Introduction

Inger Marie Okkenhaug and Karène Sanchez Summerer

During the Israeli-Palestinian War of 1947–1948, relief to Palestinian refugees was not only given by international agencies and non-governmental organizations. Aid also involved Christian mission institutions already historically present and active in the region. This humanitarian reaction of the Christian missions towards people in need was, however, not a new phenomenon. The German Protestant Syrian Orphanage in Jerusalem for example, was founded in 1860 as a response to the civil war in Syria the same year. During the following decades, the orphanage developed into the largest missionary institution in the country. As shown by Roland Löffler, the Syrian Orphanage underwent a “silent metamorphosis” from a Protestant pietistic mission institution into a major undertaking of social service.¹ This was a typical development in the Middle East, where many Christian missionaries supported welfare activities that involved ideas and practices of improving people’s lives, mostly presented as subservient to the preaching of Christianity. Facing major obstacles in their attempt to convert locals, mission organizations increasingly shifted their focus from evangelization to health and education, frequently changing their vocation according to local demands.² Furthermore, some ethnolinguistic minorities from the Middle East who had suffered displacement during World War I (particularly Assyrian and Armenian populations) saw the European sectarianization process of minorities³ as opportunities for some sort of local autonomy.

- 1 Roland Löffler, “The Metamorphosis of a Pietistic Missionary and Educational Institution into a Social Services Enterprise: The Case of the Syrian Orphanage (1860–1945),” in *New Faith in Ancient Lands: Western Missions in the Middle East and Early Twentieth Centuries*, ed. Heleen Murre-van den Berg (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 151–174.
- 2 Barbara Reeves-Ellington, *Domestic Frontiers: Gender, Reform, and American Interventions in the Ottoman Balkans and the Near East, 1831–1908* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013), 104; Ellen Fleischmann, “Evangelization or Education: American Protestant Missionaries, the American Board, and the Girls and Women of Syria (1830–1910),” in *New Faith in Ancient Lands: Western Missions in the Middle East in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*, ed. Heleen Murre-van den Berg (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 263–280; Inger Marie Okkenhaug, *The Quality of Heroic Living, of High Endeavour and Adventure: Anglican Mission, Women, and Education in Palestine, 1888–1948* (Leiden: Brill, 2002).
- 3 Laura Robson, *Minorities and the Modern Arab World, New Perspectives* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2016), 7. For minorities in the Middle East, Benjamin White, *The Emergence of Minorities in the Middle East: The Politics of Community in French Mandate Syria* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011).

Linked to large diaspora, they appealed to international Christian opinion and together with the emerging humanitarian organizations, like the Near East Relief and the Red Cross, their message was received by a Western audience who donated money to their cause.

This volume intends to trace the historical links between Christian missionaries, the roots of humanitarianism, its different modalities, their use of “humanitarian diplomacy”⁴ and local encounters in a Middle Eastern context, considered as fundamental in the history of religious and social politics in a Muslim environment, this particular field being “so connected with the present-day concerns.”⁵ The century considered, between 1850 and 1950, represents moments of colonization, war, and conflicts, all formative settings for humanitarian actions.⁶ During this time, Christian missions were seeking new ways to translate their understanding of Christianity, as seen at the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910, which put forward a civilizing mission that sought to modernize the world.⁷

The social dimensions of Christian missions in the Middle East have been revisited in several important studies in the last ten to fifteen years. These works, representing a profound change in approach, methodology, and sources, include Beth Baron’s *The Orphan Scandal: Christian Missionaries and the Rise*

4 Dzvoinar Kevonian, *Réfugiés et diplomatie humanitaire: Les acteurs européens et la scène proche-orientale pendant l'entre-deux-guerres* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2004).

5 Johannes Paulmann, “Humanity—Humanitarian Reason—Imperial Humanitarianism: European Concepts in Practice,” in *Humanity: A History of European Concepts in Practice from the Sixteenth Century to the Present*, eds. Fabian Klose and Mirjam Thulin (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016), 288.

