2 Case Studies

2.1 Three Ages of Humanitarianism

Relief efforts during the Great Irish Famine of the 1840s, the famine that ravaged Soviet Russia in 1921–3, and the devastating famine in Ethiopia in the mid-1980s are characterised by widely different societal and international circumstances. They represent three distinct phases of humanitarian engagement: the *ad hoc humanitarianism* of elitist nineteenth-century laissez-faire liberalism, the *organised humanitarianism* associated with Taylorism and mass society (c. 1900–70), and the *expressive humanitarianism* brought forth by a mix of post-material values and neo-liberal public–private entrepreneurship that is characteristic of the half century from 1968 to the present.[1] The years surrounding 1900 and 1970 were incubators of the second and third industrial revolutions; they saw the first and second wave of women's liberation; and they have been identified as two phases of the twentieth century's pronounced internationalisation that contributed to the rapid dissemination of new models and practices.[2]

Our cultural and socio-economical approach goes along with the call for a new history of humanitarianism, with greater consideration of economic developments.[3] It challenges the dominant paradigm of humanitarian studies that selects historical turning points from geopolitical landmarks. We do not claim that all emergency relief follows a dominant pattern of traditional, bureaucratic, or charismatic agency. Ad hoc, organised, and expressive elements of humanitarianism coexist and interact with each other at all times. While not mutually exclusive, time-bound humanitarian models set standards and exert pressure on the sector as a whole.

[1] The following discussion on periodisation draws on Götz, Brewis, and Werther, 'Humanitäre Hilfe'.

[2] Glenda Sluga, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

[3] Enrico Dal Lago and Kevin O'Sullivan, 'Introduction: Toward a New History of Humanitarianism', *Moving the Social* no. 57 (2017): 7, 19.

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The characterisation of our first two periods as ad hoc humanitarianism and organised humanitarianism is derived from Merle Curti's classic study *American Philanthropy Abroad*, although Curti did not give these names to the eras he described.[4] The term organised humanitarianism also reflects the proliferation of 'organisation' as a dominant principle in the early twentieth century. This surfaces in contemporary social democratic theorist Rudolf Hilferding's notion of 'organised capitalism' and in the aspirations of the internationalist movement of the time.[5] The concept of 'expressive humanitarianism' that we propose pertains to post-material self-expressiveness and to an increasing fusion of relief with advocacy strategies and the notion of rights, media-driven spectacle, commercial branding, popular involvement and populism, 'projectification', and the aggressive pursuit of humanitarian intervention. These tendencies emerge from what leading sociologists, economic analysts, and contemporary historians have identified as a caesura around 1970 that was formative for the society of our time.[6] In contrast to the beginning of the twentieth century, when 'organisation' was a prominent term in humanitarian discourse, the terms 'ad hoc' and 'expressive' are solely analytical rather than being directly derived from our sources.

Our outline of humanitarianism seeks to address levels of transatlantic history that are deeper than such eventful years as 1918, 1945, and 1989, on which contemporary observers have tended to focus. We also deviate from such geopolitically determined perspectives as that of Michael Barnett's *Empire of Humanity*, the most comprehensive historical synthesis to date of humanitarian action. Barnett's study, while representing a mature judgement, is characterised by a US bias and lacks historical perspective.[7] Moreover, it utilises a highly problematic periodisation and several terminological idiosyncrasies (development becomes 'alchemy', for example). In our view, the epoch Barnett describes as 'imperial humanitarianism' is an inadequate catch-all characterisation of the field prior to decolonisation in 1945. His subsequent 'neo-humanitarianism' is an offshoot of neocolonialism with a tautological

[4] Merle Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad: A History* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1963), 619–23.

[5] Heinrich August Winkler, ed. *Organisierter Kapitalismus: Voraussetzungen und Anfänge* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1974); Guido Grünewald, ed. *'Organisiert die Welt!': Der Friedensnobelpreisträger Alfred Hermann Fried (1864–1921) – Leben, Werk und bleibende Impulse* (Bremen: Donat, 2016).

[6] See, e.g., Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (London: Verso, 2005); Thomas Borstelmann, *The 1970s: A New Global History from Civil Rights to Economic Inequality* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012); Anselm Doering-Manteuffel and Lutz Raphael, *Nach dem Boom: Perspektiven auf die Zeitgeschichte seit 1970* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010).

[7] Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*. The author, a political scientist, draws exclusively on secondary literature and shows little knowledge of nineteenth-century disaster relief.

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ring, and 'liberal humanitarianism' conveys a misleading picture of developments after the Cold War.[8] Barnett's three categories further imply a progressive trajectory of voluntary action, when in fact many practitioners and observers oppose the increasing exploitation and manipulation of humanitarian efforts by governments and quasi-imperial coalitions. Moreover, the author's belief that only after the Cold War could humanitarianism overcome a 'quaintly and stubbornly pre-modern' condition in favour of a bureaucratised and professionalised approach underestimates the rationalisation of this sector in the first half of the twentieth century, the dysfunctional tendencies of current media- and donor-driven efforts, and the enduring parochialism of US agency in world affairs.[9]

Silvia Salvatici's recently published *A History of Humanitarianism* is a valuable overview. She does not attempt to identify an 'age of origins', adopting instead what she calls an archaeological approach to investigate the evolution of humanitarianism from the Lisbon earthquake of 1755 until the mid-ninteeeth century. This is followed by a war-related period that lasts for a hundred years, 1854–1951. However, her Third World–oriented period from the 1950s to 1989 was also a time of war and blends official development aid and emergency relief. An epilogue describing the complex emergencies and growth of the humanitarian sector after 1989 follows the dominant political science narrative without adding insights from empirical research.[10]

Chronology of Humanitarianism

Charity is part of a global heritage that acquired a new quality following the social, religious, and economic transformations in Britain during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. A crucial factor in this reshaping was the Protestant revival with its activism and incorporation of benevolent traditions like those of the Quakers.[11] Domestic charity, advocacy and reform of prisons and the slave trade, and aid to foreign countries were closely intertwined.[12] All this was preconditioned by the rise of capitalism

[8] Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*.

[9] Michael Barnett, 'Humanitarianism as a Scholarly Vocation', in *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*, eds Michael Barnett and Thomas G. Weiss (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), 253. For dysfunctionalities, see Brauman, 'Global Media'; Paul Farmer, *Haiti after the Earthquake* (New York: Public Affairs, 2011).

[10] Silvia Salvatici, *A History of Humanitarianism, 1755–1989: In the Name of Others* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019 [2015]).

[11] Frank Prochaska, *The Voluntary Impulse: Philanthropy in Modern Britain* (London: Faber and Faber, 1988), 21; Ormerod John Greenwood, *Quaker Encounters, vol. 1: Friends and Relief* (York: Sessions, 1975), 5.

[12] Stephen Tomkins, *The Clapham Sect: How Wilberforce's Circle Transformed Britain* (Oxford: Lion, 2010), 12; Ford K. Brown, *Fathers of the Victorians: The Age of Wilberforce*

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and was shaped, in Thomas L. Haskell's analysis, by 'the power of market discipline to inculcate altered perceptions of causation in human affairs', which yielded a new scope of agency upon others.[13] Distant charity likewise emerged from the bonds forged alongside European colonial expansion. While local efforts dominated disaster relief in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Atlantic world, religious groups in particular would sometimes raise money for distressed coreligionists abroad. By the second half of the eighteenth century, voluntary overseas aid began to play an increasing role in disaster recovery in the Anglo-Atlantic space. This development was facilitated by the introduction of private subscriptions as fundraising instruments. Rather than relying on government approval or religious edict, these depended on the work of an engaged committee, a media-oriented campaign, and public meetings in coffeehouses and taverns.[14] Although imperial direction shaped humanitarian efforts, the claim that eighteenth-century donors of transnational relief generally 'sought to further hegemonic aims' and that 'they offered aid paternalistically in order to strengthen their grip on a devastated region and its people' overlooks the great variety of motivations and anticipated returns.[15]

The US declaration of independence from Britain unsettled prevailing charitable practices, but it also contributed to expanding the imperial horizon of relief efforts.[16] By the beginning of the nineteenth century, relief campaigns in support of foreign lands in distress became more common. Driven by well-integrated immigrant groups and the evangelical circles that were also engaged in the struggle against the slave trade, Britain during the Napoleonic wars conducted a non-military aid campaign that benefitted various German and Austrian lands as well as Sweden. The fundraising was in response to reports of distress caused by the war and word of an anticipated or actual famine. Suffering populations in enemy states as well as allies were aided.[17]

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), 374–5. See also Norbert Götz, 'Rationales of Humanitarianism: The Case of British Relief to Germany, 1805–1815', *Journal of Modern European History* 12, no. 2 (2014): 186–99; Norbert Götz, 'The Good Plumpuddings' Belief: British Voluntary Aid to Sweden during the Napoleonic Wars', *International History Review* 37, no. 3 (2015): 519–39.

[13] Thomas L. Haskell, 'Capitalism and the Origins of the Humanitarian Sensibility, Part 1', *American Historical Review* 90, no. 2 (1985): 342.

[14] Matthew Mulcahy, *Hurricanes and Society in the British Greater Caribbean, 1624–1783* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 142, 146–9.

[15] See Alessa Johns, 'Introduction', in *Dreadful Visitations: Confronting Natural Catastrophe in the Age of Enlightenment*, ed. Alessa Johns (New York: Routledge, 1999), xxi.

[16] Amanda B. Moniz, *From Empire to Humanity: The American Revolution and the Origins of Humanitarianism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 4.

[17] Götz, 'Rationales of Humanitarianism'; Götz, 'Good Plumpuddings'; Norbert Götz and Frank Palmowski, 'Humanitäre Hilfe im Zeitalter Napoleons: Bürgerliche Gesellschaft und transnationale Ressourcen am Beispiel Erfurts', *Historische Zeitschrift* 305, no. 2 (2017): 362–92.

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A striking feature of nineteenth-century humanitarian relief was the ad hoc nature of its organisation and perspective. While relief committees responded to specific crises in accordance with established patterns, the same committees dissolved when they considered their work done, but sometimes reconvened when a similar crisis arose.[18] Relief consisted of taking emergency measures on top of those by local donors and governments, rather than creating structural interventions that would improve the long-term resilience of beneficiaries. Foreign countries were seen as responsible for the maintenance of their own charitable institutions and economic development, while transnational relief was reserved for the selective alleviation of extraordinary disasters. This led to tension between donors calling for an immediate appropriation of funds and recipient committees abroad who wanted to preside over long-term charitable investments.[19] However, early transitional groups laid the foundation for more enduring organisations such as the Society of St Vincent de Paul (SVP) in the 1840s and the Red Cross in the 1860s.[20]

The 1890s have been identified as a 'fruitful time for the development of humanitarian practices'.[21] It was the beginning of a decades-long transformation in an era described as 'progressive' in US history, and it involved physicians, social workers, engineers, and later public relations specialists and accountants, all of whom promoted scientific and technological innovations, new media, and modern business practices. An expansive humanitarian vigour surfaced for what may have been the first time in the merging of Protestant missionary zeal and liberal civilisational aspirations during the Russian Famine of 1890–1, when a reluctant US government agreed to lend logistical support to relief efforts. In the USA, the last decade of the nineteenth century is widely seen as a period of transition from a 'non-interventionist tradition' to 'missionary humanitarianism'.[22]

Curti's periodisation emphasises the correlation of voluntary and government action and the institutionalisation of relief, both of which became manifest in the run-up to the Spanish–American War of 1898. According to Curti, the bureaucratic-rational and semi-official approach of the American Red Cross (ARC) marginalised earlier voluntary relief efforts. The advancement of organisational structures, mass appeals, and government intervention

[18] Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad*, 619–21.
[19] Götz, 'Good Plumpuddings'; Götz and Palmowski, 'Humanitäre Hilfe'.
[20] Norbert Götz, 'The Emergence of NGOs as Actors on the World Stage', in *Routledge Handbook of NGOs and International Relations*, ed. Thomas Davies (London: Routledge, 2019), 19–31; Thomas Davies, *NGOs: A New History of Transnational Civil Society* (London: Hurst, 2013), 4.
[21] Luke Kelly, 'British Humanitarianism and the Russian Famine, 1891–2', *Historical Research* 89, no. 246 (2016): 824.
[22] Jeff Bloodworth, 'A Complicated Kindness: The Iowa Famine Relief Movement and the Myth of Midwestern (and American) Isolationism', *Historian* 73, no. 3 (2011): 482–5.

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revolutionised humanitarian action.[23] Over the following decade, the ARC was transformed into the professional operation it is today.[24]

Ian Tyrrell calls attention to the networked culture of humanitarianism that emerged 'through the historical experience of organized giving' in response to the remote calamities of the 1890s. He also points to the gradual displacement of idiosyncratic human interest endeavours by the more systematic work of foundations, which contributed greatly to the emergence of philanthropy as a coherent epistemic field and community in the decade after 1900.[25] For British India, Georgina Brewis has traced the transition from religious philanthropy to organised social service in famine relief efforts during the closing years of the nineteenth century.[26] Pre-war imperialism, as a recent study concludes, had a profound impact on British humanitarianism after the First World War. It affected the entire humanitarian sector, from the 'ethics of relief' to aid practice and staffing. Administrators and relief workers with experience from colonial institutions, missionary groups, or the Society of Friends remained an essential part of the 'mixed economy' of voluntary and official aid during the interwar years. Thus, newly established organisations like the Save the Children Fund (SCF) or the American Relief Administration (ARA) 'utilized the expert knowledge and techniques of famine relief first elaborated by the liberal imperialism of the late nineteenth century'.[27]

Such developments coincided with the first wave of women's liberation, leading to the 'feminisation of relief work' in the first two decades of the twentieth century.[28] However, despite this new feminised public image of aid work (such as in Red Cross advertisements), and despite the emergence of 'feminine' organisations like the SCF and the prominent role of female

[23] Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad*, 199–223, 258, 621–2. For similar observations regarding the UK at the time, see Rebecca Gill, *Calculating Compassion: Humanity and Relief in War, Britain 1870–1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 179.

[24] Marian Moser Jones, *The American Red Cross from Clara Barton to the New Deal* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), 80–136.

[25] Ian Tyrrell, *Reforming the World: The Creation of America's Moral Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), 98, 118. On the role of contemporary foundations and 'scientific philanthropy', see Craig Calhoun, 'The Imperative to Reduce Suffering: Charity, Progress, and Emergencies in the Field of Humanitarian Action', in *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*, eds Michael Barnett and Thomas G. Weiss (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), 79; Katharina Rietzler, 'From Peace Advocacy to International Relations Research: The Transformation of Transatlantic Philanthropic Networks, 1900–1930', in *Shaping the Transnational Sphere: Experts, Networks, Issues, 1850–1930*, eds Davide Rodogno, Bernhard Struck, and Jakob Vogel (New York: Berghahn, 2015), 173–95.

[26] Georgina Brewis, '"Fill Full the Mouth of Famine": Voluntary Action in Famine Relief in India 1896–1901', *Modern Asian Studies* 44, no. 4 (2010): 887–918.

