**Book Proposal for Indiana**

Basic Information

**What is your first name?**

Marcia Catherine

**What is your last name?**

Schenck

**What is your e-mail address?**

marcia.schenck@uni-potsdam.de

**What is the proposed title of your publication?**

Displaced in Decolonization: The Organization of African Unity and the Creation of an African Refugee Regime in Global Perspective

**What area of study does your manuscript pertain to?**

* Refugee Studies

**Please include five to ten keywords that summarize the central ideas of your work**

* Refugees
* Refugee regime
* 1969 Refugee Convention
* Decolonization
* Development
* Humanitarianism
* International organizations
* Organization of African Unity
* Africa
* Pan-Africanism

**What makes your book unique? Please list up to five points on what the reader will learn from your work.**

- This book combines insights from the disciplines of Refugee Studies, African History, and International Relations and offers an analysis of the African contribution to the creation of contemporary global refugee regimes.

- Its bird’s eye view of the creation of the African refugee regime transcends accounts of single countries and camps, giving a long-neglected perspective on African and global history its proper weight and expanding our understanding of the role the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and other international organizations played in the African refugee regime’s creation.

- It is the first book to set in historical context the supranational creation of the African refugee regime during the decolonization era in a way that transcends the prevalent, narrowly Eurocentric focus. It rectifies the picture by restoring due weight to factors in refugee history arising out of the decolonization process, rather than viewing issues merely through WWII and Cold War prisms.

- It presents a triptych of case studies on the OAU Convention, refugee students, and rural refugee settlements, with a focus on the 1960s, that provides innovative insights. Considered together, they generate a unique perspective on the emerging African refugee regime that helps us understand the role of African politicians, intellectuals, and refugees in its creation.

- It contributes to the new wave of literature focusing on the role of the Global South in the making of the international refugee regime through its innovative thematics and clear temporal focus.

**Please identify up to three books published in the past three years that are written on similar subjects.**

Toyin Falola and Olajumoke Yacob-Haliso’s *African Refugees* (Indiana University Press, 2023) is the most recent work in a similar area.

Lucy oe’s () reflects on the links between migration studies and colonialism.

Rebecca ’s*W* () reflects on how the refugee label is used.

Ria Kapoor’s *Making Refugees in India* (Oxford University Press, 2022) examines similar issues in relation to that country.

**Are you submitting your proposal to be included in an IU Press book series?**

YES

* Worlds in Crisis: Refugee, Asylum, and Forced Migration

Proposal Materials

**Please provide a 450 to 500-word description of the book project, including its purpose, audience, scope, contribution to scholarship, and relationship to the existing literature on the topic**

,redressesthe excessive focus in still prevalentsof decolonization ondynamics relating to WWIIand the Cold War. Instead, itesGcorrective it spotlights the neglected role of African agency in all its potentialities and limitations in cross-national and managementbook contextualizes the withinpost-colonial ,ts unique characterization ofwill provideboth academic readers and interested observers with new insights on migration. These will include scholars of studies,and of cultural studiesIt will be a lively and innovative set text fora wide range of postreading lists ,, and Africa’s role in international relations.

Its focus on the early 1960s in Africa, as sub-Saharan nations gained independence from colonial rule and the future of the continent seemed wide open, enhances the analytical productivity of the book’s insights. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) had refugees high on its agenda right from its 1963 inception. The book traces the political and intellectual history of the concept of “refugee” on the African continent. It uncovers the role of African politicians, intellectuals, and refugees in the creation of an African refugee regime during the decolonization era in a way that directly challenges previous studies’ overreliance on European political and legal structures to characterize the international refugee regime.

Drawing on James Scott’s “seeing like a state” approach, it asks: Who were the refugees and how did the OAU see them? How did OAU bodies render refugees visible, accountable, and governable? What kind of programs and conferences did the OAU facilitate and why? The book addresses these questions by drawing on 12 archives on three continents, including the OAU archives in Addis Ababa, the UNHCR and ILO archives in Geneva, the UN archives in New York, and international NGO archives. Its focus is on three areas of refugee management: The creation and adoption of the OAU’s seminal Refugee Convention; the roles envisaged for “elite refugees” in higher education in African development; and settlement programs for “rural refugees,” the vast majority of those in Africa, to facilitate their integration into and developmental contribution to their host country’s labor forces. These investigations of key aspects of 1960s refugee management reveal the importance of the ideas and approaches to refugee management issues that originated in Africa.