6 For the role of missionaries during crises in the Middle East, see Johannes Paulmann and Esther Moeller, eds., “Crisis in the Middle East: Religion, Diplomacy and Humanitarianism” special issue, *British Journal of Middle East Studies* (forthcoming)—part of the same NWO/IEG/IISMM project; Ilana Feldman and Miriam Ticktin, eds., *In the name of Humanity: The Governance of Threat and Care* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press Books, 2010), 4; Andrew Thompson, “Humanitarian Interventions, Past and Present,” in *The Emergence of Humanitarian intervention: Ideas and Practice from the Nineteenth Century to the Present*, ed. Fabian Klose (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 331–356; Kevin O’Sullivan, Matthew Hilton, and Juliano Fiori, “Humanitarianism in Context,” *European Review of History* 23, nos. 1–2 (2016): 1–15.

7 The World Missionary Conference of Edinburgh in 1910 put forward a civilizing mission that sought to modernize the world, as well as discussions around missionary-state relations. See Brian Stanley, “Church, State and the Hierarchy of ‘Civilisation’: The Making of the ‘Missions and Governments’,” Report at the World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910, in *The Imperial Horizons of British Protestant Missions, 1880–1914*, ed. Andrew Porter (Cambridge: Eerdmans, Routledge, 2010), 58–84.

of the Muslim Brotherhood, Barbara Reeves-Ellington's *Domestic Frontiers: Gender, Reform, and American Interventions in the Ottoman Balkans and the Near East, 1831–1908*, and Paul Sedra's *From Mission to Modernity: Evangelicals, Reformers and Education in Nineteenth-Century Egypt*.⁸ Even so, the humanitarian actions of Christian missionaries in the Middle East have not yet been studied thoroughly.⁹

Depending on the areas where they intervened, missionaries were frequently consulted on repeated forced migrations. Some were gatekeepers of colonial states, some also distanced themselves from them. The missionaries considered in this volume are not a homogeneous group (some well connected, others more isolated, some international protagonists, some local workers, some obsessed by the nation-state idea, others not). The case studies present various missionaries' networks that, at times, acted simultaneously and on various scales, within a competitive landscape of charities. Examining institutional and individual strategies within national and local contexts will clarify the motives and effects of Christian missions in delivering aid and thus contribute to a new understanding of the history of humanitarianism in the Middle East.

1 Christian Missions and Humanitarian Work and Practice

Some studies tackling humanitarianism define it in ways that reflect the present¹⁰ ("assistance that occurs in the context of disasters [...] applied to emer-

8 These, in addition to Heather J. Sharkey, *American Evangelicals in Egypt: Missionary Encounters in an Age of Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), Norbert Friedrich, Uwe Kaminsky, and Roland Löffler, eds., *The Social Dimensions of Christian Missions in the Middle East, Historical Studies of the 19th and 20th Centuries*, *Missionsgeschichtliches Archiv* 16 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2010); and Ussama S. Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven: American Missionaries and the Failed Conversion of the Middle East* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008).

9 Silvia Salvatici, *A History of Humanitarianism, 1755–1989: In the Name of the Others* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019). The author mentions that the missionary experience contributed to the archaeology of international humanitarianism, highlighting the links between faith and compassion, through the anti-slavery movement, and the intertwining of secular and religious agendas, in her chapter 2; Matthew Hilton et al., "History and Humanitarianism: A Conversation," *Past and Present* 241, no. 1 (2018): 1–38.

10 Michael Barnett, *The International Humanitarian Order* (London: Routledge, 2010), 2; Michael Barnett and Janice Gross Stein, eds., *Sacred Aid: Faith and Humanitarianism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); O'Sullivan, Hilton, and Fiori "Humanitarianisms

gency relief and post-conflict recovery”) but the term can also be used historically. Many Christian missions discussed the notion of “humanity” in the Arab world, their socially oriented engagement being based on their engagement in local areas in Europe.¹¹ Catholic and Protestant missionaries, aiming at regaining the Holy Land by religious, cultural, and philanthropic influence, often ending up producing “unexpected” effects,¹² established and circulated competing collective narratives in which the notion of humanity was central.¹³ As noted by Johannes Paulmann, “the evolution of modern humanitarianism overlapped with the transformation of philanthropy, which turned toward ‘strangers’ at home and abroad and became increasingly concerned with efficiency and professionalism”.¹⁴

in Context,” 1–15; Michael Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011).

