *Politics of Innocence: Hutu Identity, Conflict, and Camp Life* (Berghahn Books, 2010).

¹⁰⁷ Michael Dillon, "Underwriting Security," *Security Dialogue* 39 (2008).

¹⁰⁸ See: Melinda Cooper, "Pre-empting Emergence: The Biological Turn in the War on Terror," *Theory, Culture & Society* 23, no. 4 (2006).

¹⁰⁹ Bruce Braun, "Biopolitics and the molecularization of life," *Cultural Geographies* 14 (2007).

risk thinking.”¹¹⁰ She suggests that the speculative act of preemption within the biological world has led a fundamental rethinking of US defense policy as it attempts to incorporate the whole of life into its strategic vision.¹¹¹ In this dissertation I consider how biopolitics operates through an instrumental version of Brubaker’s notion of groupism. I highlight how authorities attempt to reproduce an idealized perception of “groups” based on firm boundaries, internal sameness, and similar narratives of persecution and displacement. Government officials respond to fluidity, contingency, and heterogeneity in refugee camps by producing order, fixity, firm boundaries, and homogeneity. Biopolitics act on these spaces, carving out groupings of refugees, encapsulating them, and protecting them from threats, whether in the form of imposters, armed bandits, or war criminals. I consider how biopolitics operates through risk management techniques based on “targeted governance,” abstracting specific types of information of interest to authorities from the complex conditions that prevail within refugee camps.

Methodology

In studying group resettlement schemes, I rely on document analysis and interviews with key individuals within Canada and internationally. The dissertation draws on numerous Canadian documents such as the CIC Overseas Processing Manual, Annual Reports to Parliament on Immigration, Reports on Plans and Priorities, and Cabinet documents and notes obtained at the Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa. It also analyzes official UNHCR documents such as the Resettlement Handbook, Annual Projected Global Resettlement Needs, Progress Report’s on Resettlement, Working Group on Resettlement (WGR) documents, and Group Profile and Proposal Documents (GPPDs). I also examine the U.S. Department of State’s Annual Proposed Refugee Admissions and Refugee Council USA documents.

¹¹⁰ Cooper, “Pre-empting Emergence.”

¹¹¹ Ibid.

While archival research provides useful insights into the historical selection of groupings of refugees in Canada, the identification of potential refugee group resettlement candidates, and official group resettlement procedures, it reveals less about how decisions are made. For this reason, interviews were conducted with officials from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAIT), Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA), United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR). A total of 12 interviews were conducted. I also attended several Canadian Council for Refugees consultations which yielded important insights into the NGO perspective on Canada's group processing and resettlement in general. Following the formal interviews I had regular correspondence with the interviewees, as well as others, regarding unfolding group resettlement decisions and changes to group processing.

It should be noted that while I was able to interview two officials at CIC I did come up against considerable resistance from others within the department despite this being the lead agency for group processing. In fact, obtaining information on how group resettlement decisions are made in general was difficult. One example is that the UNHCR headquarters refused to disclose which groupings of refugees had been considered for group resettlement and yet not chosen. Officials were either unwilling to share this list or claimed that the organization simply does not keep those sorts of records. For these reasons, I had some difficulty in completing the table in Appendix A. Despite this, some UNHCR and Canadian government officials provided important information that filled some of these gaps. It took some effort to obtain two official UNHCR Group Profile and Proposal Documents (GPPDs) (group profiles) on the Bhutanese and Burmese, something normally not shared with the public. Some officials were reluctant to share

information on state to state meetings. For all of these reasons, obtaining information on Canada's group processing program required an aggressive journalistic and indirect approach.

While the empirical focus of this dissertation is on Canada's group processing program, it also includes the UNHCR's group methodology and the US's P-2 group referral program. This is for both empirical and theoretical reasons. There are very few examples of Canada's group processing program (see Table in Appendix A). The interviewing of UNHCR officials involved with the US's P-2 group referrals provided access to many more examples of group resettlement while shedding light on Canada's group processing program given the multilateral character of both the Bhutanese and Karen Burmese resettlement initiatives that both Canada and the US played a role in.

Chapter Overview

The first chapter provides an historical analysis of the Canadian governments' response to various refugee movements beginning in the 1930s up until the 1970s. It is based on analysis of government cabinet documents and discussions during this period obtained from the Library and Archives of Canada in Ottawa. The chapter draws attention to various historical factors considered by the Canadian government in comparing and contrasting groupings of overseas refugees, from racial preferences, economic considerations and integration potential, to cold war political motivations. It examines Canada's response to the post-WWII "displaced persons" camps in Europe, the movement of the Hungarians in 1956-7, Tibetans in 1970, Ugandan Asians in 1972, Chileans in 1973, and the Indochinese in the late 1970s. The chapter introduces important themes discussed throughout the dissertation such as how secrecy and bureaucratic rationales influence resettlement decision-making. Historically, the Canadian government has

concealed those aspects of resettlement decision-making that it viewed as contentious. Behind closed doors, it attempted to balance Cold War political preferences, security concerns, integration considerations, and racial preferences in making resettlement decisions. It expressed preferences for certain groupings of refugees by relaxing and in some instances suspending normal immigration, health, and security requirements.

The second chapter begins by tracing the development of Canada's Indo-Chinese Designated Class; a regulatory framework that shares some similarities with contemporary group resettlement. I point to how eligibility rules under this framework were loosened or tightened depending on the context. The chapter considers how the demise of this framework, and largescale Indo-Chinese resettlement in general, played a role in shaping the first examples of group resettlement in the 1990s. It draws attention to the Bosnian refugee crisis as a key moment that laid the foundation for the UNHCR's group profiles. The desire for easily identifiable, self-contained, and homogenous groupings of refugees represented a new factor of consideration in the state's assessments of the ideal grouping of refugees. While the preoccupation with visualizing and drawing boundaries around chosen groupings of refugees is formally linked to concerns over fraud and security, I argue that it reflects the state's assumption of, and preference for, groupness. Moreover, the drive for internal homogeneity and bounded groupings reaffirms sovereignties' hold on territories and populations, visualizing them, and bordering them.

The third chapter is based on several interviews with both UNHCR and Canadian Immigration officials. It draws on two official UNHCR Group Profile and Proposal Documents (GPPDs) (group profiles) on the Bhutanese and Burmese. The chapter examines how the desire for visibility, clear boundaries, and homogeneity under group resettlement influences the spaces of refugee camps. It begins by considering UNHCR registration practices highlighting the role

they play in helping resettlement states visualize refugee camps and craft groupings of refugees under consideration for resettlement. I consider the gaps between the UNHCR's formal procedures for identifying groupings of refugees for resettlement and the actual practices of selection. While NGO's play a role in mapping global vulnerability, a select number of UNHCR and government officials is involved in the decision-making process under group resettlement. The chapter considers how framings of vulnerability, risk, and commonality are employed in UNHCR group profiles. These profiles subdivide groupings of refugees according to these categories. In the final part of the chapter I connect the UNHCR's mapping, registration, and profiling to the exercise of expertise away from refugee camps in places such as the UNHCR headquarters in Geneva and the protracted refugee situations working group in Ottawa. I show how refugee camps targeted for group resettlement are subjected to biopolitical practices based on ordering, mapping, and visibility.

The fourth chapter examines several group resettlement decisions, especially risk management techniques linked to "targeted governance" and remote border control. These techniques rely on information related to integration, risk, admissibility, efficiency, and biodata. The chapter considers how the testing for groupness under group resettlement is framed by gender and essentialist notions of culture. It draws attention to how the multilateral nature of largescale group resettlement decisions affords Western governments more latitude to consider the health, security risk, and integration potential of groupings of refugees. Concerns over integration and security often express hidden cultural and religious preferences. While overt forms of racism have been eliminated from resettlement decisions, obsessions over fraud, security, and efficiency mask the influence of cultural assumptions and preferences in group resettlement schemes. The final part of the chapter considers how group resettlement programs

are part of “targeted governance” aimed at alleviating the perceived security implications of “protracted refugee situations.”

The fifth chapter examines recent changes to Canada’s resettlement program that purportedly aim to improve the social and economic outcomes of resettled refugees through the limiting of what are referred to as high needs refugees and the restructuring of the entire resettlement program from a diffuse global approach towards a more focused approach centered on the selection of a few refugee populations over several years. The Canadian government has attempted to sell the reforms to refugee advocates by claiming that this approach to resettlement would improve settlement outcomes, clear backlogs in the private sponsorship stream, and create efficiencies in the overseas processing of refugees based on previous group processing experiences.

At work in the so-called multiyear commitments are biopolitical practices and the bureaucratic logic of group processing. Reflecting Valverde’s and Mopas’s concept of “targeted governance,” the reforms are based on the use of risk management techniques aimed at determining where to focus limited resettlement spaces on refugee populations deemed relatively healthy, homogenous, easy to integrate, and easy to process. The chapter also highlights tensions between a refugee regime formally based on the individual and the desire of governments to carve-out specific groupings from broader refugee movements. In the final part of the chapter I consider the Canadian government’s recent largescale resettlement of Syrian refugees. The seemingly open and democratic nature of how this resettlement decision unfolded can be contrasted with the usual secretive nature of group processing decisions. Despite this, I argue that biopolitics operated through both the governments and general public’s unease with the Syrians, as a grouping, perceived as risky and messy.

The final chapter reflects on the implications of the grouping process at work in group resettlement schemes. It considers this process in relation to border practices, risk management techniques, unease, secrecy, and sovereign power. I contemplate the possibilities for cultivating progressive alternatives to the current makeup of group resettlement schemes. The chapter considers potential future research initiatives that build on and extend the research findings of the dissertation.

Chapter One: An Historical Examination of Canada's Response to Refugee Movements from the 1930s to the 1970s

Introduction

Historically, the Canadian government has selected overseas refugees based on the assumption of various national, ethnic, and racial groupings, from “displaced persons” and “hard-cores” in the aftermath of World War II, to anti-communist “heroes” such as “the Hungarians” during the Cold War. This chapter focusses on the period of the 1930s up to the late 1970s and the beginning of the Indochinese refugee movement. A variety factors influenced the government's response to overseas refugees during this period, including: integration potential; security concerns; Cold War political preferences; racialized preferences; and economic needs. A review of Cabinet documents and notes suggests that various governments in Canada expressed their preferences for specific categories of refugees by either relaxing or in some cases suspending what was considered the normal immigration, health, and security requirements at the time. These preferences, and sometimes exclusions, applied to both onshore and offshore practices.

I begin the chapter by considering the government's response to refugees in the 1930s highlighting the racialized and exclusionary nature of immigration policies towards Jewish and what the government referred to as “Asiatic Races.” Notwithstanding Canada's closed-door refugee policy during this period, exceptions were made for Sudeten refugees seen as potential farm labours by the immigration departments of the Canadian railroads. The chapter then turns its attention to the selection of refugees from Europe following WWII, referred to in official correspondence as displaced persons. During this time, the Canadian government categorized refugees based on a mixture of racial preferences, economic priorities and Cold War political

preferences. The chapter considers its response to East German farm labours, Baltics, female domestic workers, and the so-called “hard-core” cases left behind in displaced persons camps in Europe. It then reflects on Canada’s positive response to the plight of Hungarian refugees in 1956. Viewed as anti-communist “heroes” and what were referred to as “excellent types” in terms of integration potential, the government relaxed immigration requirements in order to expedite the arrival of Hungarians. This positive reaction is contrasted with a lukewarm response to Polish Jews fleeing persecution during the same time period. The chapter then considers the selection of Tibetan refugees in the early 1970s. Cabinet documents and other official correspondence suggest that government officials considered a formal conception of group resettlement. While the government decided against this, in practice, immigration officials assessed and selected the Tibetans as a grouping. The chapter then examines Canada’s response to Chileans fleeing the Pinochet Coup in 1973. During the 1970s the government was put on the defense over its responses to the Chileans and other refugee movements such as the Ugandan Asians, Hungarians, and Indo-Chinese. Faced with charges of discrimination by NGOs at the time, it pursued a public relations campaign that downplayed Cold War strategic preferences and security concerns, while emphasizing bureaucratic technicalities in its varying responses to these groupings of refugees.

The 1930s: Racism and the Sudeten Exception

During the 1930s Canada’s immigration policies and laws were explicitly racist. This has been widely discussed. For example, the Canadian Council for Refugees notes that the 1923 Chinese Immigration Act “prohibited all Chinese immigrants except diplomats, students,

children of Canadians and an investor class.”¹¹² In September 1930, Order in Council P.C. 2115 banned immigration of what it called “Asiatic races”, with few exceptions.¹¹³ As Abella illustrates, the government also blocked the entry of Christian Armenians, considered an “Asian race”, fleeing Turkish persecution both during and after WWI.¹¹⁴ A similar racist logic governed Canada’s response to Jewish refugees both prior to and during WWII. As Abella argues, “of the more than 800,000 Jews seeking refuge from the Third Reich in the years from 1933 to 1939, Canada found room for approximately 4000. In a world which was decidedly inhospitable to refugees, Canada was no exception.”¹¹⁵

In contrast to this, the Canadian government opened its doors to German-speaking Sudeten refugees prior to WWII. It delegated authority to the immigration departments of both the Canadian Pacific and National Railways in order to resettle these refugees.¹¹⁶ Immigration officials from the railways were authorized to visit refugee camps in Europe in order to select farm families and glassworkers considered suitable for work in Canada.¹¹⁷ Newspaper articles at the time described the Sudeten as “new day pioneers”, who were self-sufficient and adept at tilling the land.¹¹⁸ Dirks provides several reasons as to why the Sudeten were permitted to enter Canada while most refugees at the time were not. First, the Sudeten had political and financial support from the British government and would therefore not cost the Canadian government any

¹¹² Canadian Council for Refugees, “A hundred years of immigration to Canada 1900 – 1999,” *Canadian Council for Refugees*, accessed July 2013, <https://ccrweb.ca/en/hundred-years-immigration-canada-1900-1999>

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Irving Abella, “Canadian refugee policy to 1980: historical overview” in *The International refugee crisis: British and Canadian responses*, ed. Vaughan Robinson (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan in association with the Refugee Studies Programme, University of Oxford, 1993).

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 86

¹¹⁶ Dirks, *Canada's refugee policy: indifference or opportunism?* , 75-76.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, 75.

¹¹⁸ NEA Service, “Sudeten Refugee Families Find Freedom and Opportunity in Canadian Northwest,” *The Victoria Advocate* (Victoria, Texas), Oct 12, 1939, <http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=861&dat=19391012&id=JFIdAAAIBAJ&sjid=kVoEAAAIBAJ&pg=2184,3691801>

money to settle them. Second, most of the German-speaking Sudeten were Roman Catholic, “a major distinction from the thousands of Jews who sought entry to Canada.”¹¹⁹ Dirks discusses how the authority to select the Sudeten was delegated to the railroads in order to distance the government from potential domestic criticism in a climate of unemployment and external criticism from Germany.¹²⁰ As will be seen throughout this chapter and the rest of the dissertation, the Canadian government has long exercised selective publicity (and secrecy) regarding the selection of overseas refugees.

The Post-WWII Period: “Displaced Person’s” Camps

Following WWII, countries such as the United States, Canada, and Australia selected thousands of refugees from camps in Europe. Despite Canada’s attempts during the war to limit as much as possible the number of refugees reaching its shores, it simply could not ignore the gravity of the situation in Europe following the war. While its acceptance of thousands of refugees was framed in humanitarian terms, the primary concern was to select suitable labour for its expanding economy. Sandvik explains that the post WWII resettlement schemes were strategically linked to the changing conditions of the world economy and its associated labor shortage:

The original resettlement programs were focused on external capabilities. They were explicitly designed to ensure the selection of candidates who were suitable (physically and mentally fit) for domestic labor markets (which required labor intensive/unsafe/strenuous work), and of appropriate nationalities, ethnicities and religions, and with acceptable family compositions.¹²¹

This is reflected in the types of refugees that Canada selected from Europe.

¹¹⁹ Dirks, *Canada’s refugee policy*, 85, 86.

¹²⁰ *Ibid*, 76, 85.

¹²¹ Sandvik, “A Legal History: the Emergence of the African Resettlement Candidate,” 10.

In March 1947 Canada's Minister of Mines and Resources submitted a report to Cabinet that encouraged the movement of what was referred to as "group labour" from the displaced persons camps in Europe. The report recommended the setting up of an interdepartmental committee consisting of representatives of the Departments of Labour and Mines and Resources (Immigration Branch).¹²² The makeup of the committee reflected the interest of the government to use the selection of refugees in Europe as a de facto immigration program for resource expansion in Canada. It considered the selection and admission of various occupational "groups," which included 1,400 woods workers, 2,000 craftsmen for the clothing industry, and 2,000 women for domestic work in private homes, hospitals, and similar institutions.¹²³ In June 1947 the Canadian government passed an order-in-council authorizing the entry of an initial 5,000 non-sponsored displaced persons and sent mobile immigration teams composed of immigration, medical, security, and labour officials to Germany and Austria.¹²⁴ Included in the teams were representatives of employers to "assist in the selection of *group* labour in order to assure suitability for employment."¹²⁵ As Knowles suggests "[the mobile immigration teams] resembled itinerant 'head hunters', only their mission was to select able-bodied refugees."¹²⁶

The expression "group labour" can be viewed as an institutional category created for the purposes of sorting overseas refugees into various groupings based on assumed sets of labour skills.¹²⁷ At times, this category intersected with assumptions about gender.

¹²² LNAC, RG2, Vol. 2640 Privy Council Office, Series A-5-a, Cabinet Conclusion, March 27, 1947.

¹²³ LNAC, *Immigration; Acceptance of Displaced Persons; Selection and Admission of Special Groups*, Privy Council Office, RG2, Vol. 2640, Series A-5-a, June 5th, 1947.

¹²⁴ Valerie Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates, Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540 – 2007* (Canada: The Dundurn Group, 2007), 164-65.

¹²⁵ LNAC, Memorandum to the Cabinet—Immigration; Selection and Admission of Special Groups, Raymond Ranger, Privy Council Office, C.D. Howe, Acting Minister of Mines and Resources, Chairman, June 2, 1947. Italics added.

¹²⁶ Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates*, 165.

¹²⁷ See Brubaker's discussion of the distinction between categories and groups, *Ethnicity without Groups*, 12- 13.

This is reflected in the overseas selection of women for domestic work. Upon arrival in Canada, the YWCA and Catholic Women's League provided settlement services to the females, including: "basic instruction in citizenship, hygiene and household operation."¹²⁸ The International Refugee Organization had been created to manage the displaced persons camps on behalf of countries such as Canada, Australia, and the United States. Holborn's largely uncritical analysis of the organization nonetheless reveals the gendered assumptions that underpinned the large grouped resettlement programs at the time.¹²⁹ She describes how there was an expectation that male breadwinners would be willing to leave their families behind to work in countries such as Canada.¹³⁰ Selection practices presupposed the existence of a patriarchal system based on the male breadwinner. The selection of female refugees for domestic work in Canada reinforced this system by presupposing what constituted women's work outside the patriarchal family.

During the early post-war period the Canadian government wanted to expand the population.¹³¹ This expansion, however, would be based on immigrants and refugees considered the "right fit" for Canada and the government at the time was comfortable in acknowledging this. An April 1947 internal memo on immigration policy suggested that:

With regard to the selection of immigrants, a great deal has been said about discrimination. I want to make it quite clear that Canada is perfectly within her rights in selecting the persons whom we regard as desirable future citizens. It is not a 'fundamental human right' of any alien to enter Canada.¹³²

By "desirable" this meant predominantly white Europeans. The government had earlier addressed criticism regarding its discriminatory practices and in a similar fashion attempted to

¹²⁸ LNAC, *Immigration; Admission of Displaced Persons; domestic help*. Cabinet Conclusion, 18th July, 1947

¹²⁹ Louise Wilhemine Holborn, *The International Refugee Organization, a Specialized Agency of the United Nations: Its History and Work, 1946-1952* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956).

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, 398.

¹³¹ LNAC, *Draft- Canadian Immigration Policy*, Cabinet Document number 444, 23rd April, 1947.

¹³² *Ibid*

justify its racist policies. This was done in a manner that demonstrates the assumption of racial and class-based groupings:

The claim is sometimes made that Canada's immigration laws reflect class and race discrimination: they do, and necessarily so. Some form of discrimination cannot be avoided if immigration is to be effectively controlled. In order to prevent the creation in Canada of expanding non assimilable racial groups, the prohibiting of entry to immigrants of non assimilable races is necessary.¹³³

Drawing on Brubaker, it is important to highlight the government's use of racialized and classist categories in its assessment and sorting of overseas refugees and immigrants as opposed to reifying the existence of "classes" and "races" as substantial groups or entities.¹³⁴ Brubaker explains:

Understanding the reality of race... does not require us to posit the existence of races. Racial idioms, ideologies, narratives, categories, and systems of classification, and racialized ways of seeing, thinking, talking, and framing claims, are real and consequential, especially when they are embedded in powerful organizations. But the reality of race—and even its overwhelming coercive power in some settings—does not depend on the existence of "races."¹³⁵

The government's selection or non-selection of displaced persons was racially framed. As noted by Abella, Canada's doors remained closed to Jewish refugees after the war, "various schemes were devised to bring in displaced persons... but every single one stipulated that no Jews be accepted."¹³⁶ Rather, Canada preferred the selection of white Baltic refugees (Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians) along with other Nordic peoples.¹³⁷

The employment of racial categories cut across the distinction between those that arrived in Canada "illegally" and those selected in camps in Europe. It can be seen in the government's

¹³³ LNAC, *Immigration*, Memorandum, Department of Mines and Resources, September 5, 1945.

¹³⁴ Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups*, 11.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹³⁶ Abella, "Canadian Refugee Policy," 88

¹³⁷ Knowles, *Strangers at our Gate*, 166.

response to the arrival of what were referred to as unauthorized displaced persons from Sweden on small boats in 1948-49.¹³⁸ Authorities were concerned that these refugees had not gone through prior immigration examination in Sweden nor received a visa before arriving in Canada. In order to deal with the issue, then Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent suggested that warnings be made to immigrants and the owners of the boats overseas against unauthorized arrivals in Canada. The warnings, explained the Prime Minister, “should not be couched in too binding terms.....the announcement might leave a possible opening to permit genuine hardship cases to be allowed entry without reversing any stated policy of the government.”¹³⁹ The Prime Minister wanted the flexibility to suspend normal immigration requirements for refugees framed as desirable types. For example, at a Cabinet meeting in 1948 the Minister of Mines and Resources submitted a recommendation to Cabinet to:

Authorize the admission of an additional group of 145 refugees, principally Baltic, who had arrived at Canadian ports from Sweden. These persons had not undergone health examination or security screening prior to arrival. However, they represented a desirable type of immigrant and the only alternative to their admission was to return them to Sweden at government expense.¹⁴⁰

The Minister based this recommendation on reports received from Officials of the Immigration Branch, who argued that:

The passengers on this vessel, almost without exception, are of a particularly desirable type of Baltic immigrant. They include about 40 family units, the balance having come forward as individuals. They comprise machinists, fishermen, textile workers, electricians, carpenters, dressmakers, etc. The amount of money in their possession totals approximately \$1, 500 000 and some claim they have funds now being transferred to

¹³⁸ See LNAC, *Immigration, admission of special small groups of refugees*, Cabinet Conclusion, vol. 2642, 1st September, 1948; LNAC, *D.P. Immigrants/Visas*, Cabinet Conclusion, vol. 2644, 31st August, 1949.

¹³⁹ LNAC, *D.P. immigrants/visas*, Cabinet Conclusion, volume 2644, 31st August, 1949

¹⁴⁰ LNAC, *Immigration, Admission of Special Small Groups of Refugees*, Cabinet Conclusion, volume 2642, 1st September, 1948

them in Canada. The Department of Labour is interviewing these aliens and expects that placing them in employment will not be too difficult if admission is authorized.¹⁴¹

This response was in stark contrast to the government's infamous reaction in June 1938 to 900 Jews fleeing Nazi persecution. As Abella explains, they were turned away and forced back to Europe where many of them ended up killed in Nazi death camps.¹⁴² The decision to make an exception for refugees from the Baltics can be contrasted to other refugees that arrived by boats to Canada's shores during this period, such as the crew and passengers of the S.S. *Sarabande*, which consisted of Latvians, Estonians, Poles, Russians, Ukrainians, and one Irish person.¹⁴³ In this case, the Labour Department argued that the placement of these refugees would entail considerable difficulty and that "such placement would likely be slow, necessitating somewhat lengthy maintenance in hostels."¹⁴⁴ The same memo that praised refugees from the Baltics for being a desirable type argued that "the applicants on this ship [the S.S. *Sarabande*] are not of the same type as those on the 'Parnu' [i.e. the Baltics]. It is intended that all the passengers on the vessel who cannot comply with existing Immigration regulations be rejected and returned to Sweden."¹⁴⁵ Given the prevailing immigration regulations at the time, this meant deporting all of the refugees with the exception of the one Irish person.

Historically, both the Canadian government and general public have viewed the unauthorized arrival by boat of refugees and immigrants as threatening. This continues to be the

¹⁴¹ LNAC, Memorandum to the Cabinet, *Displaced person immigrants proceeding to Canada from Sweden by small boats without obtaining visas prior to embarkation*, Acting Minister of Mines and Resources, 29th August, 1949.

¹⁴² Abella, "Canadian Refugee Policy," 88.

¹⁴³ LNAC, *Displaced persons at Halifax ex the S.S. "Sarabande" and S.S. "Amanda" having arrived from Sweden without obtaining visas prior to embarkation*. Memorandum to the Cabinet, Department of Mines and Resources, 20th September, 1949.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ LNAC, Memorandum to the Cabinet, *Displaced person immigrants proceeding to Canada from Sweden by small boats without obtaining visas prior to embarkation*, Acting Minister of Mines and Resources, 29th August, 1949.

case with the more recent arrivals of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees.¹⁴⁶ The Canadian government's decision in 1949 to relax immigration requirements and accept refugees from the Baltics arriving in this manner represents an important exception. This preference occurred both within Canada and in camps in Europe.

The Early Cold War Period

As the post-WWII period progressed, Cold War politics increasingly influenced Canada's response to refugees and immigrants.¹⁴⁷ In the late 1940s there were a series of discussions between the Cabinet and the RCMP Security Panel over how to resolve the perceived need for security screening of immigrants, the reality of increased applications and backlogs, and the need to continue to grow Canada's economy.¹⁴⁸ In a cabinet meeting in February 1947 the Minister of Mines and Resources circulated a report by the RCMP Security Panel that aimed to "provide a solution to the problem which would permit immigration on an increased scale and at the same time involve the least element of risk from a security standpoint."¹⁴⁹ The Panel found the current system incapable of realizing this objective and therefore considered other solutions. One of these was to abandon screening outright. The Panel took issue with this idea pointing to the likely presence of at least some subversives within immigrant movements coming from the so-called "Soviet sphere of influence."¹⁵⁰ Another proposal attempted to address this concern by suggesting that security screening be concentrated on Eastern European countries. It was concluded, however, that the adoption of this approach:

¹⁴⁶ Raveena Aulakh, "Tamil asylum-seekers spark Canadian vitriol, anger," *Toronto Star*, Published Mon Aug 16 2010,

http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2010/08/16/tamil_asylumseekers_spark_canadian_vitriol_anger.html

¹⁴⁷ See Whitaker, *Double Standards*.

¹⁴⁸ LNAC, *Security examination of prospective immigrants*. Memorandum to the Cabinet, E.W.T. Gill, Vice-Chairman, Security Panel, Cabinet Document 387, 4th February, 1947.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

would retard immigration from the areas in question, and would involve notifying relatives of the consequent delays and reasons therefor. This would, in turn, be tantamount to a statement of government policy that immigration from certain specified countries would be on a restricted basis.¹⁵¹

Whitaker highlights the tensions between politicians and security bureaucrats during the Cold War. He argues that from the point of view of the Canadian security establishment, represented by the RCMP Security Panel, all immigration represented a threat to national security.¹⁵²

Politicians such as former Immigration Minister Jack Pickersgill struggled with the Panel to admit refugees viewed as anti-Communists in a bid to score pro-Western points in the Cold War ideological battle.¹⁵³ Yet, in its early stages, the Security Panel acknowledged the strategic interests of the Cabinet to increase immigration. It was also aware, and concerned, that the government would face criticism if it concentrated security screening on Eastern Europe. The Security Panel ended up recommending the continuation of:

the present system of screening, but only to the extent that it would not interfere with the entry into Canada of immigrants otherwise acceptable—the question as to who would be selected for screening being left to the discretion of the R.C.M.P.¹⁵⁴

From the Panel's perspective, this would resolve the issue of maintaining some form of security while still increasing immigration levels. The Cabinet decided in favor of the Panel's recommendations and gave the RCMP discretion to apply security screening to individual cases that they felt warranted it.

A year later, the Department of External Affairs, the Immigration Branch, and the RCMP considered the admission to Canada of “democratic anti-Communist refugees.”¹⁵⁵ Discussions

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Whitaker, *Double Standards*, 98.

¹⁵³ Ibid, 86-87.

¹⁵⁴ LNAC, *Security examination of prospective immigrants*. Memorandum to the Cabinet, E.W.T. Gill, Vice-Chairman, Security Panel, Cabinet Document 387, 4th February, 1947.

¹⁵⁵ LNAC, *Immigration; Admission of Political Refugees*. Cabinet Conclusion 14th May 1948.

were based on a memo prepared by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, which placed refugees into three categories based on their point of origin. This included:

(a) Those who are in countries which have fallen under Communist domination, e.g., Czechoslovakia, and whose lives are in danger; (b) those who are in countries where the danger of Communist domination may become imminent, e.g., Greece and Finland; (c) those who are in other countries.¹⁵⁶

The memo (by definition) recommended that applicants in countries under “Communist domination” should obtain a visa in the country that they have fled to, the assumption being that anti-Communists would not want to be seen entering a Canadian mission in their country nor would they be able to leave the country legally.¹⁵⁷ Applicants in the category “other countries” would be dealt with by existing immigration regulations, including security screening, while visa applications from those countries where communist control appeared imminent would be considered “by a small interdepartmental group consisting of representatives of External Affairs, Immigration and the R.C.M.P.”¹⁵⁸

The following year, in 1949, the Cabinet once again considered the application of security screening by the Security Panel. This time the RCMP was having problems securing information on applicants from Eastern European Countries, Israel, and China. The Security Panel made several suggestions to Cabinet, including one that called for “rejecting all applications” from these areas.¹⁵⁹ This approach was passed over since it did not resolve the issue of balancing security concerns with the interest to attract some immigrants and refugees, whether for Cold War ideological reasons, the need for certain labour skills, or racial preferences. This last factor was reflected in the Panel’s recommendation to Cabinet to allow

¹⁵⁶ LNAC, *The admission to Canada and subsequent settlement of democratic anti-communist refugees*. Memorandum to the Cabinet, (signed) Louis. S. St. Laurent, Secretary of State for External Affairs, Department of External Affairs, 7th May, 1948.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ LNAC, *Immigration; Admission of Political Refugees*. Cabinet Conclusion 14th May 1948

¹⁵⁹ LNAC, *Immigration; security screening*, Cabinet Conclusion, vol. 2644, 9th September, 1949.

applicants from eastern European countries and Israel to be considered on their merits at various visa-issuing centers in Western Europe, while applicants from China would be rejected, with the exception of:

women with children under 18 years of age not accompanied by an adult male; unaccompanied male and female children 18 years of age and under; men over 65 and women 60 years of age; priests, clergymen, recognized members of religious bodies.¹⁶⁰

The recommended procedures highlight how security concerns intersected with racial and gender categories. The perceived threat of communist “subversives” influenced the state’s categorization of overseas refugees and immigrants.

On the surface, security screening during this early Cold War period appeared to be individually based. Cabinet gave the RCMP increased discretionary powers to adjudicate between individual cases. Yet, discussions between it and the Security Panel suggest differences in security screening in light of different categories of refugees. The application of procedures was different for “anti-democratic refugees” inside and outside the “Soviet sphere of influence,” and for so-called “Asiatic races.” In short, where a refugee originated from determined the security screening practices they faced by the RCMP.

As the Cold War progressed, economic needs continued to shape the selection of overseas refugees. For example, in 1956 the Immigration Minister approached the Cabinet about a shortage of farm labour in Ontario. The Minister suggested that there was a steady stream of refugees from East Germany coming into West Germany and that from those that applied for

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

immigration into Canada many potential farm labours could be obtained.¹⁶¹ In order to speed up their processing, the Minister suggested:

Dispensing with the normal procedures for security screening in West Germany or perhaps Austria for about six weeks. No publicity would be given to such an action, of course, and the risk of getting planted communist agents in this short period seemed rather small. There was no intension of abandoning the screening altogether and all persons coming in would be checked later and any undesirables deported.¹⁶²

Cabinet conclusions from the meeting reveal that there was concern over the Immigration Minister's proposal. It was suggested that it be checked with those responsible for security screening and that it seemed inconsistent to dispense with prior screening for persons from communist countries when this was required for countries such as Belgium.¹⁶³ In the end, economic considerations trumped these other concerns for the East Germans.¹⁶⁴ The point was raised within discussions that:

The potential source of immigrants in Europe was drying up. Mining companies were sending representatives over to canvas for suitable employees, with the cooperation of Canadian immigration offices, but it seemed unlikely that they would have much success.¹⁶⁵

This further demonstrates the confluence of Cold War security concerns and economic needs in the selection of overseas refugees in the 1950s. The government chose to conceal from the public the decision to relax security screening as this was viewed as a contentious decision.

The “Hard Core”

¹⁶¹ LNAC, *Immigration; security screening of East Germans*, Cabinet Conclusion, vol. 5775, 5th April, 1956.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Whitaker, *Double Standards*, 81.

¹⁶⁵ LNAC, *Immigration; security screening of East Germans*, Cabinet Conclusion, vol. 5775, 5th April, 1956.

Throughout its operation, the International Refugee Organization ran what were called “care and maintenance” programs aimed at preparing displaced persons for potential resettlement offers through education, employment and vocational training.¹⁶⁶ The International Refugee Organization developed an extensive system for testing and verifying refugee employment skills.¹⁶⁷ As the organization was winding down its operation in the displaced persons camps it faced the problem of what were referred to as “hard core” refugees. These refugees were aged, sick or physically disabled, and were viewed by the International Refugee Organization as “permanently unfit for resettlement.”¹⁶⁸ Few resettlement states were interested in selecting these refugees and Canada was no exception. For this reason, those placed in the category of “hard core” were amongst the last refugees remaining in the camps in Europe following WWII and the International Refugee Organization was desperate to find a solution for them. As Soguk reminds us, the main objective of the International Refugee Organization was to “facilitate order in the world, and that clearly meant the ‘reestablishment’ of the refugee with a space of particularity, a territorial inside, a country of origin, represented and protected by a state.”¹⁶⁹ The fact that the International Refugee Organization was unable to return these refugees to a specific territorial space and identity led to the creation of the category “hard core.”

Initially, the Canadian government did its best to contain these refugees within Europe suggesting that Germany and Austria absorb the remaining ones and by offering financial contribution to their upkeep.¹⁷⁰ Instructions for the Canadian Delegation sent to the International Refugee Organization in 1949 recommended that it “should urge the desirability of examining

¹⁶⁶ Holborn, *The International Refugee Organization*, 371.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 275.

¹⁶⁸ LNAC, *Instructions for the Canadian Delegation to Special Sessions of the General Council of the International Refugee Organization*, Memorandum to the Cabinet, June 28 – July 2, 1949.

¹⁶⁹ Soguk, *States and Strangers*, 159.

¹⁷⁰ LNAC, *International Refugee Organization; instructions to Canadian delegation*, Cabinet Conclusion, vol. 2644, 16th June, 1949.

very carefully the extent to which the local economy, chiefly in Germany and Austria, could absorb these *groups*.”¹⁷¹ The delegation was instructed to reject any ‘fair share’ plan that “establishes a direct ratio between the number of settlers already taken and the number of hard cases allocated.”¹⁷² A government memo suggested that since most of the “hard cores” were in Germany and Austria, and given that there was already a large refugee population in these countries, then:

It appears to the Canadian Government that the residue of the IRO operations would make comparatively little difference to the size of the problem already facing the Austrian and German authorities. Providing suitable arrangements can be made, therefore, the possibility of transferring the full responsibility for at least some groups of refugees to the local authorities should not be over-looked.¹⁷³

The Canadian government had no desire in resettling these refugees viewed as unfit.

Desperate to resettle the remaining “hard core” refugees, the International Refugee Organization continually revised its proposals to resettlement states such as Canada.¹⁷⁴ In 1951 it proposed that Canada allow the admission of 1,000 “hard core cases” with tuberculosis after they are cured in Canada. The Cabinet rejected this proposal and put forth an alternative one prepared by the Interdepartmental Committee on Immigration. The proposal included setting up an immigration team that would interview “hard-core” cases with a view to the selection of workers who could be placed or established in Canada and the acceptance of 125 tuberculosis cases, which would be selected by a special Immigration team in Europe and allowed entry to Canada as non-immigrants for treatment in the Department of National Health and Welfare at Rockhead,

¹⁷¹ LNAC, *Instructions for the Canadian Delegation to Special Sessions of the General Council of the International Refugee Organization*, Memorandum to the Cabinet, June 28 – July 2, 1949). Italics added.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ See Dirks, *Canada's Refugee Policy*, 172-75.

Halifax, Nova Scotia.¹⁷⁵ Even amongst these refugees, the consideration of labour skills guided the response of Canadian officials. Desperate to deal with the “hard-core problem,” the Director-General of the International Refugee Organization agreed to the Interdepartmental Committee’s proposals, though they were eventually rejected by Cabinet.¹⁷⁶ Dirks explains that one factor that may have led to this decision was the concern that a new strain of tuberculosis not be introduced into Canada. As he concludes, “during the life of the IRO, Canada did not accept any “hard core” tubercular refugees although some elderly non- T.B. refugees did arrive between 1949 and 1952.”¹⁷⁷

The unease of officials surrounding the gaps in knowledge over the potential for a new strain of tuberculosis reflects the biopolitical concerns of the government at the time. The “hard core,” as a grouping, was viewed as a potential threat to the health and vitality of the Canadian population. This is in contrast to those refugees framed as “ideal types” that could be used to expand Canada’s resource economy. At the same time, the category “hard core” provides a clear example of why it is important to avoid reifying “groups.” Brubaker suggests the term groupness to highlight the variability and contingency of moments of extraordinary cohesiveness and intensively felt collective solidarity.¹⁷⁸ Moreover, he proposes treating groupness as an event, as something that may or may not invest racial, ethnic, and national categories. The “hard core” was a statist and bureaucratic category ascribed to refugees with the assumed commonality of deficiencies in ability to settle. It was not based on a sense of collective solidarity and extreme cohesiveness amongst these refugees, although this is always a possibility as individuals that face

¹⁷⁵ LNAC, *International Refugee Organization; instructions to Canadian delegation*, Cabinet Conclusion, vol. 2644, 16th June, 1949.

¹⁷⁶ Dirks, *Canada’s Refugee Policy*, 174.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 174.

¹⁷⁸ Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups*, 12.

discrimination from an external threat based on their imputed commonalities may band together against that threat.¹⁷⁹

The 1956 Hungarian Exception

In 1956 the unsuccessful uprising and subsequent Soviet occupation of Hungary led to several hundred thousand refugees fleeing to Yugoslavia and Austria. Various associations, organized religious groupings, as well as the press pressured the Canadian government to help the Hungarian refugees viewed as “anti-communist freedom fighters.”¹⁸⁰ The Canadian government ended up accepting over 37,000 Hungarian refugees in a short period of time.¹⁸¹ Dirks points to broad discretionary powers given to the Immigration Minister by the Cabinet in selecting the number of Hungarian refugees.¹⁸² Discussions within Cabinet at the time demonstrate the government’s preference for Hungarians. Similar to the earlier Baltic refugees, Cabinet was willing to relax the normal immigration requirements for entry to Canada. Among the measures taken were: instructing immigration offices that all Hungarian cases be given first priority; that no application by a Hungarian was to be turned down on account of any technicality; that the ordinary rules of sponsorship would not apply so that a request from anybody reasonably able to look after a refugee would be considered and dealt with promptly; and that the normal medical examination requirements abroad, including X-rays, be waived, and instead undertaken on the arrival of these immigrants in Canada.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁹ Gerald Kernerman is exploring the relational process of grouping; how feelings of solidarity and cohesiveness may develop in relation to dictators or authoritarian regimes imputing commonalities on individuals.

¹⁸⁰ Dirks, *Canada’s Refugee Policy*, 194.

¹⁸¹ Canadian Council for Refugees, “Brief History of Canada’s Response to Refugees”, *40th anniversary of Canada’s signing of the Refugee Convention*, accessed April 12, 2016, <http://ccrweb.ca/sites/ccrweb.ca/files/static-files/canadarefugeeshistory4.htm>

¹⁸² Dirks, *Canada’s Refugee Policy*, 211.

¹⁸³ LNAC, *Immigration; Hungarian Refugees*, Cabinet Conclusions, Vol. 5775, 14th and 23rd November 1956.

Alongside the Cold War strategic value in selecting Hungarian refugees was the perception by the Immigration Minister that they would easily integrate into the Canadian economy. Cabinet conclusions from the time period suggest that Minister Pickersgill referred to the Hungarians as “excellent types, most of whom could start work immediately.”¹⁸⁴ In another meeting, while describing Hungarians who had escaped to Austria, the Minister remarked that “most of those who had come were healthy men, under the age of thirty-five, many of them single, and nearly all skilled in one trade or another. Once they learned English or French they would be eminently employable.”¹⁸⁵ Unlike the loosening of security requirements for East German farmers, discussed above, the Canadian government was comfortable publicizing its efforts to accommodate the Hungarians.

Initially, Canada selected Hungarians from Austria. However, in 1957, the Cabinet agreed to admit 1,000 Hungarian refugees from Yugoslavia and up to 1,500 from Italy.¹⁸⁶ Cold War strategic considerations influenced this decision. The Minister of External Affairs at the time felt that the selection of these refugees would send a positive signal to the Yugoslav government that had been standing up to the USSR. The belief was that this might influence both the Polish and other satellite governments.¹⁸⁷ A memorandum to Cabinet delves further into the government’s reasoning on this matter:

Yugoslavia’s national communism has, by force of example, had a strong influence on the present Polish Government and on the former Hungarian Government of Mr. Nagy in their efforts to free themselves from complete domination by Moscow. Marshall Tito has not hesitated to grant asylum to refugees from Hungary and has taken an independent

¹⁸⁴ LNAC, *Immigration; Hungarian Refugees*, Cabinet Conclusions, Vol. 5775, 23rd November 1956.

¹⁸⁵ LNAC, *Hungarian Refugees; report by Minister of Citizenship and Immigration*, Cabinet Conclusion, vol. 5775, 19th December 1956.

¹⁸⁶ LNAC, *Immigration; admission of Hungarian refugees from Yugoslavia and Italy; immigration from Poland* Cabinet, Cabinet Conclusion, vol. 1892, 21st March 1957.

¹⁸⁷ LNAC, *Immigration; admission of Hungarian refugees from Yugoslavia and Italy; immigration from Poland* Cabinet, Cabinet Conclusion, vol. 1892, 21st March 1957.

stand on the Soviet intervention in Hungary. As a result, friction between Yugoslavia and the U.S.S.R has led to the indefinite postponement of \$250, 000, 000 in Soviet credits which had been promised to Yugoslavia and the virtual collapse of negotiations with the U.S.S.R. over economic aid. In these circumstances, Marshal Tito is turning more towards the West. Already the Yugoslav Government and press do not understand why Western countries have taken more than 120,000 refugees from Austria, while doing little to help those in Yugoslavia. A decision by Canada to accept refugees from Yugoslavia would therefore be very helpful politically.¹⁸⁸

The Cabinet agreed with this assessment, but stipulated that the government would prioritize those that declared a preference to be resettled in Canada and were agricultural and mine workers.¹⁸⁹ Thus, even within chosen groupings of refugees the government carved out what it perceived as desirable subgroups.

