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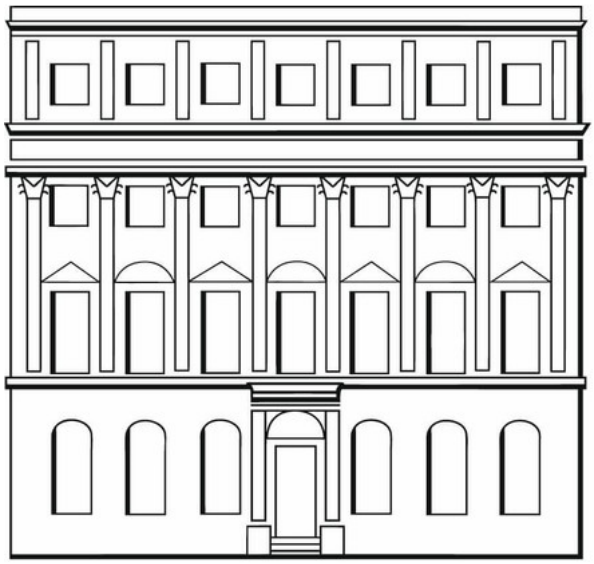

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Young-sun Hong

Introduction: The Structures of the Global Humanitarian Regime

National liberation struggles in Algeria, as in Vietnam, Korea, and the Congo, exemplify the complex problems of decolonization in Asia and Africa in the 1950s and 1960s. At the time of the universalization of the nation state as a norm, the post-war global order was, at least in theory, structured in terms of the rights of formally equal, sovereign states. Yet the real status of newly independent states that, for whatever reason, had to depend on foreign aid was only a pale reflection of this norm. In such a world, humanitarian and development assistance invariably functioned to support or oppose a specific vision of post-colonial nation-building. This latent problematic became more explicit by the end of the 1950s, when China, the Soviet Union, and its Eastern European allies began to play an active role in international humanitarian and development assistance. In this essay I show how the intersection between the Cold War and decolonization gave a distinct political, ideological, and cultural imprint to what I call the 'global humanitarian regime' after 1945. More specifically, I use the debates over humanitarian assistance during the Algerian War of 1954–62 to reconstruct the main elements, both discursive and institutional, of this humanitarian regime, and examine the ways in which the structural asymmetries inherent in this regime gave rise to a distinct pattern of political conflict.

In the final years of the Second World War, a wartime alli-

This essay draws on my recently published book, Young-sun Hong, *Cold War Germany, the Third World, and the Global Humanitarian Regime* (Cambridge University Press, 2015).

ance of the great powers envisioned a humanitarian regime that would be adequate to deal with the crisis created by the Nazi genocidal war and population displacement and, if possible, to prevent similar crises in the future. The post-war global humanitarian regime was discursively grounded in what were declared to be the inalienable rights of all individuals simply by virtue of their being human, whose institutional embodiment was the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948.[1] Despite the universalist rhetoric of this declaration, however, the architecture of this regime was determined by the domestic and geo-political needs of the great powers. During the first decade after 1945, furthermore, the United States and the European colonial powers had been able to define in international law what constituted a humanitarian crisis and, accordingly, the conditions under which other nations were permitted to provide what kinds of assistance to the different parties. This post-war global humanitarian regime privileged the victims of European 'totalitarianism', while relegating to a legal limbo the tens of millions of people who were suffering from hunger, disease, and displacement as a result of national liberation struggles and post-colonial nation-building.[2] Decolonization, as Antony Anghie has argued, did not fundamentally alter the underlying logic of international law, which, he suggests, was constituted by the civilizational difference between Europe and extra-Europe.[3] This view also underpinned the Cold War logic, which portrayed

[1] Johannes Morsink, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Origins, Drafting, and Intent* (Philadelphia, 1999); Akira Iriye, Petra Goedde, and William I. Hitchcock (eds.), *The Human Rights Revolution: An International History* (Oxford, 2012); Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann (ed.), *Human Rights in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 2011); Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge, Mass., 2010); and Mary Ann Glendon, *A World Made New: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (New York, 2001).

[2] On decolonization and refugee crises in general see Panikos Panayi and Pippa Virdee (eds.), *Refugees and the End of Empire: Imperial Collapse and Forced Migration in the Twentieth Century* (Basingstoke, 2011); Peter Gatrell, *The Making of the Modern Refugee* (Oxford, 2013); Cecilia Ruthstrom-Ruin, *Beyond Europe: The Globalization of Refugee Aid* (Lund, 1993); and Aristide R. Zolberg, Astri Suhrke, and Sergio Aguayo, *Escape from Violence: Conflict and the Refugee Crisis in the Developing World* (New York, 1989). On Palestinian refugees see Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Reconsidered* (Cambridge, 2003); Nur Masalha (ed.), *Catastrophe Remembered: Palestine, Israel and the Internal Refugees. Essays in Memory of Edward W. Said* (London, 2005); and Dawn Chatty, *Displacement and Dispossession in the Modern Middle East* (Cambridge, 2011). On the Indian partition and refugee crisis see Vazira Zamindar, *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories* (New York, 2007).

