

Refugees and Cultural Transfer to Britain

Edited by
Stefan Manz and Panikos Panayi



Refugees and Cultural Transfer to Britain

Edited by
Stefan Manz and Panikos Panayi



First published 2013
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

© 2013 Taylor & Francis

This book is a reproduction of *Immigrants & Minorities*, Volume 30, Issue 2/3. The Publisher requests to those authors who may be citing this book to state, also, the bibliographical details of the special issue on which the book was based.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Trademark notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN13: 978-0-415-57191-3

Typeset in Times New Roman
by Taylor & Francis Books

Publisher's Note

The publisher would like to make readers aware that the chapters in this book may be referred to as articles as they are identical to the articles published in the special issue. The publisher accepts responsibility for any inconsistencies that may have arisen in the course of preparing this volume for print.

Refugees and Cultural Transfer to Britain

This book is the first to focus specifically upon the relationship between refugees and intercultural transfer over an extensive period of time. Since circa 1830, a series of groups have made their way to Britain, beginning with exiles from the failed European revolutions of the mid-nineteenth century and ending with refugees who have increasingly come from beyond Europe. The book addresses four specific questions. First, what roles have individuals or groups of refugees played in cultural and political transfers to Britain since 1830? Second, can we identify a novel form of cultural production which differs from that in the homeland? Third, to what extent has dissemination within and transformation of the receiving culture occurred? Fourth, to what extent do refugee groups, themselves, undergo a process of cultural restructuring? The coverage of the individual chapters ranges from high culture, through to politics and everyday practices. The volume moves away from general perceptions of refugees as ‘problem groups’ and rather focuses on the way they have shaped, and indeed enriched, British cultural and political life.

This book was previously published as a special issue of *Immigrants & Minorities*.

Stefan Manz is Senior Lecturer in German at Aston University, UK and a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. Previous publications include *Migranten und Internierte: Deutsche in Glasgow, 1864-1918* (2003); and, as co-editor, *Migration and Transfer from Germany to Britain, 1660-1914* (2007); *Contesting Europe's Eastern Rim: Cultural Identities in Public Discourse* (2012); and *Transnational Networks. German Migrants in the British Empire, 1670-1914* (2012). His forthcoming monograph is entitled *Constructing a German Diaspora: The 'Greater German Empire', 1871-1914*.

Panikos Panayi is Professor of European History at De Montfort University, Leicester, UK. His most recent publications include: *Life and Death in a German Town: Osnabrück from the Weimar Republic to World War Two and Beyond* (2007); *Spicing Up Britain: The Multicultural History of British Food* (2008); *An Immigration History of Britain: Multicultural Racism Since c1800* (2010); and *Prisoners of Britain: German Civilian and Combatant Internees during the First World War* (Manchester, 2013).

Citation Information

The chapters in this book were originally published in *Immigrants & Minorities*, volume 30, issue 2/3 (July/November 2012). When citing this material, please use the original page numbering for each article, as follows:

Chapter 1

Refugees and Cultural Transfer to Britain: An Introduction

Stefan Manz and Panikos Panayi

Immigrants & Minorities, volume 30, issue 2/3 (July/November 2012)

pp. 122-151

Chapter 2

Joseph Mainzer (1801–1851) and the Popularisation of Choral Singing in Britain

Stefan Manz

Immigrants & Minorities, volume 30, issue 2/3 (July/November 2012)

pp. 152-170

Chapter 3

Open Windows: Jewish Refugee Artists in Scotland during the Twentieth Century

Ben Braber

Immigrants & Minorities, volume 30, issue 2/3 (July/November 2012)

pp. 171-189

Chapter 4

Refugees from Nazism and Cultural Transfer to Britain

Peter Alter

Immigrants & Minorities, volume 30, issue 2/3 (July/November 2012)

pp. 190-210

Chapter 5

From 'Asylum-Seeker' to 'British Artist': How Refugee Artists are Redefining British Art

Alex Rotas

Immigrants & Minorities, volume 30, issue 2/3 (July/November 2012)

pp. 211-238

Chapter 6

The British, Persecuted Foreigners and the Emergence of the Refugee Category in Nineteenth-Century Britain

