

NARRATORS, NAVIGATORS AND NEGOTIATORS: FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER LIFE STORIES
FROM CANADA'S AFRICA REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM, 1970 TO 1990

by

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Abstract

This dissertation critically examines the life stories of three Canadian Foreign Service officers, in order to tell a history about how officers “heard” and decided on the claims of refugee applicants who sought admission and resettlement to Canada through its Africa Refugee Program from the early 1970s to 1990. This period and area of focus allow the study to explore the relationship between officers’ individual agency and structure in the implementation of Canadian refugee policy, and to present a hitherto under-represented part of Canada’s immigration history.

The research argues that the context and conditions of refugee selection can be more fully understood by explaining: the material and ideational structures within which the officers (hearers) navigated; the many types of relationships they negotiated; and the narratives they created, both about themselves and about their role in refugee selection. The history contained in this thesis does not claim to present the truth of officers’ accounts or present theirs as the sole perspective, but instead makes an argument rooted in the literature that could be generalized beyond the context of the dissertation through further research. For this purpose, this work conceptualizes the officers as “narrators” (past and present), “navigators” and “negotiators.”

The dissertation is situated within the Historical literature on oral history, immigration to Canada, and the interdisciplinary study of the management of migration and refugee movements. It draws on substantive oral history interviews the author conducted with the three officers who were active in East-Africa between 1970 and 1990. In order to situate these life stories within the prevailing state structures of

the time, the research draws on primary sources, including Government of Canada policy documents, the *1976 Immigration Act*, Annual Reports to Parliament on Immigration Levels Plans and Ministry of Employment and Immigration Statistics.

This work argues that, notwithstanding limitations on their autonomy, the degree and nature of discretion and agency that officers could exercise varied depending on the local context of implementation and particularities of the refugee applicant or situation. Together, the life stories reflect a collective narrative about the settings, conditions, constraints and interests that shaped how the officers “heard” refugee applicant stories while they implemented Canada’s humanitarian and resettlement policy through the Africa Refugee Program in its earliest and formative years. The life stories put a human face on complex bureaucratic processes, and demonstrate that individual agency matters and affects outcomes in policy implementation and, occasionally, subsequent policy development.

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Map of the 18 Countries Covered by the Nairobi visa office, from 1981 to 2000¹



¹ Image adapted from Google map template, accessed May 10, 2019, www.google.ca

Introduction

Refugees have only one thing in common; that they have fled from their country. But apart from the fact of seeking refuge, they are as varied as Africa's people are varied. All refugees are certainly victims, but they do not consequently lose their individual ideas about life and their own purpose. They will include the ambitious, the optimist, the pessimist, the honest, hardworking men and the sly delinquent; the persons who will make the best of things, and the man who will grumble about everything. And so on. Generalisations about refugees are very dangerous; all that can safely be said is that they have sought refuge.²

The quote above is a poignant articulation of the humanity and diversity of African refugees and comes from the inaugural address delivered by the former President of Tanzania, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, at the *Arusha Conference on the African Refugee Problem* (1979). At the time, refugees on the African continent numbered approximately four million.³ By the year 2016, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) identified approximately four times more refugees in Africa.⁴ The international community recognizes three possible durable solutions for refugee situations: voluntary repatriation to one's home country, local integration in the country to which one has sought asylum, and resettlement to a third country.⁵ This dissertation focuses on the policy and practice of third-country

² Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, President of Tanzania, "Inaugural Speech," in *An Analysing Account of the Conference on the African Refugee Problem, Arusha, May 1979*, L.G. Eriksson, G. Melander and P. Nobel. (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1981), 66.

³ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁴ UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *UNHCR Statistical Yearbook 2016*, "Refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees (refugees and IDPs), stateless persons, and others of concern to UNHCR by country/territory of asylum," accessed March 18, 2019, <https://www.unhcr.org/statistics/country/5a8ee0387/unhcr-statistical-yearbook-2016-16th-edition.html>

⁵ UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *UNHCR Resettlement Handbook* (July, 2011), accessed April 14, 2019, <https://www.refworld.org/docid/4ecb973c2.html>
The handbook also outlines the history of resettlement and its "complementary" relationship with voluntary repatriation and local integration as durable solutions. The 1950 UNHCR Statute states that the UNHCR "shall assume the function of providing international protection, under the auspices of the

resettlement from Central-East Africa to Canada and specifically, the origins and evolution of Canada's Africa Refugee Program (formally established in 1981).

The UNHCR was established on 1 January 1951 by the UN General Assembly Resolution 319 (IV) with the mandate "to provide international protection to refugees and other persons of concern to the Office" and, as a consequence, "to seek permanent or durable solutions to their problem."⁶ In this context, "resettlement" involves the selection and transfer of a refugee from the state in which they have sought protection (country of first asylum) to a third state that has agreed to accept and admit them as refugees with permanent residence status.⁷ Permanent resident status ensures that refugees and their families are protected against refoulement, and affords them rights that are similar to those enjoyed by nationals of the resettlement country. Refugees also have the opportunity to become naturalized citizens of the country to which they are resettled.⁸ In addition to being a state tool of refugee protection, as well as a durable solution alongside "voluntary repatriation" and "local integration," resettlement can also demonstrate international solidarity, and be seen as a mechanism for responsibility-sharing.⁹ The Government of Canada has historically offered resettlement to refugees whom it believes are most in need of protection, and who are unlikely to obtain an alternative durable solution within a

United Nations, to refugees who fall within the scope of the present Statute and of seeking permanent solutions for the problem of refugees by assisting Governments ... to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of such refugees, or their assimilation within new national communities", 3.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

reasonable timeframe.¹⁰ According to the *UNHCR Resettlement Handbook* chapter about Canada, the Government of Canada has autonomy over the parameters and priorities of its resettlement commitments to the UNHCR.¹¹

There is considerable literature that examines the efficacy, limitations and relationship of voluntary repatriation and local integration as durable solutions, and on the various actors implicated.¹² While there is some literature on past refugee resettlement movements and processes¹³, there is very limited research about the individuals who were involved in resettlement selection processes on behalf of receiving states.¹⁴ A study of Canada's Africa Refugee Program represents an opportunity to further our knowledge about these actors.

In recent years, there has been national and international interest in Canada's refugee resettlement program, especially in the wake of the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Initiative—which was a response to the Syrian refugee crisis.¹⁵ Through

¹⁰ UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *UNHCR Resettlement Handbook Country Chapters (last updated 2016)*, accessed 17 April 2019, <https://www.refworld.org/docid/542134777.html><https://www.refworld.org>

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² See Jeff Crisp and Katy Long, "Safe and Voluntary Refugee Repatriation: From Principle to Practice," *Journal on Migration and Human Security*, 4, Issue 3 (Fall, 2016); Yacob-Haliso Olajumoke, "Intersectionality and Durable Solutions for Refugee Women in Africa," *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 11, Issue 3 (September, 2016); B.S. Chimni, "From Resettlement to Involuntary Repatriation: Towards a Critical History of Durable Solutions to Refugee Problems," *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 23, Issue 3 (October, 2004); Gaim Kibreab, "Citizenship Rights and Repatriation of Refugees," *The International Migration Review*, 37, Issue 1 (April, 2003).

¹³ See Stephanie Bangarth, "Citizen Activism, Refugees, and the State: Two Case-Studies in Canadian Immigration History," In *Modern Canada: 1945 to Present*, ed. Catherine Briggs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 17-30; Courtland Robinson, *Terms of Refuge: The Indochinese Exodus and the International Response* (London, New York: Zed Books, 1998); Howard Adelman, *Canada and the Indochinese Refugees* (Regina: L.A. Weigl Educational Associates, 1982); and Michael Casasola, "The Indochinese Refugee Movement and the Subsequent Evolution of UNHCR and Canadian Resettlement Selection Policies and Practices," *Refugee*, 32, no. 2 (Winter, 2016): 41-53.

¹⁴ Michael Molloy et al., *Running on Empty: Canada and the Indochinese Refugees, 1975-80* (McGill-Queens University Press, 2017)

¹⁵ Much of the recent interest revolves around the Private Sponsorship of Refugees program which has allowed (since 1978) Canadian permanent residents, citizens, communities and faith organizations to

this initiative, the Government of Canada has facilitated the resettlement of over forty-thousand Syrian refugees since November 2015. This resettlement took place in the context of a significant shift in the United States of America's resettlement policy when President Donald Trump signed an executive order indefinitely banning all Syrian refugees from entering the US, and briefly suspended the country's broader refugee programme. This resulted in a significant reduction in resettlement spaces where the "total number of refugees resettled in the US in 2017 more than halved—to 50,000 from 110,000."¹⁶ These changes adversely impacted the number of global resettlement spaces because, until then, the US had the largest refugee resettlement programme in the world.¹⁷

In this broader context (of significant policy changes by a major resettlement partner), the historical trajectory of Canada's resettlement policy is worth exploring. This dissertation is timely because it means to tell a story about human beings who were some of the key bureaucratic actors in the development of resettlement policy, programs and practice. The Government of Canada Immigration Foreign Service officers¹⁸ who engaged in refugee selection interviews had to make life and death

participate in selecting and settling refugees who are resettled to Canada refugees from abroad. For a discussion of Canada's resettlement program, see: Shauna Labman, "The Invisibles: An Examination of Refugee Resettlement" (PhD thesis, McGill University, 2007); Geoffrey Cameron, "Religion and Refugees: The Evolution of Resettlement in the United States and Canada" (PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 2018); and Jennifer Hyndman, William Payne and Shauna Jimenez, "Private Sponsorship of Refugees in Canada," *Oxford University Forced Migration Review*, no. 54 (February 2017): 56-59. For a brief on resettlement policy in the contemporary international context of refugee protection, the rest of the essays in the *Forced Migration Review* (FMR) 54 issue are dedicated to global resettlement case studies. The editors' introduction states its intention to consider the "modalities and challenges of resettlement in order to shed light on debates such as how - and how well - resettlement is managed, whether it is a good use of the funds and energy it uses, and whether it is a good solution for refugees."

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ For the sake of brevity, they will be designated as "officers" in the following text.

decisions about African refugee applicants who sought protection and resettlement to Canada based on the stories they told.

This study is based primarily on extensive oral history interviews with three former officers stationed in Central and East Africa between the early 1970s and 1990: Michael Molloy, Scott Mullin and Susan Burrows. The research focuses on these officers' life stories and experiences with refugee selection policy and operations¹⁹ and argues that their narratives help to explain their roles in the early development and implementation²⁰ of Canada's Africa Refugee Program in Nairobi, Kenya, from 1981 to 1990.²¹ An examination of their stories reveals not only the extent to which officers exercised individual agency while they were implementing Canadian refugee policy in the past but also how narrators of that past shape the memory of the program today. As Molloy, Burrows and Mullin remember, explain and make sense of their experiences and actions, they actively contribute to the construction of the history of the program. The three officers' life stories about their experiences developing, establishing and implementing the African Refugee Program, show them to be "narrators," "navigators" and "negotiators" who profoundly impacted Canada's resettlement policy and practice in the earliest years of the program. These three frames provide a systemic way to examine the refugee selection interview and attendant processes as a site of storytelling and simultaneously help to explain the

¹⁹ From here on the study uses the term "refugee selection interview" or "selection interviews" to refer to the refugee status determination process that was conducted abroad by Canadian Immigration Foreign Service officers. Chapter two will outline and explain the legal process and requirements under which refugee selection was carried out.

²⁰ Implementation is understood to refer to the refugee selection interview and attendant procedures.

²¹ Canada's Africa Refugee Program was inaugurated at Nairobi visa office in 1981. Chapter one explains in more detail how and why these officers were identified as participants for this study.

relationship between individual officer agency and structure in the implementation of refugee policy.

Why this Historical Period?

The Government of Canada formally established the Africa Refugee Program at the Nairobi visa office, Kenya, in the summer of 1981. The establishment of the resettlement program in Central and East Africa followed Canada's experience with the resettlement of refugees from regions such as Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia and took place a few years after Canada formalized its global resettlement program through the *1976 Immigration Act*, in 1978.²² As discussed below, however, procedures from these earlier experiences were not fully transferred to the context of Sub-Saharan Africa. The structures that shaped resettlement selection abroad arose from significant refugee policy changes that had occurred in the early 1970s on the domestic front. Key structural milestones in the 1970s included: Canada's ratification of the *1951 UN Convention* and its Protocol in 1969; refugee policy developments such as the *1970 Memorandum to Cabinet* that recommended a formalized resettlement program; and, following that, the establishment of a universal and non-discriminatory refugee system through the *1976 Immigration Act*.²³

On the international scene, third-country resettlement became formalized in 1989 through the adoption of a Comprehensive Plan of Action (CPA), which meant to approach the issue in a "global and systematic way," following the large-scale

²² The policy and legal changes that led to these markers are discussed more fully in chapter two.

²³ These developments and their implications for the Africa Refugee Program will be examined further in chapter two.

Indochinese resettlement movement.²⁴ Due to changing attitudes and a marked decline in global resettlement places available during the 1980s and 1990s, there was a shift to voluntary repatriation as the preferred durable solution.²⁵ Resettlement numbers decreased significantly during these years, such that where “one in every twenty of UNHCR’s global refugee population was resettled in 1979, the ratio fell to less than one in every 400 by 1994.”²⁶ Importantly, a shift of focus from groups to “individual protection needs,” necessitated the need for fulsome refugee status determination or selection interviews and procedures by the UNHCR and resettlement states.²⁷ In order to qualify for the diminished number of resettlement spaces, it was no longer enough for applicants to be “in need of refugee protection,” and to meet the requirements of the 1951 Convention. In addition to this, refugees had to demonstrate that they were the “*most* in need of protection” (in comparison to other refugees) and that they had exhausted other durable solutions. These global policy

²⁴ UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *UNHCR Resettlement Handbook* (July 2011), accessed April 16 2019, <https://www.refworld.org/docid/4ecb973c2.html>, 47-50.

In 1979, “the largest and most dramatic example of resettlement occurred in the aftermath of the Indo-Chinese conflict” in response to the “political and humanitarian crisis” posed by Vietnamese “boat people” arriving and being turned away from first asylum countries in South East Asia. The CPA ended “blanket” resettlement policy adopted in 1989 and formalized resettlement procedures in which all “Vietnamese boat people would be permitted to land in first asylum countries and would be screened for refugee status,” and only those who qualified as refugees would be resettled in a third country. The factors that influenced changes in the policies of both asylum and resettlement countries are beyond the scope of this study. However, the major driving force was a recognition that while the exodus of Vietnamese still retained “a refugee dimension [it] was increasingly driven by economic factors.” For substantive discussions of the CPA, the international Indochinese resettlement movement, including Canada’s role, see, as above: Robinson, *Terms of Refuge*, 1998); Adelman, *Canada and the Indochinese Refugees*, 1982); and Casasola, “The Indochinese Refugee Movement and the Subsequent Evolution of UNHCR and Canadian Resettlement Selection Policies and Practices.”

²⁵ UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *UNHCR Resettlement Handbook 2011* (July 2011), 48-49.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.* This shift and distinction between group and individual processing and its impact on refugee selection is discussed further in chapter two. Additionally, officer accounts in chapters three, four and five also refer to the legal provisions that underlined the different approaches.

changes impacted the resettlement programs of significant resettlement countries such as Canada.

These broader policy changes intersected with the professional trajectories of the three officers whose testimonies inform this study. Molloy, Burrows and Mullin were three of many government officers who were central actors in the real-time development of Canadian resettlement policies and practices. While there were definitely other actors within and outside of government who facilitated resettlement, these three officers were the main state players in the local implementation of the Africa Refugee Program, especially during these decades of flux in refugee policy. The officers interviewed for this study were primarily responsible for interviewing and selecting African refugees in Central and East Africa for Canadian resettlement from 1972 to 1990. During this period, they exercised a considerable amount of agency by narrating, navigating and negotiating their way along the continuum of resettlement policy and operations. The central role Molloy, Mullin and Burrows played in developing Canada's refugee resettlement program in Central and East Africa justifies the researcher's decision to base the analysis of this dissertation on a critical analysis of their life stories. This study selected the three officers because their experiences are important for understanding refugee policy and implementation during these formative years.

This dissertation argues that the evolution of the Africa Refugee Program can be explained, in large part, by the relationships, actions and decisions of these officers. These officers' life stories do not seek to explain why Canada established the African resettlement program, but instead, shed light on why the program evolved

and developed in the ways that it did. Seminal moments that will be explored in chapters two and three include Molloy's exploratory engagements with Asian community leaders in Tanzania and Kenya during the early 1970s. Additionally, the study examines his integral role as second-in-command to Roger St. Vincent (the officer who was in charge of the Beirut Visa Office and leading officer during the Canadian government's selection and resettlement of six thousand Ugandan-Asian 'expellees' in 1972), and his role as head of immigration and refugee selection at Nairobi visa office from 1986 to 1989. Chapter four examines Mullin's account of being dispatched to Nairobi from 1981 to 1984 to establish the Africa Refugee Program after he had previously been interviewing and selecting Indochinese refugees in the late 1970s. Chapter five will examine Burrows' account about being posted to Nairobi in 1987 when she was trained and mentored in refugee selection operations by Molloy, who had joined the Nairobi office a year earlier.²⁸ The year 1990, which was the final year in Burrows' posting in Nairobi, intersects with the end of the study's timeframe, when third-country resettlement procedures were formalized through the adoption of a CPA in 1989, leading to a focus on individual versus group selection and in turn, a stark decline in global resettlement numbers.

The Puzzle

Within the practice and policy of humanitarianism, the term "refugee" is a powerful label, at least since the adoption of the *1951 Refugee Convention*.²⁹

Individuals are only granted the formal label after they undergo procedures of status

²⁸ The researcher's attempt to locate and interview the visa officer who was responsible for refugee selection for the two years between 1984 and 1986 was not successful.

²⁹ Roger Zetter, "Labelling Refugees: Forming and Transforming a Bureaucratic Identity," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 4, no.1 (1991): 39-62

determination.³⁰ Until an individual is determined to be a refugee through the formal procedures of the UNHCR or a state government, they are considered a “refugee claimant” (because of their claim to protection), or a “refugee applicant.” This study chooses to employ the term refugee applicant in order to describe individuals who applied for refugee protection through resettlement and were interviewed for resettlement. Refugee applicant was also the term used by the Government of Canada during the purview of this study to describe individuals who applied for resettlement to Canada and is still in use today.

Initially, the goal of this project was to tell a history of the ways refugee applicants told stories, and what they included in stories told to Canadian officers during refugee selection interviews. The intent was to consider the refugee selection interview as a storytelling event that was shaped by the relationship between the “teller” and “hearer,” or in other words, the applicant and the officer. After conducting oral history interviews with officers, however, it became clear that their experiences provided a critical body of knowledge about the context and conditions of refugees’ storytelling and reflected critical phenomena that had not been considered within the literature, and that demanded their own study. To understand the officers’ stories there needed to be an explanation and discussion of the structures that the “hearers” themselves navigated, the many types of relationships they negotiated (including the interactions with the refugee applicants), and the narratives they created, both about themselves and about their role in refugee selection.

³⁰ Ibid.

While the refugee applicants' stories played a major part in these officers' narratives, and in the attending processes of policymaking and implementation, it is important to note that their histories require a separate study that employs a similarly rigorous research approach (a study the researcher would like to conduct in the near future). Practically, both perspectives could not be adequately addressed in a single dissertation. While engaging with the perspective of the "teller" is an essential element in understanding the experience as a whole, and will be the focus of future research as discussed in the Conclusion, this dissertation highlights the perspective of the "hearer."

This study seeks to provide a rich examination of the role officers played, and *how these officers themselves interpreted their role*, in shaping and conditioning the structures of Canada's refugee resettlement program, recognizing that it engages with only one pole of the intersubjective experience. As such, this dissertation does not generalize about the functioning or experience of Canada's refugee resettlement program as a whole, nor does it claim that these officers' experiences are representative of those of all officers who engaged in refugee selection. The goal of this research was not to critically deconstruct these officers' perspectives according to external frameworks or normative standards but to present a framework that makes sense of how the officers themselves understood their role. Future research would be required to more fully interrogate the claims of this study with the experience of the system as a whole during the identified period.

Existing Scholarship

In order to substantively engage with questions of storytelling, history, narrative, agency and structure within policies and practices of the Canadian bureaucracy, this dissertation recognizes the advantage of an interdisciplinary approach that includes theoretical perspectives from history, sociology, political science and international relations.³¹ The purpose of this section is to provide a brief overview of how the literature from each of these disciplinary traditions provides an important foundation for this dissertation's work.

Political-Sociological Approaches

Max Weber's early work on the role of bureaucrats in the functioning of institutions is a useful starting point in which to situate this study within political-sociological understandings of structure and agency, examine the role of individuals within bureaucracies, and explore various forms and expressions of power. Weber distinguished between three kinds of axial structures of power that shape the social order: the patriarchal, patrimonial, and the legal-rational.³² For Weber, the crucial factor in politics was bureaucracies.³³ The Weberian bureaucracy is conceptualized "as a machine in the service of the State or the civil power," or an instrument of the "power of the citizenry of the State."³⁴ Within the structures of the state, a

³¹ The next two chapters expand on this inter-disciplinarity. Chapter one discusses the role of oral history as theory and method in this study, while chapter two describes the structural conditions of storytelling.

³² Alan Bullock and R.B. Woodings, *The Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thinkers*, (London: Fontana Press, 1992), 806.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Raymond Boudon, Francois Bourricaud and Peter Hamilton, eds., "Bureaucracy," *A Critical Dictionary of Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 49-54.

bureaucrat has relative autonomy but derives their authority from a “package of rights and obligations” and explicit orders from the hierarchic authority.³⁵

Weber’s theory about bureaucracy is useful for this study’s focus on individuals who derive their mandate and authority to categorize and select immigrants from the Government of Canada laws and regulations as part of migration management. In their seminal text, *The Age of Migration*, Castles, Haas and Miller posit that categories, policies and practices within a globalized system of migration arise from social processes that are mediated by individuals.³⁶ They suggest that government officers must navigate the micro, meso and macro structures of the global migration system in the course of developing and implementing immigration and refugee policies, programs, and practices. Their understanding informs this dissertation’s concern with the role of individuals in mediating these various structures, and in what Castles et al. theorize as “systems of migration.”

According to Castles et al., individual and group agents who are engaged in migration management operate within three levels of structures—the macro, micro and meso.³⁷ The macro-level is where states, corporations and international agencies exist; the micro-level where families, social networks and local communities exist; and the meso-level is the intermediate level where networks and relationships exist.³⁸ This thesis builds on this conceptualization, with a focus on agents of the state who, in addition to their bureaucratic functions, embody other roles and cultivate their

³⁵ Ibid., 50.

³⁶ Stephen Castles, Hein de Haas and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, (Macmillan International Higher Education: The Guilford Press, 2013), 25-46.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

own personal and professional networks. In doing so, the officers interviewed for this thesis occupy, navigate and mediate all three strata. The meso-level is particularly relevant to this thesis's preoccupation with refugee policy implementation through selection interviews and procedures. To be more precise, individual officers who engaged in refugee selection interviews through formal bureaucratic processes in Central-East Africa on behalf of the Canadian state mainly occupied the meso-level, while mediating between the macro and micro levels described above.

This dissertation also builds on other political-sociological studies concerned with the role of individuals in the implementation of people-centred norms. International relations scholars Betts and Orchard's volume *Norms and the Politics of Implementation* posits that "beyond structure, agency matters for implementation."³⁹ Their collection of essays shows that material and ideational structures can constrain or enable norm or policy implementation.⁴⁰ To answer the question regarding "which actors and structures matter most in the process of implementing international norms," Betts and Orchard argue that in world politics, norms "both constrain and constitute the behaviour of states and other transnational actors [by] providing incentives and by socializing states and other actors through a range of mechanisms that include the transformation of domestic legal systems and bureaucracies."⁴¹ Structures that influence the implementation of policy norms can be material, ideational and institutional.⁴² This dissertation is preoccupied with the first two—a

³⁹ Betts Alexander and Philip Orchard, *Norms and the Politics of Implementation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 273-275.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 14.

consideration of institutional capacity as part of material structures. Generally, material structures are understood to be state capacity, priorities and interests that manifest through policy, legal and resource parameters and prescriptions, while ideational structures are understood to be the legal system and the cultural context within which officers operated.⁴³ As outlined, the two structures under consideration in this thesis are material and ideational and, for this thesis's purposes, these structures apply to refugee selection processes in two particular scales and contexts—Canada and Africa. The geographic context allows for an examination of the structures that condition officer agency within the local context of refugee selection, that is, Central East Africa.

In conceptualizing and defining ideational structures, Betts and Orchard recognize the important role ideas and cultural influences have on how international policy norms are constituted at national and local levels, and significantly, “how they can come to mean radically different things when combined with the pre-existing cultural and historical context.”⁴⁴ Of equal importance are the “agents who introduce or reinterpret new ideas” and are able to “call attention to issues or even create issues by using language that names, interprets and dramatizes them.”⁴⁵ These agents and their capacity and “commitment to ‘carry’ an international norm from institutionalization to implementation can be important in shaping implementation and surmounting potential structural obstacles.”⁴⁶ Betts and Orchard argue that such individuals or organizations can arise from within epistemic communities or

⁴³ Ibid, 4.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

individuals who are designated “experts” and who end up playing a critical role in “translating international norms into implementable policies at the domestic level.”⁴⁷

For this study, the officers acted as narrators in the past context of refugee policy implementation, and possessed “degree[s] of technical ‘expertise’ to carry [refugee policy norms] into practice.”⁴⁸ In turn, their expertise and ability to act as narrators and navigators would have been premised on an “understanding of causal relationships that shape implementation” and their access and control of “structures of epistemic knowledge” that would be designated as having authority over implementation.⁴⁹ Officers derived their authority to engage in refugee selection from the Government of Canada and, more specifically, from the mandate, provisions and prescriptions derived from within the Canadian legal system. In this sense, “the domestic legal system may also either play a constitutive role or serve as a constraining ideational structure” that legitimates policy norms and allows their implementation.⁵⁰

Betts and Orchard also argue that state interests and capacity also matter for implementation, and they conceptualize these as material structures. The capacity, interests and consequent priorities of states can act as a constraint or enabling factor, thereby explaining variation in implementation.⁵¹ These can be economic, political or refer to the broader institutional structures of the state and its capacity to implement policy norms to which it has committed or acceded.⁵² Betts’ and Orchard’s

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 14.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 15.

⁵¹ Ibid, 15.

⁵² Ibid.

conceptualization of ideational and material structures is relevant and integral to understanding the conditions, constraints and constitutive context within which officers engaged in refugee selection and implemented Canada's resettlement policy. The identification of structures is important because it explains and illuminates the broader historical context within which officers operated and, in turn, the critical range of conditions, constraints, interests and priorities that impacted officer agency in the course of refugee selection.

Recognizing the generalizations and limitations of political-sociological approaches, this study historicizes and conceptualizes refugee selection and interview processes as forms of policy implementation at the local level. The three life stories allow the study to consider government officers not only as agents of implementation, whose individual attributes, personality, capability and values can shape methods of refugee selection but also, as historical actors whose memories and accounts can shape one way in which the history of these formal bureaucratic processes can be remembered and told. Sociologists who study how discretionary decisions are made in the context of micro-level interactions between street-level bureaucrats and clients have long recognized that broader structural processes set the context for how discretion is exercised and how decisions are made.⁵³ The examination of memory (as articulated through the oral accounts of the three officers) therefore requires an additional layer of analysis which converses with and builds on the scholarship of the

⁵³ See Janet A. Gilboy, "Deciding Who Gets In: Decision-making by Immigration Inspectors," *Law & Society Review*, 25, no. 3 (1991): 571-600; and Lisa Frohmann, "'Discrediting Victims' Allegations of Sexual Assault: Prosecutorial Accounts of Case Rejections," *Social Problems*, 38, no. 2 (May, 1991): 213-226.

sociology of migration management, which has examined the role of individuals (agents) in implementing migration policies within complex bureaucratic processes.

To this end, Bouchard and Carroll's examination of street-level civil servants' judgement and discretion in decision-making within Canadian immigration policy and practices through interviews offers a useful precedent on how to conceptualize the role of individual agency within complex bureaucratic procedures.⁵⁴ Bouchard and Carroll's book is based on interviews conducted with thirty-five immigration officials from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and the Ministère des Relations Avec les citoyens et de l'immigration (MRCIw) who served in Canada and at border entry posts with the United States from 1994 to 1998.⁵⁵ While this treatise does not look at Canadian immigration from the African continent, nor does it consider refugee selection (it focuses on immigrant selection more broadly), it provides some salient findings about the role of individual officer discretion in decision making. Bouchard and Carroll define "discretion" as "the making of adjustments by bureaucrats to policy or programs through their exercise of judgement" and consider it "part of the reality of policy implementation."⁵⁶ The authors argue that the capacity to exercise discretion and judgement means that "professional norms c[o]me to be mingled with aspects of personal discretion that reflec[t] the individual biases of the immigration officer."⁵⁷ The manner in which programs are delivered, and the degree or nature of

⁵⁴ Geneviève Bouchard and Barbara Wake Carroll, "Policy-making and Administrative Discretion: The Case of Immigration in Canada," *Canadian Public Administration*, 45, no.2 (January 2008):239- 257.

⁵⁵ Ibid. Of the thirty-five officers, interviews were conducted with seven immigration officers or former immigration officers serving, or who had served, at border entry points, and twenty-eight with Canadian and Quebec immigration officers who had served or were serving in the United States.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 241-242.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 242.

discretion used by officials in visa offices or posts scattered across the country and abroad, “will reflect, at least to some degree, their personal philosophical outlook.”⁵⁸ This dissertation’s focus on memory and individual agency qualifies Bouchard and Carroll’s findings and argues that individuals have considerable, but not infinite, discretion. The capacity to exercise subjective or personal philosophy is conditioned and constrained by material structures.

Vic Satzewich’s study of officer decision-making under the current Immigration Refugee Protection is based on structured interviews conducted with over one hundred Canadian visa officers, locally engaged staff, and immigration program managers at 11 visa offices in Europe, the United States, the Middle East, South America, the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia. This research also considered the role of visa office and officers in complex immigrant selection processes and (while conceding to the important role of individual discretion) cautioned against employing simplistic dichotomies or binaries that characterize officers as either “enforcers” or “facilitators.”⁵⁹ Satzewich recognizes that such views may abound because officers are “bound by federal privacy rules and thus cannot elaborate on why they made their decisions in specific cases, [and thus] much of the public’s understanding of them is, as a result, one-sided.”⁶⁰ Therefore, the “mandated silence about the controversial cases tends to leave the public with a largely negative impression of officers and how

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Vic Satzewich, *Points of Entry: How Canada’s Immigration Officers Decide Who Gets In?* (Toronto: UBC Press, 2015). Satzewich’s temporal and thematic scope differs from this dissertation’s historical study of refugee selection abroad in that it looks at more recent legal provisions of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act of 2001 and, interviews officers who worked with the federal skilled worker class, family class, partner and spousal sponsorships, and temporary resident categories.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 7.

they do their jobs.”⁶¹ An important contribution of this dissertation, then, is to lift this “mandated silence” by presenting non-structured interviews and open life stories that reflect a perspective on the agency experienced and perceived by officers.

Additionally, this research expands on Satzewich’s warning about the dangers of conceptualizing officer actions and motives through a rigid binary that positions their actions in terms of either facilitation or enforcement. This kind of perspective on officers’ decisions or actions may not account for a complex bureaucratic environment in which the legislation spells out the general principles of immigration policy: For example, Canadian immigration regulations specify the criteria to be used in assessing applications, and detailed processing manuals explain how officers should conduct and document their investigations and decisions. Within this complexity, the decision to issue or refuse a visa is ultimately a matter of officer discretion in which he or she must be “satisfied” that: applicants are whom they claim to be; that they meet the eligibility criteria for the visa; and that they are not inadmissible to Canada for reasons of public safety, security or health conditions.⁶² While every applicant is a unique individual with a particular background, personality, and set of life experiences (as suggested by Nyerere at the outset of this dissertation), through social processes, bureaucrats must transform individuals into categories and standardized units that can be processed under pre-existing rules and procedures.⁶³ This thesis builds on early literature in the field that has examined the relationship between agency and structure and acknowledged the important role that individuals

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid., 6.

⁶³ Ibid., 216.

play in the implementation of migration policy and decision-making for immigration selection.

At this point, it is important to stress that this study does not seek to make a normative argument about the structures, institutions, rules and spaces within which these officers navigated, nor does it seek to establish the veracity or falsity of the officers' memories and accounts. Instead, the goal of the research is to examine the relationship between structure and individual agency during a specific historical moment of flux and policy development, within a local context, and as perceived by crucial bureaucratic actors. In this dissertation, three officers' life stories of refugee selection in Canada's Africa Refugee Program provide a useful and nuanced prism that reflects how individual bureaucrats navigated micro and macro structures as they implemented refugee policy, and how they understood, remembered and narrated these experiences.

The specificity of the localized lens afforded by the three officers' experiences with the Africa Refugee Program responds to a more recent call for a disaggregated understanding of power in refugee protection policy and practice by political scientists and refugee policy scholars Milner and Wojnarowicz. Milner and Wojnarowicz envision a perspective that is sensitive to its formation and expression within the "wild card" of the local context.⁶⁴ In their words, applying the notion of "productive power" in the day-to-day practice and local context of refugee protection policy implementation helps to conceptualize the "production of subjectivities and the

⁶⁴ James Milner and Krystyna Wojnarowicz, "Power in the Global Refugee Regime: Understanding Expressions and Experiences of Power in Global and Local Contexts," *Refuge*, 33, no.1 (2017): 7-17.

relationship between power and knowledge.”⁶⁵ In refugee selection, “power in the local context [has] an intimate characteristic, as refugees and interveners are fused in an unequal power relationship.”⁶⁶ Their definition of “interveners” likens the role of individual officers representing state government (such as the three subjects of this thesis) to the role of individuals representing the UNHCR, faith-based groups, NGO refugee advocates and organizations who intervene in refugee situations and interface with refugees in order to help provide solutions.⁶⁷

This thesis recognizes that the development of refugee policy and practice goes beyond the actions of government bureaucrats, or these three officers, in particular. However, much is to be gained by understanding how these individual officers understood their role as agents of the Canadian state, and how they acted as story-hearers, decision-makers, power-brokers and narrators within a particular historical moment, as they took on the responsibility for interviewing and selecting refugees who would make new lives in Canada.

History and narrative

Within these specific parameters, and with these preoccupations, it became apparent during early research that there is minimal scholarship that has considered the refugee selection interview as a space of storytelling. That gap was even more pronounced in historical studies than in socio-political scholarship. The most promising perspective was found in the historical accounts of men and women who lived hundreds of years before this study’s subjects: Natalie Zemon Davis’ social

⁶⁵ Ibid, 11-14

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ There is significant scholarship that has examined the role of non-state actors in the evolution of Canada’s resettlement policies since the Second World War and this will be discussed in chapter two.

history of the narrative skills of sixteenth-century French ordinary men and women who told crime stories and pardon tales to the King of France and his representatives, in order to save themselves from imprisonment or the gallows.⁶⁸ Zemon Davis makes use of letters and documents from archives to consider the interests of narrators within settings and structures that constrain and enable them (including the law) to reveal the minds and lives of storytellers preceding the storytelling events she studies.⁶⁹ The main methodological goal of this thesis is to demonstrate how Zemon Davis' attention to the role of narrative in history, as well as the conceptual frames she uses to explore storytelling conventions of 16th-century supplicants, can contribute significantly to making sense of 20th-century storytelling in refugee selection. In both of these contexts, however distant, telling a "good" story could mean the difference between life and death.⁷⁰

In order to interrogate storytelling in refugee selection interviews, this study substantively engages with the conditions and structures that shaped what stories refugee applicants told, and how officers heard these stories. As in sixteenth-century France, the hearing of stories was shaped and determined by structural realities, constraints and possibilities. The officers who heard refugee applicant stories were not simply enforcers of government policy and programs but had a degree of agency in how and what they heard with regards to the stories presented before them. Additionally, these officers' "discretion" (as understood by Bouchard and Carroll)

⁶⁸ Natalie Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and their Tellers in Sixteenth-Century France* (California: Stanford University Press, 1987).

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 4.

⁷⁰ Chapter one discusses oral history as a methodology and theory for this study and expands on these insights.

extended beyond refugee selection interviews to include, as Zemon Davis suggests, the minds and lives of the storytellers: what they chose to record, transmit, and learn over the years, and the choices informed by their own personal stories.

The study also investigates both the past and present contexts of storytelling. For example, the analytical concept of the narrator is similar to Zemon Davis' treatment of pardon supplicants as narrators whose legal petitions to the King were expressions in narrative technique. While Zemon Davis alludes to the need for everyone seeking a pardon to get a "command," or "jusio" by telling their pardon tale to an officer of the royal chancellery "from one of the Little Chancellery offices associated with the sovereign courts at Paris, Bordeaux, Rouen, Toulouse, and elsewhere," the book does not examine how officers of the royal chancellery "heard" these tales.⁷¹

In this dissertation, state officers are the narrators. Their oral accounts allow for a deeper understanding of the conditions of story-hearing during refugee selection interviews in Central and East Africa from the 1970s to 1990, the use of narrative in relaying these experiences to others, and their use of narrative for telling their own life stories about refugee selection. The research also illuminates the narrative techniques and interests employed by officers during present-day oral history interviews about that past. Choosing to use oral history interviews as the main primary source for this study allowed for a more in-depth exploration of the role of subjectivity and agency in both the past and present: At the first level, subjectivity and agency infused individual officers' recollections about the past; At the second

⁷¹ Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives*, 8.

level, they determined how, in the performance of their duties, officers approached refugee selection, how and whether they exercised discretion and, within this process, “heard” the stories of refugee applicants. The influential oral historian Portelli warns that, within the practice and theory of oral history, subjectivity does not mean “the abolition of controls, nor the unrestrained preference, convenience or whim of the researcher.”⁷² Instead, he considers that “the study of the cultural forms and processes by which individuals express their sense of themselves in history” is crucial.⁷³ In this research, the officers’ sense of self was reflected in the course of refugee selection interviews, and in how and what the officers chose to narrate of their life-stories during the oral history interviews. Portelli’s notion of subjectivity is, therefore, essential to understanding how officers manifested agency.⁷⁴

Canadian Immigration and Refugee Selection

There is considerable scholarship about narrative and storytelling within the in-Canada refugee status determination (RSD) interviews conducted before asylum is granted to claimants.⁷⁵ These studies have been based on first-hand observations of

⁷² Allesandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), ix

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ The dissertation will return to and expand on subjectivity as an analytical frame in chapter one.

⁷⁵ Anthea Vogl, “Refugee Status Determination, Narrative and the Oral Hearing in Australia and Canada” (PhD thesis, University of British Columbia, 2016). The in-Canada RSD interview and the role of memory and storytelling has also been extensively explored from many angles by scholars from disciplines such as law and legal studies, literature, anthropology and psychology. In addition, see, Macklin Audrey, “Asylum and the Rule of Law in Canada: Hearing the Other (Side)” in Susan Kneebone, ed., *Refugees, Asylum Seekers and the Rule of Law: Comparative Perspectives* (Cambridge University Press, 2009): 78-85; Francois Crepeau and Delphine Nakache, “Critical Spaces in the Canadian Refugee Determination System: 1989-2002,” *International Journal of Refugee Law* Vol. 20, no.1 (2008):50-122; Rousseau, Cécile et al, “The Complexity of Determining Refugee-hood: A Multidisciplinary Analysis of the Decision-making Process of the Canadian Immigration and Refugee Board’ *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 1, (2002): 43-70; France Houle, “The Credibility and Authoritativeness of Documentary Information in Determining Refugee Status: The Canadian Experience” *International Journal of Refugee Law*, Vol. 6, Issue 1, (1994): 6-33; and Robert Barsky, *Constructing a Productive*

asylum hearing and processes in Canada. However, there is currently no study about refugee selection interviews conducted by Canadian officers abroad, in particular, about Canada's African refugee program, which is the subject of this thesis.⁷⁶ One of the officers interviewed for this study, Michael Molloy, provided an oral account of his role in the resettlement of Ugandan-Asian expellees to Canada in 1972.⁷⁷ Molloy has previously contributed to scholarship on the history of public servants' role in Canadian refugee policy and implementation, told from the perspective of bureaucrats themselves.⁷⁸ These recent contributions have flowed from Molloy's active and central role in the Canadian Immigration Historical Society (CIHS), which seeks to create a repository of knowledge and historical material from its membership (mostly retired public servants).⁷⁹ While Molloy's recent contributions to scholarship

Other: Discourse, Theory and the Convention refugee class Hearing (New York: John Benjamin Publishing, 1994). In terms of scholarship from Canadian officers, see former Immigration and Refugee Board member and Chairperson, Peter Showler's *Refugee Sandwich: Stories of Exile and Asylum* (Montreal, McGill-Queens University Press, 2006): a collection of fictional stories about participants in the in-Canada refugee determination process—lawyers, judges, interpreters, hearing officers, and refugee applicants or claimants. The collection offers sometimes satirical but critical analyses on the dilemmas of the asylum process and interviews based on claims made between the years 1989-1999.

⁷⁷ Michael Molloy, "An Oral History with Mike Molloy", interview by the Ugandan Asian Archive Oral History Project, Archives and Research Collections Carleton University Library, 2014: audio and transcript accessed December 1, 2018, <https://carleton.ca/uganda-collection/people/michael-molloy/>. The project digitized the memoir of the Canadian Foreign Service officer, Roger St. Vincent, who led the Uganda-Asian mission which was then *A Very Fortunate Life: The Early Years - WW II Patriotic Duty: A Career with Canada's Immigration Service* (Montreal, Quebec, 2005). The memoir was subsequently digitized by Carleton University's Macdorum Library and it can also be found under the title, *Seven Crested Cranes: Remembering a Tragic Saga, The Exodus of Ugandan South Asians*. http://oaresource.library.carleton.ca/history/A_Very_Fortunate_Life.pdf. [accessed August 23, 2019]. The self-written and self-edited memoir was originally co-published by Vincent with the Canadian Immigration History Society fourteen years ago with very limited copies, and is largely based on notes made in a daily logbook that St. Vincent kept documenting daily details, experiences and challenges of the Uganda-Asian resettlement movement in 1972.

⁷⁸ Michael J. Molloy and Laura Madokoro, "Effecting Change: Civil Servants and Refugee Policy in 1970s Canada", *Refuge*, 33, no 1 (2017): 52-61; Michael Molloy et al., *Running on Empty: Canada and the Indochinese Refugees, 1975-80* (Montreal, McGill-Queens University Press, 2017).

⁷⁹ Chapter three discusses Molloy's role as an historian, as one of the founding members and current President (as of 2003) of the Canadian Immigration Historical Society (CIHS). The CIHS also provides a forum through which former officers provide insider accounts or perspectives on Canadian immigration and refugee policy.

on the history of Canadian resettlement policy provide relevant context for this study, they are part of an institutional history that does not offer sufficient critical insight into the conditions and structures that shaped the conditions of refugee storytelling and hearing in refugee selection interviews. The role of individual government officers in the implementation of Canadian resettlement policy abroad is still a neglected area of scholarship. This study responds to the need for scholarship that lays out the settings, conditions, structures and interests which shaped refugee applicant storytelling and hearing in refugee selection interviews.

It is necessary to recognize that beyond the specific focus on the interview as a site of storytelling and hearing, there is broader and expansive historiography of Canadian resettlement policy that recognizes structural contexts of migration policy and practice. For instance, historian Angelika Sauer examines the years immediately following the Second World War and Canada's use of immigration policy as an instrument of foreign policy and a medium through which to transmit Canada's national self-image to other countries.⁸⁰ Sauer argues that the Canadian government's response to European immigrants and refugees was a "complex interplay of both internal and external factors, with internal and external implications." Through this argument, Sauer bridges the then "traditional historiographical gap between immigration and foreign policy."⁸¹ Since the officer accounts examined in this thesis are informed by individual experiences of implementing state refugee policy and navigating local contexts as agents of the Government of Canada, Sauer's

⁸⁰ Angelika E. Sauer, "A Matter of Domestic Policy? Canadian Immigration Policy and the Admission of Germans, 1945-50", *Canadian Historical Review*, 74 Issue 2 (June 1993): 226-263.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 229.

conceptualization of immigration as an implicit expression of foreign policy is important.

It is also critical to recognize the role of domestic and ethnic advocacy or lobby groups. For example, in the case of the *Volkdeutsche* immigrants from Germany, “the government’s wavering between commitment to internationalism and adherence to unrestricted national sovereignty created a political vacuum that a well-organized ethnic lobby group, in the form of the Canadian Christian Council for the Resettlement of Refugees (CCCR), was able to fill.”⁸² However, in these early post-war years, the limits of the CCCR’s influence on changes in regulations concerning German citizens, then officially categorized as Displaced Persons, suggest that there was a distinct foreign policy component which counter-balanced the impact of domestic pressure coming from non-state actors.⁸³ The admission of ethnic Germans and German citizens demonstrated that “Canadian immigration and refugee policy in the immediate postwar years remained a strange hybrid of Canada’s internationalist aspirations and the incremental solution of domestic problems.”⁸⁴

As stated, this thesis recognizes that Canadian resettlement policy and practice have not been solely driven by bureaucratic or state actors. The role of non-state actors in refugee and resettlement policy, in particular, has been examined by historians who have looked at major resettlement movements in Canadian history. For example, Bangarth and Thompson examine the role of transnationalism and specifically, the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC) and the World Council of

⁸² Ibid., 230.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 263.

Churches (WCC) in responding to the Hungarian resettlement movement from 1956 to 1957.⁸⁵ The resettlement of over thirty-seven thousand Hungarian refugees was “truly a national one and would not have been possible without the support and assistance of a whole host of voluntary organizations from a wide range of sectors of Canadian society, all of which contributed greatly to the resettlement effort.”⁸⁶ The CCC was one of many volunteer organizations in Canada that “offered assistance to the refugees during the Hungarian refugee crisis, assisted with the material needs of the Hungarians once they arrived in Canada, and lobbied Ottawa to include not just the most able in its selection of refugees.”⁸⁷ Significantly, CCC also had a transnational context during the period from 1956 to 1958, whereby it “worked closely with its sister council in Europe, the WCC, which had direct contact with the Hungarians.”⁸⁸ The Hungarian resettlement movement is an important historical precedent and context for understanding Canadian refugee policy developments in the 1970s and provides important context for the African Refugee Program. In addition, it illustrates the role, influence and potency of citizen activism and non-state actors (national and transnational) on state immigration and refugee policies.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Stephanie Bangarth and Andrew Thompson, “Transnational Christian Charity: The Canadian Council of Churches, World Council of Churches, and the Hungarian Refugee Crisis, 1956-1957,” *American Review of Canadian Studies*, 38, Issue 3 (2008): 295-316.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 295.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 296.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ Also see Stephanie Bangarth. “Citizen Activism, Refugees, and the State: Two Case-Studies in Canadian Immigration History,” in *Modern Canada: 1945 to Present*, ed. Catherine Briggs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 17-30. During the Hungarian crisis, “the federal government relied heavily on groups such as the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC), the Canadian Catholic Conference, the Canadian Rural Settlement Society, the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC), the Canadian Red Cross (CRC)s, the Canadian Hungarian Relief Committee, the Canadian Hungarian Protestant Ministerial Association, the Canadian Christian Council for the Rehabilitation of Refugees, the Canadian Welfare Council, and the Jewish Immigrant Aid Society (JIAS) to assist with the resettlement and integration of

There has also been a recognition that historical writing about Canadian immigration has not always accounted for the diversity of perspectives in the actors involved, especially along the lines of race, gender and class. Historians Epp, Iacovetta and Swyripa introduce their collection of historical essays, *Sisters or Strangers?* by recognizing that theoretically and historically-minded political scientists, sociologists and historians alike have recently “examined the relationship between Canada’s status as a white settler nation and its imagined self-identity as a ‘nation of immigrants,’ combined with its disreputable history as a colonizer of Aboriginal peoples.”⁹⁰ In this vein, the field of postcolonial theory has contributed new and critical frameworks for the histories of racism and sexism contained in the collection of essays that re-evaluate the history of Canadian immigration and recognize that it has been characterized by a “negotiation over privilege and power among people with varied backgrounds, histories, and experiences based on group identification.”⁹¹ These critical perspectives are especially important for situating and “reading” officer accounts within the broader and deeply contested terrain of Canadian immigration and refugee history, in which “neither life experiences nor scholarly analysis can be fully comprehended by opposing dualisms; the situation is usually more complex, [and] the answers are less clearly a matter of black and white,

the Hungarian refugees who arrived in Canada.” Bangarth also critically compares government responses to different refugee crises, depending on foreign policy exigencies: “While the Hungarian refugees were fleeing a Communist state and welcomed as democratic refugees, Chilean refugees fleeing a fascist state were viewed with suspicion by government officials.” (p. 18; 25)

⁹⁰ Marlene Epp, Franca Iacovetta and Frances Swyripa, *Sisters or Strangers? Immigrant, Ethnic, and Racialized Women in Canadian History*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 1-8.

⁹¹ Ibid., 8. Also see, calls for a critical approach to scholarship from David Gillborn, “Intersectionality, Critical Race Theory, and the Primacy of Racism: and the Primacy of Racism: Race, Class, Gender, and Disability in Education,” *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol. 21, Issue 3, (2015): 278., which “challenges a-historicism by stressing the need to understand racism within its social, economic, and historical context.”

right or wrong."⁹²To stress further, this dissertation does not seek to make a normative assessment on the role of officers but seeks to illustrate the central role they played in the development and functioning of the resettlement program within a particular local context.

As such, the need to better understand the critical importance of the refugee selection interview as a significant arena for refugee storytelling led to the study's focus on government officers' testimonies and recollections about how they heard, and decided on, refugee applicants' stories within the settings, conditions and structures of the Africa Refugee Program. The three officers' life stories provide a unique conduit into a hitherto under-examined aspect of Canadian resettlement in Africa in its early and formative years, while also examining the relationship between agency and structure, as well as the production of subjectivities and power in local contexts of implementation. In this regard, this research addresses an important gap in the historiography of Canadian resettlement, but also anchors and builds on existing literature from historians, sociologists of migration and migration management, political scientists and international relation scholars.⁹³

Research Questions

In order to address the gap in the literature that explains the role of individuals in implementing resettlement policy in local contexts, as well as the role of storytelling within the refugee selection interview and attendant processes, the study

⁹² Ibid., 7.

⁹³ Chapters two and three will outline and discuss extensive scholarship that expands on and substantiates these three major thematic anchors, especially expressions of subjectivity through oral testimony and the structures of implementation, respectively.

poses two sets of key questions that generally deal with substantive issues of refugee selection and a reflection on methods employed by the study, respectively. Firstly, how did officers “hear” refugee applicant stories within the Africa Refugee Program? In turn, what structures and interests conditioned, constrained or enabled the agency of officers when making selection decisions based on applicants’ stories? In light of the centrality of life stories to this study, to what extent can oral history interviews with officers who implemented Canada’s Africa Refugee Program in its earliest and formative years help to explain the role of individual agency in policy development and implementation? What do these oral interviews reveal about what officers considered significant when making selection decisions? Beyond material and ideational structures, what other constraints and influences impacted the refugee selection interview process or outcomes?

Secondly, how and why do officers tell their life stories in particular ways? What factors shape how they tell their stories and what they choose to include or exclude? This second set of questions necessitate an interrogation of the relationship between the past and the present in the officers’ narratives, and a reflection on how the officers understand their role as narrators. For this purpose, the notion of “narrative” (to which the study returns later) must be examined as it is at the heart of studies of story-telling. Through its examination of both immigration officers’ stories and applicants’ stories (as conveyed to officers in immigration selection interviews), this study is concerned not merely with content, but also with the structure of story-telling. In using life stories obtained through oral history interviews, this dissertation seeks to answer these questions by examining the perspective and role of key

bureaucratic agents in the establishment and implementation of the African Refugee Program, and how they now understand its establishment and their ability to navigate and mediate between the structural conditions and prescriptions of refugee policy and law and the local context of operating in Central and East Africa.

While future research could critically engage with these life stories in different ways, the dissertation focuses on these questions for the following reasons. These questions allow insight and examination of how Canada's formalized refugee resettlement policy was implemented during the formative years through localized and complex bureaucratic refugee selection processes. By hearing the stories of the officers who "heard" and made decisions on the basis of refugee applicant stories told within the Africa Refugee Program, this thesis is able to examine the structures and interests that conditioned, constrained or enabled these officers agency and actions, especially during a historical period characterized by broader developments in Canadian refugee protection policy, state-building and geopolitical evolutions in Central-East Africa.

Central Argument

In summary, this dissertation argues that the life stories of the three officers in the research illuminate the relationships, tensions and/or possibilities between individual agency and structure within the process of refugee policy implementation. This dissertation uses the "life story" definition as being that of an interpretive methodology in which the "narratives about one's life, or relevant parts thereof [provide] access to the narrator's perspective: his or her values, definitions of situations, and knowledge of social processes and rules that he or she has acquired

through experience.”⁹⁴ Within the study of history, the practice and theory of oral history is a means through which to document life stories. Oral accounts can provide insight into the individual experiences, thinking and telling of a particular issue, events or period in history. The theory and practice of oral history applied to this research project are discussed in fuller detail within Chapter one.

The three officers’ individual and collective trajectories and experiences demonstrate how they exercised agency within and outside of state structures as narrators, navigators and negotiators. Also, their accounts tell a collective story about the settings, conditions, constraints and interests that shaped how they “heard” refugee applicant stories while implementing Canada’s humanitarian and resettlement policy through the Africa Refugee Program in its earliest and formative years. Additionally, the officers’ stories put a human face on bureaucratic processes, and help us to pay attention to the zones of the relative autonomy of bureaucrats, and to the variety of their actions. Ultimately, this dissertation argues that in policy implementation, the individual matters. By building on and weaving conversations from existing literature to make this argument, this thesis contributes to literature on oral history while reaffirming the value of the subjective perspective; Canadian immigration and refugee historiography with an examination of a hitherto underexplored consideration of storytelling within the African Refugee Program and; finally, to scholarship that considers the role of individuals in the implementation of state policies, especially in particular and localized contexts.

⁹⁴ Daniel Bertaux and Martin Kohli, “The Life Story Approach: A Continental View,” *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 10 (1984), 215-237

In addition, it makes a substantive contribution to theorizing the role of individual agency in the mediation of migration structures. This thesis both complicates and nuances the meso-level structures discussed by Castles. With the help of the three concepts of the navigator, narrator and negotiator, this thesis offers a localized, specific and closer examination of the “meso-level.” Moreover, the accounts of government agents themselves show how the relationship between the micro and the macro structural levels and, in turn, the role of individual agency, are entangled, nuanced and contingent on contextual variables.

The focus on the specificities and subjectivities of officers’ accounts, about their experiences operating in various contexts, helps challenge problematic conceptualizations of officers’ roles through simplistic binaries, which present them either “facilitators,” or as “enforcers.” For instance, as will be substantively discussed in chapters one and two, scholars who have employed the term “gatekeepers” to describe the role of officers in migration management have rarely allowed for a nuanced understanding of officers’ actions.

However, as this thesis will show, such simplistic terms can be problematic, essentializing and dehumanizing because they do not account for the complex and variable impact of individual agency in bureaucratic processes such as refugee selection. Indeed, officers’ actions and decisions are informed by multiple factors that include the specifics of individual refugee applications, local contexts of refugee selection, and broader material and ideational structures within which they operate. In this way, this thesis contributes a more intricate understanding to theories of migration.

Analytical Concepts: Narrator, Navigator and Negotiator

In order to explain and understand the officers' role in the development of resettlement policy and as agents of implementation, this study uses three analytical concepts: "narrator," "navigator" and "negotiator." These concepts were developed by the author in collaboration with their supervising scholars, building from the political-sociological literature on the role of individuals in mediating bureaucratic structures. The author's use of these concepts to analyze the agency and discretion of individual government officers in the implementation of refugee policy is unique to this dissertation and stands as an original contribution from the research to the historiography of resettlement. It is worth repeating that these concepts are by no means intended to suggest that only the three officers interviewed here played these roles. Rather, the three life stories examined here, are only indicative of how some officers navigated and negotiated refugee selection, and how they narrated their actions and experiences. Their accounts represent only a portion of the knowledge and memories of the history of Canadian resettlement policy in Africa.

The three concepts help to organize and interpret the officers' roles and life-stories, structure the dissertation's general analysis and argument, and speak back to the literature (as detailed in the Conclusion). They also provide a vocabulary to articulate why and how individual officers exercised agency at the time of their posting in Africa, and to show how they have understood their own actions, motives and interactions since then. The three concepts are informed, in part, by the knowledge the officers conveyed when they shared their stories, including allusions they made themselves to documents and studies to which they have contributed. For

example, the term “negotiator” was used by Burrows to describe Molloy’s role, while the terms “navigator” and “narrator” were informed by the officers’ accounts. Further underpinnings and significance of these three concepts will be substantively explored in the rest of the dissertation, primarily in the individual life story chapters (e.g. three, four and five). The following section provides working definitions for each of the concepts.

Narrator

In this study, the word “narrator” refers to someone who narrates or recounts events, experiences and information. The three life stories identify how all of the officers were narrators in their different sets of circumstances. Firstly, all three acted as narrators in the oral history interviews with the author, where they recounted experiences and memories of their roles in implementing the Africa Refugee Program from the 1970s to 1990. Secondly, while they implemented resettlement policy and engaged in refugee selection, Molloy, Burrows and Mullin narrated Canadian policy, priorities, interests, laws and procedures to various audiences, such as refugee applicants and many of the “interveners” in the process: resettlement partners (domestic and international), refugee-hosting country governments, stakeholders and refugee advocates, and researchers and academics. Thirdly, all of the officers’ official roles included directly recounting their actions to headquarters and policymakers in Ottawa regarding their operational experiences, lessons, realities, challenges and successes in order to shape policy and program development. In all three sets of circumstances, using the notion of a “narrator” allowed the researcher to identify and better understand what officers considered significant and worth

narrating in the course of implementing resettlement policy at the time, and what they include and exclude in their narratives today.

Navigator

The term navigator derives from the verb “navigate,” which means to plan, direct or steer the course of a vessel through obstacles. This study has chosen to use the image of a navigator to explain how officers steered the process of implementation of the Africa Refugee Program, within the context of material and ideational structures.⁹⁵ In this conception, the vessel was resettlement policy implementation and refugee selection. For Molloy and Mullin, especially, the term navigator provides a useful tool for discussing their respective experiences of selecting applicants in different geographic regions while employing the relevant legal mechanisms and later to compare these two experiences.⁹⁶ The term also helps clarify Molloy’s long and varied professional trajectory, which channelled him from roles of implementation (as a Foreign Service officer operating abroad) to policy development (as Director of Refugee Policy at headquarters), and back to implementation. Burrows, in contrast, “navigated” through a variety of local contexts of implementation that were each shaped by specific political conditions and ideational structures. In this way, the frame of “navigator” helped the author understand how officers acted through changing temporal and spatial contexts.

Negotiator

⁹⁵ Chapter two explains the nature of these structures from the 1970s to the 1990s.

⁹⁶ The various legal mechanisms through which officers selected individuals for resettlement are outlined and discussed in chapter two. In brief, the two main mechanisms were the Convention Refugee in Need of Resettlement class and the Indochinese Designated class which were articulated in the *1976 Immigration Act*.

Lastly, the author of this study chose the word “negotiator,” derived from the verb “negotiate,” which means to obtain or bring about by discussion or to try to reach an agreement or compromise by discussion. This concept is used to explain specific processes whereby an officer formally negotiated with various partners in order to implement resettlement policy. For Molloy, effective negotiation meant building and maintaining relationships across the resettlement continuum, from refugee selection abroad to settlement in Canada, in order to implement Canadian resettlement policy and priorities. The importance of relationships was vital to the negotiator role because discussions, negotiations and agreements about resettlement took place at different levels of government and with representatives of different organizations or groups. Additionally, these relationships and negotiations took place along the spectrum of policy development within Canada and during implementation abroad.

Thesis Structure

The thesis is structured around five chapters, excluding the introduction and conclusion. The first two chapters clarify the theoretical and analytical frameworks that were used to organize and explain the life stories. The following three chapters are each dedicated to an officer and are, in large part, ordered according to the chronology of the three officers’ experiences with the Canadian resettlement policy and the Africa Refugee Program. Michael Molloy’s involvement in the earliest and largest resettlement from the African continent (the Ugandan-Asian resettlement movement of 1972) is the first account, appearing in chapter 3. Chapter 4 is devoted to Scott Mullin, who was the first officer dispatched to the Nairobi visa office to

establish the Africa Refugee Program from 1981 to 1984 formally. Susan Burrow's extensive experience as the refugee program manager from 1987 to 1990, at a time where the program had expanded significantly in size and scope, is related in the fifth chapter. This chronological outline allows for an incremental discussion of both officers' roles and their memories. Together, the three life stories chapters tell a compelling narrative of the actions, relationships, decisions and values of individual government officers and of their significant impact on the genesis and development of the Africa Refugee Program in its earliest decades.

More precisely, chapter one outlines and explains how oral history is both method and theory in this study. This chapter locates individual agency in expressions of subjectivity in oral testimony. In doing so, the study outlines and builds on extensive oral history scholarship that has embraced narrative and subjectivity in history. This chapter is key to the dissertation because it provides the theoretical framework to understand the individual agency and discretion of officers as narrators in both the past and present and why and how they employed particular narrative techniques to articulate their individual life stories.