The Canadian government's positive response to the Hungarians can be contrasted with its lukewarm and hesitant response to Polish Jews. During the Hungarian refugee crisis Minister Pickersgill had been approached about expanding the admissible classes in order to accept some Polish Jews. The Cabinet was well aware of the continued discrimination against Jews in Poland after WWII, concluding that "there had always been anti-Jewish feeling in Poland and the government there appeared to be trying to overcome this by getting rid of as many as possible of the Jewish population."¹⁹⁰ Despite this, Immigration Minister Pickersgill argued that:

he could not consider doing anything for Jews alone, but thought it might be possible to extend the permissible categories to include brothers or sisters of Canadian citizens if they were satisfactorily sponsored financially and were recommended by the Canadian Polish Congress, the Canadian Jewish Congress or the Ukrainian—Canadian Committee, all of whom were strongly anti-communist. These persons would pay their passage and there would be less than 500 altogether. He would propose to make no announcement.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁸ LNAC, *Hungarian Refugees in Yugoslavia*, Joint Memorandum to Cabinet, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and Secretary of State for External Affairs, Cabinet Document 61 57, undated.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ LNAC, *Immigration; admission of Hungarian refugees from Yugoslavia and Italy; immigration from Poland* Cabinet, Cabinet Conclusion, vol. 1892, 21st March 1957.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

The Minister's statements suggest that being a Polish Jew escaping anti-Semitism was not enough; one also had to be associated with a strongly anti-communist organization while possessing the means to come to Canada. In contrast to the Hungarians, there would be no public announcement or suspension of normal immigration procedures.

The large-scale selection of Hungarian refugees to Canada represents an instance where public pressure, geo-political, and economic interests came together to make this an ideal grouping of refugees to resettle from the government's perspective.

The Resettlement of the Tibetans: "An Experimental Program"

Following the annexation of Tibet by China in the 1950s many Tibetans fled to India.¹⁹² Shortly after this the Dalai Lama asked both Canada and Switzerland to accept Tibetan refugees. While Switzerland agreed, Canada declined. The former High Commissioner to India, James George, noted that Immigration officials had concerns over the purportedly nomadic nature of the Tibetans, arguing that there was no immigration category for them.¹⁹³ George would end up being a key figure in Canada's eventual acceptance of the Tibetans, convincing former Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau to influence immigration officials to be more open to their resettlement.¹⁹⁴

The government's acceptance of the Tibetans was guided by concerns over nomads as well as settlement potential. In 1966 the UNHCR attempted to persuade Canadian officials to settle the Tibetans as a grouping, the hope being that this would help meet their spiritual and

¹⁹² Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates*, 212; Dirks, *Canada's refugee policy*, 235.

¹⁹³ James George, former High Commissioner to India, interviewed in Sandro Contenta, "For Tibetan Refugees, Canada was literally the New World," *Toronto Star*, Saturday October 23, 2010, http://www.thestar.com/news/world/2010/10/23/for_tibetan_refugees_canada_was_literally_the_new_world.html

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

cultural needs.¹⁹⁵ The following year an interdepartmental committee was formed by the Canadian government to consider the plight of Tibetan refugees. According to a report in 1975 by the Department of Manpower and Immigration that reviewed the Canadian resettlement program for the Tibetans, the interdepartmental committee “ruled out the idea of group settlement as contrary to immigration policy. It felt that this form of settlement would hinder the permanent integration of the Tibetans into the life of the country.”¹⁹⁶ This line of reasoning is in contrast to contemporary group processing, which emphasizes that settling groupings of refugees in the same community “improves the chance that the refugees will integrate into Canadian society.”¹⁹⁷ A Memorandum to Cabinet explains the government’s reasoning for initially turning down the request:

In December 1968, the Prime Minister advised the Dalai Lama that every possible avenue for the movement and settlement of Tibetan refugees as a group had been explored and the conclusion had been reached that settlement as a *self-contained group* would not be practicable. The Prime Minister said, however, that the migration of Tibetans on an individual or family basis would be acceptable and viewed sympathetically.¹⁹⁸

While the government refused to formally recognize the Tibetans as a “self-contained” grouping, it implicitly treated them as a one in other ways, assessing their education, skills levels, and ability to adapt to Canadian life. Moreover, the assumption of groupness, informed by essentialist understandings of “Western” and “Tibetan” culture, influenced the Tibetan resettlement program.

¹⁹⁵ Jan Raska, “Tibetan Immigration to Canada”, *Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21*, <https://www.pier21.ca/blog/jan-raska/Tibetan-immigration-to-canada>

¹⁹⁶ W. Smith, *Tibetan Refugees: A Second Life in a New Land* (Ottawa: Research Projects Group, Strategic Planning and Research, Department of Manpower and Immigration, 1975).

¹⁹⁷ CIC, *Media Lines/Qs And As, Karen Refugee Group Processing Exercise* (May 26, 2006), 3.

¹⁹⁸ LNAC, *The Settlement of a Limited Number of Tibetan Refugee Families in Small Family Groups in Canada*, Memorandum to Cabinet, 30th April, 1970. Italics added.

The interdepartmental committee on the Tibetans based its recommendations on a review of the earlier Swiss program for the selection of Tibetans. The 1975 Department of Manpower and Immigration report explains that the Swiss program had demonstrated that the Tibetans:

could adapt quite well to industrial society and that their children adjusted quite well in school. Taboos and practices which were alien or unsuitable to their new environment were readily abandoned as the material aspects of Western culture were adopted.¹⁹⁹

The report draws conclusions about the ability of the Tibetans to settle in Canada as a grouping. For instance, it considers the levels of literacy and education of the adults. The report notes that: “the Tibetans are thought to be conscientious and reliable employees by their employers. Based on their employment experience in Canada to date they have demonstrated particular aptitudes for mechanical construction and services trades. They will apply themselves willingly to any task.”²⁰⁰ Simultaneously ironic and telling, the report criticizes the Canadian resettlement program arguing that “the Tibetans are adults and are neither childlike nor dependent...It would have been more appropriate to treat them as individuals than as a group from the start.”²⁰¹ With these words, the report states the obvious, that in fact the Tibetans were selected as a “group.” At the same time, it fails to see the irony in criticizing this fact while making various generalizations about the Tibetans in its own western-centric and paternalistic tone.

The Canadian government carefully considered the integration prospects for the Tibetans based on the Swiss experience. The 1975 review explains that immigration officials felt that:

Persons from towns and settled regions of Tibet or who had received some form of secondary education before arrival in Canada would be most suitable for resettlement. Persons from unsettled rural areas with little experience with urban life, they thought,

¹⁹⁹ Smith, *Tibetan Refugees: A Second Life*, 3.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 4.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

would be restive in employment and slower to become fluent or literate in English or French. Those who had lived in towns or settled areas would adjust more quickly.²⁰²

At another point, it suggested that the interdepartmental committee felt that:

Younger married couples with small families and single workers should be selected for resettlement in Canada. Younger persons would be preferable as older persons had been almost incapable of being retrained because of their low level of literacy and lack of education and language fluency. Those with smaller families would be preferable especially if the family would be dependent on the earnings of a single bread winner.²⁰³

Despite this, the report argues that the interdepartmental committee felt it unfair to deprive India of the best and brightest from the Tibetans. It therefore was “moved to recommend a resettlement program on humanitarian grounds alone.”²⁰⁴ This of course was only a recommendation and in fact the various regions in Canada that settled the Tibetans argued that attempts should be made to select younger couples as well as those who were already established in India.²⁰⁵ Once again, the Canadian government subdivided selected groupings of refugees into preferential subgroupings. Despite the humanitarian gesture by the interdepartmental committee, immigration officials chose those they deemed the best and brightest.

Concerns over the Tibetans purportedly nomadic nature continued to influence immigration officials even after their acceptance for resettlement. While many Tibetans were seen to quickly adapt to what was referred to as a “Western mode of life,” the 1975 report suggested that:

Amongst the nomads the process of adaptation has been much more difficult. The nomads cling to the communal households that were set up to receive them. They are more dependent on official help and experience greater insecurity. Moreover they have a tendency to isolate themselves from Tibetans from other walks of life.²⁰⁶

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Ibid, 4.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

Based on this assessment, it is not surprising that only two nomads were selected in Tibet.²⁰⁷

The view that nomads are problematic reflects what Malkki refers to as a sedentarism in our thinking. This sedentarism takes for granted the territorialization of identities and in the process frames displacement in pathological terms.²⁰⁸ In case of the Tibetans, the government's concern over nomadism tainted its perception of the Tibetans as an acceptable grouping of refugees for resettlement in Canada.

A Memorandum to Cabinet on the Tibetans in 1970 based on the Swiss experience reads like a contemporary UNHCR refugee group profile; albeit, it is much more concerned with settlement potential. It explains that:

The Swiss experience suggests that the commonly held view that the Tibetans need a rigorous climate and yak pastures to become settled should be discarded as they are more likely to settle in areas where there is employment in light industry and agriculture. The experience gained in Switzerland and information from other sources suggests that initially the Tibetans should be settled in small groups consisting of ten to twelve families composed of approximately sixty persons and that these groups should be accompanied by a lama who is, according to their kind of Buddhism and way of life, very necessary as an advisor in almost every aspect of their daily lives. In view of the Swiss experience and the characteristics of the Tibetans, there is reason to believe that limited numbers can be successfully established in Canada.²⁰⁹

The Memorandum reflected on potential alternatives to resettlement such as local settlement in India or the potential for return to Tibet. This is similar to contemporary group profiles that consider resettlement offers in light of other so-called durable solutions. It highlighted areas of

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Malkki, "National Geographic", 31: see also Hyndman and Giles, "Waiting for what?."

²⁰⁹ LNAC. *The Settlement of a Limited Number of Tibetan Refugee Families in Small Family Groups in Canada*, Memorandum to Cabinet, 30th April, 1970.

Canada in which the Tibetans could settle; areas with opportunities in agriculture, forestry, mining or light industry. In a Western-centric and paternalistic fashion, it argued that:

because the Tibetans come from a culture which is in many respects years behind that of Canada and because of the importance of religion in their daily lives, their successful settlement is going to involve social, cultural, economic and psychological adjustments of the most difficult kind. Judging from the Swiss experience and problems encountered in India, the adjustment process will be slow and not easy.²¹⁰

The Canadian government's unease in formally accepting the Tibetans as a grouping reflected the prevailing concerns at the time over the ability of overseas refugees to successfully settle in Canada. Still, it treated the Tibetans as a grouping in other ways, separating those perceived as easy to integrate and those deemed difficult. It acted as if "the Tibetans" were, to put it in Brubaker's terms, a "substantial entity to which interests and agency [could] be attributed."²¹¹ This was reinforced by how the government profiled and subdivided them along with its assumption of Western superiority over "Tibetan culture."

The 1970s: Reflection, Unease and Rationalization

It is widely held that the Canadian government responded positively to the plight of 50,000 individuals of Asian origin expelled by the Ugandan leader Idi Amin in 1972.²¹² The "Ugandan Asians" were seen as desirable given their high levels of formal education and perceived self-sufficiency.²¹³ Dirk's adds that "in terms of age and educational qualifications, the Ugandan Asians comprised one of the most desirable groups ever to gain admittance to

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Brubaker, *Ethnicity without groups*, 8.

²¹² See Whitaker, *Double Standard*, 268; Michael C. Lanphier, "Canada's Response to Refugees," *International Migration Review* 15, no. 1/2 (1981): 115; Dirks, *Canada's Refugee Policy*, 238-243.

²¹³ Lanphier, "Canada's Response to Refugees," 115; Dirks, *Canada's Refugee Policy*.

Canada.²¹⁴ For these reasons, Canadian immigration officials were rapidly deployed to Uganda.²¹⁵ This contrasted sharply with the delays experienced by Chilean refugees the following year. As Whitaker explains, the Chileans were left-wing refugees, including Communists, fleeing right-wing totalitarianism allied to the United States and tied closely to Western economic interests, including some Canadian interests. Canada responded negatively to this crisis as red and pink flags were raised.²¹⁶ Dirks argues that the “high percentage of incomplete case investigations on the part of immigration personnel contrasted sharply with the rapid processing which had taken place during the Czechoslovakian and Ugandan Asian movements.”²¹⁷ Both Whitaker’s and Dirks analyses highlight how the government used overseas processing times and requirements to express preferences for certain categories of refugees over others.

At the time of the Chilean refugee crisis, Canadian officials were eager to debunk the charge that Canada had responded more positively to other refugee movements. While cabinet correspondence at the time does not provide the smoking gun, it does display subtle differences in the government’s perception and approach to different groupings of refugees. In terms of the Chileans, the Cabinet in November 1973 declared that “the processing of these immigrants should be accelerated and special efforts should be made on the part of the RCMP to accelerate security checks....although the point system may be suspended, other regulations, including medical and security checks, will be enforced.”²¹⁸ This suggests that the Cabinet did in fact relax some immigration requirements for the Chileans, though far less than was the case for the

²¹⁴ Dirks, *Canada’s Refugee Policy*, 243.

²¹⁵ Whitaker, *Double Standard*, 255.

²¹⁶ *Ibid*, 254.

²¹⁷ Dirks, *Canada’s Refugee Policy*, 248.

²¹⁸ LNAC, *Immigration policy respecting refugees and others from Chile*, Cabinet Conclusion, vol. 6422, 29th November 1973.

Hungarians in 1956.²¹⁹ Despite the distinct responses, some Cabinet members were sensitive to the charges of favoritism by NGOs and wanted to expedite the processing of Chileans. Then Immigration Minister Andras along with several other members of Cabinet blamed the delays on security screening. Whitaker points to struggles between politicians, especially the immigration Minister, and the security establishment.²²⁰ The difference with the Chileans is that they were from the wrong side of the Cold War divide. In 1974, the Cabinet discussed a situation report that considered delays in the processing of Chilean refugees. Minister Andras blamed a lack of experience on the part of the Immigration Department in dealing with a large volume of applicants from South America as well as delays from checking the records of non-Chileans with other South American governments. However, Cabinet documents reveal that Andras felt that the criteria being used for security screening were too strict and that: “he was not getting the full story from the RCMP about the information they were using in making their security judgments.”²²¹ The same Cabinet conclusion explains:

The president of the Privy Council said that in his view the whole process of the security check is questionable since the criteria being used are outdated and the standards of political behavior in South America are quite different than in Canada so that the security check probably rejects individuals who would be good Canadian citizens.²²²

A key question is what was meant by “standards of political behavior in South America”?

Immigration Minister Andras’s statements in a memo to Cabinet provide some insight into what was meant by this:

I believe security screening in this situation [with respect to Chileans] should be seen in light of the general political situation in Latin America, where violent overthrow is often

²¹⁹ LNAC, *Immigration; Hungarian refugees*. Cabinet Conclusion, Vol. 5775, RG2, Privy Council Office, Series A-5-a, Access code: 90, 14th November 1956; LNAC, *Immigration; Hungarian refugees*. Cabinet Conclusion, Vol. 5775, RG2, Privy Council Office, Series A-5-a, Volume 5775, Access code: 90, 23rd November 1956.

²²⁰ Whitaker, *Double Standards*.

²²¹ LNAC, *Situation Report –Chilean Refugees*, Cabinet Conclusion, vol. 6436, 17th January 1974.

²²² *Ibid.*

the only way to a change a government. There can be no doubt that many of the people seeking to leave Chile, especially non-Chileans, have participated to some degree in that kind of political action. The question, from a Canadian point of view, is whether we could expect such people to abandon violence when they become settled in a democratic country. In my opinion that is a question of judgment in each individual case.²²³

Based on these statements, it appears that Andras did not want to make negative generalizations about the Chileans as a grouping.

The Situation Report on the Chileans outlined the specific criteria used in the security screening process. The reasons for denying an individual entry into Canada were based on affiliations with communist organizations, political parties, and sympathizers.²²⁴ Given that Andras acknowledged the necessity in some instances for violent revolutionary action, it is not surprising that he recommended what was perceived as a narrowing of the discretionary power of the RCMP. In the end, the Cabinet agreed with Andras's recommendations and dropped some elements of the security screening process, specifically those that were based on suspicion or speculation. It was suggested that:

Emphasis should be placed on *known* subversive, revolutionary or terrorist activity...where there is doubt about an individual case, the review process should take into account the sources of information and, if the sources appeared dubious, give the benefit of the doubt to the applicant in the absence of supporting evidence concerning the nature or activities of the person.²²⁵

In practice, political exclusion based on Cold War ideology was more limited than Whitaker suggests. Andras, a politician, was willing to challenge the discretionary power of the RCMP in cases where refugees were fleeing a regime allied to the West. While Whitaker points to struggles between politicians and security bureaucrats, they were in situations where refugees

²²³ LNAC, *Situation Report—Chilean Refugees*, Memorandum to Cabinet, 14th January, 1974.

²²⁴ LNAC, *Situation Report—Chilean Refugees*, Cabinet Conclusion, vol. 6436, 17th January 1974.

²²⁵ *Ibid.* italics added.

were fleeing Communist regimes. In these instances, politicians wanted to score pro-Western points in the Cold War ideological battle, as was the case with the Hungarian refugee movement.²²⁶

Still, subtle Cold War preferences can be seen in how the government answered the criticism from NGOs that it was slow in responding to the Chilean crisis relative to others. At no point does it admit to the influence of Cold War politics. Rather it highlights bureaucratic reasons. The report argues:

Comparisons with earlier refugee situations cannot be validly made because the circumstances are quite different. In the Hungarian and Czechoslovakian situations, screening was carried out by security officers to the best of their ability in accordance with the criteria then in effect; the limited sources of information of which they could avail themselves meant that such screening as they could do did not take too long. In the Ugandan situation, no reliable sources of information were available respecting individuals; general knowledge of the Asian community indicated virtually no likelihood of any security risk, but even so immigration officers conducted a brief rudimentary screening. In addition to this, a name check was done through the British security organization in the few cases where doubt existed about the individual's ability to pass a security background check. In the Chilean situation, however, sources of information are relatively readily available. Having regard to the extraordinary world wide growth of international terrorism in the past few years, security forces have exerted themselves to develop as much information as possible about known terrorists.²²⁷

In this way, the report rationalizes the differences in the government's response to the refugee movements in terms of the availability of intelligence information while making generalizations about the "Asian community." Despite the Immigration Minister and other Cabinet members concern to curb the discretionary power of the RCMP in the security screening of the Chileans, they still drew important distinctions between the Chileans and other groupings of refugees.

Two years later, in 1975, Immigration Minister Andras submitted another situation report to Cabinet, this time comparing refugee movements from Chile, Cambodia and South Vietnam.

²²⁶ Whitaker, "Double Standards."

²²⁷ LNAC, *Situation Report—Chilean Refugees*, Memorandum to Cabinet, 14th January, 1974.

Once again, it considered criticism leveled against the government that it dragged its feet in responding to the Chilean crisis, except this time it was in comparison to the Indo-Chinese. In both the situation report and Cabinet discussions on it, Andras attempts to address this criticism by arguing that Canada had actually taken more refugees from Chile than had any other country.²²⁸ He suggested to Cabinet that a condensed report based on the situation report be created for circulation to both Members of Parliament and the media. The purpose behind this was to highlight the purported humanitarian measures that Canada had taken towards both the Indo-Chinese and the Chileans. Andras was eager to dispel the idea that Canadian officials gave preferential treatment to the Indo-Chinese.

The report lays out the statistics for arrivals to Canada of Chileans, Cambodians and South Vietnamese. Conveniently sidestepping the Canadian State's historical and contemporaneous consideration of Cold War strategic value, security concerns, integration potential, and economic needs behind its immigration and refugee selection practices, the report suggests that "in both cases, Canada's response was designed solely to alleviate human distress, without regard to political or other considerations, and has compared favorably with the response of other countries."²²⁹ In a section on similarities between the refugee movements, the report once again attempts to paint the Canadian government as acting on humanitarian grounds:

Both movements were precipitated by sudden events causing large numbers of persons to seek refuge elsewhere. In both cases Canada's response was designed solely to alleviate human distress, without regard to any political or other considerations. In both cases, Canada acted at the outset to admit, with the least possible delay, refugees in urgent need of assistance, either because their lives were in danger, as in Chile, or because they had

²²⁸ LNAC, *Situation Report—Refugee movements from Chile, Cambodia and South Vietnam*, Cabinet Conclusion, vol. 6457, 26th June, 1975.

²²⁹ LNAC, *Situation Report—Refugee Movements from Chile, Cambodia and South Vietnam*, Addendum to Memorandum to Cabinet, 10th June 1975.

relatives in Canada anxious for their welfare or were in a precarious situation, as in the case of the Vietnamese and Cambodians.²³⁰

Despite these claims, the reports own in-depth analysis reveals that the government was more receptive to the Indo-Chinese. It attempts to justify the government's varying responses to the Indochinese and Chilean refugee movements by highlighting differences in terms of the intensity and effects of the conflicts, the availability of other options for refugees besides overseas resettlement, and family connections to Canada. It is worth quoting the report at length to demonstrate these points:

The crisis in Chile arose from a political coup, in which a comparatively small proportion of the population was exposed to physical danger. The exodus from South Vietnam was caused by a violent civil war in which many thousands of civilians were killed, wounded or displaced from their homes. (e) in South Vietnam many thousands of persons had been associated with and/or employed by a foreign power, the United States—the hated enemy of North Vietnam and of the Viet Cong revolutionaries—and therefore feared for their lives after the war had been lost. The conflict in Chile was between Chileans, with no military presence by a third power. (f) At the time of the coup in Chile there were very few persons of Chilean origin in Canada. Consequently there was no demand for assistance for Chilean relatives. The 1,500 (approx.) South Vietnamese and Cambodian residents of Canada have so far provided us with the names of about 17, 000 relatives whom they wish to sponsor or nominate for admission to this country. Of these, only about a quarter are believed to have escaped before Saigon fell. (g) Chile and its neighboring countries are all signatories of the United Nations convention on refugees. The UN High Commissioner for refugees is therefore represented and active on behalf of refugees in these countries, none of which may expel a refugee unless he is found, by due process of law, [to be] a danger to national security or public order. None of the countries adjacent to South Vietnam to which refugees fled before the fall of Saigon is a signatory to the United Nations Convention. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees therefore has no jurisdiction in them. During the exodus from Cambodia and Vietnam several of these countries threatened to send back any refugees seeking admission. None have expressed willingness to accept refugees for permanent settlement.²³¹

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ Ibid.

The statements in the above excerpt are ironic given that the main purpose of the report as well as the condensed public version was to demonstrate the absence of any such bias.

The report's section on dissimilarities attempts to further justify the government's different responses to the Chilean and Indo-Chinese crises. It claims that most Chilean applicants accepted by Canada applied in their own country and therefore are not refugees under the UN definition. It argues that despite this Canada still accepted them as members of an 'oppressed minority' referring to them as "quasi-refugees." In contrast to this, it suggested that:

No Cambodian or South Vietnamese can now apply for emigration in his own country. All applicants are refugees temporarily in other countries and awaiting resettlement. Many are destitute. Although not in physical danger, their need for resettlement is in most cases now much more urgent than that of the majority of oppressed minority applicants in Chile, or Chilean refugees elsewhere in Latin America.²³²

In fact, a few years later, the government ended up using the designated classes to resettle the Indo-Chinese, something similar to the 'Oppressed Minority Policy.' Both worked beyond, or outside, the narrow definition of a refugee under the Convention. Convention status, therefore, did not necessarily determine Canada's response to overseas refugees. I discuss the use of the designated classes for the Indo-Chinese in the next chapter. The same section on dissimilarities then addresses the issue of processing times and security screening. Once again, the government attempts to justify the differences without admitting to preferential treatment for the Indo-Chinese over the Chileans. It does so by pointing to the fact that many of the Vietnamese refugees had relatives in Canada and were therefore sponsored:

Because the Vietnamese were nominated relatives, we were able to apply the more relaxed security criteria from the outset thus *enabling us to reduce processing time*. In the case of the Chilean refugees, because they had no family here, we initially were required to apply the more stringent criteria used in independent applicants and it was only later

²³² Ibid.

that we received Cabinet authority to apply the less stringent (nominated relative) criteria to the Chileans.²³³

Despite the denial of bias, or rather the justification of bias, historically it has been the case that in most instances preferences for certain national, racial, and ethnic categories of refugees is expressed by suspending the normal requirements of immigration processing and security screening.

The section of the report entitled “public relations considerations” suggests that the government planned to emphasize to the media and the public that it had accepted more Chileans than any other country. It intended to underscore “that hundreds of visas have been issued to Chileans who have chosen not to use them” and that “Government spokesmen should point out, at every opportunity, that the majority of Vietnamese refugees have come to Canada to join family members already in this country, while most Chileans have no relations here.”²³⁴ This last claim ignores the fact that the government was aware in 1973 of both individuals and organizations such as the Canadian Council of Churches and the New Democratic Party that were “urging the government to accord the Chilean expatriates the same ‘special treatment’ given to the Hungarians, Czechs and Ugandan Asians.”²³⁵ A Memorandum to the Cabinet acknowledges the activism of the Chile Solidarity Committee, which occupied immigration offices to protest the slow response from Canadian authorities.²³⁶

The initial concerns of Immigration Minister Andras and other Cabinet members to lessen the criteria for exclusion used by the RCMP with respect to the Chileans suggest that Cold War ideology in practice did not completely dominate resettlement decision-making. This,

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ Ibid.

²³⁵ LNAC, *Immigration Policy Respecting Refugees and Others from Chile*, Memorandum to the Cabinet, 22nd November 1973.

²³⁶ Ibid.

however, is overshadowed by attempts in the situation reports to mask Cold War preferences with bureaucratic technicalities while framing the Indo-Chinese as more deserving of Canada's generosity. As will be seen in chapter four, the Canadian government uses similar tactics under its group processing program.

Conclusion:

Historically, the Canadian government has developed and relied on racial, gender, and ideological categories in its assessment, sorting, and response to overseas refugees. It played a balancing act between competing priorities, at times reconciling economic needs with security concerns. Preferences for specific categories of refugees were expressed by either relaxing or removing normal immigration and security screening requirements. Secrecy, as well as obfuscation, played, and continue to play, an important role in biopolitical determinations of the ideal grouping of refugees for resettlement. The Canadian government chose to conceal decisions that it felt would be contentious in the public's eyes.

Secrecy relates to the government's sometimes uneasy relationship with the grouping of refugees. Behind closed doors officials were comfortable in proclaiming Canada's right to be discriminatory, whereas in public forums they were sensitive to appearing this way. In other instances, unease related to relaxing security concerns, such as with the East German farmers. The government's reflection in the 1970s on its varying responses to refugee movements further demonstrates this, notwithstanding its attempts to rationalize these variations to the public. Much of the criticism directed towards it focused on what were perceived as lengthy processing times, especially when it came to security screening. Subsequent chapters will reveal how eligibility, admissibility, and time requirements related to the overseas processing of refugees continues to

be a site of contention between the government and various civil society actors with an interest in these matters.

Historical Selection of Groupings of Refugees in Canada: 1930s - 1975

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| September 1930 | Immigration of “Asiatic Races” banned with few exceptions such as: Christian Armenians fleeing Turkish persecution. ²³⁷ |
| 1939 | Approximately 3000 Sudeten refugees accepted by Canada. |
| June 1939 | 907 Jewish refugees aboard the St. Louis liner refused entry into Canada. |
| June 1947 | 5,000 non-sponsored displaced persons accepted. The grouping included: 1, 400 woods workers, 2,000 craftsmen, and 2,000 women for domestic work. |
| July 1947 | Grouping of Christian clergymen |
| September 1948 | 145 refugees, mostly Baltic, arrive to Canada by boat and are accepted. |
| September 1949 | Latvians, Estonians, Poles, Russians, Ukrainians, and one Irish person arrive to Canada on the S.S Sarabande and S.S. Amanda. All are deported with the exception of the one Irish individual. |
| April 1956: | Selection of East German refugees for farm work. |
| 1956-57 | Over 37, 000 Hungarian refugees come to Canada |
| March 1957 | 500 Polish Jews accepted. |
| 1968-69 | 10, 975 Czechs come to Canada. ²³⁸ |
| March 1971 | 228 Tibetan refugees arrive in Canada. |
| 1972 | 50, 000 Ugandan Asians selected. |
| 1973-75 | 1,188 Chileans arrive in Canada. ²³⁹ |
| 1975 | Indochinese refugees begin arriving in Canada. Roughly 60, 000 selected. |

²³⁷ Abella, “Canadian refugee policy to 1980: historical overview.”

²³⁸ “Brief history of Canada’s responses to refugees,” Canadian Council for Refugees, April 2009, <http://ccrweb.ca/en/brief-history-canadas-responses-refugees>

²³⁹ Ibid.

Chapter Two: Inside/Outside the Circle: Group Processing and the Emergence of Contemporary Group Resettlement Schemes

Introduction

In this chapter I examine the conditions surrounding the creation of group resettlement programs. I trace the increasing formalization of grouping refugees according to considerations of self-containment, homogeneity, and clear boundaries. I begin the chapter by considering the development and reform of the Designated Class for the Indochinese. The passing of the 1976 Immigration Act in Canada permitted the establishment of a Designated Class regulatory framework as a means to provide protection to persons not covered by the narrower individualistic Convention definition of a refugee. The framework was supposed to simplify the question of eligibility for resettlement and reduce processing times. As such, it shares some similarities with contemporary group processing. The chapter contrasts the initially open-ended designation of eligibility for the Indochinese to the subsequent preferences of governments for much tighter definitions of group membership under group resettlement. The aftermath of the Indochinese resettlement programs along with important reforms within the UNHCR in the 1990s and early 2000s shaped the creation of contemporary group resettlement. The development of these programs was framed by humanitarian considerations, a focus on protection needs and situations of protracted displacement. However, equally important, were concerns over “pull factors,” fraud, and security. I conclude the chapter by highlighting some of the differences between contemporary group processing and the former Indochinese designated class. While both frameworks for grouping refugees aim to make resettlement processing efficient, under the latter this objective plays a central role as the state searches for self-contained and homogenous groupings of refugees that are perceived as easy to process and not a threat to

the Canadian population. I argue that contemporary preoccupations with boundaries, visibility, homogeneity, and efficiency under group processing provide the Canadian state with new variables of consideration in crafting grouping of refugees viewed as the right fit for Canada.

The chapter begins by examining the response by Western countries to the plight of the Indochinese and the subsequent use of a loose definition of eligibility under the Designated Classes used to resettle them. It then considers the increasing skepticism towards what was perceived as the open-ended nature of the Indochinese resettlement programs in the buildup to the signing of the Comprehensive Plan of Action. During the initial post-Cold War period of the 1990s resettlement became the least preferred durable solution and Western states increasingly sought to contain refugees closer to their point of origin. The chapter considers UNHCR reforms undertaken during this period and then again in the early 2000s when the organization, along with resettlement states, sought to revitalize the use of resettlement. It reflects on the UNHCR's initial involvement with the United States' Priority-2 system in the late 1990s during the Bosnian refugee crisis as a key moment that provided the template for the organization's Group Profile and Proposal Document (GPPD) (or group profile) used in the referral of refugees for group resettlement schemes. I argue that while the decision to use a group profile for these refugees reduced perceived redundancies in the referral of individuals with similar refugee claims, the need to ensure that people correspond to a specific profile reflected the US government's unease with grouping refugees.

The contemporary preoccupation with visualizing and drawing boundaries around groupings of refugees reflects relations between biopolitical concerns over threatening elements in prospective groupings and the testing of groupness. Authorities consider the presence of terrorists and imposters within groupings of refugees and in the process test their internal

homogeneity and external boundaries. The unease surrounding fluid boundaries and the presence of heterogeneous groupings of refugees in camps shares similarities with earlier colonial anxieties in relation to racial mixing and fears of contamination.

Big Circles: the Indochinese Refugee Movement and the Evolution of the Designated Classes

The daily media images of the plight of the Indochinese refugees in the 1970s captured the general public's attention in Western countries. And while Cold War ideological and geopolitical considerations guided Canada's positive response to the Indochinese,²⁴⁰ so did humanitarian considerations. The international community formalized a system of "first asylum in the region" for permanent resettlement elsewhere, also known as "an open shore for an open door," resettling over 350,000 Vietnamese and Laotian refugees, as well as half a million Cambodians.²⁴¹ The Canadian government resettled the Indochinese under the newly created Designated Classes system following the passing of the 1976 Immigration Act. This purportedly made resettlement processing more efficient by skipping refugee status determinations and focusing instead on considerations of admissibility (e.g. criminal background and security checks).²⁴² Commenting on the Indochinese Designated Class, Girard explains:

Given that none of the boat people in South East Asia were going to return to Vietnam and they could not stay any length of time in the countries of first asylum, the issue of the Convention status of the individuals was not crucial to their need for resettlement. This greatly enhanced the efficiency of our selection activities in the field.²⁴³

²⁴⁰ See Reg Whitaker, *Double Standards: The Secret History of Canadian Immigration*, (Toronto: Lester and Orpen Denys Ltd, 1987).

²⁴¹ Courtland W. Robinson, "The Comprehensive Plan of Action for Indochinese Refugees, 1989 – 1997: Sharing the Burden and Passing the Buck", *Journal of Refugee Studies* 17, no. 3 (2004), 320.

²⁴² Raphael Girard, "Designated Classes: a Regulatory device to target humanitarian resettlement programs", *The Canadian Immigration Historical Society Bulletin* 45 (January 2005): <http://cihs-shic.ca/2005/01/designated-classes/>

²⁴³ Ibid.

As will be discussed below, contemporary group resettlement schemes similarly streamline resettlement processing, whether through the skipping of refugee status determinations, the use of group profiles, or shortened (or abridged) resettlement registration forms (RRFs).²⁴⁴ The Designated Classes, however, differed from these schemes in that a key objective behind their creation was to allow the Canadian government to respond to individuals in need of protection but not necessarily considered refugees according to the rather narrow definition in the Convention.²⁴⁵ According to Basok and Simmons, the regulatory framework “gave authority to the Governor-in-Council to designate a group of people who do not qualify for Convention refugee status but who are, nevertheless, threatened by political, social or religious upheavals.”²⁴⁶ Writing at the time, Lanphier explains “the use of “Designated Classes” overcomes the brittleness of a single definition, so that definitions used by Canadian visa officers can more closely fit the characteristics of the particular group of displaced or persecuted persons.”²⁴⁷ According to Lanphier, “the existence of the definition of three different ‘Designated Classes’: Indochinese, Latin American, and Self- Exile (East European), each with differing specifications, indicates a distinctly innovative and flexible governmental approach in determining eligibility for selection under relaxed refugee admissibility criteria.”²⁴⁸

It is important to note that this was not the first time that the Canadian government developed refugee policies outside the framework of the Refugee Convention. Dirks explains

²⁴⁴ Labman points to similarities between group processing and the Designated Classes in terms of reducing the time and requisite knowledge needed for resettlement processing. Labman, *At Law’s Border*, 155.

²⁴⁵ Tanya Basok and Alan Simmons, “A review of the politics of Canadian refugee selection” in *The International refugee crisis: British and Canadian responses*, ed. Vaughan Robinson (Oxford: Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan in association with the Refugee Studies Programme, University of Oxford, 1993), 133, 148; Lanphier, “Canada’s Response to Refugees”, 116-17; see also Raphael Girard, “Designated Classes: a regulatory device to target humanitarian resettlement programs,” Bulletin 45, *The Canadian Immigration Historical Society*, (January 2005), <http://cihs-shic.ca/2005/01/designated-classes/>

²⁴⁶ Basok and Simmons, “A review of the politics of Canadian refugee selection,” 148.

²⁴⁷ Lanphier, “Canada’s Response to Refugees,” 117

²⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 129.

that one of the reasons that the government was initially hesitant to become a signatory to the Convention in 1951 was the fear that it would lose the ability to deport or exclude refugees on national security grounds. In particular, the government was concerned about Soviet espionage and subversion.²⁴⁹ In 1969 the Canadian government ratified the Refugee Convention and Protocol. That same year it setup a special program for Ugandan Asians. Girard notes the selection of Ugandan Asians was not affected by Canada's signing to the Convention since "while no one had any doubt that these victims of racial hatred were refugees, in fact most could not meet the Convention definition because they were still in their country of citizenship or usual residence."²⁵⁰ Girard goes on to say that whether or not the Ugandan Asians were refugees was academic "since Idi Amin himself had defined the eligible group based on their ethnicity."²⁵¹ The statements highlight how the grouping of refugees can simultaneously be inclusive and exclusive. On the one hand, the Ugandan Asians were excluded for their imputed membership in an ethnic grouping. On the other hand, the Canadian government reproduced this problematic ethnic category by using it as a category of eligibility for resettlement. During this same period, the government sought to move the refugee program away from its traditional focus on European refugees towards the selection of non-Europeans. As part of this move, the Federal Cabinet proposed the creation of an "Oppressed Minority Policy" which would allow the government to respond to groupings of refugees that were of interest to them but did not fall under the refugee Convention definition, specifically the requirement to be outside of one's country of citizenship or habitual residence.²⁵² For different reasons then, throughout the post-World War II period, the Canadian government responded to refugee movements (and worked) outside the formal

²⁴⁹ Dirks, *Canada's refugee policy*, 180.

²⁵⁰ Girard, "Designated Classes: a regulatory device."

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵² LNAC, RG2 Vol 6373 file 1032-70, *Selection of Refugees for Resettlement in Canada*, Memorandum to Cabinet, July 27, 1970. Cabinet Document 11032770.

framework of the Refugee Convention. The Designated Classes are a continuation of this practice. The ability to adjust them according to changing social and political circumstances (and preferences) was an important element of their operation that would come into play as the Indochinese refugee movement evolved.

There are examples in which state and UNHCR authorities in the present period have used different types of expedited resettlement processing. Canada resettled Iraqis throughout the first decade of the 2000s using a simplified referral form and designating them *prima facie*.²⁵³ However, the government chose to process them as individuals as opposed to grouping them under the group processing program. Moreover, the rationale behind this decision differs from reforms of the Designated Classes to tighten or loosen eligibility for resettlement. I discuss the Iraqi case in further detail in chapter four.

The sheer size of the Indochinese crisis and the visible urgency of the situation played a role in adopting a relatively open-ended definition of eligibility under the Designated Class framework. Individual refugees were included if they left their country of origin after April 30, 1975 and passed immigration admissibility requirements.²⁵⁴ Under this system, Canada considered Vietnamese who simply fled their country to be *ipso facto* refugees.²⁵⁵ This amounts to a *prima facie* status, which has historically been used in situations of large-scale displacement.²⁵⁶ Under this designation, each member is regarded *prima facie* as a refugee in the absence of evidence to the contrary. In fact, in 1984 some within the immigration department felt that the Indochinese Designated Class definition of eligibility was too narrow and was preventing the inclusion of individuals who had received permission to temporarily remain in

²⁵³ The goal behind expedited processing with the Iraqis was similar to group processing; namely to “generate efficiencies” in resettlement processing. CIC, Personal interview with author, 21st July, 2011.

²⁵⁴ Lanphier, “Canada’s Response to Refugees,” 117.

²⁵⁵ Basok and Simmons, “A review of the politics of Canadian refugee selection,” 133

²⁵⁶ Bonaventure Rutinwa, “Prima facie status and refugee protection,” *New Issues in Refugee Research*, UNHCR Working Paper 69 (2002): 1-3.

countries signatory to the Refugee Convention but intended to resettle to Canada.²⁵⁷ Officials aimed to loosen eligibility so as to include more Indochinese.

The 1976 Immigration Act also made possible for the first time the extensive use of private sponsorship for refugees.²⁵⁸ Whitaker explains “a major difference between the boat people and previous large groups of immigrants was that 54 per cent of the Indochinese applicants were privately sponsored (43 per cent were government sponsored, and 3 per cent were sponsored by relatives).”²⁵⁹ In this way, the Canadian government encouraged private sponsors to partake in the grouping process with the Indochinese.

The Circle is Getting Too Big

As the crisis in Southeast Asia wore on, resettlement states increasingly viewed the movement of Indochinese refugees as motivated more by economic considerations than a genuine concern with safety.²⁶⁰ A position paper from the Indochinese Consultative Group Meeting in Ottawa in April 1988 in the lead up to signing of the Comprehensive Plan of Action (CPA) explains that resettlement was:

initially the most immediate and simplest response to relieving the burden of first asylum countries. Now it is part of the problem identified with the continued outflow as many persons are seeking resettlement for economic or family reasons rather than in response to individual persecution. To maintain first asylum commitment throughout the region,

²⁵⁷ LNAC, File 8005-2-1, Act and Legislation, Designated Class Regulations Indochinese. Proposal to Canada Employment and Immigration Commission, subject: the designated classes regulations. The proposal: extension and other minor adjustment of the Indochinese Designated Class Regulations, Self-Exiled Persons Class Regulations, and Political Prisoners and Oppressed Persons Designated Class Regulations. Presented by the Executive Director Immigration to the Commission on October 2, 1984. Approved by the Commission on 12/10/84.

²⁵⁸ Doreen M. Indra, “The spirit of the gift and the politics of resettlement: Canadian private sponsorship of South East Asians” in *The International refugee crisis: British and Canadian responses*, ed. Vaughan Robinson (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan in association with the Refugee Studies Programme, University of Oxford, 1993), 230.

²⁵⁹ Whitaker, *Double Standards*, 264.

²⁶⁰ Casasola, “Current Trends and New Challenges,” 77; see also LNAC, File 85-29-4- Indochina, part one, *Memorandum for: Secretary of State for External Affairs, Subject: Indochinese Refugee Consultative Group (ICG). Sent by J.H. Taylor and L.H. Legault, Legal Advisor and Assistant Deputy Minister for Legal, Consular and Immigration Affairs*, May 30, 1986.

resettlement must remain part of the international response but not to the exclusion of encouraging other activities designed to deter the outflow.²⁶¹

Those “other activities” were the introduction of regional refugee status determination mechanisms and the encouragement of what was at first voluntary, but later on involuntary, repatriation under the CPA. This ended the use of what was referred to as ‘blanket resettlement’²⁶² and the prima facie designation.²⁶³ As Bronee explains “the establishment of a procedure for determining refugee status brought an end to automatic resettlement.”²⁶⁴

The CPA grouped Indochinese refugees into “long-stayers” and “late arrivals.” It worked by using specific cut-off dates in which “late arrivals” to countries in Southeast Asia would be subjected to refugee status screening mechanisms while the “long-stayers” that had been present in these countries up to these cut-off dates would continue to be automatically eligible for resettlement. An important issue for Canadian officials was to bring the Indochinese Designated Class in line with the CPA. There was recognition that the definition of eligibility under this system was inconsistent with the introduction of screening mechanisms under the CPA. At a preparatory meeting of the International Conference on Indochinese Refugees in Kuala Lumpur in March 1989, the Canadian High Commission noted that Canada has the weakest legislative basis for dealing with the issue of non-eligible individuals.²⁶⁵ At that same meeting, Vietnam proposed using the Organization of African Union definition of a refugee for screening purposes; however, the Canadian High Commission noted that this definition “is as broad as our

²⁶¹ LNAC, File 85-29-4- Indochina, part one. *Indochinese Consultative Group Meeting*, Ottawa, 7-8 April, 1988. (ICG)

²⁶² Sandvik, “A Legal History: the Emergence of the African Resettlement,” 29-30; see also W. Courtland Robinson, “The Comprehensive Plan of Action for Indochinese Refugees, 1989 – 1997: Sharing the Burden and Passing the Buck,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 17, no. 3 (2004).

²⁶³ Bonaventure, “Prima facie status and refugee protection,” 1-2.

²⁶⁴ Sten A. Bronee, “The History of the Comprehensive Plan of Action,” *International Journal of Refugee Law* 5, no. 4 (1993): 541.

²⁶⁵ LNAC, File 85-29-4- Indochina, part 3, vol. 12498, *Preparatory Meeting for the International Conference on Indochinese Refugees* (Kuala Lumpur, 7 – 9 March 1989).