[27] Tehila Sasson, 'From Empire to Humanity: The Russian Famine and the Imperial Origins of International Humanitarianism', *Journal of British Studies* 53, no. 3 (2016): 522 (quotation), 519–37.

[28] Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 186.

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fieldworkers in Quaker relief, men still dominated the humanitarian arena, and in some cases denied access to women and disputed their capability of conducting humanitarian field work.[29] At the same time, as victims, women continued to benefit from idealised notions of motherhood or paternalistic chivalry towards the 'fair sex'. While we know about the contributions of women in the early ad hoc campaigns (including the anti-slavery movement and philhellenism), much remains to be learned about female leadership, mobilisation, activism,[30] and negative and positive discrimination in humanitarian efforts.

Photographs came into wider use in the fundraising campaigns for India (1896–7) and the Second Boer War (1899–1902) and onwards, creating an enhanced sense of the authenticity of aid causes in an unholy alliance 'with the sensationalistic mass culture that intensified after the turn of the century'.[31] While children had played a special role in philanthropic campaigns since the Enlightenment, the twentieth century placed increased emphasis on the suffering of children.[32] As a group, children required extensive relief administration because self-help programmes were inappropriate for them. Since the South African War of 1899–1902, sympathy towards enemy children has also served as a way to oppose war.[33] The First World War and the period of political and economic instability that followed, with its collapsing empires, civil and border hostilities, expulsions, and waves of refugees, created a vast humanitarian crisis. The war became a node for organised humanitarianism

[29] Bertrand M. Patenaude, *Big Show in Bololand: The American Relief Expedition to Soviet Russia in the Famine of 1921* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), 50; Rickard to Lovejoy, 25 Oct. 1921, ARA, reel 502.

[30] Abigail Green, 'Humanitarianism in Nineteenth Century Context: Religious, Gendered, National', *Historical Journal* 57, no. 4 (2014): 1167.

[31] Heather Curtis, 'Depicting Distant Suffering: Evangelicals and the Politics of Pictorial Humanitarianism in the Age of American Empire', *Material Religion* 8, no. 2 (2012): 155; Valérie Gorin, 'L'enfance comme figure compassionnelle: Étude transversale de l'iconographie de la famine aux dix-neuvième et vingtième siècles', *European Review of History* 2, no. 6 (2015): 944. For more background, see Heide Fehrenbach and Davide Rodogno, 'Introduction: The Morality of Sight: Humanitarian Photography in History', in *Humanitarian Photography: A History*, eds Heide Fehrenbach and Davide Rodogno (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 1–21.

[32] Dominik Collet, 'Mitleid machen: Die Nutzung von Emotionen in der Hungersnot 1770–1772', *Historische Anthropologie* 23, no. 1 (2015): 67; Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 201, 210; Heike Fehrenbach, 'Children and Other Civilians: Photography and the Politics of Humanitarian Image-Making', in *Humanitarian Photography: A History*, eds Heide Fehrenbach and Davide Rodogno (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 181; Dominique Marshall, 'Children's Rights from Below: Canadian and Transnational Actions, Beliefs, and Discourses, 1900–1989', in *Taking Liberties: A History of Human Rights in Canada*, eds David Goutor and Stephen Heathorn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 189–212.

[33] Dominique Marshall, 'International Child Saving', in *The Routledge History of Childhood in the Western World*, ed. Paula Fass (London: Routledge, 2013), 474.

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that displaced ad hoc charity efforts.[34] However, the rise of international and humanitarian organisations after 1918 only resumed an ongoing trend that the war had interrupted.[35]

The present study concurs with Johannes Paulmann's claim that the Second World War was not the watershed in the history of humanitarian action that it is proclaimed to be by Curti, Barnett, and many others, since the ideas and procedures that marked this period drew strongly on previous developments.[36] Paulmann proposes the late 1960s and early 1970s as a turning point, and some academics agree.[37] At that time, decolonisation had decoupled 'caring' from direct forms of 'ruling',[38] and modern identity politics, including the second generation of feminists, had its breakthrough. The international relief effort for Biafra (1967–70) is widely recognised as a rupture in the history of humanitarianism. It effected a split in the Red Cross movement with the formation of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), moulded a generation of relief workers, and brought civil society organisations to centre stage as mediators between Western audiences and the 'Third World'.[39]

The truism that the end of the Cold War transformed the world has led many to assume that a new period of humanitarianism began after 1989. Researchers

[34] Branden Little, 'An Explosion of New Endeavours: Global Humanitarian Responses to Industrialized Warfare in the First World War Era', *First World War Studies* 5, no. 1 (2014): 1; Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*, 86; Johannes Paulmann, 'Conjunctures in the History of International Humanitarian Aid during the Twentieth Century', *Humanity* 4, no. 2 (2013): 225–6.

[35] Akira Iriye, *Global Community: The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 20; Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad*, 621–2.

[36] Paulmann, 'Conjunctures', 226.

[37] Kevin O'Sullivan, Matthew Hilton, and Juliano Fiori, 'Humanitarianism in Context', *European Review of History* 23, no. 1–2 (2016): 1–15; Eleanor Davey, *Idealism beyond Borders: The French Revolutionary Left and the Rise of Humanitarianism, 1954–1988* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 3, 21; Matthias Kuhnert, *Humanitäre Kommunikation: Entwicklung und Emotionen bei britischen NGOs 1945–1990* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2017), 23–4; Salvatici, *History of Humanitarianism*, 142.

[38] Anna Bocking-Welch, *British Civic Society at the End of Empire: Decolonisation, Globalisation, and International Responsibility* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019), 5.

[39] de Waal, *Famine Crimes*, 72–7; Paulmann, 'Conjunctures'; Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*, 133; Rieff, *Bed for the Night*, 108–9, 331; Philippe Ryfman, *Une Histoire de l'humanitaire*, 2nd ed. (Paris: La Découverte, 2016); Marie-Luce Desgrandchamps, '"Organising the Unpredictable": The Nigeria–Biafra War and Its Impact on the ICRC', *International Review of the Red Cross* 94, no. 888 (2012): 1409–32; Kevin O'Sullivan, 'Humanitarian Encounters: Biafra, NGOs and Imaginings of the Third World in Britain and Ireland, 1967–1970', *Journal of Genocide Research* 16, no. 2/3 (2014): 299–315; Arua Oko Omaka, *The Biafran Humanitarian Crisis, 1967–1970: International Human Rights and Joint Church Aid* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2016); Florian Hannig, 'The Biafra Crisis and the Establishment of Humanitarian Aid in West Germany as a New Philanthropic Field', in *German Philanthropy in Transatlantic Perspective: Perceptions, Exchanges and Transfers since the Early Twentieth Century*, eds Gregory R. Witkowski and Arnd Bauerkämper (Cham: Springer, 2016), 205–25; Lasse Heerten, *The Biafran War and Postcolonial Humanitarianism: Spectacles of Suffering* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

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do not conceive the new global order as a consequence of previous developments in Western society with which the Soviet bloc was unable to compete. However, there is little evidence of a major shift in the culture of humanitarianism that parallels the geopolitical change. Paulmann does not answer the question of whether we have witnessed 'a new departure', or merely an emphasis on emergency aid in places where sovereignty has broken down and aid has been implemented to contain conflicts at low cost. With reference to our time, Paulmann cites satellite transmissions and the BBC report on famine in Ethiopia that resulted in the Live Aid benefit concert in 1985 – events predating the end of the Cold War.[40] He also questions the significance of the geopolitical shift of 1989 for humanitarian 'so-called complexities'.[41] Similarly, Monika Krause emphasises a major shift in terms of symbolic differentiation in the humanitarian sector with the founding of MSF in 1971 and suggests another shift by the end of the Cold War. However, her account makes MSF appear to be the creator of contemporary humanitarianism, while the period commencing in 1989 is mainly characterised by expansion of the basic trend.[42]

Lilie Chouliaraki, who contrasts examples from the 1970s and 1980s with those of recent years, labels the entire period from the 1970s forwards as an 'age of global spectacle' typified by three transformations: (a) the market-compliant instrumentalisation of aid, (b) the decline of the grand narrative of solidarity, and (c) the technologically fuelled rise of self-expressive spectatorship. Taken together, she suggests that they effect an epistemic shift towards an emotional, subjective humanitarianism correlated to narcissistic morality and an emergent 'neoliberal lifestyle of "feel good" altruism'.[43] Similarly, Mark Duffield contrasts the 1970s and the present, but ultimately suggests that the decline of modern humanitarianism and the 'anthropocentric turn' brought about by its postmodern variant can be traced to the Biafran War.[44] At the same time, powerful tools of results-based management were introduced in the humanitarian sector that shifted the emphasis from overarching societal to project-specific goals.[45] Our concept of expressive humanitarianism encapsulates these trends, which are also summarised in Alain Finkielkraut's formula of the 'sentimental alienation' that has characterised humanitarian efforts in the past half-century.[46]

[40] Paulmann, 'Conjunctures', 229 (quotation), 221, 230.
[41] Johannes Paulmann, 'The Dilemmas of Humanitarian Aid: Historical Perspectives', in *Dilemmas of Humanitarian Aid in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Johannes Paulmann (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 3.
[42] Krause, *Good Project*, 104–10, 124.
[43] Lilie Chouliaraki, *The Ironic Spectator: Solidarity in the Age of Post-Humanitarianism* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013), 52, 4 (quotations), 1–21.
[44] Duffield, 'From Protection', 29 (quotation), 27. [45] Krause, *Good Project*, 87.
[46] Alain Finkielkraut, *In the Name of Humanity: Reflections on the Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 93.

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A focus on major emergencies with established systems of humanitarian response, rather than key turning points, has guided the selection of our three case studies. Our interest concerns humanitarian action, not the disaster as such. For example, the death toll of the Soviet Famine of the 1920s was exceeded by that of the Ukrainian Holodomor of the 1930s and the famine accompanying China's 'Great Leap Forward' (1959–61); but while the disaster of the 1920s became a major instance of transnational aid, in the Holdomor and the Chinese cases, there was domestic neglect of the emergency and they failed to attract much international attention.[47]

In order to examine how the relief efforts of governmental, intergovernmental, and voluntary groups unfolded in the context of their time, we turn to overviews of the Great Irish Famine of the 1840s, the Soviet Famine of 1921–3, and the famine in Ethiopia of 1984–6.

2.2 The Great Irish Famine and Ad Hoc Humanitarianism

The characteristics cited in Curti's identification of nineteenth-century ad hoc humanitarianism were (a) the lack of formal and institutional connections between different relief efforts; (b) the marked stress on voluntary initiatives; and (c) the reliance on a fundraising repertoire that in the USA had emerged from the philhellenic movement of the 1820s. Included in these were the formation of committees for the collection of money and the transportation of foodstuffs (often linked to economic boards), public meetings, church fund drives, charity events, ladies' bazaars, and ultimately newspaper campaigns.[48] In the UK, building upon the long-distance imperial charity of the eighteenth century, ad hoc humanitarianism had already emerged during the Napoleonic era. Despite the war context, foreign relief was an entirely civilian endeavour at the time, with links to the British and Foreign Bible Society, the evangelical and anti-slavery movement, and domestic charity.[49] In the 1820s, engagement with the Greek struggle for independence from the Ottoman Empire became an exemplary international aid campaign based in several countries, although military emphasis prevailed in this early instance of 'humanitarian intervention', and providing relief to distressed civilians remained a subordinate goal.[50] In addition to Curti's points, the repertoire of ad hoc humanitarianism included committee rules and procedures for the

[47] Andrea Graziosi, 'Political Famines in the USSR and China: A Comparative Analysis', *Journal of Cold War Studies* 19, no. 3 (2017): 42–103; Ó Gráda, *Eating People*, 130–73; Nicolas Werth, 'Déni, connaissance, responsabilité: Le régime stalinien et la grande famine ukrainienne de 1932–3', *European Review of History* 22, no. 6 (2015): 900–16.

[48] Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad*, 619–21. [49] Götz, 'Rationales of Humanitarianism'.

[50] Natalie Klein, '*L'humanité, le christianisme, et la liberte?*' *Die internationale philhellenische Vereinsbewegung der 1820er Jahre* (Mainz: Zabern, 2000); Gary J. Bass, *Freedom's Battle:*

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documentation of subscriptions and disbursements. However, there were no agencies active in monitoring food insecurity or other disasters, nor was there any permanent infrastructure for fundraising or aid distribution. Governments were also unprepared to manage foreign aid.

In Ireland, where famines had occurred periodically, the first significant British relief effort took place in 1822, when funds for that country were solicited by a London Tavern Committee. Collections from other British cities soon followed, and the Dublin relief committee even expressed its thanks for North American and French aid. The Irish cause included a Catholic newspaper in Paris among its supporters in 1831.[51] Some activists and donors from those years, even philhellenic veterans, later participated in relief efforts during the Great Irish Famine of the 1840s. Donors of the 1840s in turn subscribed in later years to similar campaigns, such as the Finnish famines of 1856/7 and 1867/8.[52]

Despite these compassionate forces, the 'hungry forties' represented a difficult time for transnational relief. Europe was experiencing bad harvests, an economic downturn, and political unrest.[53] In such an environment, individual and collective action typically parted ways, as local moral economies easily clashed with larger ones. Thus, although Pope Pius IX and Sultan Abdulmejid I contributed to the Irish plight in 1847, both the Vatican State and the Ottoman Empire banned the export of grain in the face of domestic scarcity and disturbances.[54] During Easter of that year, the pope spent three times the

The Origins of Humanitarian Intervention (New York: Knopf, 2008), 45–151; John Bew, '"From an Umpire to a Competitor": Castlereagh, Canning and the Issue of International Intervention in the Wake of the Napoleonic Wars', in *Humanitarian Intervention: A History*, eds Brendan Simms and D. J. B. Trim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 117–38.

[51] For 1822, see Ó Gráda, *Famine*, 218; Patrick Hickey, *Famine in West Cork: The Mizen Peninsula Land and People, 1800–1852: A Local Study of Pre-famine and Famine Ireland* (Cork: Mercier, 2002), 47. For 1831, see Donal A. Kerr, *A Nation of Beggars? Priests, People, and Politics in Famine Ireland, 1846–1852* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 54. For a broader background, see Cormac Ó Gráda, 'Ireland', in *Famine in European History*, eds Guido Alfani and Cormac Ó Gráda (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 166–84.

[52] Andrew G. Newby, 'The Society of Friends and Famine in Ireland and Finland, c. 1845–68', in *Irish Hunger and Migration Myth, Memory and Memoralization*, eds Christine Kinealy, Patrick Fitzgerald, and Gerard Moran (Quinnipiac: Quinnipiac University Press, 2015), 112. For philhellenic connections, see *Measures Adopted in Boston, Massachusetts, for the Relief of the Suffering Scotch and Irish* (Boston: Eastburn, 1847), 14–15.

[53] Eric Vanhaute, Richard Paping, and Cormac Ó Gráda, 'The European Subsistence Crisis of 1845–1850: A Comparative Perspective', in *When the Potato Failed: Causes and Effects of the 'Last' European Subsistence Crisis, 1845–1850*, eds Cormac Ó Gráda, Richard Paping, and Eric Vanhaute (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 15–40.