Furthermore, in discussing theory and method, chapter one contains a section that examines this author's positionality and standpoint with regards to the research subject, as both an 'insider' (as a colleague to the officers interviewed for the study) and as an 'outsider' due to being a former refugee and racialized person (who has experienced the bureaucratic procedures that entail Canada's refugee protection policy). That section will elaborate on how this thesis's conceptualization, approach, and questions are, in large part, informed by the knowledge, interests and

sensibilities gained through various experiences in both roles, allowing for a valuable and multi-dimensional standpoint.

Chapter two outlines and explains the evolutions in Canadian refugee protection policy and the structures within which refugee selection in Africa took place from the 1970s to the 1990s. In doing so, this chapter provides a framework to understand the material and ideational structures within which officers navigated, and the local context and conditions within which officers built, maintained and negotiated various relationships as they engaged along the continuum of policy development to implementation. This chapter is informed by primary source policy documents outlining key Canadian refugee policy developments, including the *1970 Memorandum to Cabinet on the Selection of Refugees for Resettlement to Canada* that recommended the establishment of a universal and non-discriminatory refugee system and formalized the resettlement program. The chapter also considers refugee provisions from the *1976 Immigration Act*, internal Ministry of Immigration refugee policy papers and briefs, operational guidelines to officers on refugee selection criteria, and Annual Reports to Parliament on Immigration Levels published from 1981 to 1990.

The chapter describes the ideational structures that influenced Canadian resettlement policy and implementation in Africa, including domestic and foreign policy interests and relationships during the Cold-War era. For instance, since the Second World War, third-country resettlement programs of Western governments have usually aligned with foreign policy interests and ideological objectives.⁹⁷ The United

⁹⁷ See Sauer, "A Matter of Domestic Policy," 228.

States of America has historically been a critical resettlement partner country for Canada, and throughout the Cold War, especially during the 1970s and 1980s, resettlement was understood as a tool to support foreign policy interests.⁹⁸ The US generally lends assistance and offers protection to refugees when there are “strong link[s] to US foreign policy; clear and highly visible humanitarian needs and important domestic constituencies in support” of action.⁹⁹ The Government of Canada has not been an exception to this instrumentalism of humanitarianism and has often allied with the US in the selecting humanitarian or refugee protection priorities for which to fund in UNHCR operations.¹⁰⁰ This chapter, therefore, situates individual agency within a broader ideational structural context in which global resettlement policy is informed and mediated by domestic and foreign policy priorities.

The process by which the research participants were selected and interviewed is discussed more fully in the life story chapters (three, four and five) since it constitutes the “how” of storytelling and the factors that shaped the context of each officer’s account. The third chapter, based on the life story of Michael Molloy, considers his experiences in refugee operations in the late 1960s and 1970s, as well as his central role in influencing and developing refugee resettlement policy, program and legal provisions for the *1976 Immigration Act* which in turn informed the Africa

⁹⁸ Susan F. Martin and Elizabeth Ferris, “US Leadership and the International Refugee Regime,” in *Refuge*, 33, no.1 (2017): 18-28.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 22-23. An example was the mass resettlement of refugees from Indochina in 1979, which resulted from a convergence of US government foreign policy interests pertaining to anti-Communism and support from veterans of the Vietnam conflict and humanitarian organizations. The Geneva Conference had been called by the US to lead a multi-lateral and comprehensive approach to address the refugee crisis in South Asia. The US pledged to resettle “at least 14,000 Indochinese refugees per month for whatever time it took to stabilize the situation” and its “call for others [including Canada] to resettle refugees was met with widespread agreement.”

Refugee Program. This chapter explains the role that one individual agent played in shaping the material structures, which subsequently created the operational conditions for future officers. This author's account lets Molloy "speak" on his terms as much as possible, and the analysis is intended to illuminate critical themes arising from his life story, including the very ways he uses to remember these themes. This chapter also examines how Molloy has narrated his experiences about refugee selection in Africa to different audiences over time, including an interview for the documentary film *Who Gets In*, filmed in 1989, and the oral history interview about the Uganda-Asian movement conducted in August 2014 by Heather LeRoux on behalf of *The Ugandan Asian Archive Oral History Project*.¹⁰¹

Chapter four, based on the life story of Scott Mullin, the officer who established the African refugee program in Nairobi from 1981 to 1984, provides insight into the earliest years of the Africa Refugee Program by discussing the early structures and relationships he "navigated" in order to implement the program. The most formative years of the program followed the recent formalization of Canada's global humanitarian and resettlement program in 1978. Critically, Mullin's testimony contrasts resettlement in Africa with his previous experiences in Indochina from 1978 to 1980, to show how different geographic locations and legal mechanisms differentially impacted on the length and complexity of refugee selection interviews.

Chapter five is based on the life story of Susan Burrows, who engaged in refugee selection in the Nairobi visa office between 1987 and 1990, where she

¹⁰¹ The Ugandan Asian Archive Oral History Project, Archives and Research Collections at Carleton University, accessed May 25, 2019, <https://carleton.ca/uganda-collection/people/michael-molloy/>. Also present during this interview was Shezan Muhammedi, then a PhD Candidate in History, Migration and Ethnic Relations at the University of Western Ontario.

received on-the-job training and mentorship from Molloy regarding refugee operations. Later, in 1989, Molloy developed and taught a refugee selection course in Ottawa to other Canadian officers being posted to visa offices abroad. This course was meant to prepare officers for the realities of refugee operations abroad and in the field, in addition to their knowledge of policy and legal provisions of the 1976 Immigration Act. While the Molloy connection provides continuity between their stories, as well as an occasion to discuss the mentor-mentee relationship, it also reveals an important aspect of the role of bureaucratic culture and knowledge transfer in policy implementation. This story, of the only female officer, interviewed, provides an opportunity to examine the gendered realities of refugee selection at a time when the Africa Refugee Program had become more established, was widely known, and, therefore, over-subscribed. Critically, Burrows' account helps illuminate the dual role of Canadian Immigration Foreign Service officers as both enablers of implementation and diplomats, a theme introduced earlier. In particular, the officers needed to be aware of the implications of their selection decisions on the Government of Canada's diplomatic relations with African governments or resettlement allies.

The conclusion provides a summary of the dissertation's findings and a discussion of the extent to which the study's findings confirmed, complicated or deviated from its starting argument that individual agency matters in policy implementation. In doing so, the conclusion summarizes the study's insights about the history of Canada's resettlement policy with regards to Central and East Africa, as well as the implications of the study's findings for refugee policy, practice and

scholarship. Additionally, the conclusion explores opportunities and areas for future research that have arisen from the study, including the crucial need for further explorations of the role of agency and structure in the life stories of those who experienced the Africa Refugee Program and processes as refugee applicants. A recurring theme in all three officers' life stories was their concern for the importance of human agency, intuition and discretion in immigrant and refugee selection. In light of pushes for modernization, and an increasing interest in the role of artificial intelligence in the government of Canada's operations, this study offers a compelling and personalized avenue for exploring how new technologies might impact the lives of potential and vulnerable immigrant and refugees. In this new context, the research might contribute to the imagination of renewed approaches and procedures in the implementation of the resettlement program in the future.

Chapter One: Theory and Method

The Canadian Immigration Foreign Service officers who interviewed and selected African refugee applicants for resettlement between the early 1970s and 1990 derived their authority from Canadian refugee law and policy. During the oral history interviews conducted as part of this study, each of the three officers told their story and their recollections about the process from their particular perspective. Given the dissertation's focus on officers' life stories, the purpose of this chapter is to explain the theory and method behind the use of oral history and narrative. In the same vein, this chapter helps to explain how the three officers are "narrators" in both the past and present. The individuality of each officer's life story is particularly important because this study seeks to highlight the critical role of subjectivity and individual agency in the officers' accounts (and experiences) of implementing Canada's Africa Refugee Program from the early 1970s up to 1990.

This chapter considers the methodology and theory behind the choice of oral history as a primary material for this study and uses theories concerning oral history to further elucidate the nature of the interaction between government officers and refugees within the context of refugee selection interviews. These theories help to unpack the narrative capacity of officers in the past and present contexts. As indicated in the Introduction, the role of narrator is the first of the three roles this study has identified for best articulating the actions of officers in the research.

Research Ethics and Interview Framework

As outlined in the Introduction chapter, the choice to use life stories for this thesis was deliberate and informed by the specific research questions posed. In order to get to questions of how officers “heard” refugee stories, I needed to hear from the individuals who did the hearing themselves during refugee selection in Central and East Africa. Before I could contact or interview potential officers, I was required to seek and gain ethics approval from the Carleton University Research Ethics Board-A (CUREB-A). As mentioned earlier, at the time, the scope and intent of the research project was broader and included former refugee applicants. The project received approval, and CUREB-A issued a clearance certificate that was valid from May 7, 2018, to May 31, 2019.¹⁰² Thereafter, I sent a project introduction and invitation letter to participate in the project to four retired officers.¹⁰³ This letter indicated that the study aimed “to tell a history of how refugees have told their stories of flight and persecution to government and intergovernmental officials in order to obtain protection and to gain formal refugee status.”¹⁰⁴ The introductory letter proposed that interviews last “60-minute interview or longer, if necessary”.¹⁰⁵ Three of the officers (Molloy, Mullin and Burrows) agreed to participate, and I emailed them a copy of a letter of consent to participate and be audio recorded.¹⁰⁶ All three signed and handed the consent forms to me before our interviews commenced. The research project team submitted potential interview questions as part of the research ethics approval application.¹⁰⁷ These questions were not shared with potential participants

¹⁰² See Appendix 2: CUREB A- *Clearance Certificate for Andriata Chironda, #104760.*

¹⁰³ See Appendix 3: CUREB-A- *Letter of Invitation and Introduction.*

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ See Appendix 4: CUREB-A- *Consent Form for Visa Officer Interviewees.*

¹⁰⁷ See Appendix 5: CUREB-A- *Proposed Interview Questions*

or any of the three officers interviewed. It is worth stating that before the start of my interviews with all three former officers, I briefly told them about myself and the genesis of my research project, including my current occupation in immigration policy as well as my personal experiences as a former political refugee claimant. Ultimately, the interviews with the three officers were open-ended, and some of the originally proposed questions were used as follow-up questions after the first interviews. All interviews were subsequently transcribed and, as indicated in the consent letters signed by participants, will be securely stored for a period of five years by Carleton University.

To support the material provided by my interviews obtained from the process above, and to contextualize the officers' life stories, this study also considers documentary sources concerning the structures and context within which officers were implementing refugee policy: for example, the policy documents produced by the Department of Manpower and Immigration in the early 1970s, the recommendations of the *1970 Memorandum to Cabinet* on refugee resettlement, the refugee protection provisions contained in the *1976 Immigration Act*, and documents related to operational guidance sent to the officers responsible for refugee selection.¹⁰⁸ Together, the interviews and documentary sources allow for the creation of a history of the role of individual agency in the implementation of Canada's resettlement program in Africa. These documentary sources are discussed more

¹⁰⁸ The next chapter discusses the historical context and structures within which all officers engaged in refugee selection, including policy and legal provisions of Canadian refugee protection and resettlement.

readily in chapter two, as the current chapter is devoted to the method of oral history, and is structured in three sections.

The first section will address oral history in general, as both a method and a theory, and explain how this author employed oral history interviews. The use of this method has consequences on the shape of the material collected: The very act of collecting oral histories, as well as the way by which the collection is performed, has significant consequences not only for the content of the study but also on the way the thesis is written. Standpoint theory provides a useful way to reflect critically on the nature of oral histories by addressing the context of the interview and the subjectivity of the participants. There exists an extensive and varied corpus of research concerning the use of oral histories, as they have long been considered a legitimate primary source for historians. After a summary of seminal contributions and debates, this section focuses on the ways in which oral histories can contribute to the study of refugee protection policy and, in particular, the role of bureaucrats or individuals in policy and practice.

The second section will turn to the specific contributions of narrative theory to the field of oral history. As mentioned earlier, the principal guide to investigating narrative contexts will be the analytical proposals of Zemon Davis's *Fiction in the Archives*. This study of sixteenth-century French storytellers who told pardon tales or crime stories to the king or his representatives in order to avoid the gallows¹⁰⁹ is particularly relevant to this thesis, as it reflects on the ways by which a “good,”

¹⁰⁹ Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives*.

compelling and credible story that is told to an official can be a matter of life or death.

The third and final section of this chapter will demonstrate how these considerations inform the concept of the participating Government of Canada officers implementing refugee policy as “narrators,” both in the present (as interviewees), and in the past (in their roles as officers).

Oral History as Theory and Method

The simple definition of oral history as “the interviewing of eye-witness participants in the events of the past for historical reconstruction,” as offered by Perks and Thomson’s thirty-year-old textbook, continues to resonate in twenty-first-century practices of oral history.¹¹⁰ While oral interviews with members of social and political elites have often been used to complement written sources, the most distinctive contribution of oral history has been to include the experiences and perspectives of groups of people who might otherwise have been hidden from history within the historical record.¹¹¹

Oral history has also been used to document historical experiences less likely to have left written records because they are more subjective or personal, such as intimate relations, domestic work or family life.¹¹² In addition to assisting in opening up new areas of scholarly enquiry, the method of oral history has also helped break barriers between “the chroniclers and their audience,” and between “the educational

¹¹⁰ Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, eds., *The Oral History Reader* (New York, Routledge Press: 1998), ix.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² *Ibid.*

institution and the outside world.”¹¹³ Furthermore, oral history has challenged deep orthodoxies concerning the sources, methods and aims of the discipline of history, as it generated debates about the context of the collection of data, the reliability and the nature of memory, and the relationship between the past and the present.¹¹⁴

In charting the prehistory of the modern oral history movement, Perks and Thomson explain that until the 19th-century, historians in the West relied mainly upon eye-witness accounts of significant events. However, the nineteenth-century “development of an academic history discipline led to the primacy of the method of archival research, and documentary sources, and marginalization of oral evidence.”¹¹⁵ The increasing availability of portable tape recorders after the Second World War and the possibility they created to collect testimonies from people who had left few written records provoked a renewed awareness of the usefulness and validity of oral evidence.¹¹⁶

The oral history tradition in Canada has followed a similar trajectory. In a recent textbook, Llewellyn, Freund and Reilly, insist that “oral history is a deeply political, moral and ethical practice.”¹¹⁷ It is also for this reason, and not only because of technological developments that the theory and practice of oral history evolved significantly over the decades. In a survey of the past fifty years of literature on oral history and ethics, Canadian practitioners Sheftel and Zembrzycki further contend that oral historians’ approaches to ethics have emerged from two major

¹¹³ Ibid, x- 2.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 22-71.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Kristina R. Llewellyn, Alexander Freund and Nolan Reilly. *The Canadian Oral History Reader* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press) 2015, 91.

fears: “the fear of failing as researchers and the fear of failing our narrators and doing harm.”¹¹⁸

According to the two authors, these fears have been present through what they (along with most scholars of oral history) identify as three phases in the evolution of oral history. The first phase, which occurred in the 1960s, was characterized by “positivists who practiced oral history in the decades after World War II and viewed oral history as a largely empirical pursuit.”¹¹⁹ In this early context, oral history was viewed mostly as an “objective analysis of some aspect of the past”—a product emerging out of the interview process.¹²⁰ Therefore, the interviewing process was perceived as being in service to that product, and not necessarily as a significant part of history.

The second phase of oral history began in the 1970s and was characterized by the influence of feminist and working-class scholars. They embraced the relationships and subjectivities of oral history work, and the fears of oral historians had “more to do with building authentic relationships, doing justice to narrators” and “coming to terms with how best to [democratize] the content, process, and audience for history.”¹²¹ In this kind of theory and practice of oral history, the process— and the participants— became just as important, if not more important than the product.¹²² In this phase, it was the constitutive nature of the interview that was critical. Such focus on the process and participants of oral history informs this thesis’ treatment of

¹¹⁸ Anna Sheftel and Stacey Zembrzycki, “Who’s Afraid of Oral History? Fifty Years of Debates and Anxiety about Ethics,” *The Oral History Review*, 43, Issue 2 (Summer/Fall 2016): 338-366.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 341.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 344-47.

¹²² *Ibid.*

the officers as narrators in both the present and the past that they describe in their oral accounts.¹²³

Well established among academic and community historians by the late 1970s , oral history led to many large archival projects.¹²⁴ A decade into this phase, Paul Thompson's book, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History*, became a standard reference.¹²⁵ By then, both the methods and politics of oral history were adding new challenges to the continuing and fierce criticisms from traditional defenders of written documents. Thompson, who was committed to the history of the experiences of the working class, set out to defend oral histories against the criticism that memory was an unreliable historical source. Instead, he argued that oral expressions and the "use of a human voice, fresh, personal, particular [will] always brings the past into the present with extraordinary immediacy."¹²⁶ Oral expression, he suggested, animates and serves to "breathe life into history."¹²⁷

¹²³ The next section of this chapter discusses the role and importance of subjectivity and intersubjectivity within the interview process.

¹²⁴ The timing and pattern of revival differed across the world and according to the type of history. In the 1950s and 1960s, British oral historians were interested in documenting the experiences of "ordinary" working people, which sometimes fused with a commitment to gain a "history from below" present among many historians around the world in the 1960s. G.E. Evans, *Ask the Fellows Who Cut the Hay* (London: Faber, 1956) is an example of oral history's conversation with labour history. See also Jan Vansina, *De la Tradition Orale: essai de méthode historique* (Indiana: Musée royal de l'Afrique centrale, 1961) and its English version (translated from the French by H. M. Wright), *Oral Tradition as History: A Study in Historical Methodology* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964); Philip Curtin, "Field Techniques for Collecting and Processing Oral Data", *Journal of African History*, Vol. IX, Issue 3 (1968), 367-385. For Vansina and Curtin, who were Africanists making use of oral sources in the 1960s, oral tradition offered an alternative research method and theoretical approach for reconstructing and writing pre-colonial African history that neither relied on, nor was contained in, colonial archives.

¹²⁵ Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1978).

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 14

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

More sophisticated re-evaluations of the aims and approaches of oral history came from within the emergent field.¹²⁸ A collection of essays by Grele outlined some of these critical debates concerning the reliability of memory and personal testimony amongst North American oral history practitioners, and suggested that the most promising approach was to consider the oral history interview not as a one-way process, but as a “conversational narrative.”¹²⁹

During this second phase, feminist oral historians’ contributions to the oral history theory and methodology illuminated the relationships between “language, power and meaning” in original ways.¹³⁰ In her review of these developments for Thomson’s reader, Sangster explained what a gendered lens had done for oral historians. It challenged oral historians to explore more broadly the “social construction of memory,” that is to “ask how gender, race and class, as structural and ideological relations, have shaped the construction of historical memory.” More deeply, she added, “cultural values shape our very ordering and prioritizing of events, indeed our notions of what is myth, history, fact or fiction.”¹³¹ Indeed, class, gender, culture and political worldview influence both “content and the narrative form of the interview.”¹³²

The oral history work of the 1990s constituted what Sheftel and Zembrzycki defined as a third phase, which “extends the second stage’s concern with subjectivity

¹²⁸ Perks and Thomson, *Oral History Reader*, 3: citing early critics such as William Cutler III, “Accuracy in Oral History Interviewing,” *Historical Methods Newsletter*, no. 3 (1970): 1-7; and P. O’Farrell, “Oral History: Facts and Fiction”, *Oral History Association of Australia Journal*, no. 5 (1982-83): 3-9.

¹²⁹ Ron Grele, ed., *Envelopes of Sound: The Art of Oral History* (New York: Praeger, 1991).

¹³⁰ Perks and Thomson, *Oral History Reader*, citing Berger Gluck and Daphne Patai, eds., *Women’s Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History*, (New York: Routledge, 1991), 93.

¹³¹ Joan Sanger, “Telling our Stories: Feminist Debates and the Use of Oral History”, in Perks and Thomson, *The Oral History Reader*, 87-88.

¹³² *Ibid.*

and relationships to a more intimate and interdisciplinary interrogation of what interviewing entails.”¹³³ This recent work has further balanced the documentary nature of the first phase with a postmodern perspective that emphasizes power, marginalization, intersectionality, and the varied positions of researchers.¹³⁴

This thesis makes use of the insights of the third wave of oral history scholarship by acknowledging the subjectivities of oral history work and recognizing that the “how” of oral accounts matters as much as the “what.” Having established that the main method employed for this study comes from a long and rich tradition, the chapter will now explain why it is especially relevant to a study of encounters between officers and refugee applicants.

Why Oral History?

The oral history interviews conducted with the three Canadian officers who selected African refugees from Central and East Africa from the early 1970s to the 1990s from Canada’s embassy and visa office in Nairobi, Kenya, represent the main corpus of this study. It is because of the several advantages discussed above that a close study of the officers’ life stories helps to clarify the settings and structures that shaped the practice of refugee selection procedures in local contexts. The three officers interviewed in this study are all Canadian born, Anglophone, white and educated individuals.¹³⁵ Additionally, these officers comprise only a fraction of the

¹³³ Sheftel and Zembrzycki, “Who’s Afraid of Oral History?”, 347.

¹³⁴ Ibid. Examples of such recent work are, Nan Alamilla Boyd and Horacio N. Roque Ramirez’s edited volume on queer oral history, *Bodies of Evidence: The Practice of Queer Oral History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); and Anna Sheftel and Stacey Zembrzycki’s, *Oral History Off the Record: Toward an Ethnography of Practice* (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

¹³⁵ For a historical analysis of civil servant life stories from individuals belonging to historically marginalized groups, see Alisha Seguin, “Remembering the Civil Service: Work and Life Stories of

officers who operated from the Nairobi visa office from the 1970s to 1990.¹³⁶ For this reason, this thesis is wary of generalizing their experiences as representative of all officers who engaged in refugee selection more broadly or through the Africa Refugee Program. However, as the next section shows, the value of their stories lies in the subjectivities embodied and articulated through their oral accounts and in how and what they chose to tell. Also, their life stories provide critical access and understanding into the complex bureaucratic processes of refugee selection that were at play during the most formative years of Canada's resettlement program, more generally, and the Africa Refugee Program more specifically.

Historian Madokoro and Molloy (one of the informants on this thesis) have already co-authored an overview of the role of public servants in shaping Canadian refugee protection policy and practice in the 1970s.¹³⁷ The article is based on interviews that Madokoro conducted with Molloy about the subject. Their article is an important contribution to the study of the role of individuals in policy development, especially in the formative years. It is also significant that Molloy is a co-author

Indigenous Labourers in the Canadian Federal Civil Service," (Master of Arts thesis, Carleton University, 2015). Seguin seeks to "include the voices of Indigenous federal civil servants within the larger historical record on this subject" and to "archive oral interviews on this topic so that future researchers, Indigenous narrators, and their communities can access and benefit from these life stories in future," 25.

¹³⁶ In response to my enquiry, in a follow-up email dated September 9, 2019, Molloy provided a list of officers who had been the senior officers in Nairobi before and after his term. The late Al Lukie (1973 to 1976) opened the office some "months after the Uganda operation [was] terminated and the government decided we would need a presence as pressure on the Asian minority continued in Kenya, Tanzania and elsewhere." He was followed by George "Spike" Reynolds (1976 to 1978), who "lived to 100" and was "apparently a terrifying football player in his youth and got the nick name Spike when the Germans over ran his artillery piece and he beat them off with an artillery "spike", [which was] an iron bar used as a lever to move heavy cannons." Ben Pflanz "ran the shop" from 1978 to 1981, followed by John Baker from 1981 to 1984, Donald Cameron from 1984 to 1986, and Ernest Allen from 1989 to 1992.

¹³⁷ Molloy and Madokoro, "Effecting Change."

because it underlines his role as a narrator of government policy and practice. In advance of his oral testimony for this study, his participation in several of these kinds of scholarly articles has provided him with opportunities to remember, order and collate relevant information regarding his experiences and insights during this period in Canadian refugee policy development. While Madokoro and Molloy briefly discuss the Canadian government's decision to airlift and resettle six thousand Ugandan-Asians in 1972 (within the context making Canadian refugee protection more universal and non-discriminatory) they do not address the emergence of the Africa Refugee Program established in 1981.¹³⁸ Akin to this dissertation, this description relies on documentary sources, as well as oral testimony from Molloy to Madokoro, about his experiences and knowledge gleaned when he was the Director of Refugee Policy responsible for creating the refugee provisions in the *1976 Immigration Act*.¹³⁹

Molloy has also co-authored a book with fellow former officers about Canada's resettlement of over sixty-thousand Indochinese people from eight different countries between 1975 and 1980.¹⁴⁰ This history is based on first-hand personal accounts written by the former officers who helped facilitate and select people resettled to Canada through this movement¹⁴¹, and reflects "archival research combined with

¹³⁸ The next chapter discusses how the 1970 Memorandum to Cabinet on resettlement contained provisions for the Oppressed Minority policy through whose provisions the Ugandan-Asian movement was facilitated. Chapter three discusses Molloy's expanded discussion about how his experiences during the Ugandan-Asian movement influenced him when he oversaw the creation of refugee provisions in the *1976 Immigration Act*.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Michael Molloy et al., *Running on Empty*. The co-authored book stems from significant efforts by Molloy and others in the Canadian Immigration Historical Society which will be introduced later.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

accounts of the personal experiences of former government officials.”¹⁴² The written narratives prepared by these officials were edited by the co-authors and adopted for the book. *Running on Empty* is (according to the foreword written by Ronald Atkey, the Minister of Employment and Immigration from 1979 to 1980) a “quintessential and comprehensive history of an important time in recent Canadian history.”¹⁴³ However, the authors do not problematize their method in collecting, interpreting and presenting this history. In this way, their approach can be likened to that of the first phase oral historians that were discussed in the previous section. Molloy has also co-written on the legacy of the movement on subsequent Canadian approaches to refugees, including the recent Syrian refugee initiative.¹⁴⁴

This is not, therefore, the first time that Molloy has given oral testimony about refugee selection in Africa. He was also interviewed in 2014 by Heather Leroux for the Carleton University Library, Archives and Research Collections, “Ugandan Asian Oral History Project,” about his role in the resettlement of Ugandan-Asian expellees to Canada in 1972.¹⁴⁵ The Ugandan Asian Oral History Project is part of a larger archival Uganda Collection that hopes to provide “insight into the expulsion and subsequent resettlement of over 7,000 Ugandan Asian refugees in Canada.”¹⁴⁶ It contains

¹⁴² Ibid, xiv. Three members with combined experience in “selecting refugees, managing refugee programs abroad, and foreign intelligence work, as well as writing and academic research” agreed to join Molloy as authors.

¹⁴³ Ibid. xi-xii.

¹⁴⁴ Michael J. Molloy and James C. Simeon, “Introduction: The Indochinese Refugee Movement and the Launch of Canada’s Private Sponsorship Program”, *Refuge*, 32, Issue 2 (2016): 3-7.

¹⁴⁵ Michael Molloy, “An Oral History with Mike Molloy.”

The project also published the memoir of the Canadian Foreign Service officer who led the Uganda-Asian mission: Roger St. Vincent: *Seven Crested Cranes*. The memoir is based on a daily logbook St. Vincent kept documenting daily details, experiences and challenges of the Uganda-Asian resettlement movement in 1972.

¹⁴⁶Carleton University Library, Archives and Research Collections, *The Uganda Collection*, accessed March 24, 2019, <https://carleton.ca/uganda-collection/>

newspaper clippings, two videos, the personal memoir of Roger St. Vincent documenting the experiences of the Canadian Immigration team sent to Kampala in 1972, and “numerous oral histories from Ugandan Asian refugees who recapture their lived experiences of the expulsion decree and their subsequent resettlement in Canada.”¹⁴⁷ In addition, the Uganda collection documents how Britain and Canada handled the expulsion of Ugandan Asians. The oral history practiced for this project is focused on collating oral accounts and can be compared to the first phase approach, which focused on the product and did not interrogate the form and constitutive aspects of the interviews. However, these accounts, including Molloy’s oral testimony and St. Vincent’s memoir, provide an insight into early bureaucratic processes and reveal how state agents understood their actions and role as negotiators, navigators and narrators while implementing a large-scale resettlement movement from Central Africa in early 1970s, prior to the formalization of Canada’s resettlement program. The importance of the Ugandan-Asian movement will be revisited and discussed further in chapters two and three.

Additionally, Molloy has contributed to scholarship on the history of the public servants’ role in Canadian refugee policy and implementation, told from the perspective of bureaucrats themselves.¹⁴⁸ These recent contributions are informed by his central role in the Canadian Immigration Historical Society (CIHS), which has sought (since 1986) to create a repository of knowledge and historical material from

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Michael J. Molloy and Laura Madokoro, “Effecting Change”; Michael Molloy et al., *Running on Empty*.

its membership, mostly retired public servants.¹⁴⁹ It is also notable that the Uganda Collection was transferred to the Archives and Research Collections through the efforts of the CIHS. The latter is comprised of former and current government officers, while the Uganda collection was based on oral testimony from expelled Ugandan-Asians who were interviewed and selected by officers. In this way, the collaborative approach leading to the creation of a body of historical knowledge through the Uganda Collective can be argued to represent the second phase of oral history scholarship discussed above.

While Molloy's recent contributions to scholarship on the history of Canadian resettlement policy provide important context for this study, they do not offer sufficient insight into conditions and structures that shaped the conditions of refugee storytelling and the "hearing" of local contexts in refugee selection. This gap is even wider regarding the Africa Refugee Program. Indeed, while Molloy has provided oral testimony about selecting expelled Ugandan-Asians for resettlement in 1972, the narrative therein has not been critically analyzed to examine individuals' agency in implementation. Moreover, his oral account was not conducted in the spirit of the third phase of oral history which considers the interview, the form of the interview process and subsequent oral account. The research for this dissertation offers an alternate take in its collection and use of the oral testimony of this officer and of his two colleagues and uses the data to critically examine the role of the officers as both actors (navigators and negotiators) and narrators of implementation.

¹⁴⁹ Chapter three discusses the role of Molloy as an historian in more details, including his position as current President of the Canadian Immigration Historical Society (CIHS). The CIHS also provides a forum through which former officer provide insider accounts or perspectives on Canadian immigration and refugee policy.

Existing studies on Canadian refugee status determination interviews from the perspective of decision-makers, which have mainly been conducted by scholars in anthropology and law, concern only refugee status interviews conducted *within* Canada.¹⁵⁰ The history of refugee selection interviews conducted *abroad*—the visa officers who heard and decided on refugee applicants’ stories outside of Canada’s borders, remains to be told.¹⁵¹ By collecting and analyzing the life stories of officers who operated from Canada’s visa office in Nairobi, Kenya, this study provides an original account of how the African Refugee Program was established and implemented in Central and East Africa.

The decision to research the topic of refugee selection interviews conducted by the Government of Canada officers in Africa in the early 1970s has also limited the kind of historical sources that were available to this study. While refugee status determination oral interviews (conducted domestically) have been guaranteed since 1985 through the Singh decision¹⁵² and are recorded, transcribed and securely archived by the Government of Canada, this was not the case for refugee selection interviews conducted in Africa from the 1970s to the 1990s.¹⁵³ There are no recordings

¹⁵⁰ See Anthea Vogl, “Refugee Status Determination, Narrative and the Oral Hearing in Australia and Canada”; Jan Blommaert, “Investigating Narrative Inequality: African Asylum Seekers’ Stories in Belgium”, *Discourse & Society* 413 (2001): 2; and Robert Barsky, *Constructing a Productive Other: Discourse, Theory and the Convention Refugee Class Hearing* (New York: John Benjamins Publishing, 1994).

¹⁵¹ Peter Showler, *Refugee Sandwich* is a collection of fictional stories about participants in the in-Canada refugee determination process—lawyers, judges, interpreters, hearing officers, and refugee applicants or claimants—which provides satirical and critical analyses on the dilemmas of the asylum process and interviews based on claims made between the years 1989-1999.

¹⁵² *Singh v Canada*, [1985] 1 S.C.R. 177. In the *Singh vs. Minister of Employment and Immigration* decision in 1985, the Supreme Court of Canada declared that under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms foreign asylum seekers had the right to a full hearing of their claims for protection before they were accepted or deported. The decision had a significant bearing on asylum policy and practice in Canada.

¹⁵³ Vogl, “Refugee Status Determination” considers the process of narrative construction by refugee claimants within contemporary in-Canada RSD interviews in Canada and Australia. For this

or transcripts of RSD interviews in Africa for the period under consideration because this was not a requirement for refugee procedures conducted abroad. Instead, the officers interviewed in this study indicated that they kept detailed files and notes of their interviews with refugee applicants. The researcher recommends that the history of this documentary process and its implications for decision-making deserves further examination by future scholars, as it lies beyond the scope of this particular study.

As noted earlier in this chapter, historians recognize oral history as an effective method for gathering personal perspectives of what happened in the past, and for adding to what we know from written sources. Alone, government-generated sources such as policy documents (e.g. policy proposals, memoranda and decisions of Cabinet), refugee legal provisions, operational guidance to visa officers, and annual immigration reports may provide (by their nature) official accounts of *what*, *who* and *when* but do not provide the *why* of refugee selection policy and implementation. While these are integral sources for understanding material and ideational structures in terms of their value as historical sources, they are limited to providing a factual and state-centric account.¹⁵⁴ For example, while human beings authored these policy documents, the final content of government documents and publications released in the public domain is usually iterative, measured and coloured by structural considerations.

interdisciplinary legal study, the researcher received permission from the respective governments and refugee claimants to observe the refugee status determination interviews in person, and also had access to interview transcripts. Currently, refugee selection interviews conducted abroad for resettlement are only audio recorded at the discretion of the interviewing officer and are not required by law.

¹⁵⁴ This is still an important component that accounts for the material and ideational structures within which officers operated. These are discussed in the next chapter.

Additionally, such sources usually represent official government or policy positions and do not necessarily reflect the subjective and ideological inclinations of the government of the day or the people who write them. In turn, legal instruments embody policy directions established by the government of the day, while immigration reports account for who, what, and where the government has conducted or intends to conduct its operations. By giving priority to oral history interview sources, this study seeks to understand better the implications of Canada's refugee protection policy and structures from the perspective of the individuals who delivered and implemented it abroad during its most formative years. Furthermore, the oral testimonies of Molloy, Mullin and Burrows are valuable because they were interviewed after they had all retired from the public service. As free agents, they were more likely to speak candidly without obligation to their former employer. However, it is worth noting that notwithstanding the liberty afforded by retirement, ethical considerations would likely still preclude the three former officers from divulging information that could violate the privacy of applicants or be detrimental to government and its relations with state and non-state partners.

Oral history sources that allow individuals to emote and express themselves through varied ways beyond words can humanize the policy and practice of refugee protection and tell the story not only of what happened but also how it happened. The eliciting and analyzing of oral history material, like the analysis of written sources, demands that historians comprehend "not just what is said, but also how it is said, why it is said, and what it means."¹⁵⁵ In the case of oral history interviews, the

¹⁵⁵ Lynn Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), 50-52.

extent to which the circumstances of the collection shape the content of oral sources will be explored generally in the next section of this chapter, which discusses the role of narrative form in history. It will also be addressed in the three chapters on each of the individual officers. The takeaway at this point is that the interviews undertaken with the three officers for this study produced hitherto unheard first-person accounts and insights.¹⁵⁶ The accounts came from officers' memories of events that were more than forty years old, in some instances. The perspectives these storytellers had on how they experienced and understood their role and actions in the Canadian refugee selection processes provide the building blocks of this reconstruction of an important period in Canadian resettlement policy.

Subjectivity and Individual Agency

The memories presented in this study will invariably be subjective and coloured by the context of the storytelling—that is, when, to whom and for what purpose the story is told. Echoing the third phase of oral history theory and method, Passerini was one of the first historians to highlight “subjectivity” in oral history.¹⁵⁷ Passerini demonstrated how the influence of culture and ideology on individual memory manifests itself through the silences, discrepancies and idiosyncrasies of personal recollection and testimony. The fact that dominant historical narratives can influence memory calls for even more critical reception and interpretation by historians.¹⁵⁸ We will see in chapters three, four and five how these questions coloured each of the

¹⁵⁶ Madokoro and Molloy, “Effecting Change” offers a historical account and analysis of the human factor, and the role of public servants in 1970s evolutions in Canadian refugee protection policy.

¹⁵⁷ Luisa Passerini, *Fascism in Popular Memory: The Cultural Experience of the Turin Working Class* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

three interviews: for instance, some of the memories echoed official accounts, while others corroborated another officer's version, added unknown insights, or brought new layers of complexity or nuance to known events or processes.

Following the path opened by Passerini, Portelli's book, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli*, explored the "peculiarities of oral history" by interpreting the meanings of oral accounts of the death of a union member in Italy.¹⁵⁹ Portelli argued that what he calls "orality"—narrative, subjectivity, memory and the relationship between the interviewee and the interviewer—represented oral history's main strength.¹⁶⁰

According to Portelli, emphasizing subjectivity in the practice and theory of oral history does not mean "the abolition of controls, nor the unrestrained preference, convenience or whim of the researcher"; instead, it refers to the "study of the cultural forms and processes by which individuals express their sense of themselves in history."¹⁶¹ In this definition, subjectivity has its own "objective" laws, structures and maps, reflecting "the truth of the human heart."¹⁶²

The Many Dimensions of an Interview

For the research, I made contact with a total of four former Canadian Immigration Foreign Service officers and was able to interview three of them on the record. The fourth potential informant could not participate due to pre-existing obligations. The beginning of each life story chapter offers an explanation of how this

¹⁵⁹ Allesandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli*.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, ix.

¹⁶² Ibid. In describing subjectivity, Portelli makes a literary reference to Nathaniel Hawthorne's classic distinction between "Novel" and "Romance" in the introduction to *The House of the Seven Gables* (Boston, Ticknor and Fields, 1851) where Romance "allows greater freedom to the imagination" but does not "swerve aside from the truth of human heart"

author encountered each participant, engaged with them, and came to interview them. All three officers were informed about the focus of the research through an introductory email that provided a summary of the project. Following ethics requirements prescribed by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board, all three signed a consent letter before the start of interviews. I conducted extensive interviews over the summer of 2018 and obtained over fifteen hours of audio materials, which were subsequently transcribed. They were also annotated in order to capture the non-verbal aspects of the interview, in which many of the interesting observations reside.

In this work, I employed a non-structured and open-ended approach to the interviews. The introduction sent to all participants invited them to contribute to a historical study of storytelling within selection interviews for resettlement to Canada. At the start of the interview, each interviewee was asked to tell their account and recollections in their preferred format or chronology. While there were numerous follow-up questions for clarification or where a point seemed particularly poignant, each interviewee chose the focus, thrust and form of their story. The participants were also offered the choice of place for the conversation: Molloy and Burrows opted to have the interviews conducted within the privacy of their own homes, while Mullin preferred the formal environment of his office's boardroom.¹⁶³

Much of what happens during an interview is central to the practice of oral history, especially to answer the concerns of the third phase. Sheftel and Zembrzycki

¹⁶³ The individual life story chapters discuss, in more depth, the impact of setting on the form and content of each officers' oral testimony.

state that, while there are many theories about what oral history interviews should be like, interviews are ultimately personal interactions between human beings that rarely conform to a methodological ideal.¹⁶⁴ An acknowledgement that the “work we do [as scholars] is often intensely personal” requires reflexivity, especially in collaborative environments such as oral interviews, where ethical questions arise about what can and cannot be said.¹⁶⁵ For this study, reflexivity calls for introspection and deliberation about one’s relationship with the subject matter and the interview, including any biases, ideological inclinations and/or power relations that could shape the process and resultant content. In this sense, the approach for this study was guided by the US oral historian Valerie Yow’s writing on interview ethics, the interviewer-interviewee relationship, and the importance of being reflexive about the study.¹⁶⁶ Being reflexive about our practice helps us to identify the wider logic in what we do and why we do it.¹⁶⁷ This is especially important because “oral history is not just about studying people; it is also about valuing them,” and understanding how, in addition to the interview content, what is said or happens “off the record” in our projects can also help us to “understand the humanity of interviewers, interviewees and the process itself.”¹⁶⁸ These insights guided the approach to the interviews and encouraged this researcher to be adaptable and receptive to listening and being attentive, beside or beyond the words transcribed, as well as to allow the interviewees to speak and shape the thrust of their testimonies.

¹⁶⁴ Sheftel and Zembrzycki, S, eds., *Oral History off the Record*.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, xvii.

¹⁶⁶ Valerie Yow, “Ethics and Interpersonal Relationships in Oral History Research,” *Oral History Review* 22, no.1 (Summer 1995): 51-66.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Sheftel and Zembrzycki, *Oral History off the Record*, 16.

The subjective truth of an interviewee, and the framing of the study and the interview by the researcher and interviewer, simultaneously inform the narratives produced within the oral history interview.¹⁶⁹ Subjectivity is a “unique and precious element” arising from oral sources since they, more often than most other sources, “tell us not just what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing, and what they now think they did.”¹⁷⁰ In particular, the “organization of the narrative reveals a great deal of the speakers’ relationships to their history.”¹⁷¹ Often, oral sources may not add much factual content to an episode of history—for example, the exact number of people who suffered and fled persecution from a particular African town or village on a particular date, or in a specific period. However, oral history often adds much to the subjective aspects of a story, which are “as much the business of history as are more visible facts” because it tells us what interviewees thought and now think about a particular event or process and their role within it.¹⁷²

There are usually two or more people involved in an oral history interview (as there is in any conversation), which means that two worlds, or subjectivities, are colliding and interacting in the interview. Abrams has studied the effect of this phenomenon on oral histories and uses the concept of “intersubjectivity” to discuss it.¹⁷³ Abrams suggests that we consider the relationship between the interviewee and the interviewer as a process by which both participants cooperate to create a shared

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Abrams, *Oral History Theory*, 50.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid, 54.

narrative.¹⁷⁴ Multiple and intersecting subjectivities meet in the interview space, and these include the identities adopted by parties such as class, gender, age, or ethnicity, which intersect and impact upon the story told by the interviewee as well as the way the interviewer hears the story. Since the 1990s (after the time during which the interviewed officers worked in refugee selection), contemporary studies of refugee determination interviews have taken this dimension of interviews into account, and this has sometimes led to changes in refugee determination practices.¹⁷⁵

A note on the uses and interpretation of interviews across disciplines

The practice and theory of oral history are inherently interdisciplinary because the method has been adopted within both the humanities and social sciences, and methodological debates about the approach have ranged among and between different disciplines.¹⁷⁶ From their long use of oral sources, anthropologists, folklorists, linguists and others have been attracted not only by the details that interviewees recall but also by what they fail to remember, misremember, and what they choose to remain silent about.¹⁷⁷ Oral historians constitute their sources in

¹⁷⁴ Ibid. Carol McKirdy, *Practicing Oral History with Immigrant Narrators* (California: Left Coast Press, 2015), 15, makes a separate but similar observation with regards to conducting oral interviews with immigrant interviewees when she states, “oral history is a collaborative creation between a narrator, often referred to as the *interviewee*, and an *interviewer*.” Italics in the quote are not mine.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, 10. Also, see Geraldine Sadoway, “The Gender Factor in Refugee Determination and the Effect of ‘Gender Guidelines’,” in *Not A Refugee Woman: Contesting Identities, Rethinking Practices*, eds., Maroussia Hajdukowski-Ahmed et al. (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2008), 244-253. The essay considers UNHCR Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women issued in July 1991 and adopted by the Government of Canada in 1993 after the Chair of the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB), Nurjehan Mawani, issued the Chairperson’s *Guidelines on Women Refugee Claimants Fearing Gender-Related Persecution*. Sadoway argues that these gender guidelines were intended to mitigate gender inequality and allow for more adequate protection in the “individualized method of determination of refugee status under the Refugee Convention” and to mainstream “women’s rights as human rights”.

¹⁷⁶ Donald. A. Ritchie, *The Oxford Handbook of Oral History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 11-12.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

contact with the memory-giver, which makes oral sources dialogic, relational, discursive and creative.¹⁷⁸ The centrality of human beings in the *practice* of oral history requires an interdisciplinary approach, since “human beings do not belong to any one field of scholarly inquiry.”¹⁷⁹

Standpoint Theory and the Intersubjectivity of Oral History

The discussion of theories related to subjectivity and intersubjectivity prompt a reflection on the particular nature of my relationship with the interviewees. The need to account for my subjectivity comes from more directions than the sheer demands of oral history as conceived by its practitioners over the last three decades. This research project was born from my passion for refugee protection policy and long-time work as a civil servant with refugee resettlement policy within the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. I initially understood that writing a legitimate chapter about theory in a thesis within the discipline of history required a rigidly objective voice. And, that being a “legitimate historian” entailed writing and performing a particular discourse—one in which the self was silent or absent.

This reflection arose from a quest to justify the chosen topic of scholarship—oral history and story-telling—as worthy of academic inquiry. However, as I began the literature review concerning oral history, I realized the futility of attempting to erase subjectivity from the project.¹⁸⁰ My authority was present in the entire study, and the subjective nature of my choices needed to be acknowledged and discussed at all steps from 1) coming up with the study’s scope, parameters and research question; 2) to

¹⁷⁸ Abrams, *Oral History Theory*, 16.

¹⁷⁹ Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli*, xi.

¹⁸⁰ While even conservative historians do not deny subjectivity, concerns arise from the perceived biases of subjectivity. However, centering and making subjectivity more explicit enriches the method.

creating primary historical sources for the study by seeking and selecting study interviewees; 3) to constructing and compiling potential interview questions for interviewees; and finally, 4) to selecting and interpreting oral history interview content for use in historical writing.

The conception, methodology and theorizing behind this study were partially inspired by my lived experience of successfully seeking refugee protection from the Government of Canada, eighteen years ago. At the heart of this process was the requirement to prepare a written account and, thereafter, undergo an oral hearing before an Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada member. This experience made me aware of the enormity and centrality of the role of storytelling in the refugee status determination process. Through my experience fleeing political persecution and the familiarity of home, as well as arriving in Canada alone at a young age, I found that storytelling was a key factor to securing my safety and shaping my identity as a Canadian citizen and, later, as a public servant in the Ministry of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. It is, therefore, necessary to identify and situate my subjectivity and various standpoints on the issues related to this study.

With a focus on quantitative research in the United States, Australia and Canada, scholars of indigenous studies, Maggie Walter and Chris Anderson, scholars of indigenous studies, conceptualize all methodology as three components that are “inextricably entwined in practice”: standpoint, theoretical frame, and methods.¹⁸¹ In doing so, they draw “attention on how all methodology is comprised of these three

¹⁸¹ Maggie Walter and Chris Andersen, *Indigenous Statistics: A Quantitative Indigenous Research Methodology*, (Walnut Creek, Left Coast Press, 2013), 44.

elements, not just the methodologies used by those positioned as “the other,” such as Indigenous peoples.”¹⁸² The question of how culture, race, gender, and socioeconomic background affect research methodology tends to arise only when the researcher is seen as somehow “other” and not when the researcher is part of the “unmarked,” dominant norm.¹⁸³ However, Walter and Anderson argue that these considerations are central to *all* methodology, since, “who we are, the values that underpin our concept of self, our perspectives on the world and our own position within it, our realities, and our understandings of how knowledge is construed and constructed are each part of the complex puzzle involved in exploring the underpinnings of methodology.”¹⁸⁴

These insights are important prisms to critically read both the dissertation’s author (myself) and the three officers who shared their stories. The methodological premise and thrust of this research project are as much about my standpoint—including my life experiences, world view and ways of “knowing”—as they are about the research questions and the methods that are available practically, in order to answer them. Additionally, Walter and Andersen’s observations can help us to understand how the stories of the three officers have been conditioned by their respective standpoints and experiences in relation to the history of Canadian immigration vis-à-vis their cultural, racial, gender and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Even though the responsibility of this thesis belongs to me, the authority in the process was never isolated: the collaboration and guidance of my doctoral supervisors permeate the text, as does a systematic reference to the parameters of their

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, 45-46.

respective disciplines: history, political science and social work. An individual's respective social, economic and political context, as well as their experiences and perspectives, can influence research and knowledge production. In order to critically examine and recognize the collaborative aspects of this study (including the oral interviews) and the presence of my subjectivity in the research project, feminist standpoint theory offers a systematic way to address the dialogic nature of knowledge production. Writing about standpoint theory in the production of social science knowledge, Rolin states that "relations of power can suppress and distort evidence in several ways."¹⁸⁵ Marginalized positions may provide valuable epistemic perspectives, including those of women and minorities.¹⁸⁶ In this vein, various standpoints, including gender, race, class, culture, nationality, religion, age and economic status can lead to varied epistemic viewpoints.¹⁸⁷ This theoretical framework allows me to simultaneously recognize the range of influences that affect the objectivity of my knowledge practice, valuing the epistemic insights derived from multiple experiences, but also recognizing the epistemic limitations and gaps likely to arise because of my standpoint and presence in the research project.

"Radical" oral historians, such as Portelli, have conducted a similar reflection on the standpoint of the interviewer. The use of an individual's life stories and memories (for this project as for many others) calls for an explicit consideration of the subjective perspective. Intersubjective relationships between oral history

¹⁸⁵ Kristina Rolin, "Standpoint Theory as a Methodology for the Study of Power Relation," *Hypatia* 24, no.4 (November, 2009): 220.

¹⁸⁶ Alison Wylie, "Feminist Philosophy of Science: Standpoint Matters," in *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association*, 86, no.2 (2012): 47-76.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

interviewers and interviewees inform the history produced. More than other forms of history collection, oral history is a method in which “the narrator is now pulled into the narrative and becomes part of the story,” and where the telling and writing of the story becomes an especially important part of the historian’s account.¹⁸⁸ For Portelli, writing “radical oral history” is not a “matter of ideology, of subjective sidestepping, or choosing one set of sources instead of another.” Rather, it is “inherent in the historian’s presence in the story, in the assumption of responsibility which inscribes her or him in the account and reveals historiography as an autonomous act of narration.”¹⁸⁹

The final content of oral history interviews is, therefore, the product of both the interviewee and the interviewer (researcher), or narrator and researcher, respectively. If the “researcher’s voice is cut out” or unacknowledged, then “the narrator’s voice is [also] distorted.”¹⁹⁰ In other words, it would be disingenuous to theorize or write this history without acknowledging “who speak[s] in oral history,” and amongst the numerous voices and perspectives who do, not to include my own. To summarize, radical oral historians and standpoint theorists inform my reflexive process, and it is I who have placed subjectivity and inter-subjectivities at the centre of the construction of this thesis in oral history.

Oral History and the Question of the Narrative in History

The reflections on the intersubjective nature of oral history are part of a larger effort to rehabilitate the narrative nature of historical writing. Chief amongst the

¹⁸⁸ Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli*, 56.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

authors of this movement is historian and theoretician in literary criticism, Hayden White—who has had made a compelling call for a “return to narrative representation in historiography.”¹⁹¹ White’s notion speaks to this study’s preoccupation with subjectivity and the role of officers as narrators in both the past and present. In White’s eyes, the domain of history is good ground to consider the nature of narration “because it is here that our desire for the imaginary, the possible, must contest with the imperatives of the real, the actual.”¹⁹² There must be a recognition that narrative, “far from being merely a form of discourse that can be filled with different contents, real or imaginary as the case may be, already possesses a content prior to any given actualization of it in speech or writing.”¹⁹³ Also, narrative entails “ontological and epistemic choices with distinct ideological and even specifically political implications.”¹⁹⁴

Written in 1987, White’s project represented, in some ways, an elaboration of E.H. Carr’s observations about the historian’s selective use of facts in constituting history (made six decades earlier). Facts, Carr wrote, do not speak for themselves, but they “speak only when the historian calls on them [as] it is he [or she] who decides to which facts to give the floor, and in what order or context.”¹⁹⁵ In its reliance on human sources and oral storytelling, this study departs significantly from the empiricist theory of history criticized by Carr, which (not unlike the oral

¹⁹¹ Hayden White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore and London, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), xi.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Edward Hallett Carr, *What is History?* (United Kingdom: Penguin Books, 1991), 9-10. This edition was published three decades after the George Macaulay Trevelyan Lectures delivered by Carr at the University of Cambridge from January to March in 1961.

historians of the first phase) harboured a “cult of facts,” and approached history “as a science,” a stance which “presupposes a complete separation between subject and object.”¹⁹⁶

In the empiricist tradition, history consists of a “corpus of ascertained facts” which are “available to the historian in documents, inscriptions and so on, like fish on the fishmonger’s slab” which the historian collects, takes home, “cooks and serves them in whatever style appeals to him.”¹⁹⁷ Historical facts do not exist objectively and independently of the historian’s interpretation.¹⁹⁸ Carr also called into question the “fetishism of documents,” which usually underwrote the cult of facts.¹⁹⁹ When it comes down to it, “no document can tell more than what the author of the document thought—what he thought had happened, what he thought ought to happen or would happen, or even only what he himself thought he thought.”²⁰⁰ The historian must still edit, splice, decipher, interpret and reconstitute a narrative and bestow it with historical meaning.

While the reconstitution of the past within the historian’s mind may be dependent on empirical evidence, it is not itself a strictly empirical process. It involves the personal selection, ordering and interpretation of evidence. Additionally, facts recorded in the past do not exist in a “pure form” but are “always refracted through the mind of the recorder.”²⁰¹ Therefore, “when we take up a work of history, our first concern should be not with the facts which it contains, but [first]

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid, 12.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid, 16.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Ibid, 22-23.

with the historian who wrote it” since the historian will always “get the kind of facts he [she] wants.”²⁰²

Writing two decades after Carr, the oral historian Portelli argued, “oral historical sources are *narrative* sources.”²⁰³ Where traditional writers of history would provide third-person accounts of events which they were not part of, and “present themselves usually in the role of what literary theory would describe as an “omniscient narrator,” oral history allows the oral sources to “enter the narrative” explicitly and to become a more obvious part of the story.²⁰⁴ In this way, the narrator becomes “one of the characters” in the narrative and “the telling of the story is part of the story being told.”²⁰⁵

But what is really important is that memory is not a passive depository of facts, but an active process of creation of meanings. Thus, the specific utility of oral sources for the historian lies, not so much in their ability to preserve the past, as in the very changes wrought by memory. These changes reveal the narrators’ effort to make sense of the past and to give a form to their lives and set the interview and the narrative in their historical context²⁰⁶

In the light of the discussion so far, the three officers interviewed for this study “are historians, after a fashion,” just as the historian is also “part of the source.”²⁰⁷ Two of them have long acknowledged their role as historians: Molloy as an early member and current President of the CIHS (as of 2003) and Mullin as an active

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Alessandro Portelli, “What Makes Oral History Different?” in Perks and Thomson, *Oral History Reader*, 63-74. Italics are mine, for emphasis.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Ibid, 69.

²⁰⁷ Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli*, 56.

member of the same society.²⁰⁸ And it is prudent to note that the history derived from their oral interviews (because of the very nature of oral history) is “artificial, variable and partial.”²⁰⁹ While this rule applies to all kinds of historical sources, the value of oral sources lies precisely in the way they illuminate the “cultural forms and processes by which individuals express their sense of themselves in history.”²¹⁰

These observations on the nature of narration provide a vocabulary to take into account the work of subjectivity at many levels. Firstly, they indicate how I can be simultaneously reflexive about my subjectivity within the study and my role as a historian and interviewer in co-creating narratives through the design and conduct of oral interviews. Secondly, these observations allow us to see the officers as simultaneous narrators and historians.

“Fictive” Aspects of Oral Testimonies

More is needed at this point to explain how this study will concurrently address the “content” and “form” of stories. In this regard, historian Zemon Davis’ analysis of pardon tales is most insightful.²¹¹ In her words, the pardon tale mixed three genres: “a judicial supplication to persuade the king and courts, a historical account of one’s past actions, and a story.” In all three genres, the supplicants had a role in crafting and shaping the narrative.²¹² Zemon Davis illustrates how to look for evidence of

²⁰⁸ The CIHS would have been an effective vehicle for mobilizing the participation of former officers and policymakers who had been involved in the Indochinese resettlement movement for Molloy et al., *Running on Empty*.

²⁰⁹ Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli*, ix.

²¹⁰ Ibid, 53.

²¹¹ Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives*.

²¹² Ibid, 4.

narrative skills amongst supplicants, who ranged (in the case of her study), from peasants, artisans and well-off French citizens.

Sixteenth-century pardon tales reveal much about story-telling conventions of the time, including “... what they [the story-tellers] thought a good story was, how they accounted for motive, and how through narrative they made sense of the unexpected and built coherence into immediate experience”.²¹³ Zemon Davis demonstrates that stories varied according to the circumstances of teller and listener, and “interacted with wider contemporary habits of explanation, description, and evaluation.” These understandings of the variability and partiality of story-telling (depending on the contexts and audiences of sixteenth-century France) lay out a useful frame to make sense of the story-telling practices and narrative techniques employed by the three former Canadian officers interviewed by an oral historian of the twenty-first-century.

Within the practice and theory of oral history, “fidelity” and “subjectivity” are “neither apart nor antagonistic” as “each provides the standard against which the other is recognized and defined.”²¹⁴ Oral history tells us less about events but more about their meaning. There are no “false” oral sources.²¹⁵ Oral history sources’ strength lies less in their adherence to the facts, but their departures from it since even “wrong” statements are still psychologically “true.”²¹⁶ Still, oral history sources can provide factual validity when, at times, the interviews reveal unknown events or

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ Abrams, *Oral History Theory*, 51.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

unknown aspects of known events, or, in this case, when insights from an individual officers' tale cast new light on little-explored stories. ²¹⁷

While the life and death circumstances of Zemon Davis's sixteenth-century pardon seekers more closely resonate with the object of this thesis, the preoccupation with the "form" of oral accounts is prevalent amongst current oral historians. For example, Epp recognizes the role of memory in the oral accounts of Mennonite refugee and immigrant women who fled Eastern Europe's "Great Purges" of the Stalin era and the Second World War and found their way to Canada and North America.²¹⁸ Epp is as much concerned with the content of histories as with the "patterns and myths in the process of remembering," particularly with regard to "rape, violence, escape, and morality."²¹⁹

Zemon Davis's historical method entails a close consideration of written archival material in order to interrogate "the means and settings for producing the stories" and "the interests held by both narrator and audience in the storytelling event."²²⁰ Additionally, Zemon Davis is keen to illuminate the "structures existing before that event in the minds and lives of the sixteenth-century participants," the possible storylines determined by the constraints of the law and approaches to narrative learned in the past listening to and telling of stories or derived from other cultural constructions.²²¹ For this dissertation, Zemon Davis' work was most useful for helping to make sense of the variety of narrative techniques officers used when they

²¹⁷ Ibid, 50.

²¹⁸ Marlen Epp, *Women Without Men: Mennonite Refugees of the Second World War*, Studies in Gender and History 12 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).

²¹⁹ Ibid. Note that the method and theory of oral history is discussed more substantively in chapter one.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Ibid.

spoke in various contexts over time: for example, in their interviews with media, in the oral history interviews for this study, and their selection interviews with refugee applicants.

These considerations of the many layers of mutually constituted narratives, especially in public encounters of an unequal nature, can be brought into conversation with Milner and Wojnarowicz's analysis of the various ways that power manifests in the global refugee protection regime mentioned in the Introduction. Milner and Wojnarowicz insist on the importance of studying the local context of refugee policy implementation in which "individuals have significant agency and discretionary authority to influence and shape how policies are practiced."²²² Within local contexts, where there are diffuse social relations, there is a "production of subjectivities" and a "relationship between power and knowledge" that arises from "productive power."²²³ At the core of this form of power is the ability of actors to create and enforce new realities through the use of knowledge, discourse and claims to legitimacy.²²⁴ Like Zemon Davis, they reveal how this form of power relates to the ability of actors to support "a dominating discourse" and "to extend or at least to defend its grasp through the conversion of others and suppression of rival knowledge."²²⁵

This section has discussed the scholarship, which centralizes the question of narrative within history. To summarize the lessons from Zemon Davis and Milner and

²²² Milner and Wojnarowicz, "Power in the Global Refugee Regime", 11-14, citing Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall, eds., *Power in Global Governance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 20.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Ibid. Milner and Wojnarowicz citing James Keely, "Toward a Foucauldian Analysis of International Regimes," *International Organization* 44, no. 1 (1990): 99.

Wojnarowicz as pertains to refugee selection interviews, refugee applicant stories were told and heard by officers within the parameters of a legal process prescribed by Canadian refugee protection law, regulations and operational guidelines.²²⁶ In this situation, the Canadian officers acted as a narrator, embodiment, and vector of government law and policy for foreign nationals applying for refugee protection, as well as to representatives of resettlement partners and interveners.²²⁷ Officers had the power to enforce categories through their bureaucratic authority, and to determine whether an applicant was a “refugee” or not, according to Canadian law.²²⁸ Seen with the help of Zemon Davis, Milner and Wojnarowicz, the encounter between officers and refugee applicants can be understood through multiple and simultaneous discursive frames: judicial, political, historical and narrative.

Officers as Narrators, Then and Now

As outlined in the Introduction, this study initially intended to tell a history of the refugee selection interview from the perspectives of both former refugee applicants and officers. In this conception, Zemon Davis's pardon-seekers were similar to refugee applicants in that both groups told stories to officials in order to save their lives. Zemon Davis's sixteenth-century storytellers sought to persuade the king to spare them from the gallows, while refugee applicants sought to convince Canadian officers to grant them formal refugee status and resettlement in Canada. Sixteenth-century pardon-tales contained in letters of remission were prepared by a royal

²²⁶ A brief history and trajectory of Canadian refugee protection policy in Africa is outlined in the next chapter.

