1

The Red Cross Movement: Continuities, changes and challenges

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For over 150 years, the 'Red Cross' has brought succour to the world's needy – from sick and wounded soldiers on the battlefield to political detainees, internally displaced people, and those suffering from the effects of natural disasters – as well as having played a major role in a range of global developments in public health, such as blood transfusion. The world's pre-eminent humanitarian movement, its relevance and status today are as high as they have ever been in its long history. At the time of writing, headlines carry news of the efforts of the Indonesian Red Cross – Palang Merah Indonesia – to bring aid and assistance to those communities affected by the most recent natural disaster to hit the country, the Krakatoa eruption and tsunami that struck Sunda Strait on 22 December 2018. That these terrible events are not the only crises demanding the Red Cross's attention is clear from the website of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC), which gives prominence to the work carried out for the inhabitants of Sulawesi and Lombok, still rocked by aftershocks from the earthquake, tsunami and mudslides that struck in recent months; the ongoing operations in the typhoon-affected areas of the Philippines; and to those in Nigeria, where a quarter of a million people are at risk after floods inundated a half of the country. The Federation's counterparts in the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) are busy in the world's war and conflict zones: in Syria and Iraq; in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo; in Chad, Yemen, Somalia, South Sudan and Myanmar; and in seventy-one other countries around the globe. The Red Cross, first used as an emblem to identify and protect civilian volunteers tending injured Prussian and Danish soldiers on the battlefield at Dybbøl on 24 April 1864, has become one of the world's most recognisable symbols. The movement it spawned is older than most countries on the planet, and includes, at the last count, 192 national societies, comprising 165,822 local branches with 473,513 staff and over 11.5 million volunteers.[1]

If the scale and longevity of the Red Cross distinguish it from other non-governmental organisations or humanitarian networks, so too does its approach to humanitarian affairs. Its stated mission is to 'alleviate human suffering, protect life

and health, and uphold human dignity, especially during armed conflicts and other emergencies'.[2] Grounding its actions on seven fundamental principles, the Red Cross has historically depicted its activities as a specific form of charity through humanitarianism, extending, as Jean Pictet, the author of the principles suggested, 'its merciful action to the whole of humanity'.[3] Furthermore, its interventions are governed by the principle of neutrality. This has led it to insist on obtaining agreement from all parties before deploying its delegates in the field, and operating without reference to the underlying injustices causing peoples' suffering whenever and wherever it occurs. As Jean Pictet memorably put it, like the swimmer who advances in the water but who drowns if he swallows too much of it, the Red Cross seeks to reckon with politics without becoming a part of it. The approach is in marked contrast to the methods taken by many other humanitarian organisations, whose operations are often framed by the principles of non-partisanship or solidarity, and who not only alleviate suffering wherever it is found but also explicitly bear witness to the suffering and injustices uncovered. The Red Cross might, then, be the world's most distinguishable humanitarian movement, but it represents a distinctive 'brand' of humanitarianism: a brand that both shapes the nature of its activity and operates as a powerful factor in motivating individuals, whether staff or volunteers, to engage in the movement as 'Red Crossers'. Indeed, their activities are often described as 'Red Crossing'.

Commentators and those within the organisation frequently use the term 'Movement' to describe the Red Cross, and we adopt it in this volume. In truth, though, as a descriptor, the word's value and appeal lies principally in its vagueness, its lack of precision. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is governed by its own set of statutes, and consists of three discrete elements. The first element is the ICRC itself, the origins of which lie in the meeting of a five-man committee in Geneva in 1863, whose members were concerned with how best to protect medical staff and the wounded from attack on battlefields. This concern led to the drafting of the First Geneva Convention in 1864, an act that both satisfied its members' desire to secure an international agreement to protect the sick and wounded, and started a process of mission creep that led to the ICRC becoming the 'architect' and 'guardian' of international humanitarian law (IHL) in the decades that followed.[4] Today, the ICRC's remit for protecting victims of war is vast, and far exceeds the legal mandate set out in international treaties. Through both IHL development, and humanitarian acts in myriad conflicts, the ICRC has developed into a protector of soldiers, medics, civilian victims of conflict, prisoners of war and political prisoners. Of the 756,158 detained persons visited by ICRC delegates in 2013 only 2,818 were formally protected under the Third (prisoners of war) and Fourth (civilian) Geneva Conventions of 1949.[5] As it has expanded into these new fields of humanitarian assistance, however, the ICRC has also had to avoid encroaching on State interests, by maintaining its political neutrality and operational impartiality, and insisting that its actions are acceptable to authorities on all sides of conflicts.[6]

This delicate balancing act between politics and humanitarian action in war has never been easy, and some episodes – the Holocaust and Biafran War are good examples – left the institution badly scarred. Managing its relations with the federal authorities in Berne has likewise frequently tested the institution.[7] The problem has, however, been compounded in recent years by the need to accommodate human-rights laws into its war-focused practices. This has led to the ICRC attempting to clarify 'customary practice' in the application of IHL, and updating Pictet's 1964 commentaries on the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, in the hope, one suspects, of encouraging conformity.[8]

The second element of the Red Cross Movement is the IFRC Societies. Created in the wake of the First World War by the national societies of the United States, Britain, France, Italy and Japan, the League of Red Cross Societies was officially formed in May 1919. Despite having a fundamentally different vision from that of the all Swiss ICRC – that of mobilising the combined strength of the national societies, and wedded to a concept of humanity that extended beyond zones of armed conflict and into everyday struggles of the peacetime world – its birth created uneasy and at times unwelcome competition for the ICRC.[9] Responding to the misery and destruction wrought by the 'war to end all wars', and buoyed by the spectacular growth of national Red Cross societies as a result of the war, the vision of its founder, American banker turned philanthropist Henry Pomeroy Davison, was to create a 'real International Red Cross'. This would be a humanitarian version of the League of Nations that could bring together the 'Red Cross organisations of the world', to continue their work in peacetime.[10] The focus would be on social, medical, educational and peacetime relief initiatives, with the League of Red Cross Societies playing a facilitating and coordinating role, creating an exemplary global humanitarian community. Using the network of Red Cross national societies, medical research and science would combine to extend Red Cross work into peacetime, to prevent disease and create public-health programmes around the world. Despite its controversial birth and the initial curtailment of its original lofty ideals through illness, death and lack of funds in the early years, the League survived and, in time, thrived. Its role during the interwar years was to foster and promote transnational initiatives within the Red Cross network, to standardise, coordinate and promote health care, nursing, the Junior Red Cross, and disaster relief. The Second World War and the process of decolonisation that followed in its wake led to a huge increase in the number of new national societies. Changing its name, from the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in October 1983, and again to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in November 1991, this body also has some oversight of basic governance structures in national societies.[11]

The power of the Red Cross Movement, however, lies in the national societies themselves. This global network of 192 diverse and culturally specific societies – the most recent addition to which being Bhutan, which joined the movement in

December 2019 – embodies Henri Dunant's ambition of taking the organisation of relief out of the hands of the military, tapping the energy and dynamism of civilian volunteers on a global scale.[12] This adherence to Dunant's vision is still very much in evidence, even if, over time, many national societies have loosened their original voluntary anchor and, for the sake of efficiency, professionalism and other external factors, adopted the status of quasi-State organisations. Others are completely controlled by their governments, defined as being 'auxiliaries' to the 'public authorities in the humanitarian field'.[13] The journey that brought the Movement to this position was a long and winding one. With few exceptions, the national societies of the late nineteenth century existed principally to supplement the work of overstretched army medical departments, becoming crucial cogs in the war machines of many states.[14] By the turn of the century, this nexus between wartime service and Red Cross work had been solidified, albeit with states party to the revision of the Geneva Convention of 1906 making sure to restrict the freedom of action of Red Cross workers and ensure that they were given no special status in IHL. Beyond the battlefields, however, the Movement was given more room to grow by governments that saw the value of Red Cross volunteers as responders to peacetime natural disasters and disease epidemics. This recognition of the national societies' value in contributing to the peacetime health of states and their citizens was recognised in 1919, when the Covenant of the League of Nations called on member states to 'encourage and promote the establishment and co-operation of duly authorised voluntary national Red Cross organisations having as purposes the improvement of health, the prevention of disease, and the mitigation of suffering'.[15]