[3] Antony Anghie, *Sovereignty and the Making of International Law* (Cambridge, 2005).

decolonization crises in the global South as security problems, and which justified counter-insurgency and psychological warfare programmes as the best means of securing individual freedom, collective security, and social progress in the 'free world'. These ideas also shaped the policies of such UN agencies as the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), all of which played key roles in the consolidation of the post-war humanitarian regime.[4]

Cracks in the System: Hungary, Suez, Algeria

The Western powers adopted very different policies on humanitarian assistance depending on the perceived influence of Communism on the parties to any given conflict. In the second half of the 1950s the Soviet invasion of Hungary, the Suez Crisis, and the radicalization of the Algerian War combined to reveal the ideologically determined inequalities that until that point had lain hidden behind the universalist rhetoric of international humanitarian assistance. When the Soviet Union invaded Hungary in October 1956, Western governments and aid organizations, as well as the International Red Cross (ICRC) and the UNHCR, were more than willing to stretch the letter of the 1951 Refugee Convention to aid the 180,000 Hungarians who fled their country to Austria and Yugoslavia.[5] The violent suppression by the Soviets of this democratic revolution against the Stalinist system in Eastern Europe gave Western countries an opportunity to trumpet their commitment to human rights. The United States put this commitment into practice by revising its immigration regulations to admit Hungarian 'victims of Communist terror', while the West German government condemned

[4] Recent scholarship on the UN organizations includes Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations* (Princeton, 2009); Sunil Amrith and Glenda Sluga, 'New Histories of the United Nations', *Journal of World History*, 19/3 (2008), 251–74; Carol Anderson, *Eyes off the Prize: The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights, 1944–55* (Cambridge, 2003); John Farley, *Brock Chisholm, the World Health Organization, and the Cold War* (Vancouver, 2008); Gil Loescher, *The UNHCR and World Politics: A Perilous Path* (Oxford, 2001); and Robert Hilderbrand, *The Origins of the United Nations and the Search for Postwar Security* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1990).

[5] For the history of the ICRC see David P. Forsythe, *The Humanitarians: The International Committee of the Red Cross* (Cambridge, 2005).

the East Germans for supporting this police action by the Warsaw Pact.[6]

But the Western powers displayed a very different attitude towards humanitarian assistance elsewhere. The Suez Crisis, which broke out less than a week after Soviet forces had entered Hungary, was precipitated by the Egyptian decision to nationalize the Suez Canal after the United States and Britain withdrew their offer to help pay for the construction of the Aswan Dam, a step which they, in turn, took in response to Egypt's recognition of mainland China. What followed was the invasion of Egypt by the Israelis, who saw this as an opportunity to redress a shifting balance of power in the region, based on the prearranged agreement that France and Britain would then intervene militarily and regain control over the Suez region under the pretext of restoring peace.[7]

The plan faltered on threats by the Soviet Union to come to the aid of its Egyptian ally and the unwillingness of the United States to be discredited by such a blatant Anglo-French power play. Apart from the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip and the Sinai, conditions for Egyptian civilians were especially bad in Port Said. There, in addition to a large number of Egyptian prisoners of war, the French–British air attacks had displaced over 15,000 civilians, but neither they nor the wounded were able to get assistance from the outside because French–British forces cordoned off the city. On 11 and 20 November 1956, following an urgent request from the Egyptian Red Crescent, ICRC convoys of medicines and medical supplies arrived in Cairo, but it took a long time and much negotiation before relief supplies were allowed into Port Said. Not until February 1957 were a number of Red Cross workers finally able to enter the city to organize a relief mission.[8] The Suez Crisis drove the West European countries from the high moral ground

[6] Françoise Perret, 'ICRC Operations in Hungary and the Middle East in 1956', *International Review of the Red Cross*, 313 (1996), 412–37; and Zoltan Csillag, *Data about the Activity of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Hungarian Red Cross in 1956–1957* (Budapest, 1992). For more on US immigration policy and Hungarian refugees see Carl Joseph Bon Tempo, *Americans at the Gate: The United States and Refugees during the Cold War* (Princeton, 2008).

[7] Guy Laron, *Origins of the Suez Crisis: Postwar Development Diplomacy and the Struggle over Third World Industrialization, 1945–1956* (Washington, 2013); and William Roger Louis and Roger Owen (eds.), *Suez 1956: The Crisis and its Consequences* (Oxford, 1989).

[8] Perret, 'ICRC Operations in Hungary and the Middle East in 1956'. On 7 Nov. 1956 the UN General Assembly adopted the resolution on the establishment of the UN Emergency Force in Egypt.

that they had occupied during the Hungarian crisis and gave new impetus to Third World liberation movements.

But the Algerian War was the real acid test for the global relevance of the Eurocentric humanitarian regime. The Algerian War of Independence began on 1 November 1954.[9] The position adopted by the Western countries towards the problems arising out of the Algerian conflict, however, was very different from their attitude towards the Hungarian crisis. The French insisted that, since the disturbances in Algeria were a matter of domestic security, they were the proper responsibility of the French police and security agencies, not international agencies such as the United Nations or the International Red Cross. But while the French sought to contain the political ramifications of the conflict by defining it as a purely internal matter, the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) sought to marshal international support for what it described as a violation of the Algerian people's right to self-determination.[10] During the debates over the human rights covenants in the early 1950s, Britain, France, and Belgium had argued that these principles could not be extended to their colonies because they had not yet developed to the point where they no longer needed guidance by more advanced nations.[11] However, this position was challenged by the Bandung conference, which declared that the 'rights of peoples and nations to self-determination' were 'a pre-requisite of the full enjoyment of all fundamental Human Rights'.[12] Beginning in 1956, countries

[9] Recent works on the Algerian War include Martin Evans, *Algeria: France's Undeclared War* (Oxford, 2012); Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization:The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (Ithaca, NY, 2008); Matthew Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford, 2002); and Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, rev. edn. (London, 2002). More generally, see also Yahia H. Zoubir, 'The United States, the Soviet Union and Decolonization of the Maghreb, 1945–62', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 31/1 (Jan. 1995), 58–84; id., 'U.S. and Soviet Policies towards France's Struggle with Anticolonial Nationalism in North Africa', *Canadian Journal of History*, 30/3 (Dec. 1995), 439–66; Martin Thomas, 'Defending a Lost Cause? France and the United States Vision of Imperial Rule in French North Africa, 1945–1956', *Diplomatic History*, 26/2 (2002), 215–47; and Irwin M. Wall, *France, the United States and the Algerian War* (Berkeley, 2001).