[54] 'Intelligence of the Week', *Roman Advertiser*, 9 Jan. 1847; Semih Çelik, 'Between History of Humanitarianism and Humanitarianization of History: A Discussion on Ottoman Help for the Victims of the Great Irish Famine, 1845–1852', *Werkstatt Geschichte*, no. 68 (2015): 25.

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amount he had given towards Irish relief to buy bread for poor families in Rome.[55] In France, relief efforts for Ireland only took on significant proportions when the winter was over and there was no longer fear of domestic food hardship, despite the knowledge that 'while one suffers in France, one dies in Ireland'.[56] Disaffection with the Age of Metternich, culminating in the revolutions of 1848 (among the consequences of which were an exiled pope and a crushed Irish rebellion), minimised the concern of European elites with the Irish disaster.

In contrast to the view presented by earlier research, Ireland experienced the greatest surge of food riots in its history during the Great Famine. While they coincided with agrarian protests and hunger-induced crime more than previously, and while the authorities treated them as an 'outrage' and an act of 'plundering provisions' that had to be countered by force, a distinct Irish moral economy, similar to the English equivalent described by Thompson, was still at work.[57]

Meanwhile, conditions for providing famine relief were good in the USA in 1847. A populous Irish community that was in close touch with their homeland already existed. Irish-American organisations became the nucleus for broader civic engagement and a nationwide campaign. At the same time, plentiful US harvests enabled great profits in undersupplied European markets, facilitating generosity and giving rise to the notion of a moral obligation to compensate those who suffered most under the anomalous terms of trade. Moreover, concurrent opposition to US aggression against Mexico inclined many people towards humanitarian action. The provision of famine relief for Ireland was a show of peaceful intent that allowed concerned US citizens to maintain their moral self-respect. By contrast, nativist resentment and anxiety over the prospect of paupers immigrating to the USA eventually constrained charitable giving.

UK Relief

Conditions within the UK played a special role in Irish relief. This was true from the beginning of the famine in autumn 1845, when Ireland lost nearly half its potato crop, through peaks after the nearly complete potato failures of 1846 and 1848, until its gradual diminution between 1850 and 1852.[58]

[55] 'Intelligence of the Week', *Roman Advertiser*, 17 Apr. 1847.
[56] Appeal (27 May), in *L'Ami de la religion*, 10 June 1847.
[57] James Kelly, *Food Rioting in Ireland in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: The 'Moral Economy' and the Irish Crowd* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2017), 237–41.
[58] William J. Smyth, 'The Story of the Great Irish Famine 1845–52: A Geographical Perspective', in *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine*, eds John Crowley, William J. Smyth, and Mike Murphy (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 5–6.

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The dramatic catastrophe resulted from exclusive reliance on a new food crop.[59] The famine ravaged Ireland in absolute and relative terms. The death toll amounted to approximately one million people, and it caused the emigration of more than a million more men, women, and children out of a population of slightly more than eight million. As a result, the population of Ireland shrank by a quarter in just a few years. However, this does not take regional aggravation, averted births, and long-term physical and psychological damage into account.[60]

Ireland at the time was a formally integrated part of the UK which was the wealthiest polity in the world (despite an economic downturn from 1847 to 1849). The British government was generally considered responsible for safeguarding the welfare of Ireland's population, although this meant something different in Britain and abroad. The UK administration pursued a hands-off policy, passing financial responsibility on to overtaxed local Irish authorities. As the result of a fierce market logic that did not recognise a country's inalienable right to subsistence, Ireland was made to export foodstuffs to England while parts of its own population starved to death.[61] This lack of compassion was primarily due to British resentment towards the Irish and the influence of the evangelically inspired 'moralist' faction within the ruling Whig party after 1846. These ultra-liberal moralists, with their strong grip on the treasury and support from the metropolitan press, appropriated a 'heaven-sent "opportunity" of famine to deconstruct Irish society and rebuild it anew' along modern capitalist lines.[62] Ironically, the austere development approach was designed by the heirs of the same evangelical movement that had made up the humanitarian avant-garde at the time of the Napoleonic Wars. While moral rigidity and anxiety lest there be abuse of benevolence were not unique to the Victorian age, the second generation of evangelicals had 'degenerated into doctrinaire pedantries' at such a

[59] William Crossgove, David Egilman, Peter Heywood, et al., 'Colonialism, International Trade, and the Nation-state', in *Hunger in History: Food Shortage, Poverty, and Deprivation*, ed. Lucile F. Newman (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), 229. See also Christine Kinealy, *The Great Irish Famine: Impact, Ideology and Rebellion* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 10.

[60] Cormac Ó Gráda, 'Mortality and the Great Famine', in *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine*, eds John Crowley, William J. Smyth, and Mike Murphy (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 170–1.

[61] Cecil Woodham-Smith, *The Great Hunger: Ireland 1845–9* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1962), 75. However, Irish food imports exceeded exports from 1847 onwards, see Cormac Ó Gráda, 'Ireland's Great Famine: An Overview', in *When the Potato Failed: Causes and Effects of the 'Last' European Subsistence Crisis, 1845–1850*, eds Cormac Ó Gráda, Richard Paping, and Eric Vanhaute (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 53.

[62] Peter Gray, *Famine, Land and Politics: British Government and Irish Society, 1843–50* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1999), 331 (quotation), 233; Peter Gray, 'The European Food Crisis and the Relief of Irish Famine, 1845–1850', in *When the Potato Failed: Causes and Effects of the 'Last' European Subsistence Crisis, 1845–1850*, eds Cormac Ó Gráda, Richard Paping, and Eric Vanhaute (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 99.

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rate that a historian of the movement suggests 'Frankenstein's giant creation had got out of all control'.[63]

In hindsight, the Irish famine compromises political economy along the lines of Smith, Malthus, and Mill, as well as confidence in the project of modernity and in the civilisational standard of the British Empire. Ireland represented the 'other',[64] and was routinely addressed as 'that country' in the correspondence of British officials at the time. Ireland was treated differently than other parts of the UK, giving Irish–British relations a transnational and colonial character, despite formal participation in the same polity.[65] Few would go so far as to characterise the British government's conduct during the famine as genocide, but it is evident that British notions of the inferiority of an Irish 'surplus population' let them turn their backs while an unseen hand took the lives of the starving.[66]

The first Irish voluntary organisation for relief, the Mansion House Committee, was established in Dublin in October 1845.[67] The initial response of the UK government was to accommodate relief appeals, although it adhered to free trade principles and tied relief to the repeal of the Corn Laws. Based on experience with previous food crises, the government installed a relief commission that coordinated and subsidised local committees and voluntary collections, and financed public works. It also secretly purchased maize in the USA to regulate market prices, distributing it to depots throughout Ireland, and eventually selling it to the people. These measures saved the poor from starving to death during the first year of the crisis, but they were decried in the public debate as overly generous and in part regarded as one-time interventions. In Ireland, popular unrest and opposition to its coercive suppression spread, forcing the conservative government of the UK, headed by Sir Robert Peel, to resign in June 1846.[68]

[63] Brown, *Fathers of the Victorians*, 6. [64] Kinealy, *Great Irish Famine*, 30.

[65] Oliver Macdonagh, 'Introduction: Ireland and the Union, 1801–70', in *A New History of Ireland, vol. 5: Ireland under the Union, 1801–70*, ed. W. E. Vaughan (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989), lii; David Nally, 'The Colonial Dimensions of the Great Irish Famine', in *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine*, eds John Crowley, William J. Smyth, and Mike Murphy (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 64–74.

[66] Charles Edward Trevelyan, *The Irish Crisis* (London: Longman, Brown, Green & Longmans, 1848), 32 (quotation); James Vernon, *Hunger: A Modern History* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2007), 42, 45; David Nally, *Human Encumbrances: Political Violence and the Great Famine* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2011), 14, 20, 82–4. For the genocide hypothesis, see A. J. P. Taylor, 'Genocide', in *From Napoleon to the Second International: Essays on Nineteenth-Century Europe* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1993 [1962]), 152–7; Richard L. Rubenstein, *The Age of Triage: Fear and Hope in an Overcrowded World* (Boston: Beacon, 1983), 11, 124; Tim Pat Coogan, *The Famine Plot: England's Role in Ireland's Greatest Tragedy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

[67] Christine Kinealy, *Charity and the Great Hunger in Ireland: The Kindness of Strangers* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 54.

[68] Peter Gray, 'British Relief Measures', in *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine*, eds John Crowley, William J. Smyth, and Mike Murphy (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 75–8.

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Lord John Russell's succeeding Whig administration was a weak minority government that was pressured to take a less interventionist course. Despite gravely rising food prices, it refrained from market interference and included penal elements in the public works scheme. This countered benefits to landowners from work projects and introduced performance-based remuneration that pushed the sick and the elderly below the subsistence level. After the almost complete potato failure of 1846, destitution made the number of those engaged in public relief works rise from 114,000 in October 1846 to 714,390 in March 1847. An increasing number of malnourished labourers died on the job. Notwithstanding harsh conditions and the huge number of enrollees, demand for employment in the relief scheme far exceeded availability.[69]

The government abandoned its public works programme by spring 1847. It was apparently ineffective and had become prohibitively expensive. Instead, the government sponsored a network of soup kitchens for the needy in conjunction with the aid being provided by the Quakers. This was a comparatively cheap entitlement-based approach that was intended to operate as a government programme only throughout the summer of 1847. By July, the soup kitchens were feeding three million people on a daily basis. In autumn, the burden of famine relief was written into an extended poor law. From then on, taxpayers in the distressed unions (i.e., 'poor law' districts) of Ireland had to bear the cost of the relief they received. A relative improvement in food availability during the second half of 1847 gave the illusion that the famine was over, occasioning the permanent withdrawal of means by the central government.[70] However, in 1848, blight again destroyed most of the potato crop. In 1848 and 1849, more than one million people were given relief through the extended poor law.[71] However, inmates of workhouses – the core institution of the Irish Poor Law – made up almost one-third of the victims of the Irish famine.[72] In all, public expenditures for Irish famine relief was about £10 million, mostly intended as loans.[73] Figure 2.1 depicts an official, single-copy map drawn in 1849 that uses three colours to highlight different degrees of distress. It shows that the western half of Ireland was affected most and that the government was aware of the suffering.[74]

The voluntary fundraisers during the Great Irish Famine came from varied backgrounds and their inclination to help differed considerably. Their level of

[69] Gray, 'British Relief Measures', 78–9. Regarding the demand for public relief employment exceeding the supply, see Christine Kinealy, 'The Operation of the Poor Law during the Famine', in *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine*, eds John Crowley, William J. Smyth, and Mike Murphy (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 90.

[70] Gray, 'British Relief Measures', 80–4. [71] Kinealy, 'The Operation of the Poor Law', 92–3.

[72] William J. Smyth, 'The Creation of the Workhouse System', in *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine*, eds John Crowley, William J. Smyth, and Mike Murphy (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 127.

[73] Ó Gráda, 'Ireland', 180. [74] See Section 5.2 for a further discussion of the map.

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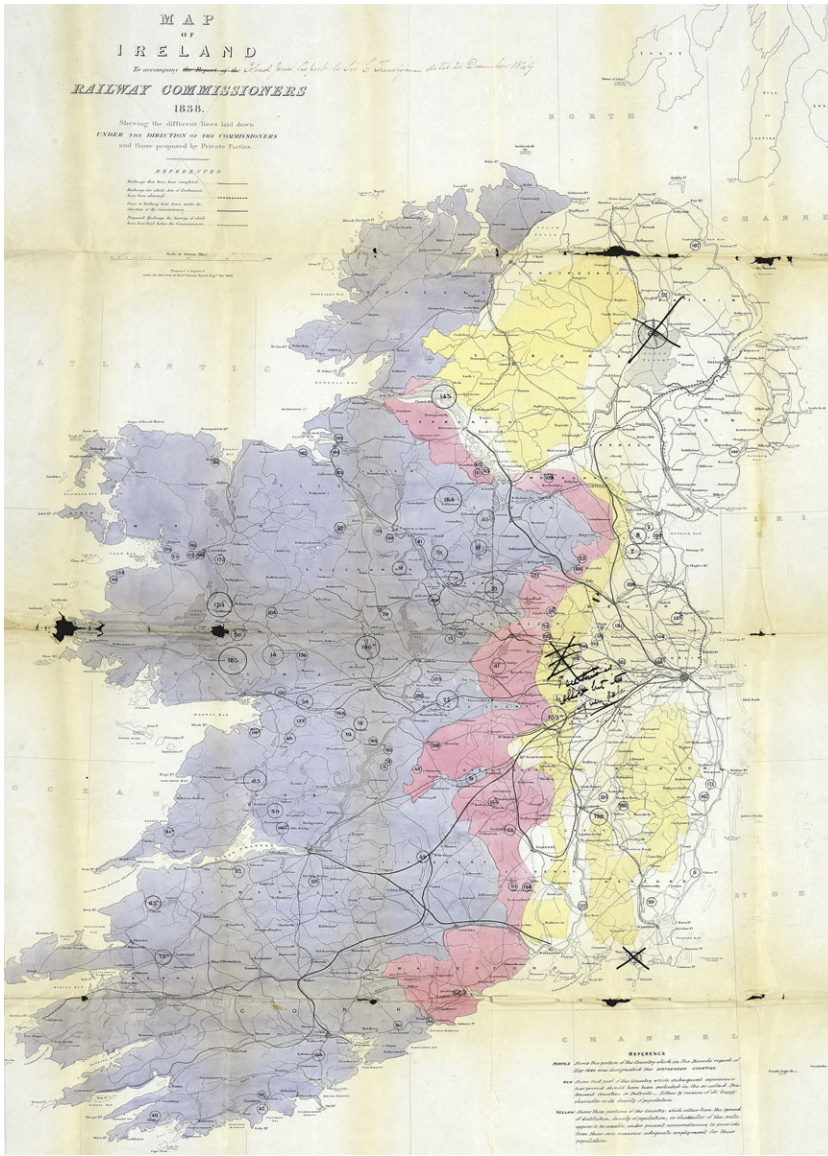


Figure 2.1 Map of Ireland accompanying Colonel Jones's report to Sir C. Trevelyan, 21 Dec. 1849, with 'distressed counties' coloured.
Courtesy of the National Archives, UK. For the colour version, refer to the Cambridge University Press website, www.cambridge.org/Humanitarianism.