Caroline Emily Shaw

Immigrants & Minorities, volume 30, issue 2/3 (July/November 2012)

pp. 239-262

Chapter 7

African Political Thinkers, Pan-Africanism and the Politics of Exile, c.1850–1970

Hakim Adi

Immigrants & Minorities, volume 30, issue 2/3 (July/November 2012)

pp. 263-291

Chapter 8

The Anglicisation of East European Jewish Food in Britain

Panikos Panayi

Immigrants & Minorities, volume 30, issue 2/3 (July/November 2012)

pp. 292-317

Chapter 9

'The Sunshine of Manly Sport and Pastimes': Sport and the Integration of Jewish Refugees in Britain, 1895–1914

David Dee

Immigrants & Minorities, volume 30, issue 2/3 (July/November 2012)

pp. 318-342

Notes on Contributors

Hakim Adi is Reader in the History of Africa and the African Diaspora at the University of Chichester, UK. He is the author of *West Africans in Britain 1900–60: Nationalism, Pan-Africanism and Communism* (1998) and (with M. Sherwood) *The 1945 Manchester Pan-African Congress Revisited* (1995) and *Pan-African History: Political Figures from Africa and the Diaspora since 1787* (2003). He has appeared in documentaries and radio programmes, and has written widely on the history of pan-Africanism, the African diaspora, and Africans in Britain, including three history books for children. His latest book *Pan-Africanism and Communism: The Comintern, Africa and the African Diaspora 1919–1939* will be published in 2013.

Peter Alter was Professor of Modern History at the University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany. After reading History, Economics and English Literature at the Universities of Cologne, Germany, and Oxford (Corpus Christi College), UK, he taught at the Universities of Cologne, Freiburg, Sussex and Cambridge. He has published widely on Irish, British and German history, most recently *Winston Churchill (1874–1965): Leben und Überleben* (2006) and *Die Windsors: Geschichte einer Dynastie* (2009). Among his books in English are: *The Reluctant Patron: Science and the State in Britain, 1850–1920* (1987); *Nationalism* (2nd ed., 1994); *Out of the Third Reich. Refugee Historians in Post-war Britain* (1998); and *The German Question and Europe: A History* (2000).

Ben Braber is an Honorary Research Fellow at the Department of History of the University of Glasgow, UK. He graduated cum laude from the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands, in 1985 and gained his PhD from the University of Glasgow in 1993. His publications include *Jews in Glasgow 1879–1939: Immigration and Integration* (2007) and 'The Trial of Oscar Slater (1909) and Anti-Jewish Prejudices in Edwardian Glasgow' (2003). He is especially interested in the integration of immigrants into Western European society in the modern era.

David Dee is Lecturer in Modern History at De Montfort University, UK. He has written widely on the sporting history of the British-Jewish community and has recently published his first monograph, entitled *Sport and British Jewry: Integration, Ethnicity, Anti-Semitism, 1890–1970* (2013) with Manchester University Press. He is currently researching into Jewish involvement in sport and recreation within the British communist movement.

Stefan Manz is Senior Lecturer in German at Aston University, UK and a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. Previous publications include *Migranten und Internierte: Deutsche in Glasgow, 1864–1918* (2003); and, as co-editor, *Migration and Transfer from Germany to Britain, 1660–1914* (2007); *Contesting Europe's Eastern Rim: Cultural Identities in Public Discourse* (2012); and *Transnational Networks. German Migrants in the British Empire, 1670–1914* (2012). His forthcoming monograph is entitled *Constructing a German Diaspora: The 'Greater German Empire', 1871–1914*.

Panikos Panayi is Professor of European History at De Montfort University, Leicester, UK. His most recent publications include: *Life and Death in a German Town: Osnabrück from the Weimar Republic to World War Two and Beyond* (2007); *Spicing Up Britain: The Multicultural History of British Food* (2008); *An Immigration History of Britain: Multicultural Racism Since c1800* (2010); and *Prisoners of Britain: German Civilian and Combatant Internees during the First World War* (Manchester, 2013).