Designated Class Regulations and Canada should not support inclusion [of it].”²⁶⁶ A month later, a letter to the Minister of Employment and Immigration from the Associate Deputy Minister/Vice-Chairman explained to the Minister that in light of the CPA’s focus on Convention refugees the:

Designated class regulations will eventually have to be reviewed, since their continued use would be both next to impossible in practical terms, and contradictory to the spirit of the common approach developed through the ICIR process.”²⁶⁷

The Indochinese Designated Classes were eventually reformed so that eligibility was restricted to Vietnamese and Laotian “long-stayers” and “screened-in” recent Vietnamese and Laotian arrivals found to be Convention refugees. However, all Cambodians (both “long-stayers” and recent arrivals) would continue to be eligible under the Regulations. Part of the government’s communication strategy was to emphasize that: “these changes will help us concentrate our efforts on the “long stayer” population in refugee camps through Southeast Asia.”²⁶⁸ Some officials believed that the plight of these refugees would receive “considerable attention from the media and from interested groups in Canada.”²⁶⁹

The tightening of eligibility under the Designated Class included the closing of what was perceived as a possible loophole for Indochinese guestworkers working in Eastern Europe. An internal government memo explains that under the revised Designated Classes the wording may

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ LNAC, File 85-29-4- Indochina, part 3, vol. 12498, *Memorandum to the Minister re: International Conference on Indochinese Refugees, signed by Nick Mulder, Associate Deputy Minister/Vice-Chairman*, April 10, 1989.

²⁶⁸ LNAC, File: 8620-9, *Immigration, Refugees and Displaced Persons –General Designated Classes. Memorandum to the [Immigration] Minister by Nick Mulder. Re: Indochinese Designated Class Regulations Amendment and Regulations Respecting the Designation of an Indochinese Designated Class (Transitional), regulatory impact analysis statement*, August 27, 1990.

²⁶⁹ LNAC, File 85-29-4- Indochina, part 3, vol. 12498. *Memorandum to the Minister, re: International Conference on Indochinese Refugees, signed by Nick Mulder, Associate Deputy Minister/Vice-Chairman*, April 10, 1989.

allow Vietnamese, Laotian, and Cambodian guestworkers in Eastern Europe to apply for benefits.²⁷⁰ The document explains that:

the guestworkers left their countries of origin legally in order to work abroad. There should be no impediment to their return to Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. In order to prevent large numbers of guestworkers from qualifying under these Regulations it is imperative the changes be made as soon as possible.²⁷¹

The closing of this loophole contrasts with the decision in 1984 that sought to expand eligibility to individuals seeking temporary protection in countries that were signatories to the Convention prior to resettling in Canada. Such was the nature of the Designated Classes, which could be reformed to meet changing political preferences and circumstances. The use of the categories “long-stayers” and “screened-in” were an attempt by the Canadian government to reassert groupness, specifically a relatively homogenous and enclosed grouping of “Indochinese” refugees “deserving” of resettlement.

While the CPA certainly did not end large-scale resettlement, its introduction of screening mechanisms, measures to deter “clandestine departures” from countries of origin, and consideration of involuntary repatriation (the most contentious aspect of the agreement),²⁷² reflected the belief of officials that many of the remaining Indochinese were no longer genuine refugees in need of resettlement. Moreover, resettlement was increasingly viewed as a “pull factor” linked to overly broad (or loose) definitions of eligibility under systems such as Canada’s

²⁷⁰ LNAC, File: 8620-9, Immigration, Refugees and Displaced Persons –General Designated Classes. *Covering Letter to Mrs. Nancy Hughes Anthony, Deputy Minister of Privatization and Regulatory Affairs entitled “Amendment to Indochinese Designated Class Regulations and Indochinese Designated Class (Transitional) Regulations. Sent by Nick Mulder, November 16, 1990.* The document also includes the “Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement”.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² LNAC, File 85-29-4 – Indochina part 2; File: 85-29-4-Indochina, part 4. Volume 12498. International Conference on Indochinese Refugees (ICIR), Geneva, Switzerland, June 13th and 14th, 1989. Internal/Confidential Summary of “Tokyo ICG Meeting [Intergovernmental Consultations on the Indochinese Refugee Problem, Tokyo, 14 – 15 November 1988] - November 14 Second Session”, 15 November 1988. Document titled “Basic Country Positions: Comprehensive Plan of Action”; LAC, File 8620-9, Vol. 1992, Immigration, Refugees and Displaced Persons –General Designated Classes. *Letter to the Honourable John McDermid, P.C., M.P., Minister of State (Privatization and Regulatory Affairs), from Barbara McDougall, August 28, 1990.*

Designated Classes. This can be seen in the UNHCR's reflection on the response to the Indochinese refugee crisis in its 2011 resettlement handbook:

After the CPA, the use of large-scale resettlement as a solution waned. In retrospect, the decision in 1979 to adopt blanket resettlement was seen as a major “pull-factor” causing very large numbers of people to leave Viet Nam primarily for economic and social reasons, rather than to seek protection. Meanwhile, elsewhere in the world, refugees in desperate need of resettlement suffered from lack of available places.²⁷³

On top of the concerns over “pull factors,” in Canada, there was a belief by some officials that since it was increasingly becoming what was referred to as a “country of first asylum” it would have to scale back its resettlement numbers. In the opening remarks at the Indochinese Consultative Group Meeting in Ottawa in April 1988, this concern was linked to the associated backlog of refugee claimants in Canada and calls to end open-ended resettlement commitments.²⁷⁴ In later chapters, I demonstrate how these concerns have gained prominence in discussions over Canada's refugee program in both overseas resettlement processing and inland determination practices.

The CPA also coincided with the end of the Cold War, which removed the political value in resettling large numbers of refugees fleeing communist regimes.²⁷⁵ The resettlement of anti-communists such as the Hungarians in 1957 was no longer an option for Western states. Instead, these same states began to intensify efforts to pre-empt the arrival of refugees to their shores through expanded border control programs.²⁷⁶ As well, Western governments worked to contain

²⁷³ UNHCR, *Resettlement Handbook* (2011ed), 49.

²⁷⁴ LNAC, File 85-29-4- Indochina, part one. *Indochinese Consultative Group Meeting*, Ottawa, 7-8 April, 1988 (ICG)

²⁷⁵ Andrew Shacknove, “From asylum to containment”, *International Journal of Refugee Law* 5, no. 4 (1993) quoted in Hyndman and Giles, “Waiting for What?,” 362.

²⁷⁶ See Peter Andreas, “Redrawing the Line: Borders and Security in the Twenty-first Century,” *International Security* 28, no. 2 (2003); William Walters, “Border/Control”, *European Journal of Social Theory* 9, no. 2 (2006); “Rethinking Borders Beyond the State,” *Comparative European Politics* 4 (2006); Hyndman and Mountz, “Another brick in the wall?”; Gerald Kernerman, “Refugee Interdiction Before Heaven's Gate,” *Government and Opposition* 42, no. 2 (2008).

refugees in their regions of origin.²⁷⁷ In the 1990s resettlement had become the least preferred durable solution by the UNHCR.²⁷⁸ The organization came to view it as a protection tool targeted towards individuals and families that had become vulnerable in their country of first refuge and therefore needed resettlement.²⁷⁹ Skepticism towards large-scale resettlement within the UNHCR also stemmed from a perception that these programs were motivated by geopolitical considerations as opposed to a genuine concern for refugee protection.²⁸⁰ Reflecting on the lasting influences of the Indochinese refugee movement, Casasola explains:

From the late 1970s onward, the Indochinese resettlement movement in many ways defined the international resettlement experience. As a result, two schools of thought developed. The ability of the Indochinese to integrate and achieve independence in new countries demonstrated to many the value of resettlement as a durable solution. At the same time, the Indochinese movement led to concerns in some quarters about a “pull-factor”—that the availability of resettlement was allegedly encouraging people to flee. As a result, some suggested that resettlement should be left to only those in need of protection.²⁸¹

Despite the pressures against resettlement in the 1990s there was some movement within the UNHCR in the latter half of the decade to once again raise its profile as a viable durable solution. Sandvik points to the development of a comprehensive Resettlement Handbook beginning in 1997 that set clear standards for referring refugees for resettlement. The organization aimed to emphasize rationality and transparency in its resettlement process in a bid to strengthen its

²⁷⁷ Hyndman points to “efforts to assist refugees closer to their homes in ‘regions of origin.’ This occurred first in the early 1990s through a policy of ‘preventative protection’ and then in the 2000s through the externalization of ‘asylum.’” Hyndman, “A Refugee Camp Conundrum: Geopolitics,” 12.

²⁷⁸ UNHCR, *Resettlement Handbook* (2011 ed.), 49; Labman, “Resettlement’s Renaissance: A Cautionary Advocacy,” 36; Sandvik, “A Legal History: the Emergence of the African Resettlement,” 21. Sandvik suggests that resettlement became the least preferred durable solution as early as the mid-1980s.

²⁷⁹ Martin, *The United States Refugee Admissions Program*, Chapter VI “The Role of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.”

²⁸⁰ Martin, *The United States Refugee Admissions Program*, Chapter VI “The Role of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.”

²⁸¹ Casasola, “Current Trends and New Challenges for Canada’s Resettlement Program,” 77; Similarly, Sandvik suggests that “the Vietnamese refugee crisis came to define the use of resettlement until well into the 2000s.” Sandvik, “A Legal History: the Emergence of the African Resettlement Candidate,” 29.

credibility and broaden the confidence of resettlement states, refugees, and other partners.²⁸²

Sandvik explains that the idea behind the 2004 version of the Handbook “was that by constructing a rigorous procedure of individual selection, within the confines of asylum and host country quotas, only ‘deserving refugees’ truly in need of protection would be found eligible for resettlement.”²⁸³ The reforms stemmed from a perception within the UNHCR that its previous approach to resettlement was unorganized, ad hoc, prone to fraud, and disconnected from a broader analysis of protection situations involving refugees.²⁸⁴ A senior official explains:

I have to say that you know that some time ago, 10 – 15 years ago, resettlement was a little bit marginalized within UNHCR operations. It was a bit on its own, identifying cases with not very scientific systems. Sometimes just identifying cases because they were found there, or were self-referring.²⁸⁵

Given this perception of earlier resettlement programs within the organization, it is no surprise that the idea of refugees referring themselves for resettlement is now seen as problematic. The same UNHCR official equated these refugees with “trouble makers.”²⁸⁶ The statements reflect the UNHCR’s stance that individual refugees actively seeking resettlement runs counter to its proactive attempts to identify protection and resettlement needs in a fair and consistent manner. This position has led to the framing of refugee agency as instances of fraud to be mitigated by a myriad of practices designed to uncover only deserving refugees in need of resettlement. While resettlement has always been viewed as proactive compared to the reactive nature of inland determination practices,²⁸⁷ the drive within the UNHCR to mitigate fraud and be credible in the eyes of resettlement states has intensified this process. A serious corruption scandal in Nairobi in

²⁸² Sandvik, “A Legal History: the Emergence of the African Resettlement Candidate,” 42-43.

²⁸³ Ibid, 43.

²⁸⁴ UNHCR, Personal Interview with author, June 5, 2012.

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ Labman argues that the Refugee Convention is reactive in its structure, while resettlement is a proactive policy. Shauna Labman, “Resettlement’s Renaissance: A Cautionary Advocacy”, *Refuge* 24, no. 2 (2007), 38.

1999-2000 that involved UNHCR staff members in the selling of resettlement spaces also contributed to the reforms in which “integrity is now a major theme of UNHCR’s resettlement program.”²⁸⁸

By the early 2000s, there emerged a renewed belief in the usefulness of resettlement as a potential durable solution.²⁸⁹ This can be seen in the passing of the UNHCR *Agenda for Protection (2003)* and *Convention Plus initiatives (2004)*,²⁹⁰ which called for the expanded use of resettlement as a durable solution, particularly for groupings of refugees.²⁹¹ These broad initiatives led to the signing of the UNHCR *Multilateral Framework of Understanding on Resettlement* that emphasized multilateral resettlement efforts focused on “protracted refugee situations” and the “strategic use of resettlement.”²⁹² A key goal of contemporary group resettlement schemes is to specifically target groupings of refugees in situations of protracted displacement. A Canadian NGO official recalls:

the whole discussion around group processing in the early 2000s actually evolved from a larger discussion on protracted refugee situations or as it was known at that time refugee warehousing, so that [group processing] was seen as one of the optional solutions to the idea of refugee warehousing.²⁹³

Officially, the “strategic use of resettlement” attempts to create benefits that extend beyond the refugees being resettled in these situations such as strengthening the protection environment in the countries of first refuge, decongesting camps, and opening up other durable solutions such as

²⁸⁸ Martin, *The United States Refugee Admissions Program*, Chapter VI (The Role of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees).

²⁸⁹ See Labman, “Resettlement’s Renaissance: A Cautionary Advocacy.”

²⁹⁰ UNHCR, *Convention Plus Core Group on the Strategic Use of Resettlement, Multilateral Framework of Understandings on Resettlement* (Geneva: UNHCR, 21st June 2004); *Agenda for Protection* (Geneva: UNHCR, October 2003) (3rd edition).

²⁹¹ UNHCR, *Resettlement Handbook* (2011 ed.), 53; see also Martin, *The United States Refugee Admissions Program*, Chapter VI.

²⁹² UNHCR, *Multilateral Framework of Understanding on Resettlement* (Geneva: UNHCR, High Commissioner’s Forum, September 16th 2004).

²⁹³ CCR, Personal interview with author, August 2, 2012.

local integration.²⁹⁴ The idea is to utilize resettlement in tandem with other durable solutions as part of a purportedly comprehensive approach to dealing with “protracted refugee situations.”

The Canadian government played an important role in these efforts during this period. Shauna Labman explains that “as co-chair of the resettlement strand of Convention Plus, Canada led the authorship of the MFU [Multilateral Framework of Understanding on Resettlement].”²⁹⁵ In June 2003 at a forum that discussed resettlement the Canadian delegation tabled a discussion paper titled “Resettlement and Convention Plus Initiatives.” According to Van Selm, this paper had been developed in the Working Group on Resettlement under Canadian chairmanship. This is a forum for the UNHCR and Resettlement states to discuss priorities and needs in the area of resettlement. A UNHCR official noted that during this period the Canadian government was a very active chair of the Working Group on Resettlement.²⁹⁶ Based largely on the Canadian resettlement program, the discussion paper suggested that resettlement “can be a timely and cost effective durable solution.”²⁹⁷ Van Selm explains that the paper called for “protection-based criteria that go beyond the 1951 Convention [which] would help to make resettlement a more flexible tool.”²⁹⁸ As noted earlier, there is a long history in Canada of developing policies that determine eligibility outside the Refugee Convention framework. The emphasis on protection-based criteria is reflected in the passing of the *2002 Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA)* in Canada, which signaled a move towards a more liberal and non-discriminatory refugee system.

Part of the revitalization of resettlement during this period also stemmed from the fact that states approached the UNHCR about increasing the referrals of refugees for resettlement.

²⁹⁴ See UNHCR, *Position Paper on the Strategic use of Resettlement* (Geneva: Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement, July 6-8, 2010).

²⁹⁵ Labman, *At Law's Border*, 109.

²⁹⁶ UNHCR, Personal Interview with author, June 5th, 2012.

²⁹⁷ Van Selm, “The Strategic Use of Resettlement: Changing the Face of Protection?,” 46.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

The organization responded by revamping and strengthening its referral methodologies in a bid to proactively identify all refugees in need of resettlement globally as opposed to field officers being selective about referrals.²⁹⁹

As the discussion above demonstrates, attempts to revitalize resettlement in the early 2000s were based on protection concerns, flexibility surrounding the Convention definition of a refugee, and responding to protracted situations. Yet, this is only part of the story. Equally important are heightened concerns by states over security and fraud. A UNHCR official recalls that in the aftermath of the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks the organization was forced to respond to these concerns by reinforcing identity and registration practices.³⁰⁰ At the same time, while the passing of IRPA in 2002 emphasized refugee protection, as Anna Pratt notes, it also ushered in a whole range of inadmissible classes based on forward-looking risk management techniques.³⁰¹ In a similar vein, anticipating the effects of the passing of IRPA, Casasola argued that while “ability to establish” is increasingly less of a problem with Canada’s resettlement program, medical and security restrictions are likely to be the new obsessions.³⁰²

The character of contemporary resettlement differs from earlier largescale programs such as the Indochinese. Despite efforts to revitalize it, lasting concerns over “pull factors” combined with obsessions over fraud and security have led to a much more limited and targeted role of resettlement. Commenting on the period of 1987 to 2002, Gary Troeller remarked that the “UNHCR witnessed various shifts of emphasis from what has been characterized as large-scale ‘mechanised immigration—oriented resettlement’ (Indo-Chinese approach) to resettlement as an instrument of international protection, that is, to smaller scale, targeted, protection-related

²⁹⁹ UNHCR, Personal interview with author, June 23, 2011.

³⁰⁰ UNHCR, Personal Interview with author, June 5th, 2012.

³⁰¹ Anna Pratt, *Securing Borders: Detentions and Deportation in Canada* (British Columbia: UBC Press, 2005).

³⁰² Casasola, “Current Trends and New Challenges for Canada’s Resettlement Program,” 81.

resettlement according to well-defined UNHCR criteria.”³⁰³ In the context of the “strategic use of resettlement,” the targeted and strategic rationale of resettlement resonates with Valverde’s and Mopas’s concept of “targeted governance” and its associated reliance on risk management techniques informed by a neoliberal rationality.³⁰⁴ This rationality is reflected in group processing’s drive to make resettlement processing efficient. In part, this is achieved through the use of shortened UNHCR resettlement registration forms (RRFs), the skipping of refugee status determinations (the acceptance of prima facie basis), and group profiles. In this respect, group processing is similar to early versions of the Indochinese Designated Class as both work outside the Convention and simplify the question of eligibility for resettlement. However, it differs from later versions of the Indochinese Designated Class in that it is less concerned with ensuring refugee status under the Convention than with developing clear criteria for membership in chosen groupings. Moreover, bureaucratic objectives intersect with security concerns and inform the selection of specific types of groupings of refugees viewed as ideal for efficient forms of overseas processing.

“Perfect Vision”: the Emergence of the Contemporary Group Profile

The desire for clear criteria is reflected in the initial conceptualization of the UNHCR’s group profile, also known as the Group Profile and Proposal Document (GPPD), used in its group methodology. GPPDs streamline resettlement processing by permitting the use of either shortened (or abridged) Resettlement Registration Forms (RRFs) for members of chosen groupings or the direct transmission of basic bio data without RRFs under the United States P-2 group referral. Among the things included in this profile are: the gender breakdown of the refugee population, its ethnic, religious, occupational and social makeup, exclusion concerns,

³⁰³ Troeller, “UNHCR Resettlement: Evolution and Future Direction,” 86.

³⁰⁴ Valverde and Mopas, “Insecurity and the Dream of Targeted Governance.”

durable solutions analysis, the quality of registration, the need for resettlement, and possibilities for “pull factors.” The GPPD also lists commonalities amongst members of a refugee grouping such as common narratives of persecution and flight and the grouping’s purported distinctiveness relative to wider populations present in refugee camps.³⁰⁵ In this way, it tests the groupness of potential groupings of refugees for resettlement. In the next chapter I discuss in detail how state and UNHCR authorities produce GPPDs. For now I want to draw attention to the Bosnian refugee crisis in the late 1990s when the UNHCR first became involved with the United States P-2 system. At that time, UNHCR officials felt that there was a substantial amount of unnecessary paperwork to process many individual Bosnian refugees with similar resettlement claims. To shorten the process, these same officials approached the US State Department which controls eligibility for resettlement to see how the process could be streamlined.³⁰⁶ A UNHCR official describes the request this way: “you know we worked it out with them [the US State Department]...*let’s sort of build a profile and if people fit into that profile you already kind of know what they’re going to [look] like.*”³⁰⁷ The decision was made that the UNHCR would only give US authorities’ basic information on individual members of the chosen grouping of Bosnian refugees such as their age and family structure.³⁰⁸ The aim was to lessen the perceived redundancy of submitting many similar individual profiles, especially in terms of refugee persecution narratives.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁵ UNHCR, *Resettlement Handbook* (2011 ed.), 233-241; *Ibid* (2004 ed.), Chapter 7; UNHCR, *Group Profile and Proposal Document, Bhutanese Refugees in Nepal for Group Resettlement Referral to the United States* (6th June, 2007); UNHCR, *Group Profile & Proposal Document, Myanmar Refugees in Mae La Oon Camp, Thailand* (April 2006).

³⁰⁶ UNHCR, Personal interview with author, August 28th, 2012.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid*.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid*.

³⁰⁹ Another UNHCR official describes the organization’s group methodology as a means of avoiding duplications and redundancies in the processing of refugees for resettlement. UNHCR, Personal interview with author, June 5th, 2012.

The decision by US and UNHCR authorities to streamline the processing of the Bosnian grouping of refugees highlights what Walters refers to as a thinning-down of strategies of governance in the contemporary period. The reliance on basic bio-data shares similarities with Deuluzes notion of the dividual. The dividual, according to Walters, is partial, fragmented, or incomplete.³¹⁰ In the context of crafting profiles for groupings of refugees, the principle concern of authorities is to make sure that no “imposters” are included in chosen groupings. This has led to a variety of identification, verification, and anti-fraud techniques at work in group resettlement schemes. It is reflected in the types of groupings of refugees viewed as ideal for group resettlement. The 2011 UNHCR Resettlement Handbook suggests that refugee “groups” referred to resettlement countries under the group methodology should be easily identifiable and ideally have common characteristics, a shared refugee claim, and need for resettlement.³¹¹ Commenting on the makeup of the UNHCR’s group profile, Martin explains:

The objective is to identify "finite groups" that can become the focus of resettlement efforts. Such clarity about the group’s dimensions is important, both to guard against fraud and to minimize any magnet effect generated by the resettlement activity. This theme was repeated to me many times during my interviews.³¹²

Martin suggests that the group methodology is reflective of how to overcome opposition to resettlement by some within the UNHCR ranks based on concerns over new “pull factors.”³¹³ A UNHCR official’s remarks demonstrate why these programs focus on situations of protracted displacement in refugee camps as opposed to urban contexts:

In a camp situation you have a group of people who are very homogenous, because they belong to the same ethnic group, they came out of the same protection situation...they escaped a particular ethnic strife in an African country, when a particular tribe attacked

³¹⁰ Walters, “Border/Control.”

³¹¹ UNHCR, *Resettlement Handbook* (2011 ed.), 234.

³¹² Martin, *The United States Refugee Admissions Program*, Chapter VI (The Role of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees).

³¹³ *Ibid*

another group...so you have a group of population which is very homogenous, in terms of not only their profile, their all the same country, same nationality, the same ethnic group, the same language, the same everything, but also their protection story is the same, unlike in an urban context where you have a mix-bag of cases which you have a refugee from Iran, who escaped because of religious persecution, a refugee from another country who escaped because of political activities.³¹⁴

The statements reveal that the desire for homogeneity and clear boundaries benefits from the very conditions that group resettlement schemes seek to resolve. Put another way, carving out finite and homogenous groupings of refugees relies on the immobility of refugees caught in situations of protracted displacement. Implicit in both Martin's analysis and the official's statements above is that these types of groupings of refugees already exist and that it is only a question of uncovering and encapsulating them.

In a context where there are limited resettlement spaces, the decision to focus group resettlement efforts only on refugee camps has serious consequences for the millions of refugees living in urban centers. Moreover, even within the space of refugee camps, the desire for homogeneity and self-containment is confronted with fluid situations. Hyndman's analysis of "ordering disorder" in Kenyan refugee camps highlights how the standardization efforts of the UNHCR fail to account "for local historical contexts" and to refugees that resist technologies of knowing such as headcounts.³¹⁵

The preference for finite and homogenous groupings of refugees can be seen in the initial discussions between the IOM, UNHCR, and Canadian Immigration authorities during the group processing pilot project in 2003. The UNHCR had approached the Canadian government about resettling two groupings of refugees out of the Dadaab refugee complex in Kenya. The first was what was understood as a "distinct" grouping of Somali Madhiban and the second was a

³¹⁴ UNHCR, Personal interview with author, June 5th, 2012.

³¹⁵ Hyndman, *Managing Displacement*, 117 – 147.

grouping of Christian Sudanese refugees. The UNHCR had determined that members of each grouping had similar refugee claims. As a result, Canada was willing to use the *prima facie* designation for them.³¹⁶ However, authorities insisted that the UNHCR have safeguards in the process in order to insure there were no “imposters as part of the group.” A CBSA official emphasized the importance of being able to establish identity and to confirm that individuals are genuinely members of this grouping. State officials worked with UNHCR and IOM staff to verify membership in the chosen “group.” CBSA officials setup the guidelines of the screening process, determined who was in the chosen grouping, and contracted the IOM to do the initial pre-screening. The same official describes discussions between CIC and the IOM:

What we said to the IOM is we want you to work with the UNHCR and what we want you to do is to define and encapsulate this group and once you have done that, nobody can be added afterwards and nobody can leave the group, as long as they are content to be a part of that group.³¹⁷

Demonstrating further the unease that governments sometimes have with group resettlement schemes, the same official exclaimed:

It’s not just identifying the individuals. It’s identifying the individual within the context of the group. Refugees are no different than anyone else. If they can inject themselves into a group they will do that just because they are desperate enough to get out.³¹⁸

The officials’ use of term “group” several times reflects the assumption of groupism. What is at issue then is determining the level of groupness as measured by internal homogeneity, the thickness of boundaries, and the ability to distinguish those inside the grouping from those outside.

³¹⁶ Labman explains: “To overcome the legislative requirement for individual refugee assessments, the Minister’s discretion in section 25 of IRPA to grant an exemption from the Act was used to declare the Sudanese and Somalis as *prima facie* refugees and vulnerable. This permitted CIC to use a singular claim for each group and exempted the refugees from the ‘ability to establish’ requirement.” Labman, *At Law’s Border*, 219.

³¹⁷ CBSA, Personal interview with author, 6th October 2011.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*

The government's unease surrounding the grouping process is reflected in its reliance on identification and verification practices from its security and intelligence agencies, despite the UNHCR and IOM conducting similar exercises on the Somali Madhiban and Sundanese groupings of refugees. These practices were also applied to both the Karen and Bhutanese. While the Bhutanese was a much larger grouping of refugees compared to the Madhiban, discussions in both the Core Group on the Bhutanese (CGB) and the more routine Working Group on Resettlement (WGR) led to the belief that this refugee grouping was sufficiently self-contained given the particular location of the camps that house them in Nepal. This in turn minimized the potential for "pull factors" and the infiltration of what were perceived as unwanted elements into the camps.³¹⁹ The same official discussed above remarked that because Nepal was not contiguous with Bhutan "it was a pretty encapsulated population, it was a big population, but it was essentially defined."³²⁰

Perhaps the clearest indication of the obsession over grouping in group resettlement schemes is reflected in the statements of a UNHCR official who explained that resettlement countries "*like to draw a circle around the group in order to know who's in it and who's not.*"³²¹ As David Newman explains, "borders are lines. They constitute the sharp point at which categories, spaces and territories interface."³²² The desire to visualize groupings of refugees is linked to the drawing of boundaries around them. The same official made the following remarks:

It's like if you had *perfect vision* at the moment you would know all the people that are in that group...to give you an example, one of the group definitions would be like Eritreans of Kunama ethnicity who are in the Shemelba camp who are registered between this date and that date, so in theory, even if you don't have all those names right in front of you right then, it's a finite group.³²³

³¹⁹ CBSA, Personal interview with author, 6th October 2011.

³²⁰ Ibid.

³²¹ UNHCR, Personal Interview with author, 28th August, 2012.

³²² David Newman, "Contemporary research agendas in border studies: an Overview", Part 1 *Theorizing Borders: Conceptual Aspects of Border Studies*, ed. Wastl-Walter, Doris, *Ashgate Research Companion to Border Studies* 37.

³²³ UNHCR, Personal Interview with author, 28th August, 2012.

The notion of “perfect vision” captures the logic of groupism at work in group resettlement practices. It is the desire to uncover what are presumed to be already-existing externally bounded and internally homogenous refugee “groups.” In the absence of “perfect vision,” government officials turn to identification and verification exercises and the proactive production and analysis of group profiles.

The desire for such clarity of group membership was less pronounced in earlier definitions of eligibility under the Indochinese Designated Class in which individual Vietnamese, Cambodians, and Laotians simply needed to demonstrate that they left their respective countries of origin after April 30, 1975. In contrast to this, contemporary group resettlement programs demand these very conditions.

Even within the NGO sector there was some acceptance of the need for “finite groups”; albeit for different reasons than resettlement states and the UNHCR. During the initial discussions surrounding the creation of group processing, some within the Canadian Council for Refugees wanted to ensure that clear criteria be used in determining inclusion in the chosen grouping so as to prevent the possible exclusion of deserving individuals. Others emphasized the need to demonstrate the perceived distinctive vulnerability of chosen groupings of refugees, the aim being to justify their resettlement to other refugees present in the camps, but not included.³²⁴ Some of these concerns could be seen in the US group resettlement of the Somali “Bantu,” something discussed in chapter four. In some cases NGOs appear to be directly involved in grouping practices based on concerns over fraud and security. The Joint Voluntary Agency routinely screens refugees for resettlement to the US and was involved in the verification process for the group resettlement of the Somali Benadir out of the Dadaab refugee camps in 2004. The

³²⁴ CCR, Personal interview with author, August 2nd, 2012.

UNHCR Resettlement Handbook indicates that “the verification questionnaire was designed by UNHCR with input from the Joint Voluntary Agency and US Department of Homeland Security [DOH].”³²⁵ At the 2004 UNHCR Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement, Robert Carey, then Vice President for Resettlement for the Refugee Council USA, suggested that the UNHCR draw on the expertise of states with large resettlement programs in dealing with issues of fraud and integrity and that the organization should enhance the fraud and integrity issues section under the composition of group and verification of membership section in the group profile document. Carey argued:

Desperate refugees are often driven to desperate measures to secure a durable solution for themselves and their families. In order to ensure that such desperation does not taint the processing of an entire population, the methodology should include more specific questions about a group’s potential vulnerabilities to fraud.³²⁶

The statements point to how the concerns of Refugee Council USA are in sync with the forward-looking risk management practices of governments. The notion of “desperate refugees” driven to “desperate measures” is similar to the statements of the Canadian official mentioned earlier; that refugees that are desperate will inject themselves into a chosen “group.”

A broad range of actors, therefore, supported the idea of crafting easily identifiable, homogenous, and finite groupings of refugees. For the UNHCR, it was the aspiration to be a legitimate and credible partner in the eyes of the major resettlement states that had grown dissatisfied with earlier resettlement programs prone to fraud and “pull factors.” In Canada, while group processing emerged in a context in which resettlement selection is formally based on protection needs, obsessions over fraud and security equally influenced its creation. For some in

³²⁵ UNHCR, “Operational Plan and Procedures, UNHCR Verification of the Somali Benadir Refugees at the Dadaab Refugee Camps for Resettlement to the United States of America,” ed. 2004 *Resettlement Handbook* (Geneva: UNHCR, 2004), 9.

³²⁶ Robert Carey. Vice President for Resettlement, International Rescue Committee for Refugee Council USA, “NGO Response to UNHCR Methodology for Group Resettlement,” *UNHCR Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement* (Geneva: June 15-16, 2004), 3.

the NGO sector, it was the fear that refugees that are genuinely members of a chosen grouping might be excluded. Despite the different motivations of each of these actors, all agreed on the importance of clear dimensions around groupings of refugees. For this reason, they all reproduced groupism by reifying ethnic, racial, or national “groups.”³²⁷

Alongside the desire for homogeneity and clear boundaries is the concern to make resettlement programs efficient. Group resettlement schemes emerged within a context of neo-liberal reforms.³²⁸ Under these schemes there is an emphasis on reducing perceived redundancies in overseas resettlement processing. Troeller notes that resettlement:

is markedly resource-intensive because it requires extensive individual casework, both refugee status determination and resettlement assessment as it is directly linked to admissions to states and by nature entails often daily liaison with donor representatives at field, Headquarters and receiving state level.³²⁹

As mentioned above, group resettlement aims to reduce these resource requirements through the use of group profiles, the skipping of refugee status interviews for individuals, and the selection of groupings of refugees that purportedly have common narratives of displacement. To use an expression encountered in several interviews with both UNHCR and Canadian immigration officials, the goal is to “*generate efficiencies*” in the processing of overseas refugees. Similarly, for the UNHCR, the group resettlement methodology is designed to improve operational efficiencies.³³⁰ The *Multilateral Framework of Understandings on Resettlement* suggests that “among the benefits of multilateral resettlement operations are the efficiencies that can be gained

³²⁷ Brubaker, *Ethnicity without groups*.

³²⁸ Randy Lippert suggests that international refugee programs do not emerge separate from governmental rationalities. “Governing Refugees: The Relevance of Governmentality to Understanding the International Refugee Regime,” *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 24, no. 3 (1999):310. Group resettlement emerged within a broader neo-liberal rationality of rule, including its associated managerial techniques aimed at making state bureaucracies efficient.

³²⁹ Troeller, “UNHCR Resettlement: Evolution and Future Direction,” 90.

³³⁰ UNHCR, *Resettlement Handbook* (2011 ed.), 233.

by pooling resources and expertise.”³³¹ It views the UNHCR group methodology as playing a role in these multilateral efforts. The creation of the group methodology within the UNHCR in the early 2000s coincides with the organization facing budgetary constraints. Writing in 2002, Troeller explains that the “UNHCR is not currently in a position financially to undertake the resettlement of large numbers of refugees as was achieved during earlier periods.”³³²

The desire for firm boundaries under group resettlement reflects the twin objectives of these programs to mitigate fraud and security threats while making overseas processing more efficient. A CIC official explains that group processing is “a streamline process, shorter interviews, etc. Therefore, you want to make sure that you are dealing with a population that you know who they are, that it’s very well defined.”³³³

Conclusion

Throughout the post World War II period the Canadian government has developed different categories for grouping refugees. In many cases these worked outside the formal definition of a refugee under the Convention. While the government refused group settlement with the Tibetans, it treated them as a grouping in other ways, separating those perceived as easy to integrate and those deemed difficult. A different set of priorities was behind the creation of the Designated Classes. With the Indochinese, the concern was to make resettlement more efficient by streamlining eligibility and having the flexibility to work outside the narrow framework of the Refugee Convention. At the beginning of the Indochinese crisis, a mix of Cold War politics and humanitarian concerns supported a broad definition of eligibility for resettlement. As the crisis wore on, however, and circumstances changed, the government sought to tighten this eligibility.

³³¹ UNHCR, *Multilateral Framework of Understanding on Resettlement*, 6.

³³² Troeller, “UNHCR Resettlement: Evolution and Future Direction,” 94.

³³³ CIC, Personal Interview, 21st July, 2011.

The conditions surrounding the creation of Canada's group processing differ and yet were influenced by the aftermath of the Indochinese resettlement programs. Similar to earlier versions of the Indochinese Designated Class there is less concern with ensuring refugee status based on the Convention; the state accepts the prima facie designation. This gives the Canadian government the flexibility to select groupings of refugees it desires regardless of whether or not members of these groupings fit the narrow definition of a refugee under the Convention. However, concerns over fraud, security risks, and "pull factors" have led officials to obsess over clear criteria for membership in groupings of refugees selected for resettlement. The state is preoccupied with visualizing and drawing boundaries around groupings of refugees. Moreover, the emphasis on creating efficiencies is much more pronounced compared to the former Indochinese Designated Class. While the Canadian government reformed definitions of eligibility under later versions of Indochinese Designated Class in response to concerns over "pull factors" and economic migrants, under group processing it avoids what are presumed to be risky, fluid, and heterogeneous groupings of refugees. The relations between the drive for efficiency, security practices, and the desire for homogeneity under group processing point to new variables of consideration in the Canadian state's assessment of the ideal grouping of refugees for resettlement. Turning to Brubaker once again, we can say that the preference for easily identifiable, homogenous, and finite groupings of refugees is grounded in the assumption that "groups" such as these exist "out there" as substantial entities, with interests, and identities.³³⁴ From the state's perspective, the issue is one of effectively visualizing them and "drawing" boundaries around them.

³³⁴ Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups*.

Chapter three: Building Circles

Introduction

This chapter further explores the drive for “perfect vision” and “drawing” boundaries under group resettlement schemes. It does so by focusing on registration, identification, and profiling practices used within the context of refugee camps. These practices act as inscription devices, making spaces to be governed such as the refugee camp visible.³³⁵ Along with the UNHCR’s group profile and proposal document (GPPD), they play a key role in operationalizing discursive binaries such as vulnerable/risky, self-contained/open-ended, and common/complex narratives. The collection of registration and identification data in refugee camps produces an authoritative knowledge that permits group resettlement decisions to be made remotely. Practices of selection under group resettlement schemes invest multiple institutions and forums from Ottawa, Washington, and Geneva, to refugee camps in Thailand, Nepal, and Kenya. They provide the foundation for biopolitical risk management techniques that assess the suitability of groupings of refugees for resettlement. Risk management techniques test the homogeneity, fluidity, risk, and boundaries of prospective groupings.

I begin the chapter by considering the preconditions for mapping refugee populations and creating UNHCR group profiles. I consider the gaps between the UNHCR’s formal group resettlement methodology and the actual practices of selection under group resettlement schemes. While NGOs, and more broadly civil society, help map global vulnerability, a select number of state and UNHCR officials play a key role in group resettlement decisions. The chapter then considers UNHCR profiles used in group resettlement schemes highlighting how

³³⁵ See William Walters and Nickolas Rose and Peter Miller for a discussion of inscription devices. Walters, “The power of inscription: beyond social construction and deconstruction in European Integration Studies,” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 31, no. 1 (2002); Rose and Miller, “Political power beyond the State,” 185-87.

risk management techniques subdivide groupings of refugees, abstract particular forms of knowledge, and contribute to the writing of specific narratives of risk, persecution, and flight that serve bureaucratic and statist ends. The final part of the chapter considers the relations between profiling and mapping practices and the exercising of expertise under group resettlement.

Pre-Circles: May 2007

In May 2007 the Core Working Group on the Bhutanese (CWG), which included state officials from Canada, Australia and the US, released a communique that announced the intention of the working group to resettle a substantial proportion of the Bhutanese refugee population out of Nepal.³³⁶ The largescale resettlement of the Bhutanese would involve the use of Canada's group processing and the United States P-2 group referral. One of the preconditions for the CWG to reach this agreement was to obtain detailed census information on the Bhutanese refugees. This required permission by the Nepalese government for the UNHCR to enter the refugee camps and conduct registration exercises.³³⁷ Information obtained by the census could then be examined by the CWG. To give a sense of how important this information is, a Canadian Immigration official remarked that following the census and issuing of identity cards to the Bhutanese in Nepal it was as if they had been identified as human beings for the first time.³³⁸ The statement highlights the importance of registration, identification, and mapping practices to the UNHCR's management of refugee camps. These are the preconditions for creating the organization's group profile and proposal documents.

³³⁶ "Communique of the Core Working Group on Bhutanese Refugees in Nepal," *Embassy of the United States, Katmandu, Nepal*, May 16, 2007, http://nepal.usembassy.gov/bhutan_05-16-2007.html

³³⁷ CIC, Personal interview with author, 21st July, 2011.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*

Census practices should not be viewed as an objective representation of reality. Moreover, they play a role in crafting groupings of refugees and reinforcing the assumption of groupism. As David I. Kertzer and Dominique Arel note, “the use of identity categories in census—as in other mechanisms of state administration—creates a particular vision of social reality. All people are assigned to a single category, and hence are conceptualized as sharing, with a certain number of others, a common collective identity.”³³⁹ In describing statecraft, Scott draws attention to the importance of making society legible and simplifying complex social processes. He views simplifications as akin to abridged maps, that “when allied with state power, would enable much of the reality they depicted to be remade.”³⁴⁰ In a similar vein, Mark Neocleous argues “we need...to appreciate the political function of maps in *constructing* rather than merely reproducing the world and in *creating* rather than merely tracing borders.”³⁴¹ Benedict Anderson suggests that the map, along with the census, “profoundly shaped the way in which the Colonial state imagined its domain—the nature of the human beings it ruled, the geography of its domain, and the legitimacy of its ancestry.”³⁴² Mapping and census practices are the preconditions for operationalizing UNHCR resettlement submission categories such as “Women and Girls at Risk,” and “Legal and/or Physical Protection Needs.”³⁴³ These categories are designed to help authorities create a hierarchy of resettlement priorities. Mapping and census practices allow authorities to visualize and “draw” boundaries around what are presumed to be homogenous and finite groupings of refugees in camps. Prior to their registration and the census, the Bhutanese were outside the field of vision of the UNHCR. Hyndman emphasizes the

³³⁹ David I. Kertzer and Dominique Arel, “Censuses, identity formation, and the struggle for political power” in *Census and Identity, The Politics of Race, Ethnicity, and Language in National Censuses*, ed. David I. Kertzer and Dominique Arel (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 5.

³⁴⁰ Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 3.

³⁴¹ Neocleous, “Off the Map, On Violence,” 418.

³⁴² Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983), 184-85.

³⁴³ UNHCR, *Resettlement Handbook* (2011), chapter six.

importance of visibility in ordering Kenyan refugee camps: “technologies of vision are used to calculate refugee populations and map the grid design of the camps onto the desert floor.”³⁴⁴

Consider the potential political effects of conducting censuses. The 1988 census led by the Bhutanese government played an important role in displacing the Bhutanese that fled to Nepal.³⁴⁵ The purpose of this census was to construct categories of illegal immigration in the southern portions of Bhutan by adopting strict standards for documentation as proof of Bhutanese citizenship. This allowed the Bhutanese government to label over 100,000 Bhutanese as illegals.³⁴⁶ The census is similar to what Neocleous calls the “state’s cartographic violence” defining who is inside and outside the Bhutanese national identity.³⁴⁷ Yet, on the other hand, the UNHCR registration, mapping, identification, and census of the Bhutanese laid the foundation for their eventual resettlement. What seems a mundane exercise of collecting demographic information by different authorities has in fact played a critical role in the lives of the Bhutanese, from generating a sense of unease and ultimately flight to another country to the inclusion in the prized and limited group resettlement programs of Western states such as Canada.

The registration of refugees factors prominently in the UNHCR’s consideration of “resettlement need.” Much of the discussion in group resettlement initiatives is based on the quality of registration, verification, bio-data, and fingerprints.³⁴⁸ The organization emphasizes continuous registration in an attempt to capture complex and fluid situations. Franke argues that the UNHCR is required to make refugee spaces thinkable through registration practices in an universalisable manner. Registration through the digitized and computerized spaces of the

³⁴⁴ Hyndman, *Managing Displacement*, 124.

³⁴⁵ Susan Banki, “Resettlement of the Bhutanese from Nepal: The Durable Solution Discourse” in *Protracted displacement in Asia: no place to call home*, ed. Howard Aldelman (London: Ashgate, 2008), 29-58.

³⁴⁶ Michael Hutt, “Ethnic Nationalism, Refugees and Bhutan,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 9, no. 4 (1996): 402-03.

³⁴⁷ Neocleous, “Off the Map, On Violence,” 419.

³⁴⁸ UNHCR, Personal interview with author, 28th August, 2012.

organization's ProGres system attempts to "find a way to establish a 'fix' on what comes to be known as the refugee population."³⁴⁹ The UNHCR uses mapping techniques in what it views as a proactive manner. According to the Resettlement Handbook,

Mapping identifies groups or categories of refugees with common needs and characteristics, and provides UNHCR with a clearer picture of the population profile. This facilitates the proactive identification of individuals or groups likely to need priority intervention, as well as refugees for whom resettlement may be the most appropriate durable solution. Mapping allows for pre-emptive risk mitigation.³⁵⁰

Despite these sorts of attempts, as Franke demonstrates the UNHCR could never capture the true complexity and fluidity of refugees in camps and elsewhere.³⁵¹ Moreover, the statements further demonstrate the assumption by officials that "groups" of refugees with commonalities exist and that with the aid of identification and mapping practices these "groups" can be uncovered. This overlooks how these practices bring into existence categories of refugees with commonalities and "needs."

