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The crisis of the refugee: an exploration of why nations have chosen to either admit or prohibit refugees entrance in times of crisis

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY
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Thesis

**THE CRISIS OF THE REFUGEE:
AN EXPLORATION OF WHY NATIONS HAVE CHOSEN TO EITHER ADMIT
OR PROHIBIT REFUGEES ENTRANCE IN TIMES OF CRISIS**

by

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ABSTRACT

Refugee policies are the policies that are most sensitive to times of crisis. Refugee outcomes are largely determined by the immigration policies that they face in host nations during times of conflict. Political scientists have answered the question, “How is refugee policy formed?” and have arrived at the two avenues by which refugee policies are formed. These two avenues are isolated government action and public opinion. Few have examined the possible causal forces behind the actions taken within each avenue. This analysis aims to shed light on the forces that drive isolated government action such as security concerns and ideology held by government officials, as well as the forces that drive public opinion such as racial and cultural differences and the perceived economic impact of refugees acceptance in the host nation. The exploration of these possible causal factors can help to isolate similarities across nations, crises, and time. If similarities are present, then it is possible to formulate effective solutions that target these causal factors.

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Introduction

On January 27th, 2017, President Trump signed an executive order banning the entry of immigrants from seven countries: Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen for 90 days.¹ The ban was blocked by a New York federal judge who cited its unconstitutionality. This very ban has been reviewed and rewritten three times in attempt to curtail immigration. The third version on this policy proposal was introduced on June 26th, 2018 and upheld by the United States Supreme Court in a 5-4 vote. The direct effects of this ban are becoming highly visible, as this policy is under both domestic and international scrutiny. Arguably the most affected group of people are refugees seeking safety in the United States, as national refugee intake has fallen to a historical low.² Although the ban came as a surprise to many Americans, the United States has a long history of strict immigration policy, especially with refugees. The term “refugee” refers to persons forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster. This analysis aims to explore what motivates anti-refugee policies.

Refugees, by nature of their circumstance, have been a misrepresented and largely overlooked group. This grave oversight too often results in the loss of life across many refugee groups. This analysis will explore the events that have led to immigration policies that contribute the outcomes of two refugee groups. The purpose of this examination is to determine if there exists a key determining variable. Outcomes, for the

¹ "Trump travel ban: Read the full executive order - CNNPolitics - CNN.com." Accessed February 26, 2019. <https://www.cnn.com/2017/03/06/politics/trump-new-travel-ban-executive-order-full-text/index.html>.

² "Trump's Travel Ban Is Upheld by Supreme Court - The New York Times." Accessed January 10, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/26/us/politics/supreme-court-trump-travel-ban.html>.

purpose of this case study, will be defined as the number of individuals who died in the crisis and the number of individuals who were able to leave and gain asylum in the "welcoming" nations in each respective crisis. Thus, outcomes, more broadly defined, are the final "locations" and/or "fates" met by each refugee. The bulk of this analysis will examine the forces that have led to such outcomes. The outcomes of asylum seekers are largely determined by the existing refugee policies at their destinations. Because of this, it is imperative to ask the question, What factors influence countries' refugee policy implementation? The answer to this question will help in determining a solution that would lead to better outcomes for asylum seekers. Both historians and political scientists alike have focused on the question "what variables influence countries' refugee policies". They have found that there are two categories of policies that are implemented. The first is through actions represented as decisions taken by government officials despite or without the influence of public opinion. For the purposes of this analysis, these actions will be referred to as isolated government actions. The second is through the host nations' public opinions on refugee policies. For the purposes of this analysis, this will be referred to as public influence. Analysis of this topic has largely focused on the actions that have occurred in different nations, conflicts, and refugee crises, within each respective avenue. However, few researchers have been able to pinpoint specific patterns that led to the motivations and influences behind each of those decisions taken within each category. Refugee crises occur often, but they are not always large enough to attract the attention of a large portion of the globe. However, most refugee crises have been met with a great deal of tension and opposition by host nations. Since this is a clear pattern, this analysis

will aim to uncover what within these two categories can be traced as causal variables in these respective outcomes.

In an effort to understand the true causal factors behind host nations' refugee policies, this analysis will examine five key independent variables within two of the largest refugee crises the world has seen: the Jewish refugee crisis during the Holocaust and the Syrian refugee crisis that unfortunately, is still affecting millions today. With respect to the first avenue of influence on a nation's refugee policies, I will examine whether a government's decisions to either implement, change, or maintain its status quo policy position, during times of crisis, are caused by national security concerns and/or the executive's motivations alone. With respect to the second avenue, I will examine whether public opinion on refugee policies is subject to differences between the culture and religion of host nations and prospective refugees, the differences between the public and the refugee groups racial compositions, and the public's perception of economic effects that refugees can potentially have on their nation's economy. This will be done through a comparative case study between the case of the Jewish refugees during WWII and the case of the Syrian refugees during the Syrian Civil War. The nations studied will be those that had the opportunity to be the most influential due to their economies and/or geographic locations. Relative to the Jewish case, these nations are the United States, Canada, and Chile. Relative to the Syrian case these are the United States, Germany, and Turkey. This comparison seeks to uncover overlapping variables between both cases that can then be applied across refugee crises of comparable size. This will enhance our

understanding of the complexity surrounding refugees crisis and will in turn make us better equipped in conceiving and implementing effective policy.

Previous Research

The concerns surrounding immigration, specifically refugee policy, have been a hot topic in the fields of political science and history for quite some time. It is widely accepted that policy has a large impact on the outcomes of refugee groups during a crisis. This has proven to be so across multiple crises, time periods, and conflicts. The examination of the causal factors of policy has been at the forefront of research surrounding refugees. This analysis has revealed two different avenues by which policy is implemented within nations. The first being through isolated government action and the second being through public opinion. This distinction then necessitates two different approaches in order to determine the influences of refugee policies.

The close examination of isolated government actions have found that they are connected to matters of national security that involve classified information that the public does not have. This historical approach has been widely popular, so much so that is has been used by Wyman in his analysis of the Jewish refugee crises during the Holocaust. The examination of refugee policy influenced by public opinion has revealed that the interaction of media has shaped narratives. In addition, this vein of analysis has revealed the way government has historically shaped the perception of refugees and how that in turn impacts immigration policy. According to various closely related studies that have been conducted, the current political climate has led to further emphasis on this

approach of the mutual influence of public opinion and refugee policy . One example of this phenomenon is presented in Pope's *Constructing the Refugee as a Villain*.

In *The Abandonment of the Jews*, Wyman examines the influences that led to the implementation of restrictive refugee policies within the United States during WWII.³ He approached this question by focusing on government decisions and their influences . His findings are widely accepted by historians and political scientists as the authoritative assessment of the Jewish refugee crisis during WWII. Wyman asserts that if the United States and the Allies had intervened with the Nazi extermination plan at any point of its development, it would have made a substantial difference in the fate of the six million Jews that were killed. Wyman cites the failure to change immigration policies as the reason behind the inexcusably high death toll, and he assigns responsibility of this failure to the Allies. Wyman concludes that US government actors such as President Roosevelt, the State Department, and Congress neglected opportunities to rescue Jews seeking asylum. This behavior included resisting policy changes in quotas and requirements for the asylum application, as well as the obstruction of incriminating information within the State Department. Wyman's analysis also acknowledges the second avenue by which refugee policy is conceived , the influence of public opinion. He cites the reaction of Jewish leaders as gross ineptitude because they failed to communicate the urgency that was the rescue of the European Jews. He also implicates the media and their intentional suppression of the final solution and the gravity of the situation that European Jews were

³ Wyman, D. (1984). *The Abandonment of the Jews: America and the Holocaust 1941-1945*(1st ed.). New York: Pantheon Books.

facing. The combination of these factors, according to Wyman, led to the absence of pressure the US government applied to Germany to change its approach to the Jewish question. Thus, Wynam concludes that the government action together with the inaction of media outlets and community leaders led to restrictive refugee policies.

In *Constructing the Refugee as a Villain*, Paul James Pope⁴ examines the possible causal factors between public opinion and the United States' current restrictive refugee policies. He does this by examining the causal factors of the second avenue of influence, media, and government narrative. More specifically, Pope aims to answer the question through an examination of the public statements made by officials, a form of isolated government action, and their effects on public opinion of refugee policies. He sets out with the assumption that public opinion influences policy implementation. He analyzes the statements of 36 governors that were written in response to the Obama administration's plan to relocate Syrian refugees across the United States. He determines that the use of "othering" is largely used by government officials to prey on the public's fear of foreigners. Othering is the process of ostracizing a group of people who possess a characteristic that is different from the majority. He concludes that public opinion is causally correlated with the narrative set forth by media and government.

⁴ Pope, P. (2017). CONSTRUCTING THE REFUGEE AS VILLAIN: An Analysis of Syrian Refugee Policy Narratives Used to Justify a State of Exception. *World Affairs*, 180(3), 53-71.

Contribution

This analysis will continue to work off this demonstrated impact of policy on refugee outcomes. The goal is to explore further the factors that impact the actions made through both of the avenues outlined above and their impact on the cases of the Jewish refugees and the Syrian refugees. Wyman has demonstrated that both of these avenues, and their respective unique actions, can affect a refugee outcome through policy implementation. This analysis will aim to examine the causal factors that are behind the stances taken by both government officials and the general public. In the case of government officials, it is important to understand why acts of obstruction occurred, to identify where their policy influences originate. In the case of public opinion, Wyman names anti-Semitism as a possible causal factor of the actions, or lack thereof, of both the media and Jewish leaders. Widespread anti-Semitism hindered media outlets from reporting the final solution accurately. Jewish leadership feared that anti-Semitism would rise if Jewish refugees flooded cities. This method of analysis can be broadened to account for the majority of the population, in order to understand the country as a whole. Causal factors must be identified in order to pinpoint effective solutions. Wyman has taken the first steps towards this identification. However, further analysis must be done.

Pope finds a causal relationship between government officials' public statements (isolated actions) and public opinion. He finds that the public already holds a "fear of the foreigner", therefore this analysis will treat that as a given. Pope fails to identify the inspiration behind refugee policy and this shortcoming largely limits the scope of application for his research. The avenues by which refugee policies are implemented

have been found and examined. However, the motivations and influences of the actions within these avenues have remained a mystery. The intention of this analysis is to contribute a deeper understanding of the causal factors that are behind the actions taken within both avenues, in order to further the understanding of what truly influences a nation's refugee policies.

Theory

The discussion around refugee policies today have become highly divisive and controversial. This analysis will investigate whether government action was caused by credible national security concerns, and/or the executive alone in both the Jewish and Syrian refugee crises. National security is a consistent concern of both the legislative and executive bodies within all nations. Since this a clearly expressed concern for nations involved in each conflict, it is plausible that this is indeed a causal factor. Government officials are elected, thus personal incentives, specifically within the legislative body is often found to be an explanatory variable of government officials action/inaction. Similarly, the executive's actions can also be influenced by personal incentives, assuming they too are elected to office. Additionally, the executive also has access to information that is granted to neither the legislative body nor the public. Thus it is possible that the executive's understanding of information may impact the implementation of refugee policy to a greater extent than other factors.

This analysis will also examine the possible causal factors behind public opinion on refugee policies. This will include an analysis of the differences between the cultures and religions of the host nation majority and its respective refugees, the difference in

racial composition between the majority and the refugee's, and what the public believes to be the potential economic effects that refugees can have on the nation's economy. Nationalist movements have historically gone hand in hand with changes made in immigration policies. This is because they have grand public support. Since nationalist movements have strong racial and cultural undertones, these factors have been included. Through analyzing these differences and misguided perceptions, we will uncover the motivations behind the "fear of the foreigner." Public opinion is shaped when many individuals feel they are or will be impacted in either a positive or negative way by an action or inaction. Thus it is important to understand what impact they feel refugees will have on the public's most telling factor: the economy.

Method

A comparative case study is "a method of analysis and a specific research design for examining a problem, both of which are used in most circumstances to generalize across populations"⁵. This method of analysis is done through the careful selection of two comparative cases, that will allow for the examination of key variables, themes, or patterns of behavior shared between cases. The nature of this research question calls for the use of a comparative case study. In order to be able to understand what influences countries' refugee policies and then identify whether key deterministic variables exist across nations conflicts it is essential to compare two or more cases to justify generalizing findings. This analysis will focus on two different refugee groups, Jewish refugees and

⁵ "Writing a Case Study - Organizing Your Social ... - USC LibGuides." Accessed December 19, 2018. <http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/casestudy>.