Alex Rotas is currently Research Fellow in the School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies at Cardiff University, UK. She has a degree in Geography (University of Cambridge, UK, 1971), an MA in Special Education (University of Western Michigan, USA, 1981) and also in Visual Culture (Bath Spa University, UK, 2001), and a PhD on visual artists from refugee and asylum-seeker populations in the UK (Bath Spa University, UK, 2006). She is the co-editor of *Migratory Settings* (2008), and her current projects include a study of asylum-seeker populations in Greece and photographing athletes in their 70s, 80s and 90s who are still competing in international competitions.

Caroline Emily Shaw is Assistant Professor of Modern European History at Bates College in Maine, USA and a Mellon Foundation/American Council of Learned Societies Recent Doctoral Recipients Fellow. She graduated with a BA in History and English Literature from Johns Hopkins University, USA, in 2001 (with Honours). Shaw received her MA (2004) and PhD (2010) from the History Department at the University of California, USA. Her research interests include the development of international humanitarian campaigns and the origins of rights claims from the eighteenth century to the twentieth century. Her current project focuses on the origins of the refugee as a category for humanitarian and political concern in the British imperial context. She has presented her work at numerous conferences and is currently teaching courses in British, European and Imperial History.

Contents

<i>Citation Information</i>	vii
<i>Notes on Contributors</i>	ix
Preface	1
Part I: Introduction	
1. Refugees and Cultural Transfer to Britain: An Introduction <i>Stefan Manz & Panikos Panayi</i>	2
Part II: Transfer of High Culture	
2. Joseph Mainzer (1801–1851) and the Popularisation of Choral Singing in Britain <i>Stefan Manz</i>	32
3. Open Windows: Jewish Refugee Artists in Scotland during the Twentieth Century <i>Ben Braber</i>	51
4. Refugees from Nazism and Cultural Transfer to Britain <i>Peter Alter</i>	70
5. From 'Asylum-Seeker' to 'British Artist': How Refugee Artists are Redefining British Art <i>Alex Rotas</i>	91
Part III: Political Transfer	
6. The British, Persecuted Foreigners and the Emergence of the Refugee Category in Nineteenth-Century Britain <i>Caroline Emily Shaw</i>	119
7. African Political Thinkers, Pan-Africanism and the Politics of Exile, c.1850–1970 <i>Hakim Adi</i>	143

Part IV: Transfer in Everyday Life

8. The Anglicisation of East European Jewish Food in Britain <i>Panikos Panayi</i>	172
9. 'The Sunshine of Manly Sport and Pastimes': Sport and the Integration of Jewish Refugees in Britain, 1895–1914 <i>David Dee</i>	198
<i>Index</i>	223

PREFACE

Although immigration and ethnicity in Britain have become key themes in social science research and have attracted increasing attention from historians, the study of refugees remains relatively marginalised, especially amongst historians. A few scholars have tried to address this issue, while some specific exile groups have received attention, particularly the Jewish refugees from Nazism. This volume attempts to add to the growing body of literature on the history of refugees in Britain by focusing upon one particular theme in the form of cultural and political transfer. Using a series of case studies, it demonstrates how refugees in Britain have both undergone transformative processes as a result of their move to the country, especially those which have become long-standing communities, and also demonstrates the way in which refugees have influenced specific aspects of British life.

The special issue divides into four sections. The introduction by Stefan Manz and Panikos Panayi begins with an examination of the concept of the refugee and then moves on to trace the main groups of refugees who have settled in Britain since about 1830, the period covered by this volume. It then concludes with a section on political and cultural transfer. The other three sections of the special issue cover the themes of 'Transfer of High Culture', 'Political Transfer' and 'Transfer in Everyday Life'. Using a series of case studies, the essays demonstrate the relationship between cultural transfer and refugees (both individuals and communities) in recent British history.

The volume emerged out of a workshop which took place at De Montfort University in the summer of 2008 in which all the contributors participated. The editors would like to thank the Faculty of Humanities at De Montfort for making funds available for this event. The editors and publisher would also like to express their gratitude to Breda Beban, Gonkar Gyatso, Margareta Kern, Adam Nieman and Susan Pacitti for their permission to publish photographs and illustrations in the contribution by Alex Rotas.