The desire to "fix" refugees in what are otherwise fluid situations is reflected in the UNHCR's suggestion that building profiles of both individuals and groupings requires in-depth registration, known as "level 3." It can also be seen in the organization's recommendations of inappropriate situations in which to conduct these exercises. Among these are "populations that are still moving" and "proximity to borders."³⁵² The messy and fluid situations that prevail in border areas frustrate the desire by government officials for "perfect vision." The UNHCR suggests that in these areas "registration may have to be avoided for security reasons or to avoid mixing the refugee population with armed elements moving back and forth across the border.

³⁴⁹ Mark F N Franke, "Refugee registration as foreclosure of the freedom to move: the virtualisation of refugees' rights within maps of international protection," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 27 (2009), 356, 260.

³⁵⁰ UNHCR, *Resettlement Handbook* (2011ed), 224.

³⁵¹ Franke, "Refugee registration as foreclosure."

³⁵² UNHCR, *Handbook for Registration* (Geneva: UNHCR, Sept. 2003), 59.

There may also be mixing with local population living on both sides of the borders.”³⁵³ Thus, group resettlement schemes target refugees in camps as opposed to urban or border situations. The former are seen to provide a stable ground in which to actively carve out grouping of refugees deemed vulnerable and homogenous, while the latter are viewed as too fluid, heterogeneous, and prone to containing risky elements.

Identification, registration, census, and mapping practices lay the foundation for various state and non-state actors to determine vulnerability, commonalities, and riskiness. In terms of vulnerability and need for resettlement, NGO’s such as Refugee Council Australia, Refugee Council USA, and the Canadian Council for Refugees can all list potential group resettlement candidates. As well as the UNHCR’s Annual Projected Global Resettlement Needs report, the designation of priority groupings of refugees by the UNHCR, the Working Group on Resettlement (WGR), and the High Commissioner’s dialogue. In the United States, the US Department of State, Homeland Security and Department of Health and Human Services produce the Annual Proposed Refugee Admissions Report to the Congress. Despite these many sources of identification (see Table One, Appendix A), most group resettlement identification is conducted in secret between UNHCR and state officials. This secrecy is motivated by the UNHCR’s unease in disclosing which groupings of refugees have been screened-out of consideration for group resettlement programs.³⁵⁴ In response to my request to the UNHCR for a list of refugee groupings identified for potential group resettlement, I received the following statement:

³⁵³ Ibid, 59.

³⁵⁴ See Barnett’s discussion on secrecy in relation to the United States Priority 2 group referral, “A New Era of Refugee Resettlement,” 3-4.

The UNHCR is not in a position to share information [regarding] refugee populations proposed for group resettlement that have not been resettled for whatever reason.³⁵⁵

The refusal to share this information underscores the difficulty in uncovering how group resettlement decisions are made. Still, Table One in Appendix A demonstrates that many more groupings of refugees are identified as potential candidates than are actually resettled. It follows that for countries like Canada and Australia that have resettled few groupings, the decision carries enormous weight.

Formally, the UNHCR has what are called internal, external, and joint sources of identifying group resettlement candidates.³⁵⁶ Officials in the field are encouraged to proactively identify resettlement need by linking it to what are called Country Operation Plans (COP) exercises, which are intended to provide a full picture of the UNHCR's activities in its countries of operation across the globe.³⁵⁷ COP exercises help produce the organization's Annual Projected Global Resettlement Needs Reports, which lists groupings of refugees deemed in need of resettlement. UNHCR headquarters instructs field offices to "subdivide each refugee population under their responsibility into large categories reflecting group characteristics, such as country of origin, ethnicity or religion."³⁵⁸ Refugee populations are further subdivided according to political affiliations, the cause of displacement, and refugee experience.³⁵⁹ COP exercises assist the UNHCR in uncovering perceived commonalities amongst refugee populations.³⁶⁰

³⁵⁵ UNHCR, email message to author, August 29th, 2012.

³⁵⁶ UNHCR, *Resettlement Handbook* (2011ed.), 235.

³⁵⁷ See Ibid, 54; "Country Operations Plans," *UNHCR*, accessed August 31, 2014, <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e456f96.html>

³⁵⁸ UNHCR, "Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement" (Geneva: UNHCR, June 18 – 19th, 2003), 3.

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

³⁶⁰ See UNHCR, *Resettlement Handbooks* (2004ed.); (2011ed.).

The Annual Projected Global Resettlement Needs Report, along with COP exercises and the identification of priority groupings of refugees by the High Commissioner, provide the foundation for what the organization views as joint sources of identification. This includes the *Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCP)*, the *Working Group on Resettlement (WGR)* and *Strategic Use of Resettlement initiatives*.³⁶¹ External sources of identification include refugee hosting States, embassies, NGOs, and refugees caught in protracted situations.³⁶² In practice, a much smaller select group of agencies and individuals are involved in the process of referring groupings of refugees.

While NGO's play a role in identifying refugees "in need" of resettlement, when it comes to group resettlement decisions they are excluded. A UNHCR official remarked that resettlement states tend to hold back at meetings such as the ATCR, which include the participation of NGO's. The same official explained that many group resettlement decisions are based on ad hoc formations of working groups such as the CGB discussed in chapter two or bilateral discussions between UNHCR and resettlement states.³⁶³ In some cases, resettlement states might initiate dialogue with the UNHCR on groupings of refugees that are of interest to them. Such was the case when US authorities approached the organization about expediting the processing of Lao Hmong in Thailand through group resettlement.³⁶⁴ The same official recalls having direct discussions with CIC staff at the ATCR meeting in Geneva on the selection of Karen for Canada's group processing program.³⁶⁵

³⁶¹ Ibid (2011ed.), 235.

³⁶² Ibid (2011 ed.), 235.

³⁶³ UNHCR, Personal interview with author, 23rd June 2011.

³⁶⁴ UNHCR, Personal interview with author, 14th July, 2012.

³⁶⁵ UNHCR, Personal interview with author, 14th July, 2012.

The bilateral nature of some group resettlement decisions is captured in a detailed explanation by a UNHCR representative of how group referrals unfold with US authorities. They explain:

What happens is, usually there's some initial discussion between a country and UNHCR, there's this idea that maybe we will do this as a group, so there's usually some initial sounding out of a country and [we would] say, would you be, do you think this would make a good group proposal? Would you be into it, you know, principally with the US, Canada and Australia; they [the UNHCR] would go and say, we're thinking about doing this as a group, would you be a country who would be responsive to that?

The statements highlight that initial discussions between the UNHCR and resettlement states on the prospects of resettling groupings of refugees are an important component of decision-making, whereas later steps of the process are formal in nature. This stems from the belief by UNHCR officials that the process of preparing in-depth group profiles is complex and cumbersome.³⁶⁶ It is seen as a waste of time and resources unless a resettlement state expresses a high level of interest in a grouping of refugees being referred. One result is that group resettlement schemes are now focused on large refugee populations as opposed to small ones.

Another UNHCR official explains:

one of the things that's always taken into consideration when you are looking at a submission of a group, a proposal for group resettlement, is the size of the population, because it is an awful lot of work at the front end to get the approval for a group resettlement methodology and I've had many different experiences with having to go through all that work and so it's always this question of whether doing all this processing, getting all the approvals that are required at every level of the U.S government and within the UNHCR, is that worth all the time it will take everybody as opposed to just drafting individual resettlement submissions.³⁶⁷

³⁶⁶ Ibid; UNHCR, Personal interview with author, 28th August, 2012

³⁶⁷ UNHCR, Personal interview with author, 14th July, 2012.

The same official explained that US officials rejected a UNHCR group referral of Darfuris refugees from Sudan on the grounds that it was not large enough to warrant the use of the group methodology.³⁶⁸ The emphasis on size is now reflected in the UNHCR Resettlement Handbook.³⁶⁹ The concern of officials over too much paperwork reflects the official goal of group resettlement schemes to “generate efficiencies.”

If a government expresses interest in resettling a grouping of refugees it might request a more detailed profile of the grouping. A UNHCR official explains:

At that point, you would...layout all these elements of explaining, you know, who these people are, what their needs for resettlement is, giving their history of the claim, laying out sort of an idea of how the group could be processed in way that is secure and etc.; timeframe and any potential pitfalls you could see. That document then, you know, written and usually presented to; in the case of the United States to the State Department, they review it first, there's a little bit of back and forth if there are any glaring gaps, they then take that and internally discuss it with Homeland Security...[and ask] what do you guys at Homeland Security think about this?...They will then get some readout on it, there might be further discussions about...additional gaps or processes might be needed, then they'll come back to us and say, at some point...we're going to agree to this group or not. Often there is some sort of proviso on it, we'll agree to this group once you have done the re-registration or verification or something like that.

The concern over “gaps” along with the emphasis on verification highlights the unease of officials in relation to processes that fall outside their field of vision. The same official goes on to explain:

then really at the very end of that process the US will usually issue some sort of very formal response back to us saying we will therefore take this group and they'll lay out all the key elements...the definition...this group of Congolese, who lived in the X camp, who arrived between this and that date, who have been re-registered prior...after this date, whatever else they [specify]...and that will become their definition, so we will know...anybody who [is included] in the group is going to have to meet all those

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

³⁶⁹ UNHCR, *Resettlement Handbook* (2011 ed.), 236.

requirements and then there usually will be with that some sort of agreement as to the documentation, which can vary. The easiest ones for us right now, let's say the Burmese in Thailand. It's literally a computer upload, I mean we just send, we upload just bio-data and when they get that bio-data the referral is done. So, somewhere between those two usually would be the document you give for a group.³⁷⁰

The statements reveal a back and forth process between the UNHCR and resettlement states, focusing on the issues of defining the boundaries and membership of the proposed grouping of refugees.

“Polaroid Shots”: Interim Group Profile

Group profiles inscribe boundaries around refugees. They group them. Rose and Miller explain:

By means of inscription, reality is made stable, mobile, comparable, combinable. It is rendered in a form in which it can be debated and diagnosed. Information in this sense is not the outcome of a neutral recording function. It is itself a way of acting upon the real, a way of devising techniques for inscribing it in such a way as to make the domain in question susceptible to evaluation, calculation and intervention.³⁷¹

Inscription devices allow authorities in places such as the UNHCR headquarters to shape the conduct of staff and refugees in camps. They abstract specific types of information from these conditions that are considered relevant to group resettlement decisions. Registration practices and group profiles provide Western governments and the UNHCR with the knowledge to make truth claims on groupings.

To be sure, profiles can only attempt to shape the conduct of others. Both refugees and UNHCR field staff can and do resist profiling logics. Refugees attempt to circumvent UNHCR anti-fraud techniques and include themselves in chosen groups for resettlement. Struggles and tensions occur between “centers of calculation” and those in the “field.”

³⁷⁰ UNHCR, Personal interview with author, 28th August, 2012.

³⁷¹ Rose and Miller, “Political Power beyond the State,” 15-16.

I begin this section by examining what the UNHCR calls the interim group profile, which precedes the full GPPD. This shortened profile reflects the concerns of some UNHCR officials, as noted above, that the creation of full profiles is a waste of time and resources unless a government expresses a high level of interest in a particular grouping. Sandvik points to the role of informal administrative techniques within the UNHCR bureaucracy designed to manage caseloads and maintain control over camp populations, while giving the appearance of due process. Her analysis of refugee resettlement in Kampala, Uganda draws attention to the mutual constitution of formal, informal, and illegal spheres in resettlement governance structures.³⁷² The initial informal concerns of UNHCR officials in the “field” have led to the formalization of a generic interim profile now included in the UNHCR Resettlement Handbook.³⁷³ A UNHCR official describes the rationale behind its creation:

How do we go from writing this 50 page document [the full GPPD] which takes a lot of work and many people and then you find out no country really wants to do it [i.e. group resettlement], you know, is there a way to do this, we developed this other interim document that was a quick sort of *Polaroid shot* of the group.³⁷⁴

It is not the purpose of the “Polaroid shot” to capture all aspects of the messy reality of those caught in situations of protracted displacement. Instead, the complex and fluid narratives of entire refugee communities are reduced to a quick picture that can be easily transported and shopped around to prospective resettlement states. The official’s use of the analogy of a “Polaroid shot” captures the reification of “groups” under group resettlement schemes. The interim profile is a technique that attempts to substantialize “groups” and convert them into a mobile inscription device. According to the UNHCR Handbook, the interim profile includes: the

³⁷² Sandvik, “Blurring Boundaries: Refugee Resettlement in Kampala—between the Formal, the Informal, and the Illegal,” *Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 34, no.1, (2011): 20.

³⁷³ UNHCR, *Resettlement Handbook* (2004 ed.), Chapter Seven.

³⁷⁴ UNHCR, Personal interview with author, 28th August, 2012.

identification of resettlement need, the strategic benefits of resettling a grouping such as opening up other durable solutions in the country of first refuge, the basis for the groupings common refugee claim, or narrative, what makes them a grouping (their commonalities), and how the UNHCR can identify which individuals belong or don't to the group.³⁷⁵ The interim profile is then sent to headquarters of the UNHCR for analysis and evaluation. This includes a consideration of potential pull factors and whether or not the population in question is stable or fluid. In deciding whether or not to refer a group proposal to a resettlement state, the Handbook continues, the headquarters considers the size of the grouping, the commonality and complexity of the refugee claim, the quality and accuracy of registration, resources required for verification, security concerns, whether or not group or expedited processing is most efficient and economical in terms of time and resources and what the organization refers to as “resettlement country preferences and capacities.”³⁷⁶ A substantial portion of the interim profile relates to security concerns and the potential for fraud as officials attempt to anticipate and identify potential problems that are of concern for state authorities.

The interim profile can be seen as a mobile inscription device that attempts to abstract specific forms of information from the complex conditions that prevail in refugee camps. As Scott suggests, “no administrative system is capable of representing *any* existing social community except through a heroic and greatly schematized process of abstraction and simplification.”³⁷⁷ He explains that is unnecessary for the state to capture all aspects of social reality given that up until the nineteenth century its principle objectives were taxation, political control, and conscription.³⁷⁸ Profiling logics reflect statist practices based on abstraction,

³⁷⁵ UNHCR, *Resettlement Handbook*, 236.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 236.

³⁷⁷ Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 22.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 23.

simplification, and legibility. These logics play a role in crafting narratives of groupings of refugees based on a mix of humanitarian, security, and bureaucratic logics. They reflect colonial-like anxieties surrounding perceptions of heterogeneity and the contamination of a presumed space of vulnerability.

Completing the Circle: Group Profile and Proposal Documents (GPPDs)

If Western governments express interest in a particular group referral then the UNHCR will proceed to create the fuller profile, the GPPD.³⁷⁹ The GPPD is produced in the course of what have become prolonged discussions between governments and the UNHCR. A UNHCR official recalls that discussions on both the Bhutanese in Nepal and the referral of the Somali “Bantu” to the US lasted roughly 4 years each.³⁸⁰ As noted above, this has led to the development of the interim profile and a focus on larger groupings of refugees.

GPPDs attempt to divide refugee populations in camps into various subgroupings of interest to authorities. In the remainder of this section I consider how framings of vulnerability, security, and commonalities are employed in these profiles.

To begin with, refugees are grouped based on the presumed presence of common narratives of flight and persecution. The crafting of these narratives is an important element of group resettlement schemes. It is something unique to the process of grouping and differs from inland determination practices and resettlement based on the individual. For example, Malkki’s analysis of Burundi Hutu living in refugee camps in Tanzania demonstrates how humanitarian

³⁷⁹ A substantial portion of my discussion in this section is based on two GPPD’s obtained from the UNHCR. The first was submitted to the Canadian government in April 2006 and inscribes roughly 800 Burmese Refugees in the Mae La Oon Camp in Thailand (UNHCR, *Group Profile & Proposal Document, [Burma] Refugees in Mae La Oon Camp, Thailand*, April 2006). The second was submitted to the United States in June 2007 and inscribes a much larger population of Bhutanese refugees in Nepal (UNHCR, *Group Profile and Proposal Document, Bhutanese Refugees in Nepal for Group Resettlement Referral to the United States*, 6th June, 2007). Beyond these two GPPD’s, I also consider group profiles provided in the UNHCR Resettlement Handbook (UNHCR, *Resettlement Handbook* (2004 ed.; 2011 ed.): Chapter 7 (2004 ed.): 233-241, (2011ed.).

³⁸⁰ UNHCR, Personal interview with author, 28th August, 2012.

organizations regard the historical knowledges and political narratives of refugees as irrelevant, unusable, and even threatening to the daily management of camps. She argues that the emphasis on physical and non-narrative evidence silences refugees.³⁸¹ There are examples of this in group resettlement too. The Resettlement Handbook explains that when identifying groupings of refugees for resettlement:

Preferably, the characteristics used to define group membership should be verifiable by some concrete or objective data. *Facts* such as nationality, date of arrival, or residence in a certain camp during a certain period of time, can frequently be determined from information UNHCR has gathered in a non-resettlement context.³⁸²

Within GPPDs, however, there is an emphasis on the need for common narratives of persecution and flight amongst groupings of refugees. The Bhutanese profile prepared for US authorities, for instance, makes reference to the census organized by the Royal Government of Bhutan in 1988 as the root cause of the displacement of the Bhutanese. It draws attention to the creation of the Bhutan People's Party in 1990 by ethnic Nepalese that had fled to West Bengal, India, and notes that in August 1990 this organization called on the King of Bhutan to unconditionally release all political prisoners, establish a constitutional monarchy, amend the Citizenship Act of 1985, and to acknowledge freedom of religious practice and freedom to form political parties. The profile quotes academics such as Michael Hutt, Amnesty International, and government reports.³⁸³

While it abstracts specific facts and elements of the flight of Bhutanese, it does emphasize the collective experience surrounding this, as well as the political resistance by some Bhutanese to their persecution at the hands of the King of Bhutan. GPPDs produce narratives based on groupings of refugees in ways that reflect the interests of resettlement states. Therefore, it is less a question of how refugees are silenced through the reliance on visual evidence of trauma and

³⁸¹ Malkki, "Speechless Emissaries: Refugees," 385.

³⁸² UNHCR, *Resettlement Handbook* (2011 ed.), 234.

³⁸³ UNHCR, *Group Profile and Proposal Document, Bhutanese Refugees*.

facts, and more a question of how individual narratives of persecution get incorporated into (or excluded from) the crafting of collective narratives by state and UNHCR authorities.

In part, these narratives highlight purportedly distinctive vulnerabilities of groupings of refugees under consideration for resettlement. The GPPD submitted to Canadian government officials explains that the Karen refugees selected for group processing are distinct from the larger refugee population in the camps along the Thailand/Burma border. Linking vulnerability to the specific location of the grouping, it suggests that:

The refugees in Mae La Oon Camp share a similar background and refugee experience with the majority of the [Burma] population in Thailand. This *group* can, however, be seen as having particular vulnerabilities distinct from the overall population in that the camp is situated in an extremely precarious location, with houses built on steep hillsides that are susceptible to landslides and other natural disasters.³⁸⁴

The profile adds that the 800 chosen Karen are located in a single camp as opposed to multiple ones or an urban situation, making identification and verification easier for authorities. It considers whether or not the Karen refugees are subjected to a policy of encampment. The inability to seek employment and other amenities of life outside the confines of the camp demonstrates the sometimes thin line between vulnerability and security in profiling practices.

The profile explains:

Refugees from [Burma] are housed in camps under the responsibility of the Ministry of Interior. The camps are closed and refugees are prohibited from leaving the confines of the camps. Refugees found to be in violation of the encampment policy are subject to arrest, detention and deportation; once deported, refugees are de-registered.³⁸⁵

The need to visualize and “draw” boundaries around groupings benefits from the refugee’s condition of encampment. When refugees choose to leave camps they are no longer within the

³⁸⁴ UNHCR, *Group Profile & Proposal Document, [Burma] Refugees*.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

field of vision of resettlement states and the UNHCR. It is for this reason that being registered is the minimum requirement to be considered for inclusion in a group resettlement initiative.

Considerations of vulnerability, commonalities, and riskiness in profiles can also be seen in the Bhutanese GPPD prepared for US authorities. The profile details human rights abuses experienced by the Bhutanese in Bhutan such as beatings, public humiliations, arbitrary arrests and detentions, and political repression.³⁸⁶ These occurrences are linked to what is referred to as a “common claim of flight.”³⁸⁷ At the same time, it explains to its readers that the Bhutanese:

have endured a prolonged period of ‘warehousing’ in refugee camps, where restricted mobility, idleness, and dependency of humanitarian assistance force refugees to place their lives on indefinite hold...Accordingly, UNHCR finds that the refugees in Nepal are indeed in need of resettlement on the basis of legal and physical protection needs and because of the lack of local integration prospects in Nepal. As neither voluntary repatriation nor local integration is presently available, resettlement is a viable solution for the population at this stage.³⁸⁸

While it is understandable that the UNHCR would emphasize conditions of encampment and immobility to justify the resettlement of the Bhutanese, lost in its analysis is the fact that these same conditions provide the ideal ground for identification, verification, census, and mapping practices to operate. Moreover, these practices can be exclusionary as they seek to craft homogenous groupings of refugees from wider refugee populations, encapsulating them, and denying resettlement opportunities to those on the outside.

As noted earlier, grouping relies on registration practices. This is reflected in the GPPD, which refers to “potential mechanisms permitting verification of membership in group(s).”³⁸⁹ This includes: “prior or planned registration” and “empirically identifiable characteristics and

³⁸⁶ UNHCR, *Group Profile & Proposal Document, Bhutanese Refugees*.

³⁸⁷ See *Resettlement Handbook* (2011 ed.), 236.

³⁸⁸ UNHCR, *Group Profile & Proposal Document, Bhutanese Refugees*.

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

commonalities.”³⁹⁰ The Karen group profile assesses the quality of the registration as well as whether or not individual members have been issued identity cards. It explains to the reader:

The population was originally registered in April 1999 jointly by UNHCR and the Thai government. A re-registration exercise was conducted in May 2005 and all data was collected and input into UNHCR’s ProGres database. Digital photographs and thumbprints were collected and are included in each individual record in the database. Each household was issued a new household registration document, which includes basic biodata and individual photographs... Household registration documents were issued during the re-registration exercise in Mae La Oon camp in May 2005. Registration data is updated on a monthly basis, and new documentation is issued whenever any changes to the household information occur (such as new births, deaths, or other changes in family composition) or corrections are made to data previously collected (such as spelling of names, dates of birth, etc.). UNHCR considers the registration data to be highly reliable; however, all data will be verified prior to the referral of individual cases for resettlement.³⁹¹

As noted at the beginning of the chapter, UNHCR and state authorities obsess over the perceived quality of registration when making group resettlement decisions. Registration plays an important role in “drawing circles” around groupings of refugees; in determining who is inside and who is outside chosen groupings.

The same Karen GPPD considers what it calls “challenges and obstacles to group processing” such as “associated refugee movements (pull factors)”. It explains:

In addition to the official refugee population in the nine camps in Thailand, there are an estimated 36, 810 individuals residing illegally in the camps pending formal admission by the Thai government. There are also an estimated 1, 000, 000 illegal migrant workers from [Burma] in the country, as well as some 800,000 who are registered migrant workers with temporary visas. It is possible that individuals from among these groups, as well as new arrivals from [Burma], may make attempts to enter the camps to seek inclusion in the ongoing resettlement operation. However, mechanisms are in place to ensure the identity of individuals submitted for resettlement, and therefore any new arrivals seeking inclusion in the group will be unable to gain access.³⁹²

³⁹⁰ Ibid.

³⁹¹ UNHCR, *Group Profile & Proposal Document, [Burma] Refugees*.

³⁹² Ibid.

The statements assume the existence of groupings of “illegal migrant workers” and “registered migrant workers with temporary visas” as distinguished from the “identities” of members of the chosen grouping of Karen. Brubaker suggests, “understood as a specifically *collective* phenomena, ‘identity’ denotes a fundamental and consequential ‘*sameness*’ among members of a group or category.”³⁹³ For this reason, he takes issue with use of the term “identity” in academic and other analysis. This includes constructivist and post-structuralist accounts that emphasize the contingent, fragmented, and fluid nature of “identities.” Despite these efforts to overcome what Brubaker refers to as strong conceptions of “identity,” he suggests that the term implies the persistence of some level of internal sameness amongst bounded “groups.” Brubaker suggests using the terms identification and categorization instead as these lack “the reifying connotations of ‘identity.’”³⁹⁴

Within the Karen profile, the fluid nature of the border between Thailand and Burma as well as the constant flow of persons into and out of the camps are considered to make accurate estimates of “pull factors” difficult. While the UNHCR attempts to assure government officials that mechanisms are in place to verify the identities of the chosen 800 Karen, these sorts of conditions obviously run counter to the desire of governments for “perfect vision.”

The UNHCR’s attempt to manage fluidity, as well as heterogeneity, in refugee camps is reflected in Turner’s analysis of refugees in Tanzania. He argues that “in spite of the heterogeneous composition of the refugee population, the bureaucratic space of the camp was homogenous and homogenising, and the governing techniques of the relief agencies tended to ‘flatten’ the population.”³⁹⁵ As the statements above demonstrate, the UNHCR, IOM, and government officials can only aspire to order, homogeneity, and firm boundaries. Registration,

³⁹³ Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups*, 34.

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 41.

³⁹⁵ UNHCR, *Group Profile & Proposal Document, [Burma] Refugees*, 81-82.

identification, and census practices are constantly confronted with fluid and messy situations both inside and outside refugee camps.

The grouping of refugees also relies on state security and intelligence agencies. During the piloting of Canada's group processing program in 2003 with the resettlement of what was referred to as a "distinct group of Somalis" out of Dadaab Kenya, government officials worked with UNHCR and IOM staff to verify membership in the chosen grouping. The CBSA setup the guidelines of the screening process, defined the chosen grouping of refugees, and contracted the IOM to do the initial pre-screening. Security and intelligence officials verified that individual Somalis were in fact members of the chosen groupings and then compared the verification list with the initial UNHCR list of members. Though, according to a CBSA official, field staff "could have been duped at the frontend."³⁹⁶ Canadian government officials subjected the chosen refugees to medical and security screening. If individuals failed either one of these tests they were excluded from the program. The same CBSA official explained that these procedures became the standard practice for Canada's group processing program and were applied to both the Karen and Bhutanese refugees.³⁹⁷ While the UNHCR's group profiles are an integral part of group resettlement schemes, equally important are the immigration, security, and intelligence practices of governments.

In some instances the drive for self-containment benefits from the geographical locations of refugee camps targeted for group resettlement schemes. This can be seen with the selection of Bhutanese groupings of refugees by both the Canadian and US governments. The GPPD submitted to US authorities provides a formal definition of the grouping that is much larger than

³⁹⁶ CBSA, Personal interview with author, 6th October 2011.

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

the approximately 800 Karen refugees selected by Canadian government officials. The profile states:

UNHCR proposes for submission the population of refugees from Bhutan in Nepal who are formally registered with the Government of Nepal and UNHCR, who reside in one of the seven refugee camps in Nepal or outside the camps, and whose membership in the group is verified by UNHCR. Refugees meeting this group profile definition would be referred to the United States resettlement program for consideration provided that in advance the refugee has signed an Agreement to Resettlement Referral (ARR).³⁹⁸

Despite the relatively open-ended definition of “group” membership, as noted in the previous chapter, discussions within both the Core Group for the Bhutanese and the Working Group on Resettlement led to a belief amongst officials that the Bhutanese refugee population was sufficiently encapsulated given the particular location of the camps in Nepal that housed them. From the perspective of authorities, this minimized the potential for “pull factors” and the infiltration of unwanted elements into the camps.³⁹⁹ In this instance, an accident of geography played a role in fixing the fluidity of refugee movements.

Carving out Vulnerable Circles

UNHCR authorities craft subgroupings of refugees from the wider refugee population in camps. The organization has specific categories of vulnerability that are prioritized for resettlement. These include: ethnic minorities who suffer discrimination in the camp, individuals with urgent security concerns, those with serious medical conditions that cannot be treated in camps, and women-at-risk.⁴⁰⁰ The Bhutanese profile singles out individual women-at-risk as well as separated or unaccompanied children for priority resettlement. It identifies “broken or non-

³⁹⁸ UNHCR, *Group Profile and Proposal Document, Bhutanese Refugees*.

³⁹⁹ CBSA, Personal interview with author, 6th October 2011.

⁴⁰⁰ UNHCR, *Group Profile & Proposal Document, [Burma] Refugees*.

traditional, disproportionate or large number of absent male/female heads of family, separated or unaccompanied children.”⁴⁰¹

The crafting of homogenous groupings of refugees relies on order and fixity. For this reason, there is a preference for refugees located in camps. Hyndman and Giles argue that refugees in protracted situations are feminized based on their location away from developed states and their lack of Convention status. These refugees are framed as genuine, immobile, and yet depoliticized. In contrast to this, those “on the move are largely seen as a threat, to prosperity and the viability of welfare states in the global North and to security in those same states.”⁴⁰²

They explain:

When individual refugees decide to divorce themselves from the scripts of sedentary camp life and move on, they become potentially threatening as ‘asylum seekers’ or ‘migrants’ who are seen as simply seeking a better life, not necessarily protection. The legitimacy of a refugee on the move, beyond such spaces, changes political valence dramatically, from innocent, helpless and deserving to politically dangerous, self-interested and undeserving.⁴⁰³

Within group profiles there are similar framings between those that remain in camps and those that chose to leave them. The Karen profile notes: “many men are absent from the camp because of continuing involvement in armed combat inside [Burma], or because they are outside the camp working illegally in other locations of Thailand.”⁴⁰⁴ Resettlement states prefer refugees that remain in camps subjected to the bureaucratic gaze of the UNHCR. The Karen GPPD prepared for Canadian government officials explains:

Only persons who are officially-recognized camp residents are eligible for resettlement submission. In the event a family is identified for referral in which one or more

⁴⁰¹ UNHCR, *Group Profile & Proposal Document, Bhutanese Refugees*.

⁴⁰² Hyndman and Giles, “Waiting for What?,” 363, 369.

⁴⁰³ *Ibid*, 367.

⁴⁰⁴ UNHCR, *Group Profile & Proposal Document, [Burma] Refugees*.

immediate relatives are pending admission by the Thai government, the case will not be included in the submission.⁴⁰⁵

From the perspective of authorities, broken-up families and those outside refugee camps present problems for ordering and fixing practices that seek to craft homogenous groupings of refugees.

“Risky” Circles

Under group resettlement schemes, individuals deemed fraudulent or a security risk threaten the conception of a vulnerable and deserving grouping of refugees. GPPDs attempt to identify potential problems, referred to as exclusion concerns. UNHCR field representatives are instructed to list the profiles of risky individuals and to provide a breakdown of the age and gender of these profiles. These include: armed combatants, individuals that have committed torture in a position of authority, individual acts of violence, and inciting others to violence.⁴⁰⁶ According to one UNHCR official, groupings of refugees that have fled ethnically framed conflicts and violence present problems for group resettlement since these groupings may include these sorts of “risky” individuals. The same official singled out “African situations” for this problem, remarking that if “there are elements that present exclusion concerns...then you have to breakdown and isolate the different profiles.”⁴⁰⁷ Officials would prefer the selection of groupings that would not require the disentanglement of vulnerable profiles from risky ones. GPPDs attempt to gage this problem by providing an estimate of the number of individuals with potential exclusion concerns and indicating whether or not these individuals are identifiable by other refugees, UNHCR staff, official records, or human rights reports.

The Bhutanese profile submitted to US government officials demonstrates how exclusion concerns are articulated in these profiles. It contains a detailed assessment of risk that deals

⁴⁰⁵ UNHCR, *Group Profile & Proposal Document, [Burma] Refugees*.

⁴⁰⁶ UNHCR, *Resettlement Handbook* (2004 ed.), see the example “Group Profile and Proposal Document.”

⁴⁰⁷ UNHCR, personal interview with author, June 5, 2012.

primarily with whether or not refugees in the camps in Nepal are affiliated with resistance organizations that have been accused of violent activities or are considered terrorist groups by Western governments. It explains that the UNHCR “does not think that exclusion issues may in general apply to this refugee caseload, although it cannot rule out that it may be applicable to some individuals within the population.”⁴⁰⁸ This conclusion is based in part on discussions within the Core Group on the Bhutanese, and in the case of Canada on security assessments conducted by agencies such as the CBSA and CSIS.⁴⁰⁹ Despite this, the group profile does attempt to isolate and identify what are perceived as potentially threatening elements. It suggests that some refugees in the camps were, or are, members of organizations such as the Bhutanese People’s Party, which according to the profile has been accused of terrorist activities by the Royal Government of Bhutan. It concludes, however, that it “has no clear evidence or information suggesting that members of the Bhutanese People’s Party who are refugees in the camps in Nepal have committed any excludable acts in Bhutan... [and] to the best of UNHCR’s knowledge, none of the Bhutanese political opposition organizations are considered as terrorist organizations by resettlement countries.”⁴¹⁰ The profile considers in detail what it views as strategies of violence and intimidation by anti-resettlement and pro-repatriation organizations such as the Bhutan Revolutionary Youth Organization (BRYO) and the Bhutanese Communist Party-Marxist Leninist Maoist (BCP-MLM). It explains that in the weeks following serious riots in the Beldangi camps, members of both of these organizations “were reportedly carrying out acts of intimidation against individuals known to be in support of resettlement.”⁴¹¹ It also considers support for the Communist Party of Nepal–Maoist (CPNM) within the camps since

⁴⁰⁸ UNHCR, *Group Profile & Proposal Document, Bhutanese Refugees*.

⁴⁰⁹ CIC, Personal interview with author, 21st July, 2011.

⁴¹⁰ UNHCR, *Group Profile & Proposal Document, Bhutanese Refugees*.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*

this is a designated terrorist organization by some resettlement states. The UNHCR's position on these issues was that if support for these organizations occurred, it was most likely within a context of intimidation and threats. It explains:

Refugees have reported to UNHCR that they have experienced varying degrees of pressure for financial contributions and extortions by members of the CPNM. The close vicinity of three cantonments of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), the military wing of the CPNM, nearby the refugee camps could increase this risk as the level of assistance in the cantonment sites is lower than in the camps.⁴¹²

The UNHCR attempts to assuage potential concerns on the part of US government officials on this matter by insisting that it has maintained a sealed humanitarian space. The GPPD explains that the:

UNHCR has made repeated interventions with the CPNM on the need to maintain the civilian and humanitarian nature of the camps, and there is no evidence that refugees in the camps were ever subjected to systematic extortion by the CPNM. According to reports, any such practices ceased at the end of November 2006 and the CPNM has repeatedly stated that its policy is not to 'tax' or recruit refugees.⁴¹³

In the event that refugees did pay the CPNM, the GPPD stresses that it is a safe assumption that this was done under duress or intimidation.

The statements above reinforce Turner's conclusions regarding the UNHCR's management of refugee camps in Tanzania. Namely, that the organization attempted to create a de-politicalized space populated by passive victims of violence lacking political subjectivity. Turner shows that "attempts to void the camp of power and politics paradoxically created a space that was hyper-politicised. To the extent that political activity was recognized by the UNHCR within the camps, it was viewed as introducing divisiveness and selfishness."⁴¹⁴ The discussion of exclusion concerns in the Bhutanese profile suggests that in many cases political agency is

⁴¹² Ibid.

⁴¹³ Ibid.

⁴¹⁴ Turner, *Politics of Innocence*, 159- 160.

confused with the intimidation of passive victims. Malkki points to a similar situation where the UNHCR and the international press presented the refusal of refugees to repatriate to Rwanda following the massacres in the 1990s as the result of intimidation.⁴¹⁵ Barnett recalls that the US Department of Homeland Security initially found many of the Karen refugee population to be inadmissible under the US Patriot Act and Real ID Act, specifically as it relates to material support for terrorist organizations, in this case support for the Karen National Army.⁴¹⁶ A UNHCR official explained that at the request of the US State Department, the organization went ahead and referred the Burmese since US authorities had agreed to grant waivers, or exemptions, to those initially found excludable.⁴¹⁷ The same official noted that in the US, terrorism laws have a particularly wide definition of material support which has contributed to the inadmissibility of many Karen. Barnett explains that “just before resettlement was to begin in June [2006], [now former] Secretary of State Rice waived the Patriot Act terrorist provisions for the entire resettlement grouping, ignoring the concerns of some at the Justice Department.”⁴¹⁸ He adds that supporters of the Burmese resettlement effort “point out that, among the refugees, ‘material support’ is more often than not provided unwittingly or under coercion.”⁴¹⁹ Implicit in this claim is that political subjectivity is tolerated in framings of refugeeness only insofar as it is imposed unwittingly on them.

Despite the UNHCR’s tendency to minimize political subjectivity within refugee camps, as noted above, the GPPD contains relatively detailed accounts of politics and resistance movements. In dealing with resettlement states, the organization, through the group profile, attempts to re-order politics, resistance, and violence inside and outside camps to fit a specific

⁴¹⁵ Malkki, “Speechless Emissaries: Refugees,” 394.

⁴¹⁶ Barnett, “A New Era of Refugee Resettlement,” 2.

⁴¹⁷ UNHCR, Personal interview with author, 28th August, 2012.

⁴¹⁸ Barnett, “A New Era of Refugee Resettlement,” 2.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid.

narrative of justification. Within refugee camps selected for group resettlement, UNHCR authorities must manage heterogeneity even while they seek relatively homogenous and vulnerable grouping of refugees. Part of this process involves recognizing political subjectivities within the camps.

It is worth noting that the Karen GPPD provided for this dissertation was missing several sections, including the one that outlines exclusion concerns. That being said, it does contain a small section that deals with rebel groups, police harassment, and incidents of refoulement. The profile highlights reports of abuse by the Thai military and police against Karen refugees in the camps, including incidents of refoulement.⁴²⁰ These refugees could easily be placed into one of the categories of vulnerable subgroupings outlined at the beginning of the Karen GPPD, specifically “individuals with urgent security concerns in the camps.”⁴²¹ Instead, they are lumped into a section that considers security concerns such as the influence of the KNU and other insurgent groups in Burma on the refugee population in Thailand. The profile explains that:

The Karen Refugee Committee (KRC), a border-wide organization made up of refugee leaders, and responsible for overseeing the management of the camps, is closely linked to the KNU. As such, the KNU exercises a great deal of indirect influence on the camps, including matters relating to the camp justice system.⁴²²

As noted above, US security and intelligence agencies were initially concerned about the presence of Karen individuals involved with insurgent and rebel groups in the camps. Despite this, Canadian government officials approved the group processing of Karen. An immigration official recalls that both the CBSA and CSIS had determined that were minimal risks associated

⁴²⁰ UNHCR, *Group Profile & Proposal Document, [Burma] Refugees*.

⁴²¹ Ibid.

⁴²² Ibid.

with resettling Karen. In fact, the same official referred to both the Karen and Bhutanese as “clean populations,”⁴²³ something discussed further in the next chapter.

Expertise under Group Resettlement Schemes

The Governmentality approach is concerned with how different locales are established as authoritative and powerful, how different agents are assembled with specific powers, and how different domains are constituted as governable and administrable.⁴²⁴ Registration information, profiles, and bio-data make refugee camp spaces visible and susceptible to intervention by UNHCR and government officials. They assist authorities in making group resettlement decisions in forums such as the Working Group on Resettlement in Geneva, the Protracted Refugee Situation (PRS) group in Ottawa, and the Resettlement Service at UNHCR headquarters. Institutions and forums that are far removed from refugee camps are made powerful and authoritative. In this way, the construction of profiles based on the grouping of refugees acts as a mobile inscription device that permit governing “at a distance.”⁴²⁵

Profiles invest agents with specific forms of knowledge on refugee populations. This knowledge becomes authoritative through its connections to the exercising of expertise in group resettlement decisions. It permits “truth claims” to be made in relation to the consideration of what are perceived as groupings of refugees with commonalities. Rose and Miller emphasize the central role of expertise to governing in advanced liberal democracies. They note:

The complex of actors, powers, institutions and bodies of knowledge that comprise expertise have come to play a crucial role in establishing the possibility and legitimacy of government. Experts hold out the hope that problems of regulation can remove themselves from the disputed terrain of politics and relocate onto the tranquil yet seductive territory of truth.⁴²⁶

⁴²³ CIC, Personal interview with author, 21st July, 2011.

⁴²⁴ Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule*.

⁴²⁵ See Rose and Miller, “Political power beyond the State.”

⁴²⁶ *Ibid*, 188.

This holds especially true with respect to Canada's group processing, where most elements of the selection process are hidden from the public. In this final section of the chapter I consider the types of expertise involved with both this program and group resettlement in general.

To begin with, the consideration of risks within the GPPD forms only one part of the security screening process under group resettlement schemes. Government officials are reluctant to fully rely on the UNHCR's and IOM's screening process. This is reflected in the statements of a CBSA agent while describing the UNHCR's ability to conduct security assessments under group processing:

Well UNHCR tries...but they are not very good at it, and the reason they are not very good at it is because they don't really have the intel to really support their assertions. Its face value, so if somebody comes in and says this is me and this is who I am and I've never been involved in this thing or that thing [e.g. terrorist activities or war crimes], they just accept it at face value, they really don't have any intel to support it, so we [CBSA] have significant intel on a lot of different organizations and groups, that's just the nature of what we do, because the primary purpose is to protect Canadians so you are not bringing in immigrants and visitor's and stuff like that there are a threat to Canada. So we've got the wherewithal to do that...with the Bhutanese population we never had any problems at all, same with the Karen, very little problems with the Karen.⁴²⁷

The security official's statements resonate with Didier Bigo's theorizations on the global field of in-security. The professional managers of unease are invested with the knowledge and power of statistics to make truth claims as to what counts as legitimate threats; to classify and prioritize these threats.⁴²⁸ The perception by security and intelligence experts that the UNHCR does not possess this knowledge places it in the category of amateurs. As Bigo explains, "amateurs always need to "prove" their claims, whereas professionals, whether public or private, international,

⁴²⁷ CBSA, Personal interview with author, 6th October 2011.

⁴²⁸ Didier Bigo, "Globalized-in-Security: the Field and the Ban-opticon" in "Translation, Philosophy and Colonial Difference", Vol. 4. *Traces: A Multilingual Series of Cultural Theory*, ed. John Solomon and Naoki Sakai (2005); "Security and Immigration: Toward a Critique of."

national, or local, corporate or public, can evoke without demonstrating.”⁴²⁹ It is for this reason that knowledge accepted at face value from those outside “the game” is simply not enough from the perspective of the security professional as are statements such as “to the best of the UNHCR’s knowledge” in the Bhutanese GPPD. It is the same reason that security and intelligence agencies in Canada perform their own security, identification, and verification exercises despite similar UNHCR practices.

Security expertise plays an important role in determining risky groupings of refugees. CBSA in consultation with CSIS and RCMP run the names of chosen refugees for group processing initiatives in intelligence databases and examine their histories. According to the CBSA, individual assessments of national security threat by CSIS are used in combination with CBSA considerations of inadmissibility under sections 34, 35, and 37 of IRPA as well as criminality checks. Taken together, these form part of the overall assessment of chosen groupings of refugees.⁴³⁰ The section on exclusion concerns contained within the GPPD is examined by the intelligence directorate of the CBSA along with profiles on particular groupings, studies on groupings within particular areas of countries, and admissibility patterns, something that will be discussed further in the next chapter.⁴³¹ The UNHCR and IOM perform pre-screening and verification exercises that provide the names of chosen refugees to security agencies such as CSIS and CBSA, who in turn re-examine the histories of these individuals and run their names through security and intelligence databases.⁴³² CBSA assess refugee populations based on information provided by countries of origin as well as internal intelligence reports, trends, and analysis. The CBSA’s intelligence and national security directorate receives

⁴²⁹ Bigo, “Security and Immigration: Toward a Critique,” 74.

⁴³⁰ CBSA, Personal interview with author, 6th October 2011.

⁴³¹ CBSA, Personal interview with author, 3rd November, 2011.