²²⁷ These partners are outlined and discussed more fully in chapter two: they include the UNCHR and voluntary organizations and faith groups that sponsored refugees and helped them to settle in Canada.

²²⁸ See Zetter, “Labelling Refugees,” for a discussion of the power of bureaucrats to create and formalize labels for refugee-hood.

notary and his clerks together with the supplicant or the supplicant's agent and then recorded on final parchment. The king alone had the power to remit death sentences. Zemon Davis's lens remains most useful for the analysis of the knowledge produced within the selection interviews, even if the story is told by the Canadian government officers who heard and authenticated the stories through their decisions.²²⁹

Zemon Davis's insights and analytical frames apply to both the past and present contexts of story-telling: the refugee selection interviews and the oral history interviews, respectively. In both contexts, the process of remembering "is refracted through the subjectivity constructed by the respondent and shaped by the intersubjective relations in the room."²³⁰ Within both the refugee selection interview and the oral history interview situations, the interviewee's performance is conditional upon the subject position that he or she occupies within the interview. The construction of a narrative account is dependent on the ability to "find a place within cultural discourses where one is comfortable enough to tell one's story."²³¹ In theories of the self, there is always a tension between individual agency expressed through "the freedom of the individual in action and words" and the power of culture, with its

²²⁹ Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives*, 8-15. A detailed description of the officials who narrated sixteenth century France pardon-tales indicates that, "royal notaries or secretaries made up the elite of the world of scribes, possessors of a lucrative royal office, which could pass from father to son or uncle to nephew and bring with it ennoblement". Additionally, in order for a pardon-seeker to get a letter of remission drawn up by a royal notary, "in principle, everyone seeking a pardon had to get a "command," a *jussio*, from an officer of the royal chancellery: from the chancellor himself or the master of requests in the Grand Chancellery in Paris or following the king's suite, or from one of the Little Chancellery offices associated with the sovereign courts at Paris, Bordeaux, Rouen, Toulouse, and elsewhere." While these are interesting insights into the social standing of officials, a full comparison with this study's 20th century subjects would be beyond the scope of this dissertation.

²³⁰ Abrams, *Oral History Theory*, 77.

²³¹ *Ibid.*

“discourses, models and language.”²³² There is never an “unmediated” or “pure” narrative of the past.²³³

It is for this reason that this thesis conceptualizes the content and form of officers’ narratives as mutually constitutive. As described in the section that discusses standpoint theory and my motivations for conducting this research project, Molloy, Burrows and Mullin were selected as narrators because, in their role as Immigration Foreign Service Officers, they were directly involved in formal procedures of refugee selection as hearers and decision-makers. The methods and practical steps employed in identifying and subsequently interviewing the three officers are explained in the early sections on the “form” of each of the three life story chapters (three, four and five). These sections offer detailed explanations and chronologies of how I encountered, engaged and came to select and interview each of the officers.

In the interviews, the narrator’s responses (e.g. the language used, the emotions expressed, the tone adopted—will be influenced by the “immediate interview context.”²³⁴ Also, outside influences and previous telling of one’s story, create a filter in intervening years that shapes the recalling and retelling of the experience.²³⁵ The refugee selection interview, which is at the core of this thesis, like the oral history interviews which help constitute its material, is an exchange between two subjects, that takes place through multiple and sometimes competing frames. The complexity of these layers of accounts of past refugee situations invites a careful analysis. The premise of this study is that the detailed examination of a limited

²³² Ibid, 49.

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ Ibid, 55.

²³⁵ Ibid.

number of stories, told by actors whose position made them both recipients and shapers of countless refugee stories, could lead to a fascinating and compelling account of important aspects of the history of forced migrations to Canada.

The following three chapters (devoted to one officer each) will use the tools discussed in this chapter to link Molloy's, Mullin's and Burrows's life stories to the structures and people they encountered in the past. These chapters will also discuss the changing ways in which the officers have understood this history since the time of their work in East Africa, in the light of the situations and the requirements of the audiences they have encountered since then. Before turning to this analysis, however, there is a need for one more element of context: an overview of the broader circumstances, interests and structures within which officers operated when they conducted refugee selection interviews in East and Central Africa, between 1972 and 1990. This is the substance of chapter 2.

Chapter Two: Historical and Structural Context of the African Refugee Resettlement Program

This chapter provides the historical context behind the implementation of Canada's African Refugee Program and introduces the material and ideational structures within which Immigration Foreign Service officers navigated and negotiated while implementing the program through refugee selection for resettlement. The previous chapter provided the theoretical premise and method through which to understand the three officers' accounts and their role as narrators in both the past and present.

Given this study's examination of an individual's agency in policy implementation, this chapter also explains the structures (material and ideational) that influenced, conditioned or shaped implementation. As defined in the Introduction, material structures are understood to represent government or state capacity, priorities and interests that manifest through policy, legal and resource parameters and prescriptions, while ideational structures represent the legal system, provisions, and the local or cultural context within which officers operated.²³⁶ The structures within which officers practiced refugee selection in East and Central Africa from the early 1970s to 1990 were international, national and local in nature. The political, economic and ideological trends outlined in this chapter are those that are essential to understand the realities, possibilities and constraints through which these officers navigated, negotiated and acted as narrators while exercising their agency. In order to systematically analyze the structural context of refugee selection, the rest of

²³⁶ Betts and Orchard, *Norms and the Politics of Implementation*, 4.

the chapter is organized into three sections. The first section examines and explains the critical policy and legal developments in Canadian refugee protection that shaped and facilitated the formation and universalization of Canada's Humanitarian and Resettlement Program and the African Refugee program in 1981. Additionally, the thesis examines the impact of state capacity, priorities and interests that were contained in the Annual Report to Parliament on immigration levels for refugee selection operations. The second section examines critical Canadian domestic and foreign policy interests and considerations, which shaped the thrust, parameters and focus of Canada's resettlement policies and practices in relation to Africa, including the period preceding and following the establishment of the African Refugee Program in 1981. The third and final section explains the local context and conditions within which officers engaged in refugee selection, including how state formation processes in the countries of operation (such as decolonization, conflict, and Africa's role in the international state system) might have impacted on who, what, and where officers engaged in refugee selection.

For this chapter, Milner and Wojnarowicz's consideration of expressions and experiences of power in global and local contexts is an important starting point for the examination of structure and the role of officers implementing resettlement policy.²³⁷ Invoking Barnett and Duvall's taxonomies of power, they argue that a comprehensive understanding of the global refugee regime "must include an account of the diverse actors and forms of power present in institutional contexts at the

²³⁷ Milner and Wojnarowicz, "Power in the Global Refugee Regime," 7-17.

global level, and the implementation contexts at the local level.”²³⁸ At the local level, there is “productive power,” defined as “production of subjects through diffuse social relations.”²³⁹ Here, there is a relationship between power, knowledge and the production of subjectivities. Of relevance to this study is Milner and Wojnarowicz’s observation that productive power also “relates to the ability to create and enforce categories and labels.”²⁴⁰ There is a need to “study the role of actors and their efforts to exert power in various contexts,” including “local contexts where the day-to-day implementation of decisions involves interactions across diverse contexts and a wide possibility of actors.”²⁴¹ This study, which builds on their framework, and asks how power is “expressed and experienced” in local contexts, “where efforts are made to implement” policies made within structures of the global refugee regime.²⁴² Similarly, as Betts and Orchard have shown through their edited collection of essays, “beyond structure, *agency* matters for implementation.”²⁴³ Betts and Orchard consider the role and interplay between structure and individual agency in the implementation of international norms and policies.²⁴⁴ Individual personality, capability (or lack thereof) and relationships can play a role in how or whether policies are implemented in various contexts.

The identification of policies, legal processes and interests that shaped the context of refugee selection is important to a thesis concerned with the individual

²³⁸ Ibid, 9.

²³⁹ Ibid, citing Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall, eds., *Power in Global*, 20.

²⁴⁰ Ibid, 11.

²⁴¹ Ibid, 12.

²⁴² Ibid.

²⁴³ Betts and Orchard, *Norms and the Politics of Implementation*, 273- 275. Italics are mine, for emphasis.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

agency of officers. Apart from having to tell their individual stories of flight and persecution, refugee applicants, as well as the officers hearing these stories, needed to navigate, narrate and negotiate their way through a complex set of local, regional and international structures. More specifically, the structures presented in this chapter directly informed *where* story-telling took place, *how* stories were told and heard, and *what* information refugee applicants shared (or were compelled or allowed to share) within refugee selection interviews with Canadian officers.

The structures of countries of departure and countries of arrival are particularly important to take into account. In his study of the ethics and politics of Western countries' refugee protection policies, Gibney argues that a Western government's responses to refugees "will be determined largely by the possibilities afforded by its domestic political environment, and that environment will be shaped by a changing array of social, institutional and economic forces, both domestic and international in origin."²⁴⁵ The "state is more able to exercise sovereignty by deciding who to let in, who to keep out, how to treat those who are let in, and who to kick out when they are no longer wanted."²⁴⁶ Explaining the evolution of African asylum policies from the 1960s to the 2000s, Milner argues that "states play a central role in the formulation and implementation of particular asylum policies" and that these policies "are motivated by the interests and priorities of states."²⁴⁷ Following their lead, this chapter recognizes that the implementation of Canada's refugee

²⁴⁵ Matthew Gibney, *The Ethics and Politics of Asylum: Liberal Democracy and the Responses to Refugees* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 13.

²⁴⁶ Cassandra Veney, *Forced Migration in East Africa: Democratization, Structural Adjustment, and Refugees*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 65.

²⁴⁷ James Milner, *Refugees, the State and the Politics of Asylum in Africa* (Oxford: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 5-6.

resettlement policy in Africa was at once a product of structures in Canada, and in African countries of asylum where refugees were selected from. The two sets of structures provide the main context of the story-hearing and of the storytelling as they occurred in Central and East Africa between officers and refugee applicants.

Molloy and Madokoro discuss the role of civil servants in effecting refugee policy changes in the late 1960s and 1970s. They argue that the people who were responsible for delivering immigration and refugee policy on the ground had a profound impact on how refugee policy evolved in Canada.²⁴⁸ Specifically, they suggest that a “succession of [Canadian] resettlement programs,” including for Uganda (1972), Chile (1973) and Indochina (1975-76), “created operational expertise and competence, intensified interaction with UNHCR, and led to purposeful interdepartmental coordination.”²⁴⁹ Officers such as Michael Molloy, when he was second in command to Roger St. Vincent in the airlifting of Ugandan-Asians in 1972,²⁵⁰ had gained experience “with alternative definitions, selection criteria, status determination, and sponsorship,” which were “mined in designing the [1976 Immigration] Act”.²⁵¹ The *1976 Immigration Act* represents the first and main legislation that prescribed statutory and selection requirements for resettlement to Canada. These will be discussed in the next section.

Although Canada’s African Refugee Program was formally implemented at Canada’s Nairobi visa office in 1981, this study situates the program’s genesis within

²⁴⁸ Molloy and Madokoro, “Effecting Change,” quoting the Memorandum to the Cabinet, “Selection of Refugees for Resettlement to Canada.” 27 July 1970, RG2, Vol. 6373, file 1032-70, LAC.

²⁴⁹ Ibid, 59.

²⁵⁰ Chapter three will more substantively discuss Molloy’s experiences with refugee selection during his career, including his role in the Ugandan-Asian operation in 1972.

²⁵¹ Molloy and Madokoro, “Effecting Change,” 59.

resettlement policy changes in the 1970s, which preceded Canadian resettlement from the African continent. As outlined in the introductory chapter, “resettlement” to a third country such as Canada is one of three durable solutions that include “local integration” in the country of asylum or “voluntary repatriation” to the country from which a refugee has fled.²⁵² Within this triad of refugee solutions, Milner situates third-country resettlement within the global refugee regime by observing that “while no country is under a legal obligation to resettle refugees, refugee resettlement has increasingly become recognized as a “tangible expression of international solidarity that allows states to ‘help share each other’s burdens.’”²⁵³ The concept of “burden-sharing” within the context of African refugee protection will be discussed further in the last section of this chapter.

Canadian Refugee Policy, Law and Bureaucratic Processes

1970 Memorandum to Cabinet: Selection of Refugees for Resettlement to Canada

The critical shift in Canada’s refugee protection policy took place when the liberal government of Canada ratified the 1951 UN Convention and its 1967 Protocol in September 1969. This ratification was followed by the presentation of policy recommendations to Cabinet by the Minister of Manpower and Immigration, Allan MacEachen, on July 27, 1970.²⁵⁴ The Memorandum to Cabinet (MC), entitled

²⁵² The UNHCR refers only those refugees most in need of third-country resettlement and who are considered unlikely to obtain other solutions in the form of local integration or voluntary repatriation in the foreseeable future. To get a sense of how the Government of Canada has autonomy and defines the parameters and priorities of its resettlement commitments to the UNHCR see, Canada Government Chapter, *UNHCR Resettlement Handbook*, (2018), accessed March 15, 2018, <http://www.unhcr.org/protection/resettlement/3c5e55594/unhcr-resettlement-handbook-country-chapter-canada.html>

²⁵³ Milner, *Politics of Asylum in Africa*, 49 citing UNHCR, *Global Consultations Report* (Geneva: UNHCR, 2002), 5.

²⁵⁴ Memorandum to the Cabinet, “Selection of Refugees for Resettlement to Canada.”

“Selection of Refugees for Resettlement to Canada,” was a means of aligning Canada’s refugee resettlement laws with international legal instruments and tailoring them to Canada’s interests. The MC presented a policy problem, an objective and a recommendation:

Problem: While Canada’s Immigration policy was placed on a universal basis with the introduction of the new Immigration Regulations in 1967 [point system], the selection of refugees has continued to favour persons of European origin.

Objective: The purpose of this memorandum is to establish a refugee program which will admit refugees who have good prospects of settlement in Canada without regard to geographic origin.²⁵⁵

The background to the MC was that since the end of World War II most of the three hundred thousand refugees resettled in Canada had come from Europe “as a result of events arising out of World War II,” and those who had “left one of the Soviet-Bloc countries” since December 31, 1951.²⁵⁶ In response to this policy problem, the MC made two critical recommendations concerning Canada’s refugee resettlement policy. The first was that the term “refugee” be redefined to provide for selection on a universal basis, that is, beyond Europe and without geographical limits. The proposed definition was that a refugee would be:

Any person who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion, is outside of the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Ibid. The Memorandum to Cabinet’s background section noted that most refugees who had been admitted before ratification of the Convention were of European origin, including those who had been resettled through the Hungarian (1956) and Czechoslovakian (1968) programs. There had been exceptions to this regional focus on Europe when the Government of Canada admitted “Chinese refugees from Hong Kong in 1962 and Haitians in 1969”.

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

The second recommendation was that the “selection of refugees be made on the basis of the norms of assessment set out in Immigration Regulations on the understanding that examining officers have discretion under Sections 32(4) and 33(5) of Immigration Regulations, to admit refugees who are considered capable of successful settlement in Canada notwithstanding their ability to meet these norms.”²⁵⁸

According to Molloy and Madokoro, the MC’s second recommendation facilitated the exemption of refugees from the “point system,” through which numerical values were assigned for immigrant applicants’ age, education, occupation, skill level, intended destination, ability to function in either English or French and the presence of relatives or community in Canada.²⁵⁹ Officers were now “expected to use their discretionary authority to override the system in favour of refugees given their assistance available on arrival.”²⁶⁰ In addition to these two recommendations, the MC also proposed a new Oppressed Minorities policy that would provide for the selection of oppressed ethnic minorities who did not meet the proposed refugee definition because they were “either not prepared to, or unable to move to another country where they could claim refugee status under the Convention.”²⁶¹

The 1970 MC was significant in that it “marked the emergence of a formal Canadian refugee policy” and was the “first step in what the future Minister of Manpower and Immigration, Robert Andras, architect of the *1976 Immigration Act*,

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

²⁵⁹ Molloy and Madokoro, “Effecting Change”, 55-57. Prior to the creation of refugee provisions of the Immigration Act, broad consultations with the Standing Conference of Organizations Concerned with Refugees (predecessor of the Canadian Council of Refugees) which had led to a decision by Molloy’s policy team to drop the point system from the overseas refugee selection system.

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁶¹ Memorandum to Cabinet, “Selection of Refugees for Resettlement to Canada.”

would characterize as ‘a discernible effort to envelope Canadian refugee activity in a framework of policy and principle guidelines.’”²⁶² Of specific relevance to this study is that the MC officially signalled a new policy to expand the Government of Canada’s immigrant and refugee selection to non-European regions such as South America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, Asia and Africa. After that, Canada was able to respond to various international humanitarian and refugee crises by offering permanent residence to refugees and displaced people such as the Bengali Muslims (1971), Tibetans (1971), Ugandan-Asians (1972) and Chileans (1973).²⁶³ Of particular importance to the evolution of Canada’s African Refugee Program was the Oppressed Minority policy, which “informed the Canadian response to refugees in Uganda and Chile.”²⁶⁴ The use of this policy to create the Special Program for Ugandan-Asians in order to resettle Ugandan-Asian minorities who were expelled by Ugandan President Idi Amin’s announcement on August 4, 1972, demonstrated its utility, “as those ordered expelled were still in Uganda and therefore outside the UNHCR’s mandate.”²⁶⁵

Following the approval of the recommendations in the 1970 MC, the Ministry of Manpower and Immigration issued *Operational Memorandum 17* (OM 17) for its

²⁶² Robert Andras, “An Historical Sketch of Canadian Immigration and Refugee Policy”, in *The Indochinese Refugee Movement: The Canadian Experience*, ed. Howard Adelman (Toronto: Operation Lifeline, 1980), 4.

²⁶³ Government of Canada, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, *Canada, A History of Refuge*, accessed March 27, 2018, <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/refugees/canada-role/timeline.html>

Notably, in 1956 Canada resettled thirty-seven thousand Hungarian refugees who fled Soviet communism during the Cold War.

²⁶⁴ Molloy and Madokoro, “Effecting Change,” 56.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

officers with instructions and guidelines on refugee selection abroad.²⁶⁶ Also, OM17 outlined the ramifications of Canada's ratification of the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol on 4 September 1969. OM17 was an update to the unnumbered *Operations Memorandum* issued on May 8, 1968, which had guided officers before ratification. The 1968 OM's primary stated goal was to "improve the efficiency of the labour market" with the department's role being to "provide such part of the organization of the labour market and to give such leadership in the operation of the total market, as will on balance do most to fill all vacancies both quickly and well."²⁶⁷ Its only reference to refugees was that "Canada discharges international obligations for the assistance of refugees," and that "there is no discrimination by race, country of origin or religion." Paragraph six of OM 17 guided the "Determination of Refugee Status Abroad."

Foreign Branch officers will be responsible for determining the refugee status of immigrants applying at posts abroad. In determining such status, officers abroad would use the refugee definition and take into consideration the exclusions, the status accorded by other countries (particularly where these are signatories to the Convention and Protocol) and any advice which may be available from UNHCR offices. If a visa officer is unable to determine whether or not an applicant is a refugee or has any specific questions regarding the definition and/or exclusions, these should be directed to IDHQ [Head Quarters in Ottawa] through normal channels.²⁶⁸

Therefore, in the early 1970s, before the 1976 Act came into effect, officers derived their authority to make refugee admission decisions abroad from OM 17. Decision-making was to be made in consultation with the UNHCR and policy officers in Ottawa

²⁶⁶ Department of Manpower and Immigration, *Operations Memorandum 17* (Revised) 2 January, 1971, Canada Immigration History Society (CIHS) Collection: 1-13.

²⁶⁷ Department of Manpower and Immigration, *Operations Memorandum Unnumbered*, May 9, 1968, Canada Immigration History Society (CIHS) Collection: 1-3.

²⁶⁸ Department of Manpower and Immigration, *Operations Memorandum 17*, 4.

(headquarters) as necessary. OM 17 provided for parameters to be followed by officers as a “result of sudden political changes such as military coups or civil strife in several areas of the world.” While visa offices “may be subject to considerable pressure to designate a group of persons as refugees,” they had to bear two factors in mind:

- (1) Refugee status under the definition is decided on an *individual*, not a group basis;
- (2) If the persons concerned have not yet been recognized as refugees by the UNHCR or another State signatory to the 1951 Convention, referring to them as refugees may have *serious international implications*. Social and political dissidents who leave a country because they disagree with the law or policies of their country are not refugees unless it is clearly established that they were subject to persecution for the specific reasons mentioned in the Convention refugees.²⁶⁹

These two factors are essential to this study because they underlie the critical requirements for eligibility for refugee selection. However, the second factor highlights how the global is ever-present in the local when implementation takes place. The interpretation of *who* is a refugee, and in turn, their selection for protection and resettlement to Canada, had broader implications internationally. The implementation of refugee policy was not unidirectional but could also inform policy and refugee protection norms. Importantly, aspects of the material structures that manifested through policy and law were malleable and mutable, subject to prevailing interests and norms.

Appendix “A” of OM17 provided specific guidance on the “Determination of Eligibility for Refugee Status,” and its foreword pledged to “assist officers in

²⁶⁹ Ibid. In the next section of this chapter there is a discussion of the genesis and differences between the designated classes and the Convention refugee class. Italics for emphasis belong to this author.

developing an interrogative technique most likely to produce the information required to determine eligibility for refugee status.” The guidance emphasized the importance for officers to possess a “thorough understanding of every part of the definition if a just and impartial determination of eligibility is to be made.” The guidance recognized that the phrase “owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted” was the “most difficult part of the refugee definition to interpret.” This is because “fear is a subjective feeling, well-founded, provides the objective element and imposes an obligation on the applicant to provide such indications as will enable the determining authority to decide whether the applicant has good grounds to fear persecution.” However, there is an acknowledgement of “problem areas” encountered in determining refugee status that is related to the “burden of proof” and “rules of evidence” which are challenging to apply in the determination of refugee status.

OM17 suggests that:

It will essentially be a question of whether his [the refugee applicant’s] submissions are credible and, in the circumstances, plausible. In the absence of conclusive evidence and where no facts are known which give the examining officer reason to question the veracity of the applicant’s claims, he should be given the benefit of the doubt. In order to do justice to the spirit of the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, its provisions should be interpreted sympathetically and from a humanitarian viewpoint.

These provisions are relevant because they explain and acknowledge the subjective elements of refugee status determination for both refugee applicants and officers. The paragraph above acknowledges that the rules of evidence are difficult to apply in this context. Instead, the instructions require the officer to apply the spirit of the Convention while determining the credibility, plausibility and veracity of refugee applicant stories and claims for protection.

In addition to refugee selection, OM 17 also established the framework for private refugee sponsorship through a pilot project with the National Interfaith Immigration Committee.²⁷⁰ If a visa officer was of the “opinion that a refugee cannot become satisfactorily established in Canada without some assistance beyond that available from Departmental resources” they could pass on a refugee’s details to the Director of Home Services Branch to refer the applicant’s case to the National Interfaith Immigration Committee.²⁷¹ The committee “would endeavour to develop a matching offer of assistance and advise Home Services Branch accordingly.”²⁷² This established relationships between the Government of Canada and private sponsors and created the foundation for what would become a robust private sponsorship program through the pathways of identifying sponsoring and voluntary groups and communities for the major refugee and humanitarian movements in the 1970s. From January 1971 until the coming into force of the *1976 Immigration Act* in 1978, OM 17 guided and prescribed how officers selected refugees for resettlement. The most significant principle to emerge and guide officer conduct was that Canada’s ratification of the 1951 Convention and its Protocol on September 4, 1969, reiterated the Government’s commitment to bring “into line our [Canada’s] policy of universality and non-discrimination.”

1976 Immigration Act

After the submissions made in the 1970 MC had been received favourably by Cabinet, it commissioned a “White Paper” to consult Canadians on this policy issue.²⁷³

²⁷⁰ Ibid, 6.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² Ibid.

²⁷³ Molloy and Madokoro, “Effecting Change,” 55-58.

This process culminated in the *1976 Immigration Act*, which came into force in April 1978, replacing the 1952 Immigration Act. The *1976 Immigration Act* required the government to consult widely about immigration intake and to announce each year's immigration "levels" in advance. In the years preceding the new Act, the Department of Manpower and Immigration had been concurrently running multi-year resettlement programs in South America, Europe, and South-East Asia and was pondering an expansion into Africa.²⁷⁴

The process leading up to the Refugee Plan component of the Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration Levels plan involved wide consultations with stakeholders such as provincial-territorial governments, churches, non-governmental organizations and local representatives from the UNHCR.²⁷⁵ As recognized in the Introduction, the development of Canadian resettlement policy and practice also involved voluntary, faith-based organizations and other non-state actors (domestic and transnational) and built on the structural precedent of historical resettlement movements.²⁷⁶ The knowledge, experiences, relationships and structures gained from the Hungarian (1956-57), Chilean (1973-76) and Ugandan-Asian (1972) resettlement movements by both government and non-state actors, for example, provided important historical precedent and context for evolutions in Canadian refugee policy and practice, including for the formal establishment of the African Refugee Program in 1981.

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

²⁷⁵ Ibid, 58: "In the same historic month, December 1978, the Indochinese Designated Class Regulations became law and the Mennonite Church decided to seek an agreement with the Immigration Department permitting the Mennonite Central Committee to authorize its congregations to sponsor refugees. A "Master Agreement" was signed by April; agreements with other churches quickly followed."

²⁷⁶ For example, see a discussion of the role of the Canadian Council of Churches and World Council of Churches in responding to the Hungarian resettlement movement in Bangarth and Thompson, "Transnational Christian Charity".

Consultations and conversations with a broad range of stakeholders had both a quantitative and a qualitative impact on the Government of Canada's refugee resettlement program, determining the annual refugee admission numbers and their specific source regions and countries. These are key structural elements because they placed limits and parameters on where officers were posted, and who and how many people they were allowed to select for resettlement in Canada. However, as already discussed, officers were not passive recipients and enforcers of these structures. The experiences and knowledge gained in their field of operations also simultaneously fed and impacted the creation of material structures through their impact on policy and law.²⁷⁷

Molloy invoked his experience with the operational realities of refugee selection into his thinking when he was appointed Director of Refugee Policy in September 1976, and he oversaw the writing of the *1976 Immigration Act's* refugee provisions and categories.²⁷⁸ The Refugee Policy Division (REPOL) had been established in 1975 by Kirk Bell, together with other officers "whose experience at the Canadian Permanent Mission to the UN in Geneva had exposed them to refugee problems and the issue of Canada ratifying the Refugee Convention."²⁷⁹ In addition to Molloy, REPOL was comprised of two other officers. Together these three led the implementation of the refugee provisions of the *1976 Immigration Act*, generated options on emerging refugee issues, provided policy guidance to refugee operations, liaised with advocacy groups and communities, oversaw the Interdepartmental

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

²⁷⁸ Ibid, 57. Molloy's additional perspectives from his oral testimony for this study are discussed further in chapter three.

²⁷⁹ Ibid.

Committee on Refugee Status determination and spearheaded relations with the Intergovernmental Committee on European Migration and humanitarian non-governmental organizations.²⁸⁰ In order to support the work of the Refugee Policy Division, units were also “created in External Affairs, and the Canadian Development Agency, and an experienced immigration foreign service officer was assigned to the Canadian Mission in Geneva to coordinate Canadian relations with UNHCR.”²⁸¹ These institutional arms were able to engage internationally and nationally on refugee issues. Within Canada, the “refugee advocacy community took full advantage of the consultative process to make known their views on asylum and resettlement.”²⁸² For the latter, they wanted a “transparent law-based system and a meaningful way to influence the government’s priorities.”²⁸³

From 1970 to 1978, these public servants (working within the framework established by Cabinet in 1970) drove innovation on refugee protection policy and programs. On 3 February 1975, the Green Paper on Immigration Policy was tabled before the House of Commons and contained new policy options that preceded the *1976 Immigration Act*.²⁸⁴ An internal policy brief prepared for policymakers in 1976 proposed a refugee policy for the Government of Canada for both the in-Canada (asylum) and abroad (resettlement) processes.²⁸⁵ Concerning overseas selection, the strategy was based on “the premise that there will always be more refugees in need

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ Ibid.

²⁸⁴ Ministry of Employment and Immigration Canada, *Annual Report (1974/75)*, Canada Immigration History Society (CIHS) Collection.

²⁸⁵ Minister of Employment and Immigration Canada, *Refugee Strategy*, 1978, Canada Immigration History Society (CIHS) Collection, 1-4.

of resettlement than we will be able to accept.”²⁸⁶ The objective was, therefore, to accept those who are “in the most need.” This emphasis on those most in need again placed a qualitative and quantitative constraint on who and how many could be resettled, thereby making third-country resettlement a solution of last resort in relation to voluntary repatriation and local integration. The key point is that the structures that were created from refugee policy discussions and changes that took place during the 1970s allowed for individual officers to play an innovative role, by determining and defining what constituted “the most in need” in any given context.

Key legislation and administrative elements of the proposed strategy included a “policy to consult with the UNHCR in identifying those from among the refugee population who could most benefit” from resettlement to Canada.²⁸⁷ Consultation with the UNHCR would be carried out at three levels: internationally, in Geneva as part of Canada’s role as a member of the UNHCR executive; regionally or locally with UNHCR field staff “where problems” existed or “may occur,” so that they might identify “the gravity of the situation and in identifying cases” benefit from resettlement to Canada; and finally with UNHCR representatives in Canada to discuss “policy options and their operational implications.”²⁸⁸ This triple-layered relationship meant that UNHCR was a key player and partner at all levels of refugee protection: norm-setting, policy, and implementation. Also, communication and negotiations would take place at the international, national and local levels. As will be seen in chapters three, four and five, officers consulted and engaged their UNHCR

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

counterparts in refugee selection, and the latter was a key (albeit not the sole) source of refugee applicant referrals and local knowledge in refugee selection in East and Central Africa.

The proposed policy strategy provided for “maximum flexibility to officers selecting refugees,” and also included the removal of the hitherto mandatory need for officers to assess whether refugees reached the “special point count” that was applied to other immigrants to determine if they could become established in Canada.²⁸⁹ The provision of flexibility is notable because it meant that officers would possess full autonomy in refugee selection. In addition, there were proposals for “special services” from the federal government to assist with the settlement of refugees including interest-free loans to cover the cost of travel to Canada; financial assistance until permanent employment; help in finding accommodation, language and other training; emergency medical care as required, and counselling; and any other services to “assist refugees upon arrival.” The strategy also sought to broaden the “range of refugees who [could] meet the standards for admittance” through a “provision in the new Act [which would] allow volunteer groups to sponsor refugees.” These groups would sign a legal undertaking to provide support and adaptation assistance during the first year in Canada, thus allowing Canada to select refugees who might not otherwise have been considered capable of successful establishment and settlement.

²⁸⁹ Ibid. Also, see an explanation of the “point system” and refugees’ exemption from meeting its requirements, earlier in this chapter.

Molloy's policy team authored the refugee strategy document in order to consult within the government and seek policy approval from senior executives as part of policy development for the refugee provisions in the *1976 Immigration Act*. Significantly, the strategy reveals "the hand" and influence of individual officers such as Molloy in shaping the structures that would inform refugee selection for both Mullin and Burrows from 1978 onward. It also reveals how that officer agency could have an impact and shape structures, and vice-versa.

Refugee and Humanitarian Legal Provisions

The strategy culminated in the *1976 Immigration Act*, Section 3 of which set out the objectives for "Canadian immigration policy and the rules and regulations" that would "be designed and administered in such a manner as to promote the domestic and international interests of Canada."²⁹⁰ One of the objectives of the *1976 Immigration Act* was to "fulfil Canada's international legal obligations with respect to refugees and to uphold its humanitarian tradition with respect to the displaced and the persecuted" and to "ensure that any person who seeks admission to Canada on either a permanent or temporary basis is subject to standards of admission that do not discriminate in a manner inconsistent with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms."

Section 6, paragraph 1 of the Act, provided that:

Subject to this Act and the regulations, any immigrant, including a Convention refugee, and all dependants, if any, may be granted landing if it is established *to the satisfaction of an immigration officer* that the immigrant meets the selection standards established by the regulations for the purpose of determining whether or not and the degree to which the immigrant will be able

²⁹⁰ *Canada: Immigration Act, 1976-77*, c. 52, s. 1 (1976), <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b5c60.html>, [accessed 23 October, 2018]

to become *successfully established in Canada*, as determined in accordance with the regulations.²⁹¹

The cornerstone of the resettlement system created through the *1976 Immigration Act* was the Convention Refugee in Need of Resettlement Class.²⁹² The qualifying appendage is that the Convention Refugee had to be “in need of resettlement” in addition to meeting the refugee definition. The appendage of “in need of resettlement” is important because it emphasized that eligibility under the Convention class definition was not enough for one to be selected for resettlement to Canada. Based on the requirements of the Act, applicants were required to pass a three-stage process that entailed “eligibility,” that is, that the applicant must: meet the refugee definition; possess the “ability to establish or settle” in Canada; and meet “admissibility” or statutory requirements placed on all immigrants by successfully passing medical, criminality and security checks.²⁹³

Also, the applicant needed to have exhausted other durable solutions such as local integration in the country of asylum or voluntary repatriation to the country of citizenship. As will be discussed in the next chapters, this assessment was often performed by the UNHCR before referring to refugee applicants for third-country

²⁹¹ Italics belong to this author for emphasis.

²⁹² The *1976 Immigration Act* defined a Convention refugee class based on the definition proposed in the 1970 MC, the same as that found in the United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees signed at Geneva on July 28, 1951, and the Protocol thereto signed at New York City on January 31, 1967. This definition defined a refugee as any person who “by reason of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion” and “is outside the country of the person’s nationality and is unable, or by reason of that fear, unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country,” or “not having a country of nationality, is outside the country of the person’s former habitual residence and is unable or, by reason of that fear, is unwilling to return to that country.” *Canada: Immigration Act, 1976-77*, accessed 2 November 2018, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b5c60.html>

²⁹³ Molloy and Madokoro, “Effecting Change,” 58.

resettlement. However, the key point is that applicants needed to prove that not only did they meet the Convention definition of a refugee, they also had a “need” for resettlement.

Designated classes

Due to the limitations of the Convention class definition, the Refugee Policy team led by Molloy created alternative humanitarian designated class regulations.²⁹⁴ Section 6 (2) of the *1976 Immigration Act* provided for the “admission of which would be in accordance with Canada’s humanitarian tradition with respect to the displaced and persecuted.”²⁹⁵ The logic behind designated classes arose in situations where there were “powerful community interests supporting their resettlement in Canada, but in many cases, the Convention definition did not fit the circumstances, not least because many objected to being classified as refugees.”²⁹⁶ In 2005, Ralph Girard, the former Immigration Program Manager of the Rome visa office, wrote an article for the CIHS about how three designated classes were created in November 1978 in order to facilitate the selection of immigrants in refugee-like situations from Eastern Europe, Latin America and Indo China.²⁹⁷ Girard argues that the decision to create designated classes was “precipitated by operational teething problems following the coming into force of the 1976 Act and its accompanying regulatory package on April 1, 1978.”²⁹⁸

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ Ibid, citing refugee provisions in the *1976 Immigration Act*.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

²⁹⁷ Ralph Girard, “Designated classes: A regulatory device to target humanitarian resettlement programs,” *Canadian Immigration History Society (CIHS) Bulletin* 45 (January 1, 2005), accessed 2 February 2019, <http://cihs-shic.ca/designated-classes/#more-43>

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

While the Government of Canada saw refugee resettlement as “part of Canada’s contribution to the UNHCR effort to assist Convention Refugees,” over time, it became clear that not all those the government wanted to help could be included in the “narrow confines of the 1951 Convention.”²⁹⁹ For example, the Self-Exiled Persons Designated class created for Eastern Europe arose from scenarios where some applicants did not consider themselves refugees and were reluctant to advance a claim or application under the Convention class definition. An example was that of Jewish émigrés from Russia who “considered the term to be pejorative and took offence at the idea it should be applied to them.”³⁰⁰ This led to high refusal rates for these Eastern European applicants under the Convention class and necessitated designated class provisions.

Also, in the months after the *1976 Immigration Act* came into force, annual planning of resettlement priorities was still in its infancy and “the UNHCR, was not interested in helping us [Government of Canada] since third country resettlement was at best a 1% solution for refugees in their care.”³⁰¹

The Refugee Affairs Directorate, headed by Mike Molloy, seized upon the opportunity to rectify not only the problem of Eastern Europeans but all of the others that had cropped up when it was discovered that the Convention would only cover a portion of those people in humanitarian need that Canada wanted to assist.

The resulting regulatory package in November 1978 created not one but three designated classes under Section 6(2) of the Immigration Act. Nevertheless, they all had a common objective, which was to simplify the process of humanitarian selection. Collectively they defined eligibility without requiring an elaborate refugee determination of Convention status.³⁰²

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² Ibid.

Girard himself drafted the designated class for Eastern Europe, which removed the need for an eligibility assessment to establish whether resettlement applicants were refugees.³⁰³ The capacity to simultaneously engage in refugee selection and also author regulatory provisions through which to do so is indicative of the epistemic and productive power that officers wielded in local contexts of implementation.³⁰⁴ So influential was this epistemic creation and categorization that the Self-Exiled Persons Designated Class became a template for the design of other designated classes, “remaining in effect until the Soviet Union collapsed.”³⁰⁵ For Latin Americans, “the designated class overcame the problem that the eligible group consisted of people still in their own country,” and it was later extended to allow the selection of political prisoners and oppressed minorities in any country designated by the government.³⁰⁶ For the Indo-Chinese, the designated class “was an operational godsend that reduced the selection process to determining admissibility rather than eligibility” and was especially apt where “none of the boat people in South East Asia were going to return to Vietnam, and they could not stay any length of time in the countries of first asylum.”³⁰⁷ Mostly, the use of designated classes enhanced the efficiency of selection abroad.³⁰⁸

Notwithstanding differences between the Convention class and designated classes, section 19 of the *1976 Immigration Act* still required that every foreign

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ Ibid. Also, see the earlier discussion about the role of “productive power “in local contexts of implementation contained in the Introduction by Milner and Wojnarowicz, “Power in the Global Refugee Regime,” 11-12.

³⁰⁵ Molloy and Madokoro, “Effecting Change,” 58.

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ Ibid.

national (whether selected for humanitarian reasons, as a refugee or immigrant) fulfill statutory requirements to pass criminal, security and medical checks before admission to Canada. Even after a favourable selection decision, a foreign national could still be refused admission to Canada (deemed inadmissible) if they failed their medical examination, were found to have engaged in and been convicted of serious criminality or were considered a security threat to Canada. As the next chapter will show, an officer's decision to accept a refugee applicant after an interview was still subject to rescission if the foreign national was deemed inadmissible for failing to fulfil any one of the statutory requirements.

The explanation of legal provisions explains a critical component of material structures that prescribed mechanisms and parameters of refugee selection for the African Refugee program established in 1981. The legal mechanisms of refugee selection allow for a better understanding of limits or possibilities for narrative and storytelling within refugee selection interviews.³⁰⁹ Also, it is particularly important to juxtapose the Convention class definition (used by officers to select refugees in Africa) with the designated classes (such as the Indochina Designated class) in order to clarify how legal mechanisms shaped officer decision-making. By understanding how these two selection mechanisms differed, this study can substantively conceptualize resettlement as a “very selective device for individuals and groups with specific characteristics and for whom resettlement is the only durable solution.”³¹⁰ In

³⁰⁹ Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives*, 4. Chapter one discussed how the pardon-tales of Zemon Davis's sixteenth-century subjects were simultaneously forms of affective storytelling and judicial supplications. African refugee applicants' stories would have been simultaneously an affective form of storytelling and a judicial supplication.

³¹⁰ Girard, “Designated Classes.”

chapters four and five, Mullin and Burrows discuss the realities and challenges of refugee selection in Africa and compare this with their experiences with selection through the designated class mechanism.

Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration Levels Plans

While the policy objectives and legal provisions of the *1976 Immigration Act* prescribed the qualitative parameters and mechanisms of refugee and humanitarian selection, the Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration Levels plan set Government of Canada immigrant and refugee admission targets or allocations for a stated period, usually three years. The *1976 Immigration Act* required that the Minister of Immigration report to Parliament on the number of immigrants who were to be admitted annually, and that Cabinet approve the final Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration Levels Plan. Section 7 also prescribed the need for numerical limits for “Convention refugees and persons of classes designated [...] in accordance with Canada’s humanitarian tradition with respect to the displaced and the persecuted”.³¹¹

In line with these requirements, the Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration Levels Plan for 1981 also included a Refugee plan and special humanitarian programs which pegged total “government intake at 16,000 people.”³¹² Explaining the rationale behind the introduction of a comparatively small allocation for the Africa Refugee Program, the report stated:

Although African nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) take the position that African Refugees are more likely to benefit from resettlement in Africa than elsewhere, the UNHCR has identified a small number of refugees

³¹¹ *1976 Immigration Act*.

³¹² Ministry of Employment and Immigration, *Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration Levels (1981/82)*, Canada Immigration History Society (CIHS) Collection, 30-36.

for whom that solution does not seem ideal. In response to this, Canada indicated its willingness to accept 200 such individuals for resettlement during 1981.

While it is not clear from the report whether the decision to accept two hundred Africans for resettlement was made by bureaucrats or by politicians, the paragraph above reflects a clear policy statement from the Government of Canada regarding resettlement from the African continent. Also, it provides an essential context for understanding why there were comparatively low allocations in comparison to other regions in the world.³¹³ The report also offers insight into the various interests that converged and informed how the Government of Canada established regional and visa office allocations; “through consultations with the Canadian representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the provinces, and private groups devoted to assisting refugees.”³¹⁴

Notably, not all African refugees resettled in the early years of the program were selected through the Nairobi visa office. In 1981 (as Mullin indicates in chapter four), only one hundred spaces were allocated to Nairobi, while the other hundred spaces were allocated to Rome visa officers and used to resettle Ethiopian refugees who had sought asylum in Italy. By 1984, the allocation to Africa had increased to one thousand spaces, “from which a total of 825 African” refugees were admitted that year.³¹⁵ The 1984 report explained that “[while] the majority of African refugees were

³¹³ Ibid, 31. Allocations for other regions were as follows: “Indochina, 8,000; Eastern Europe, 4,000; Latin America, 1,000; Africa, 200; unspecified areas, 300; and a contingency reserve of 2,500.” The allocation for the African Refugee program was increased to 500 in the following year, while admissions from Indochina were decreased by half to 4,000.

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Ministry of Employment and Immigration, *Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration Levels (1984/85)*, Canada Immigration History Society (CIHS) Collection, 53-60.

selected and processed on the continent, the major exception [was] Rome where 325 African refugees were processed.”³¹⁶ The 1985 report revealed that while “the number of Ethiopians and Ugandans” had increased, the Government of Canada was also “working closely with the UNHCR” to select Sudanese refugees through its Cairo visa office and “constantly improving our means of identifying [African] refugees in need of resettlement.”³¹⁷

The Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration Levels plan and the refugee plan within it, are important to this study for two reasons. Firstly, the report is an expression of the Government of Canada’s operational capacity. Through the allocation of resettlement spaces by region, the plan also allocates the resources that each visa office is expected to utilize in order to meet targets for the admission of immigrants and refugees. For the officers in the field, the plan is a significant material structure that provides numerical parameters and resource possibilities for refugee and humanitarian selection. In chapter four, Mullin discusses the impact of numbers on the complexity and length of selection interviews, while in chapter five, Burrows explains how “resources” were a key factor for officers engaged in refugee selection.

Secondly, the report also acts as a policy statement through which the Government of Canada articulates immigrant and refugee priorities. Therefore, the report also contains a narrative explaining the process and rationale behind the numbers. The reference to the numbers as a product of the government’s

³¹⁶ Ibid, 60.

³¹⁷ Ministry of Employment and Immigration, *Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration Levels* (1985/86), Canada Immigration History Society (CIHS) Collection, 38-45.

collaboration with the UNHCR, provinces and territories and private sponsors explains the source of the allocations. Meanwhile, an explanation of the OAU position with regards to third-country resettlement appears to offer a pre-emptive explanation for the comparatively low allocation for African refugees. This storyline is an apt segue into the next section, which explores state capacity, priorities and interests that informed the Government of Canada's resettlement Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration Levels plans.

To transition to the next section and understand the implications on government capacity and priorities, a recap about the Annual Report is necessary. Under the *1976 Immigration Act*, the Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration Levels plan set the Government of Canada immigrant and refugee admission priorities and targets. In addition to immigrant admissions, through this report, the Minister of Immigration also sought cabinet approval for the number of "Convention refugees and persons of classes designated" who would be admitted, "in accordance with Canada's humanitarian tradition with respect to the displaced and the persecuted."³¹⁸

Government of Canada Resettlement Statistics from 1980 to 1990

Evolutions in the official government of Canada storyline and policy regarding its approach to African refugees were encapsulated in the admission quotas that followed after the establishment of the Africa Refugee Program in 1981. Official Government of Canada tables and statistics on Canadian resettlement admissions from 1980 to 1990 (contained in the tables and chart below) demonstrate how, from two hundred (200) spaces in 1981, admissions increased for African nationals, as well as

³¹⁸ *1976 Immigration Act*.

from other countries in the world. Table 1, “Refugees and Designated class members by Type of Sponsorship—1980 to 1984,” shows, within Canada’s global resettlement program, fewer admission numbers under the Convention Refugee class as compared to higher admissions for the Designated class. This underlies the nature and differences in selection procedures and requirements for each, as well as the priorities of the government.

Table 2, “Refugees and Designated Class Members by Top Ten Countries of Last Permanent Residence and Destination Province 1984”, Table 2, “Refugees and Designated Class Members by Type of Sponsorship by Top Ten Countries of Last Permanent Residence and Destination Province—1986 to 1990,” and Chart, “Refugees and Designated Class Members by Top Ten Countries of Last Permanent Residence-1990” all show the source nationalities for the top ten admissions under both the Convention Refugee and Designated classes. Importantly, the numbers reveal that Ethiopian nationals were ranked seventh globally as a source country of resettled refugees between 1981-1984, with six hundred and eighty-four (684) admissions, and fourth between 1986-1990 with two-thousand one hundred and seventy-four (2,174) admissions. Also included in the top ten source countries for the latter period were Somali nationals, who ranked eighth with one-thousand and seventy-two (1,072) admissions. These numbers in the late 1980s were notably higher than when the Africa Refugee Program was established in 1981. Importantly, they also contextualize African nationals’ admissions within the context of Canada’s global resettlement admissions more generally. A comparative discussion of this broader context, including the differences and policy drivers for differences in regional admissions, is

beyond the scope of this thesis. However, the numbers above illustrate the trajectory of resettlement out of the African continent over time.

Table 1: Refugees and Designated Class Members by Type of Sponsorship—1980 to 1984³¹⁹

TABLE S3, Refugees and Members of Designated Classes: Type of Sponsorship, 1980-1984
TABLEAU S3, Réfugiés et membres de catégories désignées selon parrainage, 1980-1984

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
CONVENTION REFUGEES — RÉFUGIÉS AU SENS DE LA CONVENTION					
Government Sponsored — Parrainés par le gouvernement ¹	864	724	1,379	3,260	4,675
Family Sponsored — Parrainés par famille	53	44	69	159	197
Group Sponsored — Parrainés par un groupe	35	41	290	534	591
Self-Supporting — Indép. matériellement	—	1	53	148	162
Sub Total — Sous-total	952	810	1,791	4,101	5,625
DESIGNATED CLASSES — CATÉGORIES DÉSIGNÉES					
Government Sponsored — Parrainés par le gouvernement ¹	18,373	9,868	9,675	6,495	6,660
Family Sponsored — Parrainés par famille	1,414	2,036	1,874	1,002	943
Group Sponsored — Parrainés par un groupe	19,281	2,218	3,130	2,090	1,970
Self-Supporting — Indép. matériellement	328	48	457	281	144
Sub Total — Sous-total	39,396	14,170	15,136	9,868	9,717
TOTAL	40,348	14,980	16,927	13,969	15,342

¹ Includes Special Needs Category — Incluant la catégorie de besoins spéciaux

³¹⁹ Canada, Ministry of Employment and Immigration, *Immigration Statistics Report*, 1984, 8-9, accessed on March 24, 2018, http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/202/301/immigration_statistics-ef/index.html

Table 2: Refugees and Designated Class Members by Top Ten Countries of Last Permanent Residence and Destination Province 1984³²⁰

TABLE S4, Convention Refugees and Members of Designated Classes: Top Ten Countries of Last Permanent Residence by Province of Intended Destination, 1984

TABLEAU S4, Réfugiés et membres de catégories designées : Dix premiers pays de dernière résidence permanente selon la province de destination envisagée, 1984

	TOTAL	NFLD. T.-N.	P.E.I. Î.P.-É.	N.S. N.-É.	N.B. N.-B.	QUE.	ONT.	MAN.	SASK.	ALTA. ALB.	N.W.T. T.N.-O.	B.C. C.-B.	YUKON	Not Stated Non précisée
Vietnam Soc. Rep. — Rép. soc. du Viêt-Nam	3,405	2	2	34	15	299	1,395	234	217	724	2	480	1	—
Poland — Pologne	2,064	6	—	42	22	99	1,076	174	101	349	—	195	—	—
El Salvador — Salvador	2,030	—	2	—	—	396	844	92	79	334	—	283	—	—
Kampuchea, Dem.Rep. of — Rép. Dém. de Kampuchéa	1,492	5	—	13	12	343	561	103	35	214	—	206	—	—
Laos	863	—	—	4	3	202	332	132	37	79	—	74	—	—
Czechoslovakia — Tchécoslovaquie	765	4	—	17	9	21	381	62	30	109	1	131	—	—
Ethiopia — Éthiopie	684	2	—	16	—	44	275	65	68	143	—	71	—	—
Iran	608	19	13	22	8	71	319	14	29	47	2	64	—	—
Guatemala	490	2	—	—	—	244	92	17	5	37	—	93	—	—
Iraq	408	—	—	1	—	3	267	27	40	51	—	19	—	—
Other — Autre	2,533	—	3	25	15	483	1,250	110	122	310	—	215	—	—
TOTAL	15,342	40	20	174	84	2,205	6,792	1,030	763	2,397	5	1,831	1	—

³²⁰ Canada, Ministry of Employment and Immigration, *Immigration Statistics Report*, 1984, 8-9.

Table 3: Refugees and Designated Class Members by Type of Sponsorship by Top Ten Countries of Last Permanent Residence and Destination Province—1986 to 1990³²¹

Permanent Residents
Calendar Year — 1990

Résidents permanents
Année civile — 1990

TABLE S4, Convention Refugees and Members of Designated Classes: Top Ten Countries of Last Permanent Residence by Province or Territory of Intended Destination, 1990

TABLEAU S4, Réfugiés au sens de la Convention et membres de catégories désignées : les dix premiers pays de dernière résidence permanente selon la province ou le territoire de destination envisagée, 1990

COUNTRY PAYS	GRAND TOTAL	NFLD. T.- N.	P.E.I. Î.-P.-É.	N.S. N.-É.	N.B. N.-B.	QUE. Q.C.	ONT.	MAN.	SASK.	ALTA. ALB.	N.W.T. T.N.-O.	B.C. C.-B.	YUKON	Non Stated Non précisé
Poland — Pologne	11,902	14	17	70	19	740	8,292	740	120	1,387	3	500	—	—
Vietnam Soc. Rep. — Rég. soc. du Vietnam	5,279	9	11	127	39	997	2,172	338	208	752	1	625	—	—
El Salvador — Salvador	3,750	9	6	44	42	988	1,452	260	109	533	—	307	—	—
Ethiopia — Éthiopie	2,174	7	1	9	1	198	1,455	191	59	170	—	83	—	—
Iran	2,019	9	3	23	14	336	1,150	89	54	138	—	199	4	—
Sri Lanka	1,234	—	—	—	—	402	820	—	2	1	—	9	—	—
USSR — URSS	1,153	—	—	—	—	92	782	59	10	145	—	65	—	—
Czechoslovakia — Tchécoslovaquie	1,151	12	2	15	15	169	530	57	26	151	—	174	—	—
Somalia, Rep. of — Rég. de Somalie	1,072	—	—	3	2	313	726	2	—	24	—	2	—	—
Romania — Roumanie	1,016	8	2	19	12	347	423	52	23	56	—	74	—	—
Others — Autres	8,939	27	8	48	39	2,384	4,172	557	167	988	1	546	2	—
GRAND TOTAL	39,689	95	50	358	183	6,966	21,974	2,345	778	4,345	5	2,584	6	—

³²¹ Canada, Ministry of Employment and Immigration, *Immigration Statistics Report*, 1990, 8-9.

Table 4: Refugees and Designated Class Members by Top Ten Countries of Last Permanent Residence and Destination Province—1990³²²

Permanent Residents
Calendar Year — 1990

TABLE S4, Convention Refugees and Members of Designated Classes: Top Ten Countries of Last Permanent Residence by Province or Territory of Intended Destination, 1990

Résidents permanents
Année civile — 1990

TABLEAU S4, Réfugiés au sens de la Convention et membres de catégories désignées : les dix premiers pays de dernière résidence permanente selon la province ou le territoire de destination envisagée, 1990

COUNTRY PAYS	GRAND TOTAL	NFLD. T.- N.	P.E.I. Î.-P.-É.	N.S. N.-É.	N.B. N.-B.	QUE. QC.	ONT.	MAN.	SASK.	ALTA. ALB.	N.W.T. T.N.-O.	B.C. C.-B.	YUKON	Non Stated Non précisé
Poland — Pologne	11,902	14	17	70	19	740	8,292	740	120	1,387	3	500	—	—
Vietnam Soc. Rep. — Rép. soc. du Vietnam	5,279	9	11	127	39	997	2,172	338	208	752	1	625	—	—
El Salvador — Salvador	3,750	9	6	44	42	988	1,452	260	109	533	—	307	—	—
Ethiopia — Éthiopie	2,174	7	1	9	1	198	1,455	191	59	170	—	83	—	—
Iran	2,019	9	3	23	14	336	1,150	89	54	138	—	199	4	—
Sri Lanka	1,234	—	—	—	—	402	820	—	2	1	—	9	—	—
USSR — URSS	1,153	—	—	—	—	92	782	59	10	145	—	65	—	—
Czechoslovakia — Tchécoslovaquie	1,151	12	2	15	15	169	530	57	26	151	—	174	—	—
Somalia, Rep. of — Rép. de Somalie	1,072	—	—	3	2	313	726	2	—	24	—	2	—	—
Romania — Roumanie	1,016	8	2	19	12	347	423	52	23	56	—	74	—	—
Others — Autres	8,939	27	8	48	39	2,384	4,172	557	167	988	1	546	2	—
GRAND TOTAL	39,689	95	50	358	183	6,966	21,974	2,345	778	4,345	5	2,584	6	—

³²² Canada, Ministry of Employment and Immigration, *Immigration Statistics Report*, 1990, 8-9.

Chart- Refugees and Designated Class Members by Top Ten Countries of Last Permanent Residence—1990³²³

Permanent Residents
Calendar Year — 1990
Résidents permanents
Année civile — 1990

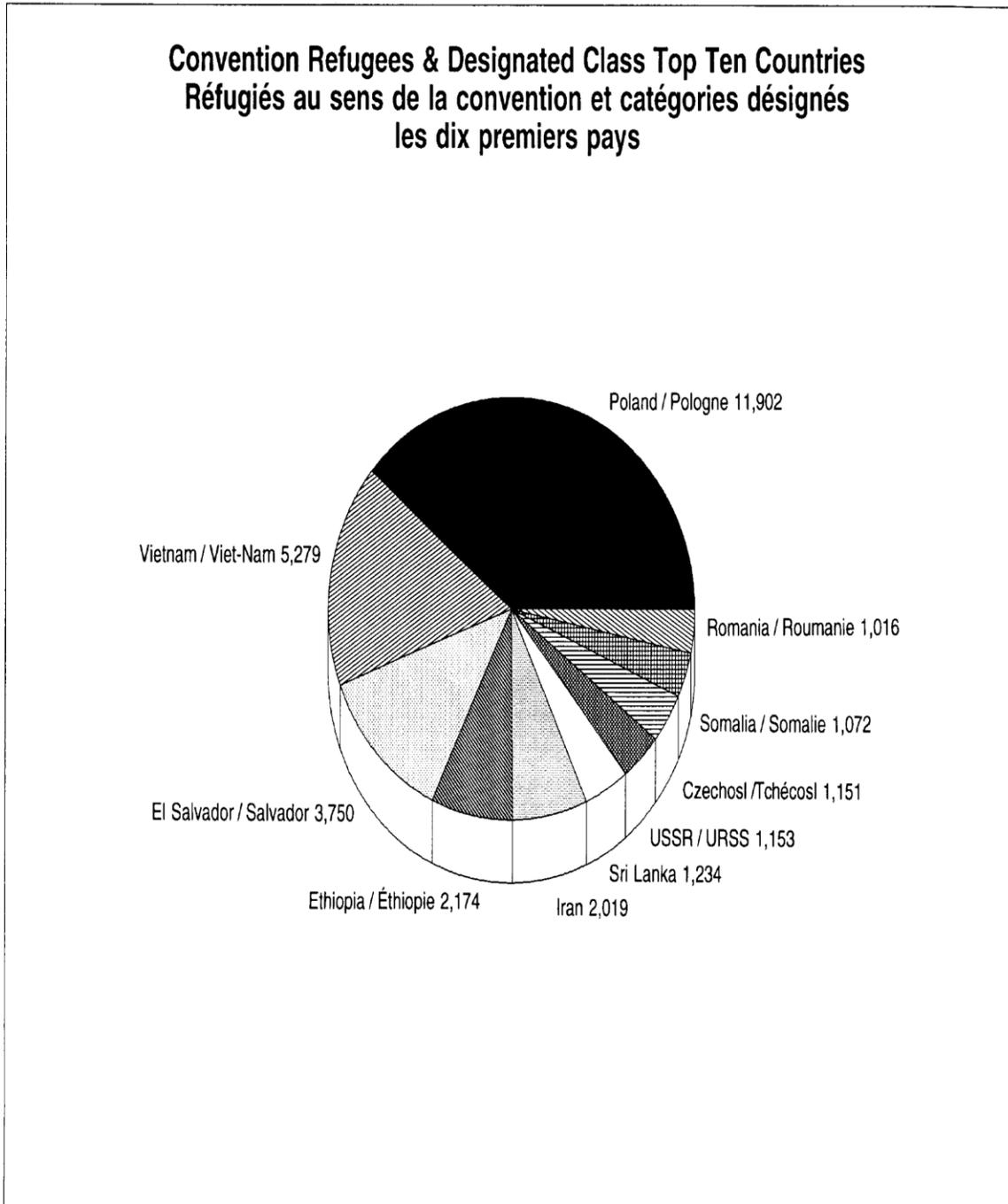


CHART 1 — GRAPHIQUE 1

³²³ Canada, Ministry of Employment and Immigration, *Immigration Statistics Report*, 1990, 10.

Canadian Interests and the Genesis of the Africa Refugee Program

As Colic-Peisker and Waxman state in their study of Western state interests and motivations for humanitarianism, while “ethical postulates are conventionally respected as a basis of culture, values and legal systems of liberal democracies,” they rarely, if ever, determine the political action on their own.³²⁴ The international refugee regime has always been embedded in *Realpolitik* and the interests of the powerful states rather than on humanitarian ideals.³²⁵ According to their study, most ethical considerations and justifications for refugee admissions are voiced by humanitarian and human rights organizations and refugee supporters through what they call the “discourse of humanitarianism,” while governments articulate pragmatic political considerations, which they usually frame within a “discourse of national interest.”³²⁶ The discourse of national interest is embedded in “political realism,” whereby a legitimate government is a guardian of sovereignty, which Colic-Peisker and Waxman define as control over population movements and, within this discourse, the “government’s duty is to promote the interests of citizens,” if necessary at the expense of “aliens: in this case, refugees.”³²⁷

In the same vein, in his study of international refugee protection norms, Loescher has insisted on the need to pay attention to “national interest, domestic and foreign policy constraints, and ideological concerns of states which must be taken into account together with legal and humanitarian principles in order to understand both

³²⁴ Val Colic-Peisker and Peter Waxman, *Homeland Wanted: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Refugee Resettlement in the West* (New York, Nova Science Publishers: 2005), 127.

³²⁵ Ibid.

³²⁶ Ibid.

³²⁷ Ibid, ix.

the reasons for and the response of states to refugee crises.”³²⁸ Loescher’s refrain echoes and aligns with Sauer’s argument introduced in the Introduction—that the Canadian government’s post Second World war response to European refugees is an expression of foreign policy, in which there is a complex interplay of both internal and external factors.³²⁹

This point is exemplified in the resettlement of the Ugandan-Asians in 1972, which marked a poignant intersection of domestic and international interests —where Canada’s refugee protection policy (and its limits) dramatically intersected with identity and state-formation processes within a newly independent African state. As alluded to in the first section of this chapter, the Oppressed Minority policy approved by the Cabinet in 1970 allowed Canada to resettle refugees, including the Ugandan-Asian expellees, who did not meet the Convention definition and were still in their home country. During this operation, officers such as Molloy gained operational experience and expertise in humanitarian and refugee selection, which subsequently informed policy thinking refugee provisions in the 1976 Act. For these reasons, understanding Canada’s role in the Ugandan-Asian movement of 1972 is essential to making sense of the genesis and context of Canada’s Africa Refugee Program, which was formally established nine years later at the Nairobi visa office.