Refugees and Cultural Transfer to Britain: An Introduction

Stefan Manz^a & Panikos Panayi^b

^a*School of Languages and Social Sciences, Aston University, Birmingham, UK;* ^b*School of Humanities, De Montfort University, Leicester, UK*

This introduction has four purposes. It first of all gives a working definition of the refugee. It then outlines the main groups of refugees which have moved to Britain since the early modern period, focusing, more particularly, upon the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which form the main focus of this volume. The article then introduces the reader to concepts of cultural transfer, especially as applied to migration and refugees, as well as outlining the main issues under consideration in the British case study, which forms the basis of this volume. Finally, the study introduces the main essays which follow and explains the structure adopted.

The Refugee

As Tony Kushner has demonstrated, while social scientists have devoted much attention to the study of refugees in Britain, for historians this subject has tended to remain something of a blank spot on the mainstream scholarly landscape. Kushner has particularly focused upon the popular memory of refugees in Britain and contrasted this with the way in which the press negatively focused upon ‘asylum seekers’ at the start of the twenty-first century. In this discourse, the historical memory suggests that the contemporary newcomers contrast with the refugees of an earlier age, especially Huguenots, and Jewish exiles from Tsarist Russia and Nazi Germany. While these groups have made a contribution to the British way of life, the more recent refugees have supposedly moved to Britain to claim

welfare benefits. As Kushner has demonstrated, refugee influxes have nearly always endured hostility upon first arrival.¹

The refugees, hostility towards them and their contribution to Britain have deep historical roots. But before moving further forward we can offer a definition of the refugee. Most explanations of this term go back to the 1951 UN Convention, which recognised individuals fleeing their land of origin due to 'a well founded fear of persecution'. Such people should automatically receive asylum in UN member states to which they move.² Nevertheless, this represents just one definition of a refugee, as several of the contributions in this volume demonstrate. Hakim Adi, for instance, points to the fact that the Organisation of African Unity constructed its own definition in 1969, related to that drawn up by the United Nations (UN), but focusing more upon the reality of politics and persecution in Africa.³

Both of these definitions essentially attempt to draw up a legal category of refugee, which, in recent decades, British governments have increasingly attempted to use in order to keep out 'undesirables', epitomised in the passage of the 2002 Home Office White Paper on immigration and asylum entitled 'Secure Borders, Safe Haven'. While this document accepted that immigration and asylum had to take place, it revolved around Britain's economic needs and also accepted the anti-asylum discourse which emerged at the end of the twentieth century.⁴ As Alex Rotas demonstrates in this volume, legal definitions remain unsatisfactory in explaining the refugee. She accepts the emerging concept of the person who moves for environmental reasons.

More problematically from the point of view of those groups who have moved towards Britain to escape persecution over the last two centuries has been the connection between economic and political motivations. On the one hand, we can identify some refugee groups who appear to have fled primarily or entirely for reasons of straightforward political persecution. A classic example would consist of the refugees from Nazism, as accepted in much of the historiography.⁵ On the other hand, those Jews who moved to Britain from the Russian Pale of Settlement during the late Victorian and Edwardian periods appear to have migrated for a combination of political and economic reasons consisting of rising and vicious anti-Semitism and dramatic economic and social change connected with the emancipation of the serfs, demographic growth and the beginnings of industrialisation in Russia.⁶ Similarly, Diana Kay and Robert Miles, examining the arrival of 'European Volunteer Workers' in Britain in the late 1940s, also demonstrated the convergence of political and economic factors, from the point of view of both the migrants themselves and the British government.⁷

Providing a legal definition of the refugee therefore proves problematic. While we can accept that a level of persecution needs to exist, this often combines with economic factors to send people to Britain.