Notwithstanding the heterogeneity of its membership, as part of a single movement, the constituent parts of the Red Cross all adhere, at least in theory, to the seven fundamental principles of the Red Cross Movement. The principles – humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality – emerged out of the confusion and debacle of the Second World War, and were adopted in Vienna in 1965.[16] It is important to note that the Movement went without this core set of principles for a long time. One of the principles most commonly associated with the Red Cross, neutrality, was absent from the founding discussions in 1863, and took time to gain traction.[17] This was not for want of trying. In 1875 Gustav Moynier, the long-time President of the ICRC (1864–1910), suggested four principles to guide the Movement's actions. In times of peace, the Red Cross Societies were to prepare for future emergencies, sharing good practice and technical knowledge across the network. They were to embrace a sense of mutuality, nurturing ties among the various national societies, and agreeing on having only one 'national' Red Cross Society in every state. Finally, the Movement was to hold to Dunant's co-opted phrase of 'tutti fratelli' ('all are brothers'), and dispense assistance on the basis of a soldier's needs, not his nationality. Although these ideas remain relevant today – only one Red Cross Society is still permitted in the territory of each independent state[18] – Moynier's principles spoke to the specific concerns

and pressures facing the young Movement, particularly after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1.[19]

The next attempt to clarify the Movement's organising principles, following the carnage of the First World War and the emergence of the League of Red Cross Societies, was no less momentous. The revised statutes of 1921 stressed values that remain central to the Movement's current operations, in insisting on its members' impartiality, independence, universality and equality. It is no surprise that the Movement felt the need to reiterate its commitment to these values – and add three more – in 1965, following events in the Congo that underscored the extent to which Cold War divisions had permeated international politics and threatened the independence of international institutions. It was also a time when the Movement had just welcomed a raft of new national societies from the newly independent states in Asia and Africa, whose leaders had little experience in, or, necessarily, understanding of, the Red Cross Movement and its values.[20]

Although the Movement has repeatedly reaffirmed its commitment to the 1965 fundamental principles (most recently in 2015) the fact that it has felt the need to do so, and has, periodically revised and updated its principles, suggests a plurality of opinion as to what the Red Cross should stand for, and how it should operate in the field. The root cause of these divisions may in part lie in the competing conceptions of humanitarianism, derived from the different geographical circumstances and historical and political trajectories of the Movement's numerous members. Still, a recurrent theme in the Movement's history has been the interplay between the national perspectives adopted by the national societies and the transnational values promoted by the two international agencies headquartered in Geneva. The issue is no better exhibited than in the evolution of the Movement's defining emblem. Despite being touted as early as 1864, the Red Cross symbol did not initially receive universal endorsement. What would eventually became known as the International Committee of the Red Cross grew out of an entity, the Genevan Society for Public Utility, which had been in existence for over three decades. The committee adopted a series of names before finally settling on the title it bears today in 1875.[21] The committee's annual bulletin, which began in 1869, reflected this hesitation, and only adopted the title *Bulletin international des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge* in 1886, whilst the International Red Cross conferences were not dubbed as such until the 1884 conference in Geneva.[22] The 'Red Cross' clearly struck a chord with the nascent relief societies of continental Europe, but some national societies, particularly from the English-speaking world, were content to operate under different banners: the United States waited until 1881 to create a Red Cross society, the British until 1905.[23]

For many states beyond Europe's shores the emblem's obvious religious connotations have also proved problematic. Although there is no direct evidence to suggest the symbol is an inversion of the Swiss flag – as a red cross was used to indicate plague or illness in earlier times – it is generally accepted that the Movement's founding fathers consciously adapted the Swiss flag for the symbol of the nascent

humanitarian organisation. The religious symbolism of the cross, however, was scarcely lost on the Protestant Genevans, who were proud of their Christian beliefs and active in promoting Christian values in other areas of their private and professional lives. The Red Cross's association with Christianity ran up against its ambitions to universalise the humanitarian message, and this tension, retaining a single unifying emblem while acknowledging the religious sensitivities of the non-Christian world, has been a recurrent theme across the years.[24] At Moynier's personal direction, the Red Crescent symbol was carried by ICRC volunteers in the Russo-Turkish wars in the 1870s, but was not officially adopted as a recognised emblem until 1929. The Iranian Society formally adopted the 'Red Lion and Star' symbol in 1922, and although it fell into disuse after the Islamic revolution of 1979, the symbol remains, on paper, a recognised emblem of the Movement. Finally, the Red Crystal was accepted as a formal emblem in 2005, to accommodate the wishes of the Israeli national emergency service, Magen David Adom, to be admitted as a full member of the Movement. Debates over the symbol are, however, rarely straight forward. The proliferation of symbols may have been largely resisted, but there has been little consistency in practice. Why has the Movement pandered to specific religious or cultural sensitivities, and what accounts for the retention of the symbol by some national societies, and its rejection by others? Anxious to court western sympathies, the Japanese dutifully followed the European precedent in establishing a national society in 1887, and they have retained the symbol ever since, despite their turbulent relations with the West over the first half of the twentieth century.[25] The Chinese, by contrast, expressed doubts about the wisdom of uncritically adopting the symbol when they belatedly turned their attention to creating a society in 1904. The Malaysian National Society elected to drop the Red Cross in favour of the Red Crescent in 1975, even though their counterparts in Indonesia – home to the largest Muslim population on the planet – were content to keep the original name and symbol.[26]

Since its earliest days, there has been an inherent tension between the status of the national societies, as chartered entities operating under the supervision of State authorities, and the position of the League/Federation and the International Committee, for whom the principles of independence, neutrality and impartiality have naturally sat more comfortably. It is easy to see how national preferences can cut across Geneva's 'vaulting universalism', such as when the New Zealand Society casually assumed that its 'primary responsibility' in 1947 was to attend to the needs of its 'kith and kin' in the British Isles rather than those of the war-ravaged societies on the continent of Europe or across Asia. Taken to extremes, such centrifugal tendencies have tested the Movement, and brought it perilously close to fragmentation, whether over the challenge posed by fascism in the 1930s and 1940s; the alternative humanitarianism propagated by communist regimes; or, more recently, the issue of apartheid in the 1980s.[27] Given the significance of these moments, it is surprising how little sustained attention they have received from historians. It is still unclear how far

the assimilation of fascism in some European Red Cross societies posed an existential threat to the Movement, or whether the communist conception of humanitarianism offered a genuine, and in its own way a no less legitimate, alternative to the cosmopolitan tradition espoused in Geneva. Recent research is uncovering different 'genealogies' of humanitarianism, some of which had little connection to the liberal, Enlightenment roots that nurtured thinking around the idea of the Red Cross.[28] The vehemence with which the ICRC pushed back on communist-inspired humanitarianism reveals much about the ideological lens adopted by members of the committee.

There is little doubt that the humanitarian ideals propelling the Movement have proved less neutral, less independent and less impartial than its promoters have often assumed. The laudable goal that first animated Henri Dunant, of tendering aid to wounded soldiers on the battlefield, was submerged very quickly during the 1860s and 1870s, by the process of the voluntary societies established to administer this aid being co-opted by the State authorities and military institutions.[29] A similar fate befell the belief that aiding those rendered *hors de combat* by their wounds was necessarily devoid of military significance; such services inevitably freed the State to devote its resources to other matters, facilitated the recovery of soldiers from their wounds and hastened their return to the battlefront. Historians of military medicine have long noted that far from limiting the impact of warfare, the assistance of well-intentioned volunteers has helped sustain the war-making capacity of their states.[30] This point was made by John Hutchinson in his foundational study of the militarisation of the Red Cross, *Champions of Charity*, published in 1996.[31] In such circumstances, the underlying sentiments behind humanitarianism can be easily lost. As Rachel Chrastil has shown, the word *humanité* rarely featured in 'Red Cross' speeches and pamphlets in France in the decades before 1914: Red Cross volunteers were called upon to serve a 'French cause, not a humanitarian one'.[32] Some international lawyers come to similar conclusions as regards the legal codes, developed in parallel with the rise of the Red Cross over the latter half of the nineteenth century. Instead of IHL constraining states' capacity to wage war, Eyal Benvenisti and Amichai Cohen explain governments' grudging acceptance of the emergence of the Geneva Conventions and other legal instruments in terms of their belief that such codes would ultimately help them maintain control over their armed forces.[33] Other areas of 'humanitarian' activity have likewise tested the independence, neutrality and impartiality of the Red Cross's endeavours, whether as contributors to the 'civilising mission' of colonial empires, or the 'nation building' or peace-and-stability (pacification) projects promoted by the international community in various parts of the world. Such tensions are not of course unique to the national societies, but have equally marked the activities of the International Committee and League/Federation.