Uganda attained independence from the British Empire in October 1962, under the leadership of Dr. A. Milton Obote. General Idi Amin led a military coup against President Obote’s government in January 1971. From the outset, President Amin

³²⁸ Gil Loescher, “Introduction,” in Gil Loescher and Laila Monahan, eds., *Refugees and International Relations*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989), 5.

³²⁹ Sauer, “A Matter of Domestic Policy,” 229.

became convinced that Uganda's Asian community was exploiting the economy to the detriment of Africans, and, on August 5, 1972, he issued an order expelling all Ugandans of South Asian descent. Subsequently, second-generation Ugandan-Asians who held Ugandan citizenship were also stripped of their citizenship and rendered stateless. His expulsion order affected at least 80,000 people, many who had lived in Uganda for generations. They were all required to leave Uganda in 90 days, that is, by November 1972.

The reason for this expulsion was unclear, but President Amin couched his actions in "self-determination" language and defended the expulsion by subtly invoking race:

We are determined to make the ordinary Ugandan master of his own destiny, and above all, to see that he enjoys the wealth of his country. Our deliberate policy is to transfer the economic control of Uganda into the hands of Ugandans, for the first time in our country's history.³³⁰

In President Amin's logic, Ugandan-Asians were not real "Ugandans" or "Africans" based on their race and dual citizenship, since many also held British, Indian or Pakistani passports. President Amin cast Ugandan-Asians as "foreign" saboteurs of Uganda's economy.³³¹ Approximately 50,000 Uganda-Asians possessed a claim to British citizenship. However, Britain was initially reluctant to increase its immigration

³³⁰ Jan Jelmert Jorgensen, *Uganda: A Modern history*, (London, Croom Helm, 1981). See also, Archives and Research Collections, Carleton University Library, *The Uganda Collection-Background: Idi Amin's Uganda, 1972*, accessed on March 28, 2018, <https://carleton.ca/uganda-collection/archival-material/background-idi-amin-uganda-1972/>

"Canada was one of the first to act, opening its borders to approximately 8,000 Ugandan Asian refugees between 1972 and 1974. Eventually, other countries came to their aid as well. South Asians from Uganda were forced to start new lives in countries such as India, Pakistan, Kenya, Malawi, United Kingdom and the United States. Ultimately, the resettlement initiative in Canada was celebrated as a success by the Canadian government, the United Nations, and the Ugandan Asian refugee community now living in Canada."

³³¹ Ibid.

quota and asked its British Overseas Territories to resettle them. Of these, only the Falkland Islands responded positively. Within Africa, neighbouring Kenya and Tanzania closed their borders with Uganda to prevent an influx of Ugandan-Asian refugees.³³² Britain's threats to cut off development aid if President Amin did not reconsider his decree also went unheeded.

Within Canada, members of the Nizari Ismaili Muslim diaspora community who had obtained Ugandan citizenship after Ugandan independence in the 1960s were among those stripped of their Ugandan citizenship. Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, who was the spiritual leader and Imam of Nizari Ismailis, appealed to Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau to offer them refuge. For Western countries reeling from the after-effects of the Second World War, including the horrors of the Jewish Holocaust, the plight of the Ugandan-Asians became particularly precarious when President Amin threatened to place them in concentration camps. This threat gained the Ugandan-Asians sympathy from some in the Canadian-Jewish community who expressed their support of Prime Minister Trudeau's announcement to offer them refuge.³³³ The Canadian Jewish Congress called Trudeau's decision a "courageous and timely action in aid of victims of discrimination," declaring that "this prompt humanitarian act designed to ameliorate the suffering of innocent people touches the heart of the Jewish community."³³⁴ Sydney Maislin, then president of the Canadian B'nai B'rith,

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Jewish Telegraphic Agency, "CJC Hails Trudeau's Move to Aid Asians Facing Expulsion from Uganda," *Daily News Bulletin*, August 30, 1972, accessed March 24, 2018, <https://www.jta.org/1972/08/30/archive/cjc-hails-trudeaus-move-to-aid-asians-facing-expulsion-from-uganda>

³³⁴ Ibid. See James W. Walker St. G., "The "Jewish Phase" in the Movement for Racial Equality in Canada," *Canadian Ethnic Studies Journal*, 34, no. 1 (Spring 2002) for a discussion of Jewish-Canadian activism for racial equality and against the damaging effects of discrimination against African-Canadians.

also sent a telegram to Trudeau supporting his decision to accept the Ugandan-Asians, whom he described as “helpless and tragic victims of Idi Amin’s economic and racial war.” He described Canada’s policy as “ethically consistent” with humanitarianism, which “serves as an example to the world and all the Commonwealth nations.”³³⁵

In response to these numerous representations and requests for action from internal and external stakeholders—including the Aga Khan, Hazar Imam, Britain’s government, community members from the Ugandan-Asian diaspora in Canada and the Canadian-Jewish community)—Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau announced in the House of Commons in late August 1972, that his government would offer refuge and resettlement to the Ugandan-Asians expelled by President Amin:

We are prepared to offer an honourable place in Canadian life to those Ugandan Asians who come to Canada[...] I am sure that [they] will, by their abilities and industry, make an equally important contribution to Canadian society.³³⁶

The Minister of Manpower and Immigration, Bryce Mackasey, signed into effect “special measures” that would allow officers to expedite three thousand immigration applicants who met normal immigration requirements. Where necessary, officers were instructed to invoke the Oppressed Minority policy in order to facilitate Ugandan-

³³⁵ Ibid. For a discussion of the role of bureaucrats, and especially, Frederick Charles Blair, then Director of the Immigration Branch of the Department of Mines and Resources in implementing Canadian government’s racist and anti-Jewish immigrant policies on the eve of the Second World War, see Irving Arbella and Harold Troper, “The line must be drawn somewhere’: Canada and Jewish Refugees, 1933 -1939”, in Franca Iacovetta, Paula Draper and Robert Ventresca (Eds), *A Nation of Immigrants: Women, Workers, and Communities in Canadian History, 1840s-1960s*, (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1998), 412-445. To Blair, “the term refugee was a code word for Jew” and his “inflexibility, fetish for regulations, and unchallenged control over immigration matters were a convenience to an administration which had no intention of allowing in Jewish refugees, but wished to avoid the calumny of not doing so.” (416-417)

³³⁶ Quotation from a PowerPoint presentation by Michael Molloy, “Speaking Tour Presentation on The Uganda Asian Refugee Movement 1972,” 40th Anniversary Lecture: Uganda Asian Refugee Movement 1972 (October 18, 2012).

Asians' immigration to Canada.³³⁷ Roger St. Vincent, the Foreign Service Officer who was in charge of the Canadian team of officers on mission to Kampala at the time, kept a diary in which he detailed all the activities, interactions and challenges experienced by the immigration team throughout the expulsion period.³³⁸ St. Vincent's "marching orders" from the Minister were that his team was to process applications from Ugandan-Asians "without any numerical limits." At the end of processing, and after the airlift began on September 27, 1972, St., Vincent wrote: "We received 8,605 applications for 21,000 persons, and 4,690 did not show up when called. We issued visas to 6,175 Ugandan Asians in 35 working days, a record that is unsurpassed."³³⁹ Molloy was animated and happy as he recounted these specifics regarding the feat accomplished by the officers who carried it out.

The experiences, challenges and triumphs that St. Vincent and his team (including Molloy) gained provided them with expertise in implementing a large-scale and fast-track selection of immigrants under humanitarian considerations.³⁴⁰ The next chapter discusses Molloy's recollections regarding the extent to which his and his fellow officers' experience with the Ugandan-Asian airlift informed policy development in Ottawa, especially concerning refugee provisions of the 1976 *Immigration Act*. For Molloy, the Ugandan-Asian airlift also provided operational knowledge and experience that proved useful in subsequent refugee movements,

³³⁷ Archives and Research Collections, Carleton University Library, *The Uganda Collection*, accessed March 24, 2018, <https://carleton.ca/uganda-collection/>

³³⁸ Roger St. Vincent, *Seven Crested Cranes: Remembering a Tragic Saga - Exodus of Ugandan Asians*, accessed March 24, 2018, https://carleton.ca/uganda-collection/wp-content/uploads/seven-crested-cranes_2016.pdf

³³⁹ Roger St. Vincent, *Seven Crested Cranes*, p. 249

³⁴⁰ Madokoro and Molloy, *Civil Servants and Refugee Policy in 1970s Canada*, p. 57

including Canada's resettlement of over 60,000 Indochinese refugees from 1979 to 1980.³⁴¹

Canada's response to the Ugandan-Asians is significant for three reasons. Firstly, it marked the first time that Canada resettled people from the African continent. Even though the Ugandan-Asian expellees were not refugees according to the Convention definition, the government admitted them under humanitarian considerations via the Uganda-Asian Special Measures program. They had been "stripped of citizenship" and expelled by their "race" as Asians and admitted to Canada under the purview of the Oppressed Minority policy (which had been approved by Cabinet in 1970) since they were "still in Uganda and therefore outside the UNHCR's mandate."³⁴² Indeed officers such as Molloy were guided by this policy on the "frontline."³⁴³ In addition, the recommendations within the 1970 MC for officer flexibility and discretion in selecting immigrants who might not otherwise meet the required 'points'—but for whom there was settlement support available in Canada from family, ethnic communities or faith groups—facilitated the selection and admission to Canada of Ugandan-Asian expellees who might otherwise have been ineligible for resettlement in Canada.

Secondly, and in the same vein, the selection and airlift provided government officials with operational experience and expertise in "interpreting and influencing policy."³⁴⁴ The Ugandan-Asian resettlement heralded, in tandem with subsequent

³⁴¹ See chapter three for Molloy's recollections on this issue.

³⁴² Molloy and Madokoro, *Civil Servants and Refugee Policy in 1970s Canada*, p. 56.

³⁴³ Ibid.

³⁴⁴ Ibid. See Susan Armstrong-Reid and David Murray, *Armies of Peace: Canada and the UNRRA Years* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 2008), a study of the Government of Canada's role in the United

domestic legislative changes and Canada's participation in international refugee protection forums, a shift in Canada's refugee policy in Africa in the early 1970s. However, it was almost a decade before the formal establishment of the Africa Refugee Program in 1981 through the *1976 Immigration Act*.

Thirdly, the Ugandan-Asian movement reveals the coalescing of domestic and international interests. Domestically, while the Canadian public viewed them sympathetically as "victims of racial hatred"³⁴⁵ (since many of those expelled were skilled people and business-minded), Ugandan-Asians were also perceived as immigrants who could establish successfully and would not pose a "burden" to Canada. Additionally, the Ugandan-Asians were deemed to be highly likely to integrate and settle well in Canada because they were either self-funded, and with means, or were being sponsored by family, friends or through a new ecumenical mechanism entitled the National Inter-Faith Immigration Committee (initiated between faith-based organizations and the Government of Canada in 1968).³⁴⁶ This perception aligned with requests for refuge by the Aga Khan and members of the Ugandan-Asian diaspora who pledged to assist with the settlement of those selected. The added voices of the Canadian Jewish Congress, which called the Ugandan-Asians "victims of [racial] discrimination," aligned with the Canadian government's new-found intent to make immigration non-discriminatory. Internationally, Canada's response to Britain's request for help was keeping in line with a long-standing alliance

Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) in the interwar years between 1943 and 1947. The study documents also make use of first-person accounts of officers who were active during this period.

³⁴⁵ Girard, "Designated classes."

³⁴⁶ Adelman, *Canada and the Indochinese Refugees*, 108.

with the United Kingdom, where Canada's formal Head of State, Queen Elizabeth II, was domiciled. Therefore, Canada's response to the Ugandan-Asians and Pierre Trudeau's government's instructions to process without "numerical limits" were simultaneously an expression of Canadian humanitarianism as well as a coalescing of domestic and foreign policy interests.

Local Structures: Political and Economic

Milner explains the range of factors that shaped the asylum policies of refugee-hosting African states from the 1960s through the 2000s.³⁴⁷ This explanation is supported by tracing the "history of state response to refugee movements in Africa from the early 1960s, through the wars of national liberation in Southern Africa, post-colonial conflict in independent Africa, and the Cold War, to the emergence of the crisis of asylum in Africa in the 1990s."³⁴⁸ Milner argues that "asylum policies have been influenced by political concerns since the emergence of an independent African state system in the early 1960s", are "largely motivated by concerns of domestic politics, national security and international relations," and that the "period of open asylum policies in Africa" existed for "specific political and strategic reasons."³⁴⁹ In earlier years, in the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s, refugees had been integrated locally in host states through "zonal development" and rural settlement approaches, including in countries hosting large refugee numbers such as Zaire (now the DRC) and Tanzania.³⁵⁰

³⁴⁷ Milner, *Politics of Asylum in Africa*, 14.

³⁴⁸ Ibid.

³⁴⁹ Ibid, 19.

³⁵⁰ Gaim Kibreab, *African Refugees: Reflections on the African Refugee Problem* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1985), 86; 102-118.

Crisp argues that the “principle and practice of asylum” in Africa during the 1960s and 1970s was informed by “ideologies of pan-Africanism and anti-colonialism” and led to open asylum policies.³⁵¹ For instance, in the early 1970s, refugees were mainly from Portuguese-held territories (e.g. Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique) who were hosted by sympathetic neighbouring countries such as Zaire, Senegal and Tanzania.³⁵² Early liberation movements in Africa had “a legitimate and even honoured place in the international relations of the continent,”³⁵³ and this translated to local integration of refugees in countries of asylum.

Within this decolonization and pan-Africanist context, African states adopted an additional and more expansive (compared to the 1951 UN Convention) refugee definition under the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The OAU’s 1969 *Convention on the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa* provided an expanded definition of ‘refugee’ as applying:

To every person who, owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his country of origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge in another place outside his country of nationality.³⁵⁴

Unlike the 1951 Convention, the OAU Convention recognized refugees who were fleeing both *individual* “persecution and *generalized* violence” and, in so doing, allowed African states to recognize “entire groups of individuals as refugees on the

³⁵¹ Jeff Crisp, “Africa’s Refugees: Patterns, Problems and Policy Challenges,” *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper no. 28 (Geneva: UNHCR, August 2000), 5.

³⁵² Aderanti Adepoju, “The Dimension of the Refugee Problem in Africa,” *African Affairs*, Vol. 81, no. 322 (1982): 22.

³⁵³ Christopher Clapham, *Africa and the International System: The Politics of State Survival*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 209.

³⁵⁴ Organization of African Unity (OAU), *Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa* (“OAU Convention”), 10 September 1969, 1001 U.N.T.S. 45, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b36018.html> [accessed 3 September 2019]

basis of shared characteristics and a common cause of flight”—also known as *prima facie* refugee status. The OAU Convention also formalized a continental policy stance that discouraged third-country resettlement of African refugees to Western countries but emphasized local integration in countries of asylum or voluntary repatriation once “liberation” was attained in the home country. Notwithstanding these ideational structures of the day, such open approaches were also “premised on manageable numbers of refugees, sustained international assistance and the ability to insulate the governing regime from the security implications associated with hosting politicized refugee populations.”³⁵⁵

In stark contrast to the treatment of refugees in the 1960s and 1970s, a significant number of host countries across the continent subsequently placed restrictions on the asylum they offered to refugees. In Central and East Africa, crises in Zaire, Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan, Ethiopia and Uganda “prompted significant refugee movements in the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa and equally significant challenges for neighbouring states.”³⁵⁶ With additional refugee movements from “Chad, Ethiopia and Zaire,” and refugee numbers increasing and straining local integration solutions, “host countries began to argue that refugees had become an open-ended burden.”³⁵⁷ New African governments viewed refugees as a security threat because they caused inter-state and regional tensions.³⁵⁸ Also, many African countries were experiencing “slow economic growth, rapid population growth,

³⁵⁵ Milner, *Politics of Asylum in Africa*, 24.

³⁵⁶ Aristide Zolberg, Astri Suhke, and Sergio Aguayo, *Escape from Violence: Conflict and the Refugee Crisis in the Developing World*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 37-91; and Gil Loescher, *The UNHCR and World Politics: A Perilous Path*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 114-26

³⁵⁷ Milner, *Politics of Asylum in Africa*, 25.

³⁵⁸ Loescher, *The UNHCR and World Politics*, 114.

balance of payments deficits and a climbing debt burden by the early 1980s”, thereby placing more pressure on countries of asylum.³⁵⁹

Some states limited the *quantity* of asylum they offered by closing their borders to new asylum seekers, promoting early repatriations, and in exceptional cases, carrying out mass expulsions. Other states limited the *quality* of asylum they provided by denying refugees a range of fundamental social and economic rights and containing them in isolated and insecure camps on the periphery of the state and cut off from local communities.³⁶⁰ This changing context of asylum in Africa meant that the durable solution of local integration was limited, thereby placing pressure on other possible solutions: repatriation or third-country resettlement.

Africa and the International System

In considering the “nature of weaker states in the international system,” Jackson argues that rapid decolonization after the end of World War II created many quasi-states that acquired “sovereign equality” and juridical statehood but had not yet established empirical statehood.³⁶¹ In this sense, many post-independent states, including African states, were domestically and internationally weak, vulnerable and insecure.³⁶² The vulnerability of many African states is vital for understanding the political uncertainty and sensitive diplomatic climate within which Canadian officers navigated while conducting refugee selection within Central and East African

³⁵⁹ Milner, *Politics of Asylum in Africa*, 25.

³⁶⁰ Ibid, 2-4.

³⁶¹ Ibid, 10: citing Robert Jackson, *Quasi-states: Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Third World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 21.

³⁶² See Patrick Chabal, *Power in Africa: An Essay in Political Interpretation* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994), 74; and as cited above in note 338, Clapham, *Africa and the International System*, 3.

countries of asylum. In chapter five, Burrows discusses the challenges and anxieties of operating in Kenya during a period of political tensions.

Refugee selection—in terms of who and for what reasons—was intensely political. Officers were keenly aware that they were simultaneously implementing Canadian refugee policy abroad, but so were diplomats whose actions and utterances could have had implications for Canadian foreign relations with host countries.³⁶³ The end of the Cold War in the late 1980s resulted in a “profound and sudden set of changes in Africa,” which included the emergence and prevalence of democratization and increased scrutiny and pressure on African leaders to commit to democratic reforms.³⁶⁴

Burden-Sharing and African Refugees

In May 1979, at the Arusha *Pan-African Conference on the African Refugee Problem*, refugee-hosting countries, such as Kenya and the conference host, Tanzania, argued for the need for more “burden-sharing” with Western countries.³⁶⁵ Conference attendees included representatives and observers from thirty-eight African countries, five African liberation movements, and twenty non-governmental organizations and refugee-serving agencies from Western countries. While reaffirming support for the *OAU Refugee Convention* principle “that granting of asylum is a peaceful and humanitarian act and should not be regarded as unfriendly by any

³⁶³ Chapter five of this thesis discusses this issue in more detail based on Burrows’ account about how the Nairobi visa office (and the Canadian High Commission) fell afoul of the host government of Kenya in the late 1980s. Essentially, the latter thought that the Government of Canada had violated international principles of sovereignty and non-interference, more so within the context of utterances and footage in the 1989 documentary film, *Who Gets In?*

³⁶⁴ Clapham, *Africa and the International System*, 193.

³⁶⁵ Eriksson, Melander and Nobel, eds. *An Analysing Account of the Conference on the African Problem*.

state,” conference recommendations also formally introduced the concept of “burden-sharing.” Paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Arusha conference’s Recommendation 1 on “Asylum in Africa”:

Recognizes that the effective implementation in Africa of the principles relating to asylum will be further advanced by the strengthening and development of institutional arrangements for “burden-sharing” adopted within the framework of African solidarity and international co-operation, defined in paragraph 8 of the Preamble and Article II, paragraph 4 of the 1969 OAU Refugee Convention [...] Further recommends that various studies be made on a regional basis with a view to determining the particular burdens facing countries of first asylum in African and the extent to which such burdens could be shared within the framework of African solidarity.³⁶⁶

The language of “burden-sharing” is significant because it provided a facilitative discourse through which refugee-hosting countries could seek and receive development aid from wealthier Western governments.³⁶⁷ The conference also introduced to the African context the concept of “third-country” resettlement, in acknowledgement of the “acute impact of refugees, especially spontaneously settled ones, can have in already impoverished areas” within countries of asylum.³⁶⁸

The composition of delegates to the Arusha conference is also noteworthy. Among non-African country delegates, there were representatives from major resettlement countries such as Canada, Australia, and the United States of America, as well as other Western countries such as the United Kingdom, Sweden, Denmark and the Vatican. African liberation movements who had “observer” status at the conference included representatives from: South Africa’s African National Congress

³⁶⁶ Regional Refugee Instruments & Related Recommendations from the Pan-African Conference on the Situation of Refugees in Africa, Arusha (Tanzania), 17 May 1979, accessed 28 March 2018, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b37214.html>

³⁶⁷ See Milner, *Politics of Asylum in Africa*, and Kibreab, *African Refugees*.

³⁶⁸ Robert Gorman, *Coping with Africa’s Refugee Problem: A Time for Solutions*, (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers and UNITAR, 1987), 14.

(ANC) and Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC); Rhodesia's (now Zimbabwe) Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and Zimbabwe African Patriotic Union (ZAPU) and; Namibia's South West African People's Organization (SWAPO). In the case of ZANU and ZAPU, they had waged a protracted anti-colonial guerilla war, which led to the displacement of thousands of people to camps in neighbouring countries such as Zambia and Mozambique. Therefore, the presence of liberation movements at the Arusha conference is perhaps illustrative of the sympathy afforded to the anti-colonial "cause" by other independent states and Western states who were present. Noteworthy, too, was the attendance of twenty non-governmental organizations and refugee-serving agencies, including representatives from the Canadian Council of Churches, the Danish Refugee Council, and the World University Service.³⁶⁹

Following the Arusha conference and discussions around the issue of "burden-sharing," the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 35/42 on 25 November 1980. This resolution called for an International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (ICARA), which was to be convened the following year. The resolution recognized that Africa had come to host over half the world's refugees and that the UNGA was "aware of the consequent social and economic burden placed on African countries of asylum."³⁷⁰ This led to the convening of ICARA I and II, which took place in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1981 and 1984, respectively. Ninety-nine states attended the first ICARA, aimed at bringing international attention to the refugee situation in

³⁶⁹ Chapter three discusses the role of non-governmental organizations in the private sponsorship of refugees including the story of how Molloy met Chris Smart from World University Service of Canada (WUSC) and engaged in discussions that culminated in the WUSC Student Refugee program in 1978.

³⁷⁰ Milner, *Politics of Asylum*, 27, citing United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), "International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa", Resolution 35/42, 25 November, 1980.

Africa, to highlight the “burden” of refugees on the economic and social infrastructures of African countries, and to develop an international framework for dealing with Africa’s burgeoning refugee numbers.³⁷¹

During the first ICARA, refugee-hosting African governments requested additional humanitarian aid and infrastructure assistance of over eight hundred and ninety-three million dollars in a report entitled *The Refugee Situation in Africa: Assistance Measures Proposed*.³⁷² Also, the UN Secretary-General’s report noted that African refugees had numbered approximately seven hundred and fifty thousand in 1970 but, after a “staggering increase,” there were over five million refugees by 1980, many of whom were hosted by only a few countries. The same report described refugees as “victims of circumstances beyond their control,” and calls for aid were deemed “even more compelling, given the fact that African governments consistently opened their doors and offered hospitality to those seeking asylum.”³⁷³ The UN High Commissioner for Refugees at the time, Poul Hartling, stated that “traditional African hospitality was being strained to the extreme as large numbers of refugees drew on limited resources.”³⁷⁴ His message to Western country conference participants, in particular, was to “give the refugees a new life and a new dignity and give the countries of asylum, in support and acknowledgement of their efforts, the resources commensurate with the considerable burden they had to bear.”³⁷⁵ Pledges for

³⁷¹ UNGA, International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (ICARA I): Report of the Secretary-General, 11 June 1981, A/36/316, accessed March 28, 2018, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae68f3f8.html>

³⁷² Ibid. The exact amount requested was \$893,126,792. The UNHCR Secretary-General’s component noted that while African refugees numbered approximately 750,000 in 1970, there had been a “staggering increase” by 1980, where refugees now numbered approximately 5 million.

³⁷³ Ibid.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁵ Ibid.

financial or in-kind assistance totalled over 566 million American dollars, with Canada and the United States contributing approximately 19 million and 283 million, respectively.³⁷⁶

The second ICARA sought to link the provision of Western development aid more directly to African host states, through enhanced refugee protection and asylum policies by the latter. However, Stein argues that while the conference was successful in meeting its first two objectives—to focus world attention on Africa’s refugee problem and to mobilize additional resources for the same—it did not raise new money.³⁷⁷ For example, “very limited funds were given to countries like Ethiopia, who hosted significant refugee populations but were unpopular with Western donors due to their position within the geopolitics of the Cold War.”³⁷⁸

The significance of the Arusha conference in 1979 and ICARA conferences in 1981 and 1984, respectively, is three-fold. Firstly, these international forums employed and heightened the language of “burden-sharing” within the African refugee protection context.³⁷⁹ Secondly, they acknowledged that, by the late 1970s and early 1980s, the scale of African refugees was beyond the host countries’ and the continent’s capacity alone—hence, the need to expand responsibility to the international stage. ICARA I and II were international forums that served to create a permanent link between the provision of development aid by Western countries with

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

³⁷⁷ Barry Stein, “ICARA II: Burden Sharing and Durable Solutions,” in John R. Rogge, ed., *Refugees: A Third World Dilemma*, (Totowa, NJ: Bowman and Littlefield, 1987), 48.

³⁷⁸ Milner, *Politics of Asylum in Africa*, 27.

³⁷⁹ This principle has continued to inform multi-lateral engagement around international refugee protection up to this day. However, the language has now evolved to refer to “responsibility sharing” through a recognition that refugees also bring benefits to their host countries and are not merely a “burden.” Also, the change in language is intended to soften refugee reception and reduce xenophobia within host countries.

host African countries' provision of asylum to refugees.³⁸⁰ Humanitarian aid could then be used as an instrument to reward or punish host African states who did not offer local integration, who involuntarily repatriated refugees to their countries of origin, or, in limited instances, where a state was responsible for displacing its citizens.³⁸¹ Thirdly, this new approach to burden-sharing introduced to African refugee protection what Milner describes as “physical burden-sharing” in the form of third-country resettlement.³⁸²

Third-country resettlement was not unique to Africa and had been used by Western governments (led by the United States) during the Cold War as a “tool of protection for those in need, but also as a means of highlighting the failures of Communist regimes.”³⁸³ While resettlement within the African context was a burden-sharing mechanism, it was still “motivated more by the interests of resettlement countries” as well as by political considerations, and was not necessarily “in response to the nature of the refugee burden articulated by host states in Africa.”³⁸⁴ Therefore, large-scale resettlement, when used, tended to focus on particular groups of refugees through which Western states could advance foreign policy.³⁸⁵

³⁸⁰ See Gorman, *Coping with Africa's Refugee Problem*, for an extended discussion about the significance of both ICARAs for African refugee protection in the international system.

³⁸¹ The case of Ugandan-Asians expelled by President Idi Amin's government is a case in point. When the President Idi Amin issued the decree to expel over 80,000 Ugandan-Asians, Britain threatened to cut off aid to the Ugandan government.” The Ugandan Government proceeded to expel the Ugandan-Asians anyway. The next section, traces the significance of the Ugandan-Asian resettlement movement as a seminal moment in Canada's resettlement policy in Africa.

³⁸² Milner *Politics of Asylum in Africa*, 49-51.

³⁸³ *Ibid*, 49.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 51.

³⁸⁵ Gil Loescher and John Scanlan, *Calculated Kindness: Refugees and America's Half-Open Door* (New York: Free Press and Macmillan, 1986).

In the late 1970s and the 1980s, the globalization of the Cold War resulted in new refugee movements, more so in Southern Africa and the Horn of Africa.³⁸⁶ However, unlike Western countries' response to the Indochinese crisis in the mid-1970s and especially the large-scale resettlement of Indochinese boat people from 1979 to 1980,³⁸⁷ "there was no political will for the large-scale resettlement of refugees from Africa."³⁸⁸ Instead, there was a "prioritization of Western geopolitical concerns over the concerns of African states," which, "coupled with the economic crisis gripping the continent, caused significant concern for host states during the 1980s and resulted in marked changes in their characterization of the presence of refugees."³⁸⁹ In the early 1970s, years before the formal establishment of the African Refugee program of 1981, Cold War considerations had already impacted the policy treatment of Chilean refugees.³⁹⁰ At the time, the Canadian government had "feared that among the refugees were terrorists, communists, and other subversives," and it was only "after a chorus of disapproval from various social justice groups" that it reconsidered its position and admitted some Chilean refugees before the end of 1976.³⁹¹ There was "considerable friction between NGOs," "church groups, and refugee organizations and the federal government" in the case of the Chilean refugees since many believed that the "federal government was influenced more by

³⁸⁶ Loescher, *The UNHCR and World Politics*, 201-46.

³⁸⁷ See Molloy et al., *Running on Empty*.

³⁸⁸ Milner, *Politics of Asylum*, 25.

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁰ Bangarth, "Citizen Activism, Refugees, and the State," 18; 25.

While over 37,000 Hungarian refugees who had fled a Communist state were "welcomed as democratic refugees" and resettled to Canada between 1956 and 1957, in later years, Chilean refugees who were "fleeing a fascist state were viewed with suspicion by government officials" and "no more than 4,500" were accepted for resettlement in Canada.

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 25.

domestic politics and Cold War machinations” instead of being motivated by humanitarian obligations.³⁹² Developments and tensions within earlier refugee movements to Canada provide an important historical context for understanding the significance of Cold war politics in refugee selection policy. In addition, they also highlight the longstanding relationship and tensions that existed between refugee agencies, faith-based groups, NGOs and the federal government with regards to refugee protection policy and practice prior to the establishment of the Africa Refugee Program in 1981.³⁹³

While the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s removed many of the foreign policy motivations, domestic pressures (especially in the United States) sustained global resettlement programmes and made resettlement activities more geographically diverse.³⁹⁴ These shifts resulted in “significant and positive changes for Africa.” Milner argues that in the same manner that the interests of donors “affect the scope and scale of financial burden-sharing,” the increase in third-country resettlement from Africa was also motivated more by interest and prevailing ideational structures within resettlement countries.”³⁹⁵

Conclusion on Canada and African Resettlement

It is essential to understand the structures within which Canadian Foreign Service officers engaged in refugee selection for resettlement, and to situate their individual stories within a broader context where national and international interests

³⁹² Ibid., 27.

³⁹³ See Chapter three, in which Molloy recalls a case in which refugee applicants who had been part of a liberation movement were found inadmissible for security reason and refused, in part, because of the vagaries of Cold War politics.

³⁹⁴ Milner, *Politics of Asylum*, 50.

³⁹⁵ Ibid., 51.

converged through refugee protection policy and practice. It was within the web of key material and ideational structures such as Canadian refugee protection policy and legal developments; foreign policy and Cold war geopolitical interests; the evolving context of African refugee protection; African state-formation processes in the course of and following decolonization: and increasing resonance of the concept of “burden-sharing” within the global refugee protection regime, that the Government of Canada made the first commitment to resettle a modest one hundred refugees from the Nairobi visa office and one hundred refugees from Rome, through its Africa Refugee Program and an allocation announced in the 1981 Refugee Plan.³⁹⁶

Building on Milner and Wojnarowicz’s analysis of power within the global refugee regime, this chapter has identified the structures and power that officers derived from state institutions, policies, legal instruments and resources. These afforded officers productive power through which they could label, create categories and enforce policies as bureaucrats.³⁹⁷ Importantly, through this productive power, officers could exercise agency and discretion (where possible) while implementing resettlement policy abroad, including in Africa. In the local context of refugee

³⁹⁶ Molloy and Madokoro “Effecting Change,” 61. In chapter three, Molloy discusses some of the conditions that led to the quota, including the nationality and country of asylum from which this first of African refugees were actually resettled.

The Department of Employment and Immigration, *Immigration Statistics Report* (1984) included new “special topics” or immigrant categories: “Entrepreneur”, “Foreign Domestic Movement” and the “Refugees and Members of Designated classes”. This marked the first time that Canada was ‘counting’ refugees and designated classes numbers. The 1984 annual report also contained a table with a list of the top ten countries of last residence for all refugees who came to Canada from 1980 to 1984, and out of a total of 15,342 refugees arriving in Canada for the year 1984, Ethiopia ranked 7th, with Ethiopian refugees contributing approximately 4.5 percent of refugees. Ethiopia remained in the top ten countries of last residence in subsequent years (5th in 1986, with 908 refugees; 7th in 1987, with 869 refugees; 8th in 1992 with 1,588 and; 8th in 1993 with 1,183 refugees accessed on March 24, 2018, http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/202/301/immigration_statistics-ef/index.html

³⁹⁷ Milner and Wojnarowicz, “Power in the Global Refugee Regime,” 11-12.

selection, this study conceptualizes officers as power brokers who exercised productive power through the authority derived from being officers of the Government of Canada engaging in refugee selection in Central and East Africa.

The next three chapters are based on the oral testimonies of three officers who engaged in refugee selection in the African program in the 1970s and 1980s. As the case of Molloy (chapter three) will illustrate, individual agency is not entirely distinct from the “structures” mentioned above. The early years of refugee policy development had allowed individual officers to apply their operational expertise with earlier refugee movements and to shape the policy development and refugee law, which would inform the next round of selection, to which we now turn our attention.

This chapter has outlined and explained the various structures, material, ideational and local, within which officers operated and engaged in refugee selection while posted at the Nairobi visa office. In doing so, it sets the contextual stage for understanding what Milner calls the “productive power” manifested during refugee selection in local contexts, especially during the formative years of the African Refugee program, when global resettlement increasingly became considered a form of physical “burden-sharing” between African states of first asylum and third-country resettlement states. This work has established, therefore, important contexts for the particularities of the next three life story chapters.

Chapter Three: Michael Molloy's Life Story

What do you want in your neighbours? The first thing we want is courage. These people carry a bucket of it with them when they come. What's your problem? We need fellow citizens who, first of all, are courageous because life requires courage. These guys have got it.³⁹⁸

Michael Molloy's life story is a product of long oral interviews discussing his recollections and reflections about three-and-a-half decades as a public servant and Canadian Immigration Foreign Service officer working on refugee protection policy and implementation. Writing this chapter was preceded by the daunting task of editing and splicing several pages of interview transcriptions in order to extract and create a narrative that is coherent and as "true" as possible to the storyteller's intent and to the context of his remembering.

By introducing the chapter with the quotation above, this author is amplifying some key and recurring themes that permeate Molloy's approach to public service and refugee selection. In this quotation, Molloy was responding to my speculation about the difficulty (for those of us who live in the West) of imagining why, despite the high likelihood of death at sea, people would still get on dangerous or unsafe boats. These comments related to his observations about the Vietnamese "boat people" who were part of the Indochinese resettlement in the late 1970s, an episode that preceded his stay in Africa, but which he deemed pertinent to his account of the Africa Refugee

³⁹⁸ Michael Molloy interviewed by Andriata Chironda, Ottawa, July 26, 2018.

Program.³⁹⁹ Toward the end of our final interview, Molloy indicated that the message he would want most to resonate from his account would be as follows:

I think a message that I'd really like is that, in the people business, taking *people* out of the equation is bad policy. There's no question that with the numbers we have today you can't sit down and interview every single person, but we're moving ourselves into a situation where all humanity will be gone [...] I think that throughout my career, with the bosses I had, the colleagues I had, the things I experienced, the difference was made by *human judgment* and *human emotion*, the feelings you get about things.

Intuition. The algorithm cannot reflect our *values*. They might reflect our *needs*, and they might be able to do four hundred cases at a time, and God bless them, but there is no sense, and we don't need much emotion when we're talking about visitor Visas or whatever we call them these days. But you can't get a job washing dishes at McDonald's without an interview. We're bringing people in now who have never seen a Canadian official except the one that stamped their passport when they came. The next official they'll talk to will be a citizenship judge five years down the road [...]

To me, the sweet part of the job was standing up at the end after you've said, "Yes, you're going," and shaking their hand and saying, "I'm really glad you're going to Canada," and making them feel that they were going to be welcome...I always told my office, "At the end of it, if it's yes, you reach out to them so that they know that they're welcome."⁴⁰⁰

One of my goals in using oral interviews as a primary source for this study was to access the hitherto untold history of Canadian refugee selection in Africa from the perspectives of individual officers who were involved in implementing resettlement policy abroad. The goal was to tell a history of how and when individual agency functions within, against or through structures. This chapter will explore whether, how and the extent to which Molloy's life story illuminates or complicates these conceptual frames.

³⁹⁹ Molloy et al., *Running on Empty* is a book Molloy co-edited with fellow former Canadian Foreign Service officers Peter Duschinsky, Kurt F. Jensen and Robert Shalka and tells the history of Canada's public policy response, resettlement and domestic support by sponsors and Canadians for Indochinese refugees who fled post-war Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

⁴⁰⁰ Molloy, Interview cited above (italics by this author for emphasis).

The rest of the chapter will be broken down into four sections. The first section will introduce Molloy by briefly providing biographical information pertinent to this study, especially concerning his positions and accomplishments.⁴⁰¹ The second section utilizes theoretical frames and concepts from chapter one (regarding oral history and narrative) to examine *how* Molloy told his story, including the conditions and context of storytelling. It includes considerations on the background to the author's meeting and interviews with Molloy in June and July of 2018, with a remark on the role of third parties. Recognizing that this study was presented to the interviewee as a historical research project into Canada's determination of refugee status or refugee selection interviews in Africa from 1970s to the 1990s, the third section considers and examines *what* Molloy chose to mention in his story to make sense of his involvement in Canadian refugee policy. Amongst other things, the former officer spoke about his Irish genealogy, his mother's penchant for storytelling, the role of family in his career, the broader Canadian immigration and refugee policy context, as well as comparisons with resettlement policies and operations implemented by himself and fellow officers in other regions in the world. The material collected during interviews aimed at assessing the impact of officer agency on refugee policy and operation provided an opportunity to consider the influence Molloy has exerted on policy development and implementation in Canadian refugee policy, in more detail and in different ways from those used in reviewing the second chapter. Using the methodological, contextual and theoretical frames set out in

⁴⁰¹ See Appendix 1: *Chronology of Officer Trajectories, Key Milestones or Events* for a detailed outline of Molloy's (and the other two interviewees') professional chronology, cross-linked with broader events or periods in Canada's refugee protection policy, and key historical moments on the African continent relating to refugees.

chapters one and two, the fourth and last section of chapter three explains how, in the course of implementing refugee policy, Molloy understood his role, and how these stories can be fruitfully analyzed around the roles of a navigator, negotiator and narrator.

Who is Michael Molloy?

Michael Molloy was born in June 1944, in Vancouver, British Columbia. He is the husband of Jo Molloy, a father of three, a retired public servant and one of the recipients of the 2002 Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal. The importance of family and relationships was a recurring theme in our interviews, which included constant reflections on how his postings impacted his wife's and his children's lives. Jo made a few short appearances during each of our two interviews, moving from the living room to the balcony where most of the interviews took place, offering food and drinks, interjecting details and opinions about particular events, or intervening when her husband either forgot the date of an event or gave the incorrect age of his daughter during a particular posting.⁴⁰²

Molloy joined the Canadian Foreign Service in 1968. When his application was accepted, and he was recruited, Molloy was studying for a Masters in History, having already obtained his Bachelor Honors in History. Soon after, he was sent to Vienna, Austria, as a trainee. Molloy did not indicate whether he had a choice in where he was

⁴⁰² Jo Molloy was not always present in the home or within earshot, and listened in only occasionally during interviews. These interventions revealed that Jo Molloy has an equally compelling life story and had been an integral anchor in Michael's professional trajectory. While recognizing the value of Jo Molloy's story, this chapter focuses on Michael Molloy's story as it relates to his direct actions and experiences as a Government of Canada officer. Therefore, Jo Molloy's perspectives are included and incorporated when they explicate, substantiate and enrich the study's themes. See Katie Hickman, *Daughters of Britannia: The Lives and Times of Diplomatic Wives* (New York: Flamingo Press, 2000) for a consideration of the integral and often powerful roles that diplomats' wives have played in history. This is a historical account of the women who were the backbone of the British Empire and Foreign Service. Also, see Annabel Hendry, "From Parallel to Dual Careers: Diplomatic Spouses" in Jovan Kurbalija, ed., *Modern Diplomacy* (Belgrade: Diplo Publishing, 1998), 127-145. This essay discusses the changing roles of diplomatic spouses in recent history, specifically within the contemporary European context, and recognizes the ways in which, due to the nature of the Foreign Service, a majority of spouses were unable to follow their own careers and instead became incorporated into their partners' work and way of life. More nuanced approaches to this question were brought to the GAC's colloquium of December 2018: <http://aidhistory.ca/event/breaking-barriers-shaping-worlds-women-and-the-search-for-global-order-1919-2019/>.

assigned. Immediately, as he began to tell his story, Molloy recalled his own parents' immigrant background, as well as their ambiguous relation to the rest of the world, as the main way to explain his pathway into the Foreign Service. To my knowledge, Molloy has not shared his genealogy in previous interviews or publications, and it is notable that he chose to begin his story with that piece of information.

Let me say a few words about my trajectory and how eventually I came to be involved. I come from a family that one half immigrated in my mother's lifetime, and on my father's side, he was born in Canada, but his father was an immigrant from Ireland and England. It's very much always been part of our family's identity that we came from a long way. We belong here. My father fought for this country in the Second World War, so we've paid our dues. I always thought that when I was young when we were kids, my mother filled our heads with stories about far-away places. She read us a lot of Kipling and stories of adventures in strange places, and then she was kind of shocked when we all decided, "You've told us about it. We're going to go see."

The family is really quite scattered around the world. I always thought that I wanted to do something overseas, and in high school, way back in the 50s I guess, every high school library had a little pamphlet that talked about life in the Canadian Foreign Service.⁴⁰³ The picture on the front page of just a little three-page thing, and on the front page was a picture of two young women at the General Assembly. Then you opened it, and there was a picture of two young guys at a trade fair somewhere in Germany. On the back, there was a tiny little paragraph saying, "By the way, the immigration people send people [abroad]" I can do that.

Eventually, when I was in grad school, I applied to the Immigration and Foreign Service and was quite shocked when my mother called me one day from Nelson, BC. We were somewhere else in the country, and she said, "Michael, Ottawa called." She said, "I said to your father, 'Jim, its Ottawa. They're looking for Molloy.'" My father said, "Don't tell them where he is."

Molloy laughed as he recalled this period. Following the good news, in June of 1968, Molloy and his wife "packed up [their] Volkswagen" and together with their eldest

⁴⁰³ I was not able to locate or verify the contents of such a pamphlet. However, it is possible that Molloy may have been referring to a short book written about the Canadian Foreign Service by a senior diplomat, Marcel Cadieux, *The Canadian Diplomat* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press 1963). The English version was translation of *Le Diplomat Canadian* by Archibald Day.

child “who was two” at the time, “drove to Ottawa” and joined the Department of Manpower and Immigration as a Foreign Service Trainee. After what he described as two weeks of “really good training,” he was sent for further training to Vienna and Belfast. Three days before he left for Vienna, Molloy found out that “the Russians marched in to crush the Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia.”

When I arrived in Vienna, it was a question of was this going to result in war? It made me somewhat nervous. But the first people I saw were Czech refugees. They were all about my age. They were young people. Most of them seemed to be carrying tennis rackets because they'd all just been out. They were allowed to travel for the first time, so they'd gone to Vienna on holiday. The number of women who came to interviews in their tennis skirts was quite interesting. Anyways, that got me interested in the process and my own role in it.

While there are numerous points of interest in the quote above, it is particularly notable that Molloy mentions that his father was “an immigrant from Ireland and England,” and that he had “fought for this country [Canada] in the Second World War.” This provides insight into his understanding of a citizen’s relationship with the state as one of reciprocity through active service. This is poignant and relevant to Molloy’s own agency as both an officer of the state and a citizen of Canada. This insight provides a critical backdrop for reading Molloy’s account, and more specifically, his understanding of immigrant and refugee selection as not merely being an administrative task, but also as a nation-building exercise in which decision-making defines the kinds of future citizens that are admitted.

Molloy’s experiences and observations in Vienna, as mentioned in the quote above, marked his first encounter with refugees and the bureaucratic processes applied in response to their plight by the Canadian government. After his training in Vienna, Molloy was posted to Tokyo, Japan, from 1969 to 1971, then Beirut, Lebanon,

from December 1971 to November 1972. In Beirut, Molloy engaged in the selection of immigrants, refugees and visitors from Lebanon, Turkey and various East African countries such as Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya. During his year in Beirut (at the behest of his supervisor, Immigration Program Manager, Roger St. Vincent), Molloy also met with what he referred to as prominent leaders from within Asian communities in East African countries such as Kenya and Tanzania. Many Asians in this region had become increasingly concerned about their sense of belonging and citizenship within post-independent African countries, at a time when decolonization and socialism were sweeping post-independent African states.⁴⁰⁴ However, Molloy did not indicate whether St. Vincent solicited these meetings or whether they were instigated or requested by Ugandan Asians in the regions. When the President of Uganda, Idi Amin, started threatening to expel Ugandan-Asians, it appeared that Roger St. Vincent's far-sightedness paid off, and Molloy joined him in Kampala, Uganda as his second-in-command. This was after the government of Pierre Trudeau agreed to Britain's request for assistance in admitting and "resettling" over six-thousand Ugandan-Asian expellees in 1972.⁴⁰⁵

Four years later, when he became the Director of Refugee Policy in the Department of Manpower and Immigration (from 1976 to 1978), Molloy would use his experience and insights from his years abroad—and in particular, the Ugandan-Asian movement—to oversee the implementation of refugee provisions in the terms of the

⁴⁰⁴ I explain the origins of this decision in chapter one, where I address the geo-political, state-formation and identity-formation processes that impacted and conditioned refugee protection policy on the African continent from the late 1960s to the 1990s.

⁴⁰⁵ This particular point is elaborated on in the section considering the "content" of the interview.

1976 Immigration Act.⁴⁰⁶ In 1986, Molloy returned to Africa after fourteen years of absence, to be posted to Nairobi for three years. There, he served as the Immigration Program Manager in charge of the selection of immigrants and refugees, as well as relations with key partners (mainly the UNHCR and other resettlement countries). Since 2002, Molloy has worked, in his retirement, as a consultant for the federal government on immigration and foreign policy issues, as a scholar and researcher. Molloy, now a university professor of public and international affairs and Canadian refugee resettlement policy, is also one of the founding members (in 1986) and current President (as of 2003) of the Canadian Immigration Historical Society (CIHS), through which he has coordinated research projects and collections of primary sources for the history of government officers in Canadian immigrant and refugee protection. This role has seen him participating in the Ugandan-Asian Expellees Oral History Project as a narrator and contributor, since 2014⁴⁰⁷, and co-authoring a recent book about the role of Canadian officers in the Indochinese refugee movement.⁴⁰⁸ He also trains current civil servants, using these stories as tools.

The personal and professional biographical account of Molloy presented above is by no means exhaustive. But it does demonstrate that the many perspectives he held, as the narrator of his life story, are invaluable to this study of storytelling and individual agency in refugee protection implementation.⁴⁰⁹ The variety in his professional positions in policymaking and implementation, over time and space, are

⁴⁰⁶ See Appendix 1: *Chronology of Officer Trajectories, Key Milestones or Events* for a detailed outline of Molloy's (and the other two interviewees') professional chronology.

⁴⁰⁷ Molloy, "An Oral History with Mike Molloy."

⁴⁰⁸ Molloy et al., *Running on Empty*.

⁴⁰⁹ See Betts and Orchard, *Norms of Implementation*.

also important because they reflect a multiplicity in his roles as navigator, negotiator and narrator. Moreover, his career developed at the centre of the period covered by this thesis—the most formative years in Canadian refugee policy. Mike Molloy developed relationships with many ministers and Prime Ministers in Canada, and with partners and colleagues abroad in order to facilitate efficient and effective refugee selection.⁴¹⁰ Molloy as a narrator, therefore, provides a critical perspective from which to understand the role of individual agency in refugee protection implementation.

Molloy's Story Form

Meeting Molloy

As mentioned previously, the identification of this study's research area, parameters and possible primary sources were directly informed by my background as a bureaucrat with years of experience working in resettlement policy. I first met Michael Molloy in the summer of 2018, after requesting an introduction from the study's co-supervisor, political scientist James Milner.⁴¹¹ However, I first heard about Molloy from fellow bureaucrats almost a decade ago, after joining the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration in 2010 as a junior policy analyst within the Resettlement Division of Refugees Branch. While slightly more familiar with the broad strokes of the in-Canada asylum policy, I was not as conversant in resettlement policy.

I was to learn, through informal conversations with senior officers within CIC, that in large part because of Canada's resettlement of over sixty-thousand

⁴¹⁰ Chapter two outlined the structures (material and ideational) within which officers exercised agency.

⁴¹¹ James Milner met Molloy in the course of his research in refugee policy.

Indochinese refugees between 1975 and 1980, the “people of Canada” had received the prestigious Nansen Award in 1986, accepted by Governor-General Jeanne Sauv  on behalf of Elizabeth II, Queen of the United Kingdom and Commonwealth. This award marked the only instance in the history of the Nansen Award when an entire “people” or government had received recognition for refugee protection.

I had heard about Molloy and read some of the policy documents his team had authored when he was Director of Refugee policy and later, Director General of Refugee Affairs branch. Because of his role in coordinating the unprecedented (and yet to be matched in numbers or scale) resettlement of the Indochinese boat people from 1979 to 1980, Molloy had become somewhat of a living legend within resettlement policy circles.⁴¹² Also, among other former senior officers, Molloy’s name and reputation regarding refugee policy endured even after his retirement because of his work through the CIHS and his teaching refugee resettlement at the School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Ottawa. Stories and recollections of the past take place in the present. As I was conceptualizing the study and, in particular, the need to conduct oral history interviews with former officers who had been posted to Central and East Africa, Molloy’s name came up—not in a vacuum, but as an occurrence informed by my professional context. Therefore, before I met Molloy for the first time in the cafeteria of the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship headquarters in June 2018, I had “met” his legacy, one he had helped to construct over the years.

⁴¹² Molloy emphasized the role of many other officers, senior and junior to him in the success of the Indochinese movement. The book *Running on Empty* was an attempt to tell the story of the many actors and individuals (officers and politicians across federal and provincial government) who had collaboratively worked to make the Indochinese refugee movement possible.

Our interviews were conducted through our shared language: English. Molloy and I were both raised in Anglophone cultures. I was born four decades after Molloy, in Zimbabwe, on the cusp of a transition from British settler colony Rhodesia to post-independent Zimbabwe. For this reason, there exist some shared literary references, including Molloy's memory about his mother reading him Rudyard Kipling's "travel stories of adventures in strange places" as a child, and curiosity for storytelling engendered in childhood. Also, because of my eight years of employment as a policy officer, I recognized and understood many of the specialized terms and acronyms that have become normalized and standard amongst Canadian government immigration and refugee policy officers.

Notwithstanding shared attributes, I am a former refugee and black woman who has experienced Canadian immigration and refugee selection as an applicant, while Molloy is a Canadian-born and raised white man. Suffice to say, these differential attributes themselves lend to differing life experiences, standpoints and perspectives. This accounting of the shared (and not shared) backgrounds of the interviewee and interviewer are important to understanding the interview context, and specifically, how Molloy may have chosen to tell his story and what he may have chosen to include or exclude in his account. To echo Sheftel and Zembrzycki, oral interviews are ultimately personal interactions between human beings, and oral interviews are collaborative and constitutive environments in which ethical questions arise about what can and cannot be said.⁴¹³ In the same vein, it is also important to invoke Portelli's point that oral history studies are the "cultural forms and processes

⁴¹³ Sheftel and Zembrzycki, *Oral History off the Record*, xvii.

by which individuals express their sense of themselves in history.”⁴¹⁴ In this case, the subjectivities of myself and Molloy, and how we understood and expressed ourselves as agents within history likely conditioned the intersubjective encounters that were the interviews.

On first meeting Molloy in the summer of 2018, I had worked as a policy analyst with the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (now Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada) for over eight years, five of them in refugee resettlement policy. Akin to Molloy, I had seen an advertisement to compete for a position as a policy officer and applied. In this role, I have worked on resettlement, immigration and settlement policy and operations, including regulatory amendment processes, stakeholder relations for the private sponsorship of refugees and case management. In operations and case management, I worked with colleagues from both intra-departmental partners (visa offices, local CIC offices and other branches within national headquarters) and inter-departmental bodies (Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canada Border Services Agency and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police).

Due to the experience and background above, I was able to understand the language and context of a bureaucrat, which likely facilitated the unfolding of a nuanced and detailed life story. However, through a reflexive approach in my role as an interviewer, I recognized that my stand-point and subjectivity shaped the narrative. Therefore, while the interview was open-ended and unstructured, it should also be understood as an intersubjective space where the ensuing narrative was a

⁴¹⁴ Allesandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli*, ix.

collaboration between two officers of the Canadian state. This commonality colours the value of this particular testimony by Molloy. As argued in chapter one, oral history's value derives from it being an exercise in subjectivity.⁴¹⁵ The "story" lies in how and what the interviewee remembers or chooses to tell. Amongst other important aspects of the humanity of the entire process of storytelling⁴¹⁶ are the steps leading up to meeting with, and surrounding, the interview with Molloy.

All interviews were arranged via email with his wife, Jo, who appears to conduct most of the couple's correspondence. In addition, Jo Molloy kindly offered refreshments, sunscreen, and a sunhat during the one interview which took place on their apartment's balcony overlooking beautiful scenery. As already mentioned, she provided further dates, names, nicknames and elements of chronology. This is all to say that this oral history study with Molloy would not have been possible without the assistance and kind indulgence of his wife. Jo Molloy's role in her husband's career, more generally, is underwritten by the fact that she knew the who, when and how of her husband's professional trajectory and experiences in detail. During the course of interviews, Molloy himself accepted and acknowledged as much.⁴¹⁷

To summarize this section on the meeting, Molloy's story, while *delivered* during the course of my summer interviews with him, was mainly *shaped* by 1) his lived experiences, encounters and accomplishments; 2) his relationships (personal and professional) during the course of his trajectory; 3) my own lived experiences and

⁴¹⁵ Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli*.

⁴¹⁶ See Sheftel and Zembrzycki, eds., *Oral History off the Record*, 16. There is a need to recognize that "oral history is not just about studying people; it is also about valuing them"

⁴¹⁷ Jo Molloy is mentioned as one of the people who had worked on the *Running on* book project behind the scenes, and is described as "our general organizer, editor, and fact checker."

encounters; and 4) my research study, questions, preoccupations and questions. This list of shaping factors came from the importance of acknowledging, with oral historians, that stories come to life in the present day within a web of interactions between issues, interests, persons, discourses and individual memories.

The interviews

I conducted and recorded two interviews with Molloy, totalling almost six hours in late June and July of 2018. All interviews took place in the informal setting of Molloy and his wife's home. Before the formally recorded interviews, I had a preliminary chat with Molloy over tea at the IRCC offices in downtown Ottawa. It soon became apparent that he would be instrumental in 1) telling his story as an officer working on refugee protection policy and practice; 2) recommending key primary documents, such as the Memorandum to Cabinet of 1970; and 3) connecting me with retired Immigration Foreign Service officers who had processed and selected resettled refugees from Africa from the 1970s to 1990 and were potential interviewees.⁴¹⁸ In the beginning, I asked Molloy to tell his story as an officer who engaged in refugee selection in the Africa Refugee Program, whichever way he wished. For all three officers, I made the interviews open-ended and self-directed, in order to allow the interviewee to frame the storyline and thrust. Only after Molloy established his storyline, did I seek elaboration, or pose questions based on a series of themes listed in the questionnaire (see appendix 2). It was clear from the outset that Molloy placed

⁴¹⁸ The next two chapters tell the stories of Scott Mullin and Susan Burrows, respectively, both of whom Molloy has worked with and maintains some contact. Molloy introduced them to me via email, and they responded immediately, indicating a willingness to participate.

value on chronology when organizing the elements of his story, a frame that I did not require.

In the citation of his opening words included earlier, Molloy chose to begin his story in a century-old past: by mentioning his Irish immigrant roots through his father; his father's role as a Canadian soldier in the Second World War; his childhood experiences with exploration, and travel stories by Rudyard Kipling; and finally, his exposure, as a schoolboy, to pamphlets advertising the virtues, and adventurous possibilities of life as a Canadian Foreign Service officer. This trajectory was narrated in an articulate, concise, confident and thoughtful manner— after the fashion of someone who is comfortable with precision and the bureaucratic traditions of relaying information, but who has also remained affable and personable.

This is not the first oral history interview in which Molloy has participated. During his time as a civil servant, he indicated that he also gave numerous interviews with academic researchers working on Canadian refugee issues.⁴¹⁹ In 2014, as part of the Ugandan Asian Archive Oral History Project at Carleton University, he was interviewed by researchers for over ninety minutes.⁴²⁰ At the helm of the CIHS, he has also demonstrated his proficiency with narrative through workshops, conferences and books⁴²¹. Most recently, Molloy has been a key member of the *Hearts of Freedom* project which seeks to preserve historical memory about Canada's resettlement of the Indochinese between 1975 and 1980, “when Canadians and their governments acting together, cooperated in the rapid transfer of more than 70,000 refugees from

⁴¹⁹For example, Molloy is cited in Howard Adelman, *Canada and the Indochinese Refugees*.

⁴²⁰ Molloy, “An Oral History with Mike Molloy”,

⁴²¹ Canadian Immigration Historical Society (CIHS), accessed January 29, 2019, <http://cihs-shic.ca/> ; and Molloy et al., *Running on Empty*.

the former Indochina”; a project that “is preserved for generations to come and becomes part of the Canadian historical narrative.”⁴²² Including Molloy, the *Hearts of Freedom* project team is also comprised of researchers from Carleton University’s Department of Social Work and the Mennonite Simons College at the University of Winnipeg.⁴²³

It is critical at this juncture to point out that in his post-retirement efforts and activities to contribute to Canadian immigration history, Molloy and former officers who do a similar kind of work embody, what Betts and Orchard call, “epistemic communities,” or individuals who play critical roles in “translating international norms into implementable policies.”⁴²⁴ However, in this case, their agency continues beyond implementation, extending into the realm of historical memory and knowledge production.

Molloy has, therefore, had the opportunity to refine his memory and develop a polished narrative about his role in the implementation of Canada’s refugee policies. Also, both the Irish storytelling tradition within which he grew up (and to which he refers explicitly) and his active role in the CIHS, have made him a reflexive storyteller and oral history collector who is aware of the importance of documenting a corporate memory, as well as narratives of Canadian immigration history, not only from the perspective of bureaucrats but from the perspective of those who came to

⁴²² Hearts of Freedom Project, “Project Outcomes,” accessed August 23, 2019, <https://heartsoffreedom.org/project-outcomes/>

⁴²³ Allan Moscovitch (Professor Emeritus of social work at Carleton University); Colleen Lundy (Professor Emeritus of social work at Carleton University); Stephanie Stobbe (Associate Professor at Menno Simons College at the University of Winnipeg); and Peter Duschinsky (Immigration Canada’s former director of international liaison and a Foreign Service Officer).

⁴²⁴ Ibid.

Canada through public programs. While Molloy wielded the precision and storytelling abilities of someone who has told his story multiple times, Portelli has argued that “no story will be repeated twice in [an] identical manner.”⁴²⁵ In fact, “life histories and personal tales” are a “living thing” which depend on time and are always a “work in progress, in which narrators revise the image of their own past as they go along [and].. an individual’s claim in telling his or her story will often be both to consistency and change, both to coherence and development.”⁴²⁶

Molloy has a good idea of what constitutes a compelling and “good” story in these various canons,⁴²⁷ which inform his appreciation for chronology, specificity, and context. He showed particular concern for the connectedness between issues and human relationships. For instance, he systematically chose to situate his Africa years within broader historical processes and events. The inclusion of “context” in Molloy’s story will be fleshed out in the next section, where I discuss how the differences in approaches, lessons and insights between and from assignments and postings to other world regions, impacted on refugee selection in Central and East Africa while he was posted in Nairobi. The point here is that, in telling his story, Molloy conceptualized his time in Nairobi as part of a continuum, and within a global context. He framed his story in a way that emphasized how the story of Canadian refugee selection in Africa has always been part of a larger story of the evolution of Canadian refugee

⁴²⁵ Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli*, 60.

⁴²⁶ *Ibid*, 61.

⁴²⁷ See Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives*, 4. Sixteenth-century pardon-tales reveal much about story-telling and social conventions of the time, including, “...what they [story-tellers] thought a good story was, how they accounted for motive, and how through narrative they made sense of the unexpected and built coherence into immediate experience.”

protection. This way of speaking is indicative of an individual who understands his individual story and agency as a navigator operating within wider structures. This is important because, of the three officers whose life stories informed this study, Molloy's professional trajectory has allowed him to be a part of some key historical moments in Canadian refugee policy and implementation, and this makes his life story more compelling and fortuitous for this study. The discussion will now turn to the content of Molloy's story.

Molloy's Story Content

People business

A recurring theme in Molloy's life story is the importance of "people." He repeatedly emphasized the collaborative nature of policy development and refugee selection, especially in the historic refugee movements in which he participated. The keen recollection of specific moments and interactions with people in the past seems to underlie what he indicated to be a central tenet of his years of public service: the importance of paying mind to the "people," be it during immigrant and refugee selection, or in documenting the past. Molloy had a great amount of respect for one particular person who embodied the "human touch" and to whom he attributes the characteristics of foresight and resilience.