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activity fluctuated, although in grossly inadequate proportions, with the severity of the distress, efforts by others, and press coverage, and it decreased over time. The first faraway group to provide relief at the end of 1845 was the Irish community of Boston. In early 1846, the British imperial forces in Bengal, which included many Irish soldiers, initiated another long-distance effort. When the famine intensified at the end of that year, some Catholic parishes and proselytising societies in England, as well as Irish organisations in the USA and transnational Quaker networks, began raising funds. The SVP expanded its model of soliciting local Catholic charity in major Irish cities, and also gave some subsidies.[75]

However, before the founding on 1 January 1847 of the British Association for the Relief of Extreme Distress in the Remote Parishes of Ireland and Scotland (or British Relief Association, BRA), transnational activity was low. While this new British initiative was controlled by the financial elite of London, it was directed by the same officials who had previously been responsible for inadequate government relief to Ireland – in particular, Charles Trevelyan, the permanent secretary of the treasury (and second-generation evangelical). In contrast to the communications of the Quakers and various relief efforts abroad, the BRA, following the official language policy, avoided the word 'famine' altogether.[76] Their campaign raised £470,000, mainly in the first months of 1847. More than two-fifths of that sum was the result of the reading of two letters by Queen Victoria in Anglican churches throughout England.[77] One-sixth of the total fund was reserved for Scotland, where some districts had also suffered from a poor harvest. The £390,000 collected for Ireland, which included donations from various parts of the empire and the wider world, was depicted as a success, although it barely exceeded funds raised during the minor famine of 1822.

Catholic and Foreign Relief

The appearance of a major British campaign encouraged the nascent relief efforts of Irish communities in the USA and Catholics around the world. Thus, a considerable, although short-lived, international voluntary effort came about in 1847, and for some time alleviated Irish distress.

British vicars apostolic (as Catholic bishops were then called) began to issue aid appeals in late 1846, perhaps challenged by the preparations being made to establish the BRA. The Catholic weekly, *The Tablet*, became the truest trusted conduit of news from Ireland to the British public. It continued to serve famine

[75] *First Annual Report of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, Cork* (Cork: O'Brien, 1846).
[76] John O'Rourke, *The History of the Great Irish Famine of 1847, with Notices of Earlier Irish Famines* (Dublin: McGlashan and Gill, 1875), 371.
[77] *Report of the British Association for the Relief of the Extreme Distress in Ireland and Scotland* (London: Clay, 1849), 50.

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relief when that cause was no longer fashionable, illustrating the durative power of institutions, even journalistic ones, over individual efforts in raising aid. Catholic bishops as well as other Catholic collectors and donors in Britain generally forwarded gifts to their sister clergy, who constituted the spiritual authority for four-fifths of the Irish population, but they also contributed significant sums to the BRA.[78]

Prompted by Paul Cullen, rector of the Pontifical Irish College, the newly inaugurated Pope Pius IX made a personal donation to the cause of Irish relief and, assimilating an interdenominational relief committee formed by UK citizens in Rome, mandated collections for Ireland in mid-January 1847. By means of an encyclical, he extended the call for famine relief to the greater Catholic world in March 1847. Its impact was most evident in France and Italy, although the encyclical was widely circulated and resulted in contributions from other places as well. Prelates from Italy and elsewhere forwarded offertories of their districts to the Vatican's Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, which distributed the sums totalling upwards of £10,000 among two dozen Irish bishops and archbishops. French fundraising was also carried out by dioceses, but was ultimately coordinated by the voluntary Comité de secours pour l'Irlande, which conveyed the proceeds of roughly £20,000 to the Irish clergy. The committee's first action, taken at a time when the pope's sphere of activity was still limited to Rome, was to ask him to address the world-at-large.[79]

The key figure behind the French petition was Jules Gossin, the president of the SVP, whose role has gone unrecognised in previous research. Gossin's circular, issued to SVP chapters in February 1847, resulted in funds that helped establish new branches in various Irish cities. These groups and their transnational network transcended the ad hoc humanitarianism of the nineteenth century, although the amount they raised abroad barely exceeded £6,000, and their raison d'être was local charity.[80] SVP branches continued their work throughout the years of famine, even after external funding had dried up; they are still flourishing today.

The isolated relief initiatives that emerged in the USA by the end of 1846 were coordinated and expanded by a national fundraising meeting that took place in Washington, DC, in February 1847. Contemporary discourse framed US relief efforts as a national enterprise of doing good that transcended ethnic, religious, and party divisions. Researchers have corroborated those claims.[81] However,

[78] On confessional demography, see *First Report of the Commissioners of Public Instruction, Ireland* (London: Clowes and Sons, 1835), 7.
[79] *Comité de secours pour l'Irlande* (Paris: A. Sirou et Desquers, 1847).
[80] Eugène Gossin, *Vie de M. Jules Gossin* (Paris: Oudin, 1907).
[81] Apart from Kinealy, *Charity and the Great Hunger*, see a dozen articles by Harvey Strum describing famine relief from different US localities, e.g., 'South Carolina and Irish Famine Relief, 1846–47', *South Carolina Historical Magazine* 103, no. 2 (2002): 130–52; 'Famine

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individuals and organisations with an Irish background played a crucial role in the relief committees – something that was downplayed at the time in order to appeal to a wider circle of donors. The role of personal ties is also evident when one considers that remittances from Irish people abroad dwarfed humanitarian efforts, even at the height of voluntary action. Such remittances continued to increase in the following years, whereas transnational charity as a manifestation of sympathy ebbed after a few months.[82] Since the USA was construed as a 'nation of joiners', most Catholic fundraisers forwarded their collection to general committees in major cities like Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Charleston, and New Orleans.[83]

These committees and some of their smaller counterparts chartered ships with relief goods that they sent to Ireland – most famously, Boston's iconic *Jamestown*, with a cargo bound for Cork. The UK government reimbursed freight costs across the Atlantic, a subtle move that gave England moral credit in the eyes of the world and co-opted critical opinion in the USA. Nevertheless, US committees maintained their distance from UK authorities and principally relied for the distribution of their foodstuffs on Irish Quakers, who had a sterling reputation of providing impartial relief, rather than entrusting the US cargo to the quasi-governmental BRA. Contributions from the USA totalled approximately £200,000.

Ad Hoc Voluntarism

When in 1847 relief for Ireland was on the global agenda, collections were initiated worldwide. Most significant was the imperial context, in which British, Irish, and confessional backgrounds joined forces. Substantial sums from India, Canada, and Australia were given to the BRA, to Irish relief committees, or to the clergy in Ireland. Catholics in third countries such as the Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany tended to donate through church channels, whereas the BRA administered most other subscriptions and donations, including Sultan Abdulmejid I's much-cited contribution of £1,000. Overviews of relief are frequently inflated by sums being counted twice,

Relief from an Ancient Dutch City', *Hudson River Valley Review* 22, no. 2 (2006): 54–78; 'A Jersey Ship for Ireland', in *Ireland's Great Hunger: Relief, Representation, and Remembrance, vol. 2*, ed. David Valone (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2010), 3–20; 'Pennsylvania and Irish Famine Relief, 1846–1847', *Pennsylvania History* 81, no. 3 (2014): 277–99.

[82] For statistics, see 'Thirteenth General Report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners', *Justice of the Peace, and County, Borough, Poor Law Union, and Parish Law Recorder* 17 (1853): 582.

[83] See Arthur M. Schlesinger, 'Biography of a Nation of Joiners', *American Historical Review* 50, no. 1 (1944): 1–25.

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among other flaws.[84] The present study estimates that voluntary relief to Ireland during the Great Famine totalled £1.4–1.5 million, of which almost £1 million came from abroad.[85]

By the end of 1846, the British Empire had to demonstrate its goodwill by providing famine relief in the sphere of voluntary action. Meanwhile, the Catholic world could not passively watch as the dominant Protestant society spread its benevolence over the Irish people. In the USA, people of Irish ancestry were crucial in stimulating relief efforts for Ireland, although nationality was often de-emphasised for improved outreach to US citizens who had no prior commitment to Ireland. For the same reason, Catholic churches in the USA, rather than making aid a confessional matter, joined local campaigns that principally channelled donations through Quaker intermediaries. English Catholics similarly maintained a cautious profile, trying to avoid causing their Anglican counterparts to develop a negative attitude towards Irish relief. The SVP chapter in Kilrush, which also distributed aid for the BRA and the Society of Friends, illustrates the local entanglement of foreign aid.[86]

Thus, the Irish Famine of 1847 saw a broad, well-coordinated network of fundraising bodies, aid providers, and local distributors working together on a hitherto unknown scale. Nevertheless, there was no preparedness for a sustained effort. By the summer of 1847, relief committees in the USA and elsewhere began to disband, church bodies turned their attention to other issues, and volunteers who had distributed aid on the ground were exhausted. Famine raged for another three years (five years in some parts of Ireland) with no significant voluntary or official relief efforts. Few people abroad could have imagined that a powerful government as the UK would remain largely passive in view of such an ongoing domestic calamity. When in the autumn of 1847 civil servants declared the situation in Ireland under control, it was widely assumed that this was in fact the case. Thus, almost all efforts ceased after a single season, showing that ad hoc humanitarianism was a weak and unreliable source of aid.

By the mid-nineteenth century, despite the trust in public authorities, a European, trans-Atlantic, imperial disposition to engage in far-reaching humanitarian projects emerged. It qualitatively surpassed the bilateral

[84] See fig. 2 in Grace Neville, '"Le pays classique de la faim": France and the Great Irish Famine', in *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine*, eds John Crowley, William J. Smyth, and Mike Murphy (New York: University Press, 2012), 489. This chart is mainly based on Donal A. Kerr, *The Catholic Church and the Famine* (Blackrock: Columba, 1996).

[85] This confirms the contemporary estimation by the Society of Friends. See *Transactions of the Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends during the Famine in Ireland in 1846 and 1847* (Dublin: Hodges and Smith, 1852), 45.

[86] *Report of the Proceedings of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, in Ireland, during the Year 1848* [SVP 1848] (Dublin: Wyer, 1849), 18.

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endeavours of the Napoleonic era and the limited multilateral (chiefly military) philhellenic activism of the 1820s. Anticipating the 'glocal' civil society of the twentieth century, the SVP illustrates the potential of charitable structures that are more enduring than the temporary committees of the nineteenth century. While other relief initiatives slackened, the SVP extended its network of auxiliaries throughout Ireland in the latter half of the 1840s. This infrastructure allowed the local middle class to engage with their suffering compatriots and provide a maximum of aid with a minimum of resources.

2.3 The Russian Famine of 1921–3 and Organised Humanitarianism

The famine that began in parts of Soviet Russia in 1921 was preceded by bad harvests, a harsh winter, and a subsequent drought – especially in the Volga Valley (see Figure 2.2). The post-revolutionary country had been ravaged by war and by then had endured seven years of chaos. The methods of war communism, including confiscation and collectivisation, had weakened rural communities, while the White armies were still active in some parts of the country. The New Economic Policy (NEP) adopted in March 1921 did not relieve conditions immediately, and the lack of emergency planning coupled with mismanagement aggravated the situation. Twenty million people were threatened by starvation; an estimated two million eventually died.[87] Nevertheless, the Bolshevik government would not officially acknowledge the famine or solicit foreign assistance until mid-1921. At that point, the author Maxim Gorky dramatically appealed for aid. His call immediately triggered an international relief campaign for Russia.[88]

Organised Humanitarianism

Historians and contemporary witnesses cite the Russian Famine of 1921–3 as a defining moment in the history of humanitarian aid.[89] The extensive

[87] Bruno Cabanes, *The Great War and the Origins of Humanitarianism, 1918–1924* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 239–40; Patenaude, *Big Show*, 197.

[88] An English translation of Gorky's appeal may be found in *ARA Bulletin* 2, no. 16 (1 Sept. 1921), 2.

[89] League of Nations, *Report on Economic Conditions in Russia: With Special Reference to the Famine of 1921–1922 and the State of Agriculture* (Geneva, League of Nations, 1922), 1; Marguerite E. Bienz, ed. *Für unsere kleinen russischen Brüder! Gaben westeuropäischer Schriftsteller und Künstler für die notleidenden Kinder in den Hungersnotdistrikten Russlands* (Geneva: Hohes Kommissariat, 1922), 9; C. E. Bechhofer, *Through Starving Russia, Being a Record of a Journey to Moscow and the Volga Provinces, in August and September, 1921* (London: Menthuen, 1921), xii; Sasson, 'From Empire to Humanity', 520; Fuyuki Kurasawa, 'The Making of Humanitarian Visual Icons: On the 1921–1923 Russian Famine as Foundational Event', in *Iconic Power: Materiality and Meaning in Social Life*, eds Jeffrey Alexander, Dominik Bartmanski, and Bernhard Giesen (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 68.

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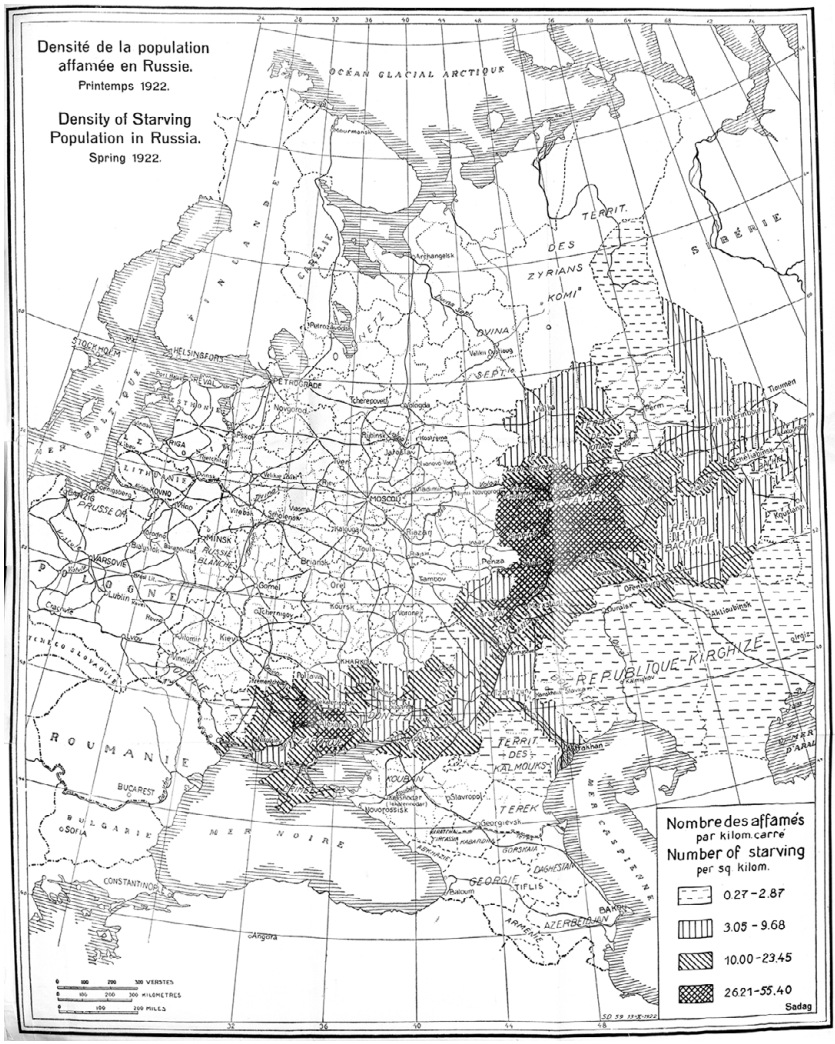


Figure 2.2 Map of famine regions illustrating the 'Density of Starving Population in Russia' in spring 1922, published by the League of Nations, *Report*, 165.
Image reproduced courtesy of the University of Warwick Library Collections, Reference HK 317.L3

international relief effort it called forth reflects trends that originated in the years around 1900 and were reinforced, refined, and sometimes redirected during and after the First World War. Those efforts provide a paradigm for what we term organised humanitarianism. The era which saw an increased

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focus on children, was characterised by (a) the institutionalisation and professionalisation of humanitarian practice, including businesslike fundraising, purchasing, and accounting procedures; (b) the active engagement of experts and the impact of science; (c) a 'mixed economy' of voluntary and state efforts; and (d) the systematic use of photographs and motion pictures in fundraising campaigns.