⁴³² CBSA, Personal interview with author, 6th October 2011.

intelligence reports on particular groupings of refugees from CSIS. According to a CBSA official “[CSIS] are on the ground, they have the expertise more so than we [CBSA] do...they provide the analysis, the data...so that we’re able to compile [it], so CSIS would give us that information.”⁴³³ CBSA obtains information on criminality concerns from the RCMP who works with Interpol. On top of the IOM and UNHCR, the Canadian Council for Refugees, Canadian Red Cross, and UNHCR Canadian office are also consulted by the CBSA.⁴³⁴ As to whether or not Canadian security and intelligence agencies work with their foreign counterparts in countries such as the US, a CBSA official remarked:

If it’s needed... But CSIS has a lot of very good Intel, we have a lot of very good Intel, and...very often we will do things that are different than other countries... if other sources have to be accessed in terms of verifying information and things like that, it will be [done].⁴³⁵

Once again Bigo’s insights apply here as the statements reflect both the struggles and cooperation, if necessary, within the broader field of in-security professionals. The assumption is that security and intelligence agencies have the knowledge and expertise, which allows them to make truth claims on the potential risk of candidates for group processing. Despite this, security and intelligence experts are not completely removed from what Rose and Miller refer to as the “disputed terrain of politics.”⁴³⁶ This is reflected in the struggles between the US State Department and Department of Homeland Security over the potential inadmissibility of Karen refugees. Political preferences, or exemptions, still play a role in selecting groupings of refugees. It should be noted that the increased formalization and lengthy process of group resettlement schemes throughout the 2000s has coincided with much earlier security assessments of refugee

⁴³³ CBSA, Personal interview with author, 3rd November, 2011.

⁴³⁴ Ibid.

⁴³⁵ CBSA, Personal interview with author, 6th October 2011.

⁴³⁶ Rose and Miller, “Political Power beyond the State.”

populations. Already mentioned is the fact that under the US's P-2 group designation the Department of Homeland Security has become involved in group proposals and discussions at much earlier stage.⁴³⁷ The implications of these issues will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Foreign policy plays a role in group resettlement decisions as well, especially under the US's P-2 program. The U.S. Department of State explicitly acknowledges that foreign policy considerations guide its selection of refugee populations caught in protracted situations.⁴³⁸ Labman argues that "more overtly than is the case in Canada, American resettlement selection aligns with foreign policy preferences."⁴³⁹ Still, in Canada, foreign policy can influence group processing decisions. The Canadian government may choose to focus resettlement efforts on countries in which there are perceived economic interests or security concerns at play. The Prime Minister or Minister of Foreign Affairs may have specific countries that are of interest to them, what one might call political preferences or priorities.⁴⁴⁰ CIC officials rely on the perceived foreign affairs expertise of DFAIT as it relates to the humanitarian situations in countries that host refugees, the chances for voluntary repatriation, conditions in the country of origin, conflict analysis, and multilateral trends around refugee movements.⁴⁴¹ DFAIT builds its knowledge of these situations from several sources. Embassies within refugee countries of origin provide analysis of the political situation facing specific populations. In countries of first refuge, DFAIT considers whether or not refugee populations are receiving the services they require, if there is the potential for refoulement, and if there are tensions between the refugee population and local communities. These sorts of considerations by DFAIT assist Canadian immigration officials in

⁴³⁷ UNHCR, Personal interview with author, 28th August, 2012.

⁴³⁸ See U.S. Department of State, "Protracted Refugee Situations," accessed April 15, 2016, <http://www.state.gov/j/prm/policyissues/issues/protracted/>

⁴³⁹ Labman, *At Law's Border*, 242.

⁴⁴⁰ DFAIT, Personal interview with author, 22nd February, 2012.

⁴⁴¹ *Ibid*; DFAIT, Personal interview with author, 16th August, 2011.

determining the need for resettlement for specific populations in the absence of alternative durable solutions. Immigration officials rely on the identification of what are referred to as priority refugee populations by the UNHCR in need of resettlement. DFAIT consults with experts within the UNHCR, the Norwegian Refugee Council, the Forced Migration Review, and a whole host of civil society actors involved in the field of forced migration/refugee studies. A DFAIT official explains “we do try to develop an expertise in-house but we know exactly who to go out to talk to, to get expertise as well, and we’re not shy about going out and doing that.”⁴⁴²

DFAIT plays a role within the PRS working group mentioned earlier. The PRS considers specific refugee situations that are viewed as matching Canada’s foreign policy interests and priorities. According to one official, the types of questions posed by DFAIT within the PRS include: is Canada engaged there? Are there good relations with the government? Does Canada have development programs there?⁴⁴³ DFAIT provides diplomatic support to the PRS through its contacts with donors, host countries, and what it refers to as “likeminded countries” within Geneva and New York. It is informed of and consulted on multilateral discussions within Geneva such as the Core Group on the Bhutanese and the Working Group on Resettlement. The Humanitarian Affairs Section at the Canadian permanent mission in Geneva attends these sorts of meetings. While delegations that deal with UNHCR affairs comprise 2 CIC and 1 Canadian International Development Agency staff member, DFAIT does liaison with the Humanitarian Affairs Section very closely.⁴⁴⁴ The PRS adopts what is referred to as a “whole of government” approach aimed at resolving protracted refugee situations. Rather than rely exclusively on resettlement, the working group aims to resolve these situations through a range of governmental

⁴⁴² DFAIT, Personal interview with author, 22 February, 2012.

⁴⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁴ DFAIT, Personal interview with author, 16th August, 2011.

measures including development assistance, which is used to influence countries of first refuge to increase local integration of refugees.⁴⁴⁵

DFAIT, for the most part, plays a secondary role in group processing, ensuring that certain conditions prevail within countries that host groupings of refugees under consideration for resettlement. This can range from proper diplomatic relations to identifying the absence of alternative durable solutions outside resettlement. It should be noted however that this seems to be changing. Recent reforms to the Canadian government's entire resettlement program suggest a more prominent role for foreign policy considerations in selecting groupings or populations of refugees, something discussed in chapter five.

Conclusion

Under group resettlement schemes, authorities are confronted with messy and fluid situations within refugee camps. Biopolitical practices based on visualizing these spaces and producing order out of disorder,⁴⁴⁶ attempt to craft collective narratives of relative vulnerability. These narratives are attached to what are perceived as self-contained groupings of refugees with firm boundaries. Census, identification, and profiling practices play an important role in sorting messy and fluid groupings with risky elements from internally homogenous and self-contained groupings considered relatively safe, vulnerable, and "deserving." Taken together, these practices reify refugee "groups" under consideration for resettlement. They simplify, abstract, and manage heterogeneity while being uneasy about it. "Drawing circles," along with the

⁴⁴⁵ DFAIT, Personal interview with author, 22nd February, 2012.

⁴⁴⁶ Hyndman, *Managing Displacement*.

aspiration for “perfect vision” reflects the logic of sovereignty to stabilize “territorialized relations, institutions, and identities” and reaffirm the “citizen/nation/state ensemble.”⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴⁷ Soguk, *States and Strangers*.

Chapter four: “Clean Population”

Between the years 2006-2012 the UNHCR identified roughly fourteen potential group referrals for either the organization’s group methodology or priority situations in need of resettlement. Among these were: Burundians in Tanzania, Eritreans in Sudan, Congolese, Afghans in Russia, Afghans in Pakistan and Iran, Iranians in Turkey, Burmese (Rohingya) in Bangladesh, Bosnians and Croatians in Serbia, Bhutanese in Nepal, and Burmese in Thailand.⁴⁴⁸ Beyond this list, even a cursory look at the UNHCR website reveals that there are many other refugees in both camp and urban contexts that could be described as in need of resettlement. Despite this, only a select few have been chosen for group resettlement schemes. In this chapter I begin to piece together this gap by drawing on several examples of grouped refugees either included or excluded from these schemes. While the chapter concentrates on Canada’s group processing program, like previous chapters it considers examples within the US’s P-2 group referral and draws on the UNHCR’s group methodology.

Resettlement programs by their very nature are discretionary. The UNHCR resettlement handbook reminds its readers of this fact stating:

Resettlement is not a right, and there is no obligation on States to accept refugees through resettlement. Even if their case is submitted to a resettlement State by UNHCR, whether individual refugees will ultimately be resettled depends on the admission criteria of the resettlement state.⁴⁴⁹

The voluntary nature of resettlement has been the target of much criticism. Many authors point to the self-interests of states that motivate large-scale resettlement decisions such as foreign policy

⁴⁴⁸ See Table One: Group Resettlement Table, Appendix A.

⁴⁴⁹ UNHCR, *Resettlement Handbook* (2011 ed.), 36.

considerations and the influence of lobbying groups.⁴⁵⁰ Some of the literature on resettlement highlights how states frame overseas refugees as “genuine” in relation to “risky” or “bogus” refugees.⁴⁵¹ These sorts of distinctions can be seen in House of Commons debates in Canada. In May 2007 Conservative Party member Nina Grewal equated Canada’s purportedly compassionate and humanitarian nature with the resettlement of Karen refugees from Burma while questioning the need for an Appeals Division for inland determination.⁴⁵² In 2008 during the proceedings of the Standing Committees on Human Rights, former Immigration Minister Finley equated increased applications for refugee status from Mexico and Haiti with “illegal migrants,” “flooding across the borders,” “taking advantage of this good system,” and “economic migrants.” The argument was made that:

Those people are not legitimate refugees compared to individuals who have been in camps for many years...it is an abuse of the system, and Canadians do not want to see that. They do want to help those who need and deserve our help, such as the Karen refugees to whom we have opened our doors, the Bhutanese and the Iraqi refugees, whose numbers we have committed to doubling this year. They are truly refugees.⁴⁵³

An internal document that outlines the government’s media strategy regarding the resettlement of Karen refugees provides insight into how it frames group processing initiatives. The document emphasizes the specific vulnerabilities of the chosen Karen refugees while pointing out the perceived benefits of group processing such as reducing “the time associated with identifying, processing and resettling refugees,” a questionable claim in light of what was discussed in chapter three; namely the protracted nature of many group resettlement discussions. The same

⁴⁵⁰ Gibney, *The Ethics and Politics of Asylum*, 159-160; see also Van Selm, “The Strategic Use of Resettlement,” 46.

⁴⁵¹ See Hyndman and Giles, “Waiting for What?”; Labman, “Queue the Rhetoric: Refugees,” “Resettlement’s Renaissance,”; Casasola, “Current Trends and New Challenges for Canada’s.”

⁴⁵² Nina Grewal, “House of Commons Debates” (39th Parliament, 1st session, volume 141, number 158, Monday, May 28, 2007).

⁴⁵³ Dianne Finley, “Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights,” Parliament of Canada (Issue 6, Evidence, June 3, 2008).

document poses a hypothetical question from the media: “why are the Karen considered vulnerable?” The prepared response goes on to explain that:

We know that many refugees are in genuine need of protection and are considered vulnerable. However, some refugees are in greater need of our protection than others. For example, some refugees are in greater physical danger due to their personal circumstances within the larger camp population.⁴⁵⁴

What is implied from this statement is that group processing decisions are based on a hierarchy of humanitarian needs. Still, the media strategy emphasizes that the Karen refugees selected have been thoroughly screened by both the CBSA and CSIS. At one point it states that “a rigorous identification and verification process was used to verify individual identity, credibility and admissibility (security and criminality). Medical screening is also taking place prior to approving travel to Canada.”⁴⁵⁵ While the Canadian government is comfortable in publicizing groupings of refugees already selected for group processing such as the Karen and Bhutanese, it is reluctant to reveal how decisions are made under this program.

Group processing schemes are shrouded in secrecy. This is reflected in one of my first attempts made to obtain information for this dissertation on the inner workings of the Core Group on the Bhutanese and the Working Group on Resettlement. I posed questions by email to an official that worked at the Canadian Humanitarian Affairs Section of the embassy in Geneva, Switzerland. The Humanitarian Affairs Section represents Canada’s position on refugee issues at both the Core Group and the Working Group on Resettlement meetings. Here is a sample of some of the questions I asked and answers given in correspondence with this official:

Question: Are there discussions [at the Core Group Meetings] on the potential security implications of the resettlement of large refugee populations?

⁴⁵⁴ CIC, *Media Lines/Qs And As, Karen Refugee Group Processing Exercise* (May 26, 2006):3.

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 2.

Answer: “This topic is discussed during Core Group meetings but we are not in a position to provide you with more information in this regard due to confidentiality constraints.”

Question: Are there discussions on medical or public health issues?

Answer “This topic is discussed during Core Group meetings but we are not in a position to provide you with more information in this regard due to confidentiality constraints.”

Question: Are there discussions on the foreign policy implications of group resettlement?

Answer: “This topic is discussed during Core Group meetings but we are not in a position to provide you with more information in this regard due to confidentiality constraints.”

Question: Could you elaborate on what was discussed at the meeting(s) of the Core Group on the Bhutanese?

Answer: “No (for reasons of confidentiality).”

Question: Did the Core group discuss the resistance to resettlement from some members of the Bhutanese refugee community in Nepal?

Answer: Yes.

Question: What was the Core group’s position in relation to this resistance?

Answer: “This is confidential.”

Question: What role did the United States play in these Core Group discussions?

Answer: “This is confidential.”

Question: From what I understand, in 2005 or 6, the high commissioner for refugees pronounced on 5 protracted refugee situations that were identified as being as a priority. Does/did the Core group discuss these sorts of announcements by the high commissioner?

Answer: “Yes.”

Question: If so, what was the nature of these discussions?

Answer: “Confidential.”⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵⁶ DFAIT official, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Canada, Geneva, Switzerland, Email message to Author, September 22, 2011.

From a research perspective my initial reaction was concern that obtaining information on group processing was going to be challenging to say the least. The refusal to answer the questions along with numerous instances of resistance from other officials when asked about group resettlement decisions (beyond limited publicly available information) demonstrates that the Canadian government shrouds these decisions in secrecy in a bid to maintain discretion over the assessment, sorting, and selection of groupings of refugees. Despite the official's constant reference to confidentiality issues, the short answers do indicate that decisions are based on security assessments, foreign policy considerations, and health implications. Yet, revealing the details of these assessments would present problems for the government's framing of group processing as based on efficiency, humanitarian gestures, and international burden-sharing. This chapter is based on the few instances, after much effort, in which officials were willing to discuss these matters in greater detail.

I begin the chapter by highlighting the prominent role of bureaucratic objectives in group processing, pointing to how these intersect with security practices in unique ways. Governments desire homogenous and self-contained groupings of refugees with minimal security screening requirements and risks. The chapter reveals risk management techniques informed by a neoliberal desire to create efficiencies in overseas resettlement processing. These techniques are less concerned with ordering and making refugee camps visible than with examining specific bits of information deemed relevant to determining the risk and efficiency of processing groupings of refugees.

Drawing on the examples of the Burmese, Somalis, Sudanese "lost boys", Liberian "women-at-risk," and Chechens, the chapter considers how assessments of groupings of refugees are gendered and influenced by cultural biases, which play a role in the construction of collective

narratives. Cultural biases and gender assumptions influence the perception of authorities as to which groupings of refugees possess the qualities to become self-governing liberal subjects; to integrate easily into Western liberal democracies. The multilateral nature of many group resettlement schemes allows the Canadian government to base selection on these preferences and concerns. It is afforded discretion in discriminating between groupings of refugees on the basis of religion, nationality, health, security risk, and education. Similar to security practices, considerations of “integration potential” in multilateral resettlement efforts express, or produce, cultural and religious preferences. In the final section of the chapter I consider the official claim that group resettlement focuses on “protracted refugee situations.” I point to pre-emptive security practices in the Canadian government’s “whole of government” approach to the resolution of these situations. The formation of working groups such as the PRS can be seen as another form of “targeted governance” in which group processing is one tool designed to deal with the perceived security implications of protracted displacement.

“Generating Efficiencies”: Group Processing and the selection of a “Clean Population”

While describing the selection of Burmese Karen for group processing, a Canadian official explained “we [CIC] were able to secure assurances from our partner agencies, the CBSA, CSIS, etc., to say, you know, that this, probably not a nice word, but you know, ‘*a clean population*,’ you don’t have hidden terrorists hiding in these camps and so it’s a safe population to go in and do expedited processing.”⁴⁵⁷ The same official remarked:

the Bhutanese were a *clean population*, there’s never been a rebel force that goes back into Bhutan to blow things up, the only element that they had that was of concern and remained a concern for a long time, was that the group as a whole, there was some very strong leaders in the camp that did not want to see resettlement take place and had

⁴⁵⁷ CIC, Personal interview with author, 21st July, 2011.

lobbied very hard and violently for no resettlement to take place, arguing that they all had the right to go back to Bhutan and they were not leaving until Bhutan would let them back in.⁴⁵⁸

The officials' use of the expression "*clean population*" and reference to CSIS and CBSA highlights the operation of biopolitical security practices under group processing. The notion of a "*clean population*" is relative; it is based on comparisons of different groupings of refugees, both within refugee camps and between them. For this reason, the idea of a "*clean population*" free of any problematic elements is a hypothetical ideal situation, something that authorities strive for. Foucault suggests that biopower inscribes racism into the mechanisms of the state, fragmenting the biological field and subdividing the species. Sovereign power, in the form of the right to kill, works through the biopower system by eliminating both internal and external threats to the population with the aim of improving the health and vitality of the population. Foucault notes that "racism is bound up with the workings of a State that is obliged to use race, the elimination of races and the purification of the race, to exercise its sovereign power."⁴⁵⁹ While it is unclear why the official quoted above hesitated in using the expression "clean populations," it does evoke notions of racial purity. Mawani's examination of the colonial management of, and anxieties surrounding, the intermingling and proximity of Aboriginal peoples, White settlers, and Chinese migrants in nineteenth century British Columbia extends Foucault's conception of state racism. She suggests that racial superiority and inferiority were:

internally fragmented and marked by *degrees of difference*. Although some racial Others (aboriginal peoples) could be tolerated in the settler regime and eventually civilized through moral training, there were other Others (Chinese and mixed-bloods) who were deemed to be too distant from the values of European modernity to be improved and assimilated and who thus needed to be expunged. Importantly, distinctions between 'fit' and 'unfit' were determined with reference to longevity not only of northern European

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁹ Foucault, *Society Must be Defended*, 258.

populations but also of aboriginal ones. Thus inferior races were those who imperilled whiteness and Indianness, albeit in different ways.”⁴⁶⁰

While this is a much different context than contemporary group resettlement, the idea of *degrees of difference* is reflected in the belief of the official that the Bhutanese and Karen are relatively “pure” populations that not only pose minimal biopolitical risk to the “Canadian” population, but are capable of integrating and becoming fully functional liberal subjects. Moreover, the notion of *degrees of differences* relates to the comparisons of different groupings of refugees that may potentially be resettled to Canada.

Officially, group processing is aimed at expediting the processing of chosen groupings of refugees through the use of shortened resettlement registration forms (RRFs) and the skipping of individual refugee status determinations (the acceptance of prima fascia basis). The creation of this program was influenced by the urgent protection program following the passing of IRPA in 2002. The goal behind the urgent protection program is to make overseas resettlement processing efficient by having CIC, CBSA, and CSIS screen resettlement candidates deemed in urgent need of protection within 48 hours. Rejected individuals are sent back to the UNHCR to be forwarded to other resettlement states for consideration. The logic of expediting the security screening for urgent cases was then applied to a second category of refugees considered vulnerable cases. Under this category, the same screening process needed to occur within 4 months. This was referred to as the “4 month envelope” and was then applied to all group processing initiatives. A CBSA official remarked that the decision to apply the vulnerability definition to group processing was “part of improving the overall timeline process for our processing of

⁴⁶⁰ Mawani, *Colonial Proximities*, 20.

refugees.”⁴⁶¹ The goal was to force agencies such as CBSA and CSIS to rethink how individual members of chosen groupings could be processed faster. The same official explained that:

all of our missions abroad said well we can't do it with the resources we've got, so you guys have to send in teams from Ottawa or we have to constitute a team in the region that can go in and actually do this processing all at once....and we said fine, let's do it, and that's how we set it up. So when we actually set up group processing it was in line with the vulnerable definition.⁴⁶²

These teams would go into what is referred to as the “theatre” for 3 weeks at a time in order to rapidly process individuals selected for group processing, including the Karen and Bhutanese.

The idea of the “theatre” has several meanings. First, it resonates with the post-colonial act of going into the “field,” whether to conduct academic research or work for a humanitarian NGO. Hyndman explains that within the UNHCR “depending on one’s post and location, ‘the field’ has a multitude of meanings, most of which are predicated on geographical distance from a perceived center.”⁴⁶³ Second, the word “theatre” evokes colonial anxieties surrounding the management of the “peripheries.” For Hindess, this anxiety manifests in settings that are perceived as outside the liberal order, where subjects are viewed as not yet fully developed rational self-governing citizens. He explains that:

The fate of colonial administrators is to imagine that they belong to one setting while being required to inhabit the other. Like police and other officials in deprived areas of contemporary Western societies, they find themselves surrounded by people who, they have come to believe, cannot be trusted to behave as autonomous social agents.⁴⁶⁴

Finally, the idea of the “theatre” can imply a situation of war or combat. Here, security professionals must temporarily go into the “theatre” and perform security acts, ensuring relatively “clean populations.”

⁴⁶¹ CBSA, Personal interview with author, 6th October 2011.

⁴⁶² Ibid.

⁴⁶³ Hyndman, *Managing Displacement*, 89.

⁴⁶⁴ Hindess, “Not at Home in the Empire,” 373.

In describing this process, the same CBSA official loudly proclaimed that “they’re vulnerable, get them out” in order to emphasize the purported urgency of the situation.⁴⁶⁵ The official recounted how the security process unfolds under group processing:

When the assessments are going for the group processing you've got to make sure it's a very tight process, so everything would be brought into a working group, a very focused working group within my division and we would take those applications and simply walk them around and say, okay, you've got this processing period, for this number of people and get it done and we would go to the next group and the next group...until it was all done; this is all within the organization [CBSA], it was all within my division, I had 150 people working for me in national security screening at that time, so we had significant responsibilities for immigrant and visitor screening and...the refugees being a key component of that and because we made a commitment to the timelines, we had to make sure that everybody was onside with that.⁴⁶⁶

As the statements above demonstrate, designations of vulnerability under group processing are more than a humanitarian gesture to needy refugees. They are a bureaucratic category designed to streamline and expedite overseas resettlement processing. More important, in some instances they play a role determining what constitutes a “*clean population*.” A Canadian Immigration official’s remarks demonstrate this:

We only go to the CBSA once we have figured that this is a population that we might be interested in, that we actually could have the capacity, the resources that we could get to them. We ask them is there a real reason why we shouldn’t [chase them], do they have flags; if they tell us that 30% of that population you are going to have to send for an in-depth clearance process; much more scrutiny, where there is a CSIS interview, then obviously we are not going to get any savings there, no efficiencies to be generated, people would be sitting in limbo waiting for clearance.⁴⁶⁷

The fact that members of the rejected population will continue to wait in limbo seems to be lost on the official. Of particular importance in the statements above is the idea that refugee populations can be screened out of group processing for requiring lengthy security assessments,

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁷ CIC, Personal interview with author, 21st July, 2011.

as opposed to having a high percentage of “group” members that would be inadmissible under Canadian immigration laws. This represents a unique way to conduct security assessments of potential candidates for group processing. From the perspective of the government the need for lengthy security screening runs counter to the bureaucratic goal of expediting the processing of groupings of refugees. In these cases, security practices are framed by a neo-liberal rationale based on risk management techniques. The reliance on these techniques suggests that the state has abandoned what is perceived as the burdensome task of sorting the at-risk from the risky in groupings of refugees.

In other instances, assessments of admissibility on group processing candidates are made and these occur at an early stage. Such is the case in the PRS interdepartmental working group, mentioned last chapter, which examines what are referred to as the “inadmissibility patterns” of different groupings of refugees. A security official explained that based on these examinations the CBSA would ask “is this a good group to choose based on their inadmissibility patterns.”⁴⁶⁸ This suggests that with group processing, profiling involves not only the comparison and contrasting of different groupings of refugees but also the same grouping across different time periods. The “inadmissibility patterns” of earlier inland refugee claimants and resettlement applications from a refugee population play a role in determining the viability of offering resettlement to present-day groupings of refugees from the same population. In describing the PRS’s consideration of resettlement, the same security official put forth the following question: “is this a good population for Canada to choose given the security risk, are we going to be able to...if we choose to resettle 1000 refugees are half of them going to be inadmissible.”⁴⁶⁹

⁴⁶⁸ CBSA, Personal interview with author, 3rd November, 2011.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid.

The examination of “inadmissibility patterns” under group processing reflects “targeted governance.” Once again, Walters’s thoughts on contemporary re-bordering practices and the individual are suggestive here. The individual “signifies an apparent thinning-down, or even hollowing-out of strategies of governance”. He explains:

Control de-emphasizes or even abandons the quest to train, moralize, reform and remake the individual. It relinquishes the dream of an all-encompassing, normalized society. It is less bothered with reforming the young offender, than with securing the home or the shopping mall against their presence.⁴⁷⁰

Under group processing, the assessment of “inadmissibility patterns” reduces members of a refugee grouping to individuals with commonalities; a consolidation of basic bio-data to form the group profile. These types of practices are less concerned with moulding refugees into self-governing liberal subjects than with protecting the Canadian population from perceived biopolitical threats. Moreover, they sort risky heterogeneous groupings from relatively homogenous and safe ones.

A similar security rationale can be found in the US’s P-2 group referral program and the UNHCR’s group methodology. When examining the interim group profile document, referred to as a “Polaroid shot” by one official, the UNHCR Resettlement Service at headquarters considers “whether or not group or expedited processing is most efficient and economical in terms of time and resources.”⁴⁷¹ The aim here is to anticipate potential problems with group referrals such as lengthy security assessments. An example of this occurred in late 2009 when the US government rejected a UNHCR group referral of Somalis out of Dadaab because of security concerns, including the fact that both the Somalis and Iraqis have the longest security clearance process. The US Department of Homeland Security evaluates the history of P-2 candidates, including

⁴⁷⁰ Walters, “Border/Control.”

⁴⁷¹ UNHCR, *Resettlement Handbook* (2011 ed.), 236.

whether or not groupings of refugees will pass the screening process.⁴⁷² Another factor for rejecting the grouping of Somalis, according to a UNHCR official, was the “tirade of fraud in the Somali caseload.” The same official remarked:

so because of these two reasons they [the US] didn’t feel that group resettlement was appropriate, because that’s one of the things they always have to look at is with this kind of simplified methodology there is always a higher risk of fraud, although generally we try to make sure that the methodology that we put into place, the procedures that we have are good enough to make sure that people are not able to sneak in, but there is a very high incidence, especially identity fraud and family composition fraud among the Somalis, their known for it [interviewee laughs].⁴⁷³

The official’s statements regarding the committing of fraud by Somalis are deeply problematic and are explored in more detail later on in the chapter.

Under targeted resettlement programs such as group processing designed to “generate efficiencies” in the processing of overseas refugees, authorities would rather avoid risky groupings of refugees than sort the good from the bad, the risky from the at-risk within a chosen grouping. The latter is viewed as too costly and inefficient.

Somali refugees in Dadaab, Kenya are also viewed as problematic by Canadian authorities. There is a belief by government officials that as a grouping there are threatening elements, specifically members of the listed terrorist organization Al Shabaab. An immigration official explained “bottom line we cannot claim that the entire Somali population is problem-free.”⁴⁷⁴ According to this same official, the *mixed* nature of the refugee population in Dadaab, some are fleeing famine as opposed to persecution under the Convention, makes Somalis in Dadaab an unlikely candidate for Canada’s group processing. From the perspective of authorities, this would frustrate efforts to carve out self-contained, homogenous, and vulnerable groupings of

⁴⁷² UNHCR, Personal interview with author, 28th August, 2012.

⁴⁷³ UNHCR, Personal interview with author, 14th July, 2012.

⁴⁷⁴ CIC, Personal interview with author, 21st July, 2011.

refugees. Iraqi refugees were similarly viewed as to mixed, or lacking a common narrative, to warrant group processing. A Canadian immigration official explained that there are twelve different tribes as well as different reasons for fleeing Iraq.⁴⁷⁵ The UNHCR echoed this concern in 2007 explaining that “resettlement using the group methodology is not envisaged at this time as the profile of the population is diverse and complex.”⁴⁷⁶ The decision against group resettlement relates as much (if not more) to security concerns expressed about Iraqis. The same Canadian immigration official remarked “there are a lot of Iraqis that have been killing Iraqis and those aren’t the people you want, you didn’t have Bhutanese killing Bhutanese... very clear security issues with the Iraqi population.”⁴⁷⁷ Similarly, a CBSA official explained that with the Iraqis:

Security screening was difficult, as a group, and it became problematic; it became a concern both from our perspective [CBSA]...let's just say the security community within Canada was less than impressed with the whole notion of doing group processing for Iraqi refugees... we were fully prepared to engage...and the numbers show that we are engaged with taking significant populations out of both Jordan and Syria and I think to a certain extent Lebanon; but group processing simply was not a part of that process.⁴⁷⁸

The statements reveal that authorities perceive the grouping of refugees as more prone to security risks. The decision by the Canadian government to still accept large numbers of Iraqis highlights the differences, and tensions, between politically motivated largescale resettlement based on individual selection, the bureaucratic rationales behind expedited forms of overseas processing, and security concerns.

In explaining the political motivations behind the multilateral decision to resettle the Bhutanese, Banki argues that in the wake of the 9/11 attacks:

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁶ UNHCR, *Resettlement of Iraqi Refugees* (Geneva: UNHCR, March 12, 2007), 7.

⁴⁷⁷ CIC, Personal interview with author, 21st July, 2011.

⁴⁷⁸ CBSA, Personal interview with author, 6th October 2011.

There was a need to find refugee populations that would allow Western countries to fill their resettlement quotas without turning to those populations viewed as potentially dangerous—that is, the Middle East refugees.⁴⁷⁹

Yet, as noted above, this overlooks the fact that Western countries such as Canada resettled significant numbers of Iraqis; more than 9,000 between 2009 and 2011.⁴⁸⁰ A compromise was reached between the concerns of security professionals and the political desire to respond to this grouping of refugees. Authorities used an expedited form of individual processing as opposed to group processing. A CIC official explained “what we’re using with the Iraqis is a simplified referral form and designated Iraqis as *prima fascia*; it simplifies things a lot; different methodology trying to ‘generate efficiencies’ like group processing; it shortens the interviewing process.”⁴⁸¹

Unlike the Iraqis, some groupings of refugees are deemed too problematic for any form of expedited processing. One example is Burundians and Rwandans, referred to by a security official as the “genocide populations.” The same official explains:

If we had a really problematic population, and we have had problematic populations in Africa, particularly people that were involved in Genocide in Rwanda and Burundi; we can’t touch those populations, those are very difficult, and as a group they are more problematic than they are worth our time to try and go in and screen out the good from the bad, because there was so many of them involved at various times with respect to genocide.⁴⁸²

The perception that “genocide populations” are too messy and heterogeneous for group processing is predicated on the belief that internally homogenous and bounded ethnic groupings are ideal. The sad irony of this is that it was the promotion, and reification, of precisely these types of groupings by both former colonial rulers and ethnonationalists in places like Rwanda

⁴⁷⁹ Banki, “Resettlement of the Bhutanese from Nepal,” 49.

⁴⁸⁰ See Staff, Canadian Press, “Iraqi resettlement will take to 2015: Jason Kenney,” *metronews.ca*, last modified June 20, 2011, 5:03 pm, <http://metronews.ca/news/canada/713691/iraqi-resettlement-will-take-to-2015-kenney/>.

⁴⁸¹ CIC, Personal interview with author, 21st July, 2011.

⁴⁸² CBSA, Personal interview with author, 6th October 2011.

that fueled genocidal violence in the first place. In describing the effects of identification practices in Rwanda, Timothy Longman notes that “colonial policies...transformed Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa into relatively rigid ethnic categories of great political significance. Regardless of their historical meanings, the ethnic categories, because of colonial policies, largely determined people’s life opportunities.”⁴⁸³ The search for homogenous and finite groupings of refugees benefits from these problematic categories.

The decision to avoid what is perceived as the burdensome task of separating the risky from the at-risk demonstrates how the bureaucratic rationale to remake resettlement processing efficient intersects with security practices under group processing. These assessments of risk and efficiency occur at a distance from refugee camps and yet rely on what Turner describes as sorting practices that attempt to separate “innocent victims” from what are perceived as troublemakers.⁴⁸⁴ When practices associated with “perfect vision” and “drawing circles” are unable to carve out vulnerable, homogeneous, and finite groupings of refugees, the state moves on to the next refugee grouping candidate.

When describing the exclusion of entire groupings of refugees under group processing officials are quick to point out that individual referrals from the UNHCR will still be accepted by the Canadian government. There is a certain level of unease on the part of officials in discussing what amounts to the biopolitical exclusion of heterogeneous and risky groupings of refugees. Despite the suggestion that individual resettlement will continue to be available in the absence of group processing, without the political will, as there was with the Iraqis, the decision against group processing has serious implications for the refugees in question. The Canadian Council for

⁴⁸³ Timothy Longman, “Identity Cards, Ethnic Self-Perception, and Genocide in Rwanda,” in *Documenting Individual Identity, the Development of State Practices in the Modern World*, ed. Jane Caplan and John Torpey (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001), 353.

⁴⁸⁴ Turner, *Politics of Innocence*, 3.

Refugees in 2010 remarked that “processing times for refugees to Canada from Africa are unacceptably long; refugees and their families suffer disproportionately from this situation in spite of the reality that African countries host huge numbers of refugees in need of resettlement.”⁴⁸⁵ Decisions against using group processing need to be considered in light of varying processing times at Canadian visa posts across the globe. In contrast to expedited forms of processing at visa posts that host Iraqi refugees, posts in Africa that would service Burundians, Rwandans, and Somalis are extremely slow and subjected to caps. It is difficult to envision many of these refugees escaping their predicament and being selected for resettlement.

In rare instances, during my interviewing, some Canadian officials admitted that entire groupings of refugees have been excluded from group processing. In these cases there was no recourse to individual resettlement for members of these groupings. One example is Iranian Kurds in camp Ashraf in Iraq. An immigration official explained that the Iranian Kurds have been directly linked to a listed terrorist organization by the Canadian state, which has repeatedly told the UNHCR that they will not resettle the 134 individuals as they are inadmissible as a “group.” According to this official, “they are a group that has vowed to overthrow a government and we designated them as a *bad group*.”⁴⁸⁶ The use of the expression “bad group” and the acknowledgement that certain groupings of refugees are inadmissible provides a rare exception to the usual hesitation by government officials to admit these decisions.

Gender and Cultural Assumptions under Group Resettlement

Mawani’s analysis of racial encounters and mixing in British Columbia’s former cannery spaces demonstrates that constructions of race were not only based on biological distinctions, but

⁴⁸⁵ CCR, “Equitable Access in Africa”, *CCR Resolutions Database*. Res. 1, June 2010, http://ccrweb.ca/en/resolutions?term_node_tid_depth_1=All&title=&term_node_tid_depth_op=or&term_node_tid_depth=All&page=1

⁴⁸⁶ CIC, Personal interview with author, 21st July, 2011.

also cultural and gender predispositions as early as the nineteenth century. These in turn determined where racialized groupings would be situated within the hierarchical organization of the canning industry.⁴⁸⁷ While the context of contemporary group resettlement is much different, similar assumptions of culture and gender influence constructions of vulnerability and risk. Moreover, the perceived tainting of vulnerability for some groupings of refugees is gendered and in some instances based on cultural assumptions.

In 2005, the United States agreed to resettle 2500 Liberian female heads of households from Guinea.⁴⁸⁸ The refugees had experienced what is referred to as double flight by UNHCR officials, first to the Ivory Coast and then Guinea. According to one official, the group proposal created problems since it de facto included male members despite being based on the UNHCR category “women-at-risk.” Rather than include the males in the grouping, the UNHCR developed a separate category called deferral pains in which direct male family members would be individually resettled at the same time as the Liberian females.⁴⁸⁹ Implicit in this decision is that individual males might compromise the vulnerability of female Liberian refugees. Moreover, the testing for groupness is sometimes framed by gender. As noted earlier, Mawani points to how racial distinctions were marked by *degrees of difference*, some groupings were seen as a threat not only to the white settler society, but to those colonial subjects that were viewed as potentially occupying a place in this settler society; albeit a subordinate position within a hierarchized system.⁴⁹⁰ The grouping of Liberian females was viewed as “deserving” of the opportunity to settle and integrate into the United States. From the perspective of UNHCR authorities, the

⁴⁸⁷ Mawani, *Colonial Proximities*, 45.

⁴⁸⁸ UNHCR, *Progress Report on Resettlement*. Executive Committee of the High Commissioner’s Programme, Standing Committee, 30th meeting (Geneva: UNHCR), 7th June, 2004, 3

⁴⁸⁹ UNHCR, Personal interview with author, 28th August, 2012.

⁴⁹⁰ Mawani, *Colonial Proximities*.

inclusion of males in the grouping would taint its vulnerability and therefore cast doubt on this assumption.

The decision by the Canadian government to screen-out Chechens from group processing also displays gender assumptions. This can be seen in an Immigration officials remarks:

As a general rule, we've told the UNHCR don't bother referring us groups of Chechens. The number that have been engaged in other activities; it's like every one of them would have to go through a thorough screening, the odd individual woman maybe, but don't come to us and say would you take 500 Chechens, because we know that all 500 we would have to really scrutinize.⁴⁹¹

Once again, the statements are revealing in that they run counter to the usual hesitation of officials to make such generalizations regarding group proposals. They demonstrate that the Canadian government is willing to “draw circles” around groupings of refugees and frame them as risky. The reference to the “odd individual woman maybe” demonstrates how gender is employed in assessments of risk and vulnerability. Authorities face challenges in their efforts to craft specific groupings of refugees based on vulnerability, homogeneity, self-containment, and riskiness. With the Liberian refugees, the presence of single males risked tainting the vulnerability of the grouping based on the UNHCR category “women at risk,” while with the Chechens masculinized conceptions of risky groupings are challenged by the existence of at least some females within these groupings. In both these situations, the crafting of groupings based on commonalities is confronted with the presence of heterogeneity.

Cultural preferences can be seen in the most recent responses of Western resettlement states to the plight of Somali refugees in places such as Kenya. This was not always the case. In 2004 US officials resettled Somali Bantus and in 2005 Somali Benadir under the P2

⁴⁹¹ CIC, Personal interview with author, 21st July, 2011.

designation.⁴⁹² In 2003 Canadian officials piloted group processing with the selection of 900 Sudanese and Somalis from Dadaab, Kenya. Canada and Australia jointly resettled these refugees.⁴⁹³ As mentioned earlier, more recently, the purportedly mixed nature of Somali refugees living in Dadaab along with concerns over security and fraud have led government officials from both Canada and the US to exclude them from group resettlement schemes. This is despite the fact that Somalis fit the UNHCR criteria of being in need of resettlement. The organization's 2013 Global Resettlement Needs report explains that there are many Somalis in Dadaab, Kenya awaiting resettlement. It blames this situation on both the security situation in Dadaab, which makes accessing the refugees there difficult, and on long delays in the security screening process of major resettlement states.⁴⁹⁴ Biopolitical fears surrounding Somali refugees are influenced by assumptions of Somali culture. This is reflected in the statements of a UNHCR official that compared Somali to Burmese refugees:

The rate of fraud in the Burmese program was minimal, I mean there was no need for them to lie and it wasn't part of their culture so to speak, whereas the Somalis it is very much part of their culture to lie, and I know that sounds kind of flippant to say that, but that's what they say as well, 'this is always how we have gotten around, this is how we have always gotten through life, is to be deceptive when you have to be', um, which they don't have to be, but it's difficult to change that attitude.⁴⁹⁵

Notwithstanding the official's qualifications, the statements point to essentialized notions of a supposedly distinct Somali culture based on deception. Such deeply problematic forms of cultural racism can be seen in generalizations about the ability of Somalis to successfully integrate into Western countries, which are once again influencing resettlement decisions. One

⁴⁹² UNHCR, Personal interview with author, 28th August, 2012.

⁴⁹³ Labman, *At Law's Border*, 232.

⁴⁹⁴ UNHCR, *Projected Global Resettlement Needs* (Geneva: UNHCR, 19th Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement, 1-3 July 2013), 21.

⁴⁹⁵ UNHCR, Personal interview with author, 14th July, 2012.

example is the United Kingdom, which is reluctant to select any Somalis for resettlement and would prefer Ethiopians.⁴⁹⁶ The UNHCR official quoted above remarked that:

[US] interest in Somalis is waning because their having a lot of problems and let's be quite frank, Somalis are famous worldwide among the resettlement countries to be exceptionally difficult to resettle and to integrate into societies and causing lots of problems in communities where they are resettled in these countries. I mean countries have even come back and said sorry but we don't want any of your Somalis, we're sick of them, we'll consider your Ethiopians, we'll consider you're Congolese.⁴⁹⁷

The candid statements above demonstrate that Western governments have clear preferences for certain groupings of refugees over others. These preferences are based on the assumption of groupism; they reify ethnic “groups” such as the “Congolese,” “Ethiopians,” and “Somalis”, imputing distinctive cultures to their “identities.” The statements prove that integration potential continues to influence resettlement decisions, especially within the EU,⁴⁹⁸ but also in Canada where recent changes to the entire resettlement program point in this direction. This is further demonstrated by the fact that the Canadian government in 2012 did not resettle any Somalis based explicitly on concerns that they don't integrate well.⁴⁹⁹

The links between culture, the ability to integrate into Western states, and groupism is reflected in a comprehensive report on refugee resettlement that points to generalized prejudices and public misconceptions about the possibility of Somali refugees having relations to Islamic radicalism. According to this report, some of the most disadvantaged refugees in the world have low acceptance rates for resettlement. It explains:

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid; In 2013 Canadian immigration officials were considering the selection of 2,500 Congolese refugees between the years 2015-17 as part of a major multilateral resettlement effort involving 50,000 Congolese. See CCR, “CCR-CIC-CBSA Fall Roundtable” (Ottawa: CCR, Summary Report, September 9th, 2013). In light of the recent announcement for the selection of Syrian refugees under the newly elected Liberal government this commitment may have been placed on hold.

⁴⁹⁸ UNHCR, Personal interview with author, 14th July, 2012.

⁴⁹⁹ CCR, “Overseas Protection & Sponsorship (OPS) Working Group Handout,” (CCR: November 2013), 3.

At the opposite end of the spectrum are the “favoured” caseloads. These are groups of refugees who are deemed to be a low security risk and who are believed to have attributes that make it easier for them to adjust to life in the resettlement country...this has led to situations where resettlement states actively compete for some groups of refugees while ignoring others in equally vulnerable situations.⁵⁰⁰

One example already mentioned is the Bhutanese referred to by a Canadian immigration official as a “clean population.”⁵⁰¹

Cultural preferences can be seen within multilateral discussions on large-scale resettlement initiatives. Eileen Pittaway, who attended several undocumented meetings with the UNHCR and resettlement state officials recalls that preferences for non-Muslim refugees were discussed and that refugees from Southeast Asia such as the mainly Christian refugees from the Karen and Karenni camps in Thailand were seen to be easier to integrate.⁵⁰² This is in contrast to the Muslim Rohingyas from Burma, something discussed shortly.

The cultural biases that underpin assessments of Somali refugees in places such as Dadaab can be contrasted with the positive framing by the media, general public, aid workers, and the US government of orphaned Sudanese men referred to as the “lost boys.” The refugees were resettled by US officials under the P-2 designation beginning in 2000. McKinnon explains that the unique circumstance of the their flight, orphaned boys at the time, led aid workers, who made direct connections between the refugees and the orphaned lost boys of Peter Pan, to press for their resettlement.⁵⁰³ Boas points to the role of Christian organizations and traditional religiously affiliated resettlement agencies such as World Vision, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, and the Hebrew Immigrant

⁵⁰⁰ Piper AM, Power, and Thom, “Refugee resettlement: 2012 and beyond,”19.

⁵⁰¹ CIC, Personal interview with author, 21st July, 2011; Piper AM et al explains that the Bhutanese are one of the “favoured” caseloads, while groups such as the Iraqis, Rohingyas, and Somalis are considered “difficult” to resettle whether for security or integration concerns, 19.