After Molloy landed in Beirut for his posting in January of 1972, the immigration program manager (his boss, Roger St. Vincent) dispatched him to several African countries, including Zambia, Kenya, Tanzania, Mauritius and Ethiopia, to process immigrant selection applications. At this time, Beirut was responsible for Africa since there was no office on the sub-continent. He also sent Molloy to Uganda, despite the absence of applications or cases in that country. He remembers Roger St.

Vincent saying to him, "You haven't got Uganda on the list [but] there's going to be trouble in Uganda." During the interview, it was neither clear what the source of this intelligence was nor the nature of "trouble" that St. Vincent expected. Molloy did not elaborate on this. Leaving his family behind in Beirut, Molloy was sent for a few weeks to meet with the British, the Americans, and with as "many of the leaders of the Asian communities as possible." He was instructed to familiarize himself with the city of Kampala, the airport, and the people: "just in case we have to be there at all. ... You are to familiarize yourself with the town and the airport." On that trip, Molloy says that he met "people who are still close friends," and some of those who are "just called uncle by [his] children." The contacts and information that he gained on this trip proved useful when he went back a second time during the summer of 1972, by which time, "a lot had happened":

In fact, when I went to call on one of my Ismaili contacts, he said, "Look, come on into the back of the shop. There's somebody who's in there who's just had a horrible experience, and you should know about it." I went back, and there's an Asian man, and the story was he'd been driving into Kampala, and he'd heard what sounded like an army convoy of heavy trucks coming up behind him, so he got off the road and out of sight. A series of trucks came by piled high with the bodies of soldiers because within the Ugandan army the northern soldiers were killing the southern soldiers, and he was quite shaken. It gave me kind of a sense of, "Boy, bad news."

Anyways, when I got back to Nairobi, I reported this to the high commissioner, and I remember sitting down with one of the officers and dictating a report. No sooner had I got home; three things happened. Our doctor said to my wife, who was pregnant with our youngest daughter, "You're not having the child here. This could get complicated, so you want to be with your mother or your mother-in-law." She decided she would go to Vancouver. At the same day, a message came in from headquarters saying, "Don't get too comfortable there. There's changes coming up, and we are going to be opening a whole series of immigration offices."⁴²⁸

⁴²⁸ Molloy, Interview (Ottawa, June 27, 2018).

As Molloy was telling this part of the story, his wife Jo walked into the room, introduced herself and jokingly remarked that she “could have done this part of the interview.” Molloy agreed. It was a lighthearted but poignant moment, which marked the first of many interventions by Jo Molloy to provide insightful glances into the enormity of spousal and family support to the work of an officer, and the contributions and collaborations that had allowed the Molloy family unit to be adaptable, a trait that Jo Molloy described as a “prized trait in the Foreign Service.” As wife and husband jointly recounted particularly challenging postings and moments for Jo Molloy and the children, it was clear that they, too, were an integral part of his story, and that the postings of Molloy had had a considerable impact on the family. It is worth saying that the couple was also very grateful for the privilege of having “seen the world” through Molloy’s work. Indeed, Jo Molloy shared stories about some of her experiences and the naughty children she had met when she had worked as a Jack-of-all-trades substitute teacher at an international school in Nairobi when Molloy was posted there in the late 1980s. On those occasions, when she graciously popped into the room (mainly to offer refreshments, her witticisms, additions and clarifications), Jo added to Molloy’s account to further humanize the story of the refugee bureaucrat legend that I had encountered when I first joined the public service years before. Life stories can be told as tragedies, dramas, comedies, legends, sagas or adventures. At times, the lure of adventure appeared in the way Molloy told his story and the particular anecdotes he chose to share. This heroic or adventure trope was a recurring theme in Molloy’s tales about some of the cases he encountered, and in some ways,

echoed the adventure stories that his mother used to read to him when he was a child.

It is in this context—when his wife was expecting their second child and was afflicted with debilitating dysentery—that Molloy’s boss sent a message through his secretary saying:

"We're going to Kampala, and I'm to come with him." He was leaving the next day, and I said, "I've got a few things to do. We have to break the lease and get Jo and pack up and get Jo and the kids out of here [Beirut]." I left on a Sunday and went back up to Athens to come down. When I got to Athens, I realized I couldn't remember what I'd done with the car.

Despite their declared adaptability, the stress and anxiety that both Jo and Mike Molloy likely experienced during that time were palpable through their tones and sombre expressions as they told their story. This anxiety was mitigated by the support of colleagues within the Foreign Service, including the doctor who insisted that Jo return to Vancouver to be with her mother while Molloy was posted in Uganda for eight weeks, instead of being alone with her daughter in Beirut. Molloy recalled how much it had meant to him to know that Jo would be safer back in Canada, especially since talk of war had been ratcheting up in the local media. In addition to the travel arrangement facilitated for Jo, Molloy also remembered the kindness of a colleague checking in on Jo during the Uganda-Asian operation: Maurice Mitchell.

And happily, once the charter flights started, we had a director of operations by the name Maurice Mitchell. And Maurice was an interesting guy in many ways. But he would arrive, once a week he'd arrive [in Kampala]. He'd head here on a flight on a chartered flight. He was based in Ottawa, and he'd come out on a charter and then go back. [...] Anyways, Maurice would arrive, and he had a letter from Jo, and he'd say 'I'm on the flight tomorrow morning, I need that letter from you before the end of the day.' He'd get home, and he'd call her. And the mere fact that he was looking out for her, that she hadn't just been sent off and forgotten. I was able to really throw myself into the job

knowing that Jo and kids were safe, and some powerful person in Ottawa had an eye on her.

It is not clear from Molloy's account if the kind of solidarity and kindness provided by Mitchell was unique or a usual occurrence. However, from the gratitude that Molloy seems to have, even now, it appears that this was not a standard expectation for officers with families.

Importance of Context

As mentioned earlier, the context of his experiences was a critical aspect for Molloy in "the how and what" he told of his story. Molloy situated his posting in Nairobi within the context of prior encounters with immigrant and refugee selection in East Africa (Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania) as well as other parts of the world. He contextualized his professional trajectory by narrating his family's immigration roots, his mother's encouragement to read adventure stories, and the interest generated by Canadian Foreign Service pamphlets that he encountered while in university. In doing so, Molloy reveals an awareness of the interconnectedness of history, and that his narrative is a cumulative product of the intersection of both personal and structural factors.

In our interviews, Molloy noted that the selection of Czech refugees in 1968, while he was based in Vienna as a junior Immigration Foreign Service officer, was a seminal moment that shaped his interest in refugee protection. After that, every posting fed his interest in and knowledge about immigrant and refugee selection, including his participation in the Uganda-Asian movement in 1972. In his role as Director of Refugee Policy in the Department of Manpower and Immigration from 1976 to 1978, Molloy oversaw the implementation of Canada's ratification of the 1951 UN

Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol and, together with his small team of one officer, crafted the refugee protection provisions in the *1976 Immigration Act and Regulations*.⁴²⁹

Molloy and Madokoro have already shown (in their recent article summarized in chapter two) how, in the 1970s, civil servants influenced Canadian refugee policy changes, especially in expanding refugee selection beyond Europe to other regions in the world.⁴³⁰ Their article uses the prism of Molloy's career to "consider how a single broker's experience is simultaneously informed by, while itself informing, the migration of people across borders."⁴³¹ The interviews conducted with Molloy for this thesis reiterate this point. While Molloy is emphatic that immigration or refugee selection operations that he participated in were never a one-person affair, it is also evident that within particular episodes in the history of government resettlement operations, the roles and idiosyncrasies of particular officers impacted policies and practices. An example provided earlier in this chapter is that of St. Vincent, whose foresight with regards to Uganda, proved invaluable.

In our first interview, Molloy described at length the time he spent as the Senior Coordinator of the Indochinese Refugee Task Force from 1979 to 1981. During this time, he oversaw, from Ottawa, and coordinated the resettlement of sixty-thousand refugees from Indochina. He described this period as "one of the greatest experiences" of his life. Almost four decades later, he remembered and recounted this "huge story" in details, where he oversaw the movement of "60,000 people from

⁴²⁹ See chapter two for a discussion of Molloy's role in the *1976 Immigration Act* which also cites Molloy and Madokoro, "Effecting Change".

⁴³⁰ Molloy and Madokoro, "Effecting Change," 52.

⁴³¹ Ibid.

70 camps in eight or nine countries and territories to reception centers on 181 flights” and “matched close to 40,000 of them with 7,000 sponsor groups”, but “overshot the target by 49 people.” This preoccupation with numbers could indicate that keeping account of numbers was important during these kinds of operations and in the course of managing the programs and that numbers have remained important to Molloy’s memory over the years.

Molloy’s trajectory, from his role as Director of Refugee policy, Senior Coordinator for the Indochinese movement and later as Canada’s Representative on Refugee and Humanitarian Affairs at the Permanent Mission of Canada in Geneva, Switzerland, are especially significant in the understanding of how Molloy embodied both roles of navigator and negotiator within and outside Canada. Domestically, as Director of Refugee Policy, Molloy was responsible for articulating Canadian domestic and foreign policy interests as they related to the ratification of the 1951 Convention and its Protocol. Also, as outlined in the previous chapter, conceptualizing refugee protection provisions required consultation with stakeholders, including representatives of provinces and territories, faith groups, and refugee advocacy organizations.

Due to his proven capabilities in both operations and policy, Molloy indicated that he was appointed Canada’s Representative on Refugee and Humanitarian Affairs at the Permanent Mission of Canada in Geneva, Switzerland, from 1981 to 1984.⁴³²

⁴³² This is a brief discussion Molloy’s role as Canada’s representative at the Permanent Mission in Geneva and is intended to show the breadth of his experience as it also included negotiating international humanitarian and financial aid for African refugees. However, an analysis of his activities in this role are beyond the scope of this study with its focus on the local context of refugee selection in Central and East Africa.

From this international platform, Molloy negotiated and managed Canadian relations with the UNHCR, IOM, UN Disaster Relief Organization and various NGOs to help systematize and formalize annual priorities for global refugee resettlement.⁴³³ While in Geneva, Molloy also helped coordinate Western donor state preparations for ICARA II.⁴³⁴ In these ways, Molloy navigated the full spectrum of refugee protections: international refugee protection regime, domestic Canadian refugee policy, and the local context of implementation and refugee selection.

Molloy in Africa

This study is particularly interested in the question of how both Molloy's career and Canada's refugee selection policy intersected and impacted on refugee protection on the African continent. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the resettlement of Ugandan-Asians in 1972 was a crucial moment in the development of Canada's resettlement policy. Molloy opined in his interview with historian Laura Madokoro, that the operation "demonstrated the utility of the Oppressed Minority policy" which "provided for the selection of oppressed people who were not Convention refugees because they were still in their home countries."⁴³⁵

It was interesting to see how the policy evolved over the first few weeks of the operation...it was clear to my boss, Mr. [Roger] St. Vincent and myself, that those in Ottawa had little understanding of what was evolving and they knew it. As the weeks rolled by, the tone of the communications became more and more concerned, even frantic, about not leaving anyone behind.⁴³⁶

⁴³³ See Appendix 1- *Chronology of Officer Trajectories, Key Milestones or Events*.

⁴³⁴ See chapter two for a brief discussion of the ICARA I and II conferences as a multi-lateral effort to address the refugee situation on the African continent through financial and physical "burden-sharing."

⁴³⁵ Molloy and Madokoro, "Effecting Change," 56.

⁴³⁶ *Ibid.*

Molloy's comments reveal the 1970s as a period of flux and transformation where civil servants such as Molloy had space and capacity to create legal provisions and categories that shaped how officers implemented refugee policy in the field. In my interview with Molloy a year after he had been interviewed by Madokoro, he expanded somewhat on the logic behind the conception and application of the Oppressed Minority policy and that it, "was essentially saying there'll be people who are refugees in every respect, except they haven't crossed the border [and] therefore, we call[ed] it oppressed minorities."⁴³⁷ Molloy recalled that at the time, the "idea was what we used in Kampala because the people were under the order of expulsion, but they hadn't been expelled." This rationale was informed by the operational practicalities and encounters that the Canadian officers had experienced during the selection and resettlement of Ugandan-Asians.

In the Uganda-Asian airlift, Molloy and his boss, Roger St. Vincent, were both on the ground facing the realities of the large-scale humanitarian operation and best equipped to narrate those realities to headquarters and policymakers. Aside from interpreting the Oppressed Minority policy and applying it to the Ugandan-Asian Special program to meet selection targets, St. Vincent's team of three officers also had to negotiate relations and manage the expectations of various local Ugandan-Asian community leaders. Additionally, while doing all this, St. Vincent's team

⁴³⁷ Molloy, Interview (Ottawa, June 27, 2019)

prepared detailed written and statistical reports to keep headquarters and politicians in Ottawa up to date on the progress (or lack thereof) in meeting admission targets.⁴³⁸

For Molloy, the Ugandan-Asian operation got him “thinking” about the need for a clear framework on refugee processing and “taught him the whole business of processing and moving large numbers of people and all the things you have to worry about at an operational level.”⁴³⁹ Also, it helped him understand that despite how “civil servants in Ottawa might imagine the world,” the “reality would invariably be different” and for this reason, if there was an expectation for officers to do the “right thing in a humanitarian situation,” they needed to have parameters that accounted for the fact that “country to country, from circumstance to circumstance, crisis to crisis, you would see things that would be the same, and that would be new.”

Importance of partnerships, relationships and stakeholders

In a way that emphasizes the centrality of “people” in Molloy’s life story, he recalled the role of family, sponsors and ordinary Canadians in welcoming and settling the Ugandan-Asian expellees. Observing this had profoundly impacted his approach and mindset when he was involved in creating legal provisions for the private

⁴³⁸ As discussed earlier in the thesis, Roger St. Vincent wrote a fascinating and detailed memoir of this period based on the daily logs he made in his journal during the Ugandan-Asian operation, titled *A Very Fortunate Life*.

In this account, St. Vincent documents that one of the earliest challenges the officers encountered in attempting to meet admission targets was the statutory provision which required all immigrants to pass medical examinations before getting on an aeroplane to Canada. This resulted in delays and tensions between St. Vincent and the lead physician during the Uganda mission. Even as targets were being missed, and it was statistically likely that most of Ugandan-Asians did not have any conditions that would endanger public health or safety and that medicals could be conducted once immigrants landed at Longue Pointe military base on arrival, the lead physician refused to compromise on procedure. Meanwhile, instructions from headquarters in Ottawa on the numerical parameters of admission were initially unclear.

⁴³⁹ Molloy, Interview (Ottawa, July 26, 2018)

sponsorship of refugees' program some years later when he became the Director of Refugee policy.

Fast-forward four or five years. The law says we can make a regulation about the sponsors of refugees. I was looking so forward to designing this. I'm thinking about it and how it'll be, and we're talking a little bit to my boss and talking a little bit to my one employee, an amazing woman by the name of Carla Thorlakson. I'm walking back to my office one day, and Carla comes up with somebody from the Settlement Bureau and somebody from the legal bureau, and she says, "Hi, Molloy. This is so-and-so." Yeah, I know them. She says, "We're going to design the procedures for this private sponsorship program. I said, "I want to do that." She says, "You're the director. Go direct." [...] I said, "Come into my office," and we didn't even sit down. I said, "When you're doing this, here is what I observed in Uganda. We have all these strangers. We don't know all about them except what's on the piece of paper. We can trust the paper there, but in the future, who knows? But I can remember how relieved I would feel knowing that somebody back in Moosejaw cared enough about this person to send a telegram to Kampala saying, 'You send Ahmed to us. He's ours.'" I said, "I want that to be foremost in your mind. This is not something where we've got to police Canadians. This is something that should make our selection decisions easy because somebody cares, and they're going to have to put their money where their mouth is. They're going to have to look after them. Bear that in mind." [...]

Now obviously, they did a lot of work, and it all came to me, and then it went other ways, so I had some influence over what was going on. But my biggest influence was just saying to Carla at that time, "I recall how relieved I felt every time I opened a file and found a telegram there saying, 'If you send them, we'll look after them.'" To me, that was really quite important. The other thing that I took away from Uganda was we needed a better-articulated framework, but I didn't think we wanted rigid rules, because having seen the Czechs, having seen other people in and around Africa, and having been in Uganda, it seemed to me that we were never going to be able to write a single rule that will be granulated enough to meet every situation. If we calibrate it exactly to the eastern Europeans, it won't help us all that much in Chile.

This excerpt highlights Molloy's role in shaping the material structures of refugee selection. In this case, Molloy invoked what he had "observed in Uganda" in order to inform his negotiations with colleagues in designing the private sponsorship of refugee

program within refugee resettlement.⁴⁴⁰ The above quotation is revealing about refugee selection in the 1970s. Firstly, it reveals how Molloy 's experience in selecting Ugandan-Asian expellees in the African context contributed in large part to a deep understanding of the critical connection between “selection” and “settlement” within humanitarian or refugee resettlement more broadly. Resettlement as concept, policy and practice needed to account for an entire continuum, as had been exemplified through the Ugandan-Asian movement.

For Molloy, Uganda heightened the importance of providing clear and implementable policies and guidelines for officers involved in refugee selection. There was a need for a “better-articulated framework,” which was clear and substantive enough to provide for fairness and transparency. At the same time, the rules had to be flexible enough to allow individual officer discretion where necessary, as well as to be contextualized for different refugee or humanitarian situations. This was an essential balance for Molloy, especially for officers operating in the new immigration system after Canada’s ratification of the 1951 UN Convention and its Protocol.

As a consequence of his experience with Uganda-Asians, Molloy recognized that selected immigrants and refugees needed a welcoming and conducive reception when

⁴⁴⁰In short, private sponsorship of refugees would be received and settled (financially and in-kind) by family, churches or non-governmental organizations once selected. See chapter two for regulatory definitions and a history of refugee resettlement categories, including the Ugandan-Asian movement. Prior to the ratification of the 1951 UN Convention and *Protocol*, through the *1976 Immigration Act*, there was no Canadian formal refugee system refugee resettlement program. So, while I have included the Ugandan-Asian movement in this study, it was not formally defined as refugee resettlement. However, for officers like Molloy who processes expellees, the experience and lessons were useful since the broader intent was simply to write a “better-articulated framework” and rules for refugee resettlement which were flexible enough to be contextualized to different missions and future refugee or humanitarian situations. This goal, as Molloy explained it, was to have rules that provided structure and clarity, but did not proscribe officer discretion on the field.

they arrived in Canada so that they could better settle and integrate into Canadian society.⁴⁴¹ Full settlement and integration in Canada encompassed economic (labour market participation), political and social (community) participation. Refugee resettlement or humanitarianism was not about merely selecting and removing the refugee from harm or conditions of persecution, but also ensuring that they had sufficient settlement support to become full and participating citizens of Canada.

With these insights in mind, Molloy collaborated with colleagues from the settlement bureau (within the Ministry of Manpower of Immigration), representatives from churches, and NGOs in creating the provisions for the private sponsorship of the refugees program, which was eventually tested when Molloy coordinated the resettlement of sixty-thousand designated Indochinese boat people between 1979 and 1980. The experience of successfully coordinating the resettlement of such a large number of people, and the logistical challenges of the entire operation, left a lasting impression on Molloy. Notably, it inscribed the importance of the relationship between the federal government and private sponsors in the implementation of refugee resettlement.

During my interviews with Molloy, it became clear that his role in coordinating Indochinese resettlement was simultaneously one of the most challenging and gratifying experiences during his time in the public service. It helped him appreciate, again, the importance of “people” and human relationships. Within the Ministry of Manpower and Immigration, the success of the Indochinese movement had highlighted

⁴⁴¹ See chapter two for a greater discussion of how his experiences of engaging in refugee selection in Uganda shaped his perspective when writing the refugee provisions of the *1976 Immigration Act*.

the importance of good working relationships with capable and passionate public servants such as Ian Timonen, who was in charge of Departmental immigration levels planning,⁴⁴² and Carla Thorlakson, Kerry Reade and Elizabeth Gryte from the settlement bureau, for example.⁴⁴³ Outside government, open lines of communication with representatives of resettlement stakeholders such as provinces and territories, private sponsors, non-governmental organizations (for example, Amnesty International and the Red Cross), and fellow resettlement countries such as the United States of America and Australia, helped improve the effectiveness and efficiency of implementing resettlement operations.

Molloy's personality and willingness to engage with people from within and outside the government allowed for some collaborative and creative approaches in refugee selection. During the interview, his face lit up when he described "one of the great joys" he helped to create when he was Director of Refugee Policy and based in Ottawa in 1978.

A young man [Chris Smart] from the World University Service of Canada [WUSC] marched into my office and demanded to know why we weren't taking refugee students. I said, "Nobody has ever asked up to this point. Why do you think?" I said, "What do you have in mind?" WUSC was encountering all sorts of African refugees in Africa and was wondering whether there might be some possibility of bringing some of them to Canada to continue their education, and perhaps, stay in Canada or not.

I said, "This is your lucky day. We just finished designing a sponsorship system, so let's think about how it would have to be modified in order to meet the particular needs of the African refugees." I said, "One thing I insist on right from the start. We will consider these to be refugees who are being resettled. If they choose, at the end of their education, to go back to Africa, that is their business, and God bless them. But I don't want to be stuck with decisions four years down the road about whether they can stay or not. So, if you're not

⁴⁴² Molloy and Madokoro "Effecting Change," 58.

⁴⁴³ Molloy, Interview (Ottawa, July 26, 2018).

prepared to have them come and stay, then you go take your business somewhere." I think it was two months later we signed the agreement. As far as I know, more than a thousand refugees have come in through that program. It's one of the few things I've ever worked on that actually is still in place. I'm very proud of it.⁴⁴⁴

To his delight, when Molloy was posted to Nairobi eight years later, the WUSC Student Refugee program was still "a big part" of resettlement from Africa.⁴⁴⁵ While the number of WUSC refugees was not large, the program simultaneously allowed for both refugee resettlement and opportunities for tertiary education to successful applicants who had been identified and sponsored by WUSC.⁴⁴⁶

This WUSC Student Refugee program's genesis reveals Molloy's skill as a consummate negotiator, one who exercised his position in refugee policy to work collaboratively with Chris Smart to conceptualize and create a unique and successful private sponsorship stream.⁴⁴⁷ Not only was Molloy willing to meet and listen to Smart, he proactively utilized his intimate knowledge of the possibilities provided by private sponsorship legal provisions with an understanding of how to create a program that would not create future problems in the future. Molloy remembers that, for him, it was important to get to the refugees on time, making sure "that they had what they needed and making sure the U.N. did all the things that they needed to do and getting

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid. In chapter four, Mullin discuss his recollections about interviewing and selecting refugee applicants for the WUSC program during his posting in Nairobi between 1980 and 1983.

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁶ World University Service Canada, Student Refugee Program, accessed October 23, 2018, <https://srp.wusc.ca/about/>

"The Student Refugee Program (SRP) is the only one of its kind to combine resettlement with opportunities for higher education. Launched in 1978 with the placement of one student at Carleton University, the program has since grown to support over 130 students per year through active partnerships with over 80 campuses."

Kurt Jensen, "World University Service of Canada's Student Refugee Program", *Canadian Immigration Historical Society, Bulletin 83* (December 2017): 18-19, accessed October, 23, 2018, <http://cihs-shic.ca/bulletin-83-december-2017/> discusses Molloy and Chris Smart's collaboration to establish the WUSC Student Refugee Program.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid.

them on the damn planes before the school year started...” All in all, the WUSC Student Refugee program was a “very gratifying business.”

As outlined in chapter two, the UNHCR was a vital partner of the Government of Canada in refugee selection. In 1981, after a quota of two hundred refugees had been established for African refugees selected through Nairobi, Molloy remembers that the government tried to spread the number “somewhat equitably between the UNHCR operations in Somalia, Kenya, Uganda, and Zambia and Tanzania.”⁴⁴⁸ One of the problems that officers encountered in meeting their targets was that they “would go someplace and interview people and tell the UNHCR which ones had been interviewed, and then the UNHCR would forget about it.” Molloy remembers that he “did a lot of work devising tools that when the officer left the country, the UNHCR had kind of a memorandum from us [Canada] with a set format,” indicating that an applicant was “going to be accepted by Canada,” and that provided family information and composition (the name of the principal applicant and spouse and dependents). The document also listed the things that the Canadian government needed from the UNHCR before the refugees were transported to Canada, including a request for a medical examination or travel documents. After that, Molloy coordinated and conducted a training session with the regional UNHCR representatives and officials from resettlement partners such as the United States and Australia. He remembers that it was only after this that “the system began to actually produce.” By “produce,” Molloy was referring to the various stages in the process (from

⁴⁴⁸ Molloy, Interview (Ottawa, June 27, 2018)

identification, interview and selection of refugee applicants) that allowed the government to meet its Annual Immigration levels and visa office targets or quotas.

Getting internal and external partners to work together seamlessly to facilitate resettlement came with some challenges. As already shown, Molloy possessed enough versatility, experience and gravitas to negotiate with the various partners. For instance, he shared a memory of how, while in Nairobi, these negotiation skills and relationships had helped birth the “Women at Risk” program after the UNHCR had identified Ethiopian women living in a refugee camp on the outskirts of Mogadishu, Somalia.⁴⁴⁹

[Molloy:] We then heard of a second camp. I think it was called Shalambood.

[Jo:] They were in Shalambood.

[Molloy:] They might have been. They might not have been. Anyways, I hadn't done any work in Somalia, so Susan [Burrows] and I and our doctor went off to Somalia for a week. Part of that experience was when the UNHCR took us out this long, winding, bumpy road into the country to this camp. It was in the middle of nowhere on the ruins of an Italian farm. There was a collapsed farmhouse on the property. I do mean collapsed. There probably were something between 100 and 120 boys and 7 or 8 women. Some young men and women who had been there, again, for years and years and years. The boys were living in huts that they'd made from sorghum stalks, and dirt raised up this much and then these stalks, just like a little igloo. No canvas, no nothing. Just this stuff. There's a rainy season in Somalia. I just can't imagine what their lives were like. The women, most of whom I would describe as young women, probably in their late 20s, but there was one lady who was considerably older. They were living in this collapsed building where there were places where there were no floors. They were literally just sort of living under a chunk of the roof. Again, they'd been there forever.⁴⁵⁰

⁴⁴⁹ The “Women at Risk” (AWR) program, that arose from this case, allowed the UNHCR to identify a quota of Convention refugee class women who “d[id] not have the normal protection of a family unit” and “f[ound] themselves in precarious situations where local authorities [could not] ensure their safety”: Guide to the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program, accessed October 23, 2018, <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/guide-private-sponsorship-refugees-program/section-3.html>

⁴⁵⁰ Molloy, Interview (Ottawa, June 27, 2018)

Molloy lowered his voice, and his face became sombre as he described the circumstances and living conditions of the people in that camp. The clarity and level of detail in his recollection of this particular field trip (one of many he had done) was striking, mainly because the events took place more than thirty years ago. It was apparent that the experience had a lasting and marked impact on Molloy. He explained how, after seeing the Ethiopian refugees at Shalambood camp, his office had reached out to Departmental colleagues back home in Canada. There was “a particularly good crew in the Ministry of Employment and Immigration’s Settlement Bureau in Toronto that was headed up by two people who died very young.” These two, Kerry Reade and “his sidekick Elizabeth Gryte,” had sharpened their skills in the Indochinese resettlement movement, and Molloy remembered them as “the most inventive, creative, and credible in the community of civil servants one could imagine.” After the Nairobi visa office had sent off a description of the refugees and the kind of specialized assistance they might need, the Ontario regional office responded within a few days. They had “contacted sponsors all over the bloody place” and set up all the settlement needs for the refugees.

Again, we went back to the Ontario region, we talked to the UNHCR, and they said, “What you urgently need is to get the women out of here.” Now I don’t know how the guys felt about it. I’ve often wondered whether it was the right thing to do or not, but we said, “Okay, we will. This place is going to be our priority, and we can’t take everybody, but we’ll take as many as we can, given our target, but we’ll take the women first.”

Again, we sent a message off to Elizabeth Gryte, G-r-y-t-e, in Toronto. In 48 hours, she had found sponsorship. There had been a meeting, emergency meeting. There had been an agreement that these women probably needed high-quality psychological support and that they could only get in Toronto. Sponsoring groups all over southern Ontario threw the money in to support them. They came back. We have found, what was it? I guess they were Ethiopians. Yes, the group were Ethiopians. They had found a psychiatrist who

spoke, but it was an Ethiopian language. I forgot the language in Ethiopia. They had found a nurse who was Ethiopian. They had found and put together this astonishing package. We were able to extricate the women very quickly, like within a matter of a couple months or two, and then over time, we ground away at the male population there. But we were running into those things all the time.

The above story illustrates that refugee selection for resettlement was often a collaborative effort between both the officers operating abroad and those in Canada to ensure that the settlement needs of refugees were met. In turn, it also underlines the significance of the “ability to establish” assessment, which officers needed to make in addition to determining “eligibility” under the Convention class. The next section will pay close attention to moments, procedures and legal provisions to which Molloy was a key agent. This will simultaneously address the ways in which he acted as a narrator, navigator and a negotiator, and also highlight how he exercised agency while doing so.

Molloy as Narrator, Navigator and Negotiator

Molloy as an enabler of implementation

As discussed in chapter two, Betts and Orchard’s consideration of the relationship between structure and agency “in explaining variations” and gaps in the implementation of legal and policies of a state is useful in conceptualizing Molloy’s role in the implementation of Canadian refugee protection policy.⁴⁵¹ Within refugee protection, both material and ideational structures matter and are contingent on the local context of implementation. In this vein, it matters that in his professional

⁴⁵¹ Betts and Orchard, *Norm Implementation*, 272-275

trajectory, Molloy traversed and navigated the entire continuum of Canadian refugee protection policy and implementation, and all these afforded him an understanding of the material and ideational structures that influenced the implementation of Canadian and international resettlement policies. This understanding was already wide and valuable when, between 1986 and 1989, Molloy was overseeing the immigration and refugee program at the Nairobi visa office, as well as engaging in refugee selection interviews. His ability to influence policy through relationships with stakeholders, and to collaborate in establishing programs such as the WUSC Student Refugee program in 1979 is a testament to the role of individual personality and agency in implementation. In these ways, Molloy can be characterized as enabling implementation.⁴⁵²

Convention Refugee in Need of Resettlement Class

When the first quota of two hundred refugees was established for African resettlement in 1981, refugee applicants were processed under the Convention Refugee in Need of Resettlement class.⁴⁵³ Unlike the Indochinese Designated class, which waived eligibility assessments for applicants under humanitarian considerations, African applicants were assessed on whether they met any of the five grounds required to be conferred with refugee status under the Convention definition. The distinction between the Indochinese Designated class and the Convention Refugee in need of Resettlement class applied to African refugee applicants in Nairobi had a direct bearing on the length and complexity of the refugee selection interviews

⁴⁵² Ibid.

⁴⁵³ Legal provisions are outlined in chapter two.

conducted by officers in Central and East Africa. In the next two chapters, both Scott Mullin and Susan Burrows describe the impact of this distinction in the process of refugee selection. Convention class refugee selection interviews for African refugee applicants were more complex, longer, and subject to higher refusal rates because of stringent requirements to meet eligibility, admissibility (medical, criminal and security checks) and the “ability to establish” provisions.

As established in the previous chapter, the refugee provisions of the 1976 *Immigration Act* were written in concert with numerous actors, interests and considerations. Therefore, applying the Convention class requirement to African refugee applicants was not an arbitrary imposition by officers such as Molloy. Additionally, the scope of resettlement out of Central and East Africa was informed by some factors beyond Canadian interests and laws. As discussed in chapter two, the Organization of African Unity (OAU)’s refugee protection policies, as well as the state-formation, geopolitical and economic processes that were unfolding on the African continent from the 1970s onwards, had an impact on the African Refugee program. As Milner has shown, the economic and political context within African countries and regions where refugees have sought asylum impacts on their refugee protection policies and, in turn, the role of third-country resettlement.⁴⁵⁴

For example, during our interviews, Molloy noted that the OAU had passed a resolution “in the early days of the OAU saying that Africa had *lost enough people*” through slavery and colonization and that “in future, African refugees would be dealt

⁴⁵⁴ See Milner, *Politics of Asylum* for a discussion of African post-independent state formation processes’ impact on refugee protection policies of refugee host states.

with in Africa.”⁴⁵⁵ Molloy remarked, with a cynical tone, that this regional policy likely “suited the Europeans” well and, as such, became “UNHCR policy for many years.”⁴⁵⁶ Molloy did not indicate what his thoughts were about the policy at the time and whether he had agreed or disagreed with it. This policy lasted until the early 1980s when “African refugees began to make their way to Europe, and the UN and the European countries [did not] want to deal with them.” After that, according to Molloy, Canada and other Western countries were “called in to resettle some of these people.”⁴⁵⁷ The Government of Canada, in collaboration with resettlement partners such as the United States and the UNHCR, determined the refugee situations and the number of people that could be addressed through resettlement.⁴⁵⁸ The Canadian government’s position was informed by its priorities and interests as articulated in the criteria approved by the Cabinet in 1978.⁴⁵⁹ Additionally, one other criterion was that the situation had to be of “serious concern to a segment of the Canadian community that is interested in Canada’s international humanitarian role or in the well-being of a particular group abroad.”⁴⁶⁰

⁴⁵⁵ Molloy, Interview (Ottawa, July 26, 2018)

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁸ Molloy and Madokoro, “Effecting Change,” 59.

The Government of Canada Cabinet approved criteria for “evaluating the appropriateness of resettlement in emerging refugee situations” in December, 1978. The first criterion was: “The situation has been examined by the Government of Canada, the UNHCR and the World Community” and they agree that “a. there is a high level of need and b. resettlement in countries such as Canada is feasible and desirable in terms of hastening a complete solution and from the point of view of the individual wellbeing of refugees.” The second criterion was whether “Canada, for geographical or historical reasons” could be considered “as having responsibilities as the first line country of resettlement”. Lastly, it was deemed that the “situation is of serious concern to a segment of the Canadian community that is interested in Canada’s international humanitarian role or in the well-being of a particular group abroad.”

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid.

In his account of the OAU policy on refugees and in turn, Western governments' position on this issue, Molloy, the narrator, is speaking with some measure of candour about the latter's self-interested approach to African refugees. This level of candid observation would likely not have been made by Molloy during the early 1980s or in real-time. The passage of time, the now established nature of the African Refugee program, and his own retirement allowed for a more permissive context and environment to comment on the issue than when he was in the field of operations. The next section examines Molloy's recollections about his experiences, especially with implementing some of the refugee provisions that he crafted through the 1978 Immigration Act.

Refugee Selection Operational Realities

When interviewing refugee applicants, officers like Molloy were guided by the legal provisions and structures summarized above and outlined more substantively in the previous chapter. However, they also exercised individual discretion and subjective judgement in hearing refugee applicant stories and making selection decisions. The degree of individual discretion allowed was defined and constrained by the Convention class eligibility requirements. Also, refugee applicants were required to meet statutory admissibility requirements by passing their medical examination, criminal and security checks.

Based on the statutory requirements of the Immigration Act, Canadian visa offices were assigned approved or designated medical practitioners who conducted medical examinations and screened for conditions that could pose a danger to public

health and public safety.⁴⁶¹ The Nairobi visa office was no exception. In addition, the office also had Canadian security personnel who conducted relevant research and checks to ascertain whether an applicant or their family members, had been convicted of serious criminality, human rights violations, or was a possible security threat to Canada.⁴⁶² When refugee selection interviews were conducted away from the Nairobi visa office— at UNHCR facilities in African countries hosting refugees, or in refugee camps in remote areas— the interview team usually was comprised of a designated medical practitioner, a member of government security personnel, a UNHCR officer, and the interviewing immigration officer.

For refugee applicants who were referred to Canada by the UNHCR, refugee selection arrangements and preparations were usually made months or weeks in advance to ensure that all necessary documents, information and equipment were assembled. Refugee applicants who were being considered for resettlement would receive advance notice about the date and time for the interview so that they could present themselves for assessment and examination. Molloy remembered that during his time, by the time most refugee applicants were interviewed, criminality and security checks would have already been conducted. However, owing to the complexity of medical examinations, these were usually conducted after an officer

⁴⁶¹ During this time, inadmissible medical conditions included active tuberculosis (TB), HIV-AIDS and syphilis. Molloy stated that selected applicants who had TB received treatment until it became inactive and they were able to board an airplane to Canada.

⁴⁶² In these years, security checks were conducted through the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS). In 2003, the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) was created to enforce the Canadian borders and to take on some of the functions hitherto performed by the RCMP and CSIS.

had determined whether the refugee applicant had met eligibility, “ability to establish,” criminal and security checks.

Individual Agency Constrained by Structures

When Molloy was narrating his experiences about the political context of operating in East Africa during the 1980s, he remembered encountering a refugee case at Nairobi, where the UNHCR referred for resettlement four young black South African members of the Pan African Congress (PAC).⁴⁶³ Tanzania’s government had incarcerated these refugee applicants in jail in Dar es Salaam for murder. Even though Molloy was sympathetic to the plight of the young men, he was required to follow legal rules. Again, for Molloy, context, chronology and details characterized how he told the story of how he came to interview the PAC group.

In the African program at that time, we were seeing a lot of things that were memorable, difficult, sometimes tragic, but usually, it was the tragedy first. It haunts me to this day. I was in Tanzania, and the UN rep there said, “Look, we’ve got four boys who were lured out of South Africa by the Pan-African Congress [PAC] on the promise that they were going to get scholarships in Europe. When they got to Dar, they were enlisted in the Pan-African Congress’ army of liberation and sent to a military camp on the edges of Dar’s land. The conditions, as you can imagine, were terribly grim. Discipline was quite ferocious. These kids were all terribly distraught at the thought that they’d been cheated. They were being exploited by these people.

At some stage, four of them decided that they would go and confront the commander who was living very comfortably in a nice house in Dar. I guess they went over the fence one night and made their way into Dar’s land, found his house, pounded on the door to demand they be released. In the course of the encounter, he pulled a gun, not realizing that he’d just trained soldiers. When

⁴⁶³ The PAC was formed on April 6, 1959, in the Johannesburg township of Soweto to address the injustices and inequality of the apartheid regime. The PAC had a central role in calling for the “anti-pass” campaign and protests that culminated in the Sharpeville massacre of 1960, in which police opened fire on protesters and killed 69 people while injuring many others. This led to the banning of the PAC and the mass arrest of members. Many members went into exile in independent African countries and other countries that were sympathetic to the struggle against apartheid. The PAC’s military wing was called the Azanian Peoples Liberation Army (APLA).

everything was over, they were up standing, and he was dead on the floor. Of course, they were arrested by the Tanzanians and tried for murder. The Tanzanians had to do what they had to do, but from what the UNHCR told me, they were very unhappy to take these boys and put them in jail. They understood as well as anybody.

I was asked [if I] would go in? I said, "Look, there's ferocious prohibitions on taking people that have committed serious crimes and murder is right up at the top." I went, and I talked to them for a couple of hours, and I can still see their faces. Of course, there was nothing our system would allow us to do. That was one of the cases that really, really bothered me. I'd recognize them on the street if I saw them today. Their faces were burned in my memory. I just felt so damn helpless. I mean, that their actions had resulted in the death of their commander was absolutely indisputable. It wasn't that they didn't get a fair trial. They got a fair trial. But the circumstances that brought them into that Liberation Army were dreadful, thoroughly reprehensible the deceit that was used to recruit them as it were.

Molloy's account of this tale is interesting in that it illustrates and, to some extent, justifies the limits of his agency and power. The manner in which he tells this story seems to show that he too is preoccupied with the extent of his agency, but still recognizes the statutory requirements that prescribe who can and cannot be admitted to Canada. Therefore, notwithstanding his sympathy for the young men and the circumstances of their conviction and incarceration for having killed their commander, the statutory provisions of the *1976 Immigration Act* on criminality and security precluded their admissibility in Canada. The men's conviction for murder automatically made them ineligible for refugee protection and resettlement under the Convention class. Due to their murder convictions, these applicants were inadmissible to Canada for serious criminality, and the statutory requirements of the *1976 Immigration Act* prescribed Molloy to refuse their applications and find them ineligible for resettlement.

As outlined in the previous chapter, from the 1960s through to the 1990s, state-formation processes in Central, East and Southern Africa involved anti-colonial liberation movements and processes of decolonization. Even had the four PAC members not murdered anyone, under a strict reading of the statutory requirements on security, their participation in a military movement that was fighting the South African apartheid regime under the aegis of liberation could conceivably have been interpreted as the subversion of a “legitimately elected government,” hence making them ineligible for resettlement.

However, for Molloy, the PAC members’ “liberation” activities were not the primary reason for his decision to refuse their application since he regarded liberation combatants as fighting against the injustices of colonialism. However, despite his personal view on the matter, he had encountered instances where provisions of the Act were unclear as to how to process former “liberation war combatants” who otherwise met eligibility and “ability to establish” requirements. For these cases, Molloy became creative and devised a mechanism for the Nairobi office to determine how to treat liberation combatants. This approach was that, before a former liberation combatant could be considered for eligibility, they must have been out of combat for at least five years, so that they would not be resettled to Canada while they were “fresh out of battle.” Molloy indicated that he helped to develop this local approach in order to ensure that they were, by then, in a state of mind that would allow them to settle in Canada well and not bring ideological leanings and affiliations that could pose a security threat to Canada. When he explains this issue, Molloy is presenting his own understanding of history and specifically, how refugee selection

constituted a form of nation-building by deciding on who could become a future citizen of Canada and what kind of ideologies or political views they could bring.

In the book *Gatekeepers: Reshaping Immigrant Lives in Cold War Canada*, immigration historian Franca Iacovetta argued that Canadian state officials' scrutiny, screening and ultimately, choice of immigrants and refugee selection was underwritten by prevailing professional discourses around citizenship and integration and the historical precedence and context of Canada's place in both pre and post-Second World War geopolitics.⁴⁶⁴ Iacovetta argues that professional discourses around integration and citizenship amongst state and settlement agency organizations revolved around "a shared desire for a healthy body politic -in physical and emotional as well as moral and sexual terms."⁴⁶⁵ Iacovetta describes these individuals as "professional gatekeepers" who included "social workers, mental health specialists, Citizenship officials, and community-based activists" who "were eager to shape just what kind of citizen these men , women and children would be."⁴⁶⁶ While this dissertation does not employ the term "gatekeeper" to describe the role of officers like Molloy in refugee selection, Iacovetta's description about the intent by settlement and citizenship officials to shape a "health body politic" can also be observed in Molloy's sentiments and actions described above, with regard to ensuring that potential citizens were not "fresh out of battle." In this way, Molloy, while likely exhibiting ideas that were widely prevalent within his professional circles, was still

⁴⁶⁴ Franca Iacovetta, *Gatekeepers: Reshaping Immigrant Lives in Cold War Canada*, (Toronto, Between the Lines, 2006)

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid, 49.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid.

exercising individual agency and discretion in how these ideas applied in practical and operational situations of refugee selection.

Alternate perspectives and tales

As already established, this study is interested not only in the “what” of officer’s life stories, but also in “how” officers tell their stories—not only the details that interviewees recall but also what they fail to remember, get wrong, or choose to remain silent about.⁴⁶⁷ Also, as people grow older in age, they go through a mental process of “life review” where they may sort through their experiences, successes and failures, with this resulting in different outcomes, and the return of forgotten memories may “cause depression and despair in some, and candour and serenity in others.”⁴⁶⁸ These are important considerations, especially when reviewing the narrative of someone such as Molloy, who, retired from the public service for a while now, has told his story many times before and is aware of his role as a narrator and historian.

During the final interview with Molloy, I asked him about his views of a documentary film in which he had been interviewed at length and extensively recorded while engaging in refugee selection in Nairobi in 1988. I came upon the film during research, and Susan Burrows had also mentioned it during her testimony.⁴⁶⁹ During my first meeting with Molloy, before our oral history interview, he had generously suggested resources and primary sources that could be useful for this

⁴⁶⁷ Ritchie, *The Oxford Handbook of Oral History*, 11-12.

⁴⁶⁸ Robert Butler, “The Life Review: An interpretation of Reminiscence in the Aged,” in *New Thoughts on Old Age*, ed. Robert Kastenbaum (New York: Springer, 1964), 265-280.

⁴⁶⁹ Burrows is one of the three officers interviewed for this study. Chapter five discusses her life story and the impact of the documentary *Who Gets In* on officers and diplomatic relations, more generally.

study, including government documents and operational guidelines for officers. Considering that this film was potentially a valuable primary source that included video footage of him and fellow officers engaging in refugee selection in Nairobi in the 1980s, it was surprising that Molloy had not suggested it or brought it up during his testimony.

Barry Greenwald, a Canadian documentary filmmaker, made the 1989 documentary *Who Gets In*.⁴⁷⁰ Greenwald was permitted the rare opportunity to observe and record Canadian government officers processing and interviewing actual refugee and economic immigrant applicants at Canadian ports of entry (airports) and missions abroad.⁴⁷¹ This kind of access had never been granted by the Government of Canada to any filmmaker before. Molloy is interviewed and filmed engaging in immigrant and refugee selection interviews. He is introduced by the film's narrator as "the head man," who works with "only two other immigration officers" and "serves a hundred and eighty (170) million people in eighteen (18) countries". Asked by an unseen interviewer to describe his job and what they take into account in selecting immigrants to Canada, Molloy states:

⁴⁷⁰ Prior to *Who Gets In*, Greenwald had worked as a film editor for the National Film Board of Canada and directed numerous documentary films, including the famous satire *Metamorphosis* in 1975, which won the Palme d'Or for best short film at the Festival de Cannes. For more expansive examination and context of the history and politics of film-making at the National Film Board Post-Second World War, see Gary Evans, *In the National Interest: A Chronicle of the National Film Board of Canada from 1949 to 1989* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, Scholarly Publishing Division, 1991)

⁴⁷¹ *Who Gets In*, directed by Barry Greenwald (Montreal: National Film Board of Canada, 1989), (Documentary Film), accessed October 24, 2018, https://www.nfb.ca/film/who_gets_in/. According to the National Film Board's introduction, the documentary "explores the many questions raised by Canada's immigration policy in the face of one of the world's largest immigration movements. Shot in 1988 in Central and East Africa, Canada and Hong Kong, the film reveals first-hand what Canadian immigration officials are looking for in potential new Canadians, and the economic, social and political priorities orienting their choices."

My role is to help select the good people however you wish to define that, for Canada, and my role is also to keep the rascals out to the extent that we can [...] we often say, well, if this person moves in next door to my mom, what is she going to think about it? Because immigration policy is a national policy, but the end results are things that happen in the neighbourhoods of Canada. Immigrants don't go to Canada, they go to Swift Current [in Saskatchewan], and they go to a particular street in Swift Current [...] Do we want that person to be an asset to the neighbourhood or do we not? ⁴⁷²

After watching this documentary (following the first interview with Molloy), I wondered about why he had not mentioned it during the first interview, and also what he now thought about how the film characterized him and fellow officers. When I mentioned the film, Molloy stated that in his opinion, the film had been heavily edited and spliced and that a lot of recorded material, including interviews they had conducted in refugee camps, had been excluded from the final version. While it is not unusual for documentaries to leave material out, it appeared that the film's producers had edited it in a way that advanced a narrative that the original filmmaker had not declared when granted permission to film by the Government of Canada. For officers such as Molloy, who had opened the Nairobi office and allowed filming to show the day-to-day complexities and realities of immigrant and refugee selection on camera, the final documentary film was disappointing.

For Molloy, it appeared as though the final producers of the documentary had edited it in a way that sought to portray Canadian officers, including himself, as bigoted and cold-hearted bureaucrats who were interested only in selecting wealthy or educated applicants for admission to Canada. ⁴⁷³ Such a portrayal seemed to

⁴⁷² Ibid. Molloy (speaking from 7:34 to 15:27 minutes).

⁴⁷³ Molloy told me in our interview that, to his understanding, the filmmaker had "blown his budget" during filming and production was taken over by someone else. The voice-over narration was also a feature that came from the new producers.

simultaneously feed into and form a long-standing perception and narrative advanced by some refugee advocates and organizations that the resettlement program was not equitable, especially as pertains to African refugees.⁴⁷⁴ Molloy indicated that this perspective did not take into account structural factors. For instance, he had noted, before our discussion about the documentary, that until the late 1980s, the OAU had discouraged third-country resettlement of Africans owing to concerns about depopulation and a desire to find continental solutions for refugees.⁴⁷⁵ Molloy's seeming reluctance to bring up the documentary in light of how the film characterized him and other officers was understandable for an individual who recognizes the impact of stories. Through the CIHS and other scholarship, Molloy has always sought to offer a narrative representation of government officers that highlights the complex web of challenges and triumphs that policymakers and bureaucrats encounter while developing and implementing refugee policy.⁴⁷⁶

Reflecting on some of the decision-making dilemmas that he faced concerning refugee applicants who had been former combatants (liberation and otherwise),

⁴⁷⁴ A few years prior to the Government of Canada's announcement that it would resettle 25,000 Syrians in November, 2015, the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) issued a written statement that echoed a long-held perception by some refugee advocates, private sponsors and African diaspora communities that African refugees were unfairly treated and neglected within Canada's resettlement program: Canadian Council for Refugees, *Statement on responding to African refugees*, June 2011, accessed: November 4, 2018,

<http://ccrweb.ca/sites/ccrweb.ca/files/nairobistatement.pdf>

⁴⁷⁵ As outlined in chapter two, from the 1960s through the 1970s, this was partially informed in part by Pan-African ideals of "brotherhood", whereby host nations offered protection and local integration to fellow Africans. In addition, many were "liberation refugees" since they were displaced through wars of liberation, so there was a belief that they would eventually return to their home countries once they were liberated. For example, many Zimbabwean (then Rhodesian) refugees who had fled to Mozambique and Zambia border camps during the war of liberation between 1966 and 1979 eventually returned at independence in 1980.

⁴⁷⁶ In chapter five, Susan Burrows offers a fuller and more nuanced discussion regarding the context and impact of the documentary on Canadian officers and diplomatic relations with the government of Kenya.

Molloy revealed that officers often had to be creative, especially when there were no clear and hard guidelines from headquarters. As discussed in chapter two, the 1980s were a period of heightened geopolitical tensions in Central and East Africa due to the Cold War. While officers such as Molloy were implementing refugee protection and exercised their discretion in selecting refugees for resettlement, they were also cognizant of broader political considerations and interests.

We were dealing with, at that stage, we were dealing with people mainly who had been displaced from South Africa, from the Portuguese colonies because of the Wars of Liberation. One of the problems that we had was that we also had kind of a not terribly well-defined policy about combatants. Quite often, we would be confronted with young men, sometimes married, sometimes not, who had been in the Liberation Army and for one reason or another had decided they'd had enough. They got out of wherever that was and ended up in Kenya or Tanzania or someplace like that and Zambia.

The question was when they admitted to having been involved in actual combat. What was the right thing to do? I had a lot of sympathy for them. There's nothing illegal about being involved in a struggle for national liberation. Nothing criminal about it, although people who are being booted out will call it terrorism. I had to sort of decide on kind of a rule of thumb, and so I just, as a matter of course, said, they have to have been out of battle for five years. I don't want people who are still recovering from combat mode. I guess it worked. Thought about it a lot since then. Again, I remember some of these young men who, again, had been sent into battle against, say, the Portuguese knowing that the high-class weapons were being kept by the party, and they were using World War I and World War II castoffs against the Portuguese, for example, who are serious people to fight.

That was another kind of theme that we continually encountered there. We were back and forth a great deal with headquarters about what to do about combatants, and the answer was, people were skittish. You never got really hard directions, so you do what seems to be sensible. But I still remember one of the fellows very, very well, an extremely likable guy, but a serious man, a serious young man who now had a wife and kids, just really wanted to go somewhere where he and his family and his kids had a chance.⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷⁷ Molloy, Interview (Ottawa, June 27, 2018)

Molloy demonstrated a reflexive and creative approach that showed an awareness of how, despite his sympathies for former liberation combatants, their actions and allegiances could be interpreted differently: either as “liberators” by Africans oppressed under colonialism and those sympathetic to their cause or as “terrorists” by others, especially by a “skittish” headquarters in Ottawa. This dilemma allowed for creativity where, in the absence of “hard directions” from headquarters, he had decided to do what seemed “sensible” at the time. Molloy’s creative approach with combatants illustrates his initiative, and reveals how, in these formative early years of the Africa Refugee Program, officers had room and capacity to create policy “on the go.”

Inadmissibility and “Liberation” militants

The decision made by an officer was not final and could be revoked if the government discovered new information or new developments unfolded. An example from the documentary film exemplified this when Molloy had a selection interview with a married couple who were former members of the liberation movement SWAPO, the South-West African People's Organization, in Namibia.⁴⁷⁸ Their story is told mostly through the voice of the documentary’s narrator. Neither of them had “seen action in ten years, and they just [wanted] to get on with their lives.” SWAPO had arranged scholarships for their education. The wife had a degree in Commerce, while the husband had a Master’s in Business Administration. They eventually became disillusioned with the movement, and now SWAPO was “after them.” Molloy did not

⁴⁷⁸ Greenwald, *Who Gets In?* (20:05 to 21:40 minutes). The narrator who told their story was Ann Medina, an American-Canadian journalist and documentary producer. Molloy told me that after Barry Greenwald had received permission from the Ministry of Manpower and Immigration and shot the documentary, he had gone over his budget and ran out of funds to produce the documentary himself.

see any issues with their coming to Canada and thought they would “make excellent immigrants.” With a broad smile and handshakes, Molloy informed them that their application was accepted and that they would be getting resettled in Canada and would be “going to a place called Kitchener, in Ontario.”

However, soon after the interview, everything goes wrong when SWAPO assassinates one of their close friends, and the husband goes into hiding. After that, during a routine interview with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), the husband refuses to make any “apologies for having waged war against South Africa,” and CSIS rules him inadmissible to Canada for security reasons. The government rescinded Molloy’s decision and refused the couple’s application for resettlement.⁴⁷⁹

The cases of the PAC and SWAPO applicants above reveal that, while applicants might meet eligibility and “ability to establish” requirements, and officers such as Molloy could exercise their discretion in refusing or accepting their applications, statutory legal requirements to pass criminality and security checks were unavoidable, and iron-clad structures mediated these decisions. There was very little, if any, flexibility when it came to refugee applicants being found inadmissible for serious criminality and security reasons. While an officer might be able to interpret the “ability to establish” provision more expansively, and according to the local context and the specifics of each applicant, statutory requirements were less permissive.

⁴⁷⁹ Under the *Immigration Act*, an applicant’s inadmissibility (in this case the husband) rendered all family members and dependents inadmissible as well.

As the historian Iacovetta has argued with regards to post-Second World War immigration to Canada, these statutory requirements around security checks had a longstanding historical logic and context, especially with regard to “who” was allowed to become a Canadian citizen and in turn, “what” it meant to be Canadian. There was a broader context in which “citizenship as a construct and process [did] not merely confer political and legal status on individuals” but that “it also operate[d] as ideology.”⁴⁸⁰ Therefore, immigrant and refugee selection would have been plausibly informed both by legal prescriptions as well as the logic of “ideology” within which officers and other decision-makers exist and operate. While an analysis of the specific role of security agents, apparatus and screening is beyond the scope of this dissertation, the excerpt below from Iacovetta regarding the role of Canadian security officials in the period following the Second World War, as “gatekeepers” informed by ideological concerns, is apt.

Like the United States, Canada also fought a war on the domestic and immigration front. Always staunch Cold Warriors, the RCMP continued to play a major role in the political screening of immigrant applicants and to push for the rejection of anyone thought to have left-wing views, tarring all of them with the communist brush. They also interrogated newcomers as well as gatekeepers suspected of breaking the country’s immigration laws. More broadly, the postwar reception and citizenship campaigns took shape within a domestic Cold War context, in which the national security state was on high alert and poised to do battle against the variously defined threats to the nation’s political as well as social and moral order[...] Certainly, even without a Cold War, mass immigration and a shift from war to peacetime would have spawned reception and Canadianization programs, and debates over the rights and duties of democracy and citizenship; and the RCMP would have continued its hunt for communists. After all, ever since the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, RCMP security intelligence forces had consistently pursued a hard-line policy against all suspected communists and sympathizers.⁴⁸¹

⁴⁸⁰ Iacovetta, *Gatekeepers*, 58.

⁴⁸¹ *Ibid*, 18.

The theme of security and the level of scrutiny that Canadian officials afforded this issue, is also exemplified in an anecdote that Molloy shared during my interviews with him. Molloy remembered interviewing a refugee applicant who stated that he had worked for “internal security.”

When somebody says, "I'm with security," some bells go off. I had a long, long talk with him about what was his job? His job was to ferret out the traitors in the group, this group of 60 young men and ferret out the traitors. Were there traitors? Yes, there were. How did you determine that? In some cases, it sounds like he wasn't using the recognized Geneva Convention route. What happened to them once you determined they were traitors? He'd rather not say. I drew what I thought was the appropriate conclusion as to what this guy had been up to and that he probably, at the very least, beat people up and may well have caused some people to be killed. I thought, "In a group of 60 freedom fighters, how many traitors do you have?"

I turned him down, and an Amnesty International representative came to see me a few weeks later. How dare you turn him down! I said, "None of your business to tell you the truth...we don't take people where we have reason to believe they [have committed] atrocities." You're not the judge of that. "Yes, I am." We will be reporting you to your headquarters. I said, "You just go ahead. Good luck to you!"

That was a very unusual case. We didn't tend to normally see that kind of thing. Normally, people who do that sort of thing are smart enough not to mention it. But it was based on my experience as an interviewer, and by that time, I'd been down there, done a lot of refugee interviews. I just felt very confident in my assessment that this guy had been finding traitors to justify his existence with dire consequences for the traitors.

The UNHCR had referred for resettlement to the Government of Canada, both of the cases from the documentary. The case above also matters because, for officers such as Molloy, a UNHCR referral form usually came with demographic information and a written narrative for the reasons of flight, and, in turn, why they might be good candidates for resettlement. The officer did not have to create this profile from scratch, except in those instances when the UNHCR did not provide information for field interviews in camps or away from the visa office. The benefit of having all this

information as well as the UNHCR pre-selection was that selection interviews were shorter, less complicated, and there were few refusals.⁴⁸² However, as the case above shows, a UNHCR referral and the support of human rights NGOs such as Amnesty International, was not a guarantee of admission, especially where an officer had reason to believe that an applicant was inadmissible for security reasons.

Misrepresentation—When Refugee Applicants lie?

During our interviews, Molloy recalled a story where refugee applicants from Rwanda who had been referred by the UNCHR told false stories during the selection interviews that he conducted. For him, intuition, common sense, experience and flexibility played an essential role in detecting what appeared to be a recycled “mill story.” It appeared that the motive was to tell a heart-wrenching story that had worked well for someone else. After discovering the fictions, Molloy contacted the UNHCR and afforded all the applicants a second chance to tell their real stories.

My job was to manage the operation, but I only had two officers, and we had 18 countries, so I would always take my fair share of the trip [...] About once every three or four months, I would say, "Next week's refugees I'll deal with," so I could keep my finger on the pulse. I had to deal with the UNHCR resettlement people, so I didn't want to be told what was happening. I wanted to see it for myself. I'll never forget this case. A very personable young man comes in, and he tells me his story. I don't know whether it was Hutu or he was Tutsi.

I just don't recall, but he was one of the two, and his story was that they were in school in the village, and soldiers or armed people from the other side arrived at the school. He managed to get out the window, ran through the village and ran through the countryside and ran and travelled until he got to Lake Victoria, and he stole a pirogue, and he paddled his way across till he got to [the other side], which is a pretty long paddle, I must say because first of all, they're not called the other Great Lakes for nothing!

You had to go from; I don't know whether it was Rwanda. I guess it must have been Rwanda. Then you had to go past Uganda to get to Kenya. Anyways, this

⁴⁸² The difference between refugee selection interviews for UNHCR versus private sponsored refugee applicants will be discussed in chapter five.

was his story. He'd been there for, I don't know, about a year when the UNHCR decided to [refer him to Canada for resettlement]...I thought, "Okay, this is a plausible story, but let's go down a layer," so I took out a piece of paper and gave him a pen and said, "Why don't you show me a plan of the classroom?" He draws this rectangle. I said, "Was it square? Was it a rectangle?" It was a rectangle. "Where did the teacher sit?" He showed me where the teacher sits. "Where did the students sit? What did they sit on? Were they desks? Were they tables?" He tells me all that. "Where was the door? Where were the windows?"

Anyways, he puts all these things in, so I said, "Where did the soldiers come in?" They came through here. "Where did you get out?" I went out there. I asked a few more questions about the village. Where was the water supply, and where did the teacher live, and where did the head man live? He laid it all out. It looked pretty good to me, so I said, "Fine, off you go." The next day, another one comes in. Before I started to talk, he asked for a piece of paper.

On the third day, two of them arrived with pieces of paper and the diagrams already. Anyways, as I said, the final day, these people all arrived with a map of the classroom and the story all carefully rehearsed. Now there I had a great advantage because it was clear to me that the first story may well have been original, but the other ones were clearly not, and there had been conversations. I can understand people wanting to put their absolute best foot forward, but there's a line there somewhere between putting your best foot forward and telling the best story you can and getting into misrepresentation.