The Red Cross Movement is, then, a complex, multidimensional network that resists simple categorisation. It might perhaps best be seen not so much as a single

river of ideas and institutions, but rather as an arcuate delta, where the main body bifurcates into numerous distributaries, or channels, which follow their own course, at times converging, at other times diverging. It works as a privileged network, held together by a shared understanding of (some) common ideals, institutions, and a real or imagined history. Its institutions instinctively orientate themselves in different directions: the national societies to their domestic constituencies and public-health systems; the League/Federation to a transnational network of relationships, projects and groupings; and the ICRC to the international state system and legal community.

The very complexity of the Red Cross Movement might in part account for the reluctance of historians to grapple with it in its entirety. The popular historian Caroline Moorehead, has, to date, been the only author to tackle the subject.[34] By contrast, professional historians have tended to devote themselves to more narrowly based studies. The enduring fascination for war and conflict goes some way to explaining the attention lavished on the ICRC. The staggered opening of the ICRC's archives to public scrutiny certainly encouraged this trend. The first papers, covering the period up until 1945, were opened in 1996, and periodic releases of material relating to subsequent periods have been made ever since – the latest, detailing the ICRC activities from 1966 until 1975, in 2015. Concerns that the opening of the archives might sully the Committee's reputation have proved unfounded. In retrospect, the decision to address the most obvious skeleton in the ICRC's cupboard, commissioning Jean-Claude Favez to write a history of the ICRC and the Holocaust, proved remarkably astute, sealing the wound and containing the impact that public disclosure of its papers might have had on its current operations.[35] Indeed, access to the voluminous ICRC holdings has proved a boon for the institution. Nearly a quarter of a century after the archive flung open its doors, there is no decline in the number of researchers anxious to mine its papers: the archive receives between 500 and 600 visitors to its reading rooms every year and handles around 2,000 written requests for information.[36] The ease of access might have accentuated, arguably to the point of exaggeration, the ICRC's role in the Movement's history and the domination of its vision in the historical narrative.[37] The burgeoning literature on the ICRC has, at the very least, enhanced the organisation's reputation, amplified its own external messaging and buttressed its position as the lead agency in the Red Cross Movement.

Recent years have seen the appearance of a number of studies of national societies, many sponsored by the societies themselves, to mark their centenary year. The anglophone societies such as Australia, New Zealand and Canada have been particularly well served in this respect. Other major societies, such as the American, Dutch, Norwegian, French and German, have also been the subject of scholarly monographs, and a history of the British Red Cross (BRC) will be published for the 150th anniversary in 2020.[38] These studies have done much to uncover particular national trajectories, and the different approaches to humanitarianism and philanthropy that have marked the journey of the Red Cross since its inception 150 years ago. There

is, though, a danger implicit in these studies, many of them in English, of seeing the history of the Red Cross through the lens of the privileged – generally western – eyes of national societies that have the resources to curate their archives, deposit them in national libraries or university repositories, and make them available to public scrutiny.[39] It is to the editors' regret that, despite their best efforts and intentions, the chapters brought together in this volume largely reflect and unwittingly reinforce this privileged version of the Red Cross's history.[40] Naturally, studies of national societies tend to emphasise national priorities and concerns, and chart their own institutional histories and perspectives. Though not ignoring the wider context, relations with the broader Red Cross 'Movement' rarely feature as a primary focus of attention. As a consequence, we are still waiting for historians to address such critical subjects as the relations among, say, the major national societies – the American, Japanese, Chinese, Soviet, Indian etc. – and between the two Geneva-based headquarters at the ICRC and IFRC. There remains a significant gap in the literature between the institutional histories of the Movement's principal components and the functioning – or perhaps, better, 'functionings' – of the Movement as a whole.[41]

The least well-served element in the historiography is the IFRC – which has only one survey work devoted to it: Daphne Reid and Patrick Gilbo's celebratory and uncritical offering, made on the occasion of the IFRC's seventy-fifth anniversary. This work joins a study by Clyde Buckingham, made in 1964 and focused on the origins of the IFRC; the chapter by Bridget Towers that appeared in a collection of essays on international health organisations, published in 1995; and two recent articles by Julia Irwin and Kimberly Lowe that have a particular focus on the League of Red Cross Societies (LRCS) and one national society, the American Red Cross.[42] Statistics from the IFRC's archives re-enforce this narrative of neglect. In recent years, the IFRC has dealt with around 160 requests per annum, with a little over half of these coming from external enquirers. Moreover, the majority consult the archives as part of broader studies of health and medical history, especially nursing education and blood transfusion, as well as disaster and refugee relief, and are not specifically focused on the role of the IFRC and the broader Red Cross Movement.[43] A research project, 'Resilient Humanitarianism', has recently commenced that might go some way towards addressing the dearth of focused enquiries on this unsung element in the Red Cross Movement. Given that the IFRC celebrated its 100th year in 2019, the initiative is perhaps long overdue.[44]

It is not the purpose of this volume to provide a definitive, far less a comprehensive, assessment of the Red Cross Movement. Rather, the chapters seek to offer insights into particular facets of the Movement's history that, taken collectively, provide a starting point from which we can re-evaluate both the Movement as an institutional network, and a particular view – a Red Cross view – on the broader humanitarianism enterprise.

Humanitarianism, as a distinct subject of scholarly enquiry, has received increasing attention over the last three decades, stimulated, in part, by the optimism brought on

by the end of the Cold War in the 1990s and the prospect of replacing power politics with a normative-based international order.[45] Historians have been central to this intellectual endeavour, providing insights into how the idea of humanitarianism and its associated institutions and regimes have evolved over time.[46] But it is a crowded field, dominated in large part by political scientists, anthropologists, sociologists and legal scholars. Our collection, therefore, starts with a chapter by Davide Rodogno that explores what he sees as the 'ingrained arrogance' in humanitarians' motivations, which have remained remarkably constant over time. In the process, he underscores the value of addressing humanitarian institutions from a historical perspective and using the historians' methodological tools. Importantly, he argues that historians need to 'expand the optic beyond humanitarianism itself' and be flexible and reflexive in testing its boundaries.

The Movement's foundational 'myth'

The collection is structured across three discrete, though interconnected, themes. The first considers what one might call the Red Cross's foundational 'myth': a story that has its genesis in Henri Dunant's traumatic encounters on the battlefield of Solferino, and which spawned a vision of humanitarianism that has proved to be coherent, compelling and durable. The Movement has traditionally explained its success in 'heroic' terms: it points to the power of 'Dunant's Dream' in promoting and sustaining the ideological conformity of its membership – through a commitment to the Red Cross ideals, fundamental principles and 'brand' – while at the same time admitting to an extraordinary level of diversity in the make-up of the Movement itself. Recent research has increasingly called this narrative into question, and, by contrast, emphasised how Dunant and his colleagues did not find, far less found, the humanitarian agenda in 1863. There were plenty of alternative approaches to those proposed in Geneva for dealing with the battlefield wounded or promoting humanitarian ideals in the mid-nineteenth century. Even within the Red Cross Movement there were competing definitions of what the idea and the Movement should mean, and who, or what, could adopt the mantle of the Red Cross.[47]

The first two chapters in this section shed light on alternative approaches to humanitarianism in the 1860s, and in the process prompt us to consider different 'histories' of the Movement emerging at this time. James Crossland's chapter examines the work of the United States Sanitary Commission, an institution born out of the American Civil War that, as early as 1862, operated volunteer ambulance detachments bearing a striking resemblance to the vision Dunant proposed in Geneva the following year. It is tempting to see the Commission's hand behind Dunant's project: its observers attended the 1864 conference and their experience in battlefield medicine was eagerly sought by those present. Crossland disputes this account. He does, though, credit the Commission for shaping the broader history of the Red Cross Movement, in offering a version of the kind of militarised

relief agency that would eventually take hold in Germany and, in due course, in other European states that were anxious to learn from Prussia's successes in military medicine during its victory over France in 1870–1. Similarly, then, to the way Francis Lieber's instructions for the Union armies shaped the direction of European thinking on the law of armed conflict, the Commission played an important part in the early institutional development of the Red Cross.[48]

Though the American imprint on the early history of the Red Cross Movement is unmistakable, Lieber and the Commission were not the only influences at work.[49] The chapter by Jon Arrizabalaga, Guillermo Sánchez-Martínez and J. Carlos García-Reyes explores how different conceptions of humanitarianism were manifest in the work of foreign-aid agencies operating in Spain's Carlist wars of the 1870s. Although the wars are often overlooked in general histories of the period, they are significant for the Red Cross story in that they posed the International Committee with its first test over whether to intervene in armed conflicts of a non-international character. Geneva ultimately chose to remain on the sidelines, establishing a precedent that remained unchallenged until 1936, when Spain's renewed descent into internecine conflict prompted the Committee to dispatch its delegates into a civil war zone for the first time. The Carlist wars showed how the Geneva Convention triggered diverse responses within the Movement in the 1860s and 1870s, bringing to the fore tensions over how aid should be dispensed in civil wars, over the sanctity of the Red Cross emblem and over the question of Red Cross engagement with other humanitarian networks. The chapter underscores the extent to which these identities, loyalties and institutional memberships overlapped, particularly between the newly emergent national Red Cross Societies, the Order of St John of Jerusalem and the Alliance universelle de l'ordre et de la civilisation, with individuals occupying multiple roles across the spectrum of humanitarian organisations.