⁵⁰² Eileen Pittaway, “The Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh: a Failure of the International Protection Regime” in *Protracted displacement in Asia: no place to call home*, ed. Howard Adelman (London: Ashgate, 2008), 83-106.

⁵⁰³ McKinnon, “Unsettling Resettlement,”404.

Aid Society as influencing the US decision to resettle the Sudanese men.⁵⁰⁴ McKinnon adds that: “the ‘Lost Boys’ and their stories worked well in the history of U.S. refugee resettlement because their narratives of exile provided great opportunities for human interest stories depicting the U.S. state as benevolent and hospitable.”⁵⁰⁵ This constructed narrative of the Sudanese refugees purportedly made them an easily identifiable and discrete grouping of refugees for US authorities.⁵⁰⁶ For aid workers, their perceived distinctiveness allowed constructions of vulnerability in a bid to gain resettlement, while for government officials it satisfied the desire to draw clear boundaries around groupings of refugees. At the same time, McKinnon argues that the Sudanese men, who were initially sent to Arizona, do not identify with the label “lost boys” in a literal sense. Rather, they use it strategically as means of communicating what it means to be a refugee from Southern Sudan and to garner donated resources that keep the Arizona Lost Boys Center open.⁵⁰⁷ The resettlement of the Sudanese men demonstrates how refugees can sometimes re-appropriate statist conceptions of distinctiveness to their advantage. While the boundaries still exist, they have been able to have a say in what constitutes their collectiveness. A similar process can be seen in Malkki’s description of how Hutu refugees refused to naturalize their presence within Tanzania by re-appropriating the concept of *refugee-ness*, normally viewed as an aberration in the national order of things. In the context of what was perceived as a nation in exile:

refugee status was valued and protected as a sign of the ultimate temporariness of exile and of the refusal to become naturalized, to put down roots in a place to which one did not belong. Insisting on one's liminality and displacement as a refugee was also to have a legitimate claim to the attention of "international opinion" and to international assistance.⁵⁰⁸

⁵⁰⁴ Boas, “The New Face of America’s Refugees,” 450-51.

⁵⁰⁵ McKinnon, “Unsettling Resettlement,” 404.

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid, 404; Boas, “The New Face of America’s Refugees,” 452.

⁵⁰⁷ McKinnon, “Unsettling Resettlement,” 404-05.

⁵⁰⁸ Malkki, “National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples,” 35.

This is an example of refugees coming together to strategically co-opt statist and humanitarian framings to their advantage. Malkki's analysis points to "a deterritorialized [Hutu] nation without roots sunk directly into the national soil."⁵⁰⁹ The drive for commonality and homogeneity under group resettlement represents the territorializing and spatial logics that Malkki associates with the "national order of things." This drive, however, is continuously confronted with hybridity, fluidity, and as the cases above demonstrates resistance.

The challenges of crafting groupings of refugees with commonalities are reflected in the narrow group definition of the "lost boys," which fail to account for those refugees that developed families prior to their resettlement. McKinnon explains:

When the U.S. government granted resettlement clearance to the "Lost Boys," it was under the auspices that the men were still orphans, meaning that they were living in refugee camps without kin relations. Many of the men had established families in the camps, yet they weren't able to resettle with their partners or children.⁵¹⁰

Hyndman suggests that "technologies of knowing" such as maps and statistics in refugee camps fail to account local historical contexts.⁵¹¹ In a similar fashion, group resettlement practices that attempt fix groupings of refugees in place are challenged by the fluidity of life in refugee camps. Sovereign practices work to capture the excess of heterogeneity, subsuming it under its homogenizing and ordering logic through the creation of new bureaucratic categories such as "deferral pains."

Grouping and Integration Potential

To date, all of Canada's group processing initiatives have involved other countries, whether bilaterally or multilaterally. The UNHCR's group methodology grew out of discussions

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid, 35.

⁵¹⁰ McKinnon, "Unsettling Resettlement," 410.

⁵¹¹ Hyndman, *Managing Displacement*, 121.

on the *Multilateral Framework of Understanding on Resettlement* (MFUR). The agreement attempts to address the issue of varying selection criteria amongst the signing parties. It explains:

As national legislation and policy may dictate the manner in which individual resettlement countries deal with the referral of groups, any limitations with respect to group processing to be identified at the outset... Refugees are not arbitrarily to be screened out of a multilateral resettlement operation solely on account of characteristics such as physical and mental condition, gender, ethnicity, race, religion, age, political opinion, nationality or country of origin.⁵¹²

The statement not only ignores that identification and selection practices under group resettlement schemes are based on national, ethnic, and gender categories, but that these categories are predicated on the assumption that substantive ethnic and national “groups” exist and can therefore be compared and contrasted in selection practices. MFUR further calls on:

all parties to seek a full understanding of the characteristics of the refugee population, including particularly vulnerable cases such as survivors of violence and torture, persons with medical needs (e.g. HIV/AIDS, mental health needs, disabilities), women at risk, separated children and the elderly, so as to best delineate and coordinate their respective responsibilities.⁵¹³

Unfortunately, such information can be used to exclude unhealthy and difficult to integrate groupings of refugees from large-scale resettlement programs. Despite MFUR's inclusive spirit, when the major resettlement states such as Canada decided to put it into practice many groupings of refugees were screened out. A Canadian immigration official recalls:

Once the UNHCR had identified some priority populations, it was pretty clear at first that some of the populations, one of them was the Rohingyas in Bangladesh, before Dadaab it's absolutely the worst refugee camp in the world in terms of living conditions, bad health, lack of access to education, so a lot of the countries, people would not meet the selection criteria, a lot of the countries have integration potential criteria, so for a lot of these refugee populations they are screened out just based on that [integration potential] for some other countries. For Canada, we focus on protection; however, refugees do have to demonstrate integration potential in 3 – 5 years.⁵¹⁴

⁵¹² UNHCR, *Multilateral Framework of Understanding on Resettlement*, 4.

⁵¹³ *Ibid*, 3.

⁵¹⁴ CIC, Personal interview with author, 21st July, 2011.

The Rohingyas are Burmese refugees that practice Islam. They currently reside in Bangladesh. To be fair, Canadian officials under pressure from the UNHCR eventually resettled a few hundred Rohingyas in Quebec but not under the group processing program. Since then there has been no more overseas processing of Rohingyas. The reasoning behind this, according to a DFAIT official, is “concern over integration potential since the Rohingyas are unfortunately one of the world’s most underprivileged populations.”⁵¹⁵ The statement begs the question: if resettlement programs are officially based on humanitarian protection then the Rohingyas would seem to qualify for a program such as group processing.

Multilateral decisions on group resettlement schemes are also influenced by security concerns. In implementing MFUR, a Canadian immigration official remarked:

We had to pick a population that all countries could agree to. That considerably narrowed the populations in the world because all countries do have different selection criteria, different admissibility, we check for different things criminally, medically, integration potential. Its individual checks on these matters, however, we have to pick a population that would meet everyone’s criteria in terms of integration potential, security issues, medical issues. So it ruled out an awful lot of the groups in parts of the world where there are some fundamentalist or security elements within the camps.⁵¹⁶

The last part of this statement highlights how group resettlement schemes target refugee camps that are perceived by authorities as relatively risk free and ordered. The desire is to carve out and select “clean populations.”

Despite legislation such as IRPA and the UNHCR’s focus on protection needs, considerations of integration potential continue to form an integral part of the resettlement process. Drawing on the governmentality approach, Lippert describes the rationale of Western resettlement programs. He explains that:

⁵¹⁵ DFAIT, Personal interview with author, 16th August, 2011.

⁵¹⁶ CIC, Personal interview with author, 21st July, 2011.

The liberal subject contrasts starkly with the refugee, the former being the stable Western figure of reason and normality, the latter an entity of non-reason and abnormality that flees illiberal government by migrating to the West. Liberal government insists there be devices present to encourage a choosing capacity among those deemed to lack such powers. Refugee resettlement is such a device. It attempts to mediate, over a more or less discrete period, between the Canadian citizenry thought to be established and civilized, and the migrating, marginalized refugee.⁵¹⁷

Refugees are thought to be settled when they become self-supporting. For this reason, Lippert notes:

In resettlement, refugees' active capacities are not to be crushed or annihilated; they are to be nurtured, promoted, shaped and, in a sense, brought into being.⁵¹⁸

He points to a mixture of pastoral and advanced liberal forms of governing in resettlement. Yet, as the discussion above suggests this is only part of the rationale of resettlement. Equally important is the sovereign decision to admit or exclude refugees from these programs. Under group processing, authorities are concerned to carve out and select groupings of refugees deemed capable of becoming self-governing liberal subjects that exercise choice. Selection practices are connected to what Latham calls subsumption; teleological assumptions about the incorporation of migrants into societies. This includes: the expectation that migrants will assimilate and integrate on a permanent basis and become "full members of society in political, economic and social terms."⁵¹⁹ The state, however, "cannot be sure anyone who is admitted on a permanent basis will live up to the assumptions of subsumptive incorporation."⁵²⁰ For this reason, it relies on "assessments of skills and background; and seeking assurance through practices of interviews, tests, and oaths and a belief in the natural tendency for allegiance to merge through long-term

⁵¹⁷ Lippert, "Rationalities and refugee resettlement," 382.

⁵¹⁸ Ibid, 382.

⁵¹⁹ Robert Latham, "Border Formations: security and subjectivity at the border," *Citizenship Studies* 14, no. 2 (2010): 192.

⁵²⁰ Ibid, 192.

social and cultural submersion.”⁵²¹ In the case of multilateral resettlement decisions discussed above, these assessments occur through the examination of the health, education, camp conditions, integration potential, and security risk of various refugee camps and the refugees that occupy these spaces. Participation in multilateral forums such as the Core Group on the Bhutanese and the Working Group on Resettlement provides resettlement states with more leeway to consider these factors. Government officials have recourse to the claim that they must satisfy the requirements of many states, despite their own national regulations. The exclusion of the Rohingyas over integration concerns combined with the inclusion of the Karen has the effect of discriminating between Muslim (Rohingyas) and Christian Burmese refugees (Karen).

Group Processing and the Canadian Protracted Refugee Situations Working Group

As noted in chapter two, group processing, in part, grew out of discussions within the UNHCR in the early 2000s on how to deal with the issue of protracted refugee situations, understood at the time as refugee warehousing. The resolution of these situations is not merely humanitarian in nature, but as Presse’s and Thompson’s remarks demonstrate, strategic. They explain:

In addition to the humanitarian imperative, Canada has a strategic interest in helping refugees find lasting solutions—because the longer refugee populations languish without access to durable solutions, the greater the risk they could pose to stability in their region, resulting in more refugee outflows. As such, Canada is exploring how its own resettlement program could be better used to help manage down refugee numbers.⁵²²

Concern over the potential instability of protracted displacement informed the creation of the Protracted Refugee Situation working group (PRS), introduced in the last chapter. Its “whole-of-

⁵²¹ Ibid, 192.

⁵²² Presse and Thompson, “The Resettlement Challenge,” 50.

government” approach in dealing with protracted situations draws on the foreign policy expertise of DFAIT, the development expertise under the Canadian International Development Agency, security expertise from the CBSA, and immigration expertise from CIC.⁵²³ The working group examines the prospects for voluntary repatriation or local integration, whether or not Canada has development programs within, and good relations with, countries hosting refugees in protracted situations, and if CIC can apply resettlement spaces to these situations. Ideally, resettlement would use the group processing method.⁵²⁴ The starting point for discussions within the PRS group was the UNHCR’s High Commissioners Dialogue in 2008 that focussed on protracted situations. Five priority situations were identified as in need of resettlement: Burundians in Tanzania, Afghans in Pakistan and Iran, Eritrean in Sudan, Burmese (Rohingyas) in Bangladesh and Bosnians and Croatian’s in Serbia. The working group considered whether or not it would use group processing to resolve these five priority situations.⁵²⁵ It is worth noting that at this point none of the aforementioned situations have been selected for this program. Public presentations of the PRS downplay if not outright ignore the important role that CBSA plays in screening refugees in these situations.⁵²⁶ The PRS discusses the potential security implications of choosing to apply the “whole of government” approach to a UNHCR identified priority situation and in particular when considering resettlement.⁵²⁷ The inclusion of the CBSA within it allows security practices to operate remotely from refugees that are unaware that they are being screened at an early stage of consideration for group processing. Already mentioned is that the PRS considers the “inadmissibility patterns” of groupings of refugees that are candidates for the program. Based on CBSA security assessments, the PRS decided against resettlement for a

⁵²³ DFAIT, Personal interview with author, August 2011; see also Adele Dion, “Comprehensive solutions: a ‘whole-of-government’ approach,” *Forced Migration Review* 33 (2009).

⁵²⁴ DFAIT, Personal interview with author, August 2011.

⁵²⁵ Ibid.

⁵²⁶ See Dion, “Comprehensive solutions: a ‘whole-of-government’ approach.”

⁵²⁷ DFAIT, Personal interview with author, 16th August, 2011.

grouping of Eritreans in Eastern Sudan. According to a DFAIT official, there were security concerns expressed about their admissibility to Canada and a belief that elements of the Eritrean refugee population in Sudan posed a risk to Canada. The same official explained that:

We recognize that in resettling, Canada has a generous program. We want to be a generous country and offer people opportunities to begin again, but that we do take security issues seriously and make sure that the population that has been identified doesn't pose or people do not pose a security risk to this country once they arrive.⁵²⁸

In the event that a grouping of refugees is determined to be a security risk then the PRS considers other measures to deal with protracted situations such as diplomatic pressure to open up local integration in countries of first refuge or the use of development assistance to improve conditions in these countries.⁵²⁹ In the example of the Eritreans in Eastern Sudan discussed above, the UNHCR and United Nations Development Program are piloting what is referred to as the “transitions solutions initiative”, which attempts to move beyond humanitarian care and foster development and self-reliance.⁵³⁰ Despite this initiative, the UNHCR’s own assessment of the situation in Eastern Sudan makes it difficult to envision a life beyond mere humanitarian assistance for these refugees.⁵³¹ The organization’s 2013 Global Appeal Update explains “refugees and the local community in eastern Sudan face acute poverty and lack of access to health care, education and employment. Refugees also face difficulties in integrating locally, and there is no possibility of voluntary repatriation at this time.”⁵³² On top of this, there appears to be

⁵²⁸ DFAIT, Personal interview with author, 22 February, 2012

⁵²⁹ DFAIT, Personal interview with author, 16th August, 2011.

⁵³⁰ See UNHCR, “2014 UNHCR country operations profile – Sudan”, UNHCR.org, <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e483b76.html> ; “UNHCR Global Appeal 2013 Update”, “Sudan”, UNHCR.org, 82-87, <http://www.unhcr.org/50a9f822b.html>

⁵³¹ Hyndman and Giles quote a Somali refugee, who resided in the Dadaab camps, as referring to UNHCR food rations given in these camps as only providing ‘don’t die survival.’ They explain that “‘don’t die survival’ ensures physical survival, meeting the humanitarian imperatives that protect the right to life, but does not respect other basic human rights.” These rights might include: access to education and the freedom to move beyond camps to seek employment. Hyndman and Giles, “Waiting for What,” 362.

⁵³² “UNHCR Global Appeal 2013 Update”, “Sudan”, 84.

a pattern of discrimination against Eritrean refugees in Canadian overseas visa posts in Africa. The Canadian Council for Refugees in 2009 highlighted what it describes as “a disturbing upsurge in rejections of Eritrean refugees in Cairo by Canada.”⁵³³ The rejections were based on a perceived lack of credibility on the part of Eritrean applicants. Under pressure from the Canadian Council for Refugees, 40 of the rejected Eritreans were reviewed by the Canadian Federal Court, which in 2011 ruled in favor of 4 of these applicants, claiming that they were unfairly refused by a Canadian visa officer.⁵³⁴ The upsurge in rejections of Eritrean refugees by Canadian visa officials demonstrates the implications of far removed security assessments that decide against offering group processing or large-scale resettlement. While officials are quick to point out that when this is taken off table the system reverts to individual referrals this overlooks the varying quotas in overseas visa posts and the extremely low chances that an individual will escape a place like Dadaab through resettlement.

In practice, approaches such as the “transitional solutions initiative” are another example of Western governments attempting to mitigate the effects of externalization strategies. In this way, both development assistance and protracted refugee situations are securitized through targeted approaches that are principally concerned with protecting Western populations. Moreover, the PRS can be seen as another example of “targeted governance” in which group processing is one tool amongst others used to mitigate the perceived risks associated with large numbers of refugees languishing in these situations.

Conclusion

⁵³³ CCR, “Disturbing upsurge in rejections of Eritrean refugees in Cairo by Canada,” ccrweb.ca, Press Release, November 30th, 2009, <http://ccrweb.ca/en/bulletin/09/11/30>

⁵³⁴ See CCR, “Federal Court rules refugees in Cairo unfairly rejected by Canada”, ccrweb.ca, Press Release, May 6th, 2011, <http://ccrweb.ca/en/bulletin/11/05/06>

The decision-making process under group processing is shrouded in secrecy. The revelation of contentious elements of this process to the general public would lead to criticism of the government's preferential treatment towards some groupings of refugees over others. The unease of officials is reflected in how they couch discretion in resettlement decision-making in the language of bureaucratic issues, multilateral obligations, and the broader goals of "durable solutions."

In *Society must be Defended*, Foucault notes that biopower inscribes racism into the mechanisms of the state, fragmenting the biological field, dividing and subdividing the species. It is here that biopolitics intersects with groupism under group resettlement schemes as the state compares and contrasts what it views as substantial ethnic, national, gender, and cultural "groups." Using risk management techniques based on biodata, integration potential, and "inadmissibility patterns," it sorts the messy, fluid, heterogeneous, culturally problematic, and risky groupings of refugees from the internally homogenous, bounded, vulnerable, and "pure" ones. Confronted with groupings of refugees deemed too problematic, government officials would rather move on to the next refugee camp or grouping than sort the risky from the at-risk.

Chapter Five:

Recent Reforms to Canada's Resettlement Program: Extending the Logic of Group Processing

Beginning in 2011, the former Conservative government of Canada made important changes to the entire overseas resettlement program. While these changes did not apply to the “Group Processing” Program, they adopted its logic in key respects. The government pitched the reforms as aimed at improving the social and economic outcomes of resettled refugees. This would be done by both curbing the acceptance of what the government referred to as refugees with high needs and by restructuring the program away from a “global approach”, where refugees could be resettled from anywhere, towards a more “focused approach” where refugees would be resettled from only a few specific refugee populations over several years. The government attempted to sell these reforms to the NGO community by emphasizing the settlement benefits that purportedly stem from limiting resettlement to refugees chosen from a few large refugee populations. In the process it drew on previous group processing exercises to argue that the reforms would improve the efficiency of overseas processing. In this chapter I reveal biopolitics at work in the focused multiyear approach adopted. The Canadian government's plan to improve the economic and social outcomes of resettled refugees amounted to new provisions for the selection of whatever it deemed to be the healthiest, most educated, and easiest to integrate groupings of refugees.

The focus of this chapter is the period of 2011 to 2013 during which time the government held consultations with the Canadian Council for Refugees over the reforms. In 2011 it made mention of the changes in a Canada Gazette notification on the repealing of the source country

class. Presented as inefficient, the notification suggests that by repealing this class the government could streamline the resettlement program to focus on priority refugee populations.⁵³⁵ The concerns over the purported inefficiency of the source country class extend to the entire resettlement program.

In this chapter I argue that the move towards a focused multiyear approach reflects important elements of the logic of group processing and by extension Valverde's and Mopas's concept of "targeted governance." A primary function of the reforms is to allow more space for the biopolitical selection of groupings of refugees while retaining the humanitarian appearance of the resettlement program. Risk management techniques operate in the biopolitical selection of populations of refugees for potential resettlement. Similar to the examination of "inadmissibility patterns," internal government documents suggest the carving out of groupings of refugees according to expected settlement potential, previous economic outcomes, and national categories. The chapter highlights how government officials contemplated the exclusion, or at least the limiting, of refugees it perceived as costly and, to this end, made comparisons of various refugee populations. It also considers how senior bureaucrats at CIC reflected on different approaches to implementing the contentious aspects of the reforms given the potential for public backlash.

The chapter considers the Canadian Council for Refugee's position on the reforms. The emergence of a government-led resettlement program combined with the politicization of resettlement decisions has led to an unsettled feeling in the organization. The government's focus on a few refugee groupings is viewed as opening the door to discrimination while limiting the

⁵³⁵ Government of Canada, Department of Citizenship and Immigration, "Regulations Amending the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations," *Canada Gazette*, Part I, Saturday March 19th, 2011, Ottawa.

flexibility to respond to emergency situations and individuals in urgent need of resettlement. The Canadian Council for Refugee's position on the reforms as well as the concerns of some bureaucrats at CIC to maintain the perception that Canada's resettlement program will continue to be based on humanitarian principles illustrates the unease surrounding the grouping of refugees generally. The chapter considers tensions between the individualistic focus of the refugee regime and the preference of governments to select groupings of refugees.

Finally, the chapter undertakes a preliminary examination of the recent – and ongoing – largescale resettlement of Syrian refugees under the current Liberal government, elected in 2015. While the selection of the Syrians is formally based on the individual, it does share some similarities with group processing. Firstly, it involves the carving out what are perceived as low risk and vulnerable groupings of refugees from the wider Syrian refugee population.⁵³⁶ Second, despite security concerns, the government has made efforts to expedite the processing of these groupings of refugees.⁵³⁷ Finally, the selection of the Syrians, much like group processing initiatives, has been informed by biopolitical considerations. However, unlike the secretive nature of group processing decisions, these considerations have been played out in the open in a seemingly democratic manner.

Selling a “Focused Approach” to Resettlement

The Canadian government began consideration of overhauling its overseas resettlement program in 2011. According to internal memos obtained by the Canadian Council for Refugees,

⁵³⁶ See “Identifying Syrian Refugees to come to Canada,” Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), “#WelcomeRefugees to Canada,” *Government of Canada*, last modified November 24, 2015, http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=1021909&_ga=1.40713442.1362541613.1471032842

⁵³⁷ The government has created temporary processing centers and deployed additional immigration and security officials in places such as Amman and Beirut “to quickly and efficiently process Syrian refugees destined for Canada.” Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship (IRCC), “Processing Overview,” *Government of Canada*, last modified December 2, 2015, http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=1023039&_ga=1.221144664.1362541613.1471032842

the stated goal of the reforms was to improve social and economic outcomes of resettled refugees. This was to be achieved by curtailing the number of what it perceived as high needs refugees as well as by reorienting the program towards a focus on multi-year commitments for only a few refugee populations.⁵³⁸ Refugees considered high needs are those requiring substantial health and settlement services in order to integrate into Canadian society.

There was little in the way of official pronouncements on the specifics of these changes. A Memorandum to the Immigration Minister dated October 30th, 2012 captures how the government intended to present the proposed reforms to the general public. It lays out a communication strategy that suggests that CIC “highlight the fact that making large, multi – year commitments will enable the Department to work more closely with partners, including the provinces and territories, to better plan for the settlement needs of specific refugee groups and provide refugee host countries with a clear signal of support from Canada.”⁵³⁹ The goal was to emphasize that selection would continue to be based on vulnerability and that the reforms were principally about the potential settlement benefits that would arise from selection limited to a few populations. Despite this strategy, in September 2013 a Canadian Press article exposed many of the controversial components of the reforms, including the limiting of refugees with health problems. Contained in that article, and in response to this revelation, a government spokesperson remarked “I can tell you that our Conservative government will continue to give refuge to the most vulnerable populations.”⁵⁴⁰

⁵³⁸ The third part of the strategy is unknown as it had been redacted in internal memos obtained by the CCR. See CCR, “Overseas Protection & Sponsorship (OPS) Working Group Handout September 2013.”

⁵³⁹ CIC, “Resettled Refugee Populations: Multi-Year Commitments for 2013 and Beyond”, *Memorandum to the Minister*, F-8303 (Ottawa: CIC, October 30, 2012).

⁵⁴⁰ Benjamin Shingler, “Canadian government examined limiting refugees with health problems,” *The Canadian Press in The Toronto Star* (Toronto, ON), September 3rd, 2013,

In contrast to the lack of announcements for the general public, CIC held extensive consultations with key stakeholders such as the Canadian Council for Refugees, the Special Agreement Holders Council, the provinces, territories, and various other actors involved in the private sponsorship of refugees. The rest of this section considers how CIC framed the proposed changes for these stakeholders. While the government initially attempted to focus attention on the settlement side of the resettlement process, the question of which populations would be chosen quickly became an issue as did the contentious proposal to limit the number of overseas refugees perceived as costly. These issues are reflected in the candid nature of CIC discussions, interactions, and presentations at the Canadian Council for Refugee's consultations during this period.

In a 2012 issue paper, "Targeted Selection", CIC presented stakeholders with three options for the proposed focused approach to resettlement. Option one was a regionally focused approach in which the majority of Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) would be selected from three to five countries of origin over a five year period. Option two would focus the majority of GAR selection on three to five different refugee populations from three different world regions, "where multiple refugee populations reside in a particular country, resettlement selection will target specific refugee populations."⁵⁴¹ Finally, option three would focus selection on a few refugee populations in protracted situations. Stakeholders as well as the CIC bureaucracy pushed for option two, a focused global approach. From the perspective of the Canadian Council for Refugees, this came closest to maintaining some semblance of a global resettlement program. On October 30th, 2012 an internal memo to the Immigration Minister

http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2013/09/03/canadian_government_examined_limiting_refugees_with_health_problems.html

⁵⁴¹ CIC, "Issue Paper: Targeted Selection" (Ottawa: CIC, Draft for discussion with SAH Council and CCR, undated).

explains that the government had chosen “a modified take on the *Focused Global Approach*”, which “would see 90% of GAR spaces allocated to three to five refugee populations residing in three different geographical regions, with 10% of GAR spaces set aside for individual protection needs and emergency appeals.”⁵⁴²

A presentation by the former CIC Director of Resettlement at the December 2012 Canadian Council for Refugees winter consultation provides some insight as to how the government presented the reforms for stakeholders. The Director made the argument that “large, multi-year resettlement commitments enables CIC to plan in advance, work with partners and stakeholders to coordinate activities overseas and develop population-specific settlement programming in Canada.”⁵⁴³ A CIC document prepared for the Special Agreement Holders Council and the Canadian Council for Refugees provides more specifics as to what was meant by “population-specific settlement programming.” It links multi-year population-based resettlement initiatives with both improved communications and information sharing with stakeholders in Canada as well as initiatives such as the development of cultural profiles. These profiles outline “the refugee population’s history, religion, cultural traditions, family structures, medical trends, educational background, refugee camp conditions and settlement considerations.”⁵⁴⁴ From the perspective of the government, group profiles would allow communities in Canada to become educated and better prepared for the arrival of groupings of refugees. This includes the use of medical profiles. Drawing on previous group processing exercises, it was suggested that:

⁵⁴² CIC, “Resettled Refugee Populations: Multi-Year Commitments for 2013 and Beyond.”

⁵⁴³ Resettlement Director, “Refugee Resettlement: Future Directions” (presentation, CCR Fall Consultation, Toronto, Ontario, December 2012).

⁵⁴⁴ CIC, “Information Sharing for Improved refugee Outcomes” (Ottawa: CIC, Draft for discussion with SAH Council and CCR, June 2012). A similar cultural profile on the Bhutanese was prepared by the International Organization of Migration in the lead up to their group resettlement. See International Organization for Migration (IOM), “Cultural Profile, The Bhutanese Refugees in Nepal, a tool for settlement workers and sponsors,” (Damak, Nepal, 2008).

representatives from CIC Health Branch, regional medical clinics, the Public Health Agency of Canada and Medical Officers (MOFs) [could] meet via teleconference or video conferencing to discuss the medical health profile of the refugee population, in order to determine a possible screening protocol both in Canada and prior to arrival, as was done for the Bhutanese movement.⁵⁴⁵

“Targeted Selection” points to streamlined medical protocols that are purportedly “tailored to the population’s needs, including a group profile to inform local authorities in Canada prior to the group’s arrival.”⁵⁴⁶ The issue paper argues that “given cuts to the supplemental coverage afforded refugees through the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP), streamlined medical protocols will be crucial for addressing the health concerns of refugees resettled to Canada.”⁵⁴⁷ These protocols along with the use of biographical, medical, and cultural profiles were presented as a solution to improving settlement outcomes in a context of cuts to refugee health care.⁵⁴⁸

The previous government further attempted to rationalize the reforms by highlighting current and historical practices under the resettlement program. It was argued that the program already focused selection on a few refugee populations despite its global approach. CIC emphasized that:

Canada’s resettlement program has historically drawn the majority of its refugees from three to five main populations [and that] the program could be used more strategically by focussing on the selection of three to five main populations to be resettled over several years in order to further assist in providing protection to large populations of refugees, unlocking durable solutions for others, while fulfilling Government of Canada priorities.⁵⁴⁹

The statements suggest that from the government’s perspective it has always grouped refugees.

In contrast to this, the Canadian Council for Refugees felt that grouping refugees, or assessing

⁵⁴⁵ CIC, “Information Sharing for Improved refugee Outcomes.”

⁵⁴⁶ CIC, “Issue Paper: Targeted Selection.”

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁸ With the election of a Liberals government in October 2015, many of these cuts have been reversed. See CBC News, “Liberal government fully restores refugee health care program”, *CBC news*, accessed February 16, 2016, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/mcallum-philpott-interim-federal-health-program-refugees-1.3453397>

⁵⁴⁹ CIC, “Issue Paper: Targeted Selection.”

them as populations, was a form of discrimination. Such criticism is not new. As chapter one noted, during the 1970s the Canadian government was criticized by NGOs for being discriminatory in its varying responses to the Hungarian, Indochinese, Chilean, and Czechoslovakian refugee movements. In part, the concern over discrimination stems from the tensions between a refugee regime that focuses on individual persecution and rights, and the reality that many instances of forced displacement, and the practices that respond to them, involve some type of grouping. A key moment in this regard is the passing of the Refugee Convention in 1951. Nyers explains that the “refugee subjectivity promoted in the Convention is nothing less than a classic example of Western liberal individualism.”⁵⁵⁰ He goes on to explain that “the refugee was defined no longer by the country from which he or she fled but as a human being with certain inalienable rights. ‘Humanity’ is the organizing principle here, not the nationality or citizenship status of the refugee applicant.”⁵⁵¹ The emphasis on individual protection under the Convention is reflected in the Canadian Council for Refugees’ position on the proper role of resettlement:

When considering selection, priority consideration should be protection for refugees and stateless persons and this should first be considered in regards to individuals, not groups or populations. The Refugee Convention is focussed only on the individual and, in past discussions at the Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR) and with the UNHCR; NGOs have been firm in urging that options for individual protection must remain available.⁵⁵²

Soguk goes further back, tracing the liberal humanitarian focus of refugee rights to the post-WWII organization the IRO, discussed in chapter one. While the IRO constitution retained “the definition of refugee based on group affiliations”, it expanded this definition to “include a more

⁵⁵⁰ Nyers, *Rethinking Refugees*, 49.

⁵⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁵⁵² CCR. Comments from the Canadian Council for Refugees, Issue Paper: Targeted Selection August 2012

generalized understanding based on the merits of individual cases.”⁵⁵³ For quite some time then, the refugee regime has emphasized the rights of individuals as opposed to groupings. Despite this, as this dissertation has emphasized, the assumption of groupism permeates the state’s assessment, sorting, and selection of overseas refugees. It is implicit even in the criticisms directed against it by NGOs that take for granted the existence of ethnic, national, and racial “groups” that are subjected to the state’s discrimination. What’s unique about the reforms, as well as group processing more generally, is that the grouping process is made explicit in a context where the refugee regime is based ostensibly on the individual. In contrast to this, the explicit use of national categories in the refugee regime was commonplace in earlier periods. Nyers, for example, explains that during the interwar period:

Refugees were defined primarily in accordance to their nationality or country of origin (be it Russian, Armenian, German, etc.). In addition to being outside their country of origin, people were recognized as refugees because of their prior membership in groups of persons who had been denied formal *de jure* protection from their country of origin.⁵⁵⁴

Nyers points to the state-centric nature of the refugee definition during this period.

Beyond emphasizing the historical focus of the resettlement program on populations, the government suggested that “targeted refugee selection” would improve existing diasporic communities, Canadian multiculturalism, and perceptions of refugees through public announcements on largescale resettlement decisions. Once again, it drew on previous group processing exercises to make these claims, including the selection of the Sudanese and Somali Madhiban out of Kenya in 2003-04, the Karen out of Thailand in 2006-08, and the Bhutanese from Nepal in 2008-12. It was suggested that the settlement of large refugee populations would

⁵⁵³ Soguk, *States and Strangers*, 160

⁵⁵⁴ Nyers, *Rethinking Refugees*, 48.

create “sustainable communities.” Pointing to the use of group processing for the Karen, it notes that:

The establishment of large Karen populations in cities around Canada, including Ottawa, Charlottetown, Regina, and Moose Jaw, has been instrumental in the development of new ethnic communities in these cities. Establishing these communities contributes to Canadian multicultural objectives, such as intercultural understanding, and also has the potential to reduce incentives for secondary migration to major centres.⁵⁵⁵

The Karen (viewed as a “clean population” by one government official, as discussed in Chapter 4), are presented as beneficial to the fabric of Canadian society because of their groupness. “Targeted Selection” explains that “the Somali community in Hamilton...played an integral and invaluable role in the initial settlement process on the group processing of the Somali Madhiban in 2004.”⁵⁵⁶ At the same time, the government acknowledged the concerns of some of the service provider organizations that placing large groupings of refugees in one area could magnify integration challenges through what was referred to as “negative coping mechanisms” and the re-establishment of “community hierarchies.” To mitigate this potential problem, “Targeted Selection” suggests that “large refugee populations will be resettled to various locations across Canada, as opposed to a single location, in order to better facilitate their integration into Canadian society.”⁵⁵⁷ The concerns of service providers involved with resettlement go to the heart of debates on what the makeup of multiculturalism should be in Canada.

The Canadian Council for Refugees argues that an overly focussed resettlement program would run counter to the objectives of multiculturalism and that:

⁵⁵⁵ CIC, “Issue Paper: Targeted Selection.”

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid.

There is a balance to be struck between embracing the idea that different ethnic and linguistic communities will (and even should) stick together for comfort and wanting those resettled, as individuals, to be comfortable enough in Canadian society to feel they belong...group resettlement can undermine this process by encouraging the individuals in the group to focus on their own group's needs only. A greater diversity of source populations contributes to greater balance and encourages learning of English/French and the making of friends outside the group. These factors contribute to the success of the whole resettlement process. Considering the Canadian mosaic, it will not sit well with the welcoming community, especially those who have strong connections with other refugee populations, if Canada only focuses on a handful of refugee populations. In light of Canada's history and the composition of our population, we are in a unique position to provide a welcoming environment to diverse refugee populations.⁵⁵⁸

The selection of refugees from a diversity of backgrounds is viewed as better suited to promoting the health and vitality of the Canadian population. Even as such statements aim to be pluralistic, inclusive, and welcoming, there is a strong hint of biopolitics at work in them.

The tensions between grouping and individual refugee rights are further reflected in how "Targeted Selection" deals with what it refers to as "scrutiny of populations." It warns that:

The [Immigration] Department could face public scrutiny with respect to the selection of populations for large resettlement commitments, particularly regarding the criteria for selection and prioritization of populations...this risk could be mitigated by establishing clear guidelines to prioritise and inform population selection.⁵⁵⁹

Despite these sorts of suggestions from the CIC bureaucracy, a Toronto Star article from 2013 explained that there were no guidelines for how refugee populations will be selected.⁵⁶⁰ As noted in the introductory chapter, there were similar concerns expressed about how groupings of refugees would be selected for group processing.

More recently, an official from the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC, formally CIC) explained that multiyear commitments are based on

⁵⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁰ Nicholas Keung, "Ottawa uses refugee programs for political goals, critics say," *Toronto Star*, Wednesday November 27th, 2013.

several factors, including resettlement priorities identified by the UNHCR, international policy and diplomatic considerations, operational implications, and stakeholder views. The official indicated that IRCC consults with Global Affairs Canada (formerly DFAIT) to get a sense of Canada's relations with countries of first refuge under consideration for multiyear commitments. For instance, IRCC makes sure that it would be able to obtain exit visas for a refugee population under consideration. The unease in discussing "groups" or populations of refugees is expressed in the same IRCC officials' comments on multiyear commitments. On the one hand, the official emphasizes that decisions are for the most part deferred to the UNHCR and are based on need and vulnerability; furthermore, security considerations apply to individuals and not the "group." The official denied that population profiles are used in making multiyear commitment decisions, insisting that they are merely employed to help settlement agencies with already chosen populations. On the other hand, when pushed further on matters of security in relation to the selection of populations, this official admitted that IRCC does consult both CBSA and CSIS on whether or not there are any major security concerns with refugee populations under consideration. Similarly, IRCC also examines the integration potential of populations it is considering for selection.⁵⁶¹ As will be seen below, population profiles are in fact used in the decision-making process.

"Generating Efficiencies"

The similarities between the reforms and group processing are expressed in the desire to make the entire resettlement program efficient. In fact, many of the documents shared with the Canadian Council for Refugees and other stakeholders were revealing in this respect. "Targeted Selection" linked the preferences of states for what are perceived as groupings of refugees with

⁵⁶¹ IRCC, Personal Interview with Author, October 5th, 2016.

similar traits to streamlined processing. In discussing the purported benefits of selecting individuals with similar profiles, it revealed that:

Despite the large number of refugees in need of resettlement, most major resettlement countries prefer refugees with similar socio-demographic and protection needs. A large multi-year resettlement commitment will allow Canada to signal well in advance to referral agencies, such as UNHCR, the numbers and types of referrals requested as well as greater coordination of referrals with other resettlement countries.⁵⁶²

These candid statements demonstrate that the preference of states to group refugees with commonalities weighs against considerations of humanitarian need. The relationship between this preference and improving the efficiency of overseas refugee processing is reflected in the government's acknowledgement that:

There is a lack of evidence to support the claim that targeted refugee selection will result in improved economic outcomes for resettled refugees. However, a targeted approach will enable a number of policy approaches and programmatic efficiencies which align with the Department's strategic interests, operational capacity, foreign policy interests and protection goals that have the potential to contribute to improved economic outcomes for resettled refugees.⁵⁶³

This is a peculiar conclusion given that for the most part the government had been framing the reforms primarily as a means to improve the economic and social outcomes of refugees; indeed, "Targeted Selection" emphasizes this. The reference to enabling "programmatic efficiencies" resonates with Valverde's and Mopas's concept of "targeted governance" and the neo-liberal desire to reform governmental programmes perceived as inefficient. In describing Thatcher's and Reagan's restructuring of universal social programs in the 1980s, they note that "the idea of 'targeting' programmes was linked to the idea of efficient, apolitical, knowledge-driven, 'evidence-based' policy."⁵⁶⁴ This is reflected in how the government rationalized the reforms.

⁵⁶² CIC, "Issue Paper: Targeted Selection."

⁵⁶³ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁴ Valverde and Mopas, "Insecurity and the Dream of Targeted Governance," 245.

“Targeted Selection” suggests that the global nature of the current resettlement program places high demands on existing operational capacity; the need to travel to remote locations is costly and yields low numbers of processed refugees. It adds:

Using traditional processing methods, officers posted abroad have limited time to process refugees and organise medical examinations while balancing the processing demands of other immigrant classes. Moreover, for refugees living in remote and relatively inaccessible locations, making trips to these areas may be overly costly particularly when only a few refugees are being processed at a time.⁵⁶⁵

In contrast to this, it argues, “a targeted selection approach for resettlement would reduce strain on existing operation capacity, both in Canada and overseas, while building on identified best-practices in refugee processing... A resettlement program that targets a limited number of populations enables missions to invest their resources more effectively.”⁵⁶⁶ An IRCC official explains that multiyear commitments provide visa offices with predictability in terms of refugee referrals from the UNHCR. This in turn is viewed as allowing these offices to more efficiently allocate resources and better plan for UNHCR referrals.⁵⁶⁷

The targeting of specific refugee populations leads to calls for the increased use of group processing:

Large-scale commitments provide opportunities for group processing, whereby large numbers of refugees with similar socio-cultural characteristics are selected in a short timeframe using streamlined eligibility criteria and admissibility screening. Group processing provides an opportunity to conduct streamlined interviews, the flexibility to reallocate resources, improve the efficiency of admissibility assessments, and the ability to quickly process families for resettlement. In the Management Response to the 2011 GAR/RAP Evaluation, CIC committed to working with UNHCR and other resettlement partners to identify refugee populations that could benefit from group processing in the future.⁵⁶⁸

⁵⁶⁵ CIC, “Issue Paper: Targeted Selection.”

⁵⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁷ IRCC, Personal Interview with Author, October 5th, 2016.

⁵⁶⁸ CIC, “Issue Paper: Targeted Selection.”

The idea of improving the efficiency of admissibility assessments is based on the CBSA practices discussed in the last chapter, which consider “inadmissibility patterns” when conducting security assessments on groupings of refugees under consideration for group processing. The statements highlight how the targeted grouping of refugees under both group processing and the reforms are linked to the desire to remake governmental programs efficient. An evaluation of the GAR resettlement stream and Resettlement Assistance Program in March 2011 suggests that the group processing designation expedites “the efficient processing of refugees, as it allows for the large-scale movement of refugees with similar socio-cultural characteristics.”⁵⁶⁹ The report calls for the adoption of “more efficient refugee screening and processing approaches” such as group processing.⁵⁷⁰ It compares the processing of refugees across Canadian visas offices in Bogota, Nairobi, Damascus, and Singapore, noting:

...given the group processing model available in Singapore, it was able to process large numbers of GARs utilizing limited staff resources. The Damascus office was also able to process relatively large numbers of refugees per staff member due to the acceptance of *Prima Facie* designation for Iraqis in Syria, and close access to urban-based refugees (the majority of whom resided in Damascus). In contrast, the efficiency of refugee processing in the Bogota and Nairobi offices did not benefit from *Prima Facie* and/or group processing designations.⁵⁷¹

More recently, a Library of Parliament document from April 2015 explains that CIC views multi-year group resettlement commitments as a means to realizing administrative efficiencies and providing “consistency for receiving communities, who can tailor orientation information and other supports to the refugees being resettled.”⁵⁷²

⁵⁶⁹ CIC. *Evaluation of Government Assisted Refugees (GAR) and Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP)*, Evaluation Division, March 2011, vi.

⁵⁷⁰ *Ibid*, xi.

⁵⁷¹ *Ibid*, 17.

⁵⁷² Sandra Elgersma. “Resettling Refugees: Canada’s Humanitarian Commitments, “*Library of Parliament*, publication no. 2015-11-E, April 2015, 5.

For some time then, the Canadian government has reflected on the eligibility, admissibility, and time requirements associated with the processing of overseas refugees. In earlier periods, a principle concern was to dispense with the normal immigration requirements for groupings of refugees framed as “ideal types.” More recently, the overseas processing of refugees has been problematized and subjected to reforms framed in the bureaucratic language of streamlining, resource requirements, and processing methodologies.

The government also suggested that the reforms would improve its response time to vulnerable refugees, which is similar to the rationale for group processing. “Targeted Selection” argues that “the global nature of the [current] program effects CIC’s ability to provide both timely protection and to effectively respond to new or emerging refugee situations in a meaningful way (e.g. Libya). A targeted approach can be used to protect vulnerable populations in a timely and efficient manner.”⁵⁷³ It adds “UNHCR and private sponsors appreciate the global nature of the resettlement program; however, the program’s global reach has resulted in it becoming oversubscribed and driven by operational capacity and existing caseloads rather than by strategic selection of populations based on protection need.”⁵⁷⁴ Such sentiments by CIC are at odds with the concerns of NGOs that view the global nature of the program as an essential component of flexibility in responding to emerging crises wherever they arise. Moreover, as discussed in previous chapters, group or large-scale resettlement decisions usually take years to be reached. The managerial language of “Targeted Selection” strategically targets limited resettlement spaces to groupings of refugees that are perceived as easy to access and process.