Syrian refugees, in order to examine how their fate was affected by different policy decisions. This is an effective comparison because the Syrian refugee crisis holds a strong resemblance to the Jewish refugee crisis of the past. One crucial similarity being that both had widespread contact with various nations due to the severity of their circumstances and their geographical locations. This comparative case study will focus on policy and its influences in the most influential nations. Although many nations were/are influential in both refugee cases, it is imperative that the nations be similar in political constitution, in order to effectively measure across nations. Hence only the most influential democratic nations were chosen in this analysis. This also meant that the same nations could not necessarily be studied in both the Jewish and the Syrian case as each case was in a different time period, leading to a difference in the nations that were positioned in each conflict to be influential. As mentioned earlier, in the case of the Jewish refugees, this analysis will focus on the policies of the United States, Canada, and Chile. In the case of the Syrian Refugees, the focus will be on the United States, Germany, and Turkey.

The policies that will be focused on within this analysis will be those that directly affected the refugees' acceptance or refusal of entrance into the prospective host countries. Examples of policies include installments of quota systems, ID requirements, visa requirements, and other policies used to limit their entrance to these nations.

The implementation of these policies can be directly affected by many different forces. Two main avenues by which policy is influenced is through public opinion causing pressure on government officials and by government officials choosing to make a certain policy decision based on their knowledge. Thus the examination of the actions

taken in both avenues of policies will aim to reveal key causal factors of both government action and public opinion on refugee policies. Furthermore, I will look at whether public opinion is influenced by the public's belief of the economic effects that refugees can have on their respective economy, the differences in culture between the refugees entering the nation, and the nation's population religion, and racial differences between the nation's residents and the refugees in need of asylum. In the case of government, influences that will be explored in this analysis include national security concerns, leadership surrounding the executive, and information that is available to the executive. This analysis will largely focus on executive decisions as these are the most visible to the public and executives are the most easily influenced state officials across nations. This is due to the powers granted to executives through democratic constitutions and the lack of bureaucratic limitations on these powers in comparison to the legislative body.

This analysis will examine similarities in influence behind each nation's policy implementations. More specifically, this analysis will examine if in the US, Canada, and Chile, the driving force of public opinion was the difference in culture between the nation's residents and the refugee group seeking asylum, in this case, the Jewish refugees. Then the task will be to examine these forces for similarities across the board. As similarities will indicate a "pattern" in nations behavior in response to the refugee crisis.

Expected Findings

If similarities are not found then it is possible that one of two things have happened. Either the analysis has failed at providing the correct comparative approach or a pattern simply does not exist. If this is the case then it will be clear that each refugee

case is individualized and that as such, policy made around each crisis must be tailored accordingly. Similarly, the reason for a shift in policy, in each avenue, will also indicate a need to customize policy for each new conflict at hand. However, if the answer is yes, and there are indeed similarities between the forces that have to led to both policy implementation and therefore, similar outcomes exist, then it is plausible that there are explanatory variables that have affected these outcomes historically.

It is important to outline these variables because without identification it is impossible to find solutions. Finding a solution to this grave dilemma is essential to human rights causes around the world. These forces that drive policy also affect the outcomes of millions of individuals, as this analysis will show with only two of the many cases available. The similarities, if present, will reflect a society that has not changed despite having knowledge of the grave outcomes for millions of individuals. Thus it is important to understand why this is, in order to redirect our approach and make amends.

Conflict in the Homeland

World War II (Pre-war 1933-1939 and during-war 1939-1945)

The political and economic situation of Germany post-World War I allowed for the rise of fascism. After World War I and the Treaty of Versailles, Germany was left with large amounts of reparations and a strict demilitarization plan. Reparations caused the German economy to deteriorate. Soon the Great Depression of the 1930s reached German soil, effectively destroying the German economy resulting in the cancellation of

reparation payments.⁶ At this point unemployment in Germany was a whopping 30%, in comparison to 19% in the United States at the height of the Great Depression. In addition to large economic repercussions, the acceptance of the Treaty of Versailles led to instability in the German government because many right-wing party members believed that this treaty insulted Germany. German leaders scrambled to find a scapegoat while the populace endured rising nationalist sentiments and a crumbling economy. When Adolf Hitler, a charismatic leader who had ascended through the ranks of the right-wing party, claimed Jewish people were to blame for Germany's downfall the Germans were convinced he could restore Germany to its former global position.

With the advent of Hitler came a severe wave of anti-Semitism that swept across Germany. State-sponsored Nuremberg laws and boycotting of Jewish businesses placed immense pressure on the population, leading to the emigration of about 38,000 Jewish people. These Nazi policies "encouraged" emigration of the Jewish people and effectively made the Jewish people refugees because they were no longer considered German citizens. In 1938, Kristallnacht ("Night of Broken Glass") and the events that followed, caused a surge in the number of Jews seeking asylum. This increase was a direct response to the several constraints placed on Jews after Kristallnacht; they were not allowed to own businesses, had to adhere to strict curfews, were barred from school and could be arrested based on their Jewish descent.⁷ Those arrested were sent to concentration camps and this became the beginning of the "Final Solution."

The Final Solution aimed to transport about eleven million Jews to designated

⁶ "Treaty of Versailles - HISTORY." Accessed February 22, 2019. <https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-i/treaty-of-versailles-1>.

⁷ "The "Night of Broken Glass" | The Holocaust Encyclopedia." Accessed February 22, 2019.

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-night-of-broken-glass>.

locations , mostly in Poland, and annihilate the population. Of the Jews who were living in Germany and German-occupied Austria, 90,000 were able to escape before the Final Solution. Unfortunately, those who escaped fled mostly to neighboring countries that would later be occupied by Nazi Germany.⁸ Following the implementation of the Final Solution it became more difficult to seek asylum. The exact number of refugees that were able to reach asylum is not known. The Final Solution was effectively carried out through the use of gas chambers, mass shootings and medical experiments. The prisoners of the concentration camps suffered from mass starvation and rampant disease. These atrocities continued until the end of World War II and the liberation of the Jewish people in 1945. The Final Solution resulted in the loss of six million Jews.

Syrian Civil War (2011-)

Syria has been a war zone for eight years, creating a similar circumstance for Syrian civilians as the situation of the Jewish citizens after WWI. The Syrian Civil War began with the uprisings in the Arab Springs. In 2011, the conflict began with peaceful protests by civilians who aimed to gain the freedoms of true democracy. The conflict escalated with the arrest of a group of children who were accused of writing graffiti that read, “The people want to topple the regime” on a wall in Daraa.⁹ Word of the arrest and subsequent torture of these adolescent boys captured the attention of the public and ignited a call for the release of the prisoners. However, the government dismissed the public’s pleas which further stoked the flames of revolution. President Bashar Al-Assad,

⁸ "German Jewish Refugees, 1933–1939 | The Holocaust Encyclopedia." Accessed February 22, 2019.

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/german-jewish-refugees-1933-1939>.

⁹ "Daraa: The spark that lit the Syrian flame - CNN - CNN.com." Accessed February 22, 2019.

<https://www.cnn.com/2012/03/01/world/meast/syria-crisis-beginnings/index.html>.

the Syrian dictator, addressed the protesters, blaming their desire for revolt as the reason for the violence. By March 2011 Assad's force fired against the demonstrators for the first time. One month later, the protesters who called for Assad's removal were joined by soldiers who defected from the Syrian army. These soldiers sought to help fight with the rebels called their group the Free Syrian Army. This is when the conflict became a civil war.

The first wave of Syrian refugees began to flee to the neighboring countries of Lebanon, Turkey, and Jordan in 2011. In efforts to discredit the rebel's goals, Assad encouraged extremists to join the rebel's cause. Assad was able to accomplish this by releasing jihadist extremist prisoners who will side with the rebel's cause solely for the purpose of power. At this point outside countries within the region became involved in the conflict in order to protect their interests. Iran entered the war to back their ally Assad and, consequently the Gulf States entered to protect their interest against Iranian influence. Both Iran and the Gulf States did this through financial aid and through small militias. The entry of Iran and the Gulf States solidified the religious layer of this conflict with Sunni Muslims predominantly on the side of the rebels, and Shia Muslims backing the Assad regime. In 2013, Assad used chemical weapons for the first time, killing thousands of civilians. By the summer of 2013, an average of 6,000 Syrian refugees were fleeing Syria per day.

ISIS then declared itself its own state outside of Assad's army and began to fight the rebels on both sides. This escalation of force prompted the entry of the United States and Russia, graduating the conflict in Syria from a regional conflict to a dispute between two great powers. This caused the Obama Administration to focus on the United States'

largest national security threat, ISIS, and not Assad's inhumane treatment of his citizens. All other participants in the conflict do not share this narrow vision, leading to confusion amongst all participants. Confusion and conflicting interest between participating parties caused the conflict to escalate from a civil war to a "proxy war."

After the election of President Trump, the United States was expected to pull out of the conflict and Assad was expected to regain control. Aleppo, the final city held by the rebels, fell to Assad's forces. On April 4th, 2017 President Assad used sarin gas, a chemical weapon that attacks the nervous system, on civilians killing 92 people, 20 of them children.¹⁰ This prompted President Trump to continue US involvement and sanction an attack on the airbase that was used to stage the chemical attack on civilians.¹¹ Chemical attacks have continued to occur in Syria and have been used to justify missile strikes by the US, Britain, and France. On December 19th, 2018 the United States finally announced its withdrawal from Syria. President Trump tweeted the reasoning for the withdrawal saying, "we have defeated ISIS in Syria, my only reason for being there during the Trump Presidency".¹²

The Syrian Civil War has resulted in the leveling of most Syrian towns, leaving cities, like Aleppo, uninhabitable. Still to this day, the number of Syrian refugees continue to increase. The official number of refugees is 16 million, including both those that have not found asylum and those who have already found asylum, either temporary or permanent. The death toll caused by the conflict continues to rise. Due to the nature of

¹⁰ "Gasping for life: Syria's merciless war on children - CNN - CNN.com." Accessed January 10, 2019. <https://www.cnn.com/2017/05/09/middleeast/syria-chemical-attack-ward/index.html>.

¹¹ "Syria profile - Timeline - BBC News - BBC.com." Accessed January 10, 2019. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14703995>.

¹² Ibid.

the conflict, it has become difficult for national agencies to track the death toll accurately. However, estimates place the death toll over 500,000 civilians of those 55,000 are children.¹³ Although the conflicts, are starkly different in origin and scale, both WWII and the Syrian Civil War resulted in the creation of millions of refugees. This is the essential similarity for effective comparative analysis. This analysis will focus on the perception and effect of large refugee groups attempting to enter host nations. Thus the Syrian case is a close comparison to the Jewish case, as both crises have produced a large influx of refugees into the global community and therefore have involved various host nations.

From Citizen to Refugee: Where is one welcome?

The World's Response: Jewish Refugees

The implementation of anti- Semitic Nazi policy as the official law of Germany made German- Jewish citizens “refugees” in the eyes of the Jewish population. The initial wave of Jewish “refugees” emigrated to France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Czechoslovakia and Switzerland. These “refugees” only gained temporary security because the Nazis occupied most of these territories during WWII. The Jewish refugee crisis escalated after Kristallnacht. This and the events that followed led 36,000 Jews to seek asylum overnight. Germany’s occupation of Austria soon after exacerbated the crisis, as 77,000 Austrian Jews looked for asylum.

It came to a point that the world could no longer ignore the plight of Jews in Nazi

¹³ "How Syria's Death Toll Is Lost in the Fog of War - The New York Times." Accessed January 10, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/13/world/middleeast/syria-death-toll.html>.

territories. Thus, the Jews officially became refugees in the eyes of the world. Thirty- two countries came together at the Evian Conference in France to discuss the refugees' pleas for asylum, but unfortunately only the Dominican Republic agreed to increase their quota of refugees. Before the war began and emigration was stopped by the Nazi's Final Solution, approximately 400,000 Jewish refugees had fled. These refugees went largely to the United States, Great Britain, Palestine, and Central and South America. Some also sought asylum in China. The United Kingdom created the Kindertransport program, which admitted 10,000 children.¹⁴ The United States choose not to increase the quota of German-Austrian immigrants and the preexisting U.S quota of 27,000 was fulfilled. The position of the United States reflected the position of most of the world, leaving Jewish refugees to face large hurdles when trying to find asylum during the first six years of Nazi rule.