Arrizabalaga, Sánchez-Martínez and García-Reyes quote Sir John Furley, who wrote in 1876 that the 'Red Cross' was the only 'emblem of neutrality' capable of enlisting 'the sympathies of the whole of Europe'.[50] There is no doubt that the idea of the Red Cross quickly gained traction even if, as their chapter shows, individuals and states interpreted its meaning in different ways. The last two chapters in this section both touch on this aspect of a divergent Red Cross story. Caroline Reeves's contribution charts the emergence of the Red Cross in China, where a national society was formally inaugurated in 1904. The Red Cross first attracted public interest during the Sino-Japanese war of 1894–5, when western missionaries trumpeted their own efforts to make up for the absence of a national society in China and the apparent indifference shown by the imperial authorities to the provision of medical services for the Chinese forces. The subsequent attempts to bring the Red Cross to China shed considerable light on the perceptions of both the Chinese and the self-appointed 'guardians' of the Movement, the ICRC. Geneva refused to recognise the Shanghai Chinese Red Cross Society on the grounds that its membership was western, not Chinese, and it served local, rather than national

needs. More specifically, though, the Committee refused to believe that 'the Chinese people [were] sufficiently civilized, from the point of view of the laws of war, to observe faithfully the Geneva Convention, even if their Emperor were to sign it'. In short, only 'civilised' states could accede to the conventions or be welcomed into the Red Cross Movement. Reeves's chapter shows how this view became internalised amongst the Chinese elite, and came to dominate its attitude towards both the maritime convention, discussed at the Hague conference in 1899, and the decision to found an official society in 1904. This was justified on entirely pragmatic, political grounds, rather than for reasons of humanitarian sentiment or even military expediency. Interestingly, the only concession the Chinese considered worth exploring was whether they should join Siam, Persia and the Ottoman Empire and insist on a distinctive emblem for their society, as it was thought 'inappropriate for China to adopt the sign of a cross'.

The Chinese case shows the extent to which the Red Cross's appeal had become decoupled from its humanitarian roots by the turn of the century, and challenges the assumption that the catalyst for institutional formation necessarily sprang from a specific relief action or war situation. It also reveals the divergent attitudes that were developing towards western and non-western humanitarianism under the Red Cross banner. By contrast, Branden Little's chapter, which focuses on the travails that beset the American Red Cross Society before the United States' entry into the First World War in April 1917, reaffirms the centrality of war to the history of the Red Cross Movement. The dynamism shown by the American Society before and after the war are celebrated elements in the Red Cross story. Clara Barton forged a society that pioneered a peacetime role for the Red Cross, while Henry P. Davison used the resources and influence of the American Society to provide an alternative to the ICRC and launch the LRCS in 1919.[51] A very different picture emerges, though, if we look at the three years of American neutrality. Little reveals a society that so singularly failed in its efforts to ignite popular enthusiasm for its activities that it was forced to withdraw its ambulance teams from Europe in 1915 for want of funds. It was only after the ousting of the prewar leadership and, importantly, the creation of a War Council led by Davison, that the Society was able to fuse modern fundraising and public-relations techniques into effective instruments, and capitalise on America's belligerency to become the largest civic organisation in American history. By highlighting the Society's 'failure to launch' between 1914 to 1917, Little reminds us of the importance of continually testing the grand narrative of the Red Cross, and being mindful of the way powerful historical forces are often shaped by contingency and fortune.

Turning points

Little's chapter offers a springboard into the second theme addressed in the collection: the role of turning points in propelling and shaping the Movement's

development over time and place. Such moments figure prominently in the writing on humanitarianism. They play an important part, for instance, in studies that have sought to understand humanitarianism as a series of epochs.[52] By examining turning points from different perspectives from within the one institution, the collection shows how the Red Cross Movement as a whole has responded to changing external environments and opportunities, and how, as part of a broader network, individual national societies charted their way forward.

Francisco Javier Martinez-Antonio's work, for example, offers a fresh reading of the impact of the Spanish-American War of 1898 on both the American Red Cross Society and the wider Red Cross Movement. It is widely accepted that the war, the first to see the use of concentration camps, stimulated American interest in the plight of civilians, and saw the American Society develop a specific tradition of civilian assistance.[53] Martinez-Antonio extends our understanding of the conflict by looking at the Society's broader relations with the Red Cross Movement. The Americans deliberately challenged the ICRC's standing by keeping it at arm's length and circumventing its authority by forging direct links with other national societies. Both actions anticipated the kind of disputes that rocked relations between the American Red Cross and Geneva in 1919. Events in Cuba represented a 'seminal' episode in the journey that would eventually see the American Red Cross emerge as a 'humanitarian world power'. In retrospect, the Cuban war may also, though, have been pivotal for the ICRC. Washington and Madrid's willingness to adhere to the hitherto dormant 'additional articles' of 1868 prompted the Committee to look afresh at the possibility of updating the 1864 Geneva Convention, a task they had avoided for the best part of three decades. The war persuaded the Committee to re-engage with legal discussions and prepared the ground for the emergence of a dedicated 'maritime code' at the Hague conference in 1899.[54]

The recent centenary commemorations around the events of the First World War have naturally renewed historical interest in the conflict, and sharpened our understanding of how the war shaped subsequent events.[55] There is little doubt that the war and its chaotic aftermath had a profound impact on the history of the Red Cross, and attitudes towards the international community's responsibility for promoting humanitarian ideas. Some national societies were, however, more deeply affected than others. In her contribution to the volume, Sarah Glassford shows how the war had a particularly powerful effect on the development of the Canadian Red Cross Society (CRC). In some respects, the CRC had followed a similar trajectory to the other off-shoots of the BRC. It looked to London, rather than Geneva, for inspiration and direction; its first baptism of fire, during the South African War of 1899–1902, cemented this process and provided a framework on which to build when war returned in the summer of 1914. The First World War was also a coming of age for the young Society, allowing it to extend its presence at home – some 1,150 branches had been founded across Canada by 1918 – and grow in confidence and capacity; by 1917, the CRC felt sufficiently emboldened to take the lead in providing assistance to the

Allied military intervention in Siberia. What made the CRC's journey so remarkable was the position it had adopted after the South African War, when it had effectively returned to a position of dormant inactivity, despite the moves of those in London to dispense with this practice and embrace a more activist, outwardly facing role. The war proved catalytic, therefore, in drawing national, imperial and transnational factors into play, and expanding the CRC's vision of what it could accomplish as a humanitarian organisation, both for Canadian society and for the wider international community.

The First World War provides the backdrop, rather than the focus, of the turning point identified by Melanie Oppenheimer in her discussion of the Australian Red Cross. Conflict was key to developing the capacity and confidence of the young Society, established as a branch of the BRC on the outbreak of war, even if its contribution to the collective humanitarian effort was often blatantly overlooked in British accounts. What interests Oppenheimer, though, is how the fortunes of the Society converged with those of the newly founded LRCS. For this young Society, the League provided an international platform to develop a distinctive Australian voice and agenda: for the League, the Australians offered a counter-weight to the established European societies, who were divided over the League's role and sceptical as to its value. In tandem with the Americans and Canadians, the Australians actively promoted the Junior Red Cross programme, an initiative that traced its origins back to the New South Wales Division of the Australian Red Cross, and developed into an important transnational movement over the course of the 1920s. Although there were perhaps local reasons for their popularity in Australia, the Juniors' wider appeal had much to do with the need to tackle the communist threat, and inculcate values of 'good citizenship' and 'the right kind' of – that is, liberal – cosmopolitanism.