Words: 461

**Please upload a 200-word statement on why Indiana University Press is an appropriate publisher for your manuscript.**

Having had the pleasure of speaking to Bethany Mowry at the African Studies Association Conference in Philadelphia in November 2022 about IU Press, I became convinced it would be the ideal publisher for my book due to its strengths in the three areas my research generally addresses: Refugee Studies, African Studies, and Global Studies. Being a global historian with an Africa focus, IU Press is best placed to provide a platform for my work that will attract colleagues in African, global, and forced migration history, but will also reach out to the interdisciplinary audiences it will appeal to. Existing IU Press publications like *Hosting States and Unsettled Guests* (2024) speak to audiences interested in both African and Refugee Studies. *Frontiers of Belonging*, (2022) intersects on refugee education with some of my book’s key concerns. *The Politics of Crisis-Making* (2023) shares a preoccupation with the politics of humanitarianism with my book, mine seeking to elaborate on it in the African context. My book is, in a broad way, in conversation with recent and forthcoming books in Indiana’s *Worlds in Crisis Series*, and would expand its scope and ambitions by its historical focus on refugees of Africa’s decolonization.

**Please upload a table of contents, with paragraph-length descriptions of each chapter.**

**Introduction**

**Refugees beyond humanitarianism: African unity, decolonization, and development**

The characterization of the 1960–70s as a “golden age” for refugees in Africa where “African hospitality,” Pan-Africanism, and an “open-door policy” towards refugees are foregrounded, is only a partial characterization of the African refugee regime’s not-always-smooth creation. The book critically examines the “golden age” perception by investigating three aspects of refugee management: the legal realm; education and employment initiatives for those dubbed urban/elite “refugee students”; and zonal development plans and resettlement initiatives for the “rural masses.” The book reveals the centrality of African initiatives in the creation of the twentieth-century international refugee regime. Focusing on African states’ novel approaches in the face of decolonization and resultant refugee challenges, it uncovers how political discussions among African politicians and diplomats, and the legal, humanitarian, and political concerns of experts at international agencies and NGOs combined to produce perspectives on African refugee management. Some of these ideas succeeded in practice, some faded into oblivion only be to revived later, and some simply failed. By unearthing the neglected history of refugees in Africa with an emphasis on the tumultuous 1960s, this book brings to the fore the complexities of refugee management during a time when an entire continent seemed able to reinvent itself and dream of a better future. *Displaced in Decolonization* is organized thematically, rather than chronologically or geographically, to bring transnational and transregional aspects to the fore. The book first discusses the OAU’s refugee management, drawing primarily on its archives, and then turns to three case studies tracing the drafting history of the OAU’s 1969 Refugee Convention, the history of refugee student scholarship policies, and the history of zonal development plans, drawing on records of major gatherings like the 1967 Conference on the Legal, Economic and Social Aspects of African Refugee Problems, OAU and UNHCR assemblies, background papers, annual reports, resolutions, budgets, expert and decision maker correspondence, and refugees’ own words, all collected from 12 discrete archives.

**Chapter 1**

**Unpacking the “African refugee problem:” Seeing refugees like the Organization of African Unity**

The OAU conceptualized the African refugee as a “problem to be solved” from its inception. It planned to resolve the issues arising out of the existence of around 400,000 refugees by addressing political conflict. Refugee populations were the outcome of independence struggles and power struggles in the newly independent African countries. The OAU sought to create a continent in which citizens of prosperous, independent nations did not have a reason to flee. I argue that the OAU’s framing of refugee displacement as temporary fostered a utopian vision of a united continent. The chapter lays the groundwork for understanding the OAU’s complex relationship with the refugee issue. It first briefly describes the OAU in relation to African refugees, including the progress of the relevant important bodies, committees, bureaus, and conferences. It then zooms in on the “Commission of Ten” which worked on the drafting of the 1969 Convention, and the Bureau for the Placement and Education of African Refugees as two key bodies in African refugee management. Lastly, it discusses the varied conceptions of who could be labeled a refugee, directly tackling the issue of how the OAU’s various bodies saw them. In practice, the African refugee was a nebulous category encompassing those fleeing anti-colonial wars, freedom fighters, students, economic migrants, political emigres, and farmers seeking sanctuary for a variety of reasons. This chapter discusses the institutional foundation of the OAU’s refugee management and in so doing reveals the workings of a linchpin in the creation of an African refugee regime. It maintains that by coordinating refugee work and spearheading the formulation of an African refugee convention, the OAU, despite often being seen as an ineffectual organization, was an important mediator for ideas that influenced the lives of many African refugees and fed back into international thinking about refugee management. The chapter principally draws on OAU archives, UNHCR, and Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation archives.