The concept of the refugee also changes through time. While the twentieth century witnessed the emergence of legal definitions, people had moved to Britain to escape persecution from the Reformation at the latest. During the nineteenth century, the refugee became a heroic figure, epitomised in the adulation accorded to individuals such as Lajos Kossuth and Garibaldi, viewed as standing up to European oppression in contrast with liberal Britain,⁸ although even in mid-Victorian Britain, hostility would emerge towards other exiles.⁹ Most of those who have migrated to Britain since that time have, with the exception of the Belgian refugees during the First World War, who symbolised the fight against Germany and helped to fill labour shortages,¹⁰ attracted hostility.

Refugees in Britain

Refugee movements to Britain are not a new phenomenon, predating the nineteenth century. While politically motivated movements may begin before the early modern period, the Reformation and subsequent Counter-Reformation and European Wars of Religion sent a range of groups to the country during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.¹¹ Huguenot refugees in Britain may have totalled 50,000 following the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV in 1685.¹² During the eighteenth century some of the growth of the Jewish population of Britain occurred as a result of a flight from anti-Semitism in the Iberian Peninsula and Holland, Germany and Poland. From about the 1720s Ashkenazi Jews from Holland, Germany and Poland, escaping a combination of deteriorating economic conditions and anti-Semitism, moved to Britain in increasing numbers. These newcomers would form an important component of the emerging Jewish community of England.¹³ In addition, a group of about 15,000 Palatines also fled to Britain in 1709 due to a combination of political and economic push factors, but would face instant hostility, leading to the deportation of many of them to North America.¹⁴

The Age of Revolution, beginning at the end of the eighteenth century and lasting, together with the rise of the nation state in Europe, until the end of the nineteenth, sent further groups of refugees to Britain. A small number would normally arrive in the country following a revolutionary outbreak on the continent, often having no desire to remain for long (although some settled permanently) and often fleeing to Britain because it

represented the last place of refuge in comparison with the less liberal states on the European continent, especially following the suppression of the 1848 revolutions.

Two underlying factors brought refugees to Britain in the century following the French Revolution. In the first place, while the country may not have constituted a fully developed liberal democracy, in view of the restricted franchise until 1928, Britain did not undergo any political revolutions during the course of the nineteenth century, which meant that it remained relatively liberal. A series of historians have examined the attractions of Britain to European refugees. Rosemary Ashton, for instance, in her study of German exiles from the 1848 revolutions listed what she described as 'the vaunted freedoms enjoyed by Britons and denied to Germans in their own country', which included 'the freedom to set foot in the country of their choice and stay there without fear of expulsion' and 'freedom of speech, of the press and of association'.¹⁵ Bernard Porter, meanwhile, pointed to the fact that during most of the nineteenth century refugees moved to Britain at will, often to continue their campaigning 'in an environment which was more tranquil, and more safe'. Furthermore, he points out that individuals of any political persuasion from communists to autocrats, could move into the country.¹⁶

At the same time Britain had relatively lax immigration controls for most of the nineteenth century compared with any other European state. Bernard Porter pointed out that

from 1826 until 1848 and again from 1850 to 1905, there was nothing on the statute book to enable the executive to prevent aliens from coming and staying in Britain as they liked. ... This freedom of entry applied to all foreigners, whether refugees or not, and for whatever reason they desired entry.¹⁷

The explanations for the free movement of people into and out of Britain for much of the nineteenth century include the relative prosperity of the mid-Victorian period, which would come under threat with the Great Depression of the late nineteenth century.¹⁸ Furthermore the comparatively relaxed attitudes of the mid-Victorian years partly resulted from the political security of the period. Unlike its continental neighbours, which intervened to a far greater extent in the lives of their citizens,¹⁹ Britain remained free from serious fears of invasion or domestic revolution. The introduction of legislation to control immigration occurred when this peace and security came under threat. The Alien Act of 1793 and a series of measures which followed it controlling the entry and residence of foreigners, as well as giving power of deportation, came into operation

when Britain was at war with France.²⁰ Similarly, the Act passed in 1848 to control entry of aliens came at a time of revolutionary upheaval on the continent.²¹

Britain during the nineteenth century contrasted with its continental neighbours, undergoing the revolutionary upheaval in the transition from autocracy to liberal democracy, which Britain had largely experienced during the seventeenth century. From the French Revolution until the outbreak of the First World War, most of the refugees who made their way to Britain originated from France, Germany, Russia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire and its successor states.