With origins in the late nineteenth century, the model of organised humanitarianism gained considerable momentum at the beginning of the First World War when Herbert Hoover created the Commission for Relief in Belgium (CRB), which would also serve as the blueprint for US relief efforts after the war. Between 1914 and 1919, the CRB managed an aid operation on an unprecedented scale, sustaining an entire nation suffering under German occupation and an allied blockade. A contemporary observer described the CRB as a hybrid 'piratical state organized for benevolence'.[90]

Hoover's accomplishment was achieved by skilful diplomacy and recourse to his business and engineering expertise. Commission offices purchased raw materials on the global food market, convoys shipped them across the Atlantic, and thousands of warehouses aided in the distribution. Overhead costs were kept low as the majority of the staff was made up of volunteers; and shipping, insurance, and other companies agreed to offer charitable discounts. Moreover, individual recipients or relief committees were asked to pay for provisions wherever they could. About 80 per cent of the US$900 million at Hoover's disposal came from governmental sources, primarily via loans from the USA and the UK, and only 6 per cent came in private donations.[91]

After the war, Hoover continued his work with the ARA, first in Central Europe and then during the famine in Soviet Russia. Mainly a government sponsored organisation, the ARA was also supported by tens of thousands of private donors. It spent US$5 billion between the armistice of 1918 and 1924.[92] The ARA Food Remittance Program, which allowed individuals to purchase food packages worth US$10 for relatives and friends in certain European countries, was a successful creation of the period, and it was also deployed during the Russian Famine.[93]

[90] George I. Gay and H. H. Fisher, eds, *Public Relations of the Commission for Relief in Belgium: Documents, vol. 1* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1929), v.

[91] The remaining 15 per cent (US$135 million) came from an enormous 'operating surplus'. For statistics, documents, and contemporary analysis, see George I. Gay, *The Commission for Relief in Belgium: Statistical Review of Relief Operations* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1925).

[92] Charles E. Noyes, 'American Relief of Famine in Europe', in *Editorial Research Reports, vol. 2* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 1940), 53–68.

[93] Patenaude, *Big Show*, 92.

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Motivated more by pragmatic considerations than compassion, the principal post-war US goals were unloading an agricultural surplus, boosting the US economy, and securing future markets. In addition, the ARA and affiliated organisations like the ARC were tools to contain communism and influence the nation- and institution-building process in Central Europe.[94] More than leaders of relief efforts in former times, the new humanitarians aimed to shape the governance structures of the societies that they were targeting.[95]

The Near East Relief (NER), which emerged in 1919 out of the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief (founded in 1915), was equally ambitious in its goal of reshaping societies in the Eastern Mediterranean by providing both emergency aid and long-term relief in the form of educational programmes. Its Protestant missionary background caused it to choose Christian children, especially Armenian orphans, as its main beneficiary group.[96] Limiting its services to a marginalised minority group contrasted with the NER's intention of raising a generation of decision makers. The NER had close governmental ties, but depended far more than the ARA on private donations and it embraced modern fundraising techniques. Over a period of ten years it spent more than US$100 million to provide relief and 'help to self-help' through education and training. As did other representatives of organised humanitarianism, the NER emphasised its own professionalism and efficiency. However, while 'tales of perfectly executed plans' dominate its official publications, its work was in many cases based on improvisation.[97]

Whereas the CRB and the ARA were examples of twentieth-century relief efforts that were largely state-financed and partially state-led, the British SCF represented an alternative format of organised voluntary action. It combined humanitarian service with advocacy, and it functioned as a corrective to government policy. Eglantyne Jebb, who co-founded the SCF in 1919, saw her organisation's role as a counterforce to nationalist politics and consciously chose 'enemy children' (first German and Austrian, then Russian) as primary beneficiaries.[98] Although child-focused charity was familiar in

[94] Friederike Kind-Kovács, 'The Great War, the Child's Body and the American Red Cross', *European Review of History* 23, nos 1–2 (2016): 41; Patenaude, *Big Show*, 335–8.

[95] Little, 'An Explosion', 5; Davide Rodogno, Francesca Piana, and Shaloma Gauthier, 'Shaping Poland: Relief and Rehabilitation Programs by Foreign Organizations 1918–1922', in *Shaping the Transnational Sphere: Experts, Networks, and Issues from the 1840s to the 1930s*, eds David Rodogno, Bernhard Struck, and Jakob Vogel (Oxford: Berghahn, 2014), 259–78.

[96] Keith David Watenpaugh, *Bread from Stones: The Middle East and the Making of Modern Humanitarianism* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015), 97–8.

[97] Davide Rodogno, 'Beyond Relief: A Sketch of the Near East Relief's Humanitarian Operations, 1918–1929', *monde(s)* 6, no. 2 (2014): 53.

[98] Linda Mahood and Vic Satzewich, 'The Save the Children Fund and the Russian Famine of 1921–23: Claims and Counter-claims about Feeding "Bolshevik" Children', *Journal of Historical Sociology* 22, no. 1 (2009): 55–83; Rodney Breen, 'Saving Enemy Children: Save the Children's Russian Relief Operation, 1921–1923', *Disasters* 18, no. 3 (1994): 221–38.

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1919, even greater attention shifted from wounded soldiers to children after the war.[99] The ARA and affiliated organisations also focused on minors, and the innocent child became an international icon closely linked to appeals for humanitarian relief.[100]

By contrast to the ARA, but like the Quakers, the outspoken SCF goal was 'to foster a new generation of peace-loving internationalists'.[101] The SCF's transnational ambitions were further emphasised by the foundation of the International Save the Children Union (ISCU) in Geneva in 1920. Thus, the SCF combined fundraising and relief with the championing of children's causes more generally, and by 1924 had brought about the adoption of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child by the League of Nations.

The SCF addressed its appeals to the entire population and, despite a generally progressive tendency, it actively recruited patrons and members representing a wide range of political views. In December 1919, Pope Benedict XV announced his support for the SCF, and religious leaders in Great Britain followed. Through its adoption of business methods, the SCF contributed significantly to the professionalisation of the humanitarian sector in the UK. Public relation experts from private firms, hired on a commission basis, designed nationwide advertising campaigns, and Jebb understood the 'efficiency of controversy' for voluntary organisations.[102] The magazine *The Record,* which began publication in October 1920, functioned as a mouthpiece. The SCF established, or at least popularised, an innovative scheme by which donors symbolically 'adopted' children in Austria, Serbia, Germany, Hungary, and other countries, creating long-term bonds. Rooted in the Christian tradition of caretaking godparents, child sponsorship has remained a popular method of humanitarian aid that has special appeal to contributors.[103]

In comparison with the ARA, however, the SCF was a small-scale player. It relied almost entirely on private donations, only addressed children's issues, and (at least during its early years) passed funding on to other groups rather than organising relief on its own. Despite its relative inexperience and a

[99] Rebecca Gill, 'The Rational Administration of Compassion: The Origins of British Relief in War', *Le mouvement social* 227, no. 1 (2009): 26.

[100] Kind-Kovács, 'The Great War', 38. See also Dominique Marshall, 'The Construction of Children as an Object of International Relations: The Declaration of Children's Rights and the Child Welfare Committee of League of Nations, 1900–1924', *International Journal of Children's Rights* 7, no. 2 (1999): 103–47; Paul Weidling, 'From Sentiment to Science: Children's Relief Organisations and the Problem of Malnutrition in Inter-war Europe', *Disasters* 18, no. 3 (1994): 203–12.

[101] Gill, 'Rational Administration', 26.

[102] Linda Mahood, *Feminism and Voluntary Action: Eglantyne Jebb and Save the Children, 1876–1928* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009), 168 (quotation), 171–3.

[103] Brad Watson, 'Origins of Child Sponsorship: Save the Children Fund in the 1920s', in *Child Sponsorship: Exploring Pathways to a Brighter Future*, eds Brad Watson and Matthew Clarke (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 18–40.

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difficult political environment ('feeding enemy children' was far from a popular cause in post-war Britain), its fundraising methods enabled the SCF to collect about £1 million during the first two years of its existence.[104]

American and British Quakers were other groups that played a significant role during the Russian Famine. They had previously set up humanitarian missions during the Russian Famine of the 1890s in the city of Buzuluk, to which they returned in 1916 and 1917, and which became the centre of their famine relief five years later. They were then engaged by both the ARA and the international Red Cross movement to channel relief.[105] During the First World War, transnational Quaker relief work was professionalised. The British Friends' Emergency and War Victims Relief Committee (FEWVRC) and the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) were established in 1914 and 1917, respectively. Initially, both organisations cooperated closely.[106]

The Nationalisation of Universal Causes

The growing awareness of global interconnectedness led to the 'heyday of a vigorous internationalism' in the early twentieth century that benefitted the humanitarian sector considerably.[107] However, the war experience also led to the nationalisation of transnational aid. Governments started to coordinate, seek control over, and channel humanitarian efforts from their territory, resulting in limited room for internationalist and pacifist organisations to manoeuvre.[108] As a consequence, transnational humanitarian efforts were often organised along national, rather than international, lines.[109] In the case of the Red Cross, the outcome was the juxtaposition of the International

[104] 'A Calendar of Principle Events', *The Record* 3, no. 1 (1922); Balance sheet notes, Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham, Save the Children Fund Archives (SCF), reel 33.

[105] David McFadden and Claire Gorfinkel, *Constructive Spirit: Quakers in Revolutionary Russia* (Pasadena, CA: International Productions, 2004), 9, 27.

[106] James E. Miles and Meaburn Tatham, *The Ambulance Unit, 1914–1919: A Record* (London: Swarthmore Press, 1919); Daniel Maul, 'American Quakers, the Emergence of International Humanitarianism, and the Foundation of the American Friends Service Committee, 1890–1920', in *Dilemmas of Humanitarian Aid in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Johannes Paulmann (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 63–87.

[107] Andrew Arsan, Su Lin Lewis, and Anne-Isabelle Richard, 'Editorial: The Roots of Global Civil Society and the Interwar Moment', *Journal of Global History* 7, no. 2 (2012): 163; Cabanes, *Great War*, 5; Mahood, *Feminism and Voluntary Action*, 174.

[108] Daniel Maul, 'Appell an das Gewissen: Fridtjof Nansen und die Russische Hungerhilfe 1921–23', *Themenportal Europäische Geschichte* (Berlin: Humboldt Universität, 2011): 3, available at www.europa.clio-online.de/essay/id/artikel-3604 (accessed 29 June 2019); Paulmann, 'Conjunctures in the History'. Humanitarian commitment could also provide a patriotic, but pacifist, alternative to military service, the Quaker ambulance corps being one example.

[109] Daniel Laqua, 'Inside the Humanitarian Cloud: Causes and Motivations to Help Friends and Strangers', *Journal of Modern European History* 12, no. 2 (2014): 182.

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Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which had little means but great moral authority, against the financially better-situated national Red Cross societies.[110] The relationship between the British SCF and its Geneva-based international counterpart, the ISCU, developed in a similar way. In contrast to the conservative Imperial War Relief Fund (IWRF), which emphasised the British and imperial character of its mission and shunned international cooperation, the SCF had encouraged the establishment of national chapters in other countries, a dozen of which emerged by 1921. Competing with the IWRF, the SCF also received substantial donations from the British dominions, principally New Zealand and Canada, where new chapters were forming. However, during the Russian Famine, the SCF put increasing emphasis on the nationalisation of relief and joined forces with the IWRF in an 'All British Appeal'. Aware that the bulk of their donations came from Britain, the SCF urged that national chapters within the ISCU receive full credit for their generosity.[111]

The shift in the global power balance towards the USA and the emergence of the first communist state in Russia further politicised the question of humanitarian aid. With Hoover as its leading promoter, humanitarian aid was increasingly treated as diplomacy – if not war – by other means, explicitly aimed at winning the hearts and minds of distressed populations and fighting the spread of communism in Europe.[112] Hoover was convinced that food aid would 'win the post war', and for that goal strict national control and administration appeared indispensable.[113] A unified national front was supposed to 'preserve American prestige' and ensure that beneficiaries knew and appreciated that the help they received came from the USA, something assumed to enhance political, social, and economic influence.[114]

The establishment of the US European Relief Council (ERC) in 1920 was a major step in this direction. Like many other organisations, it concentrated on relief for children and in addition to the ARA, it embraced the AFSC, the ARC, the Federal Council of Churches, the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), the Knights of Columbus, the National Catholic Welfare Council (NCWC), and the Young Men's and Women's Christian Associations (YMCA and YWCA).[115] Within a few months, an appeal to save the

[110] Maul, 'Appell an das Gewissen, 3–4; Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 198–9.
[111] Mahood, *Feminism and Voluntary Action*, 178, 193; Emily Baughan, 'The Imperial War Relief Fund and the All British Appeal: Commonwealth, Conflict and Conservatism within the British Humanitarian Movement, 1920–25', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 40, no. 5 (2012): 845–61; 'Co-operation True and False', *The Record* 2, no. 3 (1921).
[112] Patenaude, *Big Show,* 635. [113] Cabanes, *Great War*, 212–14.
[114] Richard Gribble, 'Cooperation and Conflict between Church and State: The Russian Famine of 1921–1923', *Journal of Church and State* 51, no. 4 (2009): 649.
[115] *Interim Report of European Relief Council, Including Statement of Contributions by States, and Auditors' Preliminary Report on Accounts* (New York: Brown, 1921).

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children of Europe addressed to the US public resulted in US$29 million in donations in late 1920, with Hoover prominently leading the campaign.[116] The organisational collaboration continued during the Russian Famine, with some changes in membership.

The difficulty of coordinating international relief during the Russian campaign is well illustrated by the example of the Society of Friends. Despite a long tradition of close cooperation between British and American Quakers, first during the Russian Famine of the 1890s, and later during the First World War, the AFSC decided to sever ties with their British counterparts in 1921.[117] Setting aside concerns about principles such as pacifism, neutrality, and impartiality, the AFSC chose to join Hoover's US relief efforts under the protection and with the ample resources of the ARA, rather than continuing its transnational approach on a more modest scale. As Daniel Maul argues, two recurrent conflicting ideas of humanitarianism are symbolised in this decision: national versus international, and professional versus 'ethical'.[118] The Catholic Church was also subject to similar tensions. While the NCWC regarded its inclusion under Hoover's ARA umbrella a victory for Catholicism in the USA, some clerics decried it as a loss of episcopal autonomy.[119] For practical reasons, the NCWC and the Papal Relief Mission were later affiliated with the ARA. However, Vatican representatives continually struggled for their independence, wanting to provide aid not in the name of the USA, but as the Catholic Church.[120]

Russian Famine Relief

The devastation caused by the Russian Famine, and the extent and international dimensions of the relief efforts, were exceptional. Ideological and political factors complicated the situation, as the Bolshevik regime was still fragile and unrecognised by most Western governments. As a result, any bilateral arrangement was difficult and left humanitarian operations in private hands. Both exiled Russians and conservative foreign politicians were sceptical or openly hostile to the idea of supporting Soviet Russia with food,

[116] Kendrick Alling Clements, *The Life of Herbert Hoover, vol. 4: Imperfect Visionary 1918–1928* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 79–84.