The international context occupies an important place in Rosemary Cresswell's study of three key moments in which the BRC was forced, after the Second World War, to re-evaluate its position and reframe its public message. In 1947, while the institution basked in the glow of its impressive wartime accomplishments, its Public Relations Department warned that in the public eye, it needed to maintain its existence. With the return of peace, the organisation slipped from people's minds, yet it was still required to prepare for an impending conflict with the Soviet Union, and to support health care in a variety of ways in the face of the new National Health Service. It was likewise difficult, in 1960, for the organisation to trade on its primary function as a wartime organisation, when new charitable aid agencies, such as Christian Aid, Oxfam and War on Want, were increasingly encroaching on the humanitarian space. The economic downturn in the early 1970s prompted another rethink of the Society's external messaging, with international activities demoted in the Society's publicity materials. By this date, the sheer range of Red Cross activities, both at home and abroad, made it difficult for the Society to give a clear message and remain relevant to its public constituency.

Eldrid Mageli's chapter likewise dwells on how external events impact on national societies, though her focus is principally on the ramifications this has had for relations within the broader Red Cross Movement. She takes as her subject the Biafran War of 1967–70: a conflict that is widely recognised as having transformed attitudes towards humanitarianism and the provision of international aid. The 'weaponisation' of humanitarian aid by the federal and Biafran authorities threw into question some of the assumptions that had traditionally underpinned the Red Cross's activities.[56] The ICRC's insistence on impartiality and neutrality ultimately compelled it to suspend aid flights to the Biafrans, and, in the process, cede ground to those agencies who were fired by the radical humanitarianism of the *sans frontiériste* movement, pioneered by former ICRC doctor Bernard Kouchner, who founded *Médecins Sans Frontières* in December 1971, and who professed a more muscular model for international aid and humanitarian action.[57] Mageli's chapter uses the example of the Norwegian Red Cross to explore how these issues played out for an individual national society. Alarmed by the collapse of its domestic standing and the threat posed to its position by the success of the church aid movement in Norway, the Norwegian Society worked hard to bring about a change of heart in Geneva, appealing directly to the ICRC, and mobilising its fellow Scandinavian societies and contacts in the League. The redefinition of humanitarianism under the pressure of events in the developing world thus played out very differently across the Red Cross family. In Norway, the Red Cross faced a domestic constituency that was fully prepared to embrace an activist stand on issues relating to the Global South. It was a position that was reflected in the Norwegian Government's attitude towards the additional protocols in the early 1970s when, much to the chagrin of the ICRC and the US and British Governments, Oslo championed the right of national liberation movements to be given a seat at the conference table.[58]

The Red Cross's *modus operandi*

The final set of chapters considers the Movement's *modus operandi*. How have the constituent parts of the Movement functioned over the last one-and-a-half centuries to make it into a dominant global force in humanitarian affairs? One way to address this issue is to consider the matter from different perspectives: the domestic, transnational and international. At the domestic level, the Red Cross has historically proved adept in integrating itself into State and civil society sectors. But how might this process affect the way the Movement, or individual national societies, articulate their mission, tap sources of strength and dynamism, respond to the needs of the disadvantaged, and conceive of their role and place in the humanitarian arena? Clearly, success invariably hinges on an ability to compromise: but as we have seen, the history of the Movement is replete with examples of national societies whose co-option by State structures ended up undermining the Red Cross's

core humanitarian values and/or foundational principles. The Movement's most distinctive feature is its capacity to knit together its constituent elements into an interlocking, self-supporting international network. This has enabled it to act in ways that were not traditionally available to other humanitarian actors. Recent moves to coordinate at a national level, such as Britain's Disasters Emergency Committee or Germany's Aktion Deutschland Hilft – and indeed, at an international level, through the Emergency Appeals Alliance – may have eroded this advantage.[59] But what distinguishes the Red Cross is that its constituent parts – the national societies, ICRC and League/Federation – all occupy rather different and at times conflicting positions. This has allowed them to draw on their complementary strengths rather than merely deepening the well of resource and expertise. This is particularly pertinent for an understanding of relations between the international agencies – the ICRC and the League/Federation – and the national societies. The international agencies are deeply involved in norm creation and the development of international law: an involvement that not only provides the normative and legal context for humanitarian activities, but also supplies a sense of identity, legitimacy and agency for the Red Cross Movement as a whole.[60]

Margaret Tennant's chapter examines how the interaction between local concerns and the international context played out in the case of New Zealand. What might be a tension between the inward- and outward-looking faces of national societies can, Tennant argues, be moulded to their advantage. Echoing the comments made in Melanie Oppenheimer's chapter about the opportunities opened to small societies by the creation of the LRCS in 1919, Tennant shows how, over time, the New Zealand Society has leveraged its membership of the Movement to slip out from under the shadow of the BRC, and to punch above its weight in the international arena. Its local concerns over the impact of natural disasters on civic populations – brought home in the 1931 Hawkes Bay earthquake and, most recently, the 2011 earthquake in Christchurch – has enabled the Society to articulate a model for engaging with the wider Red Cross Movement and, in some respects, justify the prominence of New Zealanders in the executive organs of the League and, later, Federation. It has also, though, provided New Zealand with a mechanism for repositioning itself on the international stage: forging a new postimperial network of humanitarian action that dovetailed with the country's emergent identity as a member of the Pacific community.

The next three chapters, by Rebecca Gill, Kerrie Holloway and Neville Wylie, focus on a single national case – the BRC – and offer insights into the way members of the Red Cross Movement responded to what became, in effect, one of the most problematic periods in the Movement's history. Gill's chapter on the diplomacy surrounding the 1938 International Red Cross Conference in London reveals both the extent of the fascist threat to the Red Cross's ideals, and the problems the Movement had in responding to this challenge. In retrospect, the tensions foreshadowed some of the difficulties faced four years later when confronting evidence of the Holocaust.

It should be remembered that, despite its withdrawal from the League of Nations in 1933, Germany remained an active member of international organisations devoted to health and social-welfare issues, and in the Red Cross Movement the German Society led the way in debates over such issues as civil defence during air raids. Moreover, the affable face of the Society – its president, the Duke of Saxe-Coburg – was well suited to broadcasting Germany's ostensibly peaceful intentions to a British audience and playing to the Germanophile sentiments found amongst large swathes of the British aristocracy and social elite: the very people who occupied prominent positions in the BRC and its regional branches. Indeed, as Gill notes, the welcome accorded to Saxe-Coburg revealed the appetite for appeasement in the British establishment and the 'irreproachable' position enjoyed by the Red Cross. It proved a potent cocktail, and one that meant that the ICRC's hopes of convincing the Movement to extend the Geneva Convention to cover the civilian population were seen off. The German Red Cross's defence of the status quo struck a chord in a Movement that was happy to celebrate transnational co-operation but was reluctant to embrace the kind of supranational intervention championed by the ICRC.

The London conference took place against the charred backdrop of the Spanish Civil War. Within six months the Republic had been brought to its knees, triggering a flood of refugees, some half-a-million people, to cross the Pyrenees in search of sanctuary. Kerrie Holloway's examination of this refugee crisis shows how the BRC's close association with the interests and policy preferences of the British Government coloured its response to international events. Throughout the war, the BRC leadership had happily aligned itself with the official policy of non-intervention, insisting that Spain's circumstances 'rendered any action as an independent society incompatible with the neutrality incumbent on a national Red Cross Society'. Funds were channelled through the ICRC, but in truth, the BRC leadership had little sympathy for the Republican cause, and, as Holloway's chapter shows, equally little interest in aiding Republic refugees encamped across south-eastern France once the war came to a close. The man chosen to coordinate the relief effort was an outspoken supporter of the Franco regime, and the supplies put at his disposal were woefully inadequate in their scale and inappropriate for the refugees' condition. Only 70 per cent of the funds initially earmarked for the refugees had been spent by the time operations were wound up: an amount equivalent to roughly a day's expenditure by their French counterparts. The BRC's 'modus operandi' was, Holloway concludes, influenced as much by its ideological inclinations and the preferences of its Government as by the resources at its disposal.

The chapter by Neville Wylie continues this theme, though it emphasises how, in responding to challenges, national societies often find themselves prisoners of their past. In trying to manage the 'crisis' that affected the flow of relief parcels to British prisoners of war (POWs) in the summer of 1940, the BRC was hampered by the nature of its relations with the Government, its public standing and its position with the wider Red Cross Movement. Wylie suggests that its success in positioning itself

as one of the core institutional pillars of the British establishment – a position amply evident in Gill and Holloway's chapters – ultimately worked to its disadvantage. As public concern for the parcels' traffic mounted, the Society found itself unwittingly manoeuvred into the firing line by a Government anxious to evade criticism for its own part in the supposed 'Red Cross' parcels crisis. The leadership struggled to adapt to wartime conditions, strike the right tone in its public relations and shrug off claims that it valued the social standing of its volunteer membership more than the efficiency of its operations. In particular, the aloof attitude it had traditionally taken towards the ICRC and the non-British members of the Red Cross Movement left it exposed at a time when it was forced to call on Geneva and the neutral societies to resolve the crisis.