Reforming Canada’s Resettlement Program: Biopolitical Selection Practices

⁵⁷³ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid.

The Canadian government framed the reforms to the resettlement program as a means of improving settlement outcomes by limiting intake to already chosen refugee populations. As I have shown, the targeted and neo-liberal rationale behind these changes shares similarities with the logic of group processing. This section draws on several key internal memos at CIC obtained by the Canadian Council for Refugees. The memos suggest that behind closed doors bureaucrats struggled over how to implement the contentious aspects of the reforms within existing refugee and immigration legislation, while at the same time being sensitive to public and refugee advocate perceptions. Despite some disagreements within CIC on this matter, both the bureaucracy and Immigration Minister aimed to maintain the government's biopolitical discretion to discriminate between groupings of refugees on the basis of health, security, and integration potential.

The limiting of what were referred to as high needs refugees was one of the most contentious aspects of the government's reforms. A series of internal emails that circulated at CIC in June 2012 demonstrate that bureaucrats were considering this proposal in light of cuts made to the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP) (since reversed by the new Liberal government). Still, the emails and other internal documents at CIC illustrate how the state applies biopolitical calculations in crafting and selecting groupings of refugees for resettlement.

The IFHP provides temporary health coverage to resettled refugees and other protected persons that arrive in Canada. The former Conservative government's cuts to this program included: supplemental health care benefits such as prescription medication, dental and vision care, and psychological counseling. Initially, these were to affect all protected persons including government-assisted resettled refugees. Under pressure from health care workers and other refugee advocates, the Conservative government reversed its decision for government-assisted

refugees before the changes were to take effect.⁵⁷⁵ A CIC news release at the time captures how former Immigration Minister Kenney framed the changes for the public. The Minister spoke of ensuring “fairness for Canadian taxpayers while emphasizing the need to protect public health and safety.” He argued that “Canadians are a very generous people ...however; we do not want to ask Canadians to pay for benefits for protected persons and refugee claimants that are more generous than what they are entitled to themselves.”⁵⁷⁶ The reference to Canadians being generous is a familiar line used in official statements, one that usually precedes discussions of security exclusions, and is meant to justify these contentious decisions. The framing of refugee and migrant health as a drain on health care systems is now commonplace in many Western states.⁵⁷⁷ A common refrain is that “bogus” refugee’s abuse or take advantage of generous welfare systems in the West. In the context of welfare state retrenchment the refugee becomes the scapegoat for the shortcomings of health care systems.⁵⁷⁸ Moreover, under neo-liberal inspired targeted approaches, politicians place refugees alongside other categories of individuals that are assumed to have failed to live up to the expectations of responsiblized and active citizenship. One such example is the “welfare cheat.” On top of this, there has been a securitization of public health stemming from fears surrounding the spread of infectious diseases in particular from the Global South. This has led to a narrowing of public health that seeks to protect Western populations as opposed to helping vulnerable refugees in developing

⁵⁷⁵ See Meagan Fitzpatrick, “Refugee health cuts 'clarified,' not reversed, Kenney says, ”*CBCnews*, February 18th, 2016, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/refugee-health-cuts-clarified-not-reversed-kenney-says-1.1133956>

⁵⁷⁶ CIC, “Reform of the Interim Federal Health Program ensures fairness, protects public health and safety,” *CIC*, accessed April 25th, 2012, news release has been archived, <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/media/releases/2012/2012-04-25.asp>

⁵⁷⁷ See Renisa Mawani, “Screening out Diseased Bodies: Immigration, Mandatory HIV testing, and the Making of a Healthy Canada” in *Medicine at the Border: Disease, Globalization and Security, 1850 to the Present*, ed. Alison Bashford (Basingstoke, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

⁵⁷⁸ This is similar to Bigo’s arguments regarding politician’s obsessions with illegal immigration as a means to deflect attention away from their own (or the state’s) shortcomings (e.g. welfare state retrenchment). Bigo, “Security and Immigration: Toward a Critique of the Governmentality of Unease.”

countries.⁵⁷⁹ It is reflected in Kenney's statements above which attempt to reassure Canadians that despite the cuts to the IFHP, public health and safety would be upheld.

Initially, there was some confusion as to whether or not resettled refugees would be included in these cuts. The emails reveal inconsistencies between the Conservative government's official statements and internal debates within the CIC bureaucracy. On July 3rd, 2012 the Minister publically stated that government-assisted refugees from UNHCR run camps would continue to receive health benefits.⁵⁸⁰ Yet, discussions between immigration bureaucrats a month earlier suggest that the Conservative government intended to include these refugees in the cuts.

An internal email explains:

The policy sector needs to begin work with the Ops sector on developing a strategy for resettlement of refugees with medical conditions or needs. We will need to be able to inform the UNHCR before June 30 on what types of referrals the UNHCR should not be making to Canada due to changes in IFH in the short term and which cases they may need to withdraw now (e.g. all persons needing assistive devices related to mobility).⁵⁸¹

The bureaucracy was scrambling to find a way to limit "high needs" refugees despite the Immigration Minister's refusal to change the legislation to refuse persons on the grounds of health, known as "excessive demand." Resettled refugees are exempt from "excessive demand" rules which normally apply to immigrants with health care issues deemed overly costly for the health care system thereby making them inadmissible to Canada. It would appear that then

⁵⁷⁹ Davies points to Western states that have supported the development of global surveillance systems that aim to prevent epidemics from reaching their borders. Similarly, Braun argues that the proliferation of global surveillance networks involves efforts of Western states to act extraterritorially in a geopolitical manner, in ways that extend forms of sovereign power. King argues that the threat of emerging infectious diseases (EIDs) is explicitly linked with US economic and security interests and has led to the call for more global surveillance networks in order to attack disease threats at their source. Sara Davies, "Securitizing Infectious Disease," *International Affairs* 84, no. 2 (2008); Bruce Braun, "Biopolitics and the molecularization of life" *Cultural Geographies* 14 (2007); Nicholas B. King, "Security, Disease, Commerce: Ideologies of Postcolonial Global Health," *Social Studies of Science* 32 (October-December 2002).

⁵⁸⁰ On July 3rd, 2012 the CBC reported that during an interview on the news network's show *Power and Politics* that "Kenney said that refugees from United Nations camps who are resettled in Canada with the help of the government will see no changes to the health benefits offered to them." Fitzpatrick, "Refugee health cuts 'clarified', not reversed, Kenney says."

⁵⁸¹ CIC, "IFH – questions and data mining, internal email correspondence (Ottawa: CIC, June 12, 2012).

Immigration Minister Kenny felt that overturning this post-IRPA legislation would not be viewed favorably by refugee advocates since the resettlement program is supposed to be based on vulnerability and protection needs.

The same series of CIC emails in June 2012 point to several strategies to limit “high needs” refugees. One suggestion made was to use the population-based approach to resettlement as a means to realize this objective. Contained within the emails are discussions on a chart that lists the top source countries for privately sponsored refugees and government sponsored refugees. The emails discuss several refugee population candidates that might be selected under the reforms. In relation to these, the resettlement director at the time remarked that:

What would be key to know for the short-term for each of these populations is: the top 5 (in incidence rate) medical conditions diagnosed during [Immigration Medical Examinations] IME; the medications and or treatments needed to treat these conditions; the average cost of the treatment on a monthly basis.⁵⁸²

While the statements do not make an explicit suggestion to limit or block unhealthy refugee populations, they suggest the potential for this. Given that the Immigration Minister at the time did not want to alter legislation based on the “excessive demand” rules, one way to limit “high needs” refugees was to examine disease incidence rates across refugee populations. The government’s objective to improve the social and economic outcomes of resettled refugees could be achieved through the selection of what it perceived as healthy populations.

Several months later in December 2012, an internal CIC memo prepared for the Immigration Minister provides much more detail as to options the government was considering in limiting “high needs” refugees. It began by pointing out the increased cost of resettled refugees in the post-IRPA era. To prove this claim, it provided an estimate of how many government-assisted and privately sponsored refugees resettled after the passing of this

⁵⁸² Ibid.

legislation would have been found inadmissible if the “excessive demand” criteria were applied to them. The bureaucracy warned the Immigration Minister of several problems in limiting the number of “high needs” refugees. It explained that “high needs” are inseparable from the contemporary refugee experience, including protracted situations, and that:

Once Canada receives an application, whether for a privately sponsored or UNHCR-referred refugee, the Department is required to process the application to completion. In accordance with the excessive demand admissibility exemption in IRPA, refugee applicants may not be refused because their health condition might reasonably be expected to cause an excessive demand on health or social services.⁵⁸³

Despite this, a CIC paper on the reforms, one that was made available to NGOs, suggests that “although Canada’s ability to refuse admission to applicants with high health or settlement needs is limited under IRPA, there are a number of ways to manage administratively the number of high-needs refugees resettled to Canada.”⁵⁸⁴ In fact, for the past decade under IRPA overseas visa posts used a similar form of discretion to lessen the “ability to establish” requirements when considering resettlement candidates. The same CIC paper explains:

Although Regulations require applicants to demonstrate an ability to establish successfully, in practice, applicants are rarely refused on this basis. Departmental policy is designed to enable most low-skilled applicants to pass an ability to establish assessments (e.g. the applicant may be able to find low-paid work).⁵⁸⁵

This suggests that the context in which discretion operates is an important aspect of resettlement decisions.⁵⁸⁶ As Anna Pratt argues, it is more than the residual leftover in the absence of laws.⁵⁸⁷

⁵⁸³ CIC, “Options for Managing Resettled Refugees High Needs,” *Memorandum to the Minister*, F-8331 (Ottawa: CIC, December 11, 2012).

⁵⁸⁴ CIC, “*Improving Refugee Outcomes Proposal: Managing the Number of High-Needs Refugees Resettled to Canada*” (Ottawa: CIC, Draft for discussion with the SAH Council and CCR, undated).

⁵⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁶ Resettlement is considered a discretionary act relative to relations governed by the Refugee Convention. Despite this, discretion should not simply be viewed as the absence of regulations, rules, protocols, etc. Pratt, *Securing Borders*. Labman touches on this idea as well. Labman, *At Law’s Border*.

⁵⁸⁷ Pratt, *Securing Borders*.

Overseas visa officers have discretion to consider, as Lippert might argue, the potential for refugees to become self-governing liberal subjects that exercise choice.⁵⁸⁸

CIC bureaucrats were also concerned about the effectiveness of measuring or capturing “high needs.” This was reflected in the option to focus on the UNHCR referral stage by setting a quota on medical case referrals as a proportion of the number of government-assisted refugees selected under the resettlement program. From the perspective of CIC, the problem with this approach was that it did not effectively deal with the UNHCR’s narrow definition of these types of referrals. It was suggested that:

Many refugees who are generally considered to have “high-needs” by resettlement, settlement, and community service providers will not meet this definition. For example, large single-parent families, refugees with no formal education and limited life skills for living in Western cities, and refugees suffering from poor mental health would not fall under this quota. Refugees in these circumstances also face multiple settlement barriers and place additional demand on various settlement, community and health services.⁵⁸⁹

The Immigration Minister was warned that “conditions resulting directly from the events that led to displacement, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, are prevalent and often do not present until after the refugee arrives in Canada.”⁵⁹⁰ The concerns of the officials demonstrate that, despite the desire for “perfect vision”, they sometimes encounter processes that fall outside their field of vision.

Beyond concerns over effectively measuring “high needs,” the potential for public backlash weighed heavily on CIC bureaucrats. An internal CIC memo notes:

Setting a quota on the number of refugees accepted with limited education or the number of large, single-parent families could be perceived as a reversal of Canada’s humanitarian

⁵⁸⁸ Lippert, “Resettlement and Rationalities.”

⁵⁸⁹ CIC, “*Improving Refugee Outcomes Proposal: Managing the Number of High-Needs Refugees Resettled to Canada*”, 6.

⁵⁹⁰ CIC, “Options for Managing Resettled Refugees High Needs.”

tradition. A much larger proportion of the resettlement applicants would be affected, including disproportionately more women and girls.⁵⁹¹

The bureaucracy reminded the Minister of the purpose of IRPA and its protection focus:

The excessive demand exemption for refugees exists in the Act to ensure that health needs are not a barrier to protection for those most in need. A significant reduction in the number of medical case referrals from the UNHCR and an absolute bar on people who are not expected to recover from a health condition could be perceived as deliberately working against the spirit of the excessive demand exemption and of the objective stated in the Act that the refugee program is in the first instance about saving lives.⁵⁹²

CIC officials were well aware that despite the Minister's insistence to not contravene IRPA the option of imposing a cap on UNHCR-referred medical case refugees would lead to criticism by stakeholders, refugee advocates, and portions of the general public.

Another option considered by CIC attempts to capitalize on the reform of the resettlement program to focus on the selection of few refugee populations over several years. The same internal memo from 2012 explains:

This option would manage the intake of referrals of high medical needs cases by 1) *choosing populations for resettlement partly based on settlement potential and overall health of the population*; and 2) developing caps for referrals of persons with specific health conditions within a refugee population.⁵⁹³

The first part of this option demonstrates a form of biopolitics that draws distinctions between healthy and unhealthy and easy to integrate and difficult to integrate groupings of refugees. To realize these objectives it was suggested to the Minister that health profiles could be used:

When considering populations of focus, the Department would request a general population profile from the IOM that would provide epidemiological information and incidences of significant settlement barriers (i.e. developmental delay, blindness, victims of trauma and torture, etc.). Once a population is selected, the department would establish a cap on the number of cases with known conditions or barriers. For example, if we know the population had high incidences of developmental delay and victims of violence and

⁵⁹¹ Ibid.

⁵⁹² Ibid.

⁵⁹³ Ibid.

torture, we would inform the UNHCR that out of, for example, 1,000 applicants we would only accept referrals for 50 persons with high medical needs (medical cases), 10 persons with developmental delay and 50 victims of violence and torture.⁵⁹⁴

Implicit in the proposal above is that government officials can use epidemiological information to determine an acceptable level of incidences of disease within a refugee population selected for resettlement to Canada. Populations with high levels of incidences of diseases could be sorted from those with low levels; the goal being to protect the health, longevity, and vitality of the Canadian population. The statements resonate with Foucault's notion of biopower, which "aims to establish a sort of homeostasis, not by training individuals, but by achieving an overall equilibrium that protects the security of the whole from internal dangers."⁵⁹⁵

Within the same 2012 memo, the Deputy Minister pointed to a potentially more inclusive use of health profiles for former Minister Kenny. This was done by drawing on the experiences of the Karen and Bhutanese group processing exercises. It explains:

Detailed information on the general health profiles of these populations was shared with provincial partners and SPOs [Service Provider Organizations]... These practices could be replicated more broadly within a targeted population model... The department may develop and share general population profiles and needs assessments with stakeholders, as well as providing advance information about groups stakeholders can expect to receive each year. Such enhanced information will assist SPOs and health and social service partners to better meet the needs of high needs GARs in order to support their social and cultural integration, a first step toward improving their ability to achieve economic self-sufficiency.⁵⁹⁶

This approach would be in line with what was discussed at the beginning of this chapter and what was publicly promoted by the Conservative government; namely, to focus on improving the settlement of chosen refugee populations. Beyond this, the statements further demonstrate that the logic of group processing informed the reforms of the entire resettlement program.

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁵ Foucault, *Society Must be Defended*, 249.

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid.

The bureaucracy at CIC warned the Minister of the potentially contentious nature of using health and integration profiles to select entire refugee populations, explaining that:

There is a legal risk that as the rationale for the selection of certain populations would come under scrutiny, depending on said rationale, the selection of certain populations could be seen as discriminatory against other groups.⁵⁹⁷

To mitigate this risk, the bureaucracy recommended selecting refugee populations “identified by the UNHCR as being in need of resettlement.”⁵⁹⁸ It was easy enough for the Conservative government to take this advice since the need for resettlement vastly outstrips the available places that resettlement states are willing to offer.⁵⁹⁹ For this reason, governments are able to exercise discretion in selecting refugees while still adhering to UNHCR priorities.

A third option considered for limiting “high needs” refugees was strengthening the “ability to establish” requirement. While this option appears not to have been presented to the Minister, it was discussed in a CIC paper shared with the Canadian Council for Refugees and other stakeholders. It explains:

Under this option, Missions would be asked to apply more stringently the ability to establish criteria. Guidance would clarify that refugee applicants should be exempted from the ability to establish assessment (for reasons of vulnerability or urgent protection, as outlined in the Regulations) only in exceptional circumstances. Literacy and formal education levels of the applicants would be emphasized more strongly, as these contribute to the potential to learn an official language and find employment in Canada.⁶⁰⁰

The paper makes clear that this strategy would realize the government’s objective in limiting “high needs” refugees given the broad discretionary power that overseas missions could use to

⁵⁹⁷ CIC, “Options for Managing Resettled Refugees High Needs.”

⁵⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁹ See UNHCR, *Projected Global Resettlement Needs* (Geneva: UNHCR, 19th Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement, 1-3 July 2013), 5.

⁶⁰⁰ CIC, “Improving Refugee Outcomes Proposal: Managing the Number of High-Needs Refugees Resettled to Canada.”

capture all types of “high needs” that are presumed to be hidden in narrower definitions such as the UNHCR’s medical case category. It pointed to the potential for clear cost savings for provincial health, settlement, and community services. Not surprisingly, many refugee advocates would be upset with this measure and the paper acknowledges this. Already facing caps, it explains that private sponsors would be further frustrated since the policy would lead to increased refusals based on ‘ability to establish’ criteria. It argues that:

Stakeholders would likely react negatively to this proposal and accuse Canada of preventing the most vulnerable from attaining Canada’s protection, especially female-headed households. In light of the upcoming reduction in GAR numbers and changes to IFH benefits, this option could be perceived as a retreat from a Resettlement Program driven first and foremost by humanitarian (rather than economic) principles.⁶⁰¹

The government’s grappling with these issues highlight how in the contemporary period there is some level of unease in applying naked biopolitical calculations in the grouping of refugees. Reflecting on Butler’s conception of a lawless sovereign power operating through the governmentality of indefinite detention, it would seem that in some contexts legitimacy still matters.⁶⁰² CIC documents and internal memos to the former Immigration Minister point to a balancing act by the bureaucracy as they struggled with the Minister to find ways to limit “high needs” refugees, capture these needs in a cost effective manner, and uphold the public perception that Canada’s resettlement program will continue to be based on humanitarian principles.

The desire to compare and contrast various groupings of refugees is reflected in the former Immigration Minister’s request on August 29, 2012 for: a summary of how the UNHCR prioritizes refugee populations for resettlement; information on UNHCR resettlement referrals out of Africa; academic papers on the settlement outcomes of Somali refugee cohorts that arrived

⁶⁰¹ Ibid.

⁶⁰² Butler, *Precarious Life*.

during the 1990s; and “data on other refugee cohorts, disaggregated by country of birth.”⁶⁰³ The request was to help the Minister decide “whether Canada should respond to UNHCR’s appeals for more resettlement out of the Horn of Africa.”⁶⁰⁴ The Minister wanted to compare and contrast the settlement and integration outcomes of various groupings of refugees based on national categories with particular attention focussed on Somalis. Several annexes attached to the memo provided the Minister with what were referred to as the economic outcomes for government-assisted and privately sponsored refugees as well as refugees that arrive in Canada. The annexes considered Somali integration outcomes in comparison to other groupings of refugees. The memo, prepared for the Minister, explained:

To provide a sense of prevailing trends with respect to economic outcomes, detailed analyses were done on some of the recent top source countries for GARs [government-assisted refugees]. The analysis provided in Annex F is focussed on GARs from Afghanistan, Congo, Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq, Somalia and Sudan. Annex G and H then break down the same outcomes for PSRs [privately-sponsored refugees] and in-Canada landed refugees from the same source countries.⁶⁰⁵

The assumption by officials is that the production of statistical categories based on nationality reflects the existence of relatively self-contained national “groups” with varying levels of integration potential. When combined with the examination of diseases across refugee groupings, it highlights a form of biopolitics at work within the reforms. The consideration of settlement outcomes of previous cohorts of refugees is similar to chapter four’s discussion of the CBSA’s examination of “inadmissibility patterns” under group processing. Valverde’s and Mopas’s concept of “targeted governance” suggests that there has been a move away from disciplinary power based on normalizing populations towards risk management techniques that break

⁶⁰³ CIC, “Follow-Up to Portfolio Briefing on Improving Government Assisted Refugee Outcomes,” *Memorandum to the Minister*, F-8222, (Ottawa: CIC, October 12, 2012).

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid.

individuals down into sets of “measurable risk factors.”⁶⁰⁶ The comparison of economic and settlement outcomes between, and within, various groupings of refugees demonstrate this type of governing. The goal is to anticipate the cost and difficulty of settling refugees based on specific national categories; to sort the difficult from the easy to integrate. Risk management techniques operate in two different ways. First, they compare different groupings of refugees along the lines of health, education, integration levels, and security risks. Second, they operate temporally by comparing historical and contemporary groupings of refugees framed with same national category.

Several weeks later the Immigration Minister was provided with another memo, “Resettled Refugee Populations: Multi-Year Commitments for 2013 and Beyond,” that considered several refugee population candidates for the focussed multiyear approach. The memo is worth examining in some detail as it offers further evidence of the biopolitical practices of selection under this approach. The memo suggests that given current commitments to the resettlement of 20,000 Iraqis over several years as well as the selection of an additional 500 Bhutanese in 2012-13 only two new multi-year commitments would be considered. The UNHCR had proposed four groupings of refugees for potential resettlement: Afghans in Pakistan, Somalis in Kenya, Bhutanese in Nepal, Columbians in Ecuador, and Congolese (Democratic Republic of Congo) in the Great Lakes region of Africa.⁶⁰⁷ Despite this, the Immigration Minister approved the selection of 5,000 mostly Iraqi and some Iranian government-assisted refugees out of Ankara, Turkey by 2018 and an additional 1,000 Bhutanese located in Nepal by 2014. Included

⁶⁰⁶ Valverde and Mopas, “Insecurity and the Dream of Targeted Governance,” 240.

⁶⁰⁷ CIC, “Resettled Refugee Populations: Multi-Year Commitments for 2013 and Beyond.”

with the memo was an attached Annex, which provides insight into why these two populations were chosen and not the others, recommended by the UNHCR.⁶⁰⁸

The Annex begins with a consideration of Iraqi refugees in Turkey, one of the two chosen populations. It notes that this large population is both a UNHCR and Ministerial priority. It justifies their selection based on a mix of foreign policy interests, strategic concerns over the protracted nature of the situation in Turkey, and the perception that Ankara is a stable location within which to conduct largescale resettlement processing. It explains that:

Turkey has recently become a country of strategic interest to Canada. This is happening at a time when Turkey is feeling the increasing pressures of hosting a large number of asylum seekers. Between January and September 10, 2012, over 78, 000 Syrians have fled to Turkey and while the country is struggling to cope with the growing number of refugees, hostility to foreigners is rising in border communities.⁶⁰⁹

In light of this situation, the Annex raises the issue of international burden sharing, one of the stated goals of resettlement by the UNHCR. An argument is made that a long term resettlement commitment by Canada would help influence Turkey to keep its borders open to incoming refugees.

It is unclear why Turkey was a country of strategic interest to the former Conservative government. However, “Targeted Selection”, does point to the potential for a larger foreign policy role under a focussed approach to resettlement. It explains:

In the past, Canada’s resettlement priorities were tied to larger foreign policy objectives, such as developing programs that facilitated immigration for communist defectors. In recent years, refugee populations have been selected according to their vulnerability and need, as well as private sponsors’ interest. Rather than directing where Canada should invest resettlement spaces, foreign policy has merely guided where the resettlement program does or does not operate, whether due to the existence of Canadian sanctions (e.g. Iran) or an inability to obtain entry visas (e.g. Eritrea). A targeted selection

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid, “Resettled Refugee Populations: 2013 and Beyond,” *Annex C*, F-8303, (Ottawa: CIC, October 30, 2012).

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid.

approach proposes to align Canada's resettlement program more closely with foreign policy interests and consistent with UNHCR priorities and private sponsors' interests.⁶¹⁰

In the case of Turkey, it appears that the Conservative government wanted to use the offer of resettlement as leverage in negotiations with Turkey and others, whether on issues surrounding trade, investment, and security cooperation, or convincing the Turkish government to allow more Syrian and Iraqi refugees to permanently settle. This last point is reflected in the memo, which provides further justification for focussing on Iraqi refugees and outlines what is meant by Ministerial priorities:

This commitment responds to UNHCR's request for continued commitment to Iraqi refugees and is aligned with the Government of Canada's concern for religious minorities and Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) refugees in the region... Turkey is a major transit country for refugees and other migrants heading to Europe. A large and predictable resettlement commitment there provides an opportunity for Canada to show an increased commitment to burden-sharing with Turkey (encouraging Turkey to keep asylum space open) and would help set the stage and capacity for Canada to engage in larger scale Syrian resettlement at a later date, if needed.⁶¹¹

In fact, when this memo was written, there was already a sizable Syrian refugee population in Turkey and the Canadian government was under pressure from the UNHCR and refugee advocates to resettle more of them. I shall return to the Syrian situation below.

The second population chosen by the Immigration Minister for a multiyear commitment was an additional 1,000 Bhutanese refugees from Nepal who have family ties in Canada. With the exception of the government's familiarity with the Bhutanese, both the memo and Annex provide few reasons as to why the Minister approved their selection. The Annex emphasizes that Canada is the current chair of the Bhutanese Core Group and part of multilateral efforts to find a comprehensive solution for the Bhutanese in Nepal. Furthermore, it argues that:

⁶¹⁰ CIC, "Issue Paper: Targeted Selection."

⁶¹¹ CIC, "Resettled Refugee Populations: Multi-Year Commitments for 2013 and Beyond."

Accepting another 1,000 persons who have ties to Canada will reduce the pressure in the future for a private sponsorship program. Canadian engagement will ensure we can work multilaterally to complete what the Bhutanese Core Group started: to find solutions for the remaining population through ongoing pressure on Nepal and Bhutan to allow for local integration, or repatriation of the few elderly who prefer to return to Bhutan alone instead of being resettled.⁶¹²

The memo to the Minister adds that the Bhutanese are a UNHCR priority and that the proposed commitment would allow Canada to maintain a presence in Asia for potential new resettlement initiatives in the region.⁶¹³ It goes on to explain that this population has been selected for a Visa Office Referred (VOR) initiative, which is a new stream of resettled refugees. Under it, the UNHCR identifies refugees deemed in need of resettlement who are then matched with private sponsors. The Canadian government and willing sponsors share in the cost of providing income support for the resettled refugees. The program has been criticized by the Canadian Council for Refugees for being part of broader attempts by the government to create a state-led resettlement program.⁶¹⁴ The memo concludes that “there are no known strategic or operational disadvantages to this option.”⁶¹⁵

There are several things omitted in this memo and the attached Annex on the Bhutanese refugees. First, as discussed in previous chapters, this grouping of refugees is considered what one official referred to as a “clean population” with minimal security concerns. Second, Labman suggests that the Bhutanese are “desirable” in terms of employment skills and educational levels.⁶¹⁶ The decision to select a further 1,000 was based on familiarity with well-educated and skilled refugees that have already been thoroughly screened as a grouping. The reference to “no

⁶¹² CIC, “Resettled Refugee Populations: 2013 and Beyond.”

⁶¹³ CIC, “Resettled Refugee Populations: Multi-Year Commitments for 2013 and Beyond.”

⁶¹⁴ Elizabeth McWeeny, “The Canadian Council for Refugees Vision for Canada’s Refugee Resettlement Program,” (presentation, CCR Fall Consultation, Toronto, Ontario, December 1st, 2012).

⁶¹⁵ Ibid.

⁶¹⁶ Labman, *At Law’s Border*.

known strategic or operational disadvantages” highlights the neo-liberal and targeted logic behind the reforms to the resettlement program.

The second part of the annex to the 2012 memo considers refugee populations identified by the UNHCR but not recommended for resettlement by CIC. It begins with Somali refugees in Dadaab, Kenya, acknowledging their need for resettlement given the protracted nature of the conflict in Somalia, the lack of durable solutions, and the large size of the camps in Kenya. However, and somewhat ironically, it suggests that the scale of the problem is an obstacle to resolving it:

The Somali refugee situation remains one of the UNHCR’s greatest challenges. The sheer number of persons in need means resettlement is unlikely to bring about any changes for Somalis at large unless countries were to engage at the same level as what was done for the Bhutanese and what is being proposed for the Congolese.⁶¹⁷

The remarks beg the question: why not offer Somalis that are living in Dadaab the same largescale resettlement as the Bhutanese, or what is now being done for the Syrians, and what might occur for the Congolese?

The Annex cites security concerns as one of the reasons that CIC does not recommend selecting Somali refugees for a multiyear commitment. This includes what the government believes is the infiltration of Al Shabaab into the Dadaab camps, which, from the perspective of authorities, has created a heterogeneous grouping of refugees with potentially threatening elements. On top of this, accessing the camps to process large numbers of refugees is viewed as difficult given the precarious security situation. The memo concludes:

This type of commitment is not feasible for resettlement countries. Canada, like most countries, is unable to access Dadaab Refugee Camp at this time where a significant number of Somali refugees reside, due to the deteriorating security situation. New arrivals of Somali refugees in Dadaab would not make sense at this time given the lack of access

⁶¹⁷ CIC, “Resettled Refugee Populations: 2013 and Beyond.”

It adds:

the Somali refugee situation and context is complicated by the fact that very little documentation exists due to the lack of a stable government for over three decades. Combined with the very real presence of Al-Shabaab members and other war criminals within both urban and camp based refugee populations, it is clear that a group processing approach is not viable.⁶¹⁸

The concerns of authorities over documentation, heterogeneity, and what are perceived as urban refugee populations highlight the similarities between group processing and the selection of populations under the reforms. The lack of documentation places Somali refugees outside the vision of the Canadian state, generating unease in officials. Gaps in this type of knowledge combined with a perception of risky heterogeneous groupings of refugees in Dadaab represent a problem for biopolitical practices that strive for homogeneity, “perfect vision,” and “clean populations.”

The annex attempts to ease the optics at play in its assessment of Somali refugees by emphasizing existing commitments for them, explaining:

Canada has Somali refugees (among many others) already referred by both the UNHCR and private sponsors and the mission in Nairobi will be working to process all outstanding applications over the course of the next several years. While the Department cannot propose a multiyear GAR commitment to new Somali referrals, Nairobi’s target for refugees out of this region in the world will remain high so that inventories can be brought to working levels allowing Canada to commit to a more feasible initiative (Congolese).⁶¹⁹

The “more feasible initiative” that was mentioned earlier is the proposed selection of 2,500 Congolese between 2015- 17 as part of a major multilateral resettlement effort that would select a minimum of 50,000 refugees.⁶²⁰ A UNHCR report for the February 2013 Working Group on

⁶¹⁸ Ibid.

⁶¹⁹ CIC. “Resettled Refugee Populations: 2013 and Beyond,” *Annex C*, F-8303, (Ottawa: CIC, October 30, 2012).

⁶²⁰ CCR, “CCR-CIC-CBSA Fall Roundtable.”

Resettlement suggests US interest in the Congolese as well, including several P-2 group resettlement initiatives. The report's numerous references to verification and re-verification practices further reflects the emphasis on visibility under group resettlement schemes. It explains that "in Rwanda, UNHCR has used the 2011/2012 verification exercise to identify the 'Mudende group', consisting of 2,045 households, totaling some 12,000 refugees for a P-2 group processing proposal for the USRAP [United States Refugee Admissions Program]."⁶²¹ In Uganda, it indicates that the UNHCR at the end of 2012 had completed what was referred to as a "population verification exercise" for Congolese refugees. The report explains that "while the potential for a P-2 group proposal is being actively pursued, a P1 expedited processing methodology will be initiated based on established criteria agreed at the UNHCR Regional Resettlement Meeting in Nairobi in May 2012, and the use of the Abridged RRF [Resettlement Registration Forms] which was affirmed toward the end of last year."⁶²² In light of the protracted displacement of the Congolese, the report notes that the UNHCR had decided to shift approaches from one based on the strategic selection of individuals to large-scale resettlement based on what it calls "group profiling exercises."⁶²³

The emphasis on expedited forms of processing for the Congolese, whether based on individuals or groupings, can be contrasted with the slow security clearance of Somalis.⁶²⁴ At the 2013 Working Group on Resettlement meeting in February, the UNHCR drew attention to the lack of resettlement spaces made available for refugees in Dadaab. It explained:

UNHCR has only commitments received for 1,250 refugees (UK, Sweden, USA, Australia and Norway). It has formally requested 600 places (mainly for Somalis) with

⁶²¹ UNHCR, "Updates on priority situations for the strategic use of resettlement," Working Group on Resettlement (WGR), DRC refugees, February 2013 (Geneva: UNHCR, February 2013).

⁶²² Ibid.

⁶²³ Ibid.

⁶²⁴ UNHCR, "Working Group on Resettlement (WGR)—Report," Working Group on Resettlement (WGR) (Geneva: UNHCR, February 6-7 2013): 2.

Canada but is still waiting for the formal reply. UNHCR would thus still need 1,250 or 650 places (depending on Canada's decision).⁶²⁵

Regardless of whether or not the former Conservative government agreed to this request to resettle 600 mostly Somali refugees, the memos and reports discussed throughout this chapter suggest that the selection of Somali refugees was not a priority. Their dire situation is exacerbated by the intentions of the Kenyan government to implement a policy of encampment in which all refugees will be moved to Dadaab or Kakuma.⁶²⁶ On top of this, opportunities for individual resettlement are bleak. For some time now, the Canadian Council for Refugees has criticised the Canadian government for the long delays for processing at its Nairobi visa mission, which is now subject to a cap on new referrals.⁶²⁷ Combined with the decision against large-scale resettlement similar to the one proposed for the Congolese this amounts to the exclusion from resettlement of some of the neediest refugees in the world.

The US government appears to have a similar position in regards to Somali refugees. The 2012 US proposed refugee admissions explains "in East Africa, we continue to process P-1 Somalis in Kakuma refugee camp; however, processing in Dadaab has been suspended since December 2011 due to the worsening security situation."⁶²⁸ While the US had allocated up to 12,000 resettlement spaces for African refugees in 2013, the vast majority of these are P-1 individual designations as opposed to P-2 group designations; there are only 750 refugees under this designation.⁶²⁹ In contrast to this, that same year it was anticipated that there would be

⁶²⁵ UNHCR, "Updates on priority situations for the strategic use of resettlement," Working Group on Resettlement (WGR), Kenya, February 2013 (Geneva: UNHCR, 2013): 2.

⁶²⁶ Ibid.

⁶²⁷ See CCR "Long delays at Nairobi: are we being fair?," Canadian Council for Refugees, accessed April 16, 2016, <http://ccrweb.ca/en/nairobi>

⁶²⁸ U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP), "Proposed Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2013" (Washington: USRAP, Report to Congress, 2013):26.

⁶²⁹ Ibid.

15,900 refugees under the P-2 group referral designation in East Asia, mostly Burmese.⁶³⁰ Where P-2 group initiatives exist in Africa, such as in Ethiopia, it does not include the large number of Somalis in Dadaab, Kenya. This suggests that while the US program selects from a diverse range of nationalities, in practice, it focuses on a few populations, namely the Bhutanese, the Burmese, and to lesser extent Iraqis (16.4%).⁶³¹ As such, it is similar to the focussed approach for the Canadian resettlement program in that it targets a few refugee populations. The exclusion of the majority of Somali refugees from the US and Canadian resettlement programs highlights the implications of this. Protection space is closed off for some of the most vulnerable refugees in the world based on their imputed affiliation with what are perceived to be risky or problematic groupings.

The Annex also considered the selection of Afghan refugees in Pakistan, though part of the section on the Afghans was redacted. Similar to the Somalis, it is acknowledged that this is a large and vulnerable grouping of refugees caught in a protracted situation. Despite this, the bureaucracy at CIC recommended against large-scale resettlement. The annex explains that the UNHCR only refers a few hundred refugees to the US, Canada, and Australia and would like to increase this to 1,000 annually. Drawing on the UNHCR's "strategic use of resettlement," which aims at using limited resettlement spaces in tandem with other durable solutions such as local integration, it argues:

There is recognition from all parties concerned that resettlement is not the solution. However, a coordinated strategy in relation to small-scale resettlement from Pakistan might yield benefits for others. Both Australia and the US⁶³² will look at increasing numbers; the group⁶³³ as a whole will also encourage more countries to offer resettlement. Using resettlement strategically in this situation would put UNHCR and the

⁶³⁰ Ibid.

⁶³¹ Ibid.

⁶³² The 2013 USRAP proposed refugee admissions provides further evidence of US interest in Afghan refugees.

⁶³³ The term 'group' refers to UNHCR Core groups, which: "are established through the agreement of resettlement States and UNHCR based on a joint assessment of the need for a coordinated, multi-annual approach to resettlement." UNHCR, "Core and contact groups," *UNHCR*, <http://www.unhcr.org/core-and-contact-groups.html> .

international community in a position to leverage further cooperation with the Government of Pakistan.⁶³⁴

Similar to the Canadian government's reforms of the resettlement program, the UNHCR's "strategic use of resettlement" reflects "targeted governance." With the Afghans in Pakistan, the aim is to target small-scale resettlement in a manner that provides Western countries with leverage in negotiations with Pakistan, whether on security matters, economic trade, or increasing the local integration of Afghans.

The Annex also pointed to the security situation in Pakistan as posing a risk to successfully conducting and completing large-scale resettlement for the Afghans. In particular, it suggests that this situation might limit the mobility of government officials.⁶³⁵ Similar to the security situation in Dadaab, Kenya, this is viewed as an obstacle to streamlined methods of processing large groupings of refugees. The Annex also attempted to ease the decision against large-scale resettlement by pointing to both past and present commitments for Afghan refugees. It highlights Canada's military efforts in Afghanistan as further proof that it has done its part for the Afghans. It claims:

Canada has expended significant resources in Afghanistan as well as the region and has resettled over 27, 000 refugees through PSR and GAR programs since the 1990s, mostly from Pakistan (with smaller numbers out of Central Asian republics like Tajikistan and even smaller numbers out of Iran).⁶³⁶

An argument is made that the UNHCR should be encouraged to include the targets of private sponsors when discussing the Afghan refugee issue with the government of Pakistan. It was suggested that:

⁶³⁴ CIC, "Resettled Refugee Populations: 2013 and Beyond."

⁶³⁵ Ibid.

⁶³⁶ Ibid.

Afghans in Pakistan represent Canada's single largest private sponsorship caseload...the admissions target for PSR applications are set in the 600 to 800 person range every year – or close to 60% of the target UNHCR is aiming at for global resettlement. Through this program, Canada is indeed doing its fair share for this group.⁶³⁷

Despite this claim, the Annex acknowledges that “a cap on new applications has been placed on the mission in Islamabad since January 2012 and will remain in place for the foreseeable future.”⁶³⁸ This suggests that decisions against large-scale resettlement for certain groupings of refugees are paired with caps, amongst other factors, on privately sponsored refugees from overseas missions that service these same groupings.

Given the redacted sections in the Annex it is unclear whether or not these were the only reasons that led to the decision against selecting Afghans out of Pakistan for a multiyear commitment. The available information discussed above suggests that the Canadian government preferred avoiding this grouping of refugees for concerns over security linked to the perceived risks for inefficient processing. Moreover, it hoped that other countries would offer limited resettlement spaces that might mitigate the potential instability that stems from protracted refugee situations.

Syrian Resettlement: Transparency, Biopolitics, and Grouping

In 2013, the Conservative government announced that it would select 1,300 Syrians; however, only 200 would be GARs.⁶³⁹ In response to this, the Canadian Council for Refugees argued that given federal cuts to refugee health care, private sponsors would face massive unanticipated costs to resettle Syrians. These costs could be seen as a disincentive for private citizens and organizations to come forward and sponsor the Syrians. The organization further pointed out that “Sponsorship Agreement Holders are barred from sponsoring refugees in

⁶³⁷ Ibid.

⁶³⁸ Ibid.

⁶³⁹ Ibid.

Turkey. Yet, Turkey is one of the main countries to which Syrian refugees have fled.”⁶⁴⁰ Similar to the Afghans in Pakistan discussed above, this suggests that the government was pairing the decision against resettling large numbers of government-assisted Syrian refugees out of Turkey with administrative tactics designed to block the private sponsorship community from resettling from the same place. The Conservative government put sharp limits on the Syrians -- as a grouping -- through the denial of largescale GAR selection and the blocking of private sponsors.

In the lead up to the Federal elections in November 2015 the government changed its position on the Syrians. Anne-Marie Bélanger McMurdo suggests several factors behind this. Firstly, the recent images of hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees making their way to Europe with many of them drowning has led refugee advocates to intensify pressure on Western governments to take action. In particular, McMurdo suggests that the death of three-year old Alan Kurdi, the Syrian child who drowned while travelling from Turkey to Greece on a boat, “marked a tipping point, strengthening the public outcry for the Canadian government to change its previously restrictive policies towards refugees.”⁶⁴¹ Commenting on the impact of this incident in a recent Toronto Star article, Janet Dench from the Canadian Council for Refugees, referred to Alan Kurdi’s death as a “defining moment that shifted Canadians’ attitude toward the distant refugee crisis in Europe and the Middle East.”⁶⁴² Second, in Canada, the question of Syrian resettlement became a major issue in the 2015 Federal election.⁶⁴³ In a bid to secure votes

⁶⁴⁰ CCR, “CCR responds to government announcement on resettlement of Syrian refugees,” *Canadian Council for Refugees*, July 8th, 2013, <http://ccrweb.ca/en/ccr-responds-resettlement-syrian-refugees>

⁶⁴¹ Anne-Marie Bélanger McMurdo, “Causes and consequences of Canada’s resettlement of Syrian refugees,” *Forced Migration Review* 52 (May 2016): 82.

⁶⁴² Janet Dench, paraphrased in Nicholas Keung, “How Alan Kurdi’s tragic death changed thousands of lives,” *Toronto Star*, Thursday September 1st, 2016, <https://www.thestar.com/news/immigration/2016/09/01/how-alan-kurdis-tragic-death-changed-thousands-of-lives.html>

⁶⁴³ Ibid; See also Laura Payton, Election Issues 2015: A Maclean’s primer on Syrian refugees, *Macleans*, September 3rd, 2015, <http://www.macleans.ca/politics/ottawa/refugees-primer/>; CBC news, Stephen Harper suggests Canada will do more to help Syrian refugees, *CBC news*, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canada-election-2015-syria-refugee-canada-government-1.3221757> .

all the major political parties made election promises to resettle Syrians. The newly elected Liberals initially selected 25,000 Syrians.⁶⁴⁴ Third, McMurdo explains that:

Citizens wanted their government to match the rhetoric of Canadian identity as compassionate, actively engaged in the international community and open to newcomers. It was no surprise that citizens pushed the government to make an effort towards resettling Syrians, given the longstanding willingness of many citizens to be actively engaged in sponsoring refugees themselves.⁶⁴⁵

As Dauvergne's investigation of immigration and refugee law in Canada suggests, admitting refugees for humanitarian reasons helps fulfill the expectations of a liberal state to define and understand itself as compassionate and caring.⁶⁴⁶

Given the high profile of the Syrian refugee movement, the decision-making process has unfolded in a public, seemingly democratic way. This openness is reflected in how the government has shared many of the details of the Syrian resettlement program with the public. An online notification titled *#WelcomeRefugees: Canada resettles Syrian refugees* lists the number of Syrians that have arrived in Canada on a weekly basis, a stark contrast from the former Conservative government, which was reluctant to share this sort of information. The same notification provides key figures that breakdown the Syrian arrivals into the categories of Government Assisted Refugees, Privately Sponsored Refugees, and Blended Visa Office-Referred Refugees. It lists the communities across Canada where the refugees have settled.⁶⁴⁷ It is clear that the Liberal government is making an effort to be transparent about these figures.

⁶⁴⁴ "The Government of Canada resettled 25,000 Syrian refugees between November 2015 and February 29, 2016. This included government-supported and privately sponsored refugees." Government of Canada, *#WelcomeRefugees: Canada resettles Syrian refugees*, *Government of Canada*, <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/welcome/>

⁶⁴⁵ McMurdo, "Causes and consequences of Canada's resettlement of Syrian refugees," 82.