[117] McFadden and Gorfinkel, *Contructive Spirit*, 27; Maul, 'American Quakers, the Emergence of International Humanitarianism', 63–87; Thomas C. Kennedy, *British Quakerism 1860–1920: The Transformation of a Religious Community* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

[118] Daniel Maul, 'American Quakers and Famine Relief in the Soviet Union 1921–1923', paper presented at the workshop 'Brokers of Aid: Humanitarian Organizations between Donors and Recipients', Södertörn University, Stockholm, 12 June 2014.

[119] Gribble, 'Cooperation and Conflict'.

[120] Marisa Patulli Trythall, '"Russia's Misfortune Offers Humanitarians a Splendid Opportunity": Jesuits, Communism, and the Russian Famine', *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 5, no. 1 (2018), 86–7.

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warning that this would stabilise the tottering regime. Others saw the famine as an opportunity, either for coming to terms with the new regime or for eliciting pro-Western attitudes among Russians and increasing the chance of a regime change. In fact, almost all relief help came from parties who were opposed to the ideology represented by Lenin, which in part explains why communist leaders deeply mistrusted foreign organisations and feared a counter-revolution in humanitarian disguise.[121] Nevertheless, they realised the benefit of accepting Western aid.

In the end, some 900,000 tonnes of relief goods were brought into the famine regions between late 1921 and early 1923. More than eleven million people were receiving food aid through foreign organisations by the time operations peaked in August 1922.[122] Relief was mainly delivered by two umbrella agencies, both of which signed treaties with the Bolshevik government: Hoover's ARA and the International Committee for Russian Relief (ICRR), led by Norwegian explorer Fridtjof Nansen. The ARA drew on the experience of its vast relief efforts in post-war Europe and provided more than four-fifths of all foreign aid. The ICRR was a creation of the ICRC, in cooperation with the Secretariat of the League of Nations. By 1921, both Hoover and Nansen were already internationally celebrated humanitarians.[123]

Most US relief agencies, including the ARC, worked under the ARA auspices, while Nansen represented a number of organisations from two dozen primarily European countries. The majority of humanitarian committees and organisations dealt with fundraising only. The ARA was the main agency responsible for distributing US relief, but even the AFSC in Buzuluk and, at a later point, the JDC in Ukraine worked in the field, although on a much smaller scale. Nansen depended to a great extent on the SCF and the British Quakers, who established their own distribution systems in the provinces of Saratov and

[121] See, e.g., 'The Famine and the International Situation, Material for Agitators by the Central Agitation Comission to Combat the Famine of the Central Committee of the Russian Comunist Party', undated translation by the ARA (probably Sept. 1921), Hoover Institution Library and Archives, Stanford University, ARA Russian operational records (hereafter ARA), reel 14.

[122] See 'Russian Feeding Progress: Number of Persons Fed on the First of Each Month', undated (after Apr. 1923), ARA, reel 568 and 'Feeding of the Starving Russian Population on August 1st 1922: Organisations Working under the Nansen Agreement', *International Committee for Russian Relief – Information* 30 (30 Aug. 1922), 20.

[123] The standard work on the ARA operation is Patenaude, *Big Show*. See also Benjamin M. Weissman, *Herbert Hoover and Famine Relief to Soviet Russia, 1921–1923* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1974). The official ARA history was written by Harold Henry Fisher, *The Famine in Soviet Russia, 1919–1923: The Operations of the American Relief Administration* (New York: Macmillan, 1927). For the ICRR, see Carl Emil Vogt, *Nansens Kamp mot Hungersnøden i Russland 1921–23* (Oslo: Aschehoug, 2007); Carl Emil Vogt, 'Fridtjof Nansen and European Food Aid to Russia and the Ukraine 1921–1923', *Dvacáté století* 1, no. 2 (2009): 40–50; Maul, 'Appell an das Gewissen'. For British relief, see Luke Kelly, *British Humanitarian Activity in Russia, 1890–1923* (Cham: Springer, 2018), 159–211.

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Buzuluk. Some national Red Cross chapters, including Italian, Swiss, and Swedish groups, also sought to direct relief work, but due to their limited resources, their efforts were often contingent on other players.[124]

Despite conflicts among organisations, few relief agencies remained outside the Nansen and Hoover spheres, although some like the SCF and the Quakers later signed their own aid treaties with the Soviet government. The most relevant exceptions were communists, such as the Berlin-based Workers' International Relief (WIR), and its US branch, the Friends of Soviet Russia (FSR).[125] There were also competing socialist and social democratic initiatives, such as one by the Amsterdam-based International Federation of Trade Unions, (IFTU), which mirrored ideological conflicts within the international workers' movement. In Denmark, for example, three nationwide campaigns were organised: one by the Danish Red Cross, one by the Social Democratic Union, and one by the communist Committee for Aid to Russia – the Danish auxiliary of the WIR, led by author Martin Andersen Nexø.[126] Labour movement organisations followed an agenda that differed from that of Hoover and Nansen. They saw their efforts as part of an international class struggle, rather than as a humanitarian initiative, and regarded ARA relief in particular as 'one part Trojan Horse, one part opiate'.[127] The WIR was also an exception in making extensive use of world-renowned artists and intellectuals, such as Käthe Kollwitz, George Bernard Shaw, and Albert Einstein, in their fundraising campaigns.[128]

About a month after Gorky's appeal, the ICRC organised a conference in Geneva on 15 and 16 August 1921 that brought together representatives from more than twenty humanitarian organisations and some governments.[129] The objective was to join forces and coordinate famine relief in Russia. The most tangible result was the establishment of the ICRR as an umbrella organisation.

[124] For a detailed account of this, see 'Work of the International Russian Relief Committee', *International Committee for Russian Relief – Information* no. 26 (10 July 1922), 26–32 (Swedish Red Cross), and 44–50 (Italian and Swiss Red Cross).

[125] Kasper Braskén, *The International Workers' Relief, Communism, and Transnational Solidarity: Willi Münzenberg in Weimar Germany* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Efrain M. Diaz, 'Friends of Soviet Russia: The Friendly Front Survives the Famine', *Perspectives* 34 (2007/8): 41–58. The original German name of the WIR was Internationale Arbeiterhilfe (IAH). In the following, the acronym WIR will be used, although some documents speak of International Workers' Relief, IAH, or refer more concretely to the Workers' International Russian Famine Relief Committee (WIRFRC).

[126] Kim Fredrichsen and Asger Pedersen, 'Dansk-Russisk Forenings tidlige historie', in *Dansk-russiske mellemfolkelige kontakter før og nu* (s.l.: Dansk-Russisk Forening, 2015), 3.

[127] Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*, 6. See also Braskén, *International Workers' Relief*, 39.

[128] Braskén, *International Workers' Relief*, 41–3.

[129] For lists of participants and detailed minutes of the meetings, see SCF, reel 33; Library of the Society of Friends, London, Friends Emergency and War Victims Relief Committee (FEWVRC) Archive, Relief Mission to Russia, 7/5/2/1–2.

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The initial plan of a dual European–US chairmanship failed, as Hoover, whose European representative had already negotiated terms for ARA relief with Russian authorities, declined the nomination. Therefore, Nansen became the sole high commissioner, and the ICRR remained a predominantly European body.

Apart from being a celebrity, Nansen was already an experienced humanitarian worker. His commitment to the repatriation of prisoners of war on behalf of the League of Nations had gained him international respect. In September 1921, he also became the League's high commissioner for refugees, parallel to his engagement for famine relief in Russia.

However, the preconditions for Nansen's work were difficult, as initially no government, except for his home country, Norway, supported the ICRR, nor would the participating humanitarian organisations financially commit themselves. Only the SCF pledged in advance to feed 10,000 children. While Hoover drew on the well-functioning machinery of the ARA and had ample financial means at his disposal when bargaining with suspicious Russian authorities in Riga, Nansen's position was weak as he negotiated the conditions under which relief would be provided. When Nansen arrived on 20 August, Hoover's representative had already successfully secured far-reaching US control over distribution and had even obliged the Russian government to fund part of the relief work with its gold reserves.[130]

Nansen's agreement was less favourable, particularly with regard to distribution. However, his major problem remained funding.[131] European governments were generally unwilling to invest in the enterprise, either by donations or with loans, which according to the Riga treaty, Nansen was bound to negotiate on behalf of the Soviet government. Back in Geneva, Nansen delivered two acclaimed speeches before the Assembly of the League of Nations. In the first, on 9 September, he appealed to European governments for help, pointing out that private relief alone was insufficient.[132] Two weeks later, he presented an emotional sketch of the absurdity of the situation: ships and a surplus of food were available, while twenty million people in Russia were starving and Western governments remained indifferent.[133]

Nansen received applause for his speech, but little money. The ICRR continued its work, depending on private charity and supported by minor sums from a few governments such as Norway, Sweden, and the Baltic

[130] The complete agreement as an appendix may be found in Patenaude, *Big Show*, 745–8.
[131] Vogt, 'Fridtjof Nansen and European Food Aid', 43; Vogt, *Nansens kamp*, 145–69.
[132] 'Dr Nansen at the League of Nations', *The Record* 2, no. 1 (1921).
[133] 'Fridtjof Nansens Rede vor dem Völkerbund (24 Sept. 1921)' (in English), *Themenportal Europäische Geschichte* (Berlin: Humboldt University, 2011), available at www.europa.clio-online.de/quelle/id/artikel-3535 (accessed 29 June 2019).

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states. The principal affiliated organisations like the SCF, the British Quakers, and the Swedish Red Cross acted largely on their own in their fundraising and relief work, but in many cases served as distribution agencies for ICRR provisions.

Culmination

The development of humanitarianism after 1900 culminated in the relief efforts during the Russian Famine. Foreshadowing our designation of this humanitarian era, the SCF proclaimed during the Russian Famine that 'whatever is not organised is dead'.[134] While ARA officials praised the centralised relief work under a national umbrella, they showed little understanding for the wishes of affiliated organisations to preserve independent operations or their own culture of altruism. With regard to efficiency, the ARA suggested that 'all these organizations would be greatly benefitted if their funds were donated outright to the ARA'.[135] The SCF adopted a similar position, suggesting that there was no longer room for amateur philanthropy.[136] Professionalisation also meant that experts would handle the logistics of relief, procurement of food and other supplies, and accounting, as well as marketing and public relations – the latter an area that especially created conflicts.[137] During the Russian Famine, various organisations produced at least five films.[138] The SCF appropriated the slogan 'Seeing Is Believing' and attempted to settle public controversies by claiming their documentaries irrefutably proved the reality of famine.[139]

A symbiotic mixed economy, with private relief organisations on the one hand, and the goverment on the other, was a necessity if comprehensive relief was to be provided for millions threatened by starvation in Russia, as the success of the ARA illustrates. It was possible because Hoover's goals and those of Washington generally coincided. Hoover led the ARA as a private citizen, but was also secretary of commerce in the Harding administration. Nansen and the SCF were equally quick to declare governmental support indispensable, and put great effort into lobbying for state-financed relief

[134] 'The New Charity', *The Record* 2, no. 8 (1922).
[135] Haskell to London, 20 Mar. 1922, ARA, reel 115.
[136] 'Of Giving Way to Others: A Word to Workers and Friends', *The Record* 2, no. 4 (1921).
[137] Breen, 'Saving Enemy Children'.
[138] Produced by the SCF, ARA, ICRR, British Quakers, and FSR. See also Sasson, 'From Empire to Humanity', 531; Christina Twomey, 'Framing Atrocity: Photography and Humanitarianism', *History of Photography* 36, no. 3 (2012): 255–64; Heide Fehrenbach and Davide Rodogno, eds, *Humanitarian Photography: A History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).
[139] 'Seeing Is Believing', *The Record* 2, no. 10 (1922).

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missions. Other than symbolic success, however, they failed because they were unable to persuade European governments that their common interest justified a joint commitment. Although the SFC saw itself as a government corrective, its attempts to gain state support show the inevitability of a humanitarian mixed economy. Even the Quakers, with their storied incorruptible relief philosophy, considered it necessary to adapt to the new development during the Russian Famine, and so the AFSC reluctantly engaged in a pragmatic relationship with the ARA, not least because of Hoover's access to government funding.

In the wake of Gorky's appeal, lingering conflicts between the ICRC and major national Red Cross societies surfaced, and the ICRC tried to regain the ground it had lost by setting up Nansen's high commissariat. At the same time, the ambitions of the League of Nations created new, sometimes painful discrepancies, as Nansen's unsuccessful appeals in Geneva demonstrate. Similarly, the SCF experienced difficulties when they began to extend their activities beyond fundraising to launching their own transport and distribution systems. The AFSC, which had a working relationship with the ARA, also had such problems, and ended up fearing for the loss of their identity.

Hoover and the ARA were confronted with the question of how practical economically and politically their endeavour had been. Could both humanitarian and political success be repeated as supposedly achieved in Central and Eastern Europe? In the end, while the huge relief apparatus significantly alleviated the suffering of the Russian people, saving many lives and winning over many hearts and minds, the operation failed to destabilise the Bolshevik regime.

2.4 Famine in Ethiopia 1984–6 and Expressive Humanitarianism

By late 1984, famine was affecting wide swaths of Sahelian Africa. The catastrophe had been developing since December 1982. Starvation acutely threatened more than seven million people in the northern and south-eastern regions of Ethiopia or approximately one-fifth of the total population. Warnings from aid organisations had been ignored by the international community and the government downplayed the scale of the crisis. In the 1980s, Ethiopia was ruled by a committee of military officers known as the Derg, headed by President Mengistu Haile Mariam.[140] These Marxists had assumed power after

[140] 'Derg' or 'Dergue' is the Amharic word for 'committee', an abbreviation of the government's full title, 'Provisional Military Administrative Committee'.

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a 1974 coup d'etat which overthrew Emperor Haile Selassie. They consolidated their rule through a reign of terror. The long civil war the military government engaged in against the secessionist Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) escalated in 1985 (see Figure 2.3).[141] In 1982, the World Bank ranked Ethiopia as the second poorest country in the world in terms of GNP per capita. Owing to its socialist ideology, the country could not attract significant foreign investment or development aid.[142]

The causes of the famine are complex and disputed, but civil war, years of drought across the Sahel region, compulsory land reform, and forced collective farming policies all played a part. In addition, food aid was late in coming, and when it did arrive, problems supplying relief to rebel-held areas as well as the regime's programme of forced resettlement for famine-affected people added to the death toll. Meanwhile, the Derg diverted food from rural areas to urban markets in an attempt to stifle political dissent in the cities. Estimates vary, but between 400,000 and 1 million people are believed to have died between 1984 and 1986.[143]

An Age of Expressive Humanitarianism

The famine in Ethiopia has been cited as a landmark in the history of humanitarianism, both by those who participated in the relief operations and by others who have later written about it.[144] It signified an age of expressive humanitarianism, marked by the Band Aid and Live Aid

[141] Alex de Waal, *Evil Days: 30 Years of War and Famine* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1991), 177–84, 197–203.