The declaration of war escalated the crisis from the loss of citizenry to the beginning of genocide. The implementation of the "Final Solution" began with the systematic deportation of the Jews that remained in Germany and Austria. The "Final Solution" began to be applied across all Nazi territories as the war progressed. As the need of refugees to find asylum intensified, the urgency of the world to help did not. The war was underway and the Allied powers were fighting to stop Hitler and the Axis powers' expansion. The immigration policies of the world did not reflect the allies military goals. The largest group of Jews to escape were those who were able to escape to Soviet territory. Switzerland admitted 30,000 Jews and turned away 20,000 who attempted to cross the border. Spain allowed 30,000 Jewish refugees to cross into

¹⁴ "German Jews during the Holocaust | The Holocaust Encyclopedia." Accessed February 26, 2019.

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/german-jews-during-the-holocaust>.

Portugal until 1941. Spain reduced this allowance following 1941 until the end of the war to less than 7,500. Instead Spain began to help by providing identification for about 4,000 Jews.

In Portugal, Jewish refugees were only granted temporary asylum in an effort to help them leave the port of Lisbon to reach either the United States or South America. Sweden provided asylum to Norwegian and Danish Jewish communities. Many refugees planned to flee to Palestine but were faced with Turkish opposition. Boats headed to Palestine from Greece, Bulgaria and Romania had to refuel in Turkey but did not have permission to dock. Despite this many swam to shore and made their way to Palestine through Turkey.¹⁵ Others remained in parts of France, Italy and Greece, where they were given protection. Overall the consensus of the Allies and neutral territories was that Nazi Germany had to be stopped, but the plight of Jewish refugees was forgotten. The best illustration of this is the many closed doors that Jewish refugees found when they had finished jumping through all the immigration hoops. Thus many Jewish refugees did not make it out in time.

The World's Response: Syrian Refugees

Fortunately, a few nations of the world learned from its past mistakes and attempted to become more proactive in times of crises. The UN Refugee Agency was created as a result of the mistakes made in World War II. The parallel between the Jewish and Syrian refugees illustrates the change in perception with respect to the treatment of refugees, of the world. The difference in the scale and nature of World War II in

¹⁵ "Escape from German-Occupied Europe | The Holocaust Encyclopedia." Accessed February 26, 2019.

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/escape-from-german-occupied-europe>.

comparison to the Syrian Civil War largely explains the difference in civilian lives lost.

As seen with the Jews, different ethnicities determined where some Syrian refugees settled. Most Syrian refugees at the start of the war began to seek asylum in Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan, while those of Kurdish descent were welcomed in Iraq. In 2012 Syria attempted to curtail the flow of refugees fleeing by placing bombs at the border of Turkey and Syria. When Aleppo became a battleground, 200,000 refugees fled to Turkey. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees opened various refugee camps in Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Egypt in attempt to control the refugee situations in the nations that opened their borders. These camps became overrun with refugees disease, starvation, and poor weather conditions as the UNHCR tried to obtain funds. In 2013 Lebanon became the first government to begin to integrate Syrian refugees into their society. The number of refugees in 2013 reached 2 million as about 6,000 refugees are fleeing Syria a day.

Germany created a program for 5,000 refugees to stay for two years. Sweden offered permanent residency to Syrian refugees and their family members. The UNHCR encourages countries to admit refugees, and so far sixteen countries have pledged to admit refugees. The United States is the only country of 16 that has not pledged a specific number of refugees. Both Greece and Bulgaria attempt to fight the entry of Syrian refugees. At the start of 2014 the UK became a sanctuary for Syrian refugees.

United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund estimates that in 2014 about 5.5 million children were in need of humanitarian help as a direct result of the Syrian conflict. The crisis has placed a burden on the world. For example, one in five people in Lebanon is a Syrian refugee. ISIS further complicated the refugee crisis when it

claimed land in both Iraq and Syria causing 1.2 million Iraqis to relocate to Turkey. World organizations began to call for other nations to accept refugees as the neighboring nations of the conflict could no longer accept many. A few months later Jordan began to refuse refugees entry and Lebanon imposed visa restrictions on Syrians. In December 2014 the number of displaced people grew to be larger than in World War II and the UN pled for nations' monetary assistance. Germany officially opened its doors to Syrian refugees regardless of where they were coming from. This placed pressure on other nations to do the same in 2015. However, this was not enough and many Syrian refugees were forced to return to Syria due to overcrowding in neighboring countries. Others attempted to reach Europe by boat and about 500,000 Syrian refugees reached land from 2014 - 2015. An estimated 4,000 died on their journey across the Mediterranean Sea in 2014. In 2016 the conflict continued and countries that were once able to open their borders and accept refugees early on, became unable to continue. Denmark and Sweden, for example, were forced to reduce refugee intake.

In 2018, President Assad attacked his own people with chemical weapons for the third time and the number of refugees was about 5 million, this only includes the number of displaced people. Turkey holds 2 million refugees. Lebanon 1 million and Jordan, Turkey, and Egypt hold most of the remaining refugees.¹⁶ The number of refugees in the Syrian crisis seems much greater than the number of official refugees during World War II this is because many Jews were not granted initial refugee status by neighboring countries due to strict immigration laws. Hence millions died in comparison to 500,000 deaths in the Syrian Civil War.

¹⁶ Ibid.

The number of refugee casualties in any given crisis is largely correlated with the global community response to the asylum seekers and who is considered a refugee at the time. Hence in order to truly understand how the formation of refugee/asylum policies are shaped by individual nations and possibly across national and conflict differences it is imperative that the policy responses by these nations are explored and outlined. In this comparative case study it is necessary to outline the American, Canadian, and Chilean policy responses to the call for asylum by the European Jews, as well as the American, Turkish, and German policy responses to the present call for asylum by Syrian refugees.

The American Response to Jewish Refugees

The United States has long held a reputation for opening its arms to immigrants across the world. However, history shows that the United States has not been generous in immigration policies, especially in times of crisis. Quotas are a set number of immigrants that can be granted status during a year's time in a country. In 1924, the Johnson Reed Act imposed the first permanent numerical limit on immigration. This act aimed to reduce the number of immigrants allowed into the country. This was done by basing the quotas on the lineage of those already in the United States. This system created an increase in visas for individuals from the British Isles and Western Europe but decreased the immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe.¹⁷ These quotas left only about 26,000 spaces for German immigrants. A small percentage of those spots were filled because the Great Depression changed the view of what kind of immigrant would be a productive member of society. In 1936, this changed and the focus became on whether

¹⁷ "Immigration Act of 1924 - Office of the Historian." Accessed January 14, 2019. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1921-1936/immigration-act>.

the immigrants had a family that could support them in the United States. The quota was then fully filled for the first time in 1938. In order to obtain a visa, refugees had to have two copies of their birth certificate, a quota number, two sponsors including the sponsors paperwork, a certified copy of their most recent tax return, an affidavit of their bank account from a bank, an affidavit from their employer, two copies of their prison record, military record, police dossier, a physical examination, proof of booked passage to the United States and finally proof of permission to leave Germany. This was one of the strictest immigration requirements facing refugees. It also meant that most of the refugees to enter the United States were not German. Soon it became illegal for Jewish refugees to leave Germany and the United States kept the previous requirements in place, not adjusting for the clearly restrictive laws in Germany. After the war began, the concerns coming from the State Department led to the passing of the Bloom- Van Buys bill. This bill authorized immigration officers to confiscate any visa if they felt that the refugee was a danger to the public.

Perhaps the best illustration of American policy during the Jewish refugee crisis is the turning away of the St. Louis. This was a ship full of refugees looking for asylum. The United States refused to allow the ship to dock. At the height of the war anyone with relatives still in the territory under Axis power control could not enter the United States.¹⁸ The United States did not change its immigration policy in the case of the Jewish refugees until it was too late. The War Refugee Board was created in 1944 one year before the end of the war. Still the board did not aim to relocate Jewish refugees solely to the U.S but mostly into camps in Italy and North Africa.

18 "Teacher Resources - United States Holocaust Memorial Museum." Accessed January 14, 2019.

<https://www.ushmm.org/exhibition/st-louis/teach/supread2.htm>.

The Canadian Response to Jewish Refugees

Similar to the United States, Canadian immigration policies remained largely unchanged during WWII. In 1906, the Immigration Act was implemented to enable the Department of Immigration to deal with undesirable immigrants. The Act entailed an expansion of prohibited immigrant categories, the ability to lawfully deport newly immigrated individuals of up to two years, and the ability to deport those who became a “public charge, insane, disease ridden, handicap, inmate of a jail or hospital and anyone who committed crimes of moral turpitude”.¹⁹ In 1910, the act expanded the discretionary power of the Orders in Council to allow for the Canadian government to refuse to admit individuals who belonged to “unsuited races”.²⁰ Among the largest races targeted were the Chinese, whom were not allowed to enter under the Chinese Immigration Act of 1923 unless they were diplomats, students, or children of Canadians. This expanded to anyone belonging to an Asian race in the 1930’s. As the impacts of the Great Depression grew more painful to Canadians, the number of deportations due to the “public charge” clause increased drastically.

In 1937, the annual report on immigration claimed that there was immense pressure on Canada to open the doors to European refugees. One Canadian official within the department of immigration, then a part of the Department of Departments of External Affairs and Mines and Resources wrote:

¹⁹ "A hundred years of immigration to Canada 1900 - 1999 | Canadian" Accessed January 14, 2019. <https://ccrweb.ca/en/hundred-years-immigration-canada-1900-1999>.

²⁰ Ibid.

“We do not want to take too many Jews, but in the circumstances, we do not want to say so. We do not want to legitimize the Aryan mythology by introducing any formal distinction for immigration purposes between Jews and non-Jews. The practical distinction, however, has to be made and should be drawn with discretion and sympathy by the competent department, without the need to lay down a formal minute of policy”²¹

Thus as the Nazi’s Final solution became an unfortunate reality, Canadian officials responded by maintaining prior immigration requirements. In 1939, Canada, as all of the Americas, refused entry to all Jewish refugees aboard the St. Louis ship, most of the passengers aboard died upon returning to Europe. In 1921, the Canadian Census indicated that there were 156,726 Jews in Canada and twenty years later this number was up only to 170,241 Jews in 1941, years into the crisis. In the following year, entrance into Canada reached its lowest. In 1946, Canadian officials attempted to aid in the resettlement of displaced Jewish people in Europe however, the selection process of refugees were comparable to that of cattle. Refugees had to be in good health, possess economic assets, belong to certain ethnicities, and political affiliations. Thus, like the US, Canadian immigration policies failed to account for those seeking asylum throughout the Nazi era until it was too late.

²¹ "Discrimination/oppression | Canadian Council for Refugees." Accessed April 4, 2019. <https://ccrweb.ca/en/issues/discriminationoppression>.

The Chilean Response to Jewish Refugees

Chile has historically had a small foreign born population. Unlike the United States and Canada, Chile had few formally established immigration policies during the time of WWII. In 1845 Chilean officials established a program that aimed to recruit European immigrants to settle in the south of Chile. Chile's policies encouraged the immigration of white Europeans in order to "Arreglar la Raza" (improve the race) and to improve economic well-being. This attracted only a limited number of foreigners. The Census in Chile of 1865 estimates that there were 21,982 foreign born individuals and ten years later that number was 25,199, demonstrating how small the immigrant community in Chile. This policy continued to be the only formal policy on immigration until the 1930's.²² Although Chile was known for its lack of immigration policies, it did not accept all immigrants with open arms. Asian and Arabic immigrants were admitted but in much smaller numbers than their European counterparts because they were believed to be inferior and an economic threat. In 1918, the fear of the refugee became apparent as WWI began to displace thousands and communism, fascism, and anarchism were rising in popularity. This caused immigration officials in Chile to tighten their restrictions on immigration and further formalize immigration policies. The Law of Residence of 1918 instructed immigration officials to deport "any person whose behavior was considered

²² "Chile: Moving Towards a Migration Policy | migrationpolicy.org." Accessed January 15, 2019. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/chile-moving-towards-migration-policy>.

undesirable or whose ideas ran counter to the Chilean Constitution”²³. These restrictions remained during the Jewish refugee crisis and continued to tighten as the crisis grew more urgent. Nazi ideology spread to Chile through officials within the army and government officials who had studied in Italy and Germany. Thus in 1927, the rise of a right wing movement inspired by fascism, prompted Chilean officials to instruct its consuls abroad to restrict immigration by Jewish individuals. As the Nazi regime spread in Europe, the Jewish refugee crisis began to place substantial pressure on the international communities to admit more refugees. In 1936, Chile came to an agreement with the International Organization for Migration to resettle 50 Jewish families a year in the South of Chile. The resettlement of Jewish refugees continued until 1940 allowing for the resettlement of 10,000-12,000 Jews.²⁴ However, the deplorable conditions of the agricultural industry in the South of Chile led many Jewish families to move to the already crowded cities. This led to an increase in anti-Semitism and in 1940 a party change led to the prohibition of Jewish refugees into Chile. In 1941 a Chilean diplomat to Germany wrote to Chilean officials:

“If Jews had not received proper exit visas from their country of origin, they would not be allowed in. Montt added a warning about recent Jewish efforts to obtain Chilean visas from the consulate in Prague. Some of these Jews had claimed that their relatives or acquaintances in Santiago had succeeded in getting the Foreign Ministry to authorize visas for them. As

²³ "Chile Virtual Jewish History Tour - Jewish Virtual Library." Accessed January 15, 2019. <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/chile-virtual-jewish-history-tour>.