**Chapter 2:**

**Negotiating refuge: The making of the 1969 Convention and the politics of protection**

The chapter traces the 1964–69 promulgation of the OAU Refugee Convention in its historical context. It argues that the unique historical synergies of the 1960s allowed for the creation of a regional refugee law that enshrined a broader refugee definition into regionally binding law. This definition was discussed around the world and sometimes taken up verbatim, from Cartagena to Cairo to Bangkok. It even eventually found its way into the UNHCR’s expanded definition. It argues that the 1969 Convention was only possible at this historical juncture of state-making, decolonization struggles, ideas about African unity, and pan-African solidarity. The chapter reveals how political concerns around refugee issues motivated African statesmen to draw up their own legal framework and maps the shifting ground on which these discussions took place in the 1960s, given that international refugee law based on the 1951 Refugee Convention had excluded non-European refugees up until the formulation of the 1967 Protocol. Even after 1967, African statesmen continued to believe it necessary to draw up their own continent-wide instruments. The resulting 1969 OAU “Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa” became the backbone of an African refugee regime which, when combined with the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol, formed the new foundations of international refugee law. The chapter concludes by discussing the 1969 Convention’s global reverberations in other national and regional refugee frameworks from South America to the Middle East and Asia. The chapter draws on both primary and secondary sources. These include the work of legal scholars on the 1969 Convention and its legacy in (inter)national refugee law, OAU and UNHCR archives and minutes, and articles from newspapers across various continents.

# **Chapter 3:**

# **Investing in Africa’s refugee workforce: Meeting development needs through labor planning**

The chapter examines those refugees who sought secondary and higher education. The OAU, along with many other international and non-governmental organizations, took it upon itself to provide academic scholarships for African refugees because their skills would be needed upon their return to support soon-to-be or already independent African states with their expert knowledge and labor. It shows how refugee secondary and higher education needs to be understood in the context of the development framework of human capital theory. It was designed to support pan-Africanist hopes for a decolonized continent and these merged with humanitarian arguments to create a hybrid humanitarian developmentalism. Evidence for this argument is found in documents prepared for the Conference on the Legal, Economic and Social Aspects of African Refugee Problems, the OAU’s Bureau for the Placement and Education of Refugees, students’ letters, and sources published by refugee experts from various intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, among them the African American Institute and the International University Exchange Fund, all of which supported higher education scholarships in the name of African refugee human capital development. Other sources are documentation from the UN’s Scholarship Programs for Southern African Refugees, The Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation’s 1967 conference, the George Padmore Research Library’s African Affairs Centre, the Howard Pim Library’s ANC archives, and the British Library’s endangered archives collection. It engages the secondary literature on African education in general and that of refugees and development issues in Africa.

**Chapter 4**

**Transforming landscapes: The potential of zonal development in resettling refugees and investing in rural communities**

The chapter discusses views of zonal development as a way to use rural refugees as agents of development for their host governments. It contends that the OAU perceived planned land settlement as a pioneering and durable solution to the refugee question in Africa. Designed to deal with the mass migration of mostly farming populations across state borders, land settlement policies in the 1960s distinguished between two types – spontaneous and planned. The OAU and a host of other international organizations, among them the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the International Labor Organization (ILO) sought to encourage the latter. Experts from abroad like Tristam Frederick Betts promoted zonal development plans for refugee settlements. The model was meant to encourage refugees to settle and become productive farmers who would eventually sell cash crops on the market. Planners had a three-stage model, from emergency aid to subsistence farming to income generation, turning refugees from being a burden into an asset to their host countries’ development. Refugee development policy was seen as concomitant with the development of the host community and, in this utilitarian view. The chapter critically examines the planning frenzy of the 1960s and scrutinizes development paradigms discussed by policymakers, development experts, and representatives of international organizations, together with the assumptions they made with regard to the behavior of refugees, local populations, and host governments. It first discusses the recommendations of the groundbreaking 1967 Conference on the Legal, Economic, and Social Aspects of African Refugee Problems, then discusses examples of the integrated zonal development approach, and concludes by reflecting on the planning and development paradigms that policymakers and practitioners alike saw as a panacea. It draws on the ILO’s archives, the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation’s 1967 conference material, the Lutheran World Federation’s country studies material, the OAU’s archives, and published primary source material.