[10] Jabhat al-Tahrir al-Qawmi, *Answer to Mr. Guy Mollet, Prime Minister of France* (Cairo, 1957); id., *Genocide in Algeria: A Note Presented to the Delegations to the United Nations, Eleventh Session of the General Assembly* (Cairo, 1957).

[11] Roland Burke, '"The Compelling Dialogue of Freedom": Human Rights at the Bandung Conference', *Human Rights Quarterly*, 28 (2006), 947–65, at 962.

[12] 'C. Human Rights and Self-Determination', in Final Communiqué, online at ⟨http://www.cvce.eu/obj/communique_final_de_la_conference_afro_asiatique_de_bandoeng_24_avril_1955-fr-676237bd-72f7-471f-949a-88b6ae513585.html⟩ [accessed 10

of the Bandung camp asked the UN Security Council to take up the Algerian question because they felt that the worsening situation there represented a violation of both the right to self-determination and the other rights that flowed from this basic freedom.[13]

In response to their 1954 defeat at Dien Bien Phu, the display of Third World solidarity at Bandung, and their embarrassment at Suez, the French authorities intensified their campaigns in Algeria. This radicalization was fuelled in part by the deployment there of military units and mercenaries who had served in Indo-China. But the prosecution of an unconventional war in the Algerian countryside and, as dramatized in *The Battle of Algiers* by the Italian film-maker Gillo Pontecorvo, in the streets of Algiers required the development of what came to be known as 'counter-insurgency' tactics to control the civilian population, which provided cover and support for the armed wing of the liberation movement. Such tactics, almost by definition, repositioned the line dividing the civilian from the military population that had prevailed in those conventional wars between states before the age of total war.[14] The fact that any assistance to the indigenous population could, at least in their eyes, directly or indirectly strengthen the FLN's fighting capacity led the French to recategorize food, medicine, and other aid as security issues and to control both their flow into the region and their subsequent distribution.

In Algeria the French employed many of the same military tactics that they had used in Indo-China. By comparison with the British campaign against the Mau Mau revolt in Kenya, the French military made systematic use of weapons and tactics that were widely condemned in international law, and the use of napalm and aerial bombardment as part of their scorched earth policy inevitably created large numbers of casualties, both civilian and military.[15] But

July 2010]. On the Bandung movement see Christopher J. Lee (ed.), *Making a World after Empire: The Bandung Moment and its Political Afterlives* (Athens, Ohio, 2010); and Partha Chatterjee, 'Empire and Nation Revisited: Fifty Years after Bandung', *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, 6/4 (2005), 487–96.

[13] For example, a petition of 13 June 1956 was presented to the Security Council by thirteen countries: online at ⟨http://legal.un.org/repertory/art35/english/rep_supp1_vol1-art35_e.pdf⟩ [accessed 22 Feb. 2014].

[14] On the concept of revolutionary war see Peter Paret, *French Revolutionary Warfare from Indochina to Algeria: The Analysis of a Political and Military Doctrine* (New York, 1964); and Mathias Grégor, *Galula in Algeria: Counterinsurgency Practice versus Theory* (Westport, Conn., 2011).

[15] Fabian Klose, *Menschenrechte im Schatten kolonialer Gewalt: Die Dekolonisierungskriege in*

in addition to their superiority in military technology, the French also controlled the country's infrastructure, and they were eager to leverage this power to control the civilian population by controlling the flow of humanitarian assistance.[16] One of the first major actions taken by the Specialized Administrative Sections (Sections Administratives Spécialisées), created by the French in October 1955 to combat the Algerian insurgency, was to introduce a population identification and registration system for all Algerians, including those who had been forcibly moved into 'model' resettlement villages and camps. Every Muslim resident had to carry an identity card. The French Red Cross provided minimal assistance to Algerian refugees in Tunisia and Morocco—and it provided this aid only if they had registered with the French authorities. Moreover, doctors and hospitals were required to verify the personal identity cards of the patients they treated, keep their medical records, and report suspicious injuries to the French authorities.[17]

This population identification system thus became a highly effective way of denying medical care to Algerian soldiers, partisans, and sympathizers who were wounded or seriously ill, and many doctors were imprisoned, or, in some cases, sentenced to death for violating the law.[18] The French also banned the sale of medicines and medical supplies to the Algerians, and French-owned firms in Tunisia and Morocco refused to make prosthetic limbs for Algerians. According to the Algerian Red Crescent, as of November 1958 there were about 1,900 Algerians in Tunisia who had been wounded in the struggle against the French, but who could not receive adequate medical treatment because of shortages of medicine and restrictions on medical service imposed by the French.[19] Medicine, surgical

Kenia und Algerien 1945–1962 (Munich, 2009), 259; in English as *Human Rights in the Shadow of Colonial Violence: The Wars of Independence in Kenya and Algeria* (Philadelphia, 2013).

[16] Charles R. Shrader, *The First Helicopter War: Logistics and Mobility in Algeria, 1954–1962* (Westport, Conn., 1999); and Martin S. Alexander, Martin Evans, and J. F. V. Keiger (eds.), *The Algerian War and the French Army, 1954–62: Experiences, Images, and Testimonies* (New York, 2002).

[17] Central Intelligence Agency, 'National Intelligence Service. Algeria. Section 54. Public Order and Safety' (June 1960); and Neil MacMaster, 'Identifying "Terrorists" in Paris: A Police Experiment with IBM Machines during the Algerian War', *French Politics, Culture and Society*, 28/3 (Winter 2010), 23–45.

[18] The German Red Cross Society's (DRK) abridged report on the visit of Herbert Georges Beckh, an ICRC delegate, to the DRK headquarters in Dresden on 23 July 1957, Political Archive of the Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes (PAAA)/MfAA/A13579.