²⁴ Ibid.

far as he was concerned, however, even a "baptized" Jew remained a Jew: "baptismal water can cleanse original sin, but not the filth accumulated during centuries in ghettos everywhere".²⁵

Chilean officials were well aware of the situation that the Jewish refugees were facing yet the last ships of refugees that were allowed to dock during WWII were received in January of 1940 before the "Final Solution" had even begun.

The American Response to Syrian Refugees

The United States has again failed to alter its policies to meet the demand of the Syrian refugee crisis. In 1952, the United States passed the McCarran–Walter Act as a revision of the Johnson–Reed act. The revision continued the quota system but allowed for priority to be given to skilled labor and family reunification. President Truman did not support the law but Congress had overwhelming support and was able to gain the votes to override President Truman's veto. In 1980, refugees were separated for the first time as a different category of immigrants and the U.S. officially defined a refugee. A refugee, according to the United States government is a person who is unwilling or unable to return to his country of nationality or habitual residence because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, and membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.²⁶ The refugee and the quota policies established since the 1980's have not been significantly altered.

²⁵ "What Chilean Diplomats Learned about the ... - National Archives." Accessed January 15, 2019. <https://www.archives.gov/iwg/research-papers/breitman-chilean-diplomats.html>.

²⁶ "History of U.S. Immigration Laws | Federation for American" Accessed February 26, 2019. <http://fairus.org/legislation/reports-and-analysis/history-of-us-immigration-laws>.

The Syrian refugee crisis began in 2011 when the first refugees fled to Lebanon. In 2011, the United States continued the previously stated legislation. In order to be admitted as a refugee the prospective refugee must meet the criteria of a refugee, cannot have been resettled in another country, must be determined to be of special humanitarian concern, and must be subject to criminal and security related grounds for inadmissibility. Refugees must also be clear of all security checks before being granted entry.²⁷ If not granted refugee status, an immigrant in Syria who is applying for a visa to the U.S. is required to have a valid passport, two photographs, proof of financial support, a completed medical examination, court and prison records, marriage record, military records, and petitioner documents.²⁸ In 2013, Assad used chemical weapons on the Syrian people and the refugee crisis escalated to about 6,000 refugees fleeing Syria a day. Despite the refugee number rising to 2 million, the United States did not address the refugee crisis until 2015 when the Obama administration announced that the Syrian refugee quota would be raised to 10,000 refugees compared to the 36 that were admitted in 2013. As of 2017, only 18,000 refugees have been resettled in the United States. Although, this number surpasses the quota, it makes a small dent in the 900,000 Syrians currently seeking asylum and the hundreds of thousands that have yet been able to escape immediate danger.²⁹ As of 2017, the current administration has announced its plans to stop the flow of Syrian refugees into the U.S.. Trump issued an executive order dedicated

27 "Syrian Refugee Admissions and Resettlement in the United States: In" Accessed March 5, 2019.

<https://fas.org/sgp/crs/homsec/R44277.pdf>.

28 "Step 5: Collect Supporting Documents - Bureau of Consular Affairs." Accessed February 26, 2019.

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/immigrate/the-immigrant-visa-process/collect-and-submit-forms-and-documents-to-the-nvc/step-5-collect-supporting-documents.html>.

29 "Syrian Refugees in the United States | migrationpolicy.org." Accessed January 17, 2019.

<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/syrian-refugees-united-states>.

to stopping the flow of refugees for a minimum of 90 days but the order has been ruled unconstitutional by 2 different state judges. The American consulate in Syria is currently closed and all cases are now being heard in Jordan and other neighboring countries. The minimum wait time for a legal visa to the United States as a refugee is 18 months but the refugees are in immediate danger.³⁰ In 2018, the Trump administration lowered the target number of refugees to be admitted to the US to 45,000 from the 70,000 under the Obama administration. In 2019, this number was reduced to 30,000.³¹ Despite the target number in 2018 being 45,000, only 22,000 refugees were admitted, of those admitted only 62 were Syrian.³² Thus the United States has not changed regulations in the circumstances of refugees. Instead the United States has closed its gates once again to the refugee.

The German Response to Syrian Refugees

Due to past turmoil and ongoing conflicts, Germany has historically been seen as a country of emigration. From 1820-1920 an estimated 6 million people left Germany for nations like the United States. This began to change as Germany's industrial economy began to rise leading to the demand for labor. During WWII, Germany largely relied upon forced labor within the concentration camps to fulfill the growing demand of war supplies. Once the war was over, Germany had to rebuild and this required government

³⁰ Guttman, Nathan. "Defying the Tide on Syrian Refugees." Forward: 3. Dec 04 2015. ProQuest. Web. 28 Apr. 2017 .

³¹ "Trump slashed refugee levels this year. For 2019, he's slashing ... - Vox." Accessed January 17, 2019. <https://www.vox.com/2018/9/17/17871874/refugee-news-record-history-asylum>.

³² "As the US admits less refugees, they wonder when they'll ... - CNN.com." Accessed January 17, 2019. <https://www.cnn.com/2018/10/04/politics/refugee-admissions-2018-record-low-syrian-refugees/index.html>.

officials to reconsider immigration policies. The Agreement on the Recruitment and Placement of Workers was passed in 1955 in order to encourage an influx of labor from countries like Italy, Greece, Spain, Turkey, Morocco, Portugal, Tunisia and Yugoslavia.³³ However, economic peril soon led to the ban of foreign recruitment due to growing tensions at home. From 1980-1992 violence against migrants within the nation began to rise. This led to the implementation of the Dublin Regulation which stated that any individual seeking asylum can only claim asylum in the first nation that they step foot in. This effectively decreased the number of refugees that entered and resettled in Germany. From 2002 to 2003, the number of refugees that entered Germany decreased by an astounding 20,000.³⁴ In 2003, the number of refugees in Germany were 1.1 million which account for about 1.3% of the overall population. In 2005, under the leadership of Chancellor Angela Merkel, Germany aimed to open up its borders to larger amounts of asylum seekers. The Syrian refugee case is the best example of that change. In 2015, Germany suspended the Dublin Regulation for Syrian refugees and opened its borders to them. As of 2019, Germany has given asylum to over 700,000 Syrian refugees.³⁵ Germany's policies have changed to reflect the sins committed during the Nazi regime. However, the attitudes amongst the German populous have remained wary of foreigners. Today, German officials are at a crossroads as domestic pressure pushes for an end to granting asylum seekers migration to Germany.

³³ "Migration History in Germany | domid.org." Accessed January 17, 2019. <https://www.domid.org/en/migration-history-germany>.

³⁴ "Germany: Immigration in Transition | migrationpolicy.org." Accessed January 17, 2019. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/germany-immigration-transition>.

³⁵ "Germany's Syrian Refugee Integration Experiment." Accessed January 17, 2019. <https://tcf.org/content/report/germanys-syrian-refugee-integration-experiment/>.

The Turkish Response to Syrian Refugees

Similar to Germany, Turkey has historically been known as a nation of emigration and not immigration. In the earliest years of the Turkish Republic, nations encouraged Muslims to settle in Turkey. This led to the first large wave of migrants from Greece as almost half a million Muslims in Greece migrated to Turkey. As the Jewish refugee crisis emerged, Turkey accepted about 100,000 Jews under temporary asylum. These refugees were then asked to relocate post-war to Palestine and Israel. From 1960- early 2000s large outflows of Turkish workers and refugees into Europe occurred. At first, Turkish labor was in high demand in Germany to help revive their economy after the war. In addition, Turkish political upheaval also fueled to outflow of Turkish nationals into the surrounding European nations up until 2004. Throughout this time immigration to Turkey was encouraged in an effort to increase the population and offset the number of people leaving Turkey. In the 1970's this policy ended as officials believed that the population had grown to an acceptable level.

Turkey then established a two tiered system of immigration and asylum. The first tier of asylum was focused on the European refugees during the Cold War and led to the resettlement of 13,500 asylum seekers. The second tier introduced the 1994 Asylum Regulation which limited asylum to those outside of Europe and allowed for the deportation of asylum seekers to nations such as Iran. As Turkey aimed to join the European Union (EU) it began to adopt the EU's standards on asylum and immigration policies. This changed Turkey's policies and ended the illegal deportation of refugees in

1997.³⁶ Today Turkey due to its geographic location has been strained by the Syrian refugee crisis. It has accepted over 3 million Syrian refugees. However, in 2016 Turkey was found guilty of illegally forcing refugees to return to Syria. Turkey then came under criticism for inhumane treatment of refugees.³⁷

Policies and their Causes: The Case of Jewish Refugees

United States

Isolated Government Action and its Causes

The U.S State Department is the government entity in charge of deciding how many, if any, Jewish refugees are allowed to enter the United States. One of the deterrents the State Department cited in the 1940s with regard to the Jewish Refugees was the a potential it posed in being an avenue for espionage. These concerns were confirmed in 1942, when Bahr, one of the many Jewish refugees seeking refuge in America, was questioned about his need for asylum. His case for asylum soon succumbed to the strenuous interviews conducted by the FBI. The FBI found him guilty of accepting payment from the Nazis for divulging American secrets. When Bahr's trial began he admitted that he had attended a spy school in Germany and intended to reveal his assignment to the U.S government. He claimed that he did not do this because there were "German agents everywhere". This case and confession by Bahr gave credibility to the State Department's fears and reservation surrounding Jewish migration. The Attorney

³⁶ "Turkey: A Transformation from Emigration to Immigration" Accessed January 17, 2019. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/turkey-transformation-emigration-immigration>.

³⁷ "Timeline | Syrian Refugees." Accessed February 26, 2019. <http://syrianrefugees.eu/timeline/>.

General Francis Biddle further affirmed the State Department's fears in 1942 when he declared "every precaution must be taken...to prevent enemy agents slipping across our borders. We already have had experience with them and we know them to be well trained and clever."³⁸ President Roosevelt reiterated this at a press conference in 1940 by claiming, "Not all of them are voluntary spies" and continued to receive information from the State Department until 1944.

The threat of German spies entering the United States continued to be proved credible throughout the war with numerous alleged spies being caught by the intelligence community. This use of public "spy trials" further fueled the weariness that Americans felt towards migration and this phenomenon became known as the "fear of the foreigner". The fear of the foreigner asserts that immigrants continue to be loyal to their foreign place of birth even after they are granted asylum in the United States. This phenomenon also includes the general fear of those who are different from the "natives" and overall xenophobia. However, this fear of German spies entering the United States through the American refugee system was in large part not factually supported. Firstly, the process to be granted asylum as a refugee was extremely difficult in the United States. Additionally, the State Department had policy in place that made it impossible for a refugee who still had relatives in German territories to enter the United States. Hence, a German spy would have difficulty entering the United States as a refugee without being caught. In 1944, whistleblowers within the Treasury Department came forward and unveiled the discrepancies within the State Department's information and the policies that

³⁸ "The U.S. Government Turned Away Thousands of Jewish Refugees" Accessed April 2, 2019.

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/us-government-turned-away-thousands-jewish-refugees-fearing-they-were-nazi-spies-180957324/>.

had been set in place, calling these policies unjustifiable and unconstitutional.³⁹ This discrepancy points to the influence that officials hold over policies.