The centrality of war to what Reeves calls the 'normative genesis' of the Red Cross Movement has encouraged historians to focus on the national societies of states that experienced war first hand. Comparatively little attention has been given to those neutral agencies upon which the BRC, and others like it, so critically relied. There is, it would seem, much still to be said about the connection between neutrality – i.e. State neutrality – and the functioning of the Red Cross Movement. The importance of this issue is obvious for traditional neutrals, such as Switzerland and Sweden, but is also relevant to all states that found themselves sitting on the touchlines of war and in a position to offer humanitarian services.[61] During the Second World War, Portugal's capital, Lisbon, hosted representatives of no fewer than eighteen national societies, and its own national society found itself increasingly drawn into negotiations with the belligerent powers over the provision of relief or the exchange of diplomats and civilian internees. Helena Lopes's chapter on the Portuguese Red Cross delegation in the small imperial enclave in Macau shows how neutrality, imperialism and transnationalism intersected to shape the outcome of humanitarian initiatives in East Asia.

Leo van Bergen's chapter likewise addresses the imperial context, but also builds on Wylie's by showing how the actions of the Netherlands and Dutch East Indies Red Cross Societies were trapped in their respective pasts. Van Bergen argues that their humanitarian repertoire was crafted to reflect long-held attitudes and practices. During the Japanese occupation, the Dutch East Indies Red Cross administered to the needs of the Dutch population, in line with the wishes of the Japanese occupation authorities, but largely ignored the plight of the indigenous communities. After Japan's defeat, the Society quickly resumed its traditional position, dispensing medical aid to those who remained loyal to the Dutch colonial regime, but denying it to those who did not. Its counterpart in the Netherlands exhibited similar dexterity in realigning itself to the changing circumstances. Conditioned by decades working in the service of the country's military elite, the Dutch Red Cross found it relatively simple to transfer its allegiances to the German occupation authorities, applying racial criteria to its blood transfusion service and raising an ambulance unit for service on the eastern front. A mixture of Calvinism and anti-communism

justified, in the board's view, the Society's offering its services to the Wehrmacht. Interestingly, a similar set of considerations ushered the Swiss Red Cross down the same path, leading to the Society's dispatching medical missions to the eastern front in the belief that humanitarian neutrality was unnecessary in a war against Soviet communism. The Second World War might have demonstrated the Red Cross Movement's capacity to mobilise support and resources on a global scale, but it also showed a worrying malleability in the Movement's attitude towards some of its values, and a tendency to filter its actions through discriminatory lenses. Its wartime success came at a price, and left the Movement with some difficult questions to answer once peace returned.[62]

New directions

Through a focus on our three perspectives of foundational myths, turning points and *modus operandi*, and by drawing on local, national and international perspectives of individual national societies across time and place, the chapters of this volume help reframe the Red Cross Movement as an institutional network. The picture that emerges is of a multifarious and multilayered network, in which the national societies and the League/Federation assume more prominent roles than is commonly assumed in a literature that remains heavily weighted towards a view derived from the ICRC. This view of the latter as the primary, perhaps only, aspect of the Red Cross family worthy of consideration has led to the construction of a narrative premised on the false notion that ideological coherence – dictated over the decades from Geneva – is the tie that binds the Red Cross Movement.

Our efforts to address this problem here mark the beginning of what we hope will be a new phase in the study of the Red Cross, which will be driven by the pursuit of a deeper, more holistic and inclusive, understanding of the Movement. The need for such a new direction could not be clearer. The Red Cross is a privileged network, but there is little evidence that this network operates as effectively as it could. As Peter Maurer, the ICRC president, put it, 'the Movement has an incredible capacity to be a powerful force in the world, to save lives, to change lives. But its potential is drastically untapped. It is, as others have described a "Sleeping Giant".'[63] There have been well-documented attempts to rouse the giant from its slumbers. The controversial Tansley Report of the 1970s, referred to as a 'pitiless inquisition' by former ICRC president Dr Eric Martin, was one such example. Tansley's main conclusion was that the major challenges for the Red Cross Movement came from within.[64] It is tempting to say that such internal challenges have ever been thus. Though the chapters presented here explore the many layers of this long-standing tension within the Movement, we still have much to learn about the interaction of its constituent parts at various stages in its long history. How did the ICRC try to promote conformity? What role did the regular showpiece International Red Cross conferences, convened more or less continuously since 1867, and the regional

conferences – such as the Far Eastern Conference, Bangkok (1922), held under the auspices of the League, and the Pan American Conferences (the first held in Buenos Aires in 1923) – play in this story? A similar question could be posed as to the influence exercised by the Movement's annual bulletins, regular prize competitions, circulars and publications.[65]

There is also a need to examine more deeply the differing national, transnational and international forces at play within the Red Cross Movement. The ICRC was never 'international'; it was an exclusively national-based body until the idea of a League of Red Cross Societies was born, courtesy of the Americans: an event that stung the ICRC in 1919 and still, to this day, has repercussions and consequences. The League was always, as David Forsythe suggests, a 'controversial addition to the Red Cross network', the 'ugly duckling of the Red Cross family'.[66] Yet in many respects, the League's arrival in the aftermath of the First World War was part of a wave of global humanitarian responses to the immense suffering of civilians and was part of the new internationalisation of the postwar period.[67] When viewed from this perspective, rather than through the paranoid lens of Geneva, the League's arrival appears as a timely initiative of the post-1919 age, rather than the arrival of a disruptive guest to the ICRC's party. More research is required on this subject in order to ascertain the extent to which the ICRC's derogatory view of the League was valid, or whether it was simply another example to support Davide Rodogno's thesis of 'ingrained arrogance'.

Beyond the ICRC and League/IFRC binary, there has long been a tendency in the Movement for the national societies to function autonomously or within privileged sub-networks: their response to appeals for aid and assistance tends to reflect regional sympathies or groupings. The chapters collected here speak to the power of these sub-networks; but they also highlight their limitations, and the need for members of the inner circles to reach out to peripheral members at times of extreme crisis. This prompts us to question the domination of certain Red Cross societies in the Red Cross story, especially those of America, Western Europe, Britain and its former dominions, which have received the lion's share of coverage in Red Cross scholarship, to the detriment of a deeper consideration of non-western/Global South perspectives. There is an urgent need for studies on the Red Cross in parts of the world such as Asia, Africa, and Central and South America, whether as individual national societies or as regional networks.[68] Such studies are likely to provide us with competing histories of humanitarianism; they will also likely throw up sets of ideas that may offer further challenging counterpoints to the Red Cross ideal of unity, coherence and energy, and its western Eurocentric definition of 'humanitarianism'.

Another exciting emergent area of scholarly interest in the Movement draws on the perspectives offered by social, cultural and particularly gender historians. The 'heroic' narrative of the Red Cross is disconcertingly white and male, yet there is clearly a need to revise this view. Dunant's famous clarion-call, 'tutti fratelli', was

first uttered by the women of Castiglione tending the wounded on the battlefield of Solferino, and it was the Comtesse Valérie de Gasparin who first piqued Dunant's interest in the concept of peacetime aid societies. Many of the chapters collected here speak to the decisive influence exercised by women in shaping the Movement and staffing its cadres. Much could be learnt from these women's stories about their motivations, ambitions and ideals in undertaking the work of 'Red Crossers'. Moreover, there is also much work to be done on how, in certain circumstances, the Red Cross was explicitly 'feminised' in terms of its external messaging and publicity imagery.[69] Finally, there is clearly a gendered angle to any explanation of how national aid or relief work provided a stimulus for action, particularly after 1919, when the League's agenda for peacetime work shifted the Movement's focus and threw up competing ideas on its sense of mission and motivation – or 'humanitarian sensibilities', to use Liisa Malkki's phrase.[70]

Another area opened up in this collection that requires further research going forward is the role that national societies and the League/Federation have played in the area of domestic public-health services. From the post-First World War period onwards, and within a broader mission to improve health and prevent disease, Red Cross societies around the world have engaged in a range of social welfare services, from running hospitals and training nurses to establishing blood transfusion services. These domestic services, often in partnership with governments, indicate the extent to which the initial bond that drove the Movement forward – that of voluntary humanitarianism with state-sanctioned war – has diversified over the last 150 years. This has led to the ingraining of Red Cross work into the day-to-day provision of services by states, as well as the many broader, global campaigns to combat disease and deprivation, extending the role of the Red Cross beyond the battlefield in ways that even Dunant could not have imagined.