[19] Soon after the first shipment of drugs and medical supplies to Tangier, on 3

instruments, and other medical supplies had to be clandestinely procured and smuggled to the underground at great risk. The trafficking of money, information, weapons, basic goods, and people was of crucial importance to national liberation movements around the world, as evidenced by French efforts to choke them off in Algeria.

But these French restrictions also provided East Germany and other socialist countries with opportunities to demonstrate their solidarity with the national liberation movements. The FLN asked the East Germans to provide various types of medical equipment.[20] East Germany sent its first shipment of tents, medicine, dressings, and other medical supplies that had been specifically requested by the ARC in June 1957.[21] When two high-ranking officials of the ARC visited East Germany in October 1957, they carried a large amount of foreign currency, possibly intended to purchase urgently needed medical supplies.[22] Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany also agreed to treat people who had been seriously burnt or otherwise maimed in the fighting, but who were unable to procure the necessary treatment because of restrictions imposed by the French military or the prejudices of French physicians.

Assistance to the Algerians was the first large-scale humanitarian action undertaken by the East German government in a non-socialist country. This was certainly not a purely humanitarian gesture, but was a way of linking such aid to its own security and geo-political concerns. Although the East Germans normally did their best to provide the items, such as portable X-ray machines and ambulances, that were specifically requested by the ARC, the latter was not simply a passive recipient of aid from others. Its own agency was

July 1957 the Algerian Red Crescent (Croissant-Rouge Algérien, ARC) sent the DRK an urgent request for orthopaedic aid for twenty amputees, having failed to acquire this from French orthopaedists in Morocco and Tunisia: DRK's report on aid to the ARC, 6 Jan. 1958; Report on the ARC delegation's visit to DRK, 13–20 Nov. 1958, PAAA/MfAA/A13579. See also François Bugnion, 'The International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent: Challenges, Key Issues and Achievements', *International Review of the Red Cross*, 91/876 (2009), 675–712.

[20] Secretary-General of the ARC to Dr Paul, Vice President of the DRK (14 Aug. 1957), PAAA/MfAA/A13579.

[21] Dr Boumediène Bensmaine, Deputy Secretary-General of the ARC at the October 1957 meeting, PAAA/MfAA/A13579. Since the ARC's first appeal in January 1957, the shipment from the DRK was 'the first and, till now, the most comprehensive one' to the ARC in Tangier.

[22] DRK's report on aid to the ARC (6 Jan. 1958), PAAA/MfAA/A13579.

manifest in its efforts to co-ordinate the division of humanitarian assistance among the socialist donor countries. While East Germany would continue to supply medicine and medical supplies, the ARC requested non-medical assistance, such as shoes, textiles, and electric sewing machines, from Czechoslovakia. Sewing machines and textiles were especially important because European-style clothing, which was often donated to the Algerians, clashed with traditional women's clothing, which then had to be fabricated on site.[23]

To justify the heightened intensity of their military efforts, the French depicted themselves as the first line of defence in the global war to contain Communism and as the chief defender of the Caucasian West against both Communism and 'Asiatics and African and colonial natives'.[24] Both the French and the Algerians launched propaganda campaigns to better inform the world community about the true nature of the conflict. The French flooded other Western countries with leaflets, radio broadcasts, and political documentaries. One of these, *Nurses of the Bled*, which described the joint efforts of the French and 'New Algerian' women to modernize the country, had to be hastily produced in July 1957 so that it could be shown in New York in advance of the UN vote on the Algerian question.[25] French psychological warfare units working to pacify the countryside also dispatched mobile cinemas to ensure the wide circulation of these films, and these propaganda teams were often accompanied by medical teams and social workers so as to drive home the message of the beneficent nature of French rule.

Beginning in 1957 the FLN also launched its own propaganda campaign in hopes of offsetting its losses in the field. The FLN focused much of its energy on the UN itself, where its allies, Tunisia and Morocco, were now members and where everyone's attention was focused on the Suez Crisis. In its *Answer to Mr Guy Mollet, Prime Minister of France*, the FLN contrasted the Algerian people's quest for self-determination with France's 'colonial fanaticism', which tried to

[23] 'Hilfe für die jungen unabhängigen Nationalstaaten und Befreiungsbewegungen' (17 Mar. 1961), PAAA/MfAA/A13579.

[24] Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*, 48.

[25] Neil MacMaster, *Burning the Veil: The Algerian War and the 'Emancipation' of Muslim Women, 1954–1962* (Manchester, 2009), 162. See also Amelia Lyons, *The Civilizing Mission in the Metropole: Algerian Families and the French Welfare State during Decolonization* (Stanford, Calif., 2013); and Stephan Malinowski, 'Modernisierungskriege: Militärische Gewalt und koloniale Modernisierung im Algerienkrieg (1954–1962)', *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, 48 (2008), 213–48.

tar the liberation movement with the brushes of 'Moslem fanaticism' and 'communism, the traditional battle cry of colonialists destined to frighten the western world'. The FLN also reminded the French of the help that they had received to free themselves from Nazi rule and of their own duty 'to concern themselves with the unfortunate situations of the peoples of Africa'.[26]

The Algerian General Trade Union (Union Générale des Travailleurs Algériens, UGTA) was also able to mobilize support from left-leaning unions in Europe.[27] In 1957 the pro-socialist World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) came out strongly in support of the Algerians and established the International Trade Union Committee for Solidarity with the Algerian Workers, which sought to mobilize support through press campaigns, demonstrations, and humanitarian aid drives from around the world, especially the Third World.[28] The Algerians also scored something of a propaganda victory by contrasting French behaviour with their own more punctilious observation of the Geneva Conventions. In October 1958 the FLN turned over four French prisoners to the Algerian Red Crescent, which then released them to the ICRC, and by the end of 1959 a total of 71 French prisoners had been freed in this way.[29] And in the autumn of 1958 the newly formed Algerian Provisional Government (GPRA) stated that it would welcome any international initiatives which aimed to achieve the application of the Geneva Conventions to the Algerian conflict. But the important point is that, although the French may have enjoyed military superiority on the ground, in the long run the FLN was able to use the language of human rights before a global public to overturn both France's insistence that the Algerian conflict was a purely domestic affair and the humanitarian assistance policies that flowed from this assertion.