A small movement of French refugees with a variety of political persuasions occurred as a result of the chaos following the 1789 revolution.²² Further flight from France occurred during the various revolutionary episodes of the nineteenth century, including 1830, 1848 and 1871, following the collapse of the Paris Commune. In all cases they focused upon London, a key centre of political activity.²³

Movement of German refugees began in earnest during the course of the 1830s as repression took place against the emerging nationalist and left-wing revolutionary movements. While some individuals had already settled in Britain from the 1830s, others followed after the failure of the 1848 revolutions. As had happened in Germany, the exiles divided according to their political beliefs, ranging from communist to liberal.²⁴ Italians also found themselves in exile in Britain during the early nineteenth century. For instance, several hundred arrived following the failure of the 1821–1822 and 1831 revolutions in Italy, while others fled the suppression of the 1848 revolutions, together with Poles and Hungarians. As many as 7,000 refugees may have lived in Britain in the early 1850s.²⁵

Tsarist autocracy led to a series of influxes in the century leading up to the First World War in the form of Poles, revolutionary political exiles and Jews. The first group, fleeing from phases of persecution which affected their homeland, made their way to Britain after the failed revolutionary outbreaks of 1830–1831, 1848, 1863–1864 and 1905.²⁶ Russian political exiles also escaped their country at the start of the twentieth century as a result of Tsarist repression, including Lenin, who moved to London.²⁷ Anti-Semitism, combined with deteriorating living conditions, sent about 2.5 million Jews westwards out of the Pale of Settlement, mostly destined for America,²⁸ although 150,000 settled in Britain, establishing distinct ethnic communities in some of the poorest parts of the British inner city, above all the East End of London.²⁹

The Jewish migration from Tsarist Russia differs from previous refugee movements of the nineteenth century and would set the trend for some of

the exiles of the twentieth. Most of those arriving during the Victorian era consisted primarily of political activists, who had no desire to remain in Britain for any length of time. They appear to fit into the concept of exiles, continuing their political activities in their land of settlement, just as they had done in the country from which they fled.³⁰ In contrast, the refugees from the Russian Pale of Settlement had more in common with a mass migratory movement. Not only did economic factors play a role in the stream out of Russia, but they also counted far larger numbers than any other nineteenth-century settlement. The scale of migration also meant that the Russian Jews became highly visible. Furthermore, the size of this new ethnic community and the longevity of its stay in Britain meant that it would undergo a process of integration, in which cultural transfer became important, over more than a century.³¹

The Eastern European Jewish migration also effectively signalled the end of the free movement of refugees and foreigners into Britain, resulting in the Aliens Act of 1905, which initiated the beginning of modern British immigration and refugee policy.³² Although this measure, together with the 1914 and 1919 Aliens Acts, controlled the scale of movement into Britain for several decades,³³ hundreds of thousands of refugees would enter the country in the Age of Total War.

In the first place, about 240,000 Belgian refugees made their way to Britain after the German invasion of their country in 1914. They received a positive reception as symbols of the fight against Germany and became involved in war work. However, resembling many of the exiles of the nineteenth century, and some refugees who moved to Britain during the Second World War, they virtually all returned home in 1918.³⁴

The inter-war years resulted in an increase in the number of refugees in Europe as well as the first recognition of the concept of the refugee.³⁵ The Russian Revolution and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire created millions of refugees, but few made their way to Britain because of the restrictive immigration policy. Over one million refugees fled the Russian Revolution, mostly destined for France and Germany, with only 15,000 entering Britain.³⁶

The rise of fascism sent further refugees to Britain. Once again, although several hundred thousand Spaniards escaped the Civil War in their country, only about 4,000 Basque refugee children, fleeing the bombardment of their homes by Franco in 1937, made it to Britain. Even this small group received a hostile reception from the right-wing press. But most would return home to their parents by the outbreak of the Second World War.³⁷

One of the most celebrated refugee groups to have entered Britain consisted of the exiles from Nazism, especially Jews.³⁸ Despite initial