A final word must be said on the archives and sources used by scholars involved in our field. Writing on the subject of the Red Cross still suffers from a weakness endemic to much of the writing on humanitarianism, in that for the most part, it entirely overlooks the lived experiences of those at the receiving end of Red Cross largesse and assistance. In order to recapture the voices, narratives and perspectives they offer for our understanding of the Red Cross, historians will need to be much more ambitious in their search for sources, and perhaps too, more imaginative in the way they use them. This is by no means easy, but we cannot be satisfied if the histories we write about the Red Cross merely reinforce the power-disparities and inequalities that 'humanitarians' allegedly aspire to overturn. At the same time, it is important to recognise that even 'institutional' histories of the Red Cross will only be written if the relevant records are preserved. This status is not always the case across the Movement's various archives, especially those of the smaller, less wealthy national societies. Historians must take a lead role in preserving the complex story of the Red Cross. In November 2011, the Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement agreed on a Resolution '[p]reserving the

historical and cultural heritage of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement'.[71] Projects such as the Australian Red Cross's 'Gifting to the Nation' of its records in its centenary year in 2014, and the recent Canadian deposition of its records into twenty-three archives, libraries and academic collections across the country in 2018, were led by historians, passionate about the preservation and accessibility of Red Cross archives. There are, as Charlotte Clements and Georgina Brewis remind us, various ways the scholarly community can help with saving the records of voluntary organisations – historians can write money for archives into their grant proposals, draw up a written memorandum of understanding, disseminate guidance and champion the archive collections they use.[72] There is clearly a need for historians to reach out and offer their expertise to the archivists of the Red Cross world. To give back and not always take, to make deeper use of the archives that are already available, and encourage those less accessible through purpose and interest to open their doors. It is only by taking such actions that we might solve the problem we have identified here of a preoccupation with western humanitarianism in the current scholarship.

Notes

1 The IFRC in numbers: https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/ (accessed 4 October 2018).
2 www.icrc.org/en/movement (accessed 23 October 2018).
3 J. Pictet, *The Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross: Commentary* (Geneva: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 1979), p. 22.
4 D. Palmieri, 'An Institution Standing the Test of Time? A Review of 150 Years of the History of the ICRC', *International Review of the Red Cross*, 94:888 (2012), 1273–98.
5 S. R. Ratner and R. Giladi, 'The Role of the International Committee of the Red Cross', in A. Clapham, P. Gaeta and M. Sassòli (eds), *The 1949 Geneva Conventions: A Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 525–47 (p. 534).
6 D. Forsythe, *The Humanitarians: The International Committee of the Red Cross* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); J. D. Armstrong, 'The International Committee of the Red Cross and Political Prisoners', *International Organization*, 39:4 (1985), 615–42; R. Geiβ, A. Zimmermann and S. Haumer (eds), *Humanizing the Laws of War: The Red Cross and the Development of International Humanitarian Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).
7 See, among others, T. Brückner, *Hilfe schenken: Die Beziehung zwischen dem IKRK und der Schweiz 1919–1939* (Zürich: NZZ Libro, 2016), I. Vonèche Cardia, *Neutralité et engagement: Les relations entre le Comité international de la Croix-Rouge et le gouvernement suisse pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale* (Lausanne: Société d'histoire de la Suisse romande, 2012).
8 J. Henckaerts and L. Doswald-Beck, *Customary International Humanitarian Law*, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press and the International Committee of the Red Cross, 2005); ICRC, *Commentary on the First Geneva Convention: Convention (I) for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); ICRC, *Commentary on the First Geneva Convention: Convention (II) for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); commentaries on the Third (prisoners of war) and Fourth (civilians) conventions are expected to appear in due course.

9 I. Hermann, 'Décrypter la concurrence humanitaire: Le conflit entre Croix-Rouge(s) après 1918', *Relations internationales*, 151 (2012), 91–102.
10 C. E. Buckingham, *For Humanity's Sake: The Story of the Early Development of the League of Red Cross Societies* (Washington, DC: Public Affairs Press, 1964), p. 24. See also M. Oppenheimer, '"A Golden Moment"?: The League of Red Cross Societies, the League of Nations and Contested Spaces of Internationalism and Humanitarianism, 1919–22', in J. Damousi and P. O'Brien (eds), *League of Nations: Histories, Legacies and Impact* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2018), pp. 47–48; J. F. Irwin, 'Connected by Calamity: The United States, the League of Red Cross Societies and Transnational Assistance after the First World War, *Moving the Social*, 57 (2017), 57–76.
11 See statement by the IFRC, following the Board of Governors' decision in October 2018 to suspend the membership of the Hellenic Red Cross Society. https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/press-release/statement-suspension-hellenic-red-cross-member-ifrc/ (accessed 17 October 2019).
12 H. Dunant, *A Memory of Solferino* (London: Cassell, 1947), p. 57.
13 This was defined in 2007 as being 'a specific and distinctive partnership, entailing mutual responsibilities and benefits, based on international and national laws, in which the national public authorities and the National Society agree on the areas in which the National Society supplements or substitutes public humanitarian services'. Resolution 2, 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, 2007.
14 J. Crossland, *War, Law and Humanity: The Campaign to Control Warfare, 1853–1914* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), pp. 57–114, 133–52.
15 Covenant of the League of Nations (1919), Article 25.
16 See Pictet, *The Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross*.
17 D. M. Segesser, 'Le concept de neutralité et la Convention de Genève de 1864', in J. Chandet, A. Crépin and C. Windler (eds), *Le temps des hommes doubles: Les arrangements face à l'occupation, de la Révolution française à la guerre de 1870* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2013), pp. 69–84.
18 An exception was made in 2007 with respect to the Palestinian Red Crescent Society.
19 Moynier's principles and ideas on how to reform the Red Cross movement and give it direction were conveyed in G. Moynier, *Etude sur la convention de Genève pour l'amélioration du sort des militaires blessés dans les armées en campagne, 1864 et 1868* (Paris: Librairie de Jöel Cherbuliez, 1870); and G. Moynier, 'Ce qu'est la croix rouge', *Bulletin international* 21 (1875), 1–8.
20 One might note the existence of similar concerns behind the desire to clarify diplomatic practices in the Vienna conventions on diplomatic and consular relations in 1961 and 1963 respectively.
21 Forsythe, *The Humanitarians*, p. 29.
22 P. Bossier, *From Solferino to Tsushima* (Geneva: Henry Dunant Institute, 1984), p. 338.
23 A National Aid Society had existed in Britain since 1870; the British Red Cross Society was finally inaugurated in 1905.
24 For the role of religion in motivating humanitarian endeavours, see P. Stamatov, *The Origins of Global Humanitarianism: Religion, Empires and Advocacy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); and M. Barnett and J. Stein, *Sacred Aid: Faith and Humanitarianism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).
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26 R. Provost, 'The International Committee of the Red Widget? The Diversity Debate and International Humanitarian Law', *Israel Law Review*, 40:2 (2007), 614–47.