- 11 See for example the Swedish and British local engagement of missionaries in Palestine, Karène Sanchez Summerer and Inger Marie Okkenhaug, “The Role of Protestant Missionaries during the Great Arab Revolt in Jerusalem and South Palestine (1936–1939)—Towards Humanity?” in *BJMES* special issue, *Crisis in the Middle East: Religion, Diplomacy and Humanitarianism*, eds. Johannes Paulmann and Esther Moeller (forthcoming). For the Catholic case, 19th century, see for example Katharina Stornig, “Between Christian Solidarity and Human Solidarity: Humanity and the Mobilisation of Aid for Distant Children in Catholic Europe in the Long Nineteenth Century,” in *Humanity, A History of European Concepts in Practice from the Sixteenth Century to the Present*, eds. Fabian Klose and Mirjam Thulin (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016), 265. For the Protestant case, Judith Becker, “Conceptions of Humanity in the Nineteenth-Century German Protestant Missions,” in *Humanity, A History of European Concepts in Practice from the Sixteenth Century to the Present*, eds. Fabian Klose and Mirjam Thulin (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016); Dzovinar, *Réfugiés et diplomatie humanitaire*, 561; and Roland Löffler, *Protestanten in Palästina—Religionspolitik, Sozialer Protestantismus und Mission in den deutschen evangelischen und anglikanischen Institutionen des Heiligen Landes, 1917–1939* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2008).
- 12 Heather J. Sharkey, “Introduction: The Unexpected Consequences of Christian Missionary Encounters,” in *Cultural Conversions: Unexpected Consequences of Christian Missionary Encounters in the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia*, ed. Heather J. Sharkey (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2013), 1–26; Friedrich, Kaminsky, and Löffler, *The Social Dimensions of Christian Missions in the Middle East*; and Löffler, *Protestanten in Palästina*.
- 13 On the Christian missionaries’ activities among Christian minorities, Greeks, Assyrians and Armenians, see for example Davide Rodogno, *Against Massacre: Humanitarian Interventions in the Ottoman Empire, 1815–1914: The Emergence of a Concept and International Practice* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 28–31; Derek Hopwood, *The Russian Presence in Syria and Palestine, 1843–1914: Church and Politics in the Near East* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969); and publications of Nikolay Lisovoy (in Russian). The first American Protestants from the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions arrived in Lebanon in 1819. Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven*.
- 14 Johannes Paulmann, “Conjunctures in the History of International Humanitarian Aid dur-

Missions were also influenced and transformed in encounters with other mission societies and local actors.¹⁵ In her study of the German Kaiserswerth Deaconesses in Beirut, Julia Hauser has, for example, shown how the missionary agenda, in being fundamentally impacted by local factors, underwent considerable transformation in practice.¹⁶ In addition to the impact of other missions and local demands, the political framework of state and local authorities shaped mission practice and ways of thinking about their mission. During times of war, mission work was transformed to supply immediate relief. During World War I, for example, Scandinavian and Swiss missionaries, representing neutral nations, turned relief workers during the persecutions of Armenians and other minorities in the Ottoman Empire.¹⁷ After the war and the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, the League of Nations' mandate system provided a new framework for Catholic and Protestant missions. Humanitarianism in the Middle East was then brought under the ambit of the League of Nations, though humanitarian efforts continued through volunteer and relief organizations.¹⁸ The Mandate powers in the Middle East, France and Great Britain, both welcomed mission societies as contributors to the development of health and education in the Mandates.¹⁹

ing the Twentieth Century," *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development* 4, no. 2 (Summer 2013): 215, 217. Available via <http://humanityjournal.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/4.2-Conjunctures-in-the-History-of-International-Humanitarian-Aid-during-the-Twentieth-Century.pdf>.