The Algerian Red Crescent

Millions of Algerian civilians were also affected by French counter-insurgency campaigns. More than 2 million were displaced within

[26] Al-Qawmi, *Answer to Mr Guy Mollet, Prime Minister of France*, 6, 10 ff.

[27] Arnold Fraleigh, *The Algerian Revolution and the International Community*, 2 vols. (Washington, 1967), ii. 407.

[28] Ibid. 410.

[29] 'Account of the International Committee's Action in Algeria January 1955–June 1962', *International Review of the Red Cross* (Sept. 1962), 482–7, at 484. See also Jabhat al-Tahrir al-Qawmi, *White Paper on the Application of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 to the French–Algerian Conflict* (Cairo, 1960).

the country, and an unknown number were wounded by French attacks and reprisals. Moreover, in October 1957 some 300,000 Algerians, primarily women and children, were living in Morocco and Tunisia, and the number of people living in these areas had doubled by the eve of independence in 1962.[30] During the early years of the war, Algerian refugees living in these countries were particularly vulnerable because both were still French protectorates. As a result, aid could only be channelled into this humanitarian borderland through the French Red Cross. The French, however, would only assist those who had registered with the French authorities, which many were reluctant to do.[31] Even after Tunisia and Morocco gained independence in March 1956, the French Red Cross continued to control aid in these countries because the Tunisian and Moroccan Red Crescent Societies were not recognized by the International Red Cross until 1958. The French government, however, continued to insist that all international assistance to the Algerians be channelled through the French Red Cross because the Algerian conflict was a domestic matter, and ICRC policy was not to recognize a Red Cross organization established by 'elements hostile to the legal government'.[32]

In December 1956 the FLN established the ARC in Tangier to serve as a conduit for international humanitarian assistance that would not be beholden to the Western powers. In fact, the very act of founding the organization was an explicit challenge to the discourse of humanitarian assistance.[33] Although the ICRC, which was primarily concerned with the rights of combatants, was willing to work with the ARC on an informal basis beginning in the summer of 1957, the League of National Red Cross Societies, which held to the letter of the Red Cross charter, refused to recognize the organization. The absence of international recognition did

[30] According to the Deputy Secretary-General of the ARC, the numbers of Algerian refugees in Tunis and Morocco were, respectively, 200,000 and 100,000: DRK's report on the meeting with the ARC delegation on 12 Oct. 1957, PAAA/MfAA/A13579.

[31] A. Rorholt, 'Report on Mission to Morocco and Tunisia' (Dec. 1958), online at ⟨www.unhcr.org/4417e74b2.html⟩ [accessed 19 Dec. 2013]. In Morocco, aid to Algerian refugees was initially co-ordinated by Entr'Aide Nationale, an umbrella organization of Muslim welfare societies.

[32] 'Humanitarian Aid to the Victims of Internal Conflicts: Meeting of a Commission of Experts in Geneva', *International Review of the Red Cross* (Feb. 1963), 79–91.

[33] The ARC's mission also included a 'propaganda service' to inform the 'civilized world' about the French crime of 'barbarism' against Algerians: Omar Boukli-Hacène to DRK, 2 Feb. 1957, PAAA/MfAA/A13579.

not deter the organization, which immediately began to solicit assistance for Algerian victims of French barbarism from national Red Cross organizations around the world.[34] Most Red Cross societies wanted to avoid alienating the French, and only a few, mostly from Arab countries, responded positively to the Algerian appeal. East Germany was the only country in the Soviet bloc to respond positively, and the first aid consignment was shipped in June 1957.[35] This anaemic response led the Deputy Secretary-General of the ARC to point out how differently the Red Cross societies of the 'free world' reacted to the humanitarian crises in Hungary and in Algeria, and to charge that their continuous compliance with the conditions laid down by the (former) colonial powers after 1945 was tantamount to active support for 'counter-revolutionary movements'.[36]

In April 1957 France terminated its aid to Tunisia in retaliation for the decision by the Tunisian government to allow the FLN to establish bases in the country. The following month, President Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia asked the UN to extend the protection guaranteed by the Refugee Convention to Algerian refugees within its borders. Despite the limits on its activity imposed by the UN Refugee Convention, fear of the political side effects of the humanitarian crisis rather than a change of heart with regard to the legitimacy of anti-colonial struggles led High Commissioner Auguste Lindt to use his 'good offices' function to begin providing relief to Algerian refugees in Tunisia in 1958. This was the UNHCR's first humanitarian action related to decolonization and national liberation struggles in the Third World. Since the UNHCR was a non-operational agency, the actual relief operation was carried out by the League of Red Cross Societies. However, this programme was organized and funded in such a way as to comply with the French insistence that such aid should not imply official UN recognition of the Algerian refugee crisis. In addition, the Eisenhower administration decided to support this joint refugee relief operation

[34] Omar Boukli-Hacene, President of the ARC, to the President of the DRK, 2 Feb. 1957, PAAA/MfAA/A13579. The ARC was finally recognized in July 1963, a year after Algerian independence: 'Recognition of the Algerian Red Crescent Society', *International Review of the Red Cross* (Aug. 1963), 435–6.

[35] In a letter of thanks to Dr Ludwig, President of the DRK, the President of the ARC asked Ludwig to exhort the other Eastern European Red Cross Societies to supply pro-Algerian aid: ARC to DRK, 15 June 1957, PAAA/MfAA/A13579.