Public Opinion

Racial and Ethnic Composition

One possible cause of the lack of change in public opinion is the cultural composition of both the American population and of the refugees. During the 1930's and 1940's the United States was racially predominantly comprised of White and Black Americans while smaller minorities included Native Americans, Asians and Pacific Islanders, and Hispanics. In the Northeast, the ethnic composition of the United States consisted of Americans from Great Britain, Ireland, Norway, Russia, Holland, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Latvia, Germany Belgium, Puerto Rico, Palestine, Albania, Poland, Greece, Canada, Yugoslavia, Portugal, France, Syria, Sweden, Denmark, Spain, Rumania, the West Indies, China, African Americans (using current terminology), Italy, Hungary, and Lithuania. These nations of origin were shared across the country with a few exceptions of Japanese, Filipino and Chinese Americans living on the west coast and Mexican Americans living in the middle of the United States. Many of the countries listed above, specifically those that were heavily concentrated in the Northeast, are the same countries under Nazi occupation that Jewish refugees were fleeing from.⁴⁰

However, by 1940's the foreign-born population in the U.S was steadily decreasing meaning that the connection between first generation Americans and their respective

³⁹ Zucker, B. (2001). Frances Perkins and the German-Jewish Refugees, 1933-1940. *American Jewish History*, 89(1), 35-59.

⁴⁰ "Revisit the 1940 Map of American Diversity, Owned & Bitingly" Accessed April 2, 2019.

<http://www.openculture.com/2014/01/ap-annotated-by-poet-langston-hughes.html>.

familial background have been fading as second and third generations were born in the U.S. Thus, there was likely a dissonance between Americans and the refugees. The religious composition of the United States during the 1940's was mostly Protestant and Catholic with only a small number of Americans practicing Judaism. This difference in religious affiliations between Americans and the refugees also led to a lack of sympathy amongst Americans.

Culture

It can also be said that the culture of the Jewish community possibly played a role on public opinion. When asked whether the United States should accept 10,000 refugee children from Germany, 67% of Americans answered no. When asked the same question, but including that most of the children would be Jewish, 61% of the Americans answered no. Hence the ethnicity of the children did not make a substantial difference in the court of public opinion. This negative opinion held by the general public, underlines the popularity of anti-Semitism. However, this wave of anti-Semitism cannot be attributed to the specific culture of the people but instead to other economic factors. When examining trends of anti-Semitism across specific cultural communities, there is a notable concentration in communities located in urban areas. Factors such as close proximity and cultural conflicts can account for the saturation of anti-Semitism in urban communities. The African-American community can be cited as an example of this phenomenon because they often clashed with their Jewish neighbors in urban areas over business and home disputes. American Jewish communities were also weary of their Jewish counterparts and whether an influx of Jews would inspire more anti-Semitism. Overall the culture of the Jewish people did specifically affect their acceptance into the

United States but the dissonance between Americans and their native countries likely had a larger impact on public opinion.

Economy

Another possible explanation for the stigma surrounding Jewish refugees in the 1940s is the fact that America was still recovering from the Great Depression. National unemployment in 1938 was 19 % in comparison the current unemployment rate is 4.7%.

⁴¹ The state of the job market factored into how the State Department determined who was a desirable refugee. At the start of the refugee crisis, the State Department instructed consuls to determine which refugees would be granted asylum by whether they would become a “public charge”. Because unemployment was so high, a public charge became anyone who would need to work in order to survive in the United States. The general public believed that immigrants would further exacerbate the Great Depression. This widespread anti- Semitism was believed to be a product of the poor condition of the economy. Similar to the stance taken in Germany, Americans chose to blame Jewish Americans for the economic crises. The belief that immigrants will take the place of Americans in the workforce continues to be prevalent idea.

Canada

Isolated Government Action and its Causes

The first record of the Canadian government being forced to deal with Nazi Germany was when the 1936 Olympic Games. Internationally, many nations were grappling with the question of whether they should send their athletes to compete in the

⁴¹ "United States Unemployment Rate 1920–2013 - Infoplease." Accessed April 2, 2019. <https://www.infoplease.com/business-finance/labor-and-employment/united-states-unemployment-rate>.

games, which were hosted in Berlin. Canadian officials passed a unanimous decision to send athletes to the Berlin Olympics citing two reasons for the decision to abstain from boycotting the Olympics. First, government officials noted that since Britain was sending athletes, they would as well, seeing that Britain often set the tone for European countries where international affairs were concerned. Second, there was fear of public disappointment if athletes were not sent to compete in the Olympics. However this is not to say there was not also public opposition as well, in fact there remains footage of public protest against Canadian participation in the Games. Many of which were led by prominent Jewish leaders with support from their communities.⁴² Despite these protest, the actions of British government proved to have a larger influence on Canadian officials. Canada soon revisited this dilemma in Britain at the Evian Conference. In attempt to avoid being coerced into accepting Jewish refugees, Mackenzie King, Canada's then Prime Minister refused to attend the conference. However, Britain made it clear that Canada was to be present. Prime Minister King agreed after he was assured that no nation would be “forced” to accept refugees. Canada later made no promise to accept any refugees at the conference. In King’s personal diary he notes:

“My own feeling is that nothing is to be gained by creating an internal problem in an effort to meet an international one. . . .with our great open spaces and small population. We must nevertheless seek to keep this part

⁴² "Canada and the Holocaust | The Canadian Encyclopedia." Accessed March 5, 2019.

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/holocaust>.

of the Continent free from unrest and from too great an intermixture of foreign strains of blood”⁴³

This entry clearly describes King’s personal opinion on immigration, and the influence of his opinions can be observed plainly in the decision to not open Canada’s doors to refugees. King was an elected official and he aimed to ensure security of his career. His personal concerns of the plight of the Jewish refugees were minimal but his concern for the preservation of his power was great. In 1940, Britain declared it was no longer able to care for the large population of refugees which it had accepted. Thus Britain expected Canada and Australia to accept the refugee overflow. When refugees reached Canadian borders, officials did not give them refugee status and instead they were named Prisoners of War and placed in internment camps with other Prisoners of War from WWII. Canadian officials cited national security as their reasoning behind their blockade on refugees. Various protest and petitions for the separation of the Jewish refugees from POW’s followed the decision. However, until the government ensured they were not a national security threat, they were not separated. Even when they were eventually separated, officials labeled the group of refugees “accidental Immigrants” and did not provide them with official refugee status until years later.⁴⁴ It is clear that Canadian officials, mainly PM King, were partially subject to the will of Britain. However, the personal attitudes of government officials also permeated policies as they were formed

43 "Mackenzie King's Diary Entry - The SS St. Louis." Accessed March 5, 2019. <http://adamelnikedst334.weebly.com/mackenzie-kings-diary-entry.html>.

44 "Prisoner of War Camps in Canada | The Canadian Encyclopedia." Accessed March 5, 2019. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/prisoner-of-war-camps-in-canada>.

and executed, displaying the power officials wield over refugee policies made in times of crisis.

Public Opinion

Racial and Ethnic Composition

Isolated government actions have a distinct and direct influence on policy formation during a refugee crisis. However, officials are elected and thus public opinion can also have an effect on the climate in which these isolated government actions occur. Thus public opinion, by way of election, can indirectly shape policy. During the 1930's-40's Canadians overwhelmingly expressed unfavorable opinions towards immigrants as a whole. Jewish refugees were not excluded from this public scrutiny despite their uniquely severe situation. Public opinion polls before 1945 placed Jewish immigrants as the least favorable immigrant group.⁴⁵ One explanation for the unfavorable public opinion of Jewish refugees was racial and ethnic differences between Canadians and the Jewish refugees. In the 1930's and 40's Canada's racial makeup was predominately white. Black, Indian and Asian- Canadians made up only about 3% of the population.⁴⁶ Given that the racial composition of Jewish refugees was overwhelmingly white, it is clear that racial differences did not play a deeply influential role in public opinion. This is likely because race is not often a source of tension in a nation where race is largely

⁴⁵ Abella, Irving, and יצחק אבלה. "קנדה ובעיית הפליטים היהודים 1933-1939 / CANADA AND THE JEWISH REFUGEE CRISIS 1933-1939." *Michael: On the History of the Jews in the Diaspora / מאסף לתולדות היהודים בתפוצות* (1986): 9-30.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/23494062>.

⁴⁶ "CS98-1941-3.pdf - Publications du gouvernement du Canada." Accessed March 6, 2019. http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2017/statcan/CS98-1941-3.pdf.

homogeneous, such as Canada. However, when race is homogenous within a population ethnicity becomes a way for the population to differentiate and later discriminate between communities. In 1941, the ethnic composition of the Canadian populace was not similar to the Jewish refugees, who were predominantly from Germany, Austria, Poland and the Soviet Union. A small population of refugees were from Denmark and Norway but many of them found refuge in Sweden. According to the 1941 census, 49% of Canadian citizens traced their ethnic origins to the British Isles, 30% French, and 21% other.⁴⁷ Thus even if Canadians were well connected with their European ancestors, they would not have shared connections with Jewish refugees. This lack of shared heritage explains the absence of sympathy, that could have been born from homeland ties, despite alarming cries for help from Jews around the world. The lack of ethnic diversity is also clearly linked to the rampant anti-Semitism which permeated public opinion during the 1940's. This rise of anti-Semitism within the 1930's- 40's was not likely due to racial or ethnic factors, however, the lack of ethnic diversity allowed for anti-Semitism to take root in minds.

Culture

During this moment in history, Canadians perceived themselves as rugged hard workers. They took pride in living off the land and building an agricultural industry. Immigration policies reflected this cultural perception as immigrant groups that were expected to settle in rural areas were favored. Therefore, in the 1940's the commonly held perception of the Jewish people as businessmen, bankers, and shop owners, did not

⁴⁷ Ibid.

play well in the court of public opinion. To put it simply Canadians saw the Jewish refugees as “people with brains in a country that preferred brawn, a people with strong minds in a country that wanted strong backs.”⁴⁸ These misconceptions coupled with the nativist movements sweeping the nation created a very unwelcoming environment for Jewish immigration. Strong nativist movements were often lined with anti-Semitic rhetoric that was consumed and adopted by Canadian citizens. Canadians feared that if Jewish refugees were to be admitted, they would undermine their “customs, philosophy and way of life”.⁴⁹ The conflation of the Jewish people with change led to the rise of anti-Semitism and hence the refusal of refugees.

There were also objections from the religious community to opening the borders. The Canadian religious population was comprised of predominantly Catholic and Protestant believers. The difference in religious beliefs between native Jewish citizens in Canada had already presented domestic conflicts. Catholic hospitals often refused to hire Jews because Catholic patients would often refuse services from Jewish doctors. Similar prejudices existed across most professions. Fundamentalist argued that the “Jews killed Christ” and had not repented for this sin.⁵⁰ Thus there were deeply rooted religious factors involved in the public discussion about Jewish refugees. It is likely that this factor along with the two previously mentioned above contributed to the clear dislike of the Jewish refugees.

⁴⁸ Abella, Irving, and יצחק אבלה. "קנדה ובעיית הפליטים היהודים 1933–1939 / CANADA AND THE JEWISH REFUGEE CRISIS 1933-1939." *Michael: On the History of the Jews in the Diaspora* / מאסף לתולדות היהודים בתפוצות (1986): 9-30.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/23494062>.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

Economy

Immigration policies in Canada were closely tied with the economic needs of the nation. Immigration allowances were only changed based on industry needs. Thus immigration policies often consisted of either work based programs geared towards specific industries or little to no immigration at all. When the Great Depression devastated the Canadian economy immigration numbers were at an all-time low. In 1933, the unemployment rate was at a staggering 30%.⁵¹ Like Americans at this time, Canadians viewed immigrants as competition for the few employment opportunities available. Due to rampant anti-Semitism, which only grew as the depression persisted, immigrants, if fired, were unlikely to be rehired. This led to the idea of a “public charge” or an individual who would become a burden on society. The individuals who were placed in this category were disproportionately immigrants. Thus deportation of immigrants soared as the Great Depression continued.

In this time of economic need, Canada reached out to the world for labor. Since Canada was trying to strengthen its agricultural industry, low skill work was often what was advertised at the border. Jewish refugees, as demonstrated previously, did not fit these qualification according to the public's perception. Since Jewish families were expected to contribute to the financial industries that were forming in cities, they were seen as a threat to the budding Canadian businessmen just beginning their careers. In

⁵¹ "Canada and Jewish Refugees in the 1930's - Marianopolis." Accessed March 7, 2019. <http://faculty.marianopolis.edu/c.belanger/quebechistory/readings/CanadaandJewishRefugeesinthe1930s.html>.

addition, jobs within these industries were scarce because of the industries' young age.⁵² Thus the public's perception of refugees is strongly influenced by their understanding of the economic impact that refugees will have on the host nation.