[142] Richard Pankhurst, 'The Ethiopian Famine: Cultural Survival's New Report', *Anthropology Today* 2, no. 3 (1986): 4–5; John Clarke, *Resettlement and Rehabilitation: Ethiopia's Campaign against Famine* (London: Harney and Jones, 1987), 17.

[143] de Waal, *Famine Crimes*, 115; Paul C. Hébert, 'Feed the World: Food, Development, Aid and Hunger in Africa, 1984–1985', unpublished MA thesis, Corcordia University, Canada, 2008; de Waal, *Evil Days*, 173–6; Peter Gill, *Famine and Foreigners: Ethiopia since Live Aid* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 43.

[144] Eleanor Davey, John Borton, and Matthew Foley, *A History of the Humanitarian System: Western Origins and Foundations* (London: Overseas Development Institute, 2013); Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*, 133; Alexander Poster, 'The Gentle War: Famine Relief, Politics and Privatization in Ethiopia, 1938–86', *Diplomatic History* 26, no. 2 (2012): 399–425; Matthew Hilton, James McKay, Nicholas Crowson, and Jean-Francois Mouhot, *The Politics of Expertise: How NGOs Shaped Modern Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Kurt Jansson, 'The Emergency Relief Operation: An Inside View', in *The Ethiopian Famine: The Story of the Emergency Relief Operation*, eds Kurt Jansson, Michael Harris, and Angela Penrose (London: Zed Books, 1987), 1–77; Alula Pankhurst, *Resettlement and Famine in Ethiopia: The Villagers' Experience* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992).

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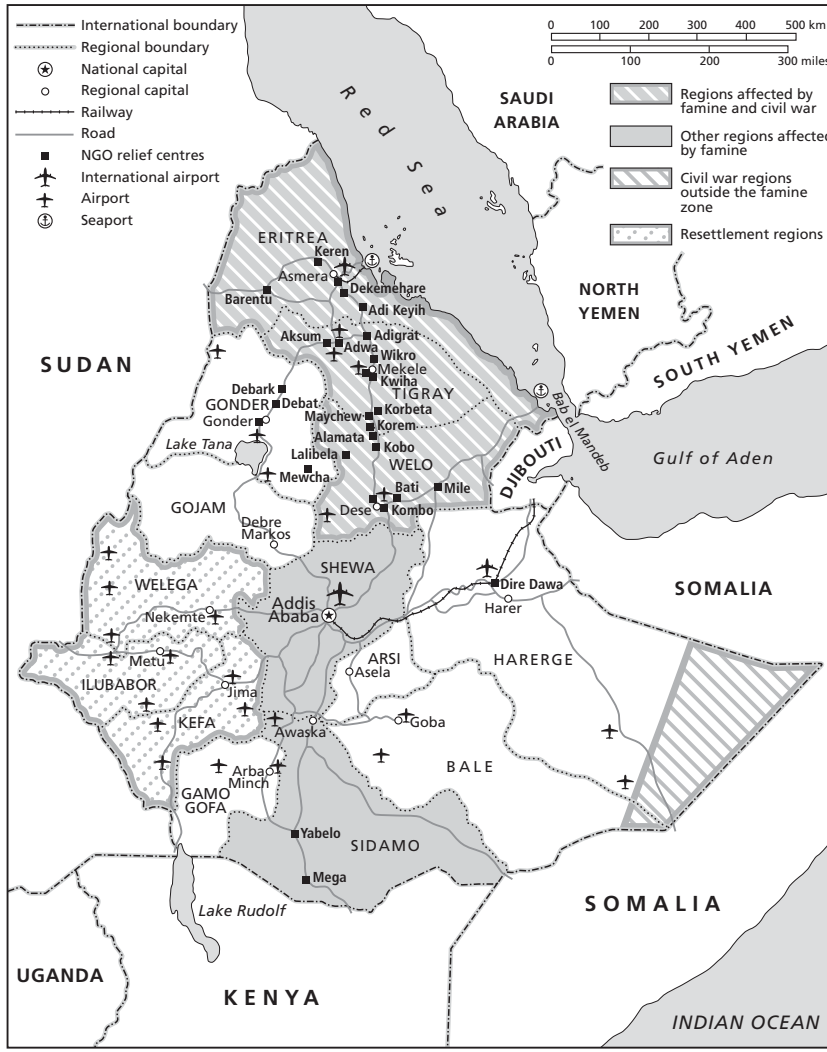


Figure 2.3 Map showing famine-affected regions of Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Tigray, 1985.
Adopted from Lafayette Barnes, 'Ethiopian Food Situation: International Response', Congressional Research Service, Issue Brief, 28 June 1985

movements, and including other phenomena that engaged the world-at-large. The relief effort saw the culmination of several trends that had their origins in the late 1960s and became prominent in the response to the humanitarian crisis in Biafra of 1968–70. These included (a) a media-driven understanding

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of disasters and relief efforts, as Biafra was the first time a famine was televised;[145] (b) an emphasis on celebrity, spectacle, and mass participation in relief, described as a 'revolution in giving' in which aid and development became attributes of an enlightened lifestyle and attracted formerly uninterested donors;[146] (c) the transformation of voluntary giving beyond established agencies to new organisations such as Band Aid, which received large sums of money and became conduits between donor governments, the charitable public, and recipients of relief, as well as voicing a commitment to 'people-to-people' aid;[147] and (d) an increased humanitarian concern for witnessing and reporting on misdeeds and perceived manipulations of aid.[148]

The period between the 1960s and the famine in Ethiopia saw the 'rise and rise' of humanitarian organisations.[149] The formation of a global aid regime in the Cold War was in part facilitated by the Soviet boycott of many of the international organisations through which this system operated. It created the context for Western powers to treat development problems and humanitarian emergencies from a security point of view, employing their aid 'to contain communism, delegitimate national liberation movements, and reproduce neocolonial rule'.[150] The Biafran crisis clearly revealed these tendencies, at the same time, it was a post-colonial conflict and domestic power struggle in West Africa that instrumentalised suffering for political ends, provoking new responses, but also rendering those offering relief complicit.[151]

In May 1967, the eastern region of Nigeria declared its independence under the name Republic of Biafra. The subsequent blockade imposed by the Nigerian government led to widespread starvation, with eight million people

[145] Susanne Franks, *Reporting Disasters: Famine, Aid, Politics and the Media* (London: Hurst, 2013); Prochaska, *Voluntary Impulse*, 2.

[146] The term 'revolution in giving' is from Franks, *Reporting Disasters*, 71.

[147] Kevin O'Sullivan, 'Biafra's Legacy: NGO Humanitarianism and the Nigerian Civil War', in *Learning from the Past to Shape the Future: Lessons from the History of Humanitarian Action in Africa* (London: Overseas Development Institute, 2016), 5–13; Tanja R. Müller, '"The Ethiopian Famine" Revisited: Band Aid and the Antipolitics of Celebrity Humanitarian Action', *Disasters* 37, no. 1 (2013): 61–79; Ami V. Shah, Bruce Hall, and Edward R. Carr, 'Bono, Band Aid, and Before: Celebrity Humanitarianism, Music and the Objects of Its Action', in *Soundscapes of Wellbeing in Popular Music*, eds Gavin Andrews, Paul Kingsbury, and Robin Kearns (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 269–88.

[148] Franks, *Reporting Disasters*; O'Sullivan, 'Biafra's Legacy'; Ryfman, *Une Histoire*; Eleanor Davey, 'Famine, Aid, and Ideology: The Political Activism of Médicins sans Frontières in the 1980s', *French Historical Studies* 34, no. 3 (2011): 531–58.

[149] Kevin O'Sullivan, 'A "Global Nervous System": The Rise and Rise of European Humanitarian NGOs, 1945–1985', in *International Organisations and Development, 1945–1990*, eds Marc Frey, Sönke Kunkel, and Corinna R. Unger (New York: Macmillan, 2014), 196–219; Davies, *NGOs*, 123.

[150] Young-Sun Hong, *Cold War Germany, the Third World, and the Global Humanitarian Regime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 4.

[151] de Waal, *Famine Crimes*, 72–7.

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considered in danger. The famine came to media attention around the globe in early 1968 through the efforts of Christian missionaries. The televised images of starving children pushed aid agencies and governments to take a stand, despite the complex political situation. The response signalled a break with humanitarian traditions and the emergence of a more politically engaged humanitarianism, most evident in the creation of MSF, but also seen in less well-known groups such as the Oxfam spin-off Third World First.[152] In 1968, a group of French doctors led by Bernard Kouchner publicly denounced the Red Cross principles of silence and neutrality in Biafra. On returning home, they organised marches and media events to raise awareness of Nigerian atrocities against civilians. Their activism, followed by similar experiences in Bangladesh, led to the formation of MSF in 1971.[153] Kouchner and his followers were part of a new generation of humanitarian individuals who cultivated close links with the media. Kouchner developed humanitarian action as a form of theatre or carnival.[154] MSF cherished the idea of *témoignage* (speaking out), although how and when this should be put into practice was subject to internal dispute. Following a split in 1979, Kouchner went on to found Médecins du Monde. By the early 1980s, MSF had become a 'brand' with a privileged place in French politics, but was also known for its increasingly anti-communist stance and critical view of Third Worldism.[155]

The role played by voluntary organisations in disaster relief had a greater impact in attracting public attention than long-term development efforts. In the final quarter of the twentieth century, it became increasingly evident that for many organisations 'association with high profile disasters was good for business'.[156] After Biafra, voluntary agencies acquired a reputation for efficiency, in part based on a perceived ability to work with grass-roots communities. With each major relief operation (including Bangladesh in 1970–1, the Sahel region in 1973, and work on the Thai–Cambodian border after the fall of the Khmer Rouge in 1979), the 'humanitarian international' appeared as 'more powerful and more privileged'.[157] Musicians and pop stars also became increasingly engaged in humanitarian activities, a development seen in George Harrison and Ravi Shankar's 1971 Concert for Bangladesh and the

[152] Georgina Brewis, *A Social History of Student Volunteering: Britain and Beyond, 1880–1980* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 184–5.
[153] Davey, *Idealism beyond Borders*, 31–6.
[154] Alex de Waal, 'The Humanitarian Carnival: A Celebrity Vogue', *World Affairs* 171, no. 2 (2008): 54.
[155] Bertrand Taithe, 'Reinventing (French) Universalism: Religion, Humanitarianism and the "French doctors"', *Modern & Contemporary France* 12, no. 2 (2004): 147–58.
[156] Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*, 132.
[157] de Waal, *Famine Crimes*, 85 (quotation), 78; Luther Banga, *Reducing People's Vulnerability to Famine: An Evaluation of Band Aid and Live Aid Financed Projects in Africa Final Report* (Douala: PAID, 1991), 1.

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1979 Concerts for the People of Kampuchea (Cambodia).[158] Although modest in comparison, such events paved the way for Irish singer Bob Geldof's global success with Band Aid and Live Aid during the 1980s.

Ethiopia, Famine, and Media-Driven Humanitarianism

In Ethiopia, recurrent famines had been met by indifference to suffering under the rule of Haile Selassie, but in 1973, the media spotlight shone on the region with the documentary 'The Unknown Famine' by British broadcaster Jonathan Dimbleby. It led to a global response and precipitated the emperor's downfall.[159] The new military government set up a Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) to oversee aid work. While this institution built a reputation as one of the most effective famine relief agencies in Africa in the 1970s, with 12,000 staff across Ethiopia, by the early 1980s it had become compromised as an arm of the Mengistu regime.[160] The RRC was widely distrusted and its communications treated with scepticism by international donors. The result was that an urgent appeal for food aid in March 1984, after the failure of the short rains, was largely ignored by relief agencies.[161] A second organisation to emerge from the 1973 famine which played a key role a decade later was the Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA). Formed mainly of Catholic charities, along with other religious groups, some secular agencies, transnational organisations, and domestic groups, CRDA's creation was the first organised cooperation in Ethiopia between the government and voluntary organisations.[162]

Initially, the mounting disaster in Ethiopia was covered only to a limited extent by the international media. In early 1983, appeals for food aid led to some news coverage and donations in the USA and Europe – particularly from the UK, Germany, and Sweden. In July 1984, a public appeal was made by the

[158] Shah, Hall, and Carr, 'Bono, Band Aid and Before', 277.

[159] Angela Penrose, 'Before and After', in *The Ethiopian Famine*, eds Kurt Jansson, Michael Harris, and Angela Penrose (London: Zed Books, 1987), 100; Andrew Jones, 'The Unknown Famine: Television and the Politics of British Humanitarianism', in *Global Humanitarianism and Media Culture*, eds Michael Lawrence and Rachel Tavernor (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019), 122–44.

[160] Ethiopians are properly referred to by the first name.

[161] de Waal, *Famine Crimes*, 107; Mark Duffield and John Prendergast, *Without Troops and Tanks: Humanitarian Intervention in Ethiopia and Eritrea* (Lawrenceville, NJ: Red Sea Press, 1994), 42–3; Tony Vaux, 'The Ethiopian Famine 1984: Oxfam's Early Involvement', Feb. 1985, MS Oxfam PGR 2/3/10/8, 10 (Bodleian Library, Oxford University, Oxfam Archive); Peter Gill, *A Year in the Death of Africa: Politics, Bureaucracy and the Famine* (London: Palladin, 1986), 30–2.

[162] Jeffrey Clark, *Civil Society, NGOs, and Development in Ethiopia: A Snapshot View* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2000), 5.

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UK Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) to accompany a television documentary.[163] In retrospect, the delay in relief efforts has been attributed to a de facto alliance between top officials in the Reagan administration and the Mengistu regime, neither of which wanted a large-scale response. Approaching its tenth anniversary in power in August 1984, the Ethiopian government did not wish to draw attention to either famine or civil war. It exerted tight control of travel visas for journalists and aid workers during the summer of 1984. The USA, for its part, had suspended development assistance to Ethiopia in 1979 and was reluctant to participate in a relief effort for a Soviet-aligned country until increased publicity forced a change in attitude.[164] United Nations (UN) agencies and voluntary organisations themselves were also partly responsible for the delay. Scepticism over RRC figures was compounded by inaccurate and misleading data on food aid requirements from the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) during 1984.[165] At the time, many donors regarded the RRC's invocation of the international community's moral responsibility as offensive.[166]

By September 1984, its anniversary celebrations over, the Mengistu regime shifted from a policy of denial to one of blaming the international community for the famine, notably the US government. The Ethiopian regime was not so much reluctant to accept aid, as it was to receive it on its own terms. It had traditionally preferred development assistance to emergency relief.[167] The CRDA telexed an urgent appeal calling for 'immediate, massive, and coordinated' action.[168] Film-maker Peter Gill, who had long been seeking access to the famine-affected regions, proposed making a documentary that would contrast overproduction of food in Europe with hunger in Ethiopia, and this met with approval, enabling him to get the necessary travel permits. Other journalists

[163] Dawit Wolde Giorgis, *Red Tears: War, Famine and Revolution in Ethiopia* (Trenton, NJ: Red Sea Press, 1989), 187; Christian Aid Memo, 11 Oct. 1984, CA 4/A/16 (School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, Christian Aid Archive, hereafter CA); Vaux, 'Ethiopian Famine 1984', 21.