[36] ARC to DRK, 15 June 1957, PAAA/A13579; DRK's report on aid to the ARC through the DRK, 6 Jan. 1958, PAAA/MfAA/A13579.

in Tunisia, primarily because of its fear that a failure to act would encourage the spread of Communism in Northern Africa. In the autumn of that year the US Food for Peace Program sent a large quantity of surplus wheat and powdered milk to Algerian refugees in Tunisia.[37]

The passage of Resolution XVII, which was unanimously adopted by the nineteenth International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (held in New Delhi from 28 October to 7 November 1957), was a major symbolic and political victory for the Algerians. The resolution condemned the practices that lay at the heart of French efforts to instrumentalize humanitarian aid to help defeat the Algerian national liberation struggle.[38] Directed against the French 'medical blockade' of Algerians, the resolution appealed to all governments to refrain from discriminating in the treatment of the wounded and from persecuting physicians who cared for specific groups of patients, to respect the principle of doctor–patient confidentiality, and to guarantee the free circulation of medicine.

The passage of this resolution represented an important step towards reclaiming for the Third World the discourse on self-determination and human rights, overturning the asymmetries that had shaped the post-war global humanitarian regime. By 1958 the pressure of world opinion began to shift the balance away from the French and their humanitarian policies in Algeria. On 8 February 1958, shortly after international relief operations had begun in Tunisia, the French bombardment of the Tunisian town of Sakhiet Sidi Youssef on the border with Algeria resulted in the death of seventy-five civilians, most of whom were Algerian refugees; ICRC trucks carrying relief supplies for Algerian refugees were also destroyed in the attack. The incident further galvanized pro-Algerian protest and prompted the Soviet Red Cross to establish its own relief operation for Algerian refugees in Tunisia.

[37] Ruthstrom-Ruin, *Beyond Europe*, 145, 151 ff., 175. During the Hungarian refugee crisis, the USA had succeeded in fronting the UNHCR for the US anti-Communist mobilization of the international community.

[38] 'Appeal from the International Red Cross. International Aid to Algerian Refugees', 12 Dec. 1957, PAAA/MfAA/A13579. The Appeal stated that about 40,000 Algerian refugees were in the Oujda area in Morocco, and the rest were in Tunisia.

Third World Challenge to the Global Humanitarian Regime

The FLN was not alone in its challenge to the international humanitarian regime. By the late 1950s, a number of Afro-Asian conferences—including the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Conference (AAPSC), the Conference of Independent African States, and the All-African Peoples' Conference—issued appeals for moral and material assistance for the people of Algeria.[39] The human right to self-determination, Algerian independence, and anti-apartheid in South Africa were always on their agenda. The first AAPSC convened in Cairo in December 1957, a year after the Suez Crisis. The conference, which was sponsored by Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser, was attended by approximately 500 delegates from forty-five countries, including representatives of liberation movements from countries that were still fighting for their independence. The conference aspired to become the 'People's Bandung', and, not surprisingly, the speeches and resolutions adopted there struck a more radical anti-imperialist tone than had been the case at Bandung two years before. In a lengthy report to the conference, the Algerian delegate Aiah Hasan attacked the French use of humanitarian aid as a weapon in what he described as a French war of 'genocide' and 'extermination' against the Algerian people. According to Hasan, the French systematically denied medicine and medical care to the Algerians, punished physicians who treated Algerian fighters, and bombed field hospitals and clinics, and he appealed to the delegates for immediate assistance.[40] The conference passed a resolution calling on people around the world, but especially in Africa and Asia, to protest against France's violations of human rights and the Geneva Conventions in Algeria.[41]

The Afro-Asian countries also created the International Aid Committee for Algeria with its secretariat in Cairo. One of the action programmes passed at the first AAPSC was to make 30 March 1958 a day of world solidarity with the people of Algeria. In April 1958 the Ghanaian President, Kwame Nkrumah, hosted

[39] The Casablanca conference of non-aligned African states in January 1961 went so far as to declare any assistance provided to France in the Algerian conflict an 'act of hostility directed against Africa as a whole': *Middle East Records*, 2 (1961), 52.

[40] 'The Algerian Problem: Report by Aiah Hasan (Algeria)', in *Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Conference, Cairo, 26 Dec. 1957–1 Jan. 1958* (Moscow, 1958), 108–28.

[41] 'Resolution on Algeria', ibid. 235.

a pan-African congress at which Frantz Fanon, emissary of the Algerian provisional government, delivered a passionate speech in favour of armed resistance to colonial rule. 'In our fight for freedom', stated Fanon in an appeal to the audience, 'we should embark on plans effective enough to touch the pulse of the imperialists—by force of action and, indeed, violence.'[42] The congress, however, rejected Fanon's call, and instead endorsed the Ghandian strategy of non-violent resistance favoured by Nkrumah.[43] However, this defeat was only temporary. In December of that year the delegates to the first All-African Peoples' Conference endorsed Fanon's call for armed struggle.[44]

Over the next twelve months this resolution was followed by a number of other actions that collectively brought about a perceptible radicalization of Third World internationalism. In December 1958 the UN finally adopted the resolution on the recognition of the Algerian people's right to independence that countries of the Afro-Asian bloc had been submitting since 1955. This resolution, in turn, cleared the way for a UN resolution on the Algerian refugees and for a joint UNHCR–Red Cross League relief programme.[45] In April 1960 the second AAPSC denounced the United States and Western Europe for their neo-colonial policy of exploiting Asia and Africa as sources of raw materials and declared that support for the French war in Algeria represented an act of aggression against all of the peoples of Asia and Africa. In an effort to build a common liberation front, the Conference decided to set up solidarity funds and an African volunteer corps. Immediately thereafter, a delegation of the Algerian Provisional Government flew to the East for official visits to Moscow, Peking, Pyongyang, and Hanoi. The Algerian War marked the beginning of China's involvement in African liberation struggles, beginning with material support for the FLN. The war

[42] From the late 1950s until his death in December 1961, Frantz Fanon served as the emissary of the Algerian provisional government; in April 1960 he was officially appointed GPRA ambassador to Africa. See Kevin K. Gaines, *American Africans in Ghana: Black Expatriates and the Civil Rights Era* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2006), 92; and Alice Cherki, *Frantz Fanon: A Portrait*, trans. Nadia Benabid (Ithaca, NY, 2006), 108, 124, 147–8; the French original was published in 2000.