- 15 This volume focuses on the spread of Christian missionaries' humanitarian actions, through their advocacy and practices. The reactions to their actions have been at the centre of several analyses; for the Muslim populations' reactions, see for example Umar Ryad, "A Muslim Response to Missionary Activities in Egypt: With a Special Reference to the Al-Azhar High Corps of 'Ulamâ' (1925–1935)," in *New Faith in Ancient Lands: Western Missions in the Middle East in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*, ed. Heleen Murre-van den Berg (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 281–307; Stefan Reichmuth, Jörn Rüsen, and Aladdin Sarhan, eds., *Humanism and Muslim Culture: Historical Heritage and Contemporary Challenges* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012).
- 16 Julia Hauser, "From Transformation to Negation: A Female Mission in a 'City of Schools,'" *Journal of World History* 27, no. 3 (September 2016): 476–477.
- 17 Inger Marie Okkenhaug, "Scandinavian Missionaries, Gender and Armenian Refugees during World War One: Crisis and Reshaping of Vocation," *Social Sciences and Missions* 23, no. 1 (2010): 63–93.
- 18 For the Armenians, see Keith David Watenpugh, "The League of the Nations Rescue of Armenian Genocide Survivors and the Making of Modern Humanitarianism, 1920–1927," *American Historical Review* 1 (2010): 1315–1339.
- 19 Elizabeth Thompson, "Neither Conspiracy nor Hypocrisy: The Jesuits and the French Mandate in Syria and Lebanon," in *Altruism and Imperialism: Western Cultural and Religious Missions in the Middle East*, eds. Eleanor H. Tejirian and Reeva Spector Simon (New York: Middle East Institute, 2002), 66–87.

The Interwar period was a time of transition and reorientation in the missions. The bloodshed of the war years had a global impact, and it was no longer possible to argue that Christianity and civilization were one and the same.²⁰ Changing orientation, the humanitarian aspect increasingly came to the forefront of Christian missions.²¹ Regarding missionaries in the Middle East during and after World War I, Keith David Watenpaugh has argued that “while many of the individuals in the theatre of humanitarian action had their origins in the region as missionaries, as did most of the organizers of the humanitarian project of NER, collectively they stood at the culmination of a secular movement in the missionary project, in which the goals and methods of evangelism gave way almost entirely to addressing the suffering of human beings and developing institutions for their care, social development and higher education”.²² However, the transition from religious to secular forms of Western humanitarianism was not necessarily a one-way phenomenon.²³ Scandinavian welfare among Armenian refugees and orphans in the 1920s and -30s exemplifies the complexity of faith-based relief work and modern relief.²⁴ Another example can be found in Palestine, where British and Swedish missions in Mandatory Palestine continued and in some instances expanded pre-war schools and hospitals, in addition to contributing crucial relief to the poorer segments of the Muslim population in the country. Thus, redefining and accommodating their mission in relation to the interwar scene, but also answering to new international trends regarding how to interpret their agency as Christian missionaries.²⁵ The humanitarian actions of Chris-

20 Hilde Nielssen, Inger Marie Okkenhaug, and Karina Hestad Skeie, eds., *Protestant Mission and Local Encounters in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 19.

21 See Deborah Gaitskell, “Mission by Other Means? Dora Earthy and the Save the Children Fund in the 1930s,” in *Protestant Mission and Local Encounters in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, eds. Hilde Nielssen, Inger Marie Okkenhaug, and Karina Hestad Skeie (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 233–258.

22 Keith David Watenpaugh, *Bread from Stones. The Middle East and the Making of Modern Humanitarianism* (Oakland, CA: California University Press, 2015), 18.