Chile

Isolated Government Action and its Causes

Chilean officials had a unique advantage when gathering information about Hitler's plans for the extermination of European Jews. Most consulates in Nazi territories were forced to close their doors by the Nazi regime, but Chilean officials were not viewed as enemies in Nazi Germany. Thus the Chilean consulate in Prague was allowed to remain open. This provided Chilean diplomat, Gonzalo Montt Rivas with unique insight into the plans of extermination as early as 1941. This exception granted to the Chilean consulate also allowed for Chile to grant visas and refugee status to Jews seeking asylum for an extended period of time. However, allowing more refugees to enter Chile would be a departure from past Chilean immigration policies. Montt's personal beliefs on the Jewish question were well known. As previously mentioned, he strongly believed that Chilean policies were being perfectly executed thus he was not inclined to disrupt the norm. During the 1920's, strong nativist campaigns were started in Chile by General Francisco Javier Diaz and Gonzalez von Marins.⁵³ Both were generals that had studied

⁵² Abella, Irving, and יצחק אבלה. "קנדה ובעית הפליטים היהודים 1933-1939 / CANADA AND THE JEWISH REFUGEE CRISIS 1933-1939." *Michael: On the History of the Jews in the Diaspora / י מיכאל: מאסף לתולדות היהודים בתפוצות* (1986): 9-30.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/23494062>.

⁵³ "Chile Virtual Jewish History Tour - Jewish Virtual Library." Accessed March 7, 2019. <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/chile-virtual-jewish-history-tour>.

abroad in Germany and had ties to Nazi ideology. Arturo Alessandri strongly affirmed this anti-immigrant rhetoric throughout his campaign and ensured that nativist policies remained the norm. During his time as president he restricted immigration to about 50 Jewish families a year. This clearly demonstrates the power that government officials had in shaping immigration policies. This nativism and anti-Semitic rhetoric did not come from the populous but instead was introduced by officials who had studied abroad and returned with that ideology and used their ability to influence their citizens.

When Alessandri lost his reelection in 1938, the change in leadership brought hope to the Jewish refugees. The successor, Presidente Pedro Aguirre Cerda believed that Chile should be a safe haven for all.⁵⁴ During this short period of time, from 1938-1941, Chile accepted 13,000 refugees. However, this was short lived. In 1941, Arturo returned to power and effectively closed the doors on refugees. The few diplomats abroad who had been tirelessly working on assisting European Jews in leaving Europe were quickly removed from their positions. This quick shift in policy reflects the importance of leadership and their own personal ideology as leaders. Despite external factors, Cerda was able to assist over 10,000 refugees in a critical time for European Jews.⁵⁵ This demonstrates that, in the case of Chile, it is isolated government actions by officials such as Montt, Alessandri, and Cerda that clearly played a role in the acceptance, and more often denial, of Jewish refugees into Chile.

⁵⁴ "Springer MRW: [AU:0, IDX:0] - Springer Link." Accessed March 7, 2019. http://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007%2F978-3-319-08956-0_211-1.pdf.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

Public Opinion

Racial and Ethnic Composition

Chile is referred to as the most homogenous South American population with respect to both race and ethnicity. The majority of the Chilean population in the 1930's-40's were racially classified as Mestizos. Mestizos are individuals who are both Native American and European and they make up the majority in Chile with respect to race.⁵⁶ Most people who have immigrated to Chile can fall into the Caucasian racial category. It is likely that the homogeneity of the populace led to a lack of sympathy for Jewish refugees. The largest groups of migrants by the 1940's came from Spain, Italy, and Germany. The largest non- mestizo ethnic groups in Chile were German, Italian, French, British and Slavic, in that order.⁵⁷ Germans made up 13% of the ethnic composition of Chilean citizenry and most Germans maintained their citizenship in Germany.⁵⁸ The presence of such a large population of German nationals likely had a large influence on the refusal to receive Jewish refugees. During this time, as explained above, large Nazi movements, initiated by government officials who had studied in Germany, gained momentum in Chile . The presence of a German population in Chile likely allowed for officials to easily gather public support for these inhumane movements. For those few refugees that were able to enter into Chile, it was an unwelcoming reception. Chileans, being a mainly homogenous populous, feared the foreigner and had strong anti-immigrant

⁵⁶ Brand, Donald. "The Peoples and Languages of Chile." *New Mexico Anthropologist* 5, 3 (1941): 72-93. https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nm_anthropologist/vol5/iss3/2

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ "Alemanes en Chile: entre el pasado colono y el presente empresarial" Accessed March 7, 2019. <https://www.dw.com/es/alemanes-en-chile-entre-el-pasado-colono-y-el-presente-empresarial/a-14958983-1>.

attitudes. Thus Jewish refugees were exiled to the south of Chile where lands were difficult to cultivate. This is also where there was the largest population of German nationals in 1940. Thus ethnic and racial resentment grew stronger in southern Chile. This led many Jewish families to flee back to the cities, where their presence inspired more anti-Semitic attitudes. In Chile race and ethnic ties were deciding factors in the fate of the Jews who attempted to enter Chilean society.

Culture

During this period of the 20th century Chile was facing various cultural changes. In the 1920's-30's there was a rise in support for the separation of church and state. In Chile this was a difficult request to fulfill as Chileans were predominantly Catholic. This meant that the rise of support for this separation was radical in the context of Chilean history. Jewish Chileans were perceived to be a large part of this movement because they were one of the communities that had been systematically disadvantaged by the church. Jewish students were often excluded from top tier schools and professional schools. The professions that Jewish graduates could hold were tightly limited. As a religious minority in a religiously homogeneous nation the Jews faced oppression for their "deviant" culture. Thus as Jewish refugees began to enter Chile they inspired a rise in the fear that Jews would enter professional industries..

At this time in Chile there were also strong nativist movements on the rise. Since Chile had a strong cohesive culture it was easy for nativism to grow in popularity. As is the nature of nativist movements, foreigners were depicted as individuals whom were infiltrating and destroying their way of life. Often this nativist movement clashed with

that of the separation of church and state movement. These political and cultural conflicts further fueled the anti-Semitism that was already present in Chile.⁵⁹

Economy

The Great Depression greatly affected the refugees prospects of entering Chile. The Chilean economy took a particularly difficult hit due to their export based economy, with North America being their primary buyers. Of the South American countries, Chile took the longest to recover. This left a long lasting effect on the Chilean population. When the public was faced with the question of whether the Jewish refugees should be allowed to enter their fears of economic competition were heightened. The perception of Jews held by the Chilean public was similar to those of other nations. Thus Jewish refugees who entered the nation were given permission to stay under one condition: that they settle in the south and work on building the agricultural industry in the Chile. When only 3% of Jews were granted permission to leave the south and migrate towards Santiago, the public outcry was immense.⁶⁰ The small number of Jews who did leave the south to enter the city suggests that unwarranted public opinion was largely influenced by perception. It is also indicates that the economic reasons cited for barring immigration is a cover for the cultural and racial factors at play.

⁵⁹ Agosín, Marjorie. *Always from Somewhere Else: a memoir of my Chilean Jewish father*. Feminist Press at CUNY, 2000.

⁶⁰ "Springer MRW: [AU:0, IDX:0] - Springer Link." Accessed March 8, 2019. http://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007%2F978-3-319-08956-0_211-1.pdf.

Policies and their Causes: The Case of the Syrian Refugees

United States

Isolated Government Action and its Causes

The fear of the foreigner continues to play a role in public opinion today.

Terrorism is defined as the use of unlawful violence and intimidation, especially against civilians, in the pursuit of political aims.⁶¹ The threat of terrorists entering the United States has been cited by the President, Department of Homeland Security and the CIA as a reason to decrease the quota of Syrian refugees. The threat of terrorism is credible however, the United States' predominant threat of terrorist attacks does not come from abroad but from domestic individuals inspired and radicalized by extremist ideologies. The deadliest terrorist attacks since 9/11 was the Orlando shooting in 2016. Terrorist attacks have killed 173 people inside the United States since 9/11.⁶² Hence the fear of terrorism is a valid security concern inside the United States. The possibility of extremist groups infiltrating the United States through the Syrian Refugees program is not as grave as current rhetoric has suggested. President Trump has introduced a ban that would not allow refugees or immigrants from 6 different nations to enter the United States for 90 days. His justification for this ban was to improve national security and prevent terrorism, yet none of the countries under the ban have produced terrorist who have committed attacks in the U.S. Thus the policy does not address the most urgent security issues in the United States. Instead the push for stricter vetting and a possible ban of Syrian refugees has given credibility the fear of the foreigner ideology. Terrorists are predominantly

61 "Terrorism | Define Terrorism at Dictionary.com." Accessed April 2, 2019. <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/terrorism>.

62 "American Deaths in Terrorist Attacks 1995-2016 - START.umd.edu." Accessed April 2, 2019.

https://www.start.umd.edu/pubs/START_AmericanTerrorismDeaths_FactSheet_Nov2017.pdf.

young males. Of the Syrian refugees accepted into the United States only 22 percent fit this category of males between the ages of 18- 59. Still 46% of Americans believe that the refugees pose a major threat to the United States. Thus this fear has been actualized in American public opinion, without the presence of evidence that Syrian refugees pose a credible threat to national security.

Public Opinion

Racial and Ethnic Composition

In the case of the Syrian refugees, ethnic composition of both the refugees and the United States does not seem to play a large role in public opinion. America continues to be a country that is made up of many different ethnic backgrounds. Racial demographics remain roughly the same in the United States except for an increase in the Hispanic population, which is now the largest minority in the U.S., and an increase in those who are mixed race. This increase in reported diversity can be attributed to the Census adding more options for different ethnicities and an increase in Hispanic migration after 1952. In 2013, the foreign born population in the U.S was 13.1%, almost double what it was in the 1940's. Syrian immigrants make up about 12% of the Arab population in the United States. The lack of common heritage between the American populous and the Syrian Refugees is much larger than that of the Jewish population. This can be a possible explanation for the lack of sympathy for Syrian refugees. However, ethnic differences do not seem to play a huge role in public opinion just as in the Jewish refugee case because it does not explain the overwhelming support for Syrian refugees amongst women of all ethnic backgrounds, Hispanics and the youth of all ethnic backgrounds.

Culture

The religious composition of the United States remains similar to that of the 1940s which the Jewish refugees faced. About 70% of Americans identify as some form of Christian, about 23% are unaffiliated, 2% are Jewish, and only about 1% are Muslim.⁶³ The majority of Syrian immigrants who emigrated after 1965 had Muslim faith and the majority of Muslims in the United States are immigrants. This creates an image that equates Muslims to foreigners. Of the Syrian refugees admitted, about 98% were Muslim.⁶⁴ The association of Muslims with foreigners can cause Americans to believe that unlike other immigrants, Syrian refugees will not attempt to assimilate into American life. At least 49% of Americans believe that at least some Muslims are un-American.⁶⁵ Recent proposals by the current administration on how to deal with the Syrian refugee crisis proposed giving preference to Christian refugees over Muslim refugees. Although this proposal was not made law because it was unconstitutional, public opinion suggested that a substantial amount of U.S citizens supported this temporary system (about 41%). This shows that religious differences between Syrian refugees and the American people can be a cause of Americans' unchanging opinion of refugees.

Economy

The Syrian Civil War began right after the Great Recession of 2008. In 2011, the unemployment rate was beginning to return to the norm of about 4% but was still at a high of 9.1%. President Trump has stated that immigrants take the jobs of the most

63 "Religious Landscape Study - Pew Forum" Accessed April 2, 2019. <https://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/>.

64 "12,587 Syrian Refugees Admitted in FY 2016: 12,486 Muslims, 68" Accessed April 2, 2019.

<https://www.cnsnews.com/news/article/patrick-goodenough/syrian-refugee-tally-fy-2016-12486-muslims-68-christians-24-yazidis>.

65 "Muslims and Islam: Key findings in the U.S. and around the world." Accessed April 2, 2019. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/08/09/muslims-and-islam-key-findings-in-the-u-s-and-around-the-world/>.

vulnerable Americans. This is one of the points he campaigned on, “ putting Americans first”. Most Americans today believe that immigrants take the jobs that Americans do not want. However, 27% of Americans believe that refugees are a burden on the United States economy because of the type of workers they are or other factors such as prejudice and misinformation. Unskilled labor suffers when large amounts of unskilled immigrants enter the United States. Skilled labor is not affected by immigration as much because there is higher job security in the skilled labor market. Thus the state of the economy in the case of the Syrian Refugee crisis has not been shown to affect public opinion in a large manner. It is possible that seeing the result of large amounts of Syrian refugees enter other nations, such as Turkey and Germany, and the economic repercussions in those countries, has affected opinion on Syrians entering America. However, there is little public opinion data on this specific question.