[164] Poster, 'Gentle War', 404; Gill, *Year in the Death*, 4–6; Harold G. Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*, 3rd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 205–7; US General Accounting Office, 'The United States Response to the Ethiopian Food Crisis', Apr. 1985, 2–3, available at http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pcaaa061.pdf (accessed 29 June 2019).

[165] Minutes of DEC Operational Meeting, 10 May 1984, 1, CA 4/A/16; Vaux, 'Ethiopian Famine 1984', 14–15.

[166] Ann Wilkens, 'Katastrofbiståndsutredningen: Fallstudie Etiopien. Svältkatastrofen i Etiopien 1984/85, en dokumentation av nödhjälpsoperationen', in *Katastrofbistånd för utveckling: Några fakta och synpunkter. Fallstudier av Etiopien och Bangladesh*, ed. Sture Linnér (Stockholm: SIDA, 1986), 11.

[167] Edward Kissi, 'Beneath International Famine Relief in Ethiopia: The United States, Ethiopia, and the Debate over Relief Aid, Development Assistance, and Human Rights', *African Studies Review* 48, no. 2 (2005): 113.

[168] CRDA to Renshaw, 26 Sept. 1984, CA 5/5/358; Christian Relief and Development Association Relief Programme 1986, 1, CA 5/A/358.

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were granted access to the afflicted area. On 23 October 1984, in a now famous BBC television newscast, reporter Michael Buerk and video journalist Mohamed Amin drew the world's attention to a 'biblical famine' affecting large tracts of Ethiopia. In the days that followed, their film was rebroadcast by 425 stations, reaching a global audience of 470 million, and finally sparking a major international response.[169] The famine in Ethiopia became '*the* story, and *the* cause'.[170] The moral outrage it raised was heightened because news of the famine came immediately after a widely reported abundant harvest in Europe, which further swelled the European Economic Community's (EEC) notorious 'grain mountain'.[171] As the head of the RRC put it, his country had been forgotten 'by a world glutted with a surplus of grain'.[172]

International Response

The BBC announcement triggered a flood of cash donations to voluntary organisations around the world. Donor governments also began to mobilise in earnest and establish a new apparatus to oversee relief. Finnish diplomat Kurt Jansson was appointed UN assistant secretary general for emergency operations in Ethiopia. The Office for Emergency Operations in Ethiopia enabled the UN to make a fresh start in relief administration and to renew relationships with the RRC.[173] The EEC development ministers met and immediately pledged millions in aid.[174] Recalling the approach in Soviet Russia more than sixty years earlier, food aid was to be a means to win the 'hearts and minds' of a demoralised recipient population. The director of USAID visited Ethiopia, followed by legislators who helped secure support for relief in the US Congress. In early November, an emergency airlift began that transcended the Cold War and the North–South divide. It was a cooperative effort of the USA, UK, France, Poland, Libya, and both German states.[175]

[169] Greg Philo, 'From Buerk to Band Aid: The Media and the 1984 Ethiopian Famine', in *Getting the Message: News, Truth and Power*, ed. John Eldridge (London: Routledge, 1993), 108–9, 121; Penrose, 'Before and After', 154. See Franks, *Reporting Disasters*, ch. 1 for background.

[170] Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*, 156.

[171] Paul Keleman, *The Politics of the Famine in Ethiopia and Eritrea* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), 5.

[172] Gill, *Year in the Death*, 40.

[173] Jansson, 'Emergency Relief', 1; IIED, *Report on the African Emergency Relief Operation 1984–1986 with Particular Reference to the Contributions of Non Governmental Organisations, and at the Request of the UN Office for Emergency Operations in Africa* (London, International Institute for Environment and Development, 1986), 35.

[174] EEC press release, Dec. 1985, available at https://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_P-86-6_en.htm (accessed 21 Sept. 2019).

[175] USAID, *Final Disaster Report Ethiopia Drought/Famine FY 1985 1986* (Washington, DC: USAID, 1987), 5, 11, available at http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNABG233.pdf (accessed 29 June 2019).

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While reluctant to provide additional aid, Moscow did not object to Ethiopia seeking food aid from the West, although they considered this assistance to be 'subversive' and designed to discredit socialism.[176] In addition to ongoing military support, the Soviet Union's main contribution during the famine was providing transportation for the Derg's controversial resettlement programme.[177] Alongside measures such as the famine tax imposed to support the RRC, resettlement was framed as Ethiopia's major domestic relief measure, and one that was part of a strategy of reducing reliance on external aid; its aim was to relocate 1.5 million people from the north to the south-west of Ethiopia (see Figure 2.3).[178] The programme was halted in early 1986, by which time 600,000 people had been moved, and it resumed in 1987 when famine again threatened Ethiopia.

In all, about 1.5 million tonnes of emergency food aid reached Ethiopia. The food and non-food aid provided from 1984 to 1986 was valued at US$1.5–2 billion. The US government became the largest single donor, contributing more than US$500 million to a USAID programme under the slogan 'a hungry child knows no politics'. The second most significant contribution came from the EEC and its ten member nations, where since the 1970s, food aid had been used in part as a measure to deal with surplus production. Other donors included Canada, Australia, the Scandinavian countries, Japan, China, and Zimbabwe.[179] Sweden had a long history of missionary work in Ethiopia and Eritrea, and since the mid-1970s, had employed relief assistance as a way to maintain and strengthen those connections. Voluntary groups used this history to describe the Swedish obligation to help in terms of 'trusteeship'.[180] The creation of the Fondo Aiuti Italani (Italian Aid Fund) illustrates the stimulus the famine had on aid policy in Italy, where socialist Prime Minister Bettino Craxi developed one of the largest aid programmes in the horn of Africa, although it was marred by corruption and misallocation. The Italian effort reflected both historical ties – Italy was the former colonial ruler in

[176] Radoslav A. Yordanov, *The Soviet Union and the Horn of Africa during the Cold War: Between Ideology and Pragmatism* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2016), 224–5.

[177] CIA, *Ethiopia: Political and Security Impact of the Drought – An Intelligence Assessment*, Apr. 1985, iv, available at www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP86T00589R000200160004-5.pdf (accessed 29 June 2019); de Waal, *Evil Days*, 211.

[178] Pankhurst, *Resettlement and Famine*, 52–3; Article 19, *Starving in Silence: Report on Famine and Censorship* (London: Article 19, 1990), 110–13.

[179] Banga, *Reducing People's Vulnerability to Famine*, 7; USAID, *Final Disaster Report*, 36, 38; Poster, 'Gentle War', 399; Gill, *Year in the Death*, 69; D. R. Morrison, *Aid and Ebb Tide: A History of CIDA and Canadian Development Assistance* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2011), 234–5; Patrick Kilby, *NGOs and Political Change: History of the Australian Council for International Development* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 2015), 103.

[180] Cecilia Steen-Johnsson, 'Lutherhjälpen: Ökad insats, dyr transport', *Dagens Nyheter*, 10 Nov. 1984, 7; Duffield and Prendergast, *Without Troops*, 46.

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Somalia, Eritrea, and briefly in Ethiopia – as well as ongoing sympathies with the region's Marxist regimes.[181] Between 1984 and 1986, Italy became the largest single donor of non-food aid to the RRC (including trucks and trailers), valued at US$17 million.[182]

In January 1985, Geldof, whose Irish roots increased his sensitivity to famine,[183] launched a new UK charity, The Band Aid Trust, to disperse funds raised by the charity single 'Do They Know It's Christmas?'. The trust also arranged additional participatory fundraising efforts, of which the Live Aid concerts were by far the most significant. The unexpected success of the original recording encouraged the production of the US song 'We Are the World' and at least twenty other charity singles in many languages.[184] This novel approach transformed fundraising around the globe. For example, for the first time in Germany, eighteen voluntary organisations held a joint television benefit, a spectacular known as the 'Day for Africa', in January 1985.[185] Celebrity activism has deep roots, and for over two centuries reformers, fundraisers, and campaigners have sought to maximise public attention by enlisting well-known public figures to aid their cause, a tendency that grew significantly in the late twentieth century.[186]

Jansson judged that the role played by voluntary organisations in Ethiopia was greater than in earlier emergency relief programmes. Although some agencies, including the Red Cross, SCF, and Catholic Relief Services (CRS), had long been active in Ethiopia, there was a rush to get into the country following the heavy media coverage.[187] Organisations working on the ground increased in number from twenty-one at the beginning of 1984 to forty-eight by the middle of 1985, and in the end involved some 600 expatriate staff and 2,000 Ethiopian employees.[188] An organisation's presence during a disaster had become an essential aspect of the humanitarian system by the mid-1980s.[189]

[181] Paola Bollina and Michael R. Reich, 'The Italian Fight against World Hunger: A Critical Analysis of Italian Aid for Development in the 1980s', *Social Science of Medicine* 39, no, 5 (1994): 607–20; Wolfgang Achtner, 'The Italian Connection: How Rome Helped Ruin Somalia', *Washington Post*, 24 Jan. 1993; Carol Lancaster, *Aid to Africa: So Much to Do, So Little Done* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 160–4.

[182] USAID, *Final Disaster Report*, 39, 85.

[183] 'Bob Geldof Says 1916 Rising Was "Nonsense" and Great Famine Was True Birth of the Irish Nation', *Irish Post*, 18 Oct. 2018.

[184] Food and Trucks and Rock 'n' Roll: The Band Aid Story, directed by Ian McMillan (London: Band Aid, 1985).

[185] Heinrich von Nussbaum, 'Das Medienspektakel: "Ein Tag für Afrika"', *Medium*, no. 2 (1985): 5–7.

[186] Shah, Hall, and Carr, 'Bono, Band Aid'; Lucy Robinson, 'Putting the Charity Back into Charity Singles: Charity Singles in Britain 1984–1995', *Contemporary British History* 26, no.3 (2012): 405–25.

[187] Jansson, 'Emergency Relief', 22.

[188] Giorgis, *Red Tears*, 228.

[189] de Waal, *Famine Crimes*, 80; de Waal, 'Humanitarian Carnival'.

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In addition, new aid consortia were put together to ease the delivery of relief, while the famine accelerated trends towards a long-standing, often unfilled, desire for greater coordination and information-sharing among agencies. Most of the organisations working in government-controlled Ethiopia were members of the CRDA umbrella body, which expanded considerably during the crisis and by December 1986 had forty-six members.[190] The CRDA held monthly meetings in Addis Ababa, providing the main forum for the exchange of information between aid agencies, the UN, and the RRC.[191] The reluctance of some donor nations to work with the RRC strengthened the position of the voluntary agencies, so that they distributed 95 per cent of the food aid that the USA provided. The EEC was more willing to work with the Ethiopian government, although 29 per cent of its food aid was still given out via voluntary organisations in 1985. Many smaller donor countries like Japan, Finland, and Switzerland directed all their relief through channels in civil society.[192]

Food distribution was complicated by the fact that many of those affected by famine were living in areas outside of the control of the Ethiopian government, such as Eritrea, Tigray, and northern Wollo (see Figure 2.3). The respect officially accorded to sovereignty during the Cold War – even to unpalatable regimes like the Derg – meant that Western governments were slow to provide aid to rebel-held areas. There, quasi-autonomous relief organisations linked to rebel forces worked with supportive organisations and diasporic communities abroad. Large donors, reluctant to associate themselves with the rebels, relied heavily on voluntary organisations in the regions controlled by the liberation fronts.[193]

Both the Ethiopian government and the rebel groups tried to manipulate Western aid for their own ends. MSF was the only aid agency to publicly criticise the Ethiopian authorities and their resettlement programme, and was ultimately expelled for doing so. MSF's refusal to 'renounce our moral responsibilities or cooperate blindly in a perversion of the very meaning of international aid' is a hallmark of the expressive humanitarianism that developed after the Biafran crisis, and was driven by the belief that the

[190] *CRDA Biannual Review 1985–6*, 20–3, CA 5/5/358.

[191] John Borton, *The Changing Role of NGOs in the Provision of Relief and Rehabilitation Assistance: Case Study 3 – Northern Ethiopia and Eritrea* (London: Overseas Development Institute, 1994), 70.

[192] Poster, 'Gentle War', 415; Jansson, 'Emergency Relief', 47; USAID, *Final Disaster Report*, 38.

[193] Duffield and Prendergast, *Without Troops*, 3; de Waal, *Famine Crimes*, 129; Max Peberdy, *Tigray: Ethiopia's Untold Story* (London: Relief Society of Tigray UK Support Committee, 1985); Borton, *Changing Role*, 85.

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donating public needed to be made aware of how their contributions were being used.[194] However, this position was rejected by other organisations who were critical of a stance which to them appeared to put vulnerable famine-survivors at greater risk.

The famine in Ethiopia accelerated the formation of aid structures embodying expressive humanitarianism, namely, the involvement of high-profile figures, large-scale televised spectaculars, and the emotional engagement of the general public (particularly young people). Musicians and celebrities across the world initiated numerous fundraising activities. Aid organisations raised significant sums and also benefitted from unsolicited donations from individuals outside of their traditional support base.[195] Things reached their height when Band Aid and other groups capitalised on this participatory enthusiasm. Moreover, while the Ethiopian crisis in some ways marked the continuation of the professionalisation of voluntary humanitarian action,[196] the Band Aid Trust, as a self-styled newcomer, represented an innovative moral economy that stood in opposition to the professional aid industry, with its high overhead and salaries. Geldof later suggested that the legacy of Band Aid was as much in mobilising the public to believe that anything was possible, contrary to experts telling them 'it is hopeless', as in delivering on its relief and rehabilitation projects.[197] However, the price for the wide-scale mobilisation was 'anything goes!', as the celebrated performance of superstar Farrokh Bulsara (better known as Queen's frontman, Freddie Mercury) at the Live Aid concert in 1985 illustrates. While performing the rock anthem 'We Are the Champions', he cried out 'No time for losers!'.

[194] Bertrand Desmoulins and Michael Fiszbin, 'An Open Letter to NGOs in Ethiopia', 13 Dec. 1985, CARE 1220, File 17 (New York Public Library, CARE Archives).

[195] Robert Dodd, 'Oxfam's Response to Disasters in Ethiopia and the Sudan', June 1986, MS Oxfam PGR 5/5/1, 37.

[196] Andrew Jones, 'Band Aid Revisited: Humanitarianism, Consumption and Philanthropy in the 1980s', *Contemporary British History* 31, no. 2 (2017): 195.

[197] Band Aid, *With Love from Band Aid: Report of 7 Years Work* (London: Band Aid Trust, 1992), 3.

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