23 The complex processes of change in humanitarian practices during the Interwar period is exemplified by historian Rebecca Jinks’ work on relief and Armenian genocide survivors. R. Jinks, “‘Marks Hard to Erase’: The Troubled Reclamation of ‘Absorbed’ Armenian Women, 1919–1927,” *The American Historical Review* 123, no. 1 (February 2018): 122–123. See also R. Skinner and A. Lester, “Humanitarianism and Empire: New Research Agendas,” *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 40, no. 5 (2012): 729–747.

24 Inger Marie Okkenhaug, “Orphans, Refugees and Relief in the Armenian Republic, 1922–1925,” in *Aid to Armenia*, eds. Jo Laycock and Francesca Piana (Manchester: Manchester University Press, forthcoming).

25 See Sanchez Summerer and Okkenhaug, “The Role of Protestant Missionaries during the

tian missionaries during the Israeli-Palestine War of 1948 and its aftermath is yet another example of encounters in the Middle East being much more complex than a “secular” Western world meeting a “religious” Arab or even Muslim world.

Relief during times of war and conflict, in a similar manner to all humanitarian work, is locally embedded and practiced.²⁶ By historicizing and localizing a number of different Christian mission denominations, Catholics and Protestants, from different national backgrounds and humanitarian aid in a specific place, during a specific time-period, we want to contribute to a new understanding of the history of humanitarianism in the Middle East. Branching out from the American and British Protestant-focused studies that have dominated research on Western missions in the Middle East so far, this volume also includes studies from a French Catholic, Vatican, but also a Protestant (Lutheran) Nordic perspective. What were the motivations, aspirations, and aims of various missions’ humanitarian practices and how did trends and patterns toward humanitarianism—relief and development—change over time: in Ottoman contexts and under British and French colonial rule? Connected to Europeans’ interests and power, to what extent were Christian missions instrumentalized? What was the role of humanitarian actions during the 1948 conflict? The volume ends with the impact of 1948, as by this time, in the rest of the Middle East, global humanitarianism had emerged in the context of post-World War II, the creation of the UN and its agencies (and in the case of Palestine, UNRWA²⁷), with new understandings of human rights and refugees’ priorities, the independence of several Arab countries, and the endorsement by many missionaries of a “development workers” label, after having fulfilled public service/health functions in the colonial settings.

Great Arab Revolt”; Bertrand Taithe, “Pyrrhic Victories? French Catholic Missionaries, Modern Expertise and Secularizing Technologies,” in *Sacred Aid: Faith and Humanitarianism*, eds. Michael Barnett and Janice Gross Stein (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 166–182.

- 26 Nefissa Naguib and Inger Marie Okkenhaug, eds., *Interpreting Relief and Welfare Activities in the Middle East, 1800–2005—Welfare and Modernity in the Middle East* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 3. See also Davide Rodogno, who argues that humanitarianism should be carefully historicized: “Beyond Relief: A Sketch of the Near East Relief’s Humanitarian Operations, 1918–1929,” *Monde(s)* 2, no. 6 (November 2014): 47, <https://www.cairn.info/revue-mondes1-2014-2-page-45.htm>.
- 27 On UNWRA, Kjersti G. Berg, “The Unending Temporary. United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNWRA) and the Politics of Humanitarian Assistance to Palestinian Refugee Camps 1950–2012” (PhD diss., University of Bergen, 2015), 2.

2 Chapters, Arguments, and Themes

Chantal Verdeil's article, "Missions, Charity, and Humanitarian Action in the Levant (19th–20th century)", presents an overview of the different modalities and challenges of the humanitarian dimension of the Catholic missionaries' action in the Middle East (Syria, Palestine, Egypt) from a long-term perspective. Based on a wide range of archives, it offers a portrait of these actions, distinguishing perennial works (relief to poor children, orphans, the sick, prostitutes, domestic workers) from more occasional actions during major crises that shook the region (massacres of 1860 in Mount Lebanon and Damascus, massacres and genocide of Armenians). Verdeil underlines the fact that the financing of these actions was not only European, but largely local, Christian but also Muslim. This article questions the transformations of these relief actions.