[43] Jeffrey S. Ahlman, 'The Algerian Question in Nkrumah's Ghana, 1958–1960: Debating "Violence" and "Nonviolence" in African Decolonization', *Africa Today*, 57/2 (2010), 67–84, at 74.

[44] See Article 10 of the 'Resolution on Imperialism and Colonialism', in Gertraud Liebscher (ed.), *Die afro-asiatische Solidaritätsbewegung: Dokumente* (Berlin, 1968), 303.

[45] Ruthström-Ruin, *Beyond Europe*, 175–6.

also provided the impetus for Cuba's first international aid mission, which included the evacuation in December 1960 of a number of soldiers and civilian wounded to Cuba for medical treatment. A year later, a ship which had delivered a load of guns and ammunition for the FLN carried seventy-six wounded Algerian fighters and twenty children from refugee camps on the return trip to Havana.[46]

On 14 December 1960 the UN adopted the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, which had been submitted by the Soviet Union, and the following day it approved a related resolution recognizing the sovereign right of states to dispose of their own wealth and natural resources.[47] Third Worldism, especially among young people, was further radicalized by the assassination of Patrice Lumumba and the baneful and self-serving role played by the Western countries in the Congo crisis. The dynamic of militant Third Worldism, along with the Sino-Soviet conflict, pushed the November 1960 meeting of the world's Communist parties to pledge material and moral support for African and Asian national liberation struggles. In January 1961 Khrushchev himself proclaimed that armed liberation struggles were 'not only admissible but inevitable', and he called on the world's Communist parties to 'fully support such just wars and march in the front rank with the peoples waging liberation struggles'.[48]

Humanitarian Crisis across the Year of Algerian Independence

The Cold War world was both pulled apart and intimately connected not only along the single axis of East–West ideological conflict, but

[46] Piero Gleijeses, 'Cuba's First Venture in Africa: Algeria, 1961–1965', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 28/1 (Feb. 1996), 159–95, at 160–1.

[47] Edward McWhinney, 'Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples', United Nations, Office of Legal Affairs, Audiovisual Library of International Law, online at ⟨http://untreaty.un.org/cod/avl/ha/dicc/dicc.html⟩ [accessed 6 July 2012].

[48] Nikita Khrushchev, 'For New Victories of the World Communist Movement' (6 Jan.1961). Khrushchev delivered this report on the November 1960 Conference of Representatives of Communist and Workers' Parties in Moscow at a meeting of party organizations of the Central Committee of the CPSU. In response, Defence Secretary Robert McNamara declared that the United States was 'ready to fight in the "Twilight Zone" between combat and political subversion': Open Society Archives, Radio Free Europe Munich, Research and Evaluation Department, 'Wars of Liberation' (22 Feb. 1962), online at ⟨http://www.osaarchivum.org/files/holdings/300/8/3/text/96-1-258.shtml⟩ [accessed 6 July 2012].

along many different axes.[49] Not only did the complex problems of decolonization and post-colonial nation-building antedate the Cold War and involve local conflicts that could not be explained as epiphenomena of superpower ideological rivalry, but the simultaneity of decolonization and Cold War in the 1950s and 1960s makes it virtually impossible, and undesirable, analytically to separate the two mutually implicated processes.

On the eve of independence one of the top priorities for international humanitarian organizations was the repatriation of about 600,000 Algerian refugees living in Tunisia and Morocco. Most of their homes and buildings had been burnt, and their lands had been left unattended for years. Consequently, they would have no way of supporting themselves once they had returned to Algeria. As it began to become clear in late 1961 that the French were not going to be able to maintain their position in Algeria, those Western countries, especially the United States and West Germany, which, in deference to the French, had previously blocked direct assistance to the Algerians now began to rethink their position and provide such help to Algerian refugees in Tunisia and Morocco through the International Red Cross. The key role played by the IRC in organizing aid for Algerian refugees and their later repatriation also increased the influence of the French Red Cross, which was directly responsible for distributing the aid that was flowing in from around the world. Church-affiliated aid groups from the United States and West European NGOs, such as Cimade (a French NGO advocating the human rights of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers), the London Aid Committee for Algerian Refugees, and Friends of Free Algeria, also began to play a more prominent role in the area. In June 1962 a three-member commission composed of the UNHCR, the French High Commissioner in Algeria, and a member of the Algerian Provisional Government was established to oversee aid to returning refugees. Western experts dominated the commission staff, and the Tunisian Red Crescent

[49] Giuliano Garavini, *After Empires: European Integration, Decolonization, and the Challenge from the Global South 1957–1986* (Oxford, 2012); Heonik Kwon, *The Other Cold War* (New York, 2010); Felix Ciută and Ian Klinke, 'Lost in Conceptualization: Reading the "New Cold War" with Critical Geopolitics', *Political Geography*, 29 (2010), 323–32; Christopher Goscha and Christian Ostermann (eds.), *Connecting Histories: Decolonization and Cold War in Southeast Asia, 1945–1962* (Stanford, Calif., 2009); Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of our Times* (Cambridge, 2005); and John Borneman, *Subversions of International Order: Studies in the Political Anthropology of Culture* (Albany, NY, 1998), 3–4.

was bitter about being marginalized in its own country, as were the socialist countries, which had provided so much moral and material support long before their Cold War competitors in the West.