Because they were in Kenya, I took the whole thing over to the UNHCR rep, who's a very good fellow and a good friend. I said, "You need to call everybody from Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday and tell them that Mr. Molloy may have been born stupid, but he wasn't born yesterday. They get one more chance to come in and tell me the real story. If they don't come in and tell me the real story, the answer is no." Over the next couple of weeks, I got five different stories. The word went out, please don't copy stories.

The anecdote above reveals an efficient social network through which information about the "good story" spread among the various applicants. The refugee applicants in Molloy's anecdote had replicated a single story to the minutest detail. However, this story also reveals how refugee applicants create stories within the webs of existing social relationships. In the case, even though every one of the other applicants had their individual and compelling stories, the collective perception that there was a good story that would get one accepted for resettlement to Canada.

Due to Molloy's choice to be compassionate and flexible, despite their clear misrepresentation, all the refugee applicants were permitted a "second chance" to tell their real stories. Molloy told me that based on their revised stories, they were all eventually accepted for resettlement in Canada. It is worth remembering that at this time, the Nairobi visa office had only two officers processing resettlement applications with responsibility for serving eighteen African countries. In addition to refugee selection targets, the officers were also expected to meet targets in different immigration categories, including visitor visas, skilled worker, economic and family class admissions. Nairobi was an intensely busy office, and this was the context within which Molloy decided to allow new selection interviews for refugee applicants who had falsified their stories in the first instance. To do this, Molloy had to negotiate with the UNHCR to facilitate new selection interviews. Molloy could have refused their applications for misrepresentation, but he exercised his intuition, compassion and agency. This anecdote reveals one way that officer discretion (by Molloy) created new opportunities for revised storytelling by refugee applicants and, in turn, the chance to be resettled to Canada, where the initial story would have been a misrepresentation or deemed not to be credible.

"Human touch."

The importance of judgement, intuition and the "human touch" is a recurring theme in Molloy's life story. There had been "a young couple" that he had interviewed in Mogadishu who had hitchhiked to the selection interview and "were not in good shape." It seemed to him that "they were a very loving couple."

You could feel it. But I have always believed that she paid a very heavy price to get there [...] when you get to interviewing people, you encounter layers. There

was a layer of fatigue, and there was a layer of, "Are we ever glad to be here." Then there was something deeper that my senses told me had nothing to do with fatigue. It had to do with some horror inflicted on them along the way.

When concluding our final interview, I asked Molloy what he would like to have resonated most from his story. While the introductory paragraph to this chapter contains the full excerpt of Molloy's response, the importance of "people" and the "human touch" is evident in this statement: "Throughout my career, with the bosses I had, the colleagues I had, the things I experienced, the difference was made by human judgment and human emotion, the feelings you get about things." These days, Molloy is concerned that immigrant and refugee selection may be moving "into a situation where all humanity will be gone," especially with the advent of "algorithms" and artificial intelligence in decision-making.

Throughout his career, "human judgement" and the "human touch" informed Molloy's decision-making and his relationships and negotiations with colleagues and stakeholders while influencing and implementing the Canadian resettlement policy. In turn, the same traits were invaluable when negotiating with policymakers, other resettlement country representatives, NGOs, faith-based groups and ordinary people. In addition to his past and present role as a narrator (with regards to his knowledge and experience in refugee policy and practice), the human factor played a role as Molloy navigated between policy and operations, different geographic contexts (local, domestic and global), various interests and different historical periods. Molloy's emphasis on the importance of "people" was central to how he narrated his experiences to policymakers, partners, stakeholders and, finally, to me.

This chapter has focused on Molloy's life story and explored and explained the various ways through which he shaped material structures and exercised agency as a narrator, navigator and negotiator within those same structures. After the government of Canada's ratification of the 1951 Convention in 1969, the 1970s were a time of flux and possibility in terms of refugee policy development and practice, in which officers like Molloy were able to innovate and create new programs and categories which would, in turn, shape the conditions of operation for subsequent officers. Therefore, the large degree of autonomy that officers like Molloy possessed in the 1970s, in both policy and refugee selection (including oversight over creating refugee provisions to implement the *1976 Immigration Act* for instance), was also a product of timing. In the 1980s, the structures of Canadian resettlement had become more established. This chapter, with its consideration of Molloy's role in helping to establish Canada's material infrastructure, sets the chronological back-drop for the next two chapters concerning Mullin and Burrows, both of which allow for a consideration of the impact of material, ideational and local structures in refugee selection and individual officer agency.

Chapter Four: Scott Mullin's Life Story

I was the youngest Foreign Service officer they'd ever hired, and I started my first posting in Hong Kong. I was barely 21. I arrived, and as I arrived, the Vietnamese boat people exodus and—*we'll get to Africa in a second, but this is context*. The boat people exodus began in earnest, and all of a sudden, Flora MacDonald, who was a foreign minister at the time when Clark was prime minister, decided we would take a large number of people. That was largely provoked by the arrival of a ship called the Hai Hong off the coast of Malaysia. Hai Hong, H-a-i-H-o-n-g. It was sort of the classic photo op. This listing freighter with hundreds and hundreds of people. Out of 3,000, maybe a hundred people were taken on.⁴⁸³

Ottawa agreed to take some people, and so we had a very small immigration office in Singapore at the high commission, so I was sent down to help. We sat on the deck of the Malaysian coast guard vessel beside this boat, which is sort of my exposure to this. I don't know. We took 60 people or something who had direct relatives in Canada. Then I was told to stay there. I had only been in Hong Kong at that point for, I don't know, three or four months, but I had not really settled, so it was fine. I don't even think I unpacked anything at that point. Then I spent a month in the refugee camps on the east coast of Malaysia, which is where they were arriving.

Now, if you look at Southeast Asia, *geography is always an important context* here. South Vietnamese tended to land on the coast of Malaysia/Thailand, and to some degree, the Philippines because that's the way the currents went. But there were lots of ethnic Chinese amongst that group. Fast-forward six months, China and Vietnam were starting to have sabre-rattling. It's absurd to think that the size of Vietnam and the size of China.

Many ethnic Chinese left North Vietnam, probably most *legitimate refugees* of them all, actually, because they were fired from jobs and other things. A lot of those people ended up going to, again, because of the way that the currents go, ended up Hong Kong and some of them ended up in China, and some of them ended up in the northern part of the Philippines. The Malaysians were apoplectic about all these ethnic Chinese because there's always been this Malaysia since its creation, has had this tension between the ethnic Malay

⁴⁸³ See Dara Marcus, *Saving Lives: Canada and the Hai Hong*, *bout de papier*, 28, no. 1 (2013): 24-27, who argues that even though "boat people" had been fleeing Vietnam since the fall of Saigon in 1975, the Hai Hong boat incident garnered attention around the world and transformed Canada's response to the Indochinese refugee movement. By 1975, over 130,000 had left Vietnam with most getting resettled in the United State of America, while Canada agreed to accept anyone with relatives in Canada.

population and the much better organized, much richer, sort of a bit like the Asians in Kenya [...]

They kept them in pretty rocky camps, and many cases left them on islands. Anyway, *I'm telling you all this because what happened then is I sent about 30,000 people to Canada from that process.* There's actually a heritage moment, one of those Heritage Minutes that's modelled after me. It was released. Then Ottawa decided, as we were sort of fumbling around, me and my colleagues on the spot going, "This is kind of ridiculous." We're looking for somebody who has a brother in Canada, which 99.9% of these people don't, so we were taking ridiculously small numbers. I mean, you sat there all day and said, "No," and maybe you said, "Yes," once to somebody who had proof, and we were demanding levels of proof and everything else.

Then there was a *big Geneva conference.* There was a whole groundswell that developed in Canada around the boat people. Ottawa just announced that we would take 50,000 people. Going from sort of 500 to 50,000 was a logistical nightmare, I mean just the practical side of it. I went back to Hong Kong and basically spent my three years in the refugee camps in Hong Kong, which were terribly well organized nice British Colonial.⁴⁸⁴

Scott Mullin's role in the Indochinese operation was reported by journalist Peter Mansbridge as being akin to that of a "One-Man Board of Immigration" during a Canada Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) half-hour special that aired July 1979.⁴⁸⁵ CBC showed the Canadian public at home the living conditions in the Sham Shui Po refugee camp in Hong Kong and explained the process through which he and other officers were selecting the Indochinese "boat people" (to use the contemporary term) for resettlement to Canada. For Mullin, as for Michael Molloy in the previous chapter, the

⁴⁸⁴ Scott Mullin Interview interviewed by Andriata Chirona, Toronto, July 10, 2018. Italics are mine, for emphasis.

⁴⁸⁵ CBC Digital Archive of "The One Man Board of Immigration," (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Video) accessed, October 31, 2018, <https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/1724306516>; and "Boat People: Rocking the World's Conscience," "Boat People: Rocking the World's Conscience," CBD Digital Archives, July 9, 1979, accessed October 31, 2018, <https://www.cbc.ca/archives/entry/sponsoring-refugees-canadians-reach-out> (at 13:23 to 16:20 minutes). It is important to note that Mullin made it clear that even though the CBC special had characterized him this way, he was not the only officer processing Indochinese people, nor had he perceived himself as a one-man entity.

Indochinese refugee movement was an essential context for understanding Canadian resettlement out of the African continent.

The relish and enthusiasm with which Mullin told the story of this period vividly conveyed how his four-year experience of selecting Indochinese “boat people” for resettlement to Canada (from 1979 to 1981) was one of the most memorable periods in his professional trajectory. Also notable is how, in the excerpt above, Mullin used the term “we” when describing the numbers of people selected and resettled from Indochina. In doing so, he seems to be identifying with a collective: the country or government of Canada. However, he uses the prefix of “I” when describing the thousands of people that he “sent” or selected for resettlement to Canada in his individual capacity. As this chapter about Mullin’s story of selecting refugees in Nairobi, Kenya, will show, the Indochinese movement loomed large in Mullin’s recollections. The epigraph also helps the reader to imagine how impressed the very young Canadian Foreign Service officer was by the enormity of the task of participating in what would prove to be one of the most significant humanitarian movements in the history of Canada. To date, the Government of Canada has not matched the size of the operation that resettled the Indochinese people, and Mullin has recently and publicly declared (based on his experience) that it would be logistically and politically possible.⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸⁶ Olivia Ward, “Daunting Logistical Hurdles Ahead for Syrian Refugee Planners,” *The Star*, November 18, 2015, accessed, October 31, 2018, <https://www.thestar.com/news/world/2015/11/18/daunting-logistical-hurdles-ahead-for-syrian-refugee-planners.html>

When the Syrian Resettlement policy was announced by the government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in November, 2015 with a goal to resettle 25,000 Syrian refugees before the end of 2015, Scott Mullin was quoted by the *Toronto Star*, commenting on the logistical and operational realities and challenges that might be involved with the government’s admission target: “I sense that the mood in

Structured in almost the same way as the previous chapter, the following examination of Scott Mullin's life story allows, in succession, for an introduction of the interviewee, the form and content of his recollection, and the scope and role of his agency during the time he processed, identified and selected African refugees for resettlement to Canada.

The first section provides the brief biographical outline of his professional life and is essential for understanding his posting in Nairobi, Kenya. It is mainly based on information that he chose to share before and during his interview. The second section considers critical themes on *how* Mullin chose to tell his story, including his influence on the process by which the interview was arranged and constituted: Molloy introduced Mullin to the author, and the interview took place at the latter's place of work, in a formal corporate boardroom of Toronto's financial district. The third section focuses on the content of the story and considers *what* Mullin chose to include in a life story that would be part of a project about the history of Canada's processes of refugee status determination and refugee selection for resettlement conducted in Africa between 1970s and the 1990s.

As we have seen, Mullin included lengthy accounts of his Indochina experience, to serve not only as an introduction but also as a comparison. The fourth and final section provides a comparative examination of how Mullin exercised individual agency as a navigator and the contrasts that Mullin voluntarily drew between Indochina and Nairobi; this offers an opportunity to gauge to what extent his role, as well as his

civil society on refugees has changed the discourse. When the government is this gutsy and ambitious, I don't think anybody will care if they're not all here by Jan. 1."

margin of autonomy, were dependent on the local context of his work. This section places his remarks within the broader historical and theoretical parameters outlined in chapters one and two, to consider how the young Canadian officer navigated structures from the local to the international levels. Most of the applicants Mullin interviewed during his stay in Nairobi were, in his words, “high-profile,” “high-risk,” and tended to be university students referred to the Government of Canada by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). This last section introduces Mullin’s understanding that a UNHCR referral was a “pre-selection,” which impacted on his and his colleagues’ approach to selection interviews, at least in the case of some refugee applicants. I suggest that Mullin’s life story can be examined mainly with the help of the theoretical frames of navigator and narrator. There are fewer traces of the activities of a navigator in his account than in the last chapter, where we examined the actions of Mike Molloy in the same city, a few years after.

Who is Scott Mullin?⁴⁸⁷

Mullin was born in Halifax, Nova Scotia and moved to Montreal with his family at the age of seven. Unlike Molloy, Mullin did not provide much biographical information or history about his early life—details such as when he was born, what his parents did for a living, or why his family moved to Montreal. Granted, Mullin had limited time (one hour) for the interview⁴⁸⁸, and there were no follow-up interviews (as with Molloy and later Susan Burrows). Instead, Mullin began his account from the

⁴⁸⁷ Appendix 1: *Chronology of Officer Trajectories, Key Milestones or Events* for a detailed outline of Mullin’s professional chronology, cross-linked with broader events or periods in Canada’s refugee protection policy and key historical moments on the African continent relating to refugees.

⁴⁸⁸ This chapter will return to this issue in the next chapter, when discussing how Mullin chose to tell and organize his account.

time that he joined the public service after he obtained his Bachelor of Arts in political science from Carleton University and was accepted into the Canadian Foreign Service. At the age of twenty-two, Mullin understood that he was the youngest Foreign Service officer who had ever been hired. He shortly got posted to the Hong Kong visa office for the training and processing of Indochinese refugees, a position he occupied from 1978 to 1980. Mullin remembered that during the Indochinese movement, in 1979, he was interviewed by Peter Mansbridge about his role interviewing and selecting Indochinese for resettlement— which became part of an hour-long special entitled "Boat People: Rocking the World's Conscience."⁴⁸⁹ The story formed the basis for an Historica Canada *Heritage Minute* released and broadcast in 2017, thirty-eight years later (it is also mentioned in the introductory quote above).⁴⁹⁰ The "minute" is based on the story of Sam and Rebecca Trinh's family, whom Mullin interviewed and selected for resettlement in 1979.⁴⁹¹

On March 5, 1979, a few months before Mansbridge called Mullin a "One Man Board of Immigration," the Toronto Star also published an interview with him titled "Viet refugees view Canadian as a god." Indochina appears to have been a poignant experience for Mullin, by his own account. The language used to tell Mullin's story

⁴⁸⁹ CBC Newsmagazine, "Boat People: Rocking the World's Conscience," CBD Digital Archives, July 9, 1979, accessed November 1, 2018, <https://www.cbc.ca/archives/entry/sponsoring-refugees-canadians-reach-out> (13:20 to 16:20 minutes). Other guests on the special included Ron Atkey (then Minister of Employment and Immigration), Flora MacDonald (then Secretary of State for External Affairs) and Stephen Tomosvary (Canadian citizen and volunteer, former immigrant from Hungary) amongst others.

⁴⁹⁰ Carolyn Dunn, "Vietnamese-Canadian family's refugee story inspires new Heritage Minute", [CBC News, June 20, 2017](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/trinh-family-boat-people-inspires-heritage-minute-1.4167835), accessed November 1, 2018, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/trinh-family-boat-people-inspires-heritage-minute-1.4167835>. In the news article about how a Vietnamese refugee family's story became a Heritage Minute, "Thirty-eight years later", Mullin tears up while watching the Heritage Minute that dramatizes the role Canada played in resettling so many desperate Vietnamese refugees. "The country is better for it," he says."

⁴⁹¹ Heritage Minutes, "Boat People, Refugees," 2017; and Dunn, "Vietnamese-Canadian family's refugee story inspires new Heritage Minute."

portrays him in a heroic manner. In his account of his role, Mullin also seems to adopt the view that the CBC interview portrayed decades earlier, especially when he refers to the approximately thirty-thousand (30,000) Indochinese that he selected “sent” to Canada. In situating his story within the public memory of a historical resettlement movement, Mullin locates himself in history. More recently, before Canada’s resettlement of thousands of Syrian refugees in 2016, Mullin leveraged his role in the banking sector to lobby the largest Canadian banks to fundraise for the Red Cross’s work with Syrian refugees⁴⁹² and also contributed his account about Indochina to *Running on Empty: Canada and the Indochinese Refugees, 1975-1980*.⁴⁹³

When his posting was coming to an end, as was standard practice, Mullin was invited to express a preference for an assignment, as was standard practice. He chose Bangkok, Thailand.

Mullin: They said, "No, you're not going to Bangkok." I said, "Oh." They said, "We want you to go to Nairobi." I thought, "Nairobi?" [Laughs] At the time, I had zero interest, no doubt. I said, "Oh." They said, "Yeah, one of the things we want you to do," and I was still a very junior officer, unfortunately. "One of the things we want you to do is set up a much more modest, but set up some sort of refugee program in East Africa." Nairobi, I went to in '84.

Interviewer: '81, maybe?

Mullin: Sorry, '81 to '84. Life just races by.

⁴⁹² Rachele Younglai, “Canadian Businesses Respond to Fundraising Appeals for Syrian Refugees”, *Globe and Mail*, September 11, 2015, accessed November 4, 2018, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/canadian-businesses-respond-to-fundraising-appeals-for-syrian-refugees/article26343994/>

Mullin did not tell this author about his newspaper interviews. Instead, this was information collated in research for this study.

⁴⁹³ Molloy et al, *Running on Empty*, 100-101; 339-341

“They” would have been the Foreign Service headquarters in Ottawa, which made final decisions on the postings to which officers were assigned.⁴⁹⁴ The Government of Canada established the first annual quota of two hundred spaces for African refugees in 1981 and Mullin was dispatched to set up the resettlement program there. As discussed in chapters two and three, a couple of years earlier, in 1978, Michael Molloy and his team of two officers had written regulations for the private sponsorship of the refugee program, which included the WUSC Student Refugee Program that Mullin would soon implement.

Mullin left the public service in 1997, after nineteen years with the Department of Foreign Affairs, including time spent as a Trade Commissioner in Hong Kong, press officer for the Foreign Minister and as Charge d' Affaires in Iran when Canada reopened its Tehran embassy in 1988. He then began another career in the private sector where he has worked in senior positions such as Vice President of Public Affairs responsible for advocacy and government relations within the Canadian Banker's Association and Vice President of Government Relations with TD Canada Banking

⁴⁹⁴ As shown in chapter 2, the fulsome story of Canada's resettlement of over 200,000 Indochinese refugees between 1975 and 1980 is told through personal accounts of Foreign Service officers (including Mullin) in the film *Running on Empty*, 100-103. In terms of the ground operations of selection, “responsibility for immigration and refugee matters in Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia rested with the three visa officers stationed in Singapore: Ian Hamilton, Dick Martin, and Scott Mullin.” Together, over three days in November 1978, these three officers “dealt with oppressive heat and torrential downpours” and Malaysian “police interference and bureaucratic delays”, interviewed and selected 604 people from the Hai Hong boat who were put on military airplanes and landed at “Longue-Point military base near Montreal, which in 1972 had welcomed 5,000 Ugandan Asians.” On arrival, the refugees were welcomed by Ministers Cullen and Couture, enabled to bathe, eat and rest and were then processed for permanent resident status. From the Hai Hong, West Germany took 657, France 222, Switzerland 52, New Zealand 9, Australia 8 and the US, 897, “including all those left over after the other countries had completed their selection processes. Notably, the *Hai Hong* catalyzed global media coverage, international compassion and action. Barely weeks later, Minister Cullen presented Canada's first ever annual refugee plan to Cabinet which “put the Indochinese refugees at the centre of Canada's resettlement efforts.”

Group, respectively.⁴⁹⁵ Mullin is currently a Principal with an advisory company working on everything from crisis management, capital markets advisory, media relations, public affairs campaigns, government relations and research. I interviewed Mullin for this study within one of the large boardrooms. After our recorded interview, as we walked out of the building, Mullin became more animated as he spoke about the recent work that he had done with the Toronto visual arts community, including the fundraising for and sponsorship and promotion of Indigenous Canadians.⁴⁹⁶ In the context of discussing the high-risk and high-profile refugees he had interviewed, he also spoke about a few African National Congress applicants that he had interviewed and selected for resettlement to Canada. However, he did not remember the details of these refugee selection interviews. This conversation was so unexpected and spontaneous that I did not have a chance to record any of it. However, it was insightful that Mullin became less circumspect once we were outside the boardroom in the sunny courtyard.

Mullin's Story Form

Despite joining the private sector, Mullin maintained contact with former colleagues from the Canadian Service, including the current President of the Canada

⁴⁹⁵ See Appendix 1: *Chronology of Officer Trajectories, Key Milestones or Events* for a detailed outline of Mullin's professional chronology, cross-linked with broader evolutions in Canada's refugee protection policy and key moments pertaining to refugee issues, including related the African continent.

⁴⁹⁶The company is called "Navigator". Mullin's online profile indicates that he was "awarded a 2012 Queens Diamond Jubilee medal for his work on diversity in Canada", "received the 2015 Harry Jerome Diversity Award from Toronto's Black Business Professional Association," and "was honoured with the 2017 Lifetime Achievement Award by Start Proud, formerly Out On Bay Street, an organization that facilitates the professional development of LGBTQ students as they transition from school to careers,": *Navigator, Meet the Team: Scott Mullin, Principal, Toronto*, accessed November 1, 2018, <https://www.navltd.com/team/Mullin-mullin/>

Immigration Historical Society, Michael Molloy.⁴⁹⁷ After Molloy introduced us through email a couple of weeks before, I made arrangements to travel from Ottawa to Toronto to interview Mullin on July 10, 2018. Mullin preferred an in-person interview. Before the email introduction, I had neither met Mullin nor encountered his name. Unlike Molloy, who had maintained an overt presence in Canadian refugee policy, research and scholarship.

“Place” is an essential factor in how and what stories people tell. On arrival at the corporate Bay Street office, I was greeted and received by a receptionist. Mullin appeared shortly after and led me to a spacious and formal boardroom where the voice recorder was quickly set up. Mullin had indicated that our interview would be limited to precisely an hour and so we made the best of that time frame. However, I was also keen to ensure that Mullin told his story in the manner that he wished to tell it since that was also the object of this study. So, after briefly describing what the study was about, I asked Mullin to begin telling his story as he saw fit.

Mullin chose to start his life story with Indochina. The starting point of his story is markedly different from Michael Molloy’s, who chose to start with his family genealogy and an account of how he ended up joining the Foreign Service. As mentioned earlier, Mullin did not refer to his family at all, except for a passing reference to a letter that he wrote to his mother after getting posted to Nairobi. It was only after the interview, through follow-up questions sent through email, that I

⁴⁹⁷ This includes participation in The Canadian Immigration Historical Society (CIHS) which was formed in 1986 by former Immigration Foreign Service officers and scholars who agreed on the “need for a non-partisan organization gathering historians, political scientists, sociologists, academics, government officials and private individuals to develop and promote interest in Canadian immigration and refugee matters and history”: *CIHS, About Us*, accessed November 1, 2018, <http://cihs-shic.ca/about-us/>

was able to flesh out a little of Mullin's earlier trajectory before he became an officer in 1978. After speaking of Indochina for over fifteen minutes, the rest of the oral story took on a comparative approach, with the Indochinese experience as the anchor.

During the interview, it became apparent that Mullin had likely not told his story about refugee selection in Nairobi as frequently as he had about the Indochinese movement. For instance, in the excerpt of the interview shared in the introduction, Mullin mistook the year that he got posted to Nairobi for 1984 instead of 1981. So, while he did not always recall the specific dates, cases or interviews he had done or encountered in Africa, he did remember in broad strokes, the structures that conditioned how eligibility interviews in Africa compared or differed from Indochinese selection interviews. As the next section shows, this comparative approach informed many of Mullin's recollections about his interviews while in Nairobi.

The recorded interview lasted one hour. As mentioned earlier, after Mullin accompanied me out of the building, he recalled interviewing members of liberation movements, including those from South Africa's African National Congress (ANC) during a field processing trip in Lusaka, Zambia. As I stood in the courtyard chatting with Mullin, there was humour and laughter as Mullin spoke of his varied interests in Canadian Indigenous art and storytelling, as well as some of the exciting initiatives he had started while working with TD Banking Group. While there was an ever-present wit to his storytelling, during this spontaneous moment in the sun, Mullin seemed more at ease than he had been in the boardroom. As many historians of oral testimonies have noted, the conditions and space of telling can impact the content of

a story and, in this case, the level of candour that an interviewee might have was noticeable. This incident led me to wonder about what was left inadvertently unsaid or suppressed by the conditions of storytelling (conditions Mullin had chosen himself). Attributing the content of the story to space alone could also be problematic. It is plausible that after the interview and percolation of thoughts, Mullin might have recalled more memories than he had before. It is also possible that the increased level of candour was a function of having built some trust through an hour of conversation. Either way, the difference in personality and recollection after the interview was noteworthy.

Mullin's Story Content

The role of “context” in storytelling was important in both Mullin and Molloy's accounts. For Molloy, his experiences resettling Czechs and Ugandan-Asians and as Senior Coordinator for the Indochinese movement provided a useful context for understanding major evolutions in Canadian resettlement policy, legislation and regulations in the early 1970s. For Mullin, his experiences selecting hundreds of humanitarian cases under the Indochina Designated class from 1979 to 1980, allowed for a comparative account of his experiences with refugee selection in Central and East Africa in the early 1980s. In some ways, the resettlement movements that preceded the Africa Refugee program contributed to the structures within which the officers operated, in so far as it shaped bureaucratic understandings about what resettlement operations entailed.

Indochina context

The Government of Canada's admission targets for the African Refugee program at the Nairobi visa office in 1981 were markedly lower than those in the Indochina movement where Mullin had interviewed over a hundred families and selected over thirty-thousand people for resettlement within a year. As indicated in the interview excerpt above, Mullin and his colleague were initially refusing ninety-nine percent of Indochinese resettlement applicants because they did not meet specific criteria, including the requirement to have family in Canada and the "ability to establish" through education, skills and literacy in either English or French. As discussed in chapter two, this criterion was a means to assess whether selected immigrants had the capacity to settle successfully in Canada.

However, after "the big Geneva conference" in December 1978, Mullin remembers the "groundswell that developed in Canada around the boat people," and Ottawa announcing that "we would take 50,000 people." This study was not the first time that Mullin had narrated his experiences about Indochina, and his recollection of names, numbers and dates were confident. Mullin had been one of the many officers who contributed to the book co-authored by Molloy and others about the role of officers and political figures in the Indochina refugee movement from 1975 to 1980.⁴⁹⁸ Therefore, while the clarity and ordered approach to Mullin's recollections about his

⁴⁹⁸ Molloy et al., *Running on Empty*, 103-107; 339-341. The United States pushed for a broad-based international response to the plight of Indochinese "boat people" in order to simultaneously demonstrate the inhumanity of the communist regimes that had taken over in Southeast Asia and Vietnam particularly, and to relieve the "political, social and financial burden on countries of first asylum." UNHCR consultations convened by Poul Hartling from 12 to 13 December, 1978 "reached a general agreement on the need for "burden sharing" by developed countries and an expression by Southeast Asian countries to continue to provide first asylum to refugees as long as these would be resettled in third countries." These meetings marked strong steps toward a broad-based international response, and led to financial pledges of \$13 million to the UNHCR to deal with the crisis.

experiences in Indochina were likely shaped by the profundity and enormity of his having had a central role in the operation at a young age, participating in the book project allowed him to organize and rehearse his memories. In addition, if the Indochinese story was still “fresh” in Mullin’s mind, it may also explain why he chose to start his story about Africa in Indochina instead.

In our interview, Mullin recalled that after the Geneva conference—which reached consensus on increasing the resettlement numbers for Indochinese boat people to Western countries—from “the practical side of it,” “going from sort of 500 to 50,000 was a logistical nightmare.” The reason for this was that the Government of Canada had relaxed selection criteria through the Indochina Designated class which meant that resettlement applicants did not need to meet the Convention class definition (that is, be refugees), were not required to have family in Canada, and did not need to have either English or French to qualify for selection. Under these new legal guidelines, Mullin subsequently spent three years in Hong Kong refugee camps, which he described as “terribly well organized” in a “British colonial” way. The latter reference is insightful about Mullin’s views about his attribution of organizational capacity to “colonial” governance. This provides important context and backdrop for the reading of his account about operating and selecting refugees from camps in post-independent countries in Central and East Africa.

I was sitting there. Remember that stuff with carbon paper where you ripped off a sheet, and there was the ink thing underneath, and it was sweaty [...] It was sweaty on your palms. You'd be sitting there, and you'd get this stuff up and down your arms. You literally had stamps. I had stamps in front of me. One said, "Canada provisionally accepted." One said, "Canada rejected." In Hong Kong, refugees knew that the short one was not the one you wanted. They all had these little cards, these 8x10 cards. That was the file card. On the back, it

was where embassies would [stamp the decision], and they would know because I was picking up the small one.

Mullin recounted that while selecting Indochinese for resettlement under the Indochina Designated class, he would “interview up to a hundred families a day” and that “it was fairly intense.” Despite this, when the CBC news crew arrived, he availed himself to be interviewed and narrated how he and other Canadian government officers were selecting Indochinese boat people and ensuring that they were selecting people who would be able to settle and establish in Canada. In response to Mansbridge’s question about how officers knew that the people they were selecting would “adapt in Canada,” Mullin explained:

Well, if someone can sail across the South China Sea, spend two months at sea, and a few more months in a camp situation like this, I think they will be able to adapt reasonably well. Obviously, there are going to be problems, and that’s hopefully what the refugee sponsorship that the government has recently introduced will help to alleviate. Private groups will assist these people in the initial adaptation in Canada. Obviously initially, somebody who doesn’t speak English or has a large family or doesn’t find a job immediately will have some difficulty. But in the long run, I don’t think these people are going to have serious difficulties. All the refugee movements that we have had in Canada, be it the Hungarians, the Czechs, the Ugandan-Asians—whomever it happens to have been, have in the long run done well. And we have to look upon it ourselves, as an investment in the future. In the first six months, we might have a lot of problems, but what this guy’s son is going to be like, and how is he going to do? I think that’s the important thing we have to look at.

Mullin’s response to Mansbridge was simultaneously a narrative of the government’s selection process and a justification of Canada’s resettlement of the Indochinese boat people on humanitarian grounds. Firstly, Mullin explained *why* it was necessary to resettle the Indochinese boat people. It was because they had lost their homes, fled, got stranded at sea and now lived in temporary and crowded camps. Secondly, Mullin explained *how* the Indochinese would be settled after they were selected. The

Government of Canada had a mechanism of private sponsorship through which Canadian citizens, church groups and volunteers would help the Indochinese to settle and adapt to their new communities. In this fashion, Mullin became a narrator and historian who reminded those watching the half-hour special about Canada's humanitarian tradition and historical role in refugee protection, including their efforts with the Czechs, Hungarians and Ugandan-Asians.⁴⁹⁹

Mullin's early interview with the CBC in Hong Kong revealed that he already understood the importance of translating the intricacies of a bureaucratic selection process into a narrative with which Canadians could understand and identify. The response to Mansbridge did not elaborate on some of the challenges and realities that officers working from other less organized camps were experiencing. The simplified way that Mullin explained the selection process of Indochinese resettlement to Mansbridge in 1979 differs from the more complex, challenging and ad hoc details that he shared (below) with me in 2018.

The [Hong Kong] camps were terribly well organized. Even UNHCR was there. Many people, not all, but many people could work so they could leave the camps. They set up schools, and they did all sorts of the usual things you would expect to happen [...] whereas the camps in Malaysia, the camps in Thailand, the camps in the Philippines, the camps in Indonesia [...] My colleagues who did that were sleeping on tables in camps overnight because there was nowhere else to stay. The logistics of getting the Wong family from this island to an airport on a plane was really like a military operation, whereas we had complete cooperation with the Hong Kong government, and they trucked people around. Planes were sent. Large numbers of planes were sent, and so we'd get this notice suddenly that said, "Bangkok can't fill this aircraft, so we're diverting it to Hong Kong tomorrow morning." We had backlogs of people.

⁴⁹⁹ See Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli*, 56. The narrator in oral interviews is an "historian after a fashion" and in his interview with Mansbridge, Mullin acts as a narrator and historian by explaining Canada's past history of refugee protection.

The difference in how Mullin explained the selection process to Mansbridge in comparison to myself could be because of the passage of time and the different audiences he was addressing. In the former case, Mullin was explaining the process to a large public of lay people, and the formalized resettlement program was still in its infancy. Also, the interview was short and taking place in a camp situation. This means that Mullin may have needed to be brief and omit details on the challenges of humanitarian selection, but it is more likely that in front of a national television network, he would likely have been required to tell the official story of the Government of Canada. However, when interviewed for this study, Mullin was aware that he is telling his story to a single and knowledgeable person, who was a scholar and a fellow bureaucrat. After having talked about Indochina, Mullin proceeded to talk about his time in Nairobi.

Establishing the Africa Refugee Program in 1981

When Mullin arrived in Nairobi, three years into his position as an Immigration Foreign Service officer, his remit was to establish and implement the African Refugee Program through which the Government would select a set annual quota of refugees for resettlement from Central-East Africa. Mullin did not indicate if he was the only officer selecting refugees in Nairobi, how many other officers were based at the visa office, nor did he offer details about the visa office. According to Mullin, he was responsible for interviewing and selecting refugee nationals based in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Zambia, Madagascar, Reunion, and Mauritius. Mullin stated that at the time, “Ottawa was thinking that maybe we'd take 150 people a year or something” and recalled thinking, “I just sent

thousands a year.”⁵⁰⁰ During Mullin’s time in Nairobi, the “three main tension spots and sources of refugees were Ethiopia, not Somalia, Uganda, and the yin-yang between Rwanda and Burundi.”

According to Mullin, Canada planned to use the quota of 150 resettlement spaces in 1981 to resettle over one hundred African refugees who had sought asylum in Italy, and a few other UNHCR referred “high-risk” and “high-profile” cases from Africa. That year, as we saw in chapter 2, there was growing recognition at headquarters in Ottawa (and in Geneva where Mike Molloy was working), of the growing need for increased financial and physical “burden-sharing” with African countries hosting refugees, implemented through third-country resettlement to Western countries.⁵⁰¹ Mullin remembers that the major difference between Indochina and Africa was that he went from selecting over a hundred families a day to interviewing fewer than ten individuals a day.⁵⁰²

Designated class versus Convention Refugee class—impact on selection procedures

In the comparative way which came to characterize the structure of his life story, Mullin volunteered an explanation for the smaller numbers in Nairobi: officers “were looking at eligibility as well as admissibility.”⁵⁰³ When the first quota was established for Canadian resettlement from Africa, applicants were interviewed for

⁵⁰⁰ Mullin, Interview (Toronto, July 10, 2018)

⁵⁰¹ See chapter one for a discussion of the “burden-sharing” context of African refugee issues in the 1980s. Also, chapter three discusses Michael Molloy’s role at the Permanent Mission of Canada, Geneva, Switzerland (1981-1984) as Counsellor responsible for Refugee and Humanitarian Affairs.

⁵⁰² As discussed in chapter five, by the late 1980s, refugee applications and admission targets from Africa had increased, but never reached the large numbers officers experienced during the Indochinese movement.

⁵⁰³ Mullin, Interview (Toronto, July 10, 2018)

selection under the Convention Refugee in Need of Resettlement Class.⁵⁰⁴ As already mentioned, this differed from the Indochina Designated class humanitarian movement, which had ended a few months before. While the end goal was the same for the designated class and Convention class (e.g. resettlement in Canada), the means and criteria were not. The *1976 Immigration Act* defined a "Convention refugee" as any person who "by reason of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion" was "outside the country of the person's nationality and is unable, or by reason of that fear, unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country."⁵⁰⁵ As Molloy discussed in chapter two, policymakers recognized that in humanitarian situations where displaced people were not "refugees," by definition, the international definition of "Convention class" was limited and inflexible.

In fact, according to Molloy et al. 's written work of 2016, this was the Malaysian government's contention during the stand-off between western countries like Canada, who wanted to process and resettle Indochinese people from the *Hai Hong* boat.⁵⁰⁶ Policy advisors at headquarters advised that from "experience in dealing with Indochinese refugees" it would not be "realistic to require each boat escapee or overland refugee to establish that he or she has personally been subject to some form

⁵⁰⁴ *1976 Immigration Act*.

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰⁶ See, Molloy et al, *Running on Empty*, 95.

In December, 1978, three designated classes were approved by the Governor-in-Council. It meant that "those selected under the designated classes, while exempt from the need to comply with the UN Convention definition, would have benefits equivalent to those accorded Convention refugee class status. These included exemption from the points system, access to assisted travel loans, eligibility for sponsorships by private groups, and access to enhanced settlement services."

of persecution as envisaged by the UN Refugee Convention.”⁵⁰⁷ It was Ottawa’s belief that the fact they had “managed to escape, survived the voyage” and were in one of the camps in Southeast Asia was “sufficient reason for them to merit our consideration on a humanitarian basis.”⁵⁰⁸ Inching toward a discussion of refugee selection in Africa, Mullin described his subjective and discretionary approach to institute “ability to establish” criteria when selecting Indochinese for resettlement.

Mullin: I'm going to get to the question that's of interest. I explain all that because this was a mass movement of people, and the criteria was the following, and I am not exaggerating. Who, *in the opinion of the visa officer*, will successfully establish in Canada? Post-op, new paragraph. We were not looking at people's eligibility as refugees. They were de-facto. They were called, I forget what they were called.

Interviewer: They were prima facie?

Mullin: Yeah, sort of a prima facie. They weren't described as refugees.

Interviewer: You didn't use that language?

Mullin: In the vernacular, we did, but technically they weren't. They were, I think we called them a *designated class*. Rarely in the Hong Kong experience would I, I mean, I would dig about somebody's background mostly with an *admissibility* lens to it. If someone said they were a nuclear scientist, I would kind of start probing a little bit more than that, obviously, but we weren't really saying, "Why did you leave?" We were sort of saying, "Okay, you're here." [...] "We've decided that anybody who's here we are prepared to look at, to take."

Mullin’s description is instructive about the speed of selection interviews. Interviews for the African refugee applicants that Mullin conducted during the early 1980s were not as fast since it was not enough to meet the Convention Refugee definition. Under the refugee provisions of the Immigration Act, eligibility for resettlement also depended on what Mullin called an applicant’s “need,” which was defined as whether

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid.

they had exhausted alternative solutions for refugee situations, especially local integration in the country of asylum. Resettlement to Canada was considered as a solution of last resort, in part due to the limited number of spaces available from the annual immigration plan.⁵⁰⁹

The Convention Refugee in need of Resettlement class applied to all the African refugee applicants Mullin encountered while posted in Nairobi. In our interview, Mullin indicated that most of the refugees he interviewed were referred to Canada by the UNHCR. As shown in this chapter, UNHCR referral meant that a refugee applicant applying for resettlement had already been determined to be a Convention refugee by the organization. Since its inception in 1951, the UNHCR has played a key role in refugee policy implementation in some countries, and it conducts individual refugee status determination on behalf of states which do not have the institutional capacity to do so on their own.⁵¹⁰ According to the *1976 Immigration Act* of Canada, even if the UNHCR had conferred refugee status, Mullin and his colleagues were still required to interview the applicant to determine if they met Canadian requirements for resettlement. The additional requirements included medical, criminal and security checks, conducted by Canadian officers and designated medical practitioners.

⁵⁰⁹ Also, as discussed in chapters two and chapter three, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) initially discouraged resettlement from Africa as it was perceived to be incongruent with the principles of Pan-Africanism.

⁵¹⁰ Anna Schmidt, "Status Determination and Recognition," in Betts and Orchard, *Norms and the Politics of Implementation*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 249-251. UNHCR status determination processes are beyond the scope of this study. However, the case studies of Tanzania and Uganda, Schmidt that UNHCR implementation of the international refugee regime in Africa is not structured by legal guidelines or government interests and hierarchies but is a product of "on-the-ground negotiation" at the local level that "hinges crucially on the constellation of interests, identities, and frames of the different organizational actors involved and the quality of their relationships."

During our interview, Mullin explained that the triple assessment for resettlement selection interviews for African refugee applicants meant that they were more complex, longer, and had higher refusal rates than selection interviews he had conducted in Indochina. I will return to this difference in legal requirements in the next section. However, the point here is that in addition to the admission quotas determined through annual levels at headquarters, different legal provisions for refugee and humanitarian resettlement selection translated into different qualitative and quantitative outcomes. In the same vein, the structural constraints imposed by the annual levels plan and legal provisions in the Immigration Act meant that selection interviews considered only “individual” refugee applicants, not “families” as a whole, as in Indochina. And so, it was that Mullin chose, during our interview, to explain how he had to “navigate” between distinct processes to establish the African Refugee program in 1981.

Resettlement as a push or pull factor?

Reflecting on the openness of the selection criteria for the Indochinese “boat people,” Mullin wondered if people might have been encouraged to sell their belongings in order to afford to get spots on “old, sinking and ageing boats” like the *Hai Hong*. In this fashion, new criteria for resettlement might have inadvertently created a “pull factor” for migrations to Canada.⁵¹¹

Mullin: But you began to think, “Are we creating...?” There’s a sort of pull-push here. By sort of dangling this carrot of resettlement, are we, in fact, attracting people to take the risk of getting on a rickety boat and crossing the South China Sea?

⁵¹¹ CBC Newsmagazine, “Boat People,” (2:14-2:50 minutes): Mansbridge narrating the plight of ethnic Chinese-Vietnamese arriving on Hong-Kong shores and in dangerous boats

Interviewer: Because that's all they needed to do?

Mullin: Bingo. Now there are people who spent 10 years in those camps because no one would take them, but it's very similar to the African situation now, right? I think what people forget in these situations that in a sort of rational, Western mind, people think, "No one is going to get on a rickety boat to cross, whether it's the South China Sea or the Mediterranean, with the chances of dying at 30%." If you're a poor, 22-year-old Malaysian or Vietnamese at that time.

Interviewer: The odds are pretty good?

Mullin: The choice, I mean it's sort of like winning the lottery or living selling vegetables on the side of the road for the rest of your life. That construct I don't think most people understand at all. The prize, the bingo prize, is so high compared to what life is currently like for you that okay, so chances are 30% I'm going to die en route. There's still 70% I win bingo. I think that construct people in the West when we have these conversations, don't get at all.

Mullin's reflections in the excerpt above introduced the idea that even in the earliest days of Canada's global resettlement program, selection for third-country resettlement to a country like Canada was akin to winning a lottery. Such a notion underlies the context in which, after voluntary repatriation to one's home country and local integration in the country of asylum, third-country resettlement was considered by officers as a solution of last resort. Hence why the "in need of resettlement" qualifier was applied stringently to applicants who otherwise met the Convention class definition in the African Refugee program. It was not enough to be a refugee. The officer was required to assess and decide, based on their story of flight and asylum situation, whether resettlement was simultaneously the best solution for the applicant and Canada.

Mullin as Narrator and Navigator

As shown in the introductory quote, "Ottawa" and "Geneva" were the key decision-makers at the policy and "norm" levels. It is reasonable to surmise that

Mullin uses the term “Ottawa” to refer to the headquarters of the Ministry of Manpower and Immigration located in the capital city, as well as Canadian policy-makers, including the office of the Prime Minister, members of the cabinet and legislature. As seen through the discussion of the impact on selection interviews arising from the difference between the Indochina Designated class versus the Convention Refugee in Need class, legal provisions and parameters for refugee selection significantly shaped the number and type of applicants an officer interviewed. Therefore, an individual officer’s agency, when making selection decisions at the local level, was constrained or shaped by structures beyond their control.

Unpacking structure in Mullin’s story

All through his interview, Mullin attributes significant roles in resettlement selection to “Ottawa” and “Geneva.” Mullin emphasized that the authority to designate a particular population or group of people (by region or nationality), could only be made at headquarters and with the approval of Cabinet. In the case of his first assignment, we have seen that the making of the “Designated class” for Indochinese refugees was facilitated by the Government of Canada’s foreign policy interests; it combined legal rules and state interests. The decision was taken by policymakers in Ottawa, in consultation with provinces and territories and other domestic stakeholders and in coordination with allies in the Cold War, primarily the United States, Australia and the United Kingdom.

Similarly, Mullin insists that he had to work with “Geneva.” His word can reasonably be taken to mean the directives resulting from UNHCR consultations and

meetings from 1975 onwards. Chief amongst the meetings where resettlement partners deliberated humanitarian solutions for displaced Indochinese people after political upheaval in Cambodia and Vietnam, the December 1978 consultations organized by UN High Commissioner for Refugees Poul Hartling culminated in a pledge by Western countries for the resettlement of thousands of Indochinese people and for financial aid towards alleviating the basic needs of people in the camps.

These international and national structures influenced where Mullin was deployed, *who* (nationalities and demographic profiles) the Nairobi visa office accepted for selection interviews, and *what* (statutory and eligibility requirements) he considered in making his decision. Still, when Mullin found himself: on a Malaysian shore selecting refugees by candlelight; in a Hong Kong camp interviewing and sending over thirty-thousand people to Canada; and finally, in the Nairobi visa office, implementing a new Africa Refugee Program, he retained some agency in the process of refugee selection. The next section gauges the extent and the nature of his discretionary power.

Desirability and viability—the WUSC student refugee program

Mullin’s musing that resettlement had to be simultaneously “desirable” and “viable” has a significant bearing in the African context. The focus on high-risk and high-profile refugee applicants required deeper scrutiny of their stories of flight and persecution in order to establish eligibility under the Convention class, and ensure that applicants passed statutory requirements. In addition to possessing skills and literacy that would help them establish in Canada, these types of refugee applicants would likely have been desirable in more political ways. As the example of Molloy in

Kenya filmed by the NFB illustrated powerfully, the desirability and viability of a refugee applicant also meant that offering them refugee protection would not adversely impact on the Government of Canada's diplomatic relations with post-independent African state governments.⁵¹²

Mullin remembered selecting refugee applicants under the WUSC Student Refugee Program who epitomized both “desirability and viability”; they exemplified an ideal approach to resettlement. As discussed in the previous chapter, the WUSC Student Refugee Program was established by Molloy and Chris Smart as part of the private sponsorship of the refugee program in 1978.⁵¹³ These refugee applicants were usually literate, eligible under the Convention class, and slated to pursue a university education in Canada. Additionally, during the entirety of their studies, they would receive financial support for tuition and basics from WUSC, and community support from volunteers at participating Canadian universities,⁵¹⁴ which meant that they would be arriving in welcoming communities that would assist with the settlement. Mullin listed subsequent success stories to show how time had validated his and his colleagues' understanding.

I probably sent, over the course of three years, maybe 25 people through it. Some cases, they would identify candidates working with UNHCR or working with somebody else. In some cases, I identified candidates. But that was an amazing program.

⁵¹² In the documentary *Who Gets In*, Molloy travels to Dar Es Salam (Tanzania) to interview Kenyan university students referred to the Canadian government for resettlement by the local UNHCR. Molloy refuses their applications and takes into account diplomatic relations with Kenya's government.

⁵¹³ See the previous chapter for fulsome discussion of how the WUSC Student Refugee Program was created in 1978 when Molloy was the Director of Refugee Policy and overseeing writing of refugee provisions for the *1976 Immigration Act*.

⁵¹⁴ See details of *WUSC Student Refugee program, About*, accessed October 23, 2018, <https://srp.wusc.ca/about/>

I don't know. I'm still in touch with or in touch, touch and go. One of them, an Ethiopian, a Director in the Interior Ministry of Finance. He came through on the program when he was in his second year.

There's two professors at Ryerson who went through the program. There's another guy who was the Vice-President of the English Catholic Teachers Federation. He went and got his teaching certificate in Windsor. Then he went back to Uganda to run against Museveni in the last election. He's still there. Some of these people have been remarkably successful, and I think part of the experience from that or the lessons from that is that an effective settlement program and the question is how much money are we prepared to pay for individuals? That's a bigger-picture question, I guess. But these programs seem to really work. I'm sure there were some failures, too.

In the eyes of Mullin, then and now, WUSC refugee applicants easily met the “ability to establish” criteria because WUSC “put them through university.” For Mullin, as for Molloy, when he helped conceptualize the program a few years earlier, a key component of selecting refugees was the perceived viability of settlement in Canada.

Mullin indicated that “9 out of 10 referrals” came through the UNHCR. The first question posed to anyone who approached the Nairobi visa office was, “has this person been listed with the UN?” The UNHCR acted as the “initial screening process.” On rare occasions, referrals came through other organizations such as the Red Cross or WUSC itself. Mullin took the time, in our interview, to give the details of the UNHCR’s role in pre-screening refugee applicants to the African Refugee program.

You weren't starting from scratch in the way you would with someone who makes an internal [application]... by definition, the U.N. had verified certain events. They *verified certain events*. Now that we're talking with this, I can remember when I was in Nairobi itself. Lots of Ugandans.

As you know from the African experience, lots of times, the opposition is welcome in the neighbouring country, right? Moi was the President of Kenya at the time, and he was no fan of Obote, even though they came, I can't think what it was that they were proposing on, but anyway, so the Kenyans had no problem with the fact that the revolutionary, the resistance leader who suddenly was living in Nairobi... I'm sure he was watched.

Ugandan students fleeing to Nairobi were sort of being picked up and taken back. Now I don't know if Ugandans had passed. But I remember there was, I

forget the details, but there were 12 students who were caught up in some specific event at Makerere. All 12 of them ended up in Nairobi. The *U.N. had done digging* because they had an office in Kampala, too. Kampala, it wasn't North Korea. I travelled to Uganda several times.

The case of Uganda students above is interesting for two reasons. Firstly, the commentary on Uganda and Kenyan relations and specifically, Kenya's violation of the "nonrefoulement," and international refugee protection norm, provide an important example of the kinds of political considerations that officers like Mullin took into account during refugee selection operations (in terms of implications for Canada's diplomatic interests in the region). Secondly, this tale provides critical insight into the UNHCR's role in information collection in local contexts. The UNHCR referral form was of practical importance because it provided the Canadian officer with a refugee applicants' story and demographic information in advance of the selection interview. However, the above excerpt illuminates a more expansive role in which the UNHCR used its physical presence in different countries such as Uganda and Kenya to strategically gather intelligence on political events and the particularities of individual stories. This intelligence was necessary for officers like Mullin, who acknowledged in our interview that he did not have expansive and established knowledge networks through which to gain local intelligence about the places from which applicants were fleeing, and the places that they had fled to. While Mullin had cultivated his source of knowledge about Ethiopians from people like Hugh Pilkington (to be discussed presently), the UNHCR possessed broader geographic and institutional reach to verify information useful in refugee selection.

Despite the UNHCR's role in pre-screening and verification, Mullin was still required by law to conduct his assessments on applicant stories' credibility and

eligibility for resettlement. While documentary evidence helped Mullin make this assessment, it was not always available for all applicants. Again, Mullin's recollections take a comparative approach with his experiences in Indochina.

Yeah, certainly Ugandans. They had university transcripts and birth certificates and all that kind of stuff. Less so Ethiopia. The one in Burundi was fairly organized. You didn't have this situation of somebody turning up. Most of the Vietnamese that we saw or they told us they had no documentation. You'd often sit there and look and say, "That's not his son. That's his nephew." You could just sit there and go, "She had a baby three weeks after she got pregnant? Three weeks after she had a baby?" I find that hard to believe [...] But the other thing, I guess, in Africa was it was pretty obvious talking to somebody that they were a university student or not. If they were a lorry driver pretending to be a university student. You could tell that...just their presence would tell you whether or not [...] Part of that it sounds like you make judgments on people based on things like appearance and stuff, but you do. Is this credible?

Unlikely sources of "local" knowledge: Dr. Pilkington

One important reason for Mullin's margin of autonomy was an officer's access to local knowledge. At this point in the interview, Mullin took the time to recall, at length, meeting and befriending a locally-based British academic who became a source of his knowledge about Ethiopian culture and history (an element of his life story not mentioned in previous accounts).

We were kind of breaking new ground by doing this kind of program, so that was sort of interesting in itself. One of the countries that I got to know quite well was Ethiopia, which is a very different place than sub-Saharan Africa. One could argue it is in sub-Saharan Africa...it has the old history and stuff, right? Castles in Gondar and Lalibela crosses [...] and the whole Queen of Sheba, King Solomon, at one point. It's a fascinating story, and I learned tons. There was an old Brit there who subsequently died in a traffic accident in Winnipeg, who was the fourth son of the Pilkington Glass Empire. Pilkington glass and they made [...]. In that classic British way, the first son inherited the business. The second son who put all the joint into the return. The third is, I forget. The third son, I think, actually became a priest or something. The

fourth son was sent to the colonies. You actually had a lot of not very successful or rich white people. The sort of B team. [Laughter]

The 'A' team inherited the family business. He'd been sent out, and he had actually studied Ge'ez. What you might ask is Ge'ez? He had a Ph.D. in Ge'ez.

Geez is the Latin version of Amharic. I heard him say to me one day, "I'm going to a conference." [Laughter] I said, "You're only going to have a table of four people." [Laughter]

His name was Hugh Pilkington. I learned tons about Ethiopia from him.

In the quote above, Mullin depicts himself as an innovator, and again, as part of a collective "we" that was "breaking new ground." This reflects an exercise in Mullin's individual agency—one described in his own words. While Mullin's account about Pilkington was humorous, it was evident that the latter had been somewhat of a subject-matter expert on whom Mullin relied for local knowledge about Ethiopian nationals who applied for resettlement to Canada. It is notable that Mullin's source of "local knowledge" about Ethiopia came from a British national, albeit one who had studied one of Ethiopia's many languages. Mullin did not mention how he met Pilkington, if his British friend was working for any government or organization, or if Pilkington's expertise might have helped his work in the visa office. But it was clear that the Canadian officer Mullin had taken it on himself to obtain local information and knowledge from sources outside of official channels like the UNHCR. The next section takes a closer look at Mullin's experiences with interviewing and selecting African refugees for resettlement.

African refugees—eligibility and ability to establish

You arrive in Africa, and I had that backdrop and context [Indochinese] for when I arrived. First of all, we were looking at a lot smaller numbers. Secondly, you were looking at displaced people, but being displaced didn't

mean you were a refugee. Otherwise, you could say that all Tutsis were, by definition, refugees. Or in the case of Ethiopians, all Oromos were. It became a more sophisticated look. Of course, in the Ethiopian context, you also had famine, and frankly at the time, most of the people in most of the refugee camps that were hung up in what we would now, perhaps, call ethnic cleansing, but it wasn't necessarily ethnic, but it was close to that. It was a Sudan kind of situation. Throw on that famine. There was virtually no one I saw in those refugee camps who had a hope in hell of successfully establishing in Canada, even if I thought they were a refugee. They were beyond [...]

Mom was illiterate. Dad was illiterate. Perhaps half the kids were illiterate. We focused on working quite closely with the UNHCR and a couple of NGOs to identify high-risk, high-profile cases where resettlement was not only desirable; it was viable. This person could make a go of it. Quite often, frankly, it was single people. Quite often, it was university students.

In the excerpt above, Mullin explains the kinds of applicants encountered in Nairobi after arriving from Indochina. It is interesting that here, unlike the Indochinese, Mullin identified Ethiopian nationals and the Oromos as distinct ethnic groups. As discussed, unlike for the Indochina Designated class, for African refugee applicants, it was not enough to be only displaced. Refugee applicants needed to meet the Convention class definition, pass their medical, criminal and security checks and, satisfy Mullin that they could establish in Canada. For Mullin, this combination of requirements led to a focus on “high profile” and “high risk” refugee applicants and selection interviews that were more complex and “sophisticated.”

However, what Mullin calls “sophistication” was also because of the discretionary and subjective aspects of selection. It is notable that Mullin thought that there was “virtually no one [he] saw in those [African] refugee camps who had a hope in hell of successfully establishing in Canada, even if I thought they were a refugee.” That statement underlines that even where refugee applicants were eligible for refugee protection under the Convention class, they could still not qualify for

resettlement because an officer did not think that they could successfully establish in Canada.

In theory, neither the UN Convention on Refugees nor the Canadian immigration law, called for refugees to prove their economic usefulness in order to resettle. Refugees applying to resettle in Canada were exempt from the “point system,” which, as discussed in chapter 2, instructed Canadian visa officers to favour immigrants who could contribute to the Canadian economy as skilled labourers or entrepreneurs, and integrate with relative ease into Canadian communities.⁵¹⁵ However, officers who interviewed refugee applicants abroad were still required to make a subjective assessment as to whether the applicant was likely to establish in Canada successfully. In this way, economic imperatives resurfaced above humanitarian concerns under the form of the “ability to establish.” In the words of Molloy examined in the previous chapter, officers were asked to envisage the process of resettlement as a continuum that began with refugee selection and ended with a successful settlement in Canadian communities. In this way, refugee selection for resettlement looked not only at the current situation of an applicant but also at possible and future outcomes.

As Mullin related, the illiteracy of entire refugee families (father, mother and children) in Ethiopian refugee camps could represent a critical determinant for why they thought they would be unlikely to establish successfully in Canada, in his eyes

⁵¹⁵ In the documentary *Who Gets In* officers are recorded interviewing economic immigrants in Hong Kong and the issue of “ability to establish” is explored. The point system sought to standardize hitherto discriminatory and subjective immigrant selection practices in order to ensure that economic immigrants met enumerated criteria such as education, language (English or French) and age in order to attain the necessary points (50) that would permit admission to Canada.

(and in the instruction he likely received from colleagues during training). In the Indochinese context, Mullin recalled how he interpreted illiteracy more generously:

You often judged people not so much, and again, we weren't looking at why they left. We were looking at: could they settle with a government willing to take tens of thousands of people. I mean, mom, dad, I would just sort of sit there and go, "Okay, dad is going to wash dishes in a restaurant in Chinatown and mom is going to sew something." It's the kids. You meet some little girl or a little boy who stunned you with how much English they had learned very quickly. I had cases in that context where literally the kid, the oldest kid, would represent the family, not the father, which in traditional Chinese culture was pretty rare, but they figured it out.

Mullin understood then and thought it important to insist almost forty years later that, when given more leeway to assessing "ability to establish," he had been able to consider illiterate Indochinese children's future, and to accept entire illiterate families, including parents and grandparents, who may not have qualified for resettlement had he met them in an Ethiopian camp, a few years afterwards. By doing so, he pointed at structures over which he had no control. The comments above also reveal how in assessing settlement potential, the Indochinese people had an advantage of the presence of a large Chinese-speaking diaspora in Canada since, despite not being able to speak English, they could, in Mullin's words "wash dishes in a restaurant in Chinatown and [the] mom is going to sew something." It is worth noting as well; the racialized imagery that is used to describe the trajectory of Indochinese people who were resettled without language skills were expected to take by officers like Mullin.⁵¹⁶ While I think he was referring to generational relations,

⁵¹⁶ See Ban Seng Hoe, "Enduring hardship: the Chinese laundry in Canada," *Mercury Series, Cultural Studies Paper*, Vol. 76 (Gatineau: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 2003). Seng Hoe's oral history explains how manual work, and in particular laundry work and business were important for the Chinese immigrants who came to Canada in the twentieth century, since it allowed them to earn a living when facing limited employment opportunities due to discrimination.

Mullin himself did not elaborate on how much, or what other knowledge he had of “traditional Chinese culture.” The key takeaway here is that when interviewing and selecting Indochinese for resettlement, Mullin and colleagues did not focus solely on the parents or principal applicants; the selection of Indochinese who did not speak English or French also accounted for the settlement outcomes of their children.

This facilitative approach in how officers like Mullin assessed the ability to establish the potential of the Indochinese might also have been encouraged by the structural possibilities allowed by admission numbers decided by the government. As Mullin stated earlier, once the Government of Canada had decided to “to take tens of thousands of people” from Indochina, officers like him had been expected to “fill up the planes” to Canada. Mullin’s inclination to consider “the kids” was, therefore, not simply a matter of personal choice. It was encouraged, and could only be acted upon, in the circumstances of exceptionally high targets set by policymakers in Ottawa and Geneva.

High-risk and high-profile refugees

Mullin’s emphasis on “literacy” during our interview is important for other reasons.⁵¹⁷ It underlined the forward-looking focus on the settlement of those selected for resettlement. While annual admission levels set in Ottawa constrained the number of refugees admitted from Central and East Africa, the Nairobi visa office

⁵¹⁷ In the film *Who Gets In*, Molloy interviews a UNHCR-referred refugee applicant from Francophone Zaire (now Democratic Republic of Congo) who was a former member of the military who fled to Kenya and had learnt to speak passable English within a few months of arrival. So advanced were his language skills, he had managed to tell his entire story of persecution and flight to Molloy in English. While Molloy had been impressed with his resourcefulness and ability to learn English so quickly and to adapt in Kenya, his application was subsequently refused for security reasons.

also worked (to repeat Mullin's words) "quite closely with the UNHCR and a couple of NGOs to identify *high-risk and high-profile* cases where resettlement was not only desirable; it was viable." Selected refugees needed to be able to "make a go of it" regarding establishing in Canada. In those early days of the Africa Refugee Program, officers believed that viable resettlement candidates were single people and university students.

Mullin: I say Ugandan students from Makerere who had opposed Obote was a group we looked at. We didn't take hundreds of people, but we took some. There were, I'm trying to remember at that point there were some Rwandese who we took. It seemed to me that large-scale resettlement of refugees was not the solution for the problem in Africa.