⁶⁴⁶ Catherine Dauvergne, *Making People Illegal: What Globalization Means for Migration and Law* (Cambridge Press 2008), 75; see also: Harald Bauder, "Dialectics of humanitarian immigration and national identity in Canadian public discourse", *Refuge* 25.1 (spring 2008).

⁶⁴⁷ Government of Canada, "Backgrounder, #WelcomeRefugees to Canada," last modified June 21st, 2016, <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/welcome/index.asp>

#WelcomeRefugees provides details of the processing of Syrian refugees, including a list of the Federal agencies involved and what function they perform in the process.⁶⁴⁸ The Syrians are being resettled under what is called the “humanitarian transfer” methodology. This methodology differs from group processing in that it is formally based on the selection of individuals, however, it does share some similarities with the logic of it.⁶⁴⁹ Much like group processing, the UNHCR referred a large number of Syrians within a short period of time, deploying extra resources, immigration and security officials to overseas visa posts servicing them. The former Immigration Minister Alexander decided to recognize the Syrians on a prima facie basis thereby removing the need for refugee status determinations. This enabled the UNHCR to refer a large numbers of Syrian refugees directly from the UNHCR’s registration database in countries such as Lebanon and Jordan. Turkey is an exception to this because the government there controls refugee registration.⁶⁵⁰ Recall that group processing involves the skipping of refugee status determinations and that under the United States’ P-2 group referral the UNHCR directly sends bio data from their registration database to US authorities. Furthermore, the selection of Syrian refugees was grouped in that it was based on the crafting of vulnerable subgroupings from the wider Syrian refugee population, viewed by some as risky.

The newly elected Liberal government also revealed details of the security screening process as it attempted to reassure portions of the public that effective measures were been taken to prevent the infiltration of risky elements within the movement of Syrian refugees to Canada.

#WelcomeRefugees reminds the public that:

Protecting the safety, security and health of Canadians and refugees is a key factor in guiding how we carry out this plan. Each Syrian refugee that Canada welcomes will undergo a robust, multi-layered screening: immigration and security interviews are done

⁶⁴⁸ Ibid, <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/welcome/overview.asp>

⁶⁴⁹ UNHCR official, email message to the author, August 19th, 2016

⁶⁵⁰ Ibid.

by experienced visa officers; documents are verified and biometric and biographic information collected; health screening; identities confirmed on arrival.⁶⁵¹

The government announced that it had “asked the UNHCR to prioritize vulnerable refugees who are a low security risk, such as women at risk and complete families.”⁶⁵² It informed the public that the UNHCR will use iris scan technology to verify the identities of refugees and that:

Immigration processing will be completed overseas. This includes full immigration medical examination, including screening for communicable diseases such as tuberculosis. Security screening will include collecting biographical information, and biometrics, such as fingerprints and digital photos, which will be checked against immigration, law enforcement and security databases.⁶⁵³

The statements reflect the de-localized nature of contemporary border practices. The border is also dispersed, following refugees as they make their way to Canada:

Upon arrival in Canada, all refugees will be welcomed and processed by Border Services Officers (BSOs) for admission into Canada. This will include final verification of identity.⁶⁵⁴

Similar risk management techniques are included in the United States’ plan to resettle Syrian refugees. A ‘facts sheet’ by the organization Human Rights First designed to lessen the public’s fears surrounding the resettlement of Syrian refugees to the United States points to UNHCR biometric and identification practices based on regular interactions with refugees. It explains that:

The U.S. government...conducts its own extremely rigorous screening process, including health checks, repeated biometric checks, several layers of biographical and background screening, and in-person interviews by specially-trained officers. Multiple agencies are involved, including the FBI’s Terrorist Screening Center, the State Department, the Department of Homeland Security [DHS], the National Counterterrorism Center, the

⁶⁵¹ Government of Canada, #WelcomeRefugees, <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/welcome/overview.asp>

⁶⁵² Government of Canada, “Backgrounder, #WelcomeRefugees to Canada,” last modified November 24, 2015, <http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?mthd=index&ctr.page=1&nid=1021909>

⁶⁵³ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid.

Department of Defense and U.S. intelligence agencies. DHS [Department of Homeland Security] has added an additional country-specific layer of review for Syrian refugee applications, which includes extra screening for national security risks.⁶⁵⁵

The understandable desire of refugee advocates to convince skeptics that the resettlement of Syrians is safe leads to an uncritical acceptance of biopolitical practices. This is reflected in the factual description of highly intrusive security practices by Human Rights First that ignores the implications of risk management techniques that act on refugees, immigrants, and travelers. As Amoores and De Goede emphasize, representations of “biometric technologies as infallible and unchallengeable verifiers of the truth about a person” are deeply problematic for assuming that these identifiers are in fact an accurate representation of an individual.⁶⁵⁶ They stress that biometrics “can be parcelled up, contracted out, integrated, applied and innovated.”⁶⁵⁷ This has serious implications for an individual’s privacy. Unfortunately, this is precisely what is being done with the security screening of Syrians where biometric data is being analyzed, synthesized, and shared with numerous security, intelligence, police, and military agencies.⁶⁵⁸

At the same time, the Canadian Council for Refugees has expressed some reservations over the Syrian resettlement program. While the organization initially played an important role in pressuring the government to increase the resettlement of Syrians, it has increasingly become concerned over the diversion of resources away from other groupings of refugees – most notably those located in Africa.⁶⁵⁹ This concern is part of the broader critique by the Canadian Council for Refugees against moving the resettlement program from a formally global approach to one based on focussed multiyear commitments. Under the latter, the processing of chosen groupings

⁶⁵⁵ Human Rights First, “Fact Sheet, Refugee Resettlement—Security Screening,” November 2015.

⁶⁵⁶ Amoores and De Goede, “Governance, risk and dataveillance in the war on terror,” 165.

⁶⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 165.

⁶⁵⁸ Human Rights First, “Fact Sheet.”

⁶⁵⁹ CCR, email message to author, August 25th, 2016.

of refugees is expedited, while other groupings wait in limbo and are subjected to quotas, backlogs, and what the organization calls “burdensome paperwork.”⁶⁶⁰ In May of this year, it issued a call for a “resettlement plan reflecting equity for all regions,” noting that:

Although some sponsors would like the processing of Syrian refugees to be faster, compared to other refugees it is relatively quick and easy to sponsor Syrian refugees. Africa hosts fully a third of the refugees in need of resettlement, but they routinely wait as long as five years for Canada to process their application. Over 6,000 people in Africa are currently waiting for an answer from Canada.⁶⁶¹

As mentioned earlier, beginning in 2011 the government imposed caps and quotas on the private sponsorship of refugees from visa offices in Nairobi, Cairo, Pretoria, Dar es Salaam, and Islamabad. The Canadian Council for Refugees explains that:

Syrian refugees are exempted from these quotas, so sponsors can apply for as many as they have the capacity for. However, for other refugees, Sponsorship Agreement Holders often find they cannot submit a sponsorship because they have reached their limit, either overall or for the specific visa office. This particularly affects African refugees as four of the five capped visa offices are in Africa.⁶⁶²

The organization is also concerned about the unequal application of new rules introduced in 2012 that require refugees selected by sponsors to be individually determined to be refugees by either the UNHCR or the country in which they are taking first refuge. It notes:

Since September 2015, Syrian and Iraqi refugees no longer require this documentation, but the rule continues to apply to other refugees. Many refugees, such as Afghans in Pakistan or Iran, do not receive individual refugee determination from either the UNHCR or the local government, so they cannot be sponsored by Groups of Five or Community Sponsors.⁶⁶³

⁶⁶⁰ CCR, “Renewing Canada’s Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program,” Canadian Council for Refugees, January 2016. <http://ccrweb.ca/sites/ccrweb.ca/files/renewing-psr-jan-2016.pdf>

⁶⁶¹ CCR, “Call for a resettlement plan reflecting equity for all regions,” *Canadian Council for Refugees*, May 24th, 2016, <http://ccrweb.ca/sites/ccrweb.ca/files/ccr-psr-statement-may-2016.pdf>

⁶⁶² CCR, “Renewing Canada’s Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program.”

⁶⁶³ *Ibid*, 3.

From the point of view of the Canadian Council for Refugees, measures such as caps, quotas, and state, or UNHCR, refugee status requirements compromise the principle of naming, which calls for the ability of sponsors to choose the refugees they wish to sponsor.

While portions of the public were moved by the images of drowning Syrians to open Canada's door to them, others were concerned over what was perceived as a risky grouping of refugees. These concerns have made it easier for the government to be transparent about the application of biopolitical security practices in the screening of Syrian refugees. This transparency reveals how the government is crafting purportedly less risky groupings of Syrians based on gendered assumptions. The candid and relatively open discussion of security screening behind the Syrian resettlement program is unique in Canada's historical response to refugee movements. As this dissertation demonstrates, as well as authors such as Whitaker, there is a long history of secrecy surrounding the security screening of refugees.⁶⁶⁴ Similar to group processing, the resettlement of Syrian refugees is based on the relatively quick deployment of immigration and security officials to countries that host them. Once there, "targeted" biopolitical risk management techniques in the "theatre" craft vulnerable groupings of refugees from wider refugee populations, ensuring that risky "profiles" have not tainted them. Where the Syrian program differs from group processing is in the relative transparency of the decision-making process as well as the importance of political will, under public pressure, to push through a large-scale resettlement decision despite reservations from portions of the public and Canada's security establishment. Similar to the Iraqis, the government tailored security practices and processing methodologies to allow for the selection of what is otherwise considered a risky heterogeneous grouping of refugees.

⁶⁶⁴ Reg Whitaker, *Double Standards*.

This chapter has situated the targeted approach of the reforms of Canada's resettlement program and its associated reliance on biopolitical techniques within the logic of group processing. Multiyear resettlement commitments rely on the production of profiles based on the health, culture, settlement potential, "inadmissibility patterns," and economic outcomes of groupings of refugees. Risk management techniques assess the viability, risk, ease of access, and efficiency of processing groupings of refugees. They sort the relatively healthy, easy to process and integrate groupings of refugees from those perceived as unhealthy, difficult to process and integrate. Targeted selection is based on the goal of "generating efficiencies" within overseas refugee processing, linking the selection of groupings of refugees with purportedly similar traits to streamlined processing methods. The reforms are the culmination of years of reflection by the Canadian government on the efficiency and resource requirements of processing overseas refugees for resettlement. Moreover, they are reflective of the neo-liberal logic at work in group processing.

Conclusion

In this final chapter of the dissertation I reflect on some of the theoretical insights that arise from studying group processing in Canada and group resettlement schemes in general. Historically, refugees have always been grouped -- racially, ethnically, nationally, religiously, and culturally -- and the same goes with practices of resettling them. Political ideology, foreign policy considerations, economic needs, and security concerns have also long shaped the grouping and selection of refugees. At some times the grouping of refugees is made explicit through statist categories such as the “Indo-Chinese designated class” or the “hard-core,” whereas at other times it is implied in the way governments assess overseas refugees, as with Canada’s approach to Tibetan refugees. The dissertation has traced the contemporary desire to select groupings of refugees believed to have the clearest set of commonalities and boundaries -- as determined through a variety of practices, such as use of census, identification, mapping, and profiling practices.

The chapter considers the emphasis placed on visibility, ordering, boundary-making, and homogeneity in group resettlement practices. It examines the relations between groupism, biopolitics, border practices, and risk management techniques. I discuss how secrecy and unease relate to the tensions between the grouping of refugees and the focus on individuals under the Refugee Convention. In the final part of the conclusion, I reflect on some possibilities for progressive alternatives to contemporary group resettlement schemes. In particular, I consider the potential of “mediated passage”⁶⁶⁵ to challenge the biopolitical and risk management practices at work in these schemes. Critical in this regard is conceptualizing collective action without re-performing the taken for granted assumptions of what constitutes a “group.”

⁶⁶⁵ Latham, “Border formations: security and subjectivity at the border.”

Drawing Circles: Biopolitics and Grouping in Resettlement Schemes

With group resettlement schemes, officials attempt to identify who is inside and outside “the circle.” They try to impose boundaries on the disorder, fluidity, and contingency in refugee camps. The drawing of “circles” around what are perceived as vulnerable refugee “groups” reflects the logic of sovereignty. As Nyers reminds us, with regard to humanitarianism’s claim of neutrality and impartiality in conflicts, “sovereignty, based on the relation of the exception, is a violent relation in the sense that it is a practice that works to keep things apart, create boundaries, and maintain separateness.”⁶⁶⁶ Sovereign power differentiates between chosen “groups” and those refugees remaining in camps. This is a bordering operation and may be seen as yet another variation of the ways in which sovereignty acts through borders and bordering, such as practices of detention, deportation, and the issuing of visas. Like other forms of bordering, group resettlement bordering intersects with the construction of collective identities and narratives. Similar to the way that state borders aim to protect national populations from what are regarded as internal and external biopolitical threats, the border around a grouping of refugees attempts to secure a conception of pure vulnerability.

In these ways, state authorities engage in an instrumental version of Brubaker’s notion of groupism. While officials assume the existence of “groups” based on ethnic, national, or racial categories, they operate on the assumption that some “groups” are more group-like than others. This is reflected in how authorities create and reform categories that group refugees, from “group labour” and the “hard core,” to the “long stayers” and the “screened in” under the “Indochinese designated class.”

⁶⁶⁶ Nyers, *Rethinking Refugees*, 41.

Once again, the preoccupation with homogeneity in group resettlement schemes is intertwined with sovereign logics. As Goldberg argues, “modern states, especially in their national articulation, ordered themselves not as heterogeneous spaces but in particular as racially and culturally homogeneous ones.”⁶⁶⁷ Biopolitics operates through this preference for homogeneity. In *Society must be Defended*, Foucault draws attention to the potential for biopolitics to justify techniques aimed at eliminating threats, both internal and external to the population, including murder, political death, expulsion, or rejection.⁶⁶⁸ Authorities under group resettlement schemes consider the presence of terrorists, imposters, and war criminals that threaten both the internal homogeneity of prospective groupings of refugees based on vulnerability and the security of Western populations. Risk management techniques based on “inadmissibility patterns,” levels of riskiness, health, and integration potential assist authorities in separating what they deem “clean populations” from risky and difficult to process ones. These techniques are integral to “groupism” since they operate by abstracting specific types of information from the complex and fluid conditions that prevail in refugee camps and elsewhere. In the process, refugees are reduced to “dividuals” with commonalities, reifying “groups,” and converting them into mobile inscription devices that can be shopped around to prospective resettlement states. Biopolitics works as a form of “groupism” by testing the internal sameness and boundaries of groupings of refugees; determining what constitutes an acceptable level of riskiness, heterogeneity, and porousness in otherwise vulnerable groupings. These practices share similarities with former colonial anxieties surrounding racial mixing and fears of contamination.

⁶⁶⁷ Goldberg, *The Racial State*, 16.

⁶⁶⁸ Michele Foucault, “Society must be Defended,” 236.

“Targeted governance” is employed to “generate efficiencies” in the overseas processing of refugees under both group processing and the multiyear focused approach to resettlement. The examination of “inadmissibility patterns” highlights how this emphasis on efficiency intersects with anticipatory security practices. Despite the global mapping of refugee vulnerability by the UNHCR, group resettlement programs target what are perceived as homogenous, easy to process, and relatively risk-free groupings of refugees.

The forgoing analysis of group resettlement schemes provides an opportunity to consider how the grouping of refugees cuts across the socially produced distinction between onshore and offshore practices. Important, in this regard, is distinguishing between categories and “groups.”⁶⁶⁹ The Canadian government’s use of the term “ideal types” in relation to Baltics is an example of a statist category informed by racial preferences. It operated in both “displaced persons” camps in Europe and with the arrival of “unauthorized” boats from Sweden. “Ideal types” were viewed as the right fit for Canada regardless of where they were located. I am not suggesting that we should ignore how the state places refugees into categories based on their location; there are real and important effects that stem from this. However, this dissertation highlights those moments when the state draws conclusions on groupings of refugees that cut across the categories of “in-Canada asylum claimants,” “government assisted refugee,” and “privately sponsored.” For example, as chapter five noted, determinations of “inadmissibility patterns,” incidences of disease, and settlement outcomes based on specific national categories cut across the distinction between inland and offshore refugees.

The Invisibility of the Making Visible

In this dissertation, I have shown how governments are concerned to make visible, at least to themselves, those groupings of refugees they are considering for resettlement. The process of identifying the most internally homogenous and bounded groupings of refugees relies on profiling, registration, and mapping practices. Spaces and processes that escape the vision of the state and UNHCR generate unease in officials. These include border areas viewed as too fluid and urban centers considered heterogeneous. Invisibility, and by extension knowledge insecurity, produces unease. Those groupings that frustrate the state's desire for "perfect vision" are far less likely to be chosen. At the same time, the practices of making visible, like virtually all components of the process of choosing some refugee groupings over others, are themselves kept largely invisible.

Individuals/Groupings

In this dissertation, I have drawn attention to the tensions and relations between "groups" and individual refugees in Canada's group resettlement practices. In the previous chapter I noted that the refugee regime has, for quite some time, emphasized the rights of individuals as opposed to groupings. With group resettlement, there is a belief by officials that bounded and homogenous groupings exist and can be uncovered. Similarly, refugee advocates and NGOs take for granted the existence of racial, ethnic, or national "groups" in their criticisms of the state. Secrecy and unease relate to the fact that group resettlement schemes make explicit the grouping process in a context where individual refugee rights are emphasized. Put another way, secrecy and unease relate to the fact that what was taken for granted in earlier periods is now brought to light through the reflection of the grouping process in a context that formally emphasizes the rights of individuals. In earlier historical periods, the Canadian government explicitly acknowledged its discrimination against what it viewed as racial and religious "groups." In those

rare instances when the government selected refugees it had grouped racially, it attempted to downplay these decisions given the public's racist attitudes. In the present period, with the ostensibly nondiscriminatory character of programs such as group processing, officials are more intent on keeping the exercise of such racialized discretion secret. NGOs insist that group resettlement decisions be based on protection needs as opposed to integration potential. Officials are uneasy with discussing the exclusion of specific groupings of refugees in the presence of NGOs -- and even anonymously in interviews for this dissertation. Secrecy plays a role in resettlement decisions by concealing the more contentious elements of risk management techniques at work in these programs. The concern to mask naked biopolitical assessments of groupings of refugees suggests that the government's need for legitimacy continues to function in some manner in the exercising of this form of sovereign power.

The grouping of refugees from the state's perspective is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, this grouping permits more discretion to operate biopolitical security practices, to consider integration potential and levels of health across entire groupings of refugees. On the other hand, the state cannot escape the question as to which "groups" (or populations) are selected and for what reasons. It is always prone to the criticism that it discriminates between "groups," that it gives preferential treatment to some over others.

Cultivating Refugee Agency through a "Politics of Mediation" in Group Resettlement

The grouping process presents a unique set of challenges for those pursuing critical approaches to refugee studies. The literature that highlights how the international refugee regime silences individual refugees and de-politicizes their experiences is relevant to many aspects of group resettlement schemes. Risk management techniques based on bio-data, "inadmissibility

patterns,” and integration potential ignore the political subjectivities and narratives of refugees. The UNHCR’s articulation of narratives of displacement based on groupings of refugees overlooks the unique personal experiences of individuals. There is an emphasis in these narratives on collective experiences of violence, intimidation, trauma, and the “need” for resettlement. However, as I have shown, there are some discussions of political resistance in “group” profiles. Through practices of simplification, abstraction, and ordering, these profiles construct specific narratives of displacement, vulnerability, commonality, riskiness, and “need.” In this way, they play a role in reifying bounded and internally homogenous refugee “groups” and reinserting them within the “citizen/nation/state ensemble.”⁶⁷⁰ With group resettlement, the task of critical theory is to challenge how these profiles and narratives are constructed in the interests of resettlement states.

This leads to an important question: how do we encourage and foster progressive alternatives to the current dynamics of group resettlement schemes without reproducing “groupism” and nationalist, ethnic, bureaucratic, or racial labels? In this final section, I begin to answer this question by exploring collective forms of resettlement that challenge the statist logics of vision, ordering, boundary-making, and grouping at work in group resettlement schemes.

To begin with, a denial of refugee agency is intensified under group resettlement schemes. While individuals may actively seek inclusion in groupings of refugees, the decision as to which groupings are chosen is far removed from them in forums such as the Working Group on Resettlement in Geneva or PRS working group in Ottawa. The UNHCR’s drive to proactively map global vulnerability, “need,” and risk leads to the labelling of refugee agency as instances of

⁶⁷⁰ Soguk, *States and Strangers*.

fraud. In those rare cases where refugees come together to lobby states for resettlement,⁶⁷¹ it is on terms dictated by Western states. Alternatives to the current makeup of group resettlement schemes, therefore, must contend with the categorizing, labelling, coding, and grouping processes of both humanitarian organizations and states. How might refugees challenge these processes?

An approach to consider is what Robert Latham has called “mediated passage.” Mediated passage holds the promise of shifting agency back towards refugees in their encounters with state officials under resettlement schemes. The homogenizing and grouping logic of these schemes reproduce border practices. Cultivating agency under these schemes must address this fact.

Latham suggests:

on its own the agency of migrants involved in negotiating their presence around the border will typically be outflanked by states that are able to interpose themselves between migrants and social institutions or establish unmediated relations with migrants in the context of border security. The relationship between migrants, the security state, and the social institutions that populate a society, therefore, requires a politics of mediation.⁶⁷²

For Latham, this can be realized through civil society organizations (CSOs) that act as mediators.⁶⁷³ These organizations would “verify and vouch for the legal identity of the migrant and negotiate with the state as to what the minimum criteria are for admission...the state must remain blind to the process; all there is to know is that the migrant is vouched for by a trusted CSO.”⁶⁷⁴

⁶⁷¹ See Jansen, “Between vulnerability and assertiveness.”

⁶⁷² Latham, “Border formations: security and subjectivity at the border,” 194.

⁶⁷³ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁴ Ibid, 195.

Critically, for Latham, CSOs must remain autonomous from the state.⁶⁷⁵ Under the current framework of group resettlement schemes, the UNHCR and organizations such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) act as mediators between state officials and refugees. These organizations, however, act in the interests of states. A key problematic in cultivating a politics of mediation under group resettlement is how to ensure that NGOs represent the voices of refugees in their encounters with states. Is it possible to envision truly autonomous NGOs that operate in this manner? While a complete answer to this question is beyond the scope of this dissertation, it is worth considering William Walters's insights on what he calls "the humanitarian border." Rather than view humanitarianism as something permanently implicated in the biopolitical calculations of states, he suggests that it is more productive to approach it "as a field which exists in a permanent state of co-option, infiltration but also provocation with the state (but also with other supranational and international entities as well)."⁶⁷⁶ This suggests that it is possible for humanitarian actors to play a progressive role in mediated passage.

An important question to consider in conceptualizing a politics of mediation under group resettlement is whether or not it is necessary or preferable, to treat refugees as a "groups"? After all, does this not simply reproduce "groupism" as well as the statist logics of borders and territorialized identities? A related question arises from this: is it possible to act collectively without reproducing what is conventionally taken to be a "group"? More specifically: how might we act collectively without requiring or emphasizing internal sameness, exclusionary boundaries, and extreme cohesiveness?

⁶⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁶ William Walters, "Foucault and Frontiers: Notes on the Birth of the Humanitarian Border," Ulrich Bröckling, Susanne Krasmann and Thomas Lemke eds. *Governmentality: Current Issues and Future Challenges*, (New York: Routledge, 2011), 149.

Here, it is worth recalling that Brubaker questions the assumption by social scientists that “groups” understood as bounded, discrete, and homogenous are in fact a permanent feature of social life.⁶⁷⁷ He argues, “categorical group denominations—however authoritative, however pervasively institutionalized—cannot serve as indicators of real ‘groups’ or robust ‘identities.’”⁶⁷⁸ A key concern of Brubaker is to demonstrate that it is not necessary to study conflicts by positing the existence of ethnic, national, or racial “groups.” The same can be said when analyzing the resettlement of large numbers of refugees.

In cultivating a politics of mediation under group resettlement the question of boundaries will inevitably be raised. How might refugees approach this issue? One way to answer this question is to consider the different ways that boundaries can function. For instance, Latham points to how boundaries can work to protect public spheres from colonization by corporate influences.⁶⁷⁹ This suggests that it is possible to think of boundaries as more than mechanisms that exclude refugees. Boundaries might play a constitutive role in mediated passage by helping to maintain the autonomy of NGOs. This in turn would provide a space for refugees to come together and articulate their desire for resettlement on their terms.

A politics of mediation would challenge the labelling and grouping practices of states and the UNHCR. Important in this regard, is Carolina Moulin’s and Peter Nyers’s examination of a three month sit in and protest in 2005 by Sudanese refugees outside the UNHCR office in Cairo, Egypt. Moulin and Nyers draw attention to how these refugees interrupted the UNHCR’s presumed “monopoly over the language of protection, care, and resettlement.” They highlight

⁶⁷⁷ Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups*.

⁶⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 53.

⁶⁷⁹ Robert Latham, *The Politics of Evasion, A Post-Globalization Dialogue along the Edge of the State*, (Routledge: New York, 2016), 111.

what they call “acts of naming” by the refugees, which challenged the UNHCR’s framing of the protests in the media:

These acts of naming were unavoidably political in that they were in disagreement with the UNHCR’s own accounting of the refugee population. Through their performance, these acts assert a claim on who has the status of a speaking being. In itself, to name is to make a political statement over the right of defining one’s own identity or community.⁶⁸⁰

For Moulin and Nyers, the Sudanese refugees acted politically by articulating their own understanding of identity and community and in the process contesting what they call “the governmentality of protection, care, and mobility.” As such, the Sudanese refugee’s demands “can be read as a re-taking of the governmentality of care, inserting refugee voices into the bureaucratic processes of categorization, population-making, and care that governs their life.”⁶⁸¹ Importantly, Moulin and Nyers situate this retaking within what they refer to as a “productive politics of interruption.” For this reason, it is more than a simple re-performance of sovereign logics. Under group resettlement, or what is perhaps better understood as collective forms of resettlement, it is possible for refugees to act collectively to disrupt both the UNHCR’s and state’s presumed hold on the language of distinctiveness, commonalities, and boundaries. Refugees might re-appropriate this language on their terms, or they might reject it.

The work of Jay M. Marlowe on the Sudanese “lost boys” is also useful in considering conceptions of collectivity outside the normative expectations of the UNHCR. Drawing on the work of Bourdieu, Marlowe highlights the distinction between ordinary and extra-ordinary in shaping the identities of refugees. Western discourses privilege the extra-ordinary associated with trauma as was the case with the “lost boys.” Missing within this is what are considered ordinary stories; how the “lost boys” responded, coped or dealt with their situation. Marlowe

⁶⁸⁰ Carolina Moulin and Peter Nyers, “‘We Live in a Country of UNHCR’”—Refugee Protests and Global Political Society,” *International Political Sociology* Vol. 1 (2007), 363.

⁶⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 366.

seeks to elevate the ordinary by placing “greater emphasis upon understanding a person’s life beyond the ascribed status of being a refugee and the associated traumatic experiences of forced migration.”⁶⁸² Critically, he points to the possibility of opening up a discussion on the hopes and aspirations of refugees. This is important since it moves beyond coping strategies in dealing with the traumatic experience of forced migration. Under mediated passage, it is possible for refugees to come together and articulate their different wants and desires for moving to another place.

A progressive politics of mediation under collective forms of resettlement might challenge how state’s make visible certain practices, while concealing others. Specifically, refugees might collectively choose to withhold information from the state in the resettlement decision-making process. In this way, they challenge statist practices of visibility. Lippert and Rehaag point to strategies of both invisibility and visibility in contemporary sanctuary practices.

They note:

Reflected in the earliest scholarly accounts of contemporary sanctuary practices, the division between visibility and non-visibility is seen in the analytical distinction between sanctuary as ‘exposure’ and sanctuary as ‘concealment.’ The former – exposure—is a strategy to provide protection to immigrants in a church or religious building and to gain the attention of mass media, the public and state authorities. The latter –concealment—is the antithesis of this effort whereby sanctuary provision is purposely concealed from state authorities.⁶⁸³

Similar strategies could be used under collective forms of resettlement. Refugees might choose to strategically make visible processes that normally generate unease in officials, including heterogeneity, contingency, and disagreements within a collectivity. While in other cases, they may choose to withhold this sort of information.

⁶⁸² Jay M. Marlowe, “Beyond the Discourse of Trauma: Shifting the Focus on Sudanese Refugees,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 23. 2 (2010): 184.

⁶⁸³ Randy K. Lippert and Sean Rehaag, “Introduction: sanctuary across countries, institutions, and disciplines” ed. Randy K. Lippert and Sean Rehaag, *Sanctuary Practices in International Perspectives, Migration, citizenship and social movements* (Routledge: New York, 2013), 3).

Conclusion:

This dissertation has critically interrogated how states along with the UNHCR and humanitarian organizations play a role in crafting refugee “groups” selected for resettlement. It has considered how the grouping of refugees for resettlement is informed by statist and bureaucratic categories. It is my hope that the reader comes away from the dissertation with not only a better understanding of how group resettlement decisions are made, but also a critical appreciation of the implications of labelling, categorizing, ordering, and grouping practices in these decisions.

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Appendix A:

Table One: Group Resettlement

| Year | UNHCR <i>potential</i> group submissions and priority situations. | Groups resettled by Canada under Group Processing. | Groups identified in the Annual Proposed Refugee Admissions report to Congress. Recommendations by Refugee Council USA (RCUSA) for P2 group designations. | Resettled Refugee Groups under the US P2 Designation. ⁶⁸⁴ |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1999 | | Bosnians. ⁶⁸⁵ | | Bosnians; Togolese in Benin |
| 2000 | | | | Sudanese “Lost Boys”. |
| 2001 | | | | Sudanese “Caretaker” Group ⁶⁸⁶ |
| 2003 | | 900 Sudanese and Somali from Dadaab. ⁶⁸⁷ | | Somali “Bantus” from the Kakuma camp in Kenya; “vulnerable” Liberian refugees from the Ivory Coast. |
| 2004 | | 450 Somali Madhiban in Kakuma, Kenya; | 14 groups recommended for P-2 group designation. ⁶⁸⁸ Under active consideration for group designation: Meskhetian Turks in Russia; Bhutanese in Nepal; Vietnamese in the Philippines; certain Liberians in West Africa. | Somali “Bantus” in Kenya |
| 2005 | Burundi; Congolese; Eritrea in Sudan; | 810 Karen in Mae La Oon, Thailand. ⁶⁸⁹ | Meskhetian Turks in Russia; Hmong Lao at | Somali Benadir in Kenya, Dadaab |

⁶⁸⁴ Information for the far right column entitled “Resettled Refugee Groups under the US P2 Designation” was mostly provided by a UNHCR Resettlement Officer involved with P2 Group Referrals. Included in this list are both the Somali Barwin and a mixed group of Afghans in Uzbekistan, however, there were no dates provided as to when they were resettled to the US.

⁶⁸⁵ A CCR representative recalls that while the resettlement of Bosnians was not officially a group processing exercise it shared many characteristics with it. It was seen as a sort of pilot project for its eventual creation. CCR, Personal interview with author, 2nd August 2012. Similarly, while the resettlement of Bosnians was not a regular P-2 designation it shared similarities with the eventual creation of the UNHCR group methodology. UNHCR, Personal Interview with author, 28th August, 2012.

⁶⁸⁶ This group is associated with the Sudanese “lost boys”.

⁶⁸⁷ “Canada and Australia in cooperation decided to jointly resettle the two smallest minority groups being persecuted in the Dadaab refugee camps.” Labman, *At Law’s Border*, 232.

⁶⁸⁸ Names of some groupings of refugees not available.

⁶⁸⁹ Labman suggests that the United States, Australia, United Kingdom, Finland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Norway, and Ireland all used the group methodology to resettle the Karen out of Thailand. Labman, *At Law’s Border*. However, to my knowledge only Canada, the US, and Australia have used the group method.

| | | | | |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Somalis; Sudanese in Ethiopia; Bhutanese; Burmese. | | Wat Tham Krabok in Thailand ⁶⁹⁰ | “1972” Burundians in Tanzania |
| | | | Minority clan Somalis in Uganda | Group of 2,500 Liberian female-headed households who have experienced “double flight” to Ivory Coast and Guinea ⁶⁹² ; |
| | | | Under active consideration for group designation: Bhutanese in Nepal; Eritrean Kunama in Ethiopia ⁶⁹¹ ; Iranian Kurds, especially in Turkey; Afghans in the former Soviet Union; refugee populations in Libya. | group of 1,500 Liberians in single-parent households in Ghana |
| | | | | Ethiopians in Yemen “the ex-navy cases”. This includes: former Navy personal and their families. |
| | | | | Burmese in camps along the Thai border. |
| 2006 | Burundi; Eritreans in Sudan; Somalis; Congolese; Bhutanese; Burmese. ⁶⁹³ | 1800 Karen in Mae La Oon and Mae Ra Ma Luang, Thailand | Meskhetian Turks in Krasnodar Krai, Russia; | Bhutanese in Nepal; Burmese in Thailand Burundians in Tanzania (UNHCR group referral continued); |
| 2007 | 500 Somalis; 9900 Bhutanese; 12,000 Burmese; 1000 Afghans in Russia; 1104 Iranians in Turkey; Iraqis in various countries. ⁶⁹⁴ | 1,000 Karen in Mae La Oon and Mae Ra Ma Luang, Thailand. ⁶⁹⁵ | Burmese in Tham Hin as well as other camps in Thailand; Burundi in Tanzania; Tibetans in Nepal; Congolese Banyamulenge in Burundi; Bhutanese in Nepal. | Eritreans in Ethiopia “the Kunama”. Congolese in Burundi “the Gatumba survivors”. |
| 2008 | 20,000 Bhutanese; 6300 Burmese in Malaysia; 22,000 Burmese/Bhutanese in Thailand; 350 mixed nationalities | 1,300 Karen refugees (2008-09). ⁶⁹⁷ | Burundians in Tanzania; Bhutanese in Nepal; Congolese Banyamulenge; Congolese refugees in Zambia; Mauritanian | Burmese from Malaysia “Chin ethnicity”; Ethnic minorities and others from Burma in |

⁶⁹⁰ These are Burmese refugees that were expeditiously processed for resettlement (not group method) according to a Congress report. However, a UNHCR representative explained that the U.S approached them about resettling this population using the group method.

⁶⁹¹ US government urged UNHCR to submit a group profile for the Eritrean Kunama in Ethiopia.

⁶⁹² UNHCR group referral based on women-at-risk.

⁶⁹³ UNHCR document “Measuring Protection by Numbers” (November 2006) explains that between 2004 and 2006 43,000 refugees (13 refugee groups) have been submitted for resettlement consideration from countries of first refuge in Africa, the Middle East and Central and Eastern Asia.

⁶⁹⁴ UNHCR decides to promote the use of group processing for Iraqi refugees with both Australia and Canada. Canada did not proceed with group processing with this grouping of refugees.

⁶⁹⁵ Refugee Council of Australia 2007 report suggests that the Australian government should consider accepting group resettlement recommendations from the UNHCR for Iraqi refugees in order to fill its Mid-East quota. The CCR advocated for the resettlement of 3,000 stateless Palestinians from Iraq living in “no-man’s land” in the Al Hol, Al Tanf and Al Waleed camps (unsure if the organization suggested group processing).

| | | | | |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | in Syria; Burundians in Tanzania, Afghans in Pakistan and Iran, Eritrean in Sudan, Burmese (Rohingya) refugees in Bangladesh; Bosnian and Croatian refugees in Serbia. ⁶⁹⁶ | | refugees in Senegal; Colombian refugees in Panama; Haitian refugees in Dominican Republic; Burmese Chin refugees in India; Burmese Rohingya Muslim refugees in Malaysia; Burmese Rohingya in Bangladesh; Karen and Karenni refugees; 1,500 Hemshins; 1,500 Batumi Kurds; 5, 500 Yezids and 10-15,000 Abkhaz Georgians in Krasnodar Krai in the Russian Federation; Afghans in Pakistan; Iraqis in Jordan; Sabaeen Mandaeans in Jordan and Syria; Sudanese Darfurians in Iraq. | Thailand. |
| 2009 | 25, 000 Bhutanese; 7, 000 Burmese in Malaysia; Eritreans in Sudan. ⁶⁹⁸ 55, 000 Somalis from Somalia and Ethiopia in Kenya; 80, 000 Afghan refugees in Iran; Approx. 9, 000 Iraqis, Iranians and Afghans in Turkey ; 600 Afghan refugees in Uzbekistan; 1,000 refugees/refugees in Libya; 20, 800 Iraqi refugees in Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon, including 600 Iraqi Palestinians from Syria ⁶⁹⁹ | 5, 000 Bhutanese (2009-12) | Sudanese; Darfurians in Iraq; Eritreans in Shimelba; | Ethnic minorities and others from Burma in camps in Thailand; ⁷⁰⁰ Ethnic minorities and others from Burma in Malaysia (Burmese Chin); ⁷⁰¹ Burundians in Tanzania Bhutanese in Nepal. ⁷⁰² |

⁶⁹⁷ The 2008 Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) report explains that Medicines Sans Frontiers (MSF) is concerned about the inadequacy of third-country resettlement of camp-based Rohingyas in Bangladesh.

⁶⁹⁶ Priority situations are based on UNHCR Antonio Guterres's initiative on resolving protracted refugee situations (PRS).

⁶⁹⁸ 2010 Projected Global Resettlement Needs – Sudan Section explains: "Eritrean protracted refugees will be presented using the group methodology, pending the availability of complete registration data. Group resettlement is expected to be launched in 2011".

⁶⁹⁹ According to the Refugee Council of Australia, 2011.

⁷⁰⁰ UNHCR group referral continued from previous year.

⁷⁰¹ UNHCR Group referral continued from previous year.

⁷⁰² It should be noted that a group proposal based on Somalis out of Dadaab was submitted to the United States in late 2009 and was rejected.

| | | | | |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2010 | Priority Refugee Situations identified by the UNHCR ⁷⁰³ : Africa (Kenya), Asia and the Pacific (Islamic Republic of Iran, Uzbekistan and Pacific Island States), Europe (Turkey), and Middle East and North Africa (Libya, Syria/ Jordan/Lebanon). | Bhutanese continued. ⁷⁰⁴ | Iraqis; Columbians; Eritreans in Eastern Sudan; Somalis; Darfuri in Chad and Cairo; Rohingyas; Eritreans in Shimelba; | Ethnic Minorities and others from Burma in camps in Thailand; Ethnic Minorities and others (ethnic Chin - Christians) from Burma in Malaysia; Bhutanese in Nepal, ⁷⁰⁵ |
| 2011 | Somalis in Kenya; Sudanese in Chad; Eritreans in Sudan; Colombian refugees in Ecuador; urban situations in Malaysia and camp populations in Nepal (Bhutan) and Thailand (Burmese); Iraqis in Syria, Jordan and Lebanon; Afghans in Iran and Pakistan. | Bhutanese continued. ⁷⁰⁶ | Eritreans in Shimelba; Darfuri in Chad | Burmese Karen and Karenni in Thailand; Burmese Chin (Christians) in Malaysia; Bhutanese in Nepal. |
| 2012 | Iraqis in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon; Iraqis and Iranians in Turkey; Afghans in Pakistan; Afghans in Iran Somalis in Dadaab Camp, Kenya; Colombians in South America; Eritreans in East Sudan; North Africans displaced from Libya. ⁷⁰⁷ | | | Burmese from Malaysia “open to all Burmese”. ⁷⁰⁸ Burmese in Thailand; Bhutanese in Nepal. ⁷⁰⁹ |
| 2013 | | 1, 000 Bhutanese out of Nepal. ⁷¹⁰ | | |

⁷⁰³ Priority Situations identified for the implementation of the UNHCR’s strategic use of resettlement approach.

⁷⁰⁴ Pride Uganda Alliance International calls for group resettlement of LGBT in Uganda (Nov 5, 2010 Xtra online). The same organization spoke in the Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development.

⁷⁰⁵ The UNHCR referred a small group of Rohingyas women-at-risk that was approved and the US government expects more referrals (unsure whether or not this is a group referral under the P2 designation).

⁷⁰⁶ Canadian Burmese Rohingyas Organization calls for Canada to increase the resettlement of Rohingyas out of Bangladesh, Thailand, and Malaysia.

⁷⁰⁷ Not able to obtain a full listing of group referrals and submissions from 2008-present. UNHCR headquarters would not provide this information.

⁷⁰⁸ It’s important to note that the UNHCR usually does not refer Rohingyas in Malaysia.

⁷⁰⁹ UNHCR 2012 projected global resettlement needs explains: “As a result of the expansion and redefinition of the US designated P-2 group of [Burmese] refugees in Malaysia to include all ethnic minority groups from [Burmese] instead of only [Burmese] Chin refugees, as had previously been the case, all refugees from [Burma] who had registered with UNHCR Malaysia by 17 August 2010 are eligible for group processing under the US Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP).”US government at this time was also working on a P2 designation for Eritreans in Shimelba camp in Ethiopia.

| | |
|------|-------------------------------------------|
| 2014 | 1, 000 Bhutanese out of Nepal (continued) |
|------|-------------------------------------------|

Table Two: Group Processing – Canada

| Year | Groups resettled by Canada under Group Processing. |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1999 | Bosnians. ⁷¹¹ |
| 2003 | 900 Sudanese and Somali from Dadaab. ⁷¹² |
| 2004 | 450 Somali Madhiban in Kakuma, Kenya; |
| 2005 | 810 Karen in Mae La Oon, Thailand. ⁷¹³ |
| 2006 | 1800 Karen in Mae La Oon and Mae Ra Ma Luang, Thailand |
| 2007 | 1, 000 Karen in Mae La Oon and Mae Ra Ma Luang, Thailand. ⁷¹⁴ |
| 2009-12 | 5, 000 Bhutanese. |
| 2010 | Bhutanese continued. ⁷¹⁵ |
| 2011 | Bhutanese continued. ⁷¹⁶ |
| 2013 | 1, 000 Bhutanese out of Nepal. ⁷¹⁷ |
| 2014 | 1, 000 Bhutanese out of Nepal (continued) |

⁷¹⁰ This is a recommended proposed refugee population under the new reforms. It is unclear whether or not group processing will be used.

⁷¹¹ A CCR representative recalls that while the resettlement of Bosnians was not officially a group processing exercise it shared many characteristics with it. It was seen as a sort of pilot project for its eventual creation. CCR, Personal interview with author, 2nd August 2012. Similarly, while the resettlement of Bosnians was not a regular P-2 designation it shared similarities with the eventual creation of the UNHCR group methodology. UNHCR, Personal Interview with author, 28th August, 2012.

⁷¹² “Canada and Australia in cooperation decided to jointly resettle the two smallest minority groups being persecuted in the Dadaab refugee camps.” Labman, *At Law’s Border*, 232.

⁷¹³ As noted above, Labman suggests that the United States, Australia, United Kingdom, Finland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Norway, and Ireland all used the group methodology to resettle the Karen out of Thailand. Labman, *At Law’s Border*. However, to my knowledge only Canada, the US, and Australia have used the group method.

⁷¹⁴ Refugee Council of Australia 2007 report suggests that the Australian government should consider accepting group resettlement recommendations from the UNHCR for Iraqi refugees in order to fill its Mid-East quota. The CCR advocated for the resettlement of 3,000 stateless Palestinians from Iraq living in “no-man’s land” in the Al Hol, Al Tanf and Al Waleed camps (unsure if the organization suggested group processing).

⁷¹⁵ Pride Uganda Alliance International calls for group resettlement of LGBT in Uganda (Nov 5, 2010 Xtra online). The same organization spoke in the Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development.

⁷¹⁶ Canadian Burmese Rohingya Organization calls for Canada to increase the resettlement of Rohingyas out of Bangladesh, Thailand, and Malaysia.

⁷¹⁷ This is a recommended proposed refugee population under the new reforms.