The humanitarian crisis did not end with Algerian independence on 3 July 1962, but took a dramatic turn for the worse. The country's medical infrastructure had been destroyed during the war, and now it faced a catastrophic shortage of general practitioners and specialists, particularly in rural areas, as all but 400 of the 2,000 French doctors who had been practising in Algeria joined the more than a million pieds-noirs who returned to France at independence. The imminent departure of 200 French military doctors would leave the country with only 200 trained physicians.[50] A brand new, fully equipped 130-bed hospital in Rouiba, near Algiers, had no surgeon, and much of the high-tech medical equipment that had been imported from the United States and West Germany remained unused and unmaintained. Despite the staggering number of handicapped veterans who needed orthopaedic limbs and rehabilitation, the only prosthetic workshop in the country was at a German-owned rehabilitation clinic in Tixeraine near Algiers, and many Catholic dispensaries had no health professionals at all.

The catastrophic state of the country's health care system posed a serious challenge to the administration of President Ben Bella, who had pledged that the new state would take care of the veterans who had fought for the country's independence. At Christmas 1962 the Algerian government made an urgent appeal to foreign doctors to come and work in Algeria. Even before this appeal, however, the Soviet Union and the socialist countries of Eastern Europe had sent physicians and other health care workers. A Yugoslav team was the first on the scene, even before formal diplomatic relations had been established between the two countries. In July 1962 twenty-six doctors and nurses, who were assigned to work in small groups in hospitals in Tizi-Ouzou and the capital city, arrived in Algiers. They also set up an orthopaedic workshop with machines delivered from Yugoslavia. The Bulgarian team similarly arrived

[50] According to a memorandum of 3 Jan. 1963 by the Secretary-General of the Organization of French Doctors in Algeria, PAAA/B92/408. One of the few who remained was Eric Hazan, a medical student and later the founder of La Fabrique Editions. In 1970 he was one of the founders of the Franco-Palestinian Medical Association, and for a time he worked as a doctor in a refugee camp outside Beirut: *New Left Review*, 48 (Sept.–Dec. 2007), 58.

at short notice and worked at the TB hospital and sanatorium in Tizi-Ouzou alongside Russian doctors. In addition to these doctors from socialist countries, Lebanese and Egyptian physicians were also present.

The Castro government also stepped into the breach, and in May 1963 Cuba dispatched its first overseas medical mission of fifty-five men and women to assist the new regime; they were followed by a second medical mission a year later. Relations between the two countries became even closer when Che Guevara travelled to Algeria in July 1963 to help celebrate the first anniversary of Algerian independence.[51] The Chinese and the Soviets also demonstrated their competitive support for the new government. China sent fourteen physicians, while the Soviets financed the construction of a hospital (with the Soviet Red Cross Society agreeing to pay the salaries of the medical staff for six months in hard currency).[52] A number of Western pharmaceutical firms were also trying to gain a foothold in the Algerian market. In one display of goodwill the West German Bayer Corporation donated medicine worth DM 100,000 to the state medical system; to signal the diplomatic importance of the gift, a number of high-level health officials from the Algerian side were on hand, and the actual transfer was widely covered by public relations personnel from the West German embassy.[53]

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The instrumentalization of humanitarian assistance by the French authorities as a means of combating the anti-colonial national liberation movement in Algeria laid bare the Cold War underpinnings of the global humanitarian regime. It opened a space for the Soviets, the Chinese, and their allies to contest the Western definition of humanitarian assistance around which the new humanitarian regime had been so recently structured. They did so in support of an array of militant and often pro-socialist leaders of national liberation movements, all of whom were more openly hostile to the West than the leaders of the non-aligned movement.

[51] Gleijeses, 'Cuba's First Venture in Africa', 165.

[52] Drs Berner and Zimmering, Bericht über den Besuch einer Delegation des Präsidiums des Deutschen Roten Kreuzes beim Algerischen Roten Halbmond, P/MfAA/A13582.

[53] Richter (embassy) to Bonn, 24 Aug. 1963, PAAA/B92/408.

Until the mid-1950s the discourse of humanitarian assistance and the mechanisms by which it was institutionalized in international law largely reflected the ideas and interests of the Western powers. This was due partly to the Soviet decision to boycott the proceedings of the United Nations organizations and partly to the UN decision not to admit China. As a result, the Communist countries had played only a marginal role in crafting the post-war humanitarian regime, and the very idea of humanitarian assistance had long been seen as something foreign to Communist thinking. However, although Communist countries were, in fact, quite active in the humanitarian domain in the 1950s, humanitarian assistance provided by both the East and the West was instrumentalized to serve the security needs of the respective donor organizations, rather than the specific needs of the beneficiaries.

This gap made the resulting conflicts far more complex than might initially be suspected. While Communist countries were, as a rule, more likely than the United States and the countries of Western Europe to support Third World challenges to the rules of the humanitarian assistance game, neither side represented a monolithic bloc. West Germany, for example, repeatedly tried to distance itself from Portuguese and French efforts to retain their colonial empires by force, though without going so far as to dispute the analysis of Third World political development that underlay the prevailing definition of humanitarian assistance or seriously to challenge its own economic interests in these regions. Similarly, divergent party ideologies and pragmatic opportunism involved the Soviet Union, China, Cuba, India, and Egypt, as well as such smaller but influential countries as Ghana and Guinea, in an elaborate dance to position themselves as champions of Third World national liberation movements, while the East German government, like its West German counterpart, increasingly sought to profile itself, though without transgressing the limits imposed by the Soviet Union. Moreover, the policies of all donor countries, from both East and West, were constantly changing in response to changing circumstances in Africa and Asia, the changing dynamics of Cold War conflict in the north, and unexpected initiatives from Third World countries themselves as they became increasingly assertive with the achievement of independence. Ultimately, this slippage between the aims of the donor countries and the needs and aspirations of the beneficiaries (which were often a matter of

dispute within these Third World countries) was a major source of frustration for the latter, and these diverging aims and expectations often meant that the assistance provided did not yield the political benefits anticipated by the donor.