**Epilogue**

Africa’s refugee regime crystallized in the 1960s. During this tumultuous decade, the OAU and its many partners pioneered new refugee management approaches, some of which still guide work on the continent today. The epilogue reiterates that the picture of refugee management in the 1960s is much more complex than simplistic notions of a “golden age” allow for. While “African hospitality” did indeed play a role in the open-door policies of countries like Tanzania, their decision to welcome refugee groups was not a purely humanitarian one. Rather, it was one interwoven with political and economic motives ranging from pan-Africanist convictions to the need to develop remote regions of their countries. The OAU saw refugees as a prime concern for the continent in light of the requirements of decolonization, development, and African unity and sought to design a unified refugee regime to address the humanitarian challenges and eschew political discord among its member states. This emerging African refugee regime was influenced, much like the OAU itself more broadly, by the competing values set out in the OAU’s Charter. Pan-African values of solidarity with territories struggling for decolonization were uppermost, but so were non-interference in internal national matters and the untouchability of colonial boundaries. African statesmen therefore perceived refugees in manifold and often contradictory ways: As security threats, freedom fighters against foreign domination, labor market competitors, or agents of development. The OAU emphasized certain refugee management approaches that it hoped would contribute to solving the “refugee problem” in the 1960s. Instead of solving the refugee issue by educating people to serve their home countries after liberation and integrating rural mass migrants into rural production systems, refugee numbers on the continent have grown dramatically, from 400,000 in 1963 to about 6.5 million in 2022. The UNHCR expects there to be a staggering 44 million displaced persons in sub-Saharan Africa in 2023. The section ends with a topical reflection on continuity and change in African refugee management and discourse through the OAU and its many allies, with the African Union (AU), the OAU’s successor, Kenya, and Uganda featuring prominently in this outlook. The epilogue draws on the archival materials already discussed and, in addition,

AU reports on refugees such as AU ECHO 2019, material from the Global Compact on Refugees, and country reports of Uganda and Kenya, alongside secondary literature like Alexander Betts’s 2021 *The Wealth of Refugees*.

**Please upload one or two sample chapters, preferably including an introductory chapter that describes the work as a whole.**

**Upload an optional second chapter.**

**Please upload your curriculum vitae or resume.**

**Please upload a file containing the names and contact information for 5 to 10 appropriate reviewers for your manuscript. Note: these cannot be individuals who served on your dissertation committee or members of the institution where you are currently employed. Please do not contact suggested reviewers yourself to ask if they would be willing to read your manuscript--this compromises the peer review process.**

* *Eric Allina, University of Ottawa, Canada*
* *Brett Shadle, Virginia Tech, USA*
* *Joanna Tague, Denison University, USA*
* *Joel Glasman, University of Bayreuth, Germany*
* *George Njung, Baylor University, USA*
* *Jill Rosenthal, Hunter College, USA*
* *Eric Burton, University of Insbruck, Austria*
* *Christian Williams, University of the Freestate, South Africa*
* *Christoph Kalter, University of Agder, Norway*

**What is the estimated or proposed length (in number of words, including notes and bibliography) of the whole manuscript?**

110,000 words

**Does your manuscript contain illustrations? Please note the number and type (e.g., charts, photographs, black & white, color)**

Yes, about ten black and white images

**Will any parts of your proposed manuscript have been previously published? If so, what parts, and approximately how much of the manuscript do they represent?**

Yes, part of Chapter 3, about 8% of the book, will have appeared as an article in *Africa Today*.

**What is your estimated date for completing the entire manuscript? How much of the manuscript is complete now?**

I am presently refining various chapters and will submit a completed draft to my tenure committee at the end of 2023. It will provide feedback during Spring Semester 2024. I will then rework the manuscript accordingly over the Summer and submit the completed manuscript to IU Press by the end of September 2024. As discussed with Bethany, I need an advance contract for my second book for my tenure file and so am approaching IU Press now to ascertain its interest since, for the reasons I have outlined, it is my preferred choice for publication.