Germany

Isolated Government Action and its Causes

Leadership has played an important role in the fate of the Syrian refugees. Chancellor Angela Merkel has been a driving force behind the recent policies that Germany has set in place. In 2015, Germany became the only EU member that eliminated the Dublin Regulation, which required asylum seekers to seek asylum in the first EU nation they arrived in. This led to an influx of Syrian refugees. That same year, the recognition rate of Syrian refugees seeking asylum was 96%.⁶⁶ Angela Merkel was

⁶⁶ "Germany's Response to the Refugee Situation: Remarkable" Accessed March 8, 2019. <https://www.bfna.org/research/germanys-response-to-the-refugee-situation-remarkable-leadership-or-fait-accomplis/>.

instrumental in the elimination of this regulation and the rate of acceptance. She led her party on a “We can do it” campaign despite opposition. Public opinion during this time was favorable towards the refugees. Thus the argument could be made that Merkel had public pressure to open the doors. However, Merkel has insisted the doors for refugees remain open despite growing public disapproval. Germany’s Interior Minister Horst Seehofer, the chair of the Christian Social Union has growing support within the government and the public in his fight against Merkel's refugee policies.⁶⁷ Most recently, his platform has called for deportations of refugees that “impose public safety concerns”.⁶⁸ However, his efforts to increase deportations have failed for the most part. This demonstrates Merkel’s influence on refugee policy and how important government officials are in creating and enforcing refugee policies in times of crisis.

Public Opinion

Racial and Ethnic Composition

One possible factor that needs to be examined in the case of Germany is ethnic differences between the refugees and the German populace. Germany's ethnic composition is: German (91.5%) , Turkish (2.4%) and other 6.1% (made up largely of Polish, Italian, Romanian, Syrian, and Greek).⁶⁹ While there has been an increase in the

⁶⁷ "A nasty immigration fight could cost German Chancellor Angela ... - Vox." Accessed March 8, 2019. <https://www.vox.com/world/2018/6/18/17474908/germany-immigration-migration-angela-merkel-donald-trump>.

⁶⁸ "German lawmakers push for Syrian refugee deportations ... - DW." Accessed March 8, 2019. <https://www.dw.com/en/german-lawmakers-push-for-syrian-refugee-deportations/a-46162773>.

⁶⁹ "Germany Demographics Profile 2018 - IndexMundi." Accessed March 9, 2019. https://www.indexmundi.com/germany/demographics_profile.html.

foreign population within the last 50 years in Germany, it is evident that Germans remain the majority of the population. Even though Syrians are the third largest foreign group in Germany, Syrian refugees find little solace within the minority populations because they are all recent migrants. Thus there is no strong leadership within the Syrian community. Polls suggest that ethnic Germans are more fearful of the refugee than the general population. It is important to clarify that German citizens does not equate with being ethnically German. In 2015 ethnic Germans were asked whether they believed refugees posed a threat to prosperity, 45% said yes. In comparison, only 28% of the general population said yes. Although they are not a majority, it is possible for ethnic Germans to have influence through the electoral system in place to ensure proportional representation. This avenue on influence has proved to be effective as opposition to refugees has witnessed increased support, largely from ethnic Germans, as well as support for right wing parties such as the Alternative for Germany (AFD) party. Thus it is clear that ethnicity influences the opinion ethnic Germans have on refugees.

However, race does not seem to be a deciding factor with respect to public opinion. Germany does not calculate racial statistics. Unlike many nations, it believes that if race is calculated then the nation will become more divided. Thus there is little accurate knowledge of Germany's racial composition. A recent study done by the UN estimates that a little over 1% of the population is black, while most of the population is white. However, these statistics are not reliable because many would not classify

themselves as black but German instead due to the lack of emphasis on race.⁷⁰ Thus is it unlikely that race would play a significant role in the case of Syrian refugees who also often identify racially as white.

Culture

Debates around the Syrian refugees has been at the forefront of German politics. In 2015, 94% of Germans said they would want Germany to open its doors for refugees.⁷¹ However, when asked if they would be ok with refugees being resettled in their neighborhood or near to them, 80% of Germans said no. This presents a problem for refugees that have settled in Germany and those that still seek asylum because Germans value integration and assimilation. Syrian refugees cannot speak the language and have therefore found it extremely difficult to integrate into society. Syrian refugees are also still well rooted in their own traditions, customs, and culture⁷². This has led to a rise in xenophobia as the public has consistently seen a clear separation between the refugees and the general population.

Historically, Germany consisted of a large Christian population. Today religious demographics compose of 34% Non-believers 30% Catholics, 30% Protestant, and 6%

⁷⁰ "UN experts: In Germany there are 'no-go' areas for black people - The" Accessed March 9, 2019. <https://www.thelocal.de/20170228/un-experts-in-germany-there-are-no-go-areas-for-black-people>.

⁷¹ "We asked Germans what they really felt after Angela Merkel opened" Accessed March 8, 2019. <http://theconversation.com/we-asked-germans-what-they-really-felt-after-angela-merkel-opened-the-borders-to-refugees-in-2015-103634>.

⁷² "Germany's Syrian Refugee Integration Experiment." Accessed March 9, 2019. <https://tcf.org/content/report/germanys-syrian-refugee-integration-experiment/>.

Muslim.⁷³ When asked whether Germans preferred non-Muslim refugees to Muslim refugees a majority of Germans preferred non-Muslim refugees. Thus it is clear that religious differences between the refugees and the German population is a factor that has shaped public opinion. Another possible factor may be the perceived association of Muslim faith and terrorism in Western nations. This perception has inspired the “fear of the foreigner” mentality by reinforcing security concerns.

Economy

Historically, Germany’s immigration policies have been largely economically based. Germany has granted most of its foreign population permission to stay on the basis of work programs. In the 20th century, when Germany had a shortage of unskilled labor, it opened its borders up to foreign assistance from countries like Turkey and Poland. However, in recent years Germany has had a shortage of skilled labor within certain industries. Unemployment in Germany is 5.3% which is low and those who are unemployed are not the skilled workers that the labor market needs.⁷⁴ Thus Germany is facing a long term economic dilemma. Merkel’s government argued the refugees could help reconcile this dilemma. However, this would require a large investment by the people of Germany. Over 50% of Germans stated they believed immigration was good for the economy.⁷⁵ But the form of immigration that the German people conceptualize is

⁷³ "Germany - World Population Review." Accessed March 8, 2019.

<http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/germany-population/>.

⁷⁴ "• Unemployment rate in Germany 2019 | Statistic - Statista." Accessed March 9, 2019.

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/227005/unemployment-rate-in-germany/>.

⁷⁵ "Public attitudes to immigration in Germany in the aftermath ... - Cadmus." Accessed March 9, 2019.

not humanitarian but calculated immigration based on the economic cycle. Only 20% of Syrian refugees have a degree or vocational qualifications and only 30-40% have work experience that is relevant to the German labor market.⁷⁶ Economically, Germans do not have much to gain from the majority of Syrian refugees in the short term. This is reflected in the German public opinion of refugees from outside the EU as only 40% of Germans approve.⁷⁷

Turkey

Isolated Government Action and its Causes

Turkey has taken in more refugees during the Syrian refugee crisis than any other nation.⁷⁸ There are currently 3,644,342 registered Syrian refugees in Turkey.⁷⁹ Due to its geographic location, Turkey was the first nation to be faced with the task of what to do with the large number of refugees. Turkish officials were quick to respond and open the doors for the thousands of refugees to enter. Led by President Gül, Turkish officials were

[http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/48044/RSCAS_PB_2017_23.pdf?sequence=](http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/48044/RSCAS_PB_2017_23.pdf?sequence=1)

[1.](http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/48044/RSCAS_PB_2017_23.pdf?sequence=1)
⁷⁶ "Germany's Response to the Refugee Situation: Remarkable" Accessed March 9, 2019. <https://www.bfna.org/research/germanys-response-to-the-refugee-situation-remarkable-leadership-or-fait-accomplis/>.

⁷⁷ "Public attitudes to immigration in Germany in the aftermath ... - Cadmus." Accessed March 9, 2019. [http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/48044/RSCAS_PB_2017_23.pdf?sequence=](http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/48044/RSCAS_PB_2017_23.pdf?sequence=1)

[1.](http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/48044/RSCAS_PB_2017_23.pdf?sequence=1)
⁷⁸ "Syrian Refugees in Turkey: The Long Road Ahead | migrationpolicy.org." Accessed March 9, 2019. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/syrian-refugees-turkey-long-road-ahead>.

⁷⁹ "Situation Syria Regional Refugee" Accessed March 9, 2019. <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria/location/113>.

welcoming of their neighbors.⁸⁰ However, officials made it clear that these refugees were temporary. Thus it is clear that officials understood the need to intake refugees, but the reason for doing so may not be humanitarian aid. In 2011, when the crisis began Turkey was in the process of changing its immigration regulations to meet the EU standards. Thus when faced with the Syrian refugee crisis, government officials' hands were likely tied. This crisis was not totally against Turkish officials' interests as Turkey has been trying to establish itself as a leading power in the region and taking a stance against the Assad regime by accepting refugees is a strong political move. Still officials did not understand the magnitude of the crisis at the time. President Erdogan expressed that if another wave of migrants were to arise, Turkey would not have the capabilities to withstand it.⁸¹ Although there is no clear data, it is suspected that Turkish officials have begun to violate non-refoulement policies. Reports have been released by individuals within the Turkish refugee system that once they entered Turkish borders they were faced with two options: jail or signing away their right to asylum and leave.⁸² Turkish officials have categorically denied these allegations. This shows that although Turkish officials have had their hands tied in regards to official refugee policy, it is possible they have made their own unofficial refugee policies. It is likely that these policies are a product of the pressures the government has felt with the large influx of refugees. Officials have

⁸⁰ "President Gül Has Iftar with Syrian Refugees in the Province of Malatya." Accessed March 9, 2019. <http://www.abdullahgul.gen.tr/news/397/90615/president-gul-has-iftar-with-syrian-refugees-in-the-province-of-malatya.html>.

⁸¹ "Haaretz.com on Twitter: "Erdogan warns that Turkey alone cannot" Accessed March 9, 2019. <https://twitter.com/haaretzcom/status/1098427852586856453>.

⁸² "Syrian refugees deported from Turkey back to war - The Guardian." Accessed March 9, 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/oct/16/syrian-refugees-deported-from-turkey-back-to-war>.

been welcoming, however, the plan was temporary and the length of this conflict has superseded Turkish officials' expectations.

Public Opinion

Racial and Ethnic Composition

Public opinion on Syrian refugees has grown worse as the conflict has progressed. In 2011, 57% of the population believed that immigration hurts the country as a whole, 38% had no opinion, and 5% felt that it positively impacted the nation. In 2017, the Syrian Barometer showed that there were large waves of resentment towards the refugees.⁸³ It is possible that ethnicity may be a differentiating factor that impacts public opinion. Similar to the German people, Turks do not categorize themselves by race but instead by ethnicity. When asked to identify by race, Turkish individuals will most often identify as Caucasian or white. However, it is doubtful that race has played a large role in public opinion of the Syrian refugees as they also would often identify as white. In both groups, race is not a large identifying feature. However, ethnicity is extremely important in both groups. The Turkish population is comprised of the following ethnicities: Turks (72.5%), Kurds (12.7%), Kaza Kurds (4%), Circassians (3.3%), Bosniaks (2.6%), Georgians (1.3%), Albanians (1.2%), Arabs (1.1%), Pomaks (0.8%) and Others (0.5%).⁸⁴ The Syrian population consists of Arabs and Kurds (90%), Armenians and others

⁸³ "Please Note: Draft Syrians Barometer-2017-Executive Summary" Accessed March 9, 2019. <https://mmuraterdogan.files.wordpress.com/2016/06/syrians-barometer-executive-summary.pdf>.

⁸⁴ "The Ethnic Groups Of Turkey - WorldAtlas.com." Accessed March 9, 2019. <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/the-ethnic-groups-of-turkey.html>.

(10%).⁸⁵ In areas of Turkey where regions are indistinguishable, the population does not believe themselves to be the same or similar to the refugees ethnically. It is possible that ethnic differences have led to a lack of sympathy for refugees.