The first part, "Advocacy", comprises four chapters, intended to shed light on the rhetoric of the missionaries towards humanitarian actions. It opens with Beth Baron's analysis of freed slave girls' encounters with Presbyterian missionaries in Cairo in the late 1880s. Missionaries participated in the struggle to end slavery, in addition to playing a role in the lives of freed slaves; for missionaries, freed slave girls were possible converts and church workers. American missionaries were in Egypt to convert Egyptians, not to free African slaves, but they did intervene by pressuring Copts to free their slaves, giving refuge to rescued slaves. Missionary schools gave shelter to freed slaves where they received a basic education and girls were trained in domestic chores. Some freed slave girls also received professional training and became nurses in mission hospitals. Baron's study shows that the missionaries' humanitarian offer came at a price. The girls were pressured to adopt a new religion and expected to work in "the homes, schools and hospitals of a group that considered them sisters in Christ but racially inferior".

Nazan Maksudyan is also concerned with American missionaries' ideology, aims and practices in late 19th-century Middle East. The focus here is on the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) and photographs as representations of religious and humanitarian work among Armenians in "Asiatic Turkey" (Anatolia). Maksudyan argues that the bodily conditions of targeted constituencies and their physical surroundings were reconceived and reconceptualized by missionaries as material representations and mirrors of religious and moral progress. What missionaries propagated relied on the bodies and physical surroundings of the Armenians and the main indicator of conversion was a change in the living conditions and customs of the people. Maksudyan argues that the social change that took place as

a result of American welfare institutions (in education and health) was the essence of conversion itself. Armenians were converted to a certain definition of “civilization” rather than to the Protestant religion. Photography and narrative descriptions of this social change were used as evidence for successful proselytizing.

Protestant mission among Armenians in Anatolia during the late Ottoman period is also the theme of Inger Marie Okkenhaug’s article. Based on sources from the Scandinavian branches of the Lutheran Women’s Mission Workers’ organization, Okkenhaug focuses on how the mission—evangelization, healing, and welfare—was practiced by a Scandinavian female missionary, Bodil Biørn (1871–1960), working in Armenian communities in the Ottoman Empire from 1905 to 1914. As has been shown elsewhere, for American Protestant missionaries who worked in the Ottoman Empire, humanitarian work and missionary enterprise could not be disentangled.²⁸ This fusion of evangelization, emergency relief and “longer-term efforts to prevent suffering from famine, ill-health, or poverty”²⁹ also characterized the activities and perceptions of the Scandinavian missionaries in the region.

Heleen Murre-van den Berg’s article analyses the British missionary contribution in Iraq via the publications of one of its most vocal representatives, the Rev. W.A. Wigram (1872–1953). His works played an important role in explaining the situation of the Assyrians in the English-speaking world, implicated in the plight of the Assyrians because the British had actively involved them militarily in the Great War. Murre-van den Berg presents a politicized advocacy for the Assyrians of the Church of the East as a vulnerable minority, entitled to the support of Great Britain and the rest of the world. The role of the militarization of the British presence in Iraq, and the militarization of the Assyrians is questioned, as well as the extent of the universalism of humanitarianism within the supposedly special position of (some) Middle Eastern Christians as part of an eschatological reading of the world.

The second part, “Best Practices”, analyses missionary networks and how missionaries had an impact on the development of humanitarian practices and law. It also examines how non-missionaries took over, to a certain extent,

28 Flora A. Keshgegian, “‘Starving Armenians’: The Politics and Ideology of Humanitarian Aid in the First Decades of the Twentieth Century,” in *Humanitarianism and Suffering: The Mobilization of Empathy*, eds. Richard Ashby Wilson and Richard D. Brown (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 144. See also Nazan Maksudyan’s article in this volume.