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29 G. Best, *Humanity in Warfare: Modern History of the International Law of Armed Conflicts* (London: Routledge, 1983), pp. 141–3.
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31 J. F. Hutchinson, *Champions of Charity: War and the Rise of the Red Cross* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996).
32 R. Chrastil, 'The French Red Cross, War Readiness, and Civil Society, 1866–1914', *French Historical Studies*, 31:3 (2008), 445–76 (p. 459).
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36 Email communication with ICRC archives, Mr Fabrizio Benzi, 22 October 2018.
37 See, for example, Forsythe, *The Humanitarians*.
38 M. Oppenheimer, *The Power of Humanity: 100 Years of Australian Red Cross, 1914–2014* (Sydney: HarperCollins, 2014); M. Tennant, *Across the Street, across the World: A History of the Red Cross in New Zealand* (Wellington: NZRC, 2015); and S. Glassford, *Mobilizing Mercy: A History of the Canadian Red Cross* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017). Two titles on the American Red Cross were published in 2013: see J. Irwin, *Making the World Safe: The American Red Cross and a Nation's Humanitarian Awakening* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); and M. M. Jones, *The American Red Cross from Clara Barton to the New Deal* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013). For a history of the Dutch Red Cross, see L. van Bergen, *De zwaargewonden eerst? Het Nederlandsche Roode Kruis en het vraagstuk van oorlog en vrede 1867–1945* (Rotterdam: Erasmus, 1994); for Norway, see E. Mageli, *With the Right to Help: The Story of the Norwegian Red Cross* (Oslo: Pax, 2014). Two context-specific titles that examine the German and French Red Cross societies are B. Morgenbrod and S. Merkenich, *Das Deutsche Rote Kreuz unter der NS-Diktatur, 1933–1945* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2016); and B. Taithe, *Defeated Flesh: Medicine, Welfare and Warfare in the Making of Modern France* (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999). R. Cresswell, *Health and Humanitarianism: A Global, National and Local History of the British Red Cross, 1870–2020* (London: Bloomsbury, forthcoming).
39 See, for example, the work of Japanese scholars attached to the Department of Nursing, Hiroshima Prefectural College of Health and Welfare, and the Japanese Red Cross College of Nursing; Yukari Kawahara, '125-Year History of the Japanese Red Cross Nursing Education', *Journal of Humanitarian Studies*, 4 (2015), 93–9.
40 Appendix 1 summarises the archival holdings of the national Red Cross societies (as of 2014). Public contacts for national society archives can be found at https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/who-we-are/archives/ (accessed 17 October 2019). Where no contact is available, scholars are encouraged to approach the IFRC archives (archives.contact@ifrc.org).
41 A notable exception is Hutchinson's *Champions of Charity*, which offers an incisive analysis of the Movement's early history, and the different 'national' approaches to Dunant's founding idea.

42 D. A. Reid and P. F. Gilbo, *Beyond Conflict: The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 1919–1994* (Geneva: IFRC, 1997); Buckingham, *For Humanity's Sake*; B. Towers, 'Red Cross Organizational Politics, 1918–1922: Relations of Dominance and the Influence of the United States', in P. Weindling (ed.), *International Health Organisations and Movements, 1918–1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 36–55; Irwin, 'Connected by Calamity'; K. A. Lowe, 'The LRCS and ICRC: A Re-Evaluation of American Influence in Interwar Internationalism', *Moving the Social*, 57 (2017), 37–56.
43 Email communication with IFRC Archivist, Mr Grant Mitchell, 31 October 2018.
44 This four-year project, 'Resilient Humanitarianism: The League of Red Cross Societies, 1919–1991' (DP190101171), will run from 2019 to 2022. The Chief Investigators are Melanie Oppenheimer, Susanne Schech, Romain Fathi, Rosemary Cresswell and Neville Wylie.
45 For the appeal of humanitarianism as a principal area of research, see M. Hilton, E. Baughan, E. Davey, B. Everill, K. O'Sullivan and T. Sasson, 'History and Humanitarianism: A Conversation', *Past and Present*, 241 (November 2018), e1–e38, doi:10.1093/pastj/gty040.
46 See in particular B. Simms and D. J. B. Trim (eds), *Humanitarian Intervention: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); J. Paulmann (ed.), *Humanitarianism and Media: 1900 to the Present* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2018); F. Klose (ed.), *The Emergence of Humanitarian Intervention* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); J. Paulmann (ed.), *Dilemmas of Humanitarian Aid in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); E. dal Lago and K. O'Sullivan, 'Introduction: Towards a New History of Humanitarianism', *Moving the Social*, 57 (2017), 5–20; J. Paulmann, 'Conjunctures in the History of International Humanitarian Aid during the Twentieth Century', *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development*, 4:2 (2013), 215–38.
47 Crossland, *War, Law and Humanity*, pp. 44–93.
48 See J. F. Witt, *Lincoln's Code: The Laws of War in American History* (New York: Free Press, 2012).
49 J. Guillermand, 'The Contribution of Army Medical Officers to the Emergence of Humanitarian Law', *International Review of the Red Cross*, 29:271 (1989), 306–32.
50 J. Furley, *Among the Carlists* (London: Tinsley, 1876), p. 287.
51 See Towers, 'Red Cross Organizational Politics'; Irwin, *Making the World Safe*; Jones, *The American Red Cross*, *passim*.
52 M. Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011); B. Cabanes, *The Great War and the Origins of Humanitarianism, 1918–1924* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Y. Hong, *Cold War Germany, the Third World and the Global Humanitarian Regime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Paulmann, 'Conjunctures in the History of International Humanitarian Aid'.
53 Irwin, *Making the World Safe*.
54 See N. Wylie, 'Muddied Waters: The Influence of the First Hague Conference on the Evolution of the Geneva Conventions of 1864 and 1906', in M. Abbenhuis, C. E. Barber and A. R. Higgins (eds), *War, Peace and International Order? The Legacies of the Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), pp. 52–68.
55 See, for instance, D. Reynolds, *The Long Shadow: The Great War and the Twentieth Century* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2013).
56 M. Desgrandchamps, *L'humanitaire en guerre civile: La crise du Biafra (1967–1970)* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2018); Lasse Heerten, *The Biafran War and Postcolonial Humanitarianism: Spectacles of Suffering* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).
57 This is explored in E. Davey, *Idealism beyond Borders: The French Revolutionary Left and the Rise of Humanitarianism, 1954–1988* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).
58 S. Widmer, 'Switzerland, Regime Change, and Armed Conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa in the Global Cold War, 1967–1979' (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Lausanne, 2018).

59 The Emergency Appeals Alliance currently acts as an umbrella organisation for the Austrian, Belgian, British, Canadian, Dutch, German, Italian, Japanese, Swedish and Swiss national groupings. See www.emergency-appeals-alliance.org/ (accessed 28 October 2018).
60 See Ratner and Giladi, 'The Role of the International Committee of the Red Cross'.
61 See, for example, Cédric Cotter (*S')Aider pour survivre: Action humanitaire et neutralité suisse pendant la Première Guerre mondiale* (Geneva: Georg, 2018).
62 For postwar criticisms of the Red Cross see G. Best, *Law and War since 1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).
63 Speech given by Mr Peter Maurer, president of the ICRC, Joint Opening Ceremony – Statutory Meetings of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement 2017. Antalya, 6 November 2017. www.icrc.org/en/document/my-message-movement-its-time-awaken-giant (accessed 15 November 2018).
64 There were six detailed background papers that accompanied the final report, *An Agenda for Red Cross: A Re-Appraisal of the Role of the Red Cross*, July 1975. For a brief overview, see Oppenheimer, *The Power of Humanity*, pp. 188–9.
65 The *International Review of the Red Cross* will devote some of its 150th-year edition (2019) to a discussion of its historical role.
66 Forsythe, *The Humanitarians*, pp. 36–7.
67 See, among others, Cabanes, *The Great War and the Origins of Humanitarianism*; K. D. Watenpaugh, *Bread from Stones: The Middle East and the Making of Modern Humanitarianism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015).
68 See I. Feldman, 'Humanitarianism and Revolution: Samed, the Palestine Red Crescent Society, and the Work of Liberation', in Paulmann, *Humanitarianism and the Media*, pp. 222–39.
69 The female nurse is a ubiquitous image in many national societies' propaganda materials during the First World War, especially the American Red Cross. Consider, for instance, Harrison Fisher's 1918 poster 'I summon you to comradeship in the Red Cross – Woodrow Wilson', depicted on the dust cover of Irwin's *Making the World Safe* (see note 38), or A. E. Foringer's 'The Greatest Mother in the World', which featured in ARC fundraising posters in 1918 and 1919, and again in 1943. See, in general, D. Palmieri, 'Humanitarianism on the Screen: The ICRC films, 1921–1965', in Paulmann, *Humanitarianism and the Media*, pp. 90–106; and D. Rodogno and H. Fehrenbach (eds), *Humanitarian Photography: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).
70 L. Malkki, *The Need to Help: The Domestic Arts of International Humanitarianism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015). For a study of the role and motivation of ICRC delegates, see Brigitte Troyon and Daniel Palmieri, 'The ICRC Delegate: An Exceptional Humanitarian Player?', *International Review of the Red Cross*, 89:865 (March 2007), 97–111.
71 www.icrc.org/en/doc/resources/documents/resolution/council-delegates-resolution-6–2011.htm (accessed 20 January 2019).
72 www.voluntarysectorarchives.org.uk (accessed 20 January 2019). This is part of a British Academy Research Project, 'Digitising the Mixed Economy of Welfare in Britain'.