Cultural

In a 2014 study, when the populous was asked about the current refugee policies in Turkey, a recurring theme among the responses was the idea of Turkish hospitality. When examining self-reports on the culture of Turkey, a researcher found “both in absolute and relative terms (in comparison to Western European countries) most respondents thought that the Turkish public was relatively more open and tolerant of foreigners, and would not exhibit the kind of racism and xenophobia present in the West.”⁸⁶ They also reported that they are emotional and compassionate. When asked whether Turkish citizens believed themselves to be similar in culture to Syrians 80% responded no. This is growing to be an important factor in public opinion. As populations of Syrian refugees in Turkey grow, the government is beginning to work on long term integration and assimilation policies. Given that the public believes that the culture of Syrian refugees is irrefutably different to that of the Turkish people, it may become difficult for the Turkish people to accept assimilation policies. As seen in Germany, the Syrian population has strong held traditions and cultural practices. It is unlikely that will be different in Turkey.

⁸⁵ "Population Profile: Syrian Refugees." Accessed March 9, 2019.
<https://cpa.ca/docs/File/Cultural/EN%20Syrian%20Population%20Profile.pdf>.

⁸⁶ Tolay, Juliette. (2014). Deconstructing Turkish Public Attitudes Towards Refugees: Empowering Rights Over Politicization and Self-Gratification. USAK Yearbook. 6. 1-29.

Religion is a key similarity between the population of refugees and the host population in Turkey. One of the motivating factors cited by both government officials and public opinion polls has been that Syrians are Turkey's brothers in faith. There is a religious account in "The Islamic discourse, of how the residents of Medina helped the early Muslims led by the Prophet Muhammad, who migrated to Medina to escape prosecution in Mecca".⁸⁷ This religious understanding has led a strong religious motivation amongst the Turkish people to open their homes to their Muslim siblings. This demonstrates how important religious similarities/ differences can be in the outcomes of refugees.

Economy

Due to the extraordinarily large population of refugees that have entered Turkey, economic concerns have been cited by both the public and government officials. The discussion of refugees as an economic burden is a valid concern given the size of Turkey's economy. Therefore it is not surprising that the public has expressed concerns over the Syrian refugees effects on the economy. In 2014 when asked if immigrants made it more difficult for refugees to find employment, 61% of Turkish respondents said yes.⁸⁸ This demonstrates the fear of competition within the labor market that was beginning to grow as the population of refugees increased and the likelihood of their

⁸⁷ "Opinion | Turkey Stands Between Europe and the Next Refugee Crisis" Accessed March 9, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/25/opinion/syria-idlib-refugees-turkey-war-erdogan-putin-assad.html>.

⁸⁸ "Please Note: Draft Syrians Barometer-2017-Executive Summary" Accessed March 9, 2019. <https://mmuraterdogan.files.wordpress.com/2016/06/syrians-barometer-executive-summary.pdf>.

speedy departure diminished. In 2017 54% of Turkish said that Syrians should not be granted work permits at all and 23% said yes but only temporary permits.⁸⁹ Thus it is clear that a fear of economic competition is a factor in public opinion of refugees. Another possible factor is the understanding of immigration in Turkey as whole. As in Germany, Turkey has largely based its immigration policies on the economy and its shortages. It is possible that the skills that the public thinks Turkey requires at the moment are not ones that they believe Syrians will provide. This is demonstrated in the poll where individuals were asked if they felt Syrians could contribute to Turkish economy, where 54% said they did not agree at all and 27.9% said they did not agree.⁹⁰ Thus the majority of the population does not believe the Turkish economy will be better off with Syrian refugees as a part of it. Economic factors are likely a driving force behind Turkish public opinion because within economic based questions, Turkish individuals have the clearest and most cohesive answers as a population.

Possible Flaws

This analysis aimed to identify patterns within two avenues of influence on refugee policy. It did this by using a comparative case study of two different refugee crises and across six nations. Thus this analysis faced the challenge of comparing different nations which each had their own domestic and international policies in place prior to crisis. This makes it difficult to generalize across nations, since each nation begins at its own “place” in the policy. I aimed to mitigate this by creating a baseline of similarities such as similar electoral systems.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

Both avenues presented their individual challenges. Overall, in the case of isolated government action it was difficult to obtain information on the internal discussions that were being held between executives and leaders in each nation. I aimed to tackle this challenge by digging into journals and tracking the dates in which legislation was announced and information was provided by external sources such as telegrams from other nations. Although it is clear that public opinion is a cause of policy formation it is not the sole factor contributing to the formation of policy. Public opinion is not solely influenced by cultural, racial and economic factors. In both cases of crisis, national identity, media portrayal, political figures, and social pressure can influence public opinion. Secondly, public opinion can only be measured by public opinion polls, in which the populace is correctly represented and by voting choices of the population. In the case of public opinion of the Jewish refugees it is difficult to quantify public opinion because public opinion polls were not widely used in the 1940's. This was the beginning of WWII; this makes it difficult to see how the American populous felt during the height of the crisis. In the case of the Syrian refugee crisis, public opinion polls are abundant. However, it is difficult to explain general opinion because the conflict is ongoing. Thus public opinion continues to shift.

Analysis

This analysis has shown that there are forces that are relevant across crisis, avenue and nation. The most salient of these is the fear of the foreigner. This fear has shown throughout this analysis to be influential in isolated government action and public opinion across all five nations and within each crisis. In the case of isolated government action, this variable was most present in the personally held beliefs/ideology of public officials.

In the case of public opinion the fear of the foreigners was present in racial, cultural, and economic considerations. This fear is caused by perceived differences between refugees populations and the individual in the host nation. Thus it is a variable that is present in both isolated government action and public opinion because individual biases and fears have influence within both avenues. The presence of this variable is visible in both the Jewish refugee case and the Syrian refugee case and so it is clear that this variable has stood the test of time. This indicates that this is a deeply rooted issue and that the solution is likely within fundamental policy that affects all individuals across the respective host nation.

In the exploration of isolated government action two patterns emerged across four of the five nations presented. Turkey, an outlier, will be discussed further later on. Officials within the United States, Canada, Chile, and Germany each cited security concerns as reasons to deny entry to Jewish and Syrian refugees. In order for security concerns to be legitimate it must be evident that refugees pose a threat to national security. However, there is little evidence that refugees commit crimes at a higher rate than natives. Thus, it is likely that officials have used security concerns as a way to legitimately propose legislation without fear of public and/or international community backlash. A prime example of this was highlighted at the start of this analysis, the Trump travel ban. Trump cited 9/11 as an example of an act of extremism his travel ban aimed to prevent. However, none of the individuals connected to 9/11 were from any of the countries named in the ban. This is not an isolated occurrence, officials in Germany have cited extremist acts as evidence for the security threat posed by refugees.

The second pattern evidenced within the exploration of isolated government

action confirmed that personally held beliefs of government officials are influential in their policy making. Most of the leaders examined have expressed personally held beliefs concerning refugees. In all the cases in which personally held beliefs were investigated, leaders had decisive opinions on the outcomes of refugees. In the case of Jewish refugees Biddle, Montt, Cerda and King each had clearly defined opinions of Jewish refugees. In the case of Syrian refugees Trump and Merkel have both expressed clear opinions on the state of the refugees. Apart from Merkel and Cerda, all of the above had xenophobic ideology. This affected their inclination to help refugees when presented with information that the public did not have readily available. Perhaps what makes the importance of personally held beliefs most salient are the cases of Cerda and Merkel. These leaders pushed for the refugees acceptance as a pillar of their agenda and both boosted refugee acceptances significantly while in office. Thus demonstrating the influence that government officials attitudes can have on refugee outcomes.

Turkey is an outlier. Isolated government action in Turkey seems to be largely driven by the goal of EU acceptance. Thus government interest plays the largest role in refugee policy formation through isolated government action. It is possible that the two variables outlined above are and have affected Turkish officials. However, in such case this force has been overshadowed by government interest as a whole.

In the exploration of public opinion three possible causal avenues were explored: race and ethnicity, culture, and economic perceptions. With respect to racial and ethnic factors this analysis suggests that the difference in race between the host nation and the refugees is not a large determinant in public opinion. Four of the five nations examined had mostly homogenous racial and ethnic composition. In the Syrian case the U.S stood

out because it was the sole racially diverse nation. Still, across all nations and both crises, public opinion remained unfavorable. Indicating that racial diversity may not directly benefit refugees. However, it is possible that due to a lack of diversity, populations may be unable to sympathize or connect with the refugees. This lack of empathy could help facilitate the other factors considered in this analysis, such as the fear of the foreigner.

Cultural differences play a large role in public opinion of refugees. This analysis identified two key variables. Perceived cultural differences between the refugees and the host nation population were cited in each nation examined as a motivating factor for public opinion. Moreover, cultural differences were present in public opinion polls taken in each nation as well. The rising support of nativist groups during both WWII and the Syrian Civil War further demonstrates the importance of perceived cultural differences. In each case, nativist rhetoric was evident in public opinion. Cultural difference is often presented as a threat to the nation's identity. Refugees bring their own culture to the host nation and nativists argue that this culture will "contaminate" the nation's identity. This rhetoric included issues of cultural differences and in most cases cited religion. Thus, religious differences are the second key variable found across the two refugee groups and all five nations. Both Jewish and Syrian refugees have been penalized in public opinion for their religious beliefs. In the case of Jewish refugees, their faith was regarded as inferior in most nations. Christians and Catholics looked down on Jewish communities in the US, Canada, and Chile often citing only religious reasons to justify gross anti-Semitism. Syrian refugees are predominantly Muslim. Since the American and German populations have tied extremist violence towards the Muslim faith, Syrian refugees have faced similar public opinions due to religious differences. In Turkey, Syrian refugees

have largely been accepted. For those who were proponents of refugees in Turkey, Muslim brotherly love was a theme amongst the Turkish population. In Germany, anti-immigrant sentiments rising within the public cite the inability for Syrians to integrate due to their religious and cultural differences. Therefore, it is clear that the perception of the refugees' culture and religion, if different than that of the host nation, negatively impacts public opinion.

Economic concerns were also a large indicator of public opinion. Across all nations and in both cases, public opinion of refugees was often cited as based on economic concerns. There were three patterns identified in the analysis amongst populations whom cited economic concerns. First is the fear of economic competition. This is evident due to the focus of economic competition in nativist rhetoric, which as stated previously, gained public support in both refugee cases. Jewish refugees faced this fear amongst high skilled laborers since Jews were viewed as businessmen. Syrians have faced this challenge with low skilled workers since they are perceived by the public as low skilled. Secondly is the classification of refugees by economic desirability. Jewish refugees were perceived to be undesirable because of their potential economic contribution within each nation. Syrian refugees face similar classification. Lastly, the public's perceived economic burden that a population of refugees will have on a host nation can affect the public's opinion of refugees. This is demonstrated in both the Jewish and Syrian case across all nations. It was commonly believed that Jews would become a burden on society. Since the Great Depression had just ended this was a large concern for all populations when forming opinions on refugees. While for Syrian refugees, the economic burden that they pose to nations that have opened the doors for them has been

perceived by the public as large. Syrian refugees have entered Germany and Turkey in massive numbers. Although the German economy can sustain this population, the public does not perceive it as such. This is likely due to media portrayal, however, this will not be discussed here. In Turkey the public is well aware of the economic burden placed on Turkey. These three factors are present in all of the nations examined in both cases of refugees. Perhaps this indicates that economic concerns are the most important factor in economic opinion. Most economic concerns presented above do not hold when faced with the known economic benefits of immigration. This indicates that public perception is likely not based in factual evidence but instead on other sources.

Solutions

It is evident that the “fear of the foreigner” idea has been a prominent player in the discussion surrounding refugees. This analysis has demonstrated that differences between individuals can be a mechanism for this fear. In the case of isolated government action personally held beliefs by government officials are deterministic in policy. In the case of public opinion cultural differences play a key role in determining public opinion of refugees. Economic factors are also a key predictor of public opinion. Each deterministic factor has one thing in common. Individuals fear the unknown. Thus this analysis indicates that a solution to this problem must tackle that fear.

One possible solution to this issue would aim to change public opinion through education. This will provide the tools that are necessary for individuals to formulate informed opinions. This will also help reduce the proliferation of misinformation that often leads to misconceptions. Cultural and ethnic education can also help to eliminate the dissonance between the American people and the foreigner, by showing that different

does not have to be mistrusted. Basic economic understanding will allow for the public to tackle economic effects of refugees in an informed manner. Whatever the solution, the time to act is not during crisis. Instead all solutions must be long-term efforts to address the outlined variables above. This analysis has demonstrated that these factors are not surface level and run deep within the society. Thus any proposed solution must keep this in mind. Change has not come within the last few decades. The aim of this analysis was to examine possible outlets for a change. Education seems to be a viable solution.

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Vita