29 Paulmann, “Conjunctures in the History of International Humanitarian Aid,” 215.

the humanitarian aims and organizations of missionaries, the “NGOization” of Christian missions, when missions “became development”, thus re-evaluating the role of religion in their discourses and practices. This part explores the transnational implication of the states on missionaries’ activities; how governments used missionaries’ ideas involved in development projects during the transition from colonial to mandate to postcolonial rule; and to what extent the League of Nations and its media were linked to the missionaries.

Bertrand Taithe’s case study focuses on the creation and theocratic management of Christian model villages populated with Algerian “orphans” from the 1866–1869 famine. The two villages inspired by Middle East missionary activities remained strictly limited as to their impact and symbolic presence in a colonial landscape dominated by secular politics and racial segregation. Following the lives of “rescued” children in these settlements and in the wider world, Taithe stresses the limits of missionary activism and the ambiguous opportunities missionary humanitarianism offered.

In the Interwar period, the Rockefeller Foundation (RF) became a major humanitarian actor in the Middle East, through its support for the New York-based Near East Relief (after 1930, Near East Foundation). Philippe Bourmaud, in his article “Missionary Work, Secularization, and Donor Dependency: Rockefeller-Near East Colleges Cooperation after World War I (1920–1939)”, explores the links between the Christian-minded Rockefeller and the missionaries, the RF choosing the American University of Beirut (AUB) as their main local partner. Thanks to RF funding, the AUB was able to develop ample medical services, partly with a view to providing medical assistance to the refugee populations of the region. Bourmaud analyses how donor dependency has played out for the RF, and compares secular and missionary receptivity to the influence of donors, considering missionary institutions that change their general perspective and become secularized, following professionalized models of philanthropical operation.

American humanitarian activities in the Levant is also the topic of Idir Ouahes, whose article focuses on the U.S. humanitarian, state, and non-state actors’ actions in favour of Christian minorities in early 20th century Syria and Lebanon. Ouahes traces the U.S. enthusiastic and managerial answer and paradigm to World War I, the roots of what was called “Machine Age humanitarianism”. “Inevitably, the significant structure given to U.S.-Levant ties through humanitarian aid spilled into the political arena.” Ouahes thus puts into perspective the links of different actors around the missionaries, depicting the colonial context of French mandatory authorities, who had taken over from the Ottomans after the war. The French government in Syria and Lebanon “viewed

such activity suspiciously, though they welcomed the income that enabled them to reduce their state-building obligations”.

In a similar manner to the French Mandate government's view of Western missions as welfare agents, the British Mandate government in Palestine also welcomed Christian missionaries' welfare work. For Scottish Presbyterian missionaries in Palestine, medical practice became a way to improve the relationship with the local population. In his article, Michael Marten focuses on Scottish Presbyterian missions to the Jews in Palestine and the Scots' reactions to the humanitarian crisis in the region after World War I. Marten uncovers insights into ways of thinking about what the churches and their missionary committees were doing in this period, as they sought to translate their understanding of Christianity in new ways. During World War I and the immediate aftermath, the Scots engaged in a direct form of humanitarian (ecumenical) relief. Although the United Free Church of Scotland continued to some extent to provide relief during the British Mandate, its focus was also on defending the Church against the increasing Zionist influence in Palestine.

In the epilogue, Seija Jalagin and Maria Chiara Rioli analyse the impact of the 1948 Israeli-Arab conflict in terms of humanitarian actions and refugees among Jews and Arabs and the narratives around humanitarianism and Christian missions.

The theme of Seija Jalagin's article is a Finnish mission in Jerusalem during the 1940s. While the Scottish missions had been active among Jews in Palestine since 1839, the Finnish Protestant mission to the Jews was a relative newcomer to the country, arriving in the 1920s. Headed by Aili Havas (1903–1988), this Protestant mission concentrated solely on the Jews and was, like many other foreign religious actors in the Middle East, both marginal and a grassroots agent. Havas' mission was the establishment of a student home for young Jews to study the Bible and discuss religious issues. With Nazi Germany's annihilation of European Jewry, by 1940 the mission home was transformed into a shelter for Jewish refugees. During the war years, Havas dedicated herself to aiding Jewish refugees. Giving priority to the care of children, the mission's original focus on evangelization was transformed to become a Jewish children's home. In a similar manner to that of the Scottish mission, political and military atrocities in Europe thus permanently changed the Finnish mission agenda in Palestine.