Interviewer: Because the numbers were staggering?

Mullin: The numbers were staggering and the capacity for these folks to settle, but you had these individual cases where the Rwandese, the Tutsis, were pretty. Many of them had studied in France.

Interviewer: These would have been Tutsis from Rwanda or Burundi?

Mullin: I'm trying to think. I think they were from Burundi. [...] Ethnic Tutsis. Then Ethiopians and a couple of cases of extreme [?] Ethiopians, you got into, again, university students who had been opposed to what's his name?

Interviewer: This would have been Mengistu. He's in Zimbabwe, exile under Mugabe. I saw him in a bank once.

Mullin: Oh, really?

Interviewer: Quite a story. Another day.

Mullin: That group and Mengistu's administration was I don't know whether it's, I'm trying to remember. You're making me think about things I can barely remember.

In the exchange above, Mullin recalls interviewing and selecting Ugandan, Rwandese and Ethiopian university students. The Ugandan students were opposed to the government of President Milton Obote, who had deposed Idi Amin in 1979; the Rwandese were ethnic Tutsis who had fled to Burundi after 1972 and; the Ethiopian

university students opposed the Derg regime, led by Mengistu Haile Mariam. On the one hand, the cross-section of refugee applicants above provides a lens into the political context of uncertainty and flux from state-formation processes in East Africa during the 1980s. On the other, it also illustrates the difference between the Indochinese and African refugee applicants that Mullin selected. The latter met the requirements of the Convention class under political grounds, while the former was selected primarily for “humanitarian” reasons. However, as already argued, the resettlement of Indochinese boat people was understood to be humanitarianism, underwritten by Canadian foreign policy interests and relationships.

At this point, Mullin was quick to point out that during his entire time in Nairobi, he had neither interviewed any female refugee applicants nor had any been referred to the Government of Canada for resettlement.

Now the thing that's, perhaps, interesting in comparison to your own experience and what folks know is I would say almost everybody I took was a man. We were presented with very few women, certainly out of cultures like Ethiopia. At the time, most women wouldn't have done that sort of thing.

“That sort of thing” would be referring to political activism or opposition political participation that led to the “high-risk” and “high-profile” kind of applicants that he was encountering through the African refugee program. It is also plausible to argue that the emphasis on “individual” determination and selection under the Convention Refugee class versus “family” selection at this time likely also resulted in the absence of women. Mullin mentioned the absence of women refugee applicants without prompting, but knew that I had attributed my interest in refugee selection interviews and refugee policy to my own experience as a refugee, after fleeing persecution for political activism in Zimbabwe. Mullin explicitly linked his consideration of the

gender of refugee applicants to his interviewer's story, as the oral history interview space allowed the interviewee and interviewer's subjectivities to interact and "cooperate" to create a shared narrative.⁵¹⁸ Additionally, the last sentence in the exchange above underlies the constitutive and intersubjective aspect of oral history: "you're making me think about things I can barely remember." As other authors have shown, the multiple identities of interview participants, including class, gender, age, and ethnicity, can intersect to impact upon the unfolding story.⁵¹⁹ This moment in the interview, when Mullin's chose to recollect of his experience in direct "comparison to [my] own" also had to do with the well-documented fact that oral histories are as much about the past as they are about the time when stories are remembered, constituted and told.

"New and shiny object"—the Africa Refugee Program

Cognizant of Mullin's musings about whether the Indochina Designated class had created a pull-factor, I asked whether Mullin had wondered the same about the early years of the Africa Refugee Program.

While there was shiny object Europe and shiny object North America for smart, university-educated Africans, I don't think there was this pull factor that we witness today. Some of these folks were referred to us by the UNHCR, and I'll get to that in one second. But I don't think these people were necessarily drooling or anticipating. There was no undercurrent of wanting to leave Africa and go make your fortune in Western Europe or North America, whatever the case may be. It predates all of that. I don't think I'm being naïve in saying that. Certainly, [with] Ethiopians, I never had that impression. I don't know whether it was there, just think it just wasn't part of the psyche at the time. There was no question that somebody whose brother or father or something, and in most cases, it wasn't North America. It was the U.K. They were viewed with the utmost respect because they'd gone and studied in the U.K. There was that,

⁵¹⁸ Abrams, *Oral History Theory*, 54.

⁵¹⁹ Ibid, 10. Also, see Sadoway, "The Gender Factor in Refugee Determination," 244-253

but I don't really think anybody that I ever saw was sitting in front of me as a way that they'd left only because they wanted to go to North America... They had a legitimate reason for being in difficulty, and the option was now presented. That was something they would explore, but I don't think they had gotten on the bus in Kampala with the sole objective of turning up in the Canadian High Commission's immigration section [...] I think it's an important qualification, so I didn't feel we were pulling people out of places. This was *fairly new and shiny object* stuff. No one had really done this kind of stuff.

Mullin's response above emphasizes the Africa Refugee Program as a "fairly new and shiny object," which did not then have the kind of pull-factor he had witnessed earlier in Indochina.⁵²⁰ It is worth noting that Mullin is responding to my question about his experiences in the early 1980s but also likely addressing the more recent developments in Canada's global resettlement program. In the 1990s, the private sponsorship stream became inundated with high application numbers at visa offices such as Nairobi, Cairo and Islamabad. In part, this was because the government was receiving more private sponsorship refugee applications than it could process. By the late 1990s and 2000s, large backlogs of refugee resettlement applications had developed at these missions, and resulted in long wait times (going up to five years in Nairobi) for refugee applicants to get interviewed.⁵²¹ Evolutions in the resettlement

⁵²⁰ By the late 1980s, the Africa Refugee Program was more widely known within the region. Chapter five discusses what this meant for refugee selection and shares anecdotes about interactions with applicants whose resettlement applications had been refused.

⁵²¹ Canadian Council of Refugees, *Nairobi: Long Delays-Statement on Responding to African Refugees*, accessed November 4, 2018, <http://ccrweb.ca/sites/ccrweb.ca/files/nairobistatement.pdf> []. In the wake of the Government of Canada announcement that it would resettle 25,000 Syrians in November, 2015, the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) issued a written statement which echoed a long-held perception by the refugee advocacy group, within the private sponsorship community, and by African diaspora groups that African refugees were not treated fairly within the broader resettlement program. The statement noted that while "Canada's processing of refugees is too slow in many parts of the world [...] it is slowest of all in Africa. Processing is particularly slow in the countries of East and Central Africa covered by Canada's visa office in Nairobi. These long delays leave vulnerable refugees in dangerous situations for longer than anywhere else in the world. We call on the Canadian government to do more to respond to African refugees, who are currently being neglected by Canada's immigration program."

program, especially in Nairobi, provide context for Mullin's response, which appears to suggest a distinction between these earlier African refugee applicants and those that followed. Mullin pioneered and established the African Refugee Program. Therefore, during these early days, it was unlikely that ordinary people in the region or Canada would have known or been aware of this "fairly shiny and new object."⁵²²

Navigating the past and present

Mullin has told his story about refugee selection in Central and East Africa by comparing it with his experiences in Indochina. Through these experiences, and in his own understanding, Mullin navigated two different geographic contexts of refugee selection. In addition, while he may not have used the term specifically, he navigated different legal provisions for the two regions. In relating his experiences to me, Mullin used the very fact of these "navigations" as the main structure of his stories. In this way, we could say that Mullin was also navigating between the past and present to provide a narrative that had meaning for him.

It was clear, in our interview, that Mullin had told his story about Indochina quite often. As seen earlier in the chapter, Mullin's experiences in Indochina had a marked impact on him, and especially the manner in which they continued to resonate in public memory.⁵²³ Mullin's Indochina recollections were more precise in part because they had been more rehearsed than those of his time in Africa. As shown earlier in this chapter, Mullin told the stories about the former because they were

⁵²² In the next chapter, Burrows recounts a period when the "shiny object" was no longer new and the program had developed an echo effect through family-reunification.

⁵²³ As mentioned earlier, the story of the Sam and Rebecca Trinh's family, whom Mullin interviewed and selected for resettlement from Indochina in 1979, had inspired an Historical Canada Heritage minute that was released in 2017.

simultaneously important to him and also because the Indochinese operation continues to be the largest resettlement operation in Canadian history. Additionally, the story about how government, civil society and citizens came together to facilitate the Indochinese operation is a positive story for the public memory and a beacon of what is possible when political and humanitarian will intersect. Therefore, when it came to the Africa Refugee Program, Mullin remembered details and anecdotes that he did not seem to have thought about in decades, and this likely made for a more candid, albeit less chronological account.

As we saw early in the chapter, Mullin narrated the Indochinese movement and Canada's resettlement program to newspapers, television, researchers and bankers. The receiving audience shaped the number of occasions, level of detail and the form and order of his account and conditions of storytelling, that is, the what, why, when, and to whom he was telling his story. The Indochinese movement was "unprecedented" in magnitude, and "a clear example of Canada performing at its best."⁵²⁴ It is not surprising that it would be central to Mullin's life story about refugee selection in Africa. While Mullin shared Indochina as context, it also appeared that for him, this was the most formative part of his life story as a former officer. The role of the Indochinese diaspora and descendants of those who resettled have also continued to keep the memory of this operation alive.⁵²⁵ Also, it is a story with which he was more familiar and rehearsed. His story about Africa was more spontaneous,

⁵²⁴ Ibid, XI. Preface written by the late Honourable Ronald Atkey, PC, and QC who was the Minister of Employment and Immigration from 1979 to 1980.

⁵²⁵ See earlier reference in chapter three to a reference about the work of the "Hearts of Freedom Project" which seeks to "ensure that the settlement experience of South East Asian refugees will be preserved for generations to come and becomes part of Canada's historical narrative," accessed August 23, 2019 <https://heartsoffreedom.org/project-outcomes/>

meaning that he was unable to recount case-specific details or dates.

Notwithstanding, the comparative approach through which Mullin told his story provides a useful lens and discussion of the political interests and legal rules that informed refugee selection in different geographic contexts.

Mullin's narrative provides an invaluable insight into the discretionary aspects of refugee selection in the early days of the Africa Refugee Program, especially regarding the "ability to establish" assessment. Mullin's anecdotes offer a window into how he navigated material and ideational structures by selecting "high-profile" and "high-risk" refugee applicants from Central and East Africa. In fulfilling his remit to establish the Africa Refugee Program, Mullin would have needed to navigate diplomatic relations with the host government of Kenya delicately.⁵²⁶ While Mullin did not proffer any details on this, it would be reasonable to surmise that any Canadian Foreign Service officer would have been aware of the politics of his/her operating environment, especially during a time of political flux and state formation in the region. In addition, as discussed in chapter two, through forums such as the congregation of the *Arusha Conference on Refugee Problems* in 1979 and the first International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (ICARA) in 1981, refugee-hosting countries in the region such as Tanzania and Kenya had started demanding refugee "burden-sharing" from Western governments.⁵²⁷ Therefore, by the time Mullin arrived in Nairobi to establish the Africa Refugee Program, refugee "burden-sharing"

⁵²⁶ In the next chapter, Susan Burrows describes the impact of operating in Nairobi during a period of tense diplomatic relations between the Governments of Canada and Kenya in the late 1980s.

⁵²⁷ See chapter two for historical context of liberation and decolonization on evolution in refugee protection policies of refugee hosting countries. At this time, countries like Tanzania and Kenya had begun voicing concerns about the "burden" of hosting refugees on their economies and infrastructure, and asking Western countries do more towards "burden-sharing".

had become deeply political. Also, as discussed in chapter two and earlier in this chapter, Cold-War interests and security considerations by “Ottawa” made refugee selection a profoundly intricate process.

Ultimately, Mullin’s story is compelling because it provides a lens into the memory of an individual who narrated and navigated seminal moments in the history of Canada’s resettlement program. Mullin’s life story focuses on a historical period from 1979 to 1984, during which he implemented Canada’s formalized resettlement program. Mullin’s story is a comparative account of how he exercised agency and navigated different legal and geographic contexts. When juxtaposed with his experiences in Indochina, where he operated under the more facilitative Indochina designated class mechanism, his account of refugee selection in the Africa Refugee Program reveals less autonomy and discretion under the more stringent Convention Refugee in Need of Resettlement class which had been established through the *1976 Immigration Act*. So, while Mullin was deployed to the Nairobi visa office to establish the Africa Refugee Program, despite its formative stage, his agency was constrained by the numerical limits of an inaugural annual quota of two hundred persons, versus the many thousands he had selected for resettlement from Indochina in a single year. Therefore, in this way, he possessed expansive autonomy in Indochina, which was limited in Central and East Africa. Also, while statutory and admissibility requirements of admission for refugees were clear, the officer still had discretion and could subjectively determine what constituted “ability to establish.”

Ultimately, this chapter reveals Mullin to have been a narrator and navigator in his life story. Mullin is a narrator through his oral testimony for this study as well as

in the many ways that he related a complicated bureaucratic program to various audiences in both the past and present. This chapter provides a prism into how officers experienced and practiced refugee selection in different regions, and the extent to which different refugee and humanitarian mechanisms could either facilitate or constrain officers' autonomy in the field. Mullin's account about the early years of establishing the Africa Refugee Program provides an apt segue to the next chapter, which focuses on officer Susan Burrows' oral testimony about selecting refugees within an already established, and more expansive program.

Chapter Five: Susan Burrows' Life Story

Some of the stories were very hard to listen to and some of the situations, I mean, some of the people were so heroic. I remember in Djibouti, interviewing this man who came in in a wheelchair, and he said he had been shot at. I think he'd lost part of a leg. He crawled to the refugee camp.

Like he got help eventually, but he basically just crawled on his hands and knees to get out, and finally ended up, we ended up taking him under a disabled refugee program at the time [...]

At times you got almost cynical because you would be hearing the same refugee story over and over again, and then you'd think, oh, come on. You know? I mean, give me something a little bit different.

But other times, those stories kind of were incredible. They were like [...] heroism, the conditions people had to go through. I tried never to lose sight of the fact that these people would, you know, that's the other thing, that I always tried to keep in mind it wasn't just a matter that they had come as refugees and the things they went through in the past, but I was thinking, "How would it feel like for me to give up all my family, all my possessions and have to go to another place?"

And sometimes having been in the camp for five or six years, and wondering, you know, if you were ever going to get out of it. Because one day to the next, you wouldn't think there was any hope. It was remarkable how much hope people kept. So, of course, they had to have hope for their children, and universally, and I'm talking refugees and immigrants, they just always were doing it for the children, yes.

At the beginning of my interview with Susan Burrows, the third and last one conducted for this thesis, she mused about the kinds of stories and refugee applicants she encountered during her three-year posting in Nairobi, Kenya, from 1987 to 1990.⁵²⁸ She addressed more critically, the theme of the "heroic" or courageous refugee that is also present in the life stories of Michael Molloy and Scott Mullin. However, she was the only one who used the term more explicitly to describe some of the refugee applicants that she encountered. In this chapter (which focuses on

⁵²⁸Susan Burrows interview with Andriata Chironda, Ottawa, July 2018.

Burrows' experiences implementing resettlement policy in Nairobi, three years after Scott Mullin), I underline several elements of continuity, comparability and contrast with the two previous chapters. As stated in the Introduction, after arriving in Nairobi in the summer of 1987 for her posting as Immigration Canadian Foreign Service officer, Burrows received operational training in refugee selection from Molloy, who had been in charge of immigrant and refugee selection at Nairobi for one year by this time. This relationship is essential in conceptualizing both the form and content of Burrows' life story.

Akin to the two previous chapters, the rest of the chapter is organized into four sections. The first section introduces Burrows and provides a brief biographical outline of her professional trajectory, including her posting in Nairobi. It also explores the reflections that Burrows chose to share about her family values and context, as she believed they might have led her to a career in the Canadian Foreign Service.

The second section considers Burrow's life story from the angle of "how" she chose to tell it, including the process by which she came to be interviewed by this author. The third section examines "what" Burrows chose to include and exclude from the content of her account. Like the two other officers, Burrows shared recollections of her anxiety about working in the process of refugee selection in the early days of her career as an Immigration Canadian Foreign Service officer, especially because Nairobi was the first time she worked in refugee selection. In this vein, Burrows discussed the training and knowledge transfer she received from Molloy, showing how she built on the bureaucratic knowledge and culture of refugee selection to develop what she called "intuitive approaches" of her own. The fourth and concluding section

draws on the extent and limits of the individual officer's agency as she navigated the structures of refugee selection. In particular, because Burrows represents the only female official interviewed for this study, and because she included several times in her story the question of the gendered nature of officers' agency, this subject will also be addressed in this chapter. In addition, the impact of the 1989 National Film Board documentary film, *Who Gets In* will retain our attention: Burrows' comments on the film offered further insights into the vagaries of selecting refugees in an intensely politicized era and environment, especially when she recalled how she navigated the dual role of refugee selection and diplomat. This section closes with an analysis of Burrows' role as a narrator within refugee protection policy and practice in the past and present.

Who is Susan Burrows?

Susan Burrows started her life story by stating that she and her identical twin sister Sandra were born in October 1952 in Walkerton, Ontario. Burrows, who was baby "B," weighed less than baby "A." The sisters were adopted together and raised in Southampton, Ontario, where she attended public school. After that, she went to high school in Port Elgin because it was a district school that covered both Southampton and Port Elgin, as well as other small towns in the region. Burrows mentioned that during her teenage years, she worked as a babysitter, as a short-order cook at a beach bowling alley, as a waitress during the summer of 1968, and as a motel house-cleaner during the summer of 1969 and 70, before proceeding to university. She received an undergraduate degree in Political Science and Geography and a Master of Arts degree in International Relations from Carleton University (in 1975 and 1978

respectively). Her graduate thesis was about Canadian Sports Policy and the boycotts of Apartheid South Africa.

Burrows' career in the Foreign Service was not her first time as a civil servant. During the summers of 1973 and 1974, she had worked as a tour guide for Parks Canada. Later, during her graduate training, she took a temporary clerical position in the Toponymic Division of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. During her final year of undergraduate studies and the entirety of her graduate studies, she doubled as a teaching assistant, in order "to make enough money to complete [her] Master's Degree."

While this study focuses on Burrows' time in Africa, it is essential to recognize that Burrows' professional trajectory was expansive and alternated between postings abroad and policy positions in Ottawa. Burrows' career in the Canadian Foreign Service started in 1978, when as a trainee she did her French language training and a short temporary assignment in New York City (United States of America), before being posted as a Third Secretary to the Hong Kong High Commission from 1978 to 1983 with responsibility for Southern China. This was followed by a posting as a Second Secretary to the Canadian Embassy in the Netherlands from 1983 to 1987. When she arrived in the Nairobi visa office in 1987, Burrows was responsible for refugee programs in Ethiopia, Somalia, Djibouti, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and Zambia. After Nairobi, Burrows held several positions at national headquarters in Ottawa and postings in New York, Hong Kong, Trinidad and Singapore. She retired

from the civil service when she had reached senior management in 2010, and has occasionally worked as a consultant since then.⁵²⁹

Public service runs in the family

While her parents always knew that Burrows was interested in politics and travel, they never imagined that she would join the Canadian Foreign Service. According to Burrows, her father “probably thought” that she and Sandra “were going to be like every other girl in the town, get married at the age of 19, never go to university.” Her “dad didn’t even save any money” for the twins to go to university. By the time they got to high school, their mother “had realized” that “they were more academically inclined than other girls, and so she started saving money.” In addition to the jobs taken prior and during university, her mother’s savings enabled Burrows and her twin-sister to complete undergraduate and graduate studies.

Burrows’ recalled that her parents did not think that once she got into “the service,” she was “going to be spending the rest of [her] life overseas” and that realization had “probably been a bit of a shock to them both.” The only time her father had “ever interfered” in her Foreign Service career was in 1983. Burrows had just returned from her Hong Kong posting, and she was set to be posted to Detroit, “not long after the Detroit riots.” She remembers her father being upset and telling her, “You are not going to Detroit.” He was “terrified because all he’d ever seen on TV were the riots, so he thought, you know, I was going to get attacked, in a very dangerous place.”

⁵²⁹ See Appendix 1: *Chronology of Officer Trajectories, Key Milestones or Events* and Map of Nairobi Visa Office Regional Coverage.

Burrows' parents had both served in the Second World War as part of the Canadian army and had instilled "a sense of public duty" during her upbringing. The theme of public service is explored later in the chapter, especially in relation to the example and legacy of her mother, who had been part of the Canadian Women's Army Corps, and had, in Burrows' own words, seen "more action than [her] dad."

Another thing too is because she was in the army and she married my dad. My dad got sent back to Canada before she did, so she was still overseas in '46 and then she came back. And she said to me many times, "I wish I'd just stayed in Europe. I would have had a career for myself." She had a life and had been independent since she was 13, so I think for her, she was an inspiration to be an independent woman and have a career of our own [...]
And yet, on the other hand, she was one of the most motherly mothers. She cooked, she baked [and] she was always home for us. You know, didn't do things if Dad didn't like it, and that sort of thing. She was very traditional as well, but I think it was the fact that she'd had an exciting life, one that inspired us to want to do something, especially abroad.

And to think that as a woman, of course, during the war it was, I remember it; this was later in life I said to her, "You know, I didn't realize, when you joined the Army that you women were actually thought of by a lot of men as prostitutes, almost. They thought, 'Oh, what kind of woman would go and join the army and do something like that? It must be something wrong with her.'" And she said, "Yes, we did get that kind of prejudice against us for doing that."

Her mother "seldom talked about" the war years, and stories about her mother's war experiences often arose from reunions with her war friends where "they talked about the fun times they had." Burrows witnessed some of these infrequent reunions. This reluctance to tell stories about the war also applied to her father. It is notable that Burrows shared her family story in a follow-up interview. The biographical account of her life story only became relevant in her story after she had shared the account of her experience with refugee selection, a story that she began in 1987 after arriving in Nairobi. The next section discusses the shaping of Burrows' life story.

Burrows' Story Form

After my preparatory meeting with Michael Molloy in June 2018 for this study, he suggested the names of former Canadian Immigration Foreign Service officers who had engaged in refugee selection interviews on the African continent and who were (in his eyes) potential participants. After that, Molloy introduced me to Susan Burrows through email. The fact that Burrows and Mullin agreed to be interviewed after the introduction by Molloy is perhaps indicative of the trust that exists with the latter.⁵³⁰ After the email introduction, I exchanged a couple of emails with Burrows before we met for the first part of two interviews, which lasted a total of four hours and twenty-six minutes. All interviews took place during the summer of 2018 in the privacy of Burrows' home in Ottawa. The first interview in early July lasted about an hour and a half, and Burrows agreed to a follow-up interview for later in the month.

All of the interviews took place in a relatively informal setting that also included the attentive participation (through occasional purring) of Burrows' cat, Selkie. My first interview with Burrows took place after Molloy's interview. This detail in the sequence is relevant because their stories and experiences are interconnected. For instance, in the first interview with Burrows, she described Molloy as having been a "negotiator" in Nairobi. I subsequently asked Molloy about Burrows' description, and why Burrows might have seen him in this way. And, in the first interview with Molloy, he mentioned a refugee selection trip that he took with Burrows to a camp on the outskirts of Mogadishu. He did not provide many details because, to him, this was

⁵³⁰ Chapter one discusses briefly the challenges that other researchers have experienced in finding willing officer participants. See Satzewich, *Points of Entry: How Canada's Immigration Officers Decide Who Gets In*, 8.

Burrows' story to tell, and he knew, by this time, that she would also be interviewed. I was later able to corroborate with Burrows, "her story" about the Mogadishu selection trip. This process demonstrated a connection and continuity in Burrows' and Molloy's stories—in their shared experience of refugee selection in Nairobi, and in the present context of storytelling.

According to Burrows, when she arrived in Nairobi, she knew about the refugee resettlement policy but had not had any training about practice and operations.

I was just in anguish every day. I don't know if I'm doing the right decisions. I don't know how I'm supposed to know this. How am I supposed to learn all this? How come Molloy knows, and how come my predecessor knew how to do all this stuff? Like, I was just, I thought, "What if I'm making the wrong decisions? It's affecting people's lives, and honestly, I pretty well wrote that every day for the first year, and then it got to the point where, oh, they think I'm an expert on this, or maybe. And it was almost like a turnaround, and it was just pure experience.

The reflective content above provides insight into Burrows' understanding of her agency and, in turn, the impact and consequences of exercising it through selection decision-making. Through the on-the-job training she received from Molloy and experience from time and practice, Burrows eventually gained confidence in her abilities to make selection decisions. Ready access to knowledge and information (about Kenya and other countries from which refugees came) that was produced by regional UNHCR representatives and resettlement officers also helped bolster Burrows' confidence. Burrows developed relationships with other Westerners from the expatriate community, including "a colleague who was working for CIDA."⁵³¹

⁵³¹ The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) was established by the Canadian government of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau in 1968. Its mandate was to "support sustainable development in developing countries in order to reduce poverty and contribute to a more secure,

The process of remembering, reconstructing and narrating stories in oral interviews is subjective. Molloy trained Burrows on the operational aspects of refugee selection, and a study of the trainer and trainee relationship between Molloy and Burrows offers an insight into the construction and iteration of bureaucratic knowledge and culture about refugee selection and the implementation of resettlement policy more broadly. In the context of the present study, Molloy has helped to identify Burrows as a potential narrator, a relationship which, arguably, impacted on the form of Burrows' story and inflected its content.

Burrows chose to begin her story precisely from the time when she was posted to Nairobi and trained by Molloy. Unlike Molloy and Mullin, she did not initially start her story by mentioning elements of context ahead of her arrival and experiences in Africa. It was only later, during a second interview, that Burrows spoke of her family background and her parents' relationship to public service during the second interview, whereas Molloy's story began with a chronological account from childhood, and Mullin began with a comparative context of his experiences in Indochina.

The different approaches possibly reflect two things: The first issue is that of familiarity. A month before my first formal interview with Molloy, we had met to discuss the project over a coffee. Later that month, I interacted with Molloy at a Canadian Immigration History Society (CIHS) panel discussion by former officers who

equitable, and prosperous world" by administering Canadian foreign aid programs abroad. CIDA was merged with the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD) in 2013 under Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government and under the current government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, DFATD was renamed Global Affairs Canada (GAC).

had worked on the Czechoslovakian refugee movement in 1968.⁵³² The event took place at the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) headquarters in Ottawa. Through these interactions, Molloy and I built up a familiarity that may have made him comfortable enough to inflect his story with some personal background. On the other hand, I only met Burrows for the first time on the occasion of our first oral history interview—our previous interactions had been via email.

Secondly, this was not the first time that Molloy was telling his story about his experience with refugee selection in Africa and other regions. He had rehearsed and told his story many times and to different audiences over the years.⁵³³ On the other hand, Burrows indicated that this was the first time that she was telling her story about refugee selection, not just concerning the African continent, but in general.⁵³⁴ Notwithstanding, it was evident that Burrows had given thought to, and organized her recollections, in advance of the interview. Her account was detailed and illuminated the intricate relationship between the eligibility and “ability to establish” provisions

⁵³² At the same event, Molloy introduced me to a fellow former Foreign Service officer, Peter Duschinsky, who in the early 1980s had managed resettlement selection at the Cairo visa office, including the resettlement of Ethiopian refugees who were in Sudanese camps. I had a few exchanges with Peter through email after the event about possibly participating in the project but these plans eventually fell through. However, from my brief interaction with him at the CIHS event, I learnt of his remarkable personal story: He had been orphaned and come to Canada at the age of thirteen through the Hungarian refugee movement of 1957 and after joining the Foreign Service, had a distinguished career with postings to Cairo, Paris, Chicago and Budapest. Like Molloy, he had also worked in international and domestic immigration and refugee policy and had other interests, including as a researcher. Notably, he was one of the co-authors with Molloy and other colleagues of *Running on Empty*.

⁵³³ See chapter three for an outline of previous fora to which Molloy has told his story.

⁵³⁴ Burrows did not elaborate on whether she had been approached or had considered participating in any research projects before.

of the *1976 Immigration Act* during decision-making for refugee selection.⁵³⁵ The next section discusses what part of her story Burrows chose to share.

Burrows' Story Content

Before the start of our first interview, Burrows had read the brief introduction to the study's research focus and signed the consent letter. As mentioned earlier, after I encouraged her to tell her story, Burrows started her account by talking about Nairobi. When prompted about where she wanted to start with her story, Burrows responded:

Well, I guess probably when I got posted to Kenya. I'd had two previous postings, neither of which were involved with refugees, although I had interviewed a couple of refugees when I was in the Netherlands. This was really my first opportunity to work with refugees, and so I went to Kenya in the summer of early July of 1987, and we had a regional office there at the time. There were four or five posts around Africa, but I was posted to Nairobi, which had the largest of the immigration and refugee programs, and we covered a huge territory, from Ethiopia, Somalia in the north, right down to Zambia in the south, and quite a few countries in between.

I knew I was going as a Refugee Officer. I did not have any previous training, which was a bit of a shock when I got there, because I was replacing somebody who really was quite an expert on it, but I also had the good fortune of working for Mike Molloy, who really was the person who trained me on almost every aspect of it. I knew our policy, but putting it into practice was a totally different thing.

The quote above is insightful for several reasons. Like Mullin in the previous chapter, Burrows refers to and identifies with the collective “we” when referring to the

⁵³⁵ The sixteenth century French female supplicants and pardon tellers of Zemon Davis', *Fiction in the Archives*, “whether on the advice of a royal notary or from their own sense of things, used different strategies to describe their state of mind as they committed sudden homicide, without ever presenting themselves as unpardonable avenging furies—but also without resorting to the nineteenth century polarization between the “good” woman and the angry woman in the attic. Rather they placed themselves on the spectrum of affect.” Additionally, even though women were “not heard very often”, their pardon tales “could be set off from the men by a distinctive complexity and texture.” This was because “women were either silent about their feelings or many-tongued” and gave “coherence to their remission narratives” through creativity in “dialogue or prose detail alone,” 103.

establishment of a regional office by the Canadian government and, more specifically, the Ministry of Manpower and Immigration. Also, when Burrows arrived in Nairobi, the Ministry of Manpower and Immigration had not yet begun formal training for officers who engaged in refugee selection for resettlement. Burrows indicated that “Ottawa” finally developed and began to offer a refugee training officer course to Foreign Service officers in 1989, a year before she left Nairobi. Molloy was tasked with overseeing the development of course content and delivering the inaugural class. Unfortunately, the training came late into her posting, and she had already gained operational experience in Nairobi while working with Molloy, himself. The role of Molloy as a “trainer” is important to understanding the sharing and transfer of bureaucratic knowledge and culture and how this impacted on approaches to refugee selection.

Like Molloy and Mullin, Burrows’ narrative is a product of her agency, experiences and memories as well as the intersubjective collaboration within the oral history interview. Burrows’ account of Molloy’s role in her training offers an insight into the role of bureaucratic culture and knowledge transfer in shaping an officer’s approach to refugee selection. The story of her relationship with Molloy lends itself well to a critical reading, especially using the concepts of subjectivity and intersubjectivity, as defined in chapter one.

Regional Context of Refugee Selection and the Role of the UNHCR

In the previous chapter, Mullin’s comparison of his Indochina and Africa experiences highlighted geography as a central factor in refugee selection. Burrows’ mention of geography was equally notable, but different: she was surprised by the

expansive regional territory covered by the Nairobi visa office when she arrived in 1987. The Nairobi visa office was responsible for immigrant and refugee selection in eighteen Central, East and South African countries and Burrows, as the refugee officer, was responsible for refugee operations.⁵³⁶

I think the first thing that really hit me was what a huge territory we covered, and I had studied African politics at university, mainly South Africa, that was my thesis area, but I had to instantly become an expert on the politics of about ten different countries. And when I say expert, I'll give you an example.

I was going to both Rwanda and Burundi, and in each country, you had a, in one country you had a Hutu minority being persecuted by a Tutsi majority, and in the other country, you had a Hutu majority being persecuted by, sorry, a Hutu minority being persecuted by a Tutsi majority.

So, to try, and there also had been civil wars between the two countries as well as within both countries, and keep those straight as you went from one country to the other was very confusing and to *hear the same refugee stories*.⁵³⁷ But from the other point of view, it was also difficult. And then I was doing it all in French, and my French wasn't all that great at that point, so that was a bit of a challenge.

But we did have a lot of advantages in the program. We had the central, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees office, was also centrally located in Nairobi, and they were the coordinating office. And as you know, the United Nations or the High Commission for Refugees establishes targets every year in terms of the number of people in each country they would like them to accept.

The excerpt above, which shows the overlapping geographies of the reach of the UNHCR and Canada's refugee offices, reveals a continuous theme from all officers' accounts about the importance and centrality of the UN agency to many aspects of Canada's Africa Refugee Program. In our interviews, Molloy emphasized how Canada's ability to meet its annual resettlement targets was, in large part, dependent on

⁵³⁶ See the previous section for a list of these eight countries. Also, see Map of Nairobi Visa Office Regional Coverage.

⁵³⁷ Italics are mine for emphasis.

UNHCR's ability to identify and refer refugee applicants and, after selection for resettlement, to help facilitate medical examinations and travel arrangements. Mullin further explained how, In the early years of Canada's refugee program at Nairobi, the UNHCR was the major referral organization.⁵³⁸

As shown and highlighted in Mullin's account as well, the UNHCR helped Canadian officers by fact-checking and verifying refugee applicant stories and providing local knowledge or information. Burrows found the UNHCR's role important especially when trying to make sense of refugee applicant stories, political and regional contexts of the conflict and instability that had led to refugees' flight and, as she tried to "keep those [details] straight as [she] went from one country to the other." Since officers like Burrows made decisions on the basis of applicant stories, verifying these stories against facts and local knowledge that was available to them from sources such as the regional UNHCR office, helped them to assess the credibility of applicant stories of persecution and flight and in turn, determine their eligibility for refugee protection and resettlement. This was especially important when officers would "hear the same refugee stories" and needed to establish the veracity or truthfulness of what they were hearing.

In order to establish whether refugee applicants were eligible for resettlement to Canada as refugees, officers also needed to determine whether they believed stories of persecution and flight. In the case of Burrows', she was required to determine the credibility of what she believed to be the "same" kind of stories from

⁵³⁸ Mullin indicated that when the African refugee program was established in 1981, in his experience, nine out of ten interviews were with UNHCR referred applicants. This ratio persisted for a long time until the 1990s.

applicants who were fleeing from complex politics and conflicts. It is likely that these refugee stories were told to officers like Burrows in affective and evocative ways. Zemon-Davis' described how some of the pardon tales she encountered in the archives tended to be much about "showing" rather than just "telling" what the actors were like and what they were feeling, "recreating for their readers and hearers a situation where the supplicant became all of a sudden justifiably or understandably heated up and angry and may have feared for his or her life..."⁵³⁹ In these tales, the mentioning of "precise persons, places, movements and gestures were intended partly to generate supporting witnesses, but also to give concreteness and credibility to the story" by providing "details that guarantee that the event really happened."⁵⁴⁰ Parallels can be drawn between Zemon-Davis's observation of "stories where the telling is routine" and Burrows' comments about encountering the same stories during refugee selection.⁵⁴¹ In the latter scenario, the UNHCR's assistance in providing local and regional facts and context was an invaluable resource for Burrows and helped to decipher the many and similar refugee applicant stories that she encountered in the region.

Burrows' views regarding the importance of effective relationships with the local UNHCR is critical to understanding the complex context of refugee selection. She remembered that "the UNHCR officers did vary in terms of the quality of the people who were doing the referrals." While there were "some really good resettlement officers, ones [she] admired tremendously," there were also "some that

⁵³⁹ Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives*, 37.

⁵⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 45.

⁵⁴¹ *Ibid*, 48.

really didn't do their job that well.” This observation echoes chapter three’s discussion of Molloy’s frustrations with UNHCR inefficiencies and unreliability in referring to adequate applicants and facilitating post-selection medical and travel arrangements.⁵⁴² As Schmidt has explained with regard to UNHCR refugee status determination, the complex nature of the process of implementation of refugee norms and policy arises from the enmeshment of international and “domestic” or local logics and practices.⁵⁴³ Broad pressures affect implementation and on-the-ground decision-making, and these include “democratization, state consolidation, regional politics, or material shortages.”⁵⁴⁴ Also, due to the heterogeneity of interests and actors across different countries or regions, implementation at the local level can be unstable and variegated, and local settings become sites for “conflictive negotiation systems.”⁵⁴⁵

The centrality of individuals in policy implementation and practice within resettlement extended to partner countries and institutions. A fuller discussion of the entire continuum of refugee selection that includes the UNHCR refugee intake and status determination process is beyond the scope of this study. However, the key takeaway is that Burrows, Mullin and Molloy understood the critical importance of effective working relationships with the UNHCR in facilitating resettlement.

⁵⁴² See chapter three for a discussion of how Molloy organized a training workshop with the UNHCR in order to implement a standardized resettlement referral process and documentation for all third-country resettlement countries operating in the region. In addition, the workshop clarified resettlement country expectations from the UNHCR in order for countries to meet admission targets. At this time, the UNHCR office was also working with the United States and Australian resettlement programs.

⁵⁴³ Anna Schmidt, “Status Determination and Recognition,” 268.

⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 267.

⁵⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

Resources, Targets and Refugee Selection

Burrows' story introduced the concept of visa office or mission targets and how this impacted on the time and resources that were available to operations. Targets comprised of numerical ranges of permanent resident admissions projections and allocations for each Canadian visa office abroad. Within the mission-specific range of admission numbers, sub-targets were allocated for different immigrant classes, including for resettled refugees.⁵⁴⁶ Burrows understood at the time (and still recognizes) that the annual targets varied “tremendously depending on the refugee crisis at the time” and were determined by “civil servants in Headquarters who would be negotiating that for us based on [the] resources” available. For all officers interviewed, the quantitative (number of admissions) and qualitative (nationalities, countries or regions) parameters of refugee selection were defined according to priorities, interests and resources of the Government of Canada.⁵⁴⁷ The financial and human resources available to visa offices represent the main instance of the material structures officers navigated. In the excerpt below, Burrows described these qualitative and quantitative structures.

There were a number of factors. Resources, we had to [...] arrange the number of people of various ethnic origins already in Canada who could help with the resettlement of these people. Language, education, all of the regular factors that go into this. They gave us a general target overall of what was expected for Nairobi to take, and then on top of that, they would give us a country-specific target that they wanted us to take.

⁵⁴⁶ In 1981, the inaugural resettlement space allocation for African refugees was two hundred and by 1985 it had quadrupled to one-thousand spaces.

⁵⁴⁷ The *1976 Immigration Act* had standardized immigrant and refugee selection legal provisions and prescribed that Annual Immigration Levels plans be tabled and approved by Cabinet. In regards to refugee selection, regional, visa office and proportions between private and government assisted refugees were established in consultation with provinces and territories and key stakeholders such as non-governmental organizations, faith-based groups and churches and refugee advocacy groups.

And so, the UNHCR regionally, but also in each country, would have a general target themselves in terms of what they were going to refer to Canada. The big advantage with the government-assisted refugees was that we had notes from UNHCR in advance, so we knew these were the people they were referring, and these were the ones that they, I guess, expected us to take, but it was always our choice as to whether or not we would take them because we had our refugee criteria at the time. That was the general context of it all.

Burrows' comments about the role of resources and targets provide critical insight into the interplay between officer agency and structures related to the Canadian government's resource capacity, interests and priorities. In addition to this is the broader structural context of UNHCR targets and priorities which intersected with those of Canada, especially in relation to government-assisted refugees. The targets and resources allocated to each visa office by UNHCR prescribed who could even be considered for resettlement. Further Canadian parameters for settlement included the presence or absence of "people of various ethnic origins already in Canada who could help with the resettlement" of those selected. Within the international and national parameters described above, the individual officer was required to conduct eligibility and "ability to establish" assessments, and ensure that if found eligible for resettlement, the refugee applicant also met criminal, medical and security statutory requirements.⁵⁴⁸

Government Assisted and Group or Privately Sponsored Refugees

Burrows recalled that the two main categories for resettlement she worked with when in Nairobi, were the "government-sponsored refugees" and "group-sponsored refugees." She explained that government-sponsored or "assisted" refugees were usually UNHCR-referred and received financial settlement assistance from the

⁵⁴⁸ See chapter two for a detailed outline of the refugee provisions of the *1976 Immigration Act*.

Government of Canada for up to one year. As discussed in chapters two, three and four, Burrows reiterated that group-sponsored or privately-sponsored refugees were usually identified and privately sponsored by Canadian citizens, churches, parishes or non-governmental organizations such as the World University Scholarship of Canada (WUSC) who pledged to provide settlement assistance for food, shelter, clothing and other in-kind supports in the first year in Canada. However, sometimes, group-sponsored refugees were “matched by the government” to private sponsors. For Burrows, an important distinction between the two groups lay in the process and pathway through which their applications for resettlement came before her and other officers. According to what Burrows understood at the time, “the huge difference between government-sponsored refugees and group-sponsored refugees was that the group sponsors were *naming* individuals.”

So, they would say, "Okay, we want so-and-so." And it was usually somebody who had a relative in Canada, so the relative was referring that person to us. In addition to going to the various countries to interview government-sponsored refugees, we also were interviewing the group-sponsored ones, both in Kenya and outside of Kenya. I had a workload in Kenya that I had to do, so in other words, these would be refugees that were in the various camps around Nairobi, and some were actually living in the city. Some were confined to the camps; others were urban refugees that were coming to us and named refugees. I would do those interviews, as well.

And we only had government-assisted, and we had privately-sponsored. Those were the two. And as I say, the private-sponsored tended to have a higher refusal rate than the government-sponsored.

Burrow's words above show how the group or privately sponsored refugees tended to be named or sponsored through the efforts of relatives who were in Canada. This suggests that previously resettled refugees who were now settled in Canada were seeking to reunite with family. As explained in chapter two, under the 1976

Immigration Act, most privately sponsored refugees were supported by Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAHs), who were often large faith-based organizations, churches or parishes that entered into formal agreements with the federal government through the Ministry of Manpower and Immigration.⁵⁴⁹ Family members in Canada could approach a large SAH to “name” a refugee for whom they would form a “constituent group” in order to raise settlement funds. As explained in chapter two, the *Immigration Act* also provided for “groups of five” Canadian citizens or permanent residents to “name” a refugee applicant and collate resources for their sponsorship and settlement.⁵⁵⁰ These mechanisms came to be the means through which former refugees and diaspora communities who were now settled as permanent residents and citizens in Canada came to participate in resettlement through private sponsorship. While most of the selection interviews that she conducted from 1981 to 1984 were UNHCR-referred, Burrows encountered a larger number of privately “named” refugee applicants from 1987 to 1990.

In the previous chapter, Mullin’s response to the question of whether in the early 1980s, the Africa Refugee Program was creating a “pull” factor akin to his observations about the Indochina Designated class is important. However, it appears that by the late 1980s, when Burrows was in charge of refugee operations in Nairobi, things had changed. Scholars have written about the “echo effect” arising in

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid. See William Janzen, “The 1979 MCC Master Agreement for the Sponsorship of Refugees in Historical Perspective,” *Journal of Mennonite Studies* (2011): 211-222, for a discussion of the first SAH agreement signed by the Department of Immigration with Mennonite Central Committee of Canada (MCCC) in 1979 in response to the Indochinese movement. This article discusses the Master Agreement’s genesis, context and implications.

⁵⁵⁰ Such group or private sponsors were legally required to provide settlement assistance to sponsored refugee individuals or families for up to one year.

resettlement when Canadian citizens or permanent residents who are former refugees themselves, mobilize private sponsorship or government assistance in order to reunite with family members who are still in refugee situations.⁵⁵¹ It is plausible that because of this factor, increased resettlement applicant numbers in the late 1980s were because of the family reunification motives of those who had been resettled in the early years of the Africa Refugee Program. While the echo effect is now recognized by immigration officials as a natural consequence of resettlement, it does not appear that this terminology was being used within the African Refugee Program context at the time. Notwithstanding, for both Burrows and Mullin before her, the “naming” process of government-assisted and privately sponsored refugees (by the UNHCR and family respectively) impacted the form, duration and intensity of refugee selection interviews and procedures. This was because, as explained by Mullin in the previous chapter, Canadian officers perceived UNHCR-referred refugee applicants to be “pre-screened” since they already had been interviewed and determined to be Convention refugees before referral for resettlement to Canada. Additionally, the biographical and narrative information on the referral document from the UNHCR made the officer’s job administratively easier.

UNHCR pre-selection and the role of “family reunification” in private sponsorship

This author’s interview exchange with Burrows is a poignant illustration of the echo effect as well as a continuity of a theme identified in the two previous chapters regarding the role of UNHCR referrals in refugee selection.

Burrows: They would have the notes. I think they became a lot more detailed later on because I do remember if, and I'm not sure if my memory, this was 30

⁵⁵¹ Hyndman et al., “Private Refugee Sponsorship in Canada.”

years ago. But I think we had a lot more detailed notes as I did the interviews in Asia than I did in Africa.

We'd have sort of first, have the referral, which basically meant that they endorsed, that they thought these were refugees in their opinion, and then they would have a little bit of a brief story. But sometimes we didn't have anything, so again, in Burundi was one situation where we had nothing, and we basically had to do it from scratch. So that added a lot of time to the interview, too, so yes.

Interviewer: In terms of numbers for the group-sponsored ones, you indicated that you largely processed them in Nairobi, at the embassy, so to speak. Would you say that was the quality of the applications?

Burrows: Well, again, yes, not, they weren't great refugees. Higher on the admissibility factors, higher on education, because a lot of them were urban refugees. But their refugee stories, they had mainly come across the border and were seeking work in Kenya and that kind of thing. Yes, the privately-sponsored ones. But we had hundreds and hundreds of files of privately-sponsored on our files in Kenya that we couldn't reach.

Even when we would go off on area trips, we tended to concentrate on the government-sponsored ones, and I think one of the processes – and I think we all felt this, and I think Molloy felt the same too – that it would have been a better program if the refugees had been unnamed, if we had been able to say, “Okay, we've got this portion of the ones that we can't accept, maybe, from UNHCR.”

If we could give them [private sponsors] a larger number and say, “You would take them.” There's a give and take on that. The downside to that is that yes, there were genuine family members who, it makes sense. Like, you've come out of a camp, and this happened a lot too, I would get, I tried not to maintain much contact with the refugees after they went to Canada because then they would contact me and say, “Now can you get my brother out? Can you get my cousin out?”

The above exchange reveals some critical issues. Firstly, it shows that Burrows and, in her opinion, Molloy, while recognizing the value of private sponsorship in family reunification, preferred UNCHR-referred refugee applicants because they tended to meet Convention class eligibility requirements more than privately sponsored refugees. Secondly, Burrows reveals a refugee selection conundrum whereby those who tended to score “higher on admissibility factors” such as education, “weren't

great refugees”—meaning that they did not meet eligibility. The eligibility and admissibility continuum was a central prism through which Burrows selected refugees and is discussed more substantively in the next section.

The common preference by both Molloy and Burrows for resettled refugees to not be named presents a significant contestation between structure (through limited resources and targets) and an individual officers’ desire for efficiency in refugee selection where capacity and resources focus on “better” applications—such as pre-screened UNHCR-referred refugee applicants who tended have higher acceptance rates because they met eligibility and admissibility requirements.

Even the WUSC students, the ones that were getting the WUSC scholarships, some of their referrals were really bad. They were never going to make it as students, and they certainly weren’t being put forward because they were real refugees. We had a pretty high refusal rate all around.

Then as I said, it got to the point where we had so many of these PSR cases on file; we couldn’t even find the people ... Their relatives didn’t know where they were, so we couldn’t even bring them in for interview[s] or get them to the UNHCR in the country that we were visiting because the relatives didn’t know where they were.

While Molloy and Mullin recalled the WUSC Student Refugee program applicants as having had more favourable acceptance rates, Burrows provided a much more circumspect and qualified perspective. Burrows’ remark about “real refugees” and “high refusal rates” refers to refugee applicants’ eligibility for protection and resettlement under the Convention class. With experience, she came to recognize that applicants who were strong on eligibility tended to be weak on the “ability to establish” assessment.

As already shown, the “ability to establish” assessment also took into account whether there were communities in Canada who would be able to provide the necessary support (and who spoke the same language and shared the same culture) to selected applicants. In other words, the intent was to balance protection needs with a consideration of whether selected applicants would be comparatively better off in Canada or not. The eligibility and “ability to establish” continuum or relationship was an essential prism and analytical tool through which Burrows exercised agency and discretion when making selection decisions. While the applicants likely conditioned Burrows’ views about some of the WUSC applicants that she interviewed, it is also possible that her views are likely more objective and distanced from those of Molloy since she was not actively involved in creating the program. However, in general for Burrows, applicants “that were strong on eligibility were usually weak on the admissibility because they could not express themselves well, and therefore probably lost points on that side of it.”

The previous two chapters discussed the distinction between selection interviews under the “designated class” and the Convention class, and the impact of differences on resettlement selection and officer decision-making. Burrows expanded the benefits of “designated class” status afforded in other regions to resource savings and how this could have been beneficial in the African context. Had the “designated class” status been applied to some of the displaced populations Burrows encountered in the region, it would have expedited selection interviews by removing the eligibility component of the interview, allowed officers to select families and not just individual refugee applicants, and facilitated officer discretion in assessing families’ “ability to

establish” in Canada. Burrows offered some comparative insight about her experiences using the Designated class provisions in South-East Asia:

Because then, when we started interviewing in the Karen refugee camps, where you were seeing whole families, it made a huge difference in how the kids were. Often you picked it [the family] on the basis of a kid, sometimes on the basis of a spouse who had now gone further than the husband. Even with the independent immigrants, who often I would think to myself, why didn't you put your wife as the head of the family, because she has a lot more going for her than you do, you know?...

What's interesting is when you're in the camps, and in fact, of course, it's because they developed this new policy where they had to group the group refugees, where eligibility isn't considered. You're basically only looking at admissibility, but that wasn't the case [in Africa]. We didn't even have anything like that back then, so I would say you certainly got to hear more of the story when you're dealing with an individual. There's no question about that, because you were concentrating on that eligibility side of things, and you did have to hear their stories. They were very different refugees from what we were seeing in the camps.

According to Burrows, designated class status would have created room and resources for the officer to focus on the settlement needs, including, “what the kids [of selected families] are going to do,” “what would be the best place to send them” and whether they have “friends” or “relatives” in Canada who would facilitate their settlement and integration into local communities. As discussed in chapters two and three, especially regarding Molloy’s preoccupation with the importance of settlement when he and his refugee policy team were writing refugee provisions in the Immigration Act, a selected refugee was not destined to “Canada,” but to a specific province, city, town and neighbourhood in Canada. Therefore, once an officer had selected a refugee applicant for resettlement, they needed to dedicate their time to ensuring that the applicant would be destined and settled in a welcoming community in Canada.

Attaining designated class status was not simple, as officers needed to “go through a fair bit of frontline people to get that recognized.” As outlined in chapter two, these people required a convergence of domestic and foreign policy Canadian interests and wide consultations and consensus with key stakeholders such as provinces and territories. Additionally, there would need to be engagement and negotiation with third-country resettlement partner countries (and their interests) as well as with the UNHCR.⁵⁵² Burrows’ observations about the benefits of the absence of “designated class” status in the African context are vital because they draw attention to the limits of individual officer agency in the face of material and ideational structures. On the ground, it was evident that refugee selection could be made more efficient and effective with the requisite legal provisions, but officers like Burrows did not possess the capacity to unilaterally make such changes in the course of implementing refugee policy. The Government of Canada never applied designated class status to any African population during Burrows’ time in Nairobi.

Burrows as Narrator and Navigator

Since Burrows was the only female officer interviewed for this study, I asked her whether she felt being a woman had shaped, enabled or constrained refugee selection interviews in any way.

I thought there would be a barrier with me being a woman, and the men talking about the persecution that they experienced, but no.

I think what happened is that first they thought; they knew we were there to help them, but also, I think they kind of turned off that. They almost turned

⁵⁵² See Molloy and Madokoro, “Effecting Change,” for their discussion of how resettlement priorities were determined by the convergence of domestic and foreign policy interests, in consultation with the UNHCR. Chapter two discusses the role of African asylum countries’ appeals for “burden-sharing.”

that off. I didn't get any sense from them that they saw me as a woman or a young woman or anything. It's like you're a government agent, and that's why I'm telling you my story [...] I think they [male refugee applicants] saw you as a government official, and they knew you had the power, that's the other thing. So, they're not going to be that aggressive. The odd time they might, again, when they, you know, it was more if you were interviewing an urban young man, it would be a different attitude to somebody who had been in the camps. But as I say, I think it was actually an advantage in interviewing the women. For sure, it was an advantage because they would tell you things that I don't think they would have told a male officer.

Burrows' response suggests various experiences that depended on geography and the gender of the refugee applicant. Also, it appears that her identity as an officer of the Government of Canada, with the authority and power it carried, seemed to override or, at the very least, take precedence over her being a woman in her encounters with refugee applicants. For female refugee applicants, it "probably helped" that she was a woman because she did not "think some of the women would have told [their full stories], particularly the sexual assault cases."⁵⁵³

As a follow-up to her comments, I asked Burrows whether she had experienced challenges within her profession as a female Canadian Foreign Service officer.

There was certainly sexism. There was no doubt about that. But I was never seen as a...threat to people. I tried not to be, you know, and I think that was a factor as well, but maybe to the point of being too subjective of things, you know.

I think a lot of the guys, as I was coming up in the service, they didn't see me as someone who was going to be particularly aggressive in my career or was going to be; I wasn't too strident about my opinions on things. I would joke with

⁵⁵³ As part of my M.A. research paper in History, I interviewed Zimbabwean refugee claimants about their experiences before the in-Canada Immigration and Refugee Board, between the years 1999 and 2001. One female study participant had been sexually assaulted in Zimbabwe, presumably for her perceived political beliefs but had chosen not to reveal this in her formal refugee narrative or to her lawyer. She shared that this non-disclosure was a result of the complex interaction of trauma, guilt and self-censorship. While disclosing her sexual assault could likely have bolstered her refugee protection application, she had not been comfortable doing so with her male legal representative. She eventually and fortuitously disclosed her sexual assault to the female medical professional who conducted her psychological assessment.

them and do that type of thing, so maybe that was part of that as well, but I didn't, I certainly didn't get it from the refugees who might, that I can recall ever having that. There were a few times when I was in situations on the street or something, and I'd be a little bit nervous, but generally, it was okay, you know?

In a later interview, I also asked Burrows about the influence of her mother's military service in the Second World War on her professional trajectory. She stated that similar to her mother, she "didn't see myself as a woman very often, even when I was growing up." With laughter, Burrows recalled that she "didn't know how to flirt" and found it "so weird that women would use their bodies and use their femininity to get ahead." As a result of not having that sensibility, Burrows thought that she might not have picked up on "the gender thing as much as [she] probably should have."

Then when I got into almost a male-dominated occupation, I was more comfortable with them than I was with sometimes women. Whereas my sister, as a librarian, went into almost a female-dominated occupation. But she said she never saw herself as a typical librarian. She certainly was not a typical librarian. She was anything but. She was rebellious, she got involved with the unions, and so she always was bucking the system, and I think that which I think was a good thing, much more so that I ever did, so yes [...]

I could count on the fingers of one hand the number of women that preceded me, and they were very different in personalities too, different from each other and different from me, so yes. Some, one or two of them were flirtatious, and kind of used that as their persona, yes, you know. Then others were almost masculine in the way they treated things. I guess I kind of fell somewhere in between but maybe more on the masculine side of things. And the other thing I noticed with a lot of women though that is they did, and these are colleagues, they became, it was as though [they] tried to, 'out-men the men.'

Like, they tried to be as harsh as they could be, they were not, they didn't help other women, which I did try and do as much as I could. But they were very, they lost their compassion, and that's what I thought I've seen a lot of, yes. And I did see that with a lot of women, and I think it was just because they were competing in a man's world and had to maybe, had to put that on more, or maybe that was always part of their makeup. I don't know which it was.

I didn't think I would ever become that way because I knew I would have to change so much that I didn't want to be doing that job if I had to change that

much. But I do remember people saying to me, "Oh, you're always trying to please people. You try to, by doing that, you're not going to get ahead. You have to be a lot tougher if you're going to get ahead." And I do think it probably hurt me getting promotions, so yes.

Burrows' introspective account above provides essential context for understanding the various standpoints – daughter to a war veteran mother, twin-sister to a “rebellious” and union involved librarian, and a Foreign Service officer– coalesced and influenced her agency. Paradoxically, while Burrows states that she did not pick up on the “gender thing” as much, her reflections above about navigating the Foreign Service as a woman reveal a deep awareness of the various tropes through which women “gendered” themselves in order to navigate or thrive in what she described as an “almost a male-dominated occupation.” In the same vein, notwithstanding this awareness, she chose not to perform such tropes.

Operational Realities of Refugee Selection

Implementing the Canadian resettlement policy in Central and East Africa also involved navigating on the ground realities and vagaries of refugee selection in Nairobi. Burrows shared an anecdote about a case she encountered as a refugee officer, which illuminates the intricacies of refugee selection and departure to Canada. The story Burrows shared involved the mysterious death of one of two sisters whom Burrows had selected for resettlement. One sister, the principal refugee applicant, was selected under the WUSC Student Refugee program while her sister would accompany her to Canada to ensure they were not separated. Burrows read a letter she had written to her sister about the story. For privacy, this author has replaced actual names with random letters of the alphabet.

Burrows: But I'll read it, if you don't mind, I'll read it to you.

Interviewer: Yes, please do.

Burrows: It says, sometimes things happen here that are stranger than fiction. I had interviewed two girls, sisters, who are Ethiopian refugees, so I got the nationality wrong. One, X, spoke good English and has a scholarship. So she must have been, maybe she was a WUSC scholar, I'm not so sure. And the other Q, I accepted for family reunification.

Well, they didn't show up at the airport on Wednesday, and we were worried that some [...] because we used to, and this I had also forgotten, go to the airport, and we'd have their documents there, and then we would facilitate them on the plane and get them there, so we had to do that as well.

Interviewer: Oh, so after selection, there was the departure?

Burrows: Yes, there was the departure. Usually worked with the IOM on that, but we would sometimes go out and do that. Well, they didn't show up at the airport on Wednesday, and we were worried, then someone phoned the next day to say that Q had died. The story is she had stomach pains on the Saturday, so they took her to the hospital, and they said it was appendicitis, and they'd let her go.

And I said Kenyans don't bother much with refugees unless they pay them. So, she was okay, and then on the Wednesday, she complained of a severe headache. By the time the taxi came to take them to the airport, she was unconscious, and she died on the way to the hospital. They were doing an autopsy, but the initial suspicion was poisoning. Now, I'll put that in perspective; often when they did do autopsies, when they wouldn't know what anything was, they'd put poisoning down, so.

Anyway, luckily, another Canadian-Ethiopian refugee had flown out to take the girls back, and I'm quite impressed with this lady. She suspects someone in the Ethiopian community was jealous of A and had slipped some poison into her Coke. Well, there is this cousin whom we rejected, and while he appeared still broken up about it, P (who was another locally engaged staff) and I suspect him. Maybe we'll get to the bottom of it next week and maybe not. As the Canadian-Ethiopian girl said, everyone is so much on the take here you can't even trust the autopsy. I'm hoping it'll turn out to be something like peritonitis. Anyway, some bizarre things happen in this business, and it just shows how desperate some people are. So, we were afraid this cousin had killed the girl, and she was a bit slow. She had, I don't know whether she had a mental deficiency, but she certainly wasn't; she was taken because of the sister.

Interviewer: And she wouldn't have been alert enough if somebody was trying to harm her.

Burrows: No, and I can remember the cousin came in to see me, along with a bunch of other men, and they threatened me. They said, you know, "If you

don't do something if you don't take me, we're going to make sure the same thing that happened to Q happens to you." And I thought, "Well, I..." And actually, at that, I wasn't scared, because they were in my office, and I was surrounded by people, but it was really bizarre. And then they said, but then I found out they'd gone to the IOM office and threatened the junior female officer and told her they were going to dangle her out a window or something. They were being very threatening, and they were being angry and threatening. The sister was being very calm. I remember thinking this is weird, because if they did something, why isn't she more upset?

And then a couple of days later she came in wailing and crying and putting on a big show, and I thought, what's going on? So it was, it just got more and more bizarre, and we couldn't make anything out of the autopsy because they said that it was poison. But I think, when I think of it, my guess is that I don't know what the stomach pain would have been. I thought maybe bashed her on the back of the head with a shovel or something, but I think the severe headache could have been a cerebral aneurysm, and that might have been what caused her death because it was very quick. And we never did take the cousin, that's for sure, but we did take [X], the sister went off and she, and I think this again if I remember this Canadian-Ethiopian lady was very helpful with that. So, I'll give that to you, but it was a very bizarre story.

I had written in my diary, so you can tell that it was a true story. You can take out, P though, she's the only name I think mentioned in there. She was our locally engaged officer, so yes.

In addition to providing insight into some of the realities of refugee selection, I share this story in its entirety for two reasons. Firstly, Burrows was keen to read and share a copy of the letter she had written to her sister in 1988 about the case. Burrows had even written about the case in her diary. Secondly, while this is an unusual case, it serves to illustrate how, unlike Mullin's experiences in the early 1980s, by the late 1980s, resettlement had become more widely known and sought-after opportunity to leave for Canada. So prized was this opportunity, that those selected for resettlement were subject to jealousy, intrigue and even physical harm because they had been selected.

The "Albino" and the Echo Effect

Burrows also shared an anecdote about a “memorable case” that she encountered during an area trip to a refugee camp in Somalia, where she suspected that an “albino” refugee was experiencing discrimination. While that particular individual had not been referred to the government of Canada by the UNHCR and was therefore not on Burrows’ interview list, due to her intuition and suspicion that he was vulnerable, she made an intuitive decision to interview him.

Burrows: I don't know whether UNHCR was going to refer him to another country eventually, but he happened to be there with this group, and he was friends with all of them. That's when I had specifically asked about him.

Interviewer: How old would this guy have been?

Burrows: Gauging how old he is now; I would say his mid-20s.

Interviewer: What was it that drew you?

Burrows: To him?

Interviewer: Yes. Do you remember?

Burrows: Physically. He was light-skinned with kind of goldish-coloured eyes. He just stood out from all of these others, and I thought, "Wow!" I asked about him. When the UNHCR rep told me, "They call him albino because he's half Italian." I thought, "Wow! I bet he's having a hard time." That's where it all started [...] There was no question about that afterwards and what he had to put up with probably more on top of even these other refugees from the Shalambod in Somalia. He was Ethiopian. No, there was no doubt about that. The only thing was that afterwards, after he got to Canada, then he continued to contact me and wanted to make that happen for his fiancé, his sister.
[LAUGHTER]

Interviewer: Was that awkward for you?

Burrows: Yeah, because I really didn't think that it was going to be that many more coming. I think I was able to process one or two others, but not all of them. But eventually, I guess, they all came to Canada because now that I've been in touch with them and his family is all here, and the kids have gone back to Ethiopia, which is really amazing.

The anecdote above is significant because it shows that refugee selection was also contingent and dynamic, depending on what the officer encountered in local contexts and how they chose to interpret their encounter. In this case, despite likely having a numerical limit on the number of refugees interviewed during particular area trips, based on her intuition and observations, Burrows exercised her judgement and discretion to add another refugee applicant to her list. The fact that this applicant-maintained contact with Burrows after he was resettled in Canada and through that contact, sought to reunite with his family is notable.

Earlier, this chapter briefly discussed how the Africa Refugee Program was likely affected by the echo effect, which arises when former resettled refugees who have become Canadian citizens or permanent residents mobilize resources to privately sponsor or seek government assistance in order to reunite with family members who are still in refugee situations.⁵⁵⁴ By deciding to act on her observations and to interview and subsequently select the “albino” applicant for resettlement, Burrows had also facilitated the family reunification aspirations and realities that followed. This particular anecdote is a poignant example of the productive and contingent nature of individual officer agency, sometimes against the limitations of material structures, and, more specifically, resettlement spaces allocations in this case. Also, they show how, similarly to oral history interviews, the refugee selection interview encounter was also a personal and intersubjective encounter between two human beings, albeit without the same power.

⁵⁵⁴ See footnote number 438 referencing, Hyndman et al., “Private Refugee Sponsorship in Canada.”

“Importing Civil Wars” and the Consequences of Decision-Making

As outlined in the previous two chapters, in addition to determining eligibility and “ability to establish,” officers also needed to ascertain whether refugee applicants fulfilled the statutory requirement for medical, criminal and security checks. When Canadian officers went on refugee selection trips outside within the region, they travelled with a specialized selection team. The team included: a designated or approved medical doctor who conducted medical examinations; a Canadian security officer was sometimes also present during interviews in order to conduct criminal and security checks, and a local UNHCR officer for the camp or country where selection interviews were taking place. Burrows indicated that officers often “worried about importing civil wars.”

We were very often worried that we were, especially with the Burundese and the Rwandese, you know, we were actually going to be importing situations where people would then be settling their scores in Canada [...]

Security checks were an essential requirement for all immigrants and refugees admitted to Canada as a means to ensure public safety and security. For Burrows personally, fears about importing conflict were not unwarranted. During the 1980s and early 1990s, East-Central African states such as Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda hosted large numbers of refugees from Burundi, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Somalia, including high-profile political exiles and refugees.⁵⁵⁵ After Burrows had returned to Ottawa in the 1990s, a news story appeared in a major Canadian newspaper about a high-profile member of the militant rebel group RENAMO being spotted on a Toronto

⁵⁵⁵ See chapter two for political context of refugee selection from the 1970s to the 1990s.

street by a Mozambican refugee who had fled RENAMO persecution.⁵⁵⁶ Burrows was interviewed in the newspaper about this oversight by officers and was mortified to learn that the RENAMO high-profile member had been resettled through the Nairobi visa office.

While in Nairobi, Burrows would conduct “one hundred” refugee selection interviews in a year and was “probably on the road once a month” for selection trips. While the frequency of trips varied in her first two years in Nairobi, they would “go to Tanzania and Zambia for a week, so that would be three days in each of those countries” where the “UNHCR brought the people to the city to be interviewed.” In Ethiopia and Somalia, they would go on trips once or twice a year, once a year for Rwanda and Burundi, and once a year for Uganda. Burrows remembers conducting interviews under challenging conditions.

Djibouti, we went to twice in the time I was there. That we didn't get, I don't think we got to Djibouti till '89, no, was it? I'm sorry, it was '88 because it was the year of the Olympics. So, I was going down this dirt track, this guy with the UNHCR and this guy was out jogging, and he said, he stopped the car, and he said, "Oh, you're a Canadian, aren't you?" And he said, "Ben Johnson just won the race." [Laughter] We were the only two Canadians in the whole of Djibouti, I think, at the time, so [...] I think I told you about going to Djibouti when they had 300 days of rain in three days. I had my feet up on the desk because there was water up to about our knees if you got into it, and so they were trying to clean out the floods in the offices. We were interviewing under those conditions. That was pretty rough.

⁵⁵⁶ The acronym stands for Mozambican National Resistance in English and Resistência Nacional Moçambicana in Portuguese. RENAMO was formed in 1975 and was considered by most post-independent countries in the region, and especially members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), to be a proxy sponsored by the Rhodesian and Apartheid South African intelligence organizations to destabilize the newly independent Mozambican state, which was host to refugees and liberation fighters from Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and South Africa. In addition, RENAMO was intended as a counter to communism and liberation ideologies that were sweeping the continent and affecting the survival of settler colonies such as Rhodesia, South Africa and Namibia.

In addition to difficult physical conditions, with limited time and resources, Burrows indicated that in those days, “everything was done by hand.” In order to track “all the refugees,” she had built her “own table with columns and rows” where she would document refugee applicants’ progress including, “where this refugee was at this stage and have, they passed their medicals and when was their visa going to be ready?” At the time, the entire office “had one broken-down old printer that would at the odd time sort of spew something out.” Aside from this, “everything was done by hand,” including all officer notes and files. Burrows remembers the selection team would “be lugging [heavy] suitcases full of files” where “there was always the danger they would get lost or stolen.” After an officer had made a selection decision, medicals examination documents were also “done by hand.” So, aside from interviewing and decision-making, officers also performed administrative tasks, with the support of locally-engaged staff at the visa office, to finalize the process. Such descriptions paint a clearer picture of the more mundane aspects of refugee selection, which were nonetheless integral components to implementing the Africa Refugee Program and facilitating the selection and resettlement of refugees in Canada.

Burrows as Narrator and Creative Agent in Relation to “Who Gets In”

Burrows, like Molloy, used the knowledge gained from the operational challenges and gaps to improve or develop better programs. Burrows did this by narrating her experiences and lessons learned from operations to headquarters. One product of such narrative and creative processes was the “Women at Risk Program,” which arose out of the need to address the plight of vulnerable women refugee

applicants.⁵⁵⁷ Burrows remembers that Ottawa developed the Women at Risk Program in collaboration with the UNHCR after Nairobi officers' observations about the vulnerability of African refugee women in camps. The program addressed situations "where if you had a sister who was going to be left back in the camp by herself," or where officers wondered, "what's going to happen to this poor girl?" For Burrows, being a refugee officer was not only about refugee selection operations, but also entailed a constant evaluation of existing programs and asking, "if we don't have a program that this works for, then we have to find another program, and we have to build a program that will help these kinds of people as well." These examples illustrate Burrows as both a narrator and a creative agent within the Canadian resettlement policy.

Navigating Diplomatic Relations

Burrows was the first interviewee to mention the documentary film *Who Gets In?*⁵⁵⁸ As discussed in chapter three, the film marked the first time that Canadian immigration and refugee selection interviews were filmed for public viewing. Burrows remembered the political context in Kenya during 1989 when the film was released. That period had been so tense that "the Askaris would walk around" at all times, and she had not gotten "a decent night's sleep." President Daniel Arap Moi's "outspoken

⁵⁵⁷ See chapter three for brief discussion of the Woman at Risk program (AWR) developed in collaboration with the UNHCR and first applied to refugee applicants selected through Nairobi visa office from a camp in Somalia.

⁵⁵⁸ Greenwald, *Who Gets In?* The National Film Board blurb describes it as a documentary that "explores the many questions raised by Canada's immigration policy in the face of one of the world's largest immigration movements. Shot in 1988 in Africa, Canada and Hong Kong, the film reveals first-hand what Canadian immigration officials are looking for in potential new Canadians, and the economic, social and political priorities orienting their choices."

Foreign Minister” Robert Ouko, who had “been critical of the government [and] had a world perspective on things,” had been murdered.

The first thing was that the *National Film Board had come*. Did I tell you this story? Maybe not, but National Film Board came to Kenya, in '89, they did that movie, *Who Gets In?* [...] And then the government [of Kenya] reacted really badly to that because they had showed the riots in '82 and Kenya didn't come across as a very good government at all, and I think they made it out to be much more, much worse than it really was.

But so [Moi] came off the plane and he made a really negative speech against Canada, and they did this kind of fake protest against us, and the High Commissioner was hung in effigy, and she was all upset, and very, you know, very tense. So, there was that incident's tension, and then the Foreign Minister was [killed]...This was in the early, early 1990; this all happened.

[After the documentary film *Who Gets In* was released], they [Kenyan protesters] didn't react immediately. But within a few days, they started calling her [the Canadian High Commissioner to Kenya and Uganda, Raynell Andreychuk] on the carpet...

The cumulative impact of political developments related to the documentary, the “incident with the Foreign Minister” and ensuing riots “in an area called Eastlands,” all “caused tension” for Canadian officers, including for the High Commissioner who was held accountable for the political tension. The local taxi drivers were “a great source of political information” and would chat with Burrows all the time. One of the taxi drivers told her, “Oh, don't go downtown, things are really rough... [there is] a curfew; just don't be seen outside.” In return for this intelligence, Burrows agreed to his request to leave his taxi in her driveway overnight. The next thing she knew, there were “ten taxis” in her driveway because the taxi drivers “didn't want to leave them downtown.” This story, while told as an incidental anecdote about the political tensions of the day, also reveals the inadvertent and personalized sources of local knowledge that were available to officers. Akin to Mullin's relationship with Dr.

Pilkington (from whom the former learned a lot about Ethiopia) Burrows cultivated relationships with the local Kenyans she encountered in her day-to-day, and from whom she obtained useful local information and knowledge that helped her navigate her surroundings.

Burrows' discomfort was also due to the hostility directed at the Canadian government and its local representatives after the documentary *Who Gets In* was released. Burrows surmised that the Kenyan government likely perceived the Government of Canada as seeking to project an inaccurate and negative image of the political situation in Kenya. In addition to Molloy, Burrows appears in the film screening paper applications for the economic and skilled worker immigration class, and notifying travel visa applicants about decisions on their applications.⁵⁵⁹ While the riots the film showed (including images of dead bodies on the street) had taken place in 1982, the documentary gave the incorrect impression that they took place in 1989.⁵⁶⁰ Also, the documentary's narrator stated that Nairobi was a "typical developing world outpost," which "has all the hallmarks of a troubled developing nation: a staggering birth rate, a faltering economy, a repressive government and an uncertain future."⁵⁶¹

The Government of Kenya would likely have been displeased with the documentary and officers at the Canadian mission for two reasons. Firstly, the film used dated imagery and the footage of riots from 1982, which to Burrows, mischaracterized the political situation as "worse than it was." Secondly, the

⁵⁵⁹ Greenwald, *Who Gets In* (from 9:40 to 11:10 minutes).

⁵⁶⁰ *Ibid*, (from 5:34 to 7:45 minutes).

⁵⁶¹ *Ibid*.

description of post-independent Kenya's political challenges was more candid than would be permissible in diplomatic relations. Canadian government officials' active participation in the film would not have helped on this account. Together, these factors would explain why the Canadian High Commissioner was dragged over a "parapet" through Kenyan government-supported protests in front of the Canadian High Commission offices, and why the "imprisonment" of an effigy of the High Commissioner was in a street stall in the Kenyan city of Mombasa.⁵⁶²

Burrows felt that the documentary was a "hatchet job" that had been edited to make officers like Molloy as well as the Canadian government look like "racists," especially in relation to refugees and immigrants from Africa vis-à-vis economic immigrants from Hong Kong. In the same vein, the film appeared to create the impression that the Canadian government was primarily interested in selecting only those immigrants who would bring large sums of money and investment to Canada. Therefore, for both Burrows and Molloy, the documentary's final narrative did not fully capture the import and complexity of their work in Nairobi and everything that Greenwald had filmed.

When this author asked Molloy about Burrows' views on the film, he indicated that originally, the Ministry of Manpower and Immigration had permitted the film because of Barry Greenwald's good reputation as a capable documentary filmmaker.⁵⁶³ However, Molloy remembered that after filming, Greenwald had "blown

⁵⁶² Todd Shields, "Demonstrations in Ottawa Cause Backlash in Kenya," *The Globe and Mail*. January 12, 1990; and *The Montreal Gazette*, "Marchers in Kenya Denounce Canada Over Ottawa Protest", December 1, 1989.

⁵⁶³ See chapter three for Molloy's perspectives on *Who Gets In?*

his budget” and could not afford to take the film to production.⁵⁶⁴ The new producer decided to overlay the film with the voice of a narrator, and a narrative which neither he nor Burrows felt was a fair representation of officers at Nairobi visa office nor what the original filmmaker Greenwald had intended.⁵⁶⁵

The diplomatic aftermath of *Who Gets In* and the political tensions in Kenya took place during Burrows’ final year in Nairobi. The episode illustrates the vagaries of operating in a post-independent African state sensitive to any perceived slight or interference in its sovereignty. In the same vein, the actions and conduct of Canadian Foreign Service officers had broader implications for Canada’s diplomatic relations. In addition to navigating the intricacies of Canada’s laws while engaging in refugee selection, when navigating local politics, officers also needed to tread carefully.

In the documentary, Molloy is filmed arriving in Dar Es Salam, Tanzania and under cover of darkness, interviews UNHCR-referred Kenyan university student activists who had fled state persecution, imprisonment and torture at the hands of the Kenyan government. Molloy refuses their applications and expresses concerns that accepting their refugee applications would likely be viewed negatively by the Kenyan government, sour diplomatic relations, and threaten the Canadian government’s ability to operate in Nairobi. Ironically, the documentary’s release ended up doing just that.

Toward the end of 1990, Burrows felt that she was ready to leave Nairobi. In addition to the toll of political tensions and dynamics following the documentary, she

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid.

also experienced a personal loss during the week before her departure, which, while “a personal thing” had “repercussions” on her. A friend (the wife of an Air Canada representative in Nairobi) was a Canadian woman from Edmonton whose teenage daughter, who was about to graduate, went horseback riding, fell off the horse, and eventually died.

Because the Canadian community was so small, we all knew each other. Like, we all went to the same cocktail parties. They were involved with us. It just hurt the whole community, and I remember thinking when I left, “I’m leaving at a really good time. I don’t want to stay here anymore.” It just tainted the whole thing for me at the end, so yes. So that was a really sad incident. And then, on the other hand, I was starting to make friends among the Kenyans, and so I was feeling much more comfortable and at home there, and I would have been happy to stay another year, but the political tensions were really getting higher at that time, so yes.

After Nairobi, Burrows went back to Ottawa, where she spent two years as a government Resource Analyst at the Department of Foreign Affairs, and another year as Deputy Director of Africa and Middle East Geographic Desk at the Department of Citizenship and Immigration. In both positions, her practical insights from engaging in refugee selection helped develop and refine resettlement policy and programs.

This chapter has shown that material structures in the form of refugee provisions in the *1976 Immigration Act* prescribed the mechanisms and settings of refugee selection interviews. Unlike, Molloy’s experiences with Uganda-Asian expellees in 1972, Burrows and Mullin selected resettlement applicants under a formalized humanitarian and resettlement program. The *1976 Immigration Act* had more unambiguous legal prescriptions for refugee applicants to meet eligibility and admissibility requirements for resettlement under the Africa Refugee Program established in 1981. While this brought clarity, officers were still required to exercise

discretion in deciding whether or not refugee applicants would be able to establish in Canada. Here, Burrows' observations and insights about the eligibility and "ability to establish" continuum are critical. Refugee applicants who tended to fulfil eligibility requirements, that is, met the definition of the Convention class, tended to have lower settlement potential. This recurring scenario presented a quandary for the officer, who was compelled to exercise personal discretion in deducing and deciding on what "satisfied" them and constituted "ability to establish."

A significant insight from Burrows' account relates to the impact of visa office admission targets established through the Annual Levels plan at headquarters. These targets significantly determined human and financial resource allocations across and within visa offices, which in turn shaped or constrained refugee selection processes. In this vein, it was Burrows who proposed Molloy as having been the visa office "negotiator" who engaged and met with resettlement partner organizations such as the UNHCR in order to meet their admission targets, optimize allocated resources, and maintain the integrity of Canada's resettlement program. Like Molloy and Mullin, Burrows also navigated ideational structures in the course of implementing the Africa Refugee Program.

Finally, Burrows' story provided a valuable, gendered perspective on navigating the realities and challenges of engaging in refugee selection abroad as a female Foreign Service officer. These realities included concerns about physical safety as well as navigating political tensions within Kenya in the late 1980s. Additionally, unlike Mullin's operational realities in the early 1980s, by the late 1980s, the Africa Refugee Program had become more established, widely known and therefore

oversubscribed. Due in part to the echo effect of previous resettlement, as well as more public awareness of the Africa Refugee Program, it had begun to receive more refugee and sponsorship applications than it could process in a reasonable time, and this was creating backlogs and long processing times.

Officers were operating within ideational structures. These included the Government of Canada domestic and foreign policy interests, and African governments' interests and state-formation processes in the Central and East Africa region. Burrows' account also helps illuminate the dual role of Canadian Immigration Foreign Service officers as both implementers of refugee protection policy and diplomats, who needed to be self-aware about the implications of their selection decisions on the Government of Canada's diplomatic relations with African governments.

Chronologically, Burrows' chapter built on Molloy's chapter (which focused on the 1970s) and Mullin's chapter (which considered the establishment of the Africa Refugee Program in the early 1980s). Burrows' Nairobi posting ended in 1990, and this also marks the end period of this dissertation's focus. While each officer's life story is worthwhile on its terms, collectively, the three officer's accounts tell a compelling history about men and women who were the "faces" of Canadian refugee protection for almost three decades.

Conclusion

This study has examined the life stories of three Canadian Foreign Service officers who were critical actors in the development and implementation of Canada's African Resettlement Program during its earliest and formative years, in order to explore and explain the relationship between structure and agency in the implementation of Canada's resettlement policy in Central and East Africa from the 1970s to 1990. Specifically, the study interrogated the relationship between individual officers' agency and structures in the establishment and implementation of Canada's Africa Refugee Program during the same period. Implementation was understood to refer to the actions and procedures that officers undertook in interviewing, hearing, documenting and selecting refugees for entry and resettlement in Canada. In order to explore this relationship, this dissertation argued that the officers' life stories explain how and when they exercised agency in the course of their work. In order to systematically explain and organize their oral accounts, the thesis has conceptualized the officers as narrators, navigators and negotiators. These three conceptual frames organize and allow for the systematic examination of the three life stories and explain the settings, conditions, constraints and interests that shaped or enabled how these officers "heard" refugee applicant stories in the course of implementing Canada's humanitarian and resettlement program on the African continent.

The conceptualizing of officers' narratives about their experiences with refugee selection, their role as agents navigating structures and local contexts of implementation, and their negotiation of relationships with various actors arose from

defined scholarly parameters and a set of specific research questions. Broadly, this study sought to understand better how officers “heard” the stories of African refugee applicants and determined what they considered to be significant when making selection decisions for resettlement in Canada. In this vein, the thesis examined the life stories to identify and explain the structures and interests that conditioned, constrained or enabled the agency of officers when hearing applicant stories and making refugee selection decisions.

Asking these questions and examining officer experiences is important because it provides critical insight into the conditions of refugee applicant storytelling for Canadian resettlement in a particular historical period and local context; the structures that officers as “hearers” of these stories navigated; the relationships they negotiated; and the narratives they created about their experiences for various audiences. In order to answer these key questions, the dissertation identified and examined the state structures and interests within which officers worked. By centralizing life stories as a primary source, the study engaged with oral history and narrative theory to fully consider: how and why officers told their stories in particular ways; what officers’ oral interviews reveal about what they considered to be significant or not in making selection decisions; and what other constraints or influences impacted refugee selection beyond material and ideational structures.

The officers’ life stories, and particularly excerpts of their recollections that are highlighted in this thesis, lend insights into how the officers may have felt and what they thought about particular processes, legal provisions, historical moments, places, refugee applicants or organizations. Whilst the content or ‘what’ of their life

stories is important, it is critical to reiterate that this thesis did not set out to present officers' accounts as the sole or hegemonic perspective on the history and implementation of the African Refugee Program. Furthermore, as discussed in chapter one, in order to systematically organize and examine officer accounts, I took the liberty of editing and interpreting extensive interview material.

This dissertation has argued that the life stories of Michael Molloy, Scott Mullin and Susan Burrows can help to explain the relationships, tensions or possibilities between individual agency and structure within the process of refugee policy implementation through refugee selection. Their stories show how they exercised agency as narrators, navigators and negotiators and afford insight into the settings, conditions, constraints and interests that shaped refugee selection within the Africa Refugee Program during its earliest and formative years. Through its focus on the role of individuals in the development and implementation of Canada's Africa Refugee program, this dissertation has contributed to the literature on Canada's history of refugee resettlement by emphasizing the importance of individual agency within bureaucratic structures, and the value of oral history and narrative in historical writing. This dissertation employed three analytical frames of narrator, navigator and negotiator in order to facilitate its analysis. These concepts helped to organize and explain the officers' life stories within the present and past contexts. They also helped the researcher examine the extent to which individual officers exercised agency and discretion in narrating their oral testimonies (as they were implementing Canada's resettlement policy and navigating material and ideational structures) and when negotiating relationships with resettlement partners. In the same vein, these

concepts provided a means to explore continuities or discontinuities amongst the three life stories. The next section will discuss the study's overall findings, including the degree and variability in how these three concepts added analytical clarity, cohesion and organization to the three life-stories and the entire dissertation in general.

Key Findings and Insights

This dissertation's findings from a granular historical perspective support Betts and Orchard's more generalized argument that individual agency matters for implementation. This study shows how officers made refugee selection decisions according to the requirement of the law and government priorities of the day, and specifically refugee provisions in the *1976 Immigration Act* and refugee admission allocations for each region (and visa office) that were prescribed by the Ministry of Employment and Immigration's Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration Levels. In addition, from the 1970s to the late 1980s, Canada's Cold War foreign policy considerations and alliances within the context of the African continent were ideational structures that limited or enabled officers' capacity to hear certain refugee applicants' stories and in turn, decide if they were eligible for admission to Canada through resettlement. For example, statutory requirements on the need for applicants to pass medical, criminal and security examinations disqualified former liberation militants from being eligible for resettlement due to their ideological leanings and military experience.

Notwithstanding limitations on discretion that arose from material and ideational structures, the three life stories reveal that there was often capacity and

opportunities for officers to exercise some discretion during refugee selection, in terms of whom they interviewed and how they applied the refugee provisions of the *1976 Immigration Act*, especially as a case pertained to family reunification and vulnerable refugee applicants. A critical finding of this dissertation is that, while material and ideational structures placed limitations on the annual numbers and types of refugee applicants that could be resettled from each Canadian visa office (including Nairobi), the local conditions of implementation significantly impacted variations in, and degree of, officer agency when making refugee selection decisions. In the same vein, officers' discretion and agency varied depending on the local context and particulars of each refugee applicant or situation. However, overall, the oral testimonies revealed that while all officers had some leeway in terms of which applicants they interviewed and how they went about enacting refugee law during selection procedures, their discretion and autonomy was limited and shaped by statutory requirements, annual refugee priorities and plans, resources, foreign policy interests and the vagaries they encountered in the local context of refugee selection.

The goal of this dissertation was not to critically engage with or assess the motivations that guided the exercise of discretion by visa officers. While future research that includes the perspectives of both the "teller" and the "hearer" could more fully unpack what motivated visa officers to exercise discretion in the way that they did, the contribution of this dissertation is to illustrate where, how and to what extent that discretion was exercised, and the extent to which officers were able to exert agency in light of the structures in which they functioned.

The agency of officers is explained through their actions as navigators, narrators and negotiators. The three concepts help to organize the complex web of actions and interactions that these three officers engaged in over space and time—between the local contexts of implementation and policy development at headquarters in Ottawa. The life stories show that all three officers embodied the roles of narrator and navigator at various points in time. As narrators, their individual stories tell the story of Canadian resettlement selection in Africa from a ‘human’ perspective and simultaneously show that the government officers who implemented policy were not mere vessels and enforcers of refugee law. As navigators, the officers navigated and traversed various legal provisions (expressed through eligibility and admissibility requirement under the 1976 Immigration Act), the government of Canada priorities (expressed and local contexts of humanitarian and refugee policy implementation. As a negotiator, only Molloy’s story embodied this role more substantively. While Burrows and Mullin likely engaged in negotiations within the course of refugee selection, this was not the thrust of their stories.

Chapter one outlined and explained the study’s methodology and the theoretical logic behind its use of oral sources for the research project. The chapter did this by exploring relevant traditions from how orality, subjectivity, intersubjectivity and the relationship between the past and present provided a theoretical framework from which to conceptualize the officers as narrators in both the past and present contexts of storytelling. Subjectivity is particularly key to understanding officers’ agency in how they implemented resettlement policy, and also in how they remembered and recounted their memories of those actions in their

oral testimonies. Portelli's refrain regards the value of subjectivity in oral history emanating from how it reveals how and what informants choose to (or not) narrate in their testimonies.

Subjectivity is particularly relevant in this study, where the officers are not merely narrators in the present but also integral actors in the historical past being documented where they acted as narrators, navigators and negotiators. As explained in chapter one, individual memories are invariably subjective and coloured by the context of the storytelling, that is, what, when, why, and to whom the story is told. This is what makes oral history unique and useful since the story lies in how the story is told and what is told. This thesis has paid close attention to critical themes arising in the form and content of each life story—that is, how each officer told their story (conceptualization, order and framing of narrative) and what they chose to include or draw attention to. However, while embracing the critical insights from studying subjectivity, this thesis has heeded oral historians' cautions about the limitations of oral accounts. There is a need to recognize that dominant historical narratives, culture and hegemonic ideologies about the past can also influence individual memory and manifest through silences, discrepancies and idiosyncrasies in testimony.⁵⁶⁶ Therefore, this dissertation has situated and examined the three officers' accounts with that recognition and critical lens in mind, especially in light of the expertise that some of the officers have contributed (and continue to contribute) to the public

⁵⁶⁶ See chapter one's discussion about the limits of subjectivity by Passerini, *Fascism in Popular Memory*.

memory and the deeply contested history of Canadian immigration and refugee protection.⁵⁶⁷

Chapter two provided the historical context for key evolutions in the material and ideational structures within which the officers implemented resettlement. There is a substantive discussion of the 1970s as being the formative years of Canadian refugee protection policy and law, including the conception and formalization of Canada's resettlement policy through the *1976 Immigration Act*. This chapter shows how expressions of agency within structures, especially in these formative years, were also mediated and shaped by individual officer actions, personality, attributes and creativity. The chapter incorporates part of Molloy's earlier trajectory of how his operational experiences during the Ugandan-Asian airlift operation in 1972 influenced some of his thinking when he and his team were writing the refugee provisions of the *1976 Immigration Act* during his time as Director of Refugee policy. In doing so, Molloy helped to develop refugee policy and fed the shape and form of the material structures within which he and future officers like Mullin and Burrows subsequently operated. Molloy's central role in helping to create legal refugee provisions and operational guidance is notable because it shows that in the formative period of Canada's resettlement policy in the 1970s, individual officers had the capacity to shape material structures and that their agency was not mutually exclusive from the structures within which they and other officers functioned.

⁵⁶⁷ See Epp et al., *Sisters or Strangers*, 1-8, which re-evaluates the history Canadian immigration and recognizes that it has been characterized by a "negotiation over privilege and power among people with varied backgrounds, histories, and experiences based on group identification."

Chapters three, four, and five focused on the three officers' life stories. These chapters demonstrated that while officers heard refugee applicants' stories and made selection decisions within prescribed policies, legal requirements, numerical limits, and resource constraints dictated by the Government of Canada's priorities and political interests (domestic, regional and international) and in varying local context and conditions, all three officers were still able to exercise some discretion during the course of implementing the Africa Refugee Program.

There are important conclusions to be drawn from the three life stories with regard to the relationship between structure and agency. The study shows that while material and ideational structures may constrain or proscribe its limits, officer agency does matter for implementation. Chapter three focuses on Molloy and especially his account of policy development in the 1970s and role as Immigration Program Manager of the Nairobi visa office in the late 1980s. In his role as Director Refugee Policy, he oversaw the writing and creation of refugee provisions in the *1976 Immigration Act* through which the Government of Canada established the Africa Refugee Program. In this role, he created and cultivated relationships with refugee protection partners and stakeholders such as the UNHCR, faith-based groups, voluntary organizations and fellow bureaucrats within the Ministry of Immigration's Settlement Bureau, for example. Through such relationships, Molloy applied his in-depth knowledge and understanding of the *1976 Immigration Act's* opportunities and collaborated with Chris Smart to establish the WUSC Student Refugee program in 1978. The collaboration with a non-governmental organization like WUSC provides a clear example of how the 1970s were formative years of Canadian refugee policy (when the

infrastructure of refugee policy implementation was under construction) during which officers were able to impact material structures. In this vein, Molloy occupied and navigated a central and unique temporal space, which allowed him the opportunity to help create terminology and typologies that had enduring resonance on bureaucratic language and culture, more so when he subsequently became a trainer to future refugee officers such as Burrows in the late 1980s. Moreover, in his role as a negotiator inhabiting the nexus between policy development and implementation in these formative years of flux and possibility, officers like Molloy helped define and shape elements of material structures.

Chapter four focuses on Mullin's life story. Mullin was the first officer to select refugees for resettlement under the Africa Refugee Program. His posting brief from 1981 to 1984 was to establish the program. His comparative account of refugee selection in Africa is juxtaposed with his experiences selecting resettlement applicants in Indochina from 1978 to 1981. The comparative context between Africa and Indochina provides a compelling backdrop for understanding how material structures interact with ideational structures to shape the terrain and form of implementation. Specifically, during resettlement selection in Indochina, Mullin selected many families during a single day under the Indochina Designated class legal provisions who were considered by the Government of Canada to be in refugee-like situations, but who, by his own account, were not necessarily refugees in that they did not meet the refugee definition under the Convention Refugee class. Selecting through this provision allowed more officer discretion and for more interviews with less stringent eligibility requirements.

On the other hand, in the Africa Refugee Program, Mullin's experience was that applicants for resettlement must fulfill the requirements of the Convention Refugees in Need of Resettlement class. The requirement meant that unlike in the Indochina resettlement operation, officers could only interview individual applicants and assess whether they met the refugee definition in their "individual" capacity. Similarly to the designated classes, the officers needed to be "satisfied" that applicants would be able to establish in Canada, and this meant that most of those interviewed and selected for resettlement tended to be high-risk and high-profile applicants.

Chapter five focused on Burrows's life story, as the only female informant for the study. Her account and anecdotes about the realities and vagaries of refugee selection and the numerous trips undertaken in remote refugee camps and situations in Central and East Africa from 1987 to 1990 reveal significant evolutions in the Africa Refugee Program in comparison to when it was established in the early 1980s by Mullin. For example, Mullin recalled that the Africa Refugee Program started with a small quota, and suggested that he did not encounter any female refugee applicants at that time. Burrows encountered a program whose limited spaces were oversubscribed, with many of these applicants being female. Both Mullin and Burrows discussed how designated class status facilitated and made the selection easier, administratively. However, Burrows' account emphasized that it was not easy for an officer to designate a refugee situation they encountered in the field in order to override the individual determination and requirement to meet the provisions of the Convention Refugee class. Instead, ideational structural considerations weighed more for such facilitative criteria since the Government of Canada only applied designated

class status where there was a convergence between domestic and foreign policy priorities with a particular humanitarian or refugee crisis or situation.

Narrator

Through their oral testimonies and stories, all three officers have been invaluable and central narrators for this study because, without their accounts, there would be no story. While Burrows indicated that she had not shared her life story about her experiences as a Foreign Service officer before, Mullin and Molloy indicated that they had told their stories about refugee selection numerous times, albeit without a focus on their experiences on the African continent. Through his role as one of the founding members and now as President of the Canadian Immigration History Society, Molloy has been a prominent actor in the documentation of bureaucratic and public memory by collating official historical policy development documents and rallying together former Canadian Foreign Service officers who engaged in immigration and refugee selection. Molloy has also offered oral testimony through the Ugandan-Asian Oral History Project about his experiences as second-in-command for the team of Canadian officers who selected and facilitated the airlift of Ugandan Asians in 1972.

Before this study, Mullin had told his story about selecting Indochinese boat people for resettlement on many occasions, including to a book co-authored by Molloy and others.⁵⁶⁸ However, he had never narrated his experiences about his role as the first officer to establish and select refugees for resettlement through the African Refugee program in 1981. It is likely, for this reason, that the account about his

⁵⁶⁸ Molloy et al., *Running on Empty*.

experiences with refugee selection in Africa seemed less rehearsed than his account about Indochina, and his testimony had a sense of spontaneity.

As well, all three officers indicated that in the past, during refugee selection and implementation of refugee policy and procedures, they narrated their experiences, challenges and observations to colleagues and resettlement partners in order to facilitate refugee selection as well as to improve and further develop Canada's refugee policy and programs. Officers provided narratives of their operational experience in the following contexts. Firstly, they did so amongst other officers through training and knowledge transfer. Burrows indicated that while she eventually acquired immense confidence and experience from actually engaging in refugee selection and being in the field, during the beginning of her post in Nairobi, she received much of her operational training and mentorship from Molloy. Burrows' training from Molloy underlines the role of narrative and knowledge transfer amongst bureaucrats, which can shape enduring culture and sensibilities regarding approaches to implementation.

Secondly, officers acted as narrators of policy and program constraints or priorities with resettlement colleagues and partners such as the UNHCR, Red Cross, and private sponsors such as faith-based organizations and the WUSC. This role was necessary since communication and knowledge sharing were central to the standardization of procedures and the effective and efficient delivery of the resettlement program. A good example is Molloy's central role in identifying delays and inefficiencies in post-selection processes, arranging a workshop with the UNHCR

and representative officers from other major resettlement countries like the US and Australia, which culminated in the creation of clearer and more standard procedures.

Thirdly, in order to effectively utilize limited resources, meet visa office targets (across all immigration categories, including resettled refugees), and to inform policymakers about operational realities, officers needed to provide accounts about operational realities, challenges and possibilities to headquarters in Ottawa. In this way, they were narrators who translated operations and implementation into policy and vice-versa. For example, Burrows' narration of her experiences and observations in Africa to policy colleagues in Ottawa about resettlement operations and refugee selection helped to inform policy developments and create more flexible programs. An example of one such program was the collaborative development of the Canadian Women at Risk (AWR) program with the UNHCR. The AWR program example shows that while policy informed implementation, it was not a linear or one-way process, and applied both ways.

There was a recurring use of the collective term "we" across all three officers' individual stories, especially to describe global resettlement policies or operations of the Canadian government or its Africa Refugee Program. Clearly, the officers identified or at least saw themselves as part of a community— national or bureaucratic. In her discussion of recent evolutions in Canadian asylum practice following the New York attacks on September 11, 2001, Sherene Razack suggests that the encounter between a refugee claimant and a government official who is also a decision-maker is underpinned by ideas about "who we think "they" are, as compared

to who we think “we” are.”⁵⁶⁹ The collective “we” is clearly a national category” that is also “shaped by national narratives.”⁵⁷⁰ This perspective provides a critical lens through which to understand the narrators (officers) and their narratives as simultaneously feeding on and to, an existing and contested Canadian public immigration and refugee history. Also, the use of “we” to describe government or visa office actions, alludes to the officers’ own agency in storytelling and how they themselves understand their role as agents and part of the Canadian state.

Navigator

This conceptual frame was a useful tool for a systematic consideration of the ways that officers navigated various bureaucratic processes (for example, between policy to implementation); geographic contexts (for example, between Indochina and Central-East Africa and within the latter, the eighteen countries served by Nairobi visa office); and legal mechanisms (for example, between the Designated class and Convention Refugee class provisions), all while developing and implementing resettlement policy over time.

All officers were born and raised in various parts of Canada before they joined the Canadian Foreign Service: Molloy in 1968, Mullin in 1977 and Burrows in 1980.⁵⁷¹ During their time in the Foreign Service, all three were posted and travelled to

⁵⁶⁹ Carmela Murdoca in Conversation with Sherene Razack, “Pursuing National Responsibility in a Post-9/11 World: Seeking Asylum in Canada from Gender Persecution,” in Maroussia Hajdukowski-Ahmed, Nazilla Khanlou, Helene Moussa (Eds), *Not Born a Refugee Woman: Contesting Identities, Rethinking Practices* (New York, Berghahn Books, 2009), 256.

⁵⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁷¹ See Appendix 1: *Chronology of Officer Trajectories, Key Milestones or Events* for details on the professional trajectories of the three officers and the many other positions, international postings and assignments they undertook, but which are beyond the scope of this study.

distant countries and regions of the world, including Indochina and Africa.⁵⁷² Firstly, they were navigators of different local contexts of implementation in different geographies, climates, places, cultures, languages and evolving state formation processes in the various regions and countries of operation.⁵⁷³ Secondly, all officers navigated humanitarian and refugee provisions in the Immigration Act, especially the differences between the designated class and Convention class. As mentioned earlier, Mullin's comparative account of selecting refugees and humanitarian applicants from Africa and Indochina underscores the role of navigator within differing geographic local contexts of refugee selection as well as distinct legal mechanisms. Mullin's account also shows the limits or opportunities for officer agency that were imposed by government priorities. Where he could select over a hundred families per day in Indochina for resettlement without the need to determine whether they were Convention refugees, by his account Mullin limited in Nairobi to interviewing and selecting considerably fewer individuals (less than ten) per day.

Thirdly, in the course of refugee selection, all officers were aware of their simultaneous role as diplomats and how refugee selection decisions could impact diplomatic relations. Burrows' account regarding diplomatic tensions between the Governments of Kenya and Canada that became exacerbated following the release of the documentary film *Who Gets In* provides an example of how officers occupied this dual role and navigated ideational structures, with variegated results.

Negotiator

⁵⁷² Ibid.

⁵⁷³ Ibid.

As all the life stories have shown, in addition to eligibility and statutory requirements regarding criminality, security and medicals, the *1976 Immigration Act* prescribed that officers assess refugee applicants on their potential ability to establish and settle in Canada. Settlement in Canada was (and remains to this day) a crucial component and consideration for refugee selection. While all three officers likely negotiated with various partners along the resettlement continuum (from refugee selection to settlement in Canada), this study found that of the three, only Molloy acted as a negotiator within formal resettlement policy and implementation processes as well as in his central role in helping to constitute informants for this study. Through his long-standing relationship with them, Molloy was this study's conduit to both Mullin and Burrows. By facilitating and introducing this author to both former officers, Molloy acted as a negotiator through whose network and relationships the study was able to gain access to narrators who may otherwise not have been available to this study.

During his time as Director of Refugee Policy from 1976 to 1978, Molloy created and cultivated relationships with individuals representing internal and external partners of the Department of Immigration. These relationships allowed him to negotiate the downstream effect of the Canadian government's ratification of the *1951 UN Convention* and its Protocol, by overseeing and creating refugee provisions for the implementation of the *1976 Immigration Act*. That included working on regulations that came into effect in 1978, designing programs, and operational instructions, including new operational manuals. As alluded to in the previous section, during his tenure as the Immigration Program Manager at Nairobi visa office in the

late 1980s, Molloy's relationships and negotiations with resettlement partner representatives such as the UNHCR, IOM, Red Cross and WUSC, helped facilitate more effective and efficient pre- and post-resettlement procedures in the region. In turn, this enabled the Nairobi visa office to be closer toward meeting its annual resettlement targets and help maintain the Africa Refugee program's integrity.

Implications

Historiography

As a form of historical writing, and through the use of officer narratives and oral testimony, this study has somewhat answered White's enduring call for a "return to narrative representation in historiography."⁵⁷⁴ Beyond proffering a historical account of the genesis and evolution of Canada's resettlement policy in Central and East Africa, this dissertation also underlines the continued utility and value of oral history in accessing narratives and subjects that might otherwise remain unexamined. By examining critical aspects of the officers' oral testimonies and letting Molloy, Mullin and Burrows "speak" as much as possible in chapters three, four and five respectively, this author has sought to weave narrative into the history of refugee selection—a history told by and from the subjective perspective of some of the key actors and agents who lived it. Through oral history, the study can access not only what the actors did or hoped to do at the time, but also how and why they remembered and narrated what they did.

It is worth reiterating that this thesis, notwithstanding its examination of contextual official Government of Canada reports, documents and statistics, has not

⁵⁷⁴ White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical*, xi.

fully drawn upon the breadth of written accounts regarding refugee selection from the African continent. An area of potential future research that arises from this thesis would be to seek and examine insights from written sources such as papers, briefs, letters or essays that officers authored, which can help illuminate further how bureaucratic actors understood and represented their own role in public discourse and history.

Structure and agency for implementation

In order to explore the material structures within which officers narrated, navigated and negotiated while implementing resettlement policy, this study supplemented the officers' life stories with key written sources such as the 1970 Memorandum to Cabinet on the *Selection of Refugees for Resettlement to Canada*, refugees provisions from the *1976 Immigration Act*, Ministry of Immigration refugee policy papers and briefs, operational guidelines to officers on refugee selection criteria, and Annual Reports to Parliament on Immigration Levels published after the establishment of the Africa Refugee program from 1981 to 1990. Together, these primary written sources help to reveal and explain the material structures—policy, laws, priorities and resource capacity of the Canadian government—within which the officers implemented refugee selection. This synthesis of the documentary primary sources also helped to tell a compelling history in which individual agency mattered and impacted the implementation of the Africa Refugee Program.

This study also showed how the local context of implementation, as well as the African continent's place in the international system, also accounts for ideational structures that condition and shape refugee selection, especially within the context

of the Canadian government domestic and foreign policy interests. Specifically, this dissertation was able to situate officers' experiences with the Africa Refugee Program within the context of a discourse on "burden-sharing" that became pronounced from the late 1980s within international dialogues between refugee-hosting African states, third-country resettlement western states and the UNHCR, such as ICARA I and II. Subsequent increases in the Nairobi visa office's refugee allocations from 1981 onwards underlie how third-country resettlement came to be viewed in international refugee protection as a form of "physical burden-sharing."⁵⁷⁵

This study also underlined how large-scale expressions of humanitarianism through resettlement only took place where material and ideational structures converged for the Government of Canada, thereby providing mechanisms and more flexible criteria through which officers could exercise more discretion in selection. Molloy's recollections about his experience as part of the mission, which selected over six thousand Ugandan-Asian expellees in 1972, is an apt example of such a convergence that took place before the formalization of Canada's global resettlement program in 1978. While the British government's formal request for assistance may have prompted the Government of Canada to resettle the Ugandan-Asian expellees, the government justified their admission and the resources expended in airlifting them to Canada on the simultaneous basis of humanitarianism and economic sense. Many of those expelled were business people and skilled immigrants that the government considered as being likely to establish and contribute to the Canadian economy successfully.

⁵⁷⁵ Milner *Politics of Asylum in Africa*, 49-51.

Mullin's account about the resettlement of over sixty-thousand Indochinese boat people from 1979 to 1981 also illustrates a convergence of ideational and material structures. Simultaneously in support of allies like the United States and a response to the precarious circumstances of the Indochinese boat people, the Government of Canada joined other Western governments to express an anti-Communist stance in Indochina during the Cold War era. As discussed earlier above, the designated class provision in the Immigration Act allowed for the resettlement of Indochinese boat people who may otherwise not have been considered refugees. In order for officers to facilitate and expedite resettlement through this legal mechanism, there was a need for a convergence of domestic and foreign policy interests, and the acquiescence of policymakers in Ottawa.

An important theme arising from the life stories pertained to how Canadian refugee law related to "liberation war" refugee applicants in Africa. Molloy and Mullin both indicated that they had interviewed refugee applicants who had either been liberation combatants or members of liberation movements. Some of the examples provided included refugee applicants from South Africa's African National Congress (ANC) and Namibia's South West African People's Organization (SWAPO). For Molloy notably, he indicated that even though he may have understood or even empathized with these applicants' struggles against colonialism governments, the statutory requirement on security together with general Cold War politics and ideological sensitivities in the early years of the Africa Refugee Program, rendered many such applicants inadmissible to Canada and in turn, ineligible for resettlement. The implication is that notwithstanding whatever discretion may have been available to

officers within legal provisions, the exercise of such discretion with regards to political refugee applicants was subject to broader ideational structures.

Productive power and the “human touch.”

This study also has implications for the practice of humanitarianism and refugee protection, especially with regards to formal refugee selection procedures. A recurring theme in the life stories was that of the importance of the “human touch.” All of the officer’s face-to-face interviews with applicants provided an important opportunity to exercise “human judgement” in hearing applicant stories and arriving at selection decisions. Molloy’s anecdotes about offering UNHCR-referred Rwandese applicants a second chance (new interviews) to re-tell their stories after discovering significant misrepresentation, is one such example. In turn, despite not having a formal referral for him, Burrows decided to interview the “albino” refugee who (based on her intuition) was likely vulnerable and in need of resettlement due to his minority status.

Such anecdotes underlie Milner and Wojnarowicz’s argument about the importance of exploring the role of productive power in local contexts.⁵⁷⁶ The three life stories, and especially the above examples of officer discretion, exemplify the role that the three officers played as “power-brokers” within the implementation of Canadian refugee policy. The next section discusses how the Government of Canada has been exploring the use of artificial intelligence in immigration and refugee selection. With that in mind, these life-stories emphasize adaptability (in the face of unpredictable local contexts and unique refugee situations or circumstances) and capacity for

⁵⁷⁶ Milner and Wojnarowicz, “Power in the Global Refugee Regime,” 11-14.

empathy (with vulnerable or precarious refugee applicants) that human actors bring to implementation and refugee selection in particular.

Discrimination regarding African refugees?

While a formal study about the genesis and implementation of Canada's African Refugee Program may be a new contribution to scholarship, this does not mean that before this project there was an absence of "stories" about Canadian resettlement from Africa in popular discourse, especially amongst African diaspora communities and refugee advocates. After the Government of Canada announced in November 2015, that it would resettle twenty-five thousand Syrian refugees, the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR), issued a written statement that echoed a long-held perception by some refugee advocates, private sponsors and African diaspora communities that the Government of Canada "neglected" African refugees within Canada's resettlement program.⁵⁷⁷ The CCR statement stressed the comparatively 'slow' processing times in "countries of East and Central Africa covered by Canada's visa office in Nairobi" and stated that these delays left "vulnerable refugees in dangerous situations for longer than anywhere else in the world."⁵⁷⁸

While this author was aware of such perceptions, this study did not set out to explore or confirm whether there was indeed discrimination of African refugees in refugee selection. This dissertation has recognized the various theoretical frames and

⁵⁷⁷Canadian Council for Refugees, "Nairobi: Long delays Statement on responding to African refugees," (webpage info) June, 2011, accessed: November 4, 2018, <http://ccrweb.ca/sites/ccrweb.ca/files/nairobistatement.pdf>

⁵⁷⁸ Prior to changes made by the Government of Canada in 2012 that imposed application intake limits at missions with high case backlogs (Nairobi, Cairo, Pretoria and Islamabad) and changes in application requirements and procedures for privately sponsored refugees in 2013, processing times for privately sponsored refugees in Nairobi had reached approximately 60 months or 5 years and refusal rates reached 70%.

perspectives that exist when it comes to the scholarship and history of Canadian immigration, including critical race theory. Notwithstanding this recognition, the methodological thrust of this research project, including the life story and open-ended approach to the interviews, was designed to examine specific bureaucratic processes and contexts from the perspectives of those who implemented them. Therefore, in conception, questions and argument, this dissertation's "story" derives from how and what these officers told of their life stories. However, due to the focus on the African Refugee Program, all three officers were likely aware of this perceived discrimination. As shown, the intersubjective nature of the oral history interview and, in turn, the present context of remembering and storytelling can shape what people include or exclude in their stories. Hence, it is essential to read the life stories critically, with this in mind.

During active service, government officers and bureaucrats, including those who engage in immigrant and refugee selection, are precluded by ethical and privacy guidelines from offering personal opinions about Government of Canada policies, programs or complex cases within the public domain.⁵⁷⁹ In part, for this reason, the life stories from Molloy, Mullin and Burrows are important and invaluable "insider" perspectives on the inner workings and logic of Canada's African refugee Program and early resettlement policy, more generally. It is worth emphasizing that officer's life stories, and in turn, this thesis, are not making generalized and normative claims

⁵⁷⁹ These concerns by officers around what can be said or shared in their accounts and on the record, echoed those of the public servants who shared their stories with Seguin, "Remembering the Civil Service: Work and Life Stories of Indigenous Labourers in the Canadian Federal Civil Service," 41. During oral interviews, the narrators "carefully decided" what they discussed with researchers and what they felt they could "safely mention on the record to a public audience."

about the African Refugee Program. As stated, the life stories and experiences of the three officers examined in this thesis show the central role that individuals played in the development and implementation of bureaucratic processes, and how they did so as navigators, negotiators and narrators.

Future Work

The Refugee applicant perspective

This study has argued that resettlement policies, programs and procedures are developed, implemented, administered, enforced and enlivened by human beings. The stories of human beings who heard and decided on refugee applicants' eligibility for resettlement are invaluable. However, these officers' life stories provided only one type of perspective in order to explain and understand the role of stories within refugee selection processes and interviews.

As stated in the introduction, this study was initially intended to be an oral history presenting the two main perspectives in refugee selection interviews—that of officers and refugee applicants. Such an approach would have conceptualized refugee applicants as storytellers and officers as hearers and examined how each subjectivity understood and experienced the interview process. However, the scope of the study changed when, during preliminary fieldwork, I recognized the need to situate and explain both the officer and refugee applicant actions and agency within broader structures that shape refugee policy implementation through selection for resettlement. While this study provides important insights and revelations about the role of individual government officers' agency in the genesis and implementation of

Canada's Africa Refugee Program, I recognized that the story of agency in refugee selection is incomplete without the perspectives of the refugee applicants who applied for resettlement and presented themselves before Canadian bureaucratic scrutiny. Therefore, while this study has offered context into the structures, conditions and interests that refugee applicant story "hearers" and decision-makers manage in the course of refugee selection, there is still a need to hear the story of refugee selection from the perspective of the storyteller and refugee applicant.

The importance of documenting refugee perspectives is recognized in refugee studies, especially with regards to their experiences navigating state and local structures in pursuit of durable solutions within countries of asylum.⁵⁸⁰ Potentially, future research could explore refugee applicants' agency and examine the structures that condition and shape their ability to seek asylum in countries of asylum, to access resettlement opportunities and in this vein, to tell their stories to Canadian government officers.⁵⁸¹ Importantly, juxtaposed with the officer testimonies discussed in this study, refugee life stories would allow for a "conversation" with the life stories of officers and illuminate the various conditions and structures that combine (collide) in the refugee selection interview. Such a research project would

⁵⁸⁰ For example, there has been scholarship that centers refugee issues alongside the broader political, social and economic forces that impact on refugee lives and experiences through a case study of Eritrean refugees in Wad El Hileau, a camp in Eastern Sudan, see Jonathan Bascom, *Losing Place: Refugee Population And Rural Transformations In East Africa* (New York, Berghahn Books, 2001). See also a volume by Alastair Ager, ed. *Refugee Perspectives on the Experience of Forced Migration* (London and New York, Pinter, 1999) whose theme includes valuing the resources, capacities and meanings derived from refugees themselves and explores the connection of the personal to the political in the lives and experiences of refugees.

⁵⁸¹ The agency of refugees in the African context has been explored before. For example, see Liisa Malkki, "Speechless Emissaries: Refugees, Humanitarianism, and Dehistoricization," *Cultural Anthropology*, 11, no. 3 (Aug., 1996): 377-404; and Helene Moussa, *Storm and Sanctuary: The Journey of Ethiopian and Eritrean Women Refugees* (Dundas, Ontario: Artemis Enterprises, 1993).

ask questions that mirror those of officers in both the present and past. For example, how did refugee applicants construct and tell their stories of flight and persecution in order to gain resettlement in Canada? What did they consider to be a “good” story in this vein, worth including or excluding in their stories? How did they make narrative sense of their past and especially, their encounter with Canadian bureaucracy and refugee selection procedures? Such conversation between the officer and refugee applicant narratives would provide for a substantively more fruitful exploration of the extent and manifestation of productive power within refugee selection procedures. While inquiries focused on refugee perspectives have been conducted with regards to the role of productive power and refugee narrative capacity within refugee status determination hearings for in-Canada asylum claims, there has been no scholarship that explores the issue of narrative in the resettlement context.⁵⁸² It is only through future research that examines the interaction between the “hearer” and the “teller” that more critical questions about the motivations and biases, and asymmetries of power within the relationship between the two principal actors, can be effectively unpacked.

However, such a project could potentially pose some methodological and theoretical challenges. Firstly, there would be a need to identify former refugee applicants who are willing to speak candidly about their experiences (positive or negative) with refugee selection processes and government officials (not necessarily the three officers interviewed in this study). While this author had received formal ethics approval from Carleton University’s Research and Ethics Board to interview

⁵⁸² See Barsky, *Constructing a Productive Other*.

former refugee applicants and had managed to identify potential interviewees, it was unclear how comfortable they would have been to discuss the minute details of their experiences, including potentially revealing their stories of flight and persecution.

Future research is imperative in order to tell the story of refugee selection from the perspective of African refugee applicants. Such research might explore ways in which refugee applicants exercised agency when telling their stories to Canadian officials, and the types of structures that mediated their experiences with this process (especially in light of their unique experiences of flight and asylum). Therefore, extensive oral history interviews with former African refugee applicants for the same period and visa office would help create a fuller picture of the refugee selection interview.

Also, a consideration of refugee selection from the perspective of both officers and refugee applicants would require a substantive analysis of the layers of power within the process and between the parties. Also, it would be imperative to address the structures that shaped the conditions of flight and asylum for refugee applicants, within their home countries and the countries where they sought asylum. This context of flight and asylum is vital to understanding how they formed their stories, and why third-country resettlement came to be considered the most viable durable solution for their situation. Potentially, such an approach would help explain the refugee applicant's agency and the complex structures within which they navigated, negotiated and narrated their experiences while seeking resettlement to Canada.

Resettlement 2.0: Artificial intelligence and refugee selection?

This dissertation has highlighted the particular importance of human actors and agency during refugee selection processes and interviews. Individual agency and discretion matter in refugee selection and policy implementation as humans can hear stories, exercise judgement, empathize and intuitively identify with human vulnerability (potentially), and where necessary, ask follow-up questions to seek nuance, clarify inconsistencies or information gaps so as to arrive at a better-informed decision. In the same vein, only humans can demonstrate agency as narrators, navigators and negotiators during refugee selection. In his story, Molloy emphasized how, for him, the “human touch,” and “human emotion” were essential aspects of immigrant and refugee selection. In the same vein, the welcoming handshake that officers offered to an applicant after a positive selection decision could never be replaced by “algorithms.” While Molloy did not refer to any specific initiative or policy, the Government of Canada has recently been reported to be conducting exploratory tests on the use of artificial intelligence for immigration and refugee selection.⁵⁸³ This initiative by the Ministry of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada began under the government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper in 2014. While the government insists that it is only using artificial intelligence as a “sorting mechanism,” immigration and refugee stakeholders and advocates are

⁵⁸³ “How Artificial Intelligence Could Change Canada’s Immigration and Refugee System,” CBC Radio, November 16, 2018, accessed November 21, 2018, <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/thesundayedition/november-18-2018-the-sunday-edition-1.4907270/how-artificial-intelligence-could-change-canada-s-immigration-and-refugee-system-1.4908587>

concerned about the implications of such policy directions on Canada's refugee policy.⁵⁸⁴

The refugee advocacy organization, the Canadian Council for Refugees, made representations to the Parliament's Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, expressing disquiet about modernization and electronic "client service delivery."⁵⁸⁵ The group was concerned about the adverse impact of these initiatives on poor or vulnerable immigration applicants with limited means or no access to the internet.⁵⁸⁶ The role of artificial intelligence in the implementation of immigration and refugee selection is an area that requires more research and scrutiny.

In conclusion

The goal of this dissertation was to contribute to a scholarship that places people at the center of policy by telling a history about the impact of Canadian refugee protection policy and programs on people's lives. The result illustrates that the stories of the individuals who developed and implemented Canada's Africa Refugee program as Foreign Service officers are an integral component to understanding human agency in the face of structures, in addition to being an important dimension of Canada's immigration and refugee history. When seeking durable solutions, refugees encounter policies and bureaucratic procedures that are

⁵⁸⁴ Tom Cardoso, "Ottawa's Use of AI for Immigration a 'High-Risk Laboratory'" *The Globe and Mail*, September 26, 2018, accessed November 21, 2018, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/politics/article-ottawas-use-of-ai-for-immigration-a-high-risk-laboratory-report/>; and Teresa Wright, "Canada's Use of Artificial Intelligence in Immigration Could Lead to Break of Human Rights" *Global News*, September 26, 2018, accessed November 21, 2018, <https://globalnews.ca/news/4487724/canada-artificial-intelligence-human-rights/>

⁵⁸⁵ Canadian Council of Refugees, "Modernizing Client Service Delivery at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada CCR submission to Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration," January 2017, 1-5, accessed November 21, 2018, <http://ccrweb.ca/sites/ccrweb.ca/files/cimm-modernization-services-ircc-ccr-comments-jan-2017.pdf>

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid.

enacted and implemented by human actors. Specifically, as this thesis has shown, officers had the bureaucratic authority to ascribe the formal label of “refugee” according to Canadian refugee law.⁵⁸⁷ This study has shown that the stories of the officers who performed this role are essential to explaining and understanding the conditions encountered by ordinary human beings who find themselves in extraordinary circumstances of flight and displacement from all that is familiar. As policies and procedures relating to refugee resettlement are again the focus of public debate, it is important for our understanding of these procedures to be ever mindful of the central role that individuals play in their development and implementation, and the role that individual agency can play in the mediating of complex structures.

⁵⁸⁷ See Zetter, “Labelling Refugees: Forming and Transforming a Bureaucratic Identity” for a discussion of the power of bureaucrats to create and formalize labels for refugee-hood.

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Appendix 1: Chronology of Officer Trajectories, Key Milestones or Events (1951 to 2018)

Description

Appendix 1: *Chronology of Officer Trajectories, Key Milestones or Events* is a spreadsheet and has been uploaded as a separate document. The document is a chronology of significant events or historical moments in Canadian, African and global refugee issues from 1951 to 2018. These broader developments are juxtaposed with the intersecting chronologies of Molloy, Mullin and Burrows' professional trajectories. The dissertation chapters focus on refugee policy changes, events and officer experiences that advance and are most pertinent to the study's preoccupation with the African Refugee Program. However, the appendix provides more substantive information that situates the three life stories within more extensive professional experiences.

Appendix 2: CUREB-A- Clearance Certificate, Andriata Chironda, #104760

Description

Appendix 4 is a Clearance Certificate indicating approval from CUREB-A to the dissertation research project team to conduct field-work and interviews. Approval was granted from May 7, 2018, to May 31, 2019. The Ethics Protocol Clearance ID number was # 104760.

Appendix 3: CUREB-A- Letter of Invitation and Introduction

Description

Appendix 4 is the letter of invitation and introduction that was first sent to potential participants, including the three participating officers Michael Molloy, Susan Burrows and Scott Mullin. This invitation letter was also submitted to and approved by CUREB-A, as part of the application that sought ethics approval to conduct research and interview participants.

Appendix 4: CUREB-A- Consent Form for Visa Officer Interviews

Description

Appendix 3 is the consent form that was sent to and signed by all three participating officers Michael Molloy, Susan Burrows and Scott Mullin, before the onset of oral interviews. This consent form was also submitted to and approved by CUREB-A, as part of the application that sought ethics approval to conduct research and interview participants.

Appendix 5: CUREB-A- Proposed Interview Questions

Description

Appendix 2 is a list of proposed questions that were sent as part of the application to the Carleton University Research Ethics Board - A when we sought permission to conduct fieldwork and interviews for this research project. Questions were broken down by participant groups. Ultimately, the final interviews were open-ended and did not follow the proposed format. However, the questions in Appendix 2 provided a

guideline for the follow-up interviews that were held with Michael Molloy and Susan Burrows.