While humanitarianism guided Finnish missionaries' relief work among Jewish Holocaust survivors and refugee families in Jerusalem in 1948, they did not see Arab refugees as worthy of aid. This was in contrast to a number of Catholic institutions in Palestine that established relief operations for

Arab Palestinians during the Israeli-Palestine conflict in 1947–1948. As shown by Maria Chiara Rioli in her article based on unpublished Catholic archives, mobilizing to assist the Palestinian refugees was not only achieved by international agencies and non-governmental organizations but also involved the complex and variegated web of Christian institutions already historically present and active in the region. Rioli, who writes on the history of the Catholic church and relief in Jerusalem, and specifically the Franciscan *Casa Nova*, points out that even if the Christian missions' involvement in the Palestinian refugee crisis was relatively small when compared to the new international agencies, "convents, schools, hospitals operated by religious congregations or directly by the local Churches of various rites and denominations were among the first places to receive and aid the Palestinian refugees". Rioli's analysis of the plurality of the Catholic presence makes it possible to retrace many threads of inquiry in the ecclesiastical archives in the Middle East and elsewhere.

3 Concluding Remarks

One of the central activities of mission-related humanitarianism from the 1860s onward, concerned the question of relief and refugees of the Middle East, due to the repetitive nature of forced migration since the 1850s, producing an expertise still relevant today. Several of the contributions to this anthology focus on missions, refugees and relief from the civil war in Syria in 1860, the persecutions of Armenians in the 1890s, aid to refugees from World War II and the Palestinian-Israeli War. In 1947–1948, Christian missions, long present in the region, contributed relief to Palestinian refugees alongside international agencies and non-governmental organizations. The humanitarian actions of Christian missionaries during the war of 1948 and its aftermath are an example of encounters in the Middle East being much more complex than a "secular" Western meeting a "religious" Arab or even Muslim world. Our anthology seeks to discover and retrace such "entangled histories" for the first time in an integral perspective.

Although significant on a local scale until the end of the World War I and later on also at a transnational level, the role of Catholic missions has been underestimated from the point of view of medical action,³⁰ partially resulting

30 From 1925, by Pope Pius XI himself, who recommended the use of medicine in the missionary setting, U. Bertini, *Pie XI et la médecine au service des missions* (Paris: Librairie Bloud

from the impression that the Papacy itself was ambivalent with regard to work that could distract missionaries from their pastoral mission. The opening of the Vatican archives for the period 1939–1958, in March 2020, will be a formative period for the connected history of Christian missions and humanitarianism, the analysis of the NGOization of certain Christian missions and intertwined aspects of religious, medical, and humanitarian networks.³¹

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- 31 The Prefet of the Secret Archives of the Vatican, Bishop Sergio Pagano, referred in his speech of 4 March 2019 (http://www.osservatoreromano.va/vaticanresources/pdf/QUO_2019_053_0503.pdf, accessed 31 January, 2020) announcing the opening of the post-1938 Vatican archives (1939–1958), to a "charity diplomacy". The Press Office of the Holy See mentioned special archival collections that will be of interest of researchers. "The first is that of the Relief Commission, the second is simply called Pontifical Charity, and the third is that of the Migration Office, set up to deal with the problem of the repatriation of prisoners and refugees, as well as the growing issue of migration". Files: Commissione soccorsi 1939–1958; Beneficenza pontificia 1939–1968 busta IV Associazioni chiesi istituzioni; Ufficio migrazione 1946–1966; Pontificia Opera di assistenza 1944–1970; Opera Nazionale per l'Assistenza religiosa e morale degli operai 1